

From: chris_servheen@fws.gov
To: [Serena Baker](#)
Cc: [Michael Thabault](#); [Matt Hogan](#); [Anna Munoz](#)
Subject: Re: ADDITIONAL: question from LA Times editorial writer on the proposed delisting of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly
Date: Friday, April 15, 2016 10:25:34 AM

The mortalities of adult females (the most important segment of the population) as a percentage of the total number of adult females in the population has changed very little over time. So, no we are not worried about the 2015 mortality levels. Mortalities vary year to year and a single year does not make a trend. For an example of the mortality variation, the 2014 mortality level was the lowest number in 8 years. Mortalities are not trending up while the population is trending down.

Chris

On Apr 15, 2016, at 8:30 AM, Serena Baker <serena_baker@fws.gov> wrote:

From: Hall, Carla [mailto:Carla.Hall@latimes.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2016 4:43 PM
To: Serena Baker
Subject: RE: questions from LA Times editorial writer on the proposed delisting of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly

Hi, Serena,

here is another one: This year you estimate the bear pop at 717. Last year you estimated it at 747. Meanwhile, bear mortality in Yellowstone ecosystem in 2015 was 60 or 70 bears (I heard both numbers)—which is the highest in the 10-15 years since you've been keeping records on grizzly mortalities, I heard. Does that give FWS pause about delisting? Are bear mortalities trending upward while bear pop estimates are trending downward?

Thanks!

Carla

From: Serena Baker [mailto:serena_baker@fws.gov]
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2016 8:12 AM
To: Hall, Carla
Subject: Re: questions from LA Times editorial writer on the proposed delisting of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly

Hi Carla,

We appreciate your interest in the Yellowstone grizzly bear population. What is your

deadline?

Thanks!

Serena Baker
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On Apr 13, 2016, at 8:12 PM, Hall, Carla <Carla.Hall@latimes.com> wrote:

Hi, Serena,

I have seen the proposed rule change and have some questions. Would it be possible to talk to you or an expert, perhaps Dr. Servheen, about the de-listing? (Or perhaps you are an expert on all this!)

I know the Service has meticulously tracked the numbers and distribution of grizzlies over the years and now say the population is 717 bears and that the grizzly has tripled its range since being listed. I know the Service says it has accomplished the goals of the recovery plan. I know FWS looks at three demographic criteria: is the minimum pop large enough to maintain genetic integrity; the distribution of the population, and “total mortality limits” (meaning that the number that die don’t leave the population depleted?) But beyond that I have some questions:

1How did the FWS come to decide that 500 was the absolute minimum number and that over 674 was very good for this population. I understand that the Service

has said that that can be maintained-- but why is that the correct number to maintain?

2)One critic of the delisting told me that the GYE population is isolated and until the Service can improve connectivity between all the ecosystems, then genetic diversity of the species won't be maintained—or improved. What are your thoughts on that?

3)And why de-list this one ecosystem? I've heard it's important that all ecosystems are thriving and sustainable before any of them get de-listed. What are your thoughts on that?

4)Will the biggest difference for the de-listed Yellowstone grizzlies be that they will now be transferred to state management which can set up hunting programs (with numerous restraints and guidelines—I've read the Wyoming plan) and choose how to handle trouble grizzlies—whether relocating or killing?

5)I've heard that if grizzlies are de-listed and roam out of the DMA, then anything can happen to them—they can be hunted without strict regulation. Is this a concern?

6)Why is the Service not concerned about the demise of whitebark pine? Is this because you think that grizzlies, which are opportunistic eaters, have replaced it with something else? And if it's ungulates, doesn't a greater dependency on ungulates end up with more grizzlies in more trouble—feasting on livestock, fighting each other for carcasses...

Thanks so much for your help on this.

Carla Hall

LA Times editorial writer

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