

FEB 21 2015



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Mountain-Prairie Region



IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/R6/ES/EA
ESO-00060852

MAILING ADDRESS:
Post Office Box 25486
Denver Federal Center
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

FEB 17 2015

Montana Wyoming Tribal Leader's Council
711 Central Avenue, Suite 220
Billings, Montana 59102

Dear Tribal Partner:

Based on your organization's concerns, please accept this letter as our advance notice of intent to review the endangered species status of the grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) in the Greater Yellowstone Area. While the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee's Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee has recommended delisting this population, at this time no delisting actions or proposals have been moved forward. If desired, we would gladly engage in a discussion on the grizzly bear's status.

We recognize each Tribe's inherent powers to make and enforce laws and to manage and control their natural resources. It is our goal to support this authority. We also wish to improve our relationship with your organization. We want to hear your concerns and keep an open line of communication during this process. As an organization, you will also have the opportunity for formal comments during the federal register process if any proposal is moved forward.

We are proposing to host three consultation meetings in broad areas where Tribes have expressed interest in this issue. We would like to offer three meetings in late winter or early spring. Ideally, the three meetings would occur within the Great Plains, Northern Rocky Mountains, and Idaho geographical areas. In addition, during the March 19, 2015, Mountain-Prairie Region Tribal Leadership Roundtable we will spend some time discussing this topic.

We are requesting location and venue suggestions for the three consultation meetings. If your organization is interested in coordinating a consultation meeting in conjunction with an organizational meeting, please reach out to the contacts listed below. We are asking for this information no later than **March 6**, as we plan to announce all three consultation meetings with details about locations and times by **March 18**.

At your request, the Service is available to talk with your organization to share information we have about this species and the status review process. We will also discuss how Tribal information, comments, and expertise can be incorporated into the process.

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To ensure Tribal information regarding Yellowstone grizzly bears may be incorporated into our review, we request that the Tribes participate in the consultation meetings or submit any comments and information by **March 31, 2015**. Please send those responses electronically to chris_servheen@fws.gov or by mail to:

Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
University Hall, Room 309
University Of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59812

If you would like provide recommendations or ideas for the consultation meetings, please contact Ivy Allen, Tribal Liaison, by email at ivy_allen@fws.gov or by phone at 303-236-4575. If you have questions about the species or the comment process, please contact Chris Servheen, Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, at 406-243-4903.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Chris Servheen", written over a circular stamp.

Deputy

Regional Director