

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNORS' ROUNDTABLE ON THE YELLOWSTONE ECOSYSTEM GRIZZLY BEAR CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Recommendations Related to the Conservation Strategy and the Primary Conservation Area (PCA)

1. The PCA boundary should be adopted as presented in the draft Conservation Strategy. The Round Table affirms the proposed management within the PCA, including the approach of allowing for a temporary reduction in secure areas for the purpose of habitat improvement.
2. The Round Table recommends that the Conservation Strategy include a data validation process.
3. The Conservation Strategy should include and explain the concept of adaptive management in understandable terms, explain how adaptive management will be applied, and explain how the Conservation Strategy will be amended. (For example, the document should explain how management changes in the Targhee National Forest that may affect habitat in the Plateau and Henry's lake Bear Management Units will be evaluated in relation to occupancy and re-listing criteria, and what changes might result.)
4. When data demonstrate that bear populations are healthy and robust outside the PCA according to state plan goals, more flexible management may be considered within the PCA, provided the basic objectives for the PCA are maintained.
5. Eliminate references to monitoring population parameters and mortality in the 10 mile area surrounding the PCA in relation to management decisions in the Conservation Strategy. (i.e. Eliminate the 10 mile "buffer.") Monitoring and management outside the PCA should be governed by state management plans. Unless monitoring under state plans outside the PCA indicates the need for management review and action, decisions in the Conservation Strategy should be limited to results of monitoring within the PCA.
6. Continue centralized coordination of ecosystem-wide population monitoring to insure data integrity and to provide a database available to the 3 states and other appropriate entities.

Recommendations Related to State Plans

1. The three states should initiate development of state grizzly bear management plans for areas outside the PCA concurrent with revision of the draft CS for the PCA.
2. State and federal agencies should develop and communicate a process agreement that outlines and harmonizes state and federal planning and de-listing.
3. State plans should be developed through a public process and seek to:
 - Insure long-term viability of grizzly bears and preclude re-listing.
 - Support expansion of grizzly bears beyond the PCA in areas that are biologically suitable and socially acceptable.
 - Manage grizzly bears as a game animal, including allowing regulated hunting when and where appropriate.

Recommendations Related to Funding

Short Term

1. Continue funding state efforts and make funding for state plans a priority.
2. Re-evaluate state costs, including local government needs (I&E, planning, etc.) so that budgets are realistic.
3. Continue federal dollars to support management within the PCA.

Long Term

1. Develop mechanisms to assure long term funding. Pursue establishment of an Endowment for Grizzly Bear management, CARA dollars, and national appropriations through Congress.
2. Involve the Governors' Offices and the states' delegations in lobbying for federal dollars.
3. Develop funding for livestock depredation compensation.

Recommendations Related to Citizen Involvement

1. Appoint 3 non-voting citizens per state to the Yellowstone Grizzly Management Committee. Strive for a balanced representation and encourage their active participation in each meeting through establishment of Committee ground rules and clarification of roles and authorities.
2. After three years, evaluate the structure and based on the evaluation, and make appropriate changes.

Recommendations Related to Education

1. Establish and fund an interagency education working group with citizen members appointed by the three Governors.
2. Produce education materials based on the following criteria and messages:
 - Honest and realistic messages about bears and bear management
 - The need for nuisance protocol and removal of problem bears
 - No jargon
 - Safety and sanitation
 - The need for informed hunters
 - Resident and non-resident messages
 - Living with bears/bear country communities
 - The importance of networks and communication
 - Responsibility of local government
 - Signage
3. Think about tools in "bear country" within the PCA that might encourage human safety, survival of the bear, and increased capacity for local governments, managers and private landowners (i.e., habitat-oriented and open space tax incentives; development restrictions and responsibilities; zoning and subdivision regulation).

Recommendations Related to Plan and Process Clarity

1. Make a strong effort to provide citizens with a clear, understandable version of the plan and process.
2. Find avenues through the IGBC to start communication among states and federal entities about interrelationships among T/E species and encourage language to this effect in the Conservation Strategy.

Recommendations Related to the Montana Legislature

1. Once the Grizzly Bear is de-listed, designate it a trophy animal in order to provide enhanced protection and significant fines under Montana law.
2. Revise Montana law with regard to taking Grizzlies for potential livestock depredation in a manner that eliminates this barrier to de-listing.

Recommendations Related to Nuisance Bear Policy

1. Nuisance bear policy in the Conservation Strategy should be clarified and defined to increase public understanding and decrease misconceptions.
2. The Round Table affirms that management authority for nuisance bears outside National Park boundaries lies with state agencies and that clear, effective protocols, including sensitivity to the placement of nuisance bears, need to be part of the Conservation Strategy as well as state plans.