

From: Ryan Moehring
To: [Noreen Walsh](#)
Cc: [Matt Hogan](#); [Jeffrey Fleming](#); [Michael Thabault](#); [Stephen Torbit](#); [Chris Servheen](#); [Scott Aikin](#); [Kristine Martin](#); [Annette Naylon](#); [Nicole Alt](#); [Robert Mansheim](#); [Anna Munoz](#); [Seth Willey](#); [Serena Baker](#)
Subject: RE: Posted to Web: Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Tribal Consultation
Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2015 12:13:59 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

FYI:

NAVAJO AND SHOSHONE NATIONS SPEARHEAD DRIVE TO HAVE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION INSTITUTE A MORATORIUM ON GRIZZLY DELISTING

BY [NATIVE NEWS ONLINE STAFF](#) / [CURRENTS](#) / 24 JUN 2015

Tribal opposition continues to mount against the federal government's proposed removal of Endangered Species Act (ESA) status from the iconic Yellowstone grizzly, and the subsequent state organized trophy hunts that will result from delisting the bear.

Resistance that began with the Northern Cheyenne in Montana has now swollen to include all of the tribes in that state, plus every tribal nation in Wyoming, South Dakota, North Dakota, Nebraska, a plurality in Idaho, and some of the most influential tribes in Oklahoma, including the Cherokee and Chickasaw nations.

With the recent declarations and resolutions passed by the Navajo Nation and the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, Arizona and Utah can now be added to the list.

“THE UNPRECEDENTED NATURE OF THIS TRIBAL COALITION IN OPPOSITION TO DELISTING THE YELLOWSTONE GRIZZLY BEAR PROVIDES TESTAMENT TO THE ENORMOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS SACRED BEING WITHIN OUR CULTURES,” SAYS CHAIRMAN JASON WALKER OF THE NORTHWESTERN BAND OF SHOSHONE.

In one of the last acts of the Shelly-Jim Administration, then President Ben Shelly declared the Navajo Nation's opposition to the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) intent to delist the grizzly and enable “the states of Wyoming, Montana and Idaho to sell licenses to generate hundreds of thousands of dollars from trophy hunting the grizzly.”

“The Navajo Nation stands in solidarity with those tribal nations in opposition to this policy,” President Shelly informed FWS Director Dan Ashe. “This policy violates tribal spiritual and religious rights, and infringes upon tribal sovereignty,” he said.

Prior to Euro-American contact, grizzlies populated much of the Southwest, and President Shelly touched

upon the significance of the grizzly in traditional Navajo culture.

“The Navajo people are not separated from this issue or its significance and potential impact upon our culture, as the grizzly bear has been honored in Navajo culture since our creation,” he explained to Director Ashe. “The grizzly bear is integral to one of our most significance ceremonies.”

The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation’s resolution presents in detail the spiritual, cultural and historic significance of the grizzly in Shoshone culture.

In their respective pronouncements, both nations decried what all thirty-five tribes in opposition to delisting the grizzly identify as the government’s failure to adhere to established consultation protocols.

President Shelly advised Interior Secretary Jewell that, “Many times, tribal nations have confronted this situation where a federal agency fails to honor the mandated consultation process, and in doing so undermines the unique and historic nation-to-nation relationship tribal nations hold with the federal government.”

In response to growing frustration that “FWS has continued to ignore some 35 official tribal Resolutions and Declarations from federally recognized Indian tribes,” the eleven–nation Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council (TLC) told Secretary Jewell that it, “fully supports the proposed Tribal Consultation Summit on the Yellowstone Grizzly Bear, planned for this summer.” GOAL Tribal Coalition, the organizational fulcrum of tribal opposition to delisting, introduced the summit.

“This tribal initiative is absolutely necessary to ensure that the ‘meaningful tribal consultation’ mandated by Executive Orders issued by both the Clinton and Obama administrations are honored by FWS,” says Chairwoman Roxanne Sazue of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe (CCST). “Treaties, Congressional Acts, Secretarial Orders, and Executive Orders cannot be ignored,” she emphasizes.

GOAL issued an alert June 10, which indicates that FWS Director Ashe has already made the decision to proceed with delisting the grizzly before any meaningful tribal consultation process has been undertaken. At a recent Environment and Public Works Committee hearing, Director Ashe stated to Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and a delisting advocate, “We are working with the states of Wyoming and Idaho and Montana literally as we speak to try to put together the frame for a potential delisting proposal.”

To proceed with delisting the grizzly from the ESA without tribal consultation would contradict President Obama’s pronouncements on the need for “meaningful tribal consultation.”

The CSST is among the tribal nations that have called for FWS Coordinator, Dr. Chris Servheen, to be removed from the consultation process due to what the tribe calls his “demeaning and dismissive attitude

toward the massed tribal opposition.” The Rocky Mountain TLC claims that Servheen “is clearly an impediment to good faith consultation.”

Following a recent federal and state interagency grizzly bear meeting, Servheen advised the media that the tribes did not present “a problem” to the government’s desire to delist the grizzly.

Since 1997, in the ancestral homelands of the twenty-six Associated Tribes of Yellowstone, Servheen has authorized the killing of over 300 “problem” grizzlies. FWS currently estimates the Greater Yellowstone grizzly population at around 700 grizzlies, but the approximations have fluctuated dramatically in recent years due to different counting techniques.

All thirty-five tribal nations in the coalition contend that the Yellowstone grizzly is not recovered under the criteria of the ESA, contrary to FWS’s position.

“The grizzly once inhabited most of what became the Western United States, but today, not unlike tribal people, they survive on less than 2% of their original country. With only 2% of their historic population, the grizzly bear cannot be considered a recovered species appropriate for removal from ESA protections,” writes Chairman Walker.

“The grizzly bear must be considered within the context of the entirety of its historic domain pre-European contact. Many areas of biologically suitable habitat exist where the grizzly once roamed, all of them in ancestral tribal homelands where our ancestors walked, and where the grizzly should walk again,” he insists.

Several former government biologists support the tribes’ contention, including David Mattson, whose research as a member of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team (IGBST) was central to bringing the Yellowstone grizzly back from the brink.

“Even using the suspect counting methods employed by FWS and the IGBST, there is no evidence of a population increase since the early 2000s, and the weight of evidence suggests a possible decline since 2007,” says Mattson, who identifies three of the four major food sources that sustain Yellowstone grizzlies as having “experienced catastrophic losses and major ongoing declines.”

“Whatever the population estimate is, the Greater Yellowstone grizzly population is not large enough to provide any meaningful buffer against deteriorating habitat conditions,” he warns.

“The situation with Yellowstone grizzlies is somewhat unique in the extent to which the science has been politicized,” Mattson discloses, a point the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe emphasized in its recent statement.

“Under the circumstances, the most appropriate course of action is for a moratorium to be instituted, under which all of the impacted tribal nations can be consulted,” asserts Chairman Walker. “A moratorium would

also provide an opportunity for tribal nations to review the raw data the FWS is basing all of its conclusions upon.”

The Navajo Nation has appealed directly to Secretary Jewell and FWS Director Ashe to establish the suggested moratorium on delisting the grizzly.

“Our ancestors walked here. Those yet unborn will walk here, too. We must ensure that the grizzly bear is here to walk with them for all tribal nations,” President Shelly impressed upon the Obama Administration officials. “To that end, the Navajo Nation supports GOAL Tribal Coalition and the political and spiritual leaders who have called for a moratorium to be introduced and kept in place until a meaningful tribal consultation process has been conducted.”

“Extinction is forever,” Chairman Walker reminds Secretary Jewell in the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation’s resolution, “and delisting the grizzly bear in Greater Yellowstone will doom them to the inevitable fate of an island population.”

<http://nativenewsonline.net/currents/navajo-and-shoshone-nations-spearhead-drive-to-have-obama-administration-institute-a-moratorium-on-grizzly-delisting/>

From: Noreen Walsh [mailto:noreen_walsh@fws.gov]
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2015 4:23 PM
To: Seth Willey; Serena Baker
Cc: Matt Hogan; Jeffrey Fleming; Michael Thabault; Stephen Torbit; Chris Servheen; Scott Aikin; Ryan Moehring; Kristine Martin; Annette Naylor; Nicole Alt; Robert Mansheim; Anna Munoz
Subject: RE: Posted to Web: Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Tribal Consultation

Yes, let me add my [thanks](#) – great teamwork!

*Noreen Walsh
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From: Willey, Seth [mailto:seth_willey@fws.gov]
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2015 3:41 PM
To: Serena Baker
Cc: Noreen Walsh; Matt Hogan; Jeff Fleming; Michael Thabault; Stephen Torbit; Chris Servheen; Scott Aikin; Ryan Moehring; Kristine Martin; Annette Naylor; Nicole Alt; Robert Mansheim; Anna Munoz
Subject: Re: Posted to Web: Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Tribal Consultation

Thank you Serena and Jill. I know this was a complicated letter / series of letters to figure out. We appreciate all your energies to get it across the finish line!

Seth

Seth L. Willey
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Regional Recovery Coordinator
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On Thu, Jun 18, 2015 at 2:05 PM, Serena Baker <serena_baker@fws.gov> wrote:
Good Afternoon All,

Just closing the loop. Noreen signed the Yellowstone grizzly bear government-to-government Tribal consultation letters, and they were mailed Monday. The bulletin with a link to the base letter is now live on our website under both Top Stories and Tribal:
http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/pressrel/2015/06182015_USFish-and-Wildlife-Service-Seeks-Tribal-Input-on-Listing-Status-of-the-Yellowstone-Grizzly-Bear.php. Please be advised, this lists Matt as the contact, so Kris' phone number: 303.236.7920. Please let us know if you'd like something different.

Matt,

Attached is the Tribal contact list we used for distribution. The parties under the first tab, Chair-Pres, all received letters. Their phone numbers are listed. Since you are traveling, I'm happy to send them in a different format for your convenience, just let me know. Rows 2-38 are all the federally recognized Tribes in R6. Of those, the ones highlighted in blue are part of the 33 Tribes that have joined GOAL's grizzly bear campaign. Row 41 is the Northwestern Band of Shoshoni Nation of Utah, which is not a federally recognized Tribe, but has contacted us and has a DTS to Secretary Jewell. Rows 44-45 are the Tribal Councils within R6 who have contacted us. Rows 48-55 are Tribes headquartered outside R6 who have contacted us. Purple denotes the Tribes who have DTS letters to Secretary Jewell and Director Ashe. I apologize for all the detail, I just wanted the team to have as much information as possible. Special thanks particularly to Jill, and also Kris, and Anna for their wonderful assistance! Happy to answer any questions. Thanks!

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