

# Grizzly Bear Recovery

in the

# North Cascades



# Questions & Answers

*The public has many questions about grizzly bears and grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades of Washington. The questions in this booklet were compiled from more than 700 comments we received about grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades during public meetings held around Washington State in mid-1992. We hope this booklet helps answer questions about grizzly bear management and recovery in the North Cascades and addresses many of the concerns raised by the public.*

*The North Cascades Ecosystem Management  
Subcommittee*

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Washington Department of Wildlife  
U.S. Forest Service  
National Park Service  
Washington Department of Natural Resources  
British Columbia Ministry of Environment*

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# Introduction

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There were once more than 50,000 grizzly bears in the western United States, but today fewer than 1,000 remain in Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and Washington. The grizzly bear was declared a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act in 1975. It is listed as an endangered species by the Washington Department of Wildlife and is designated as vulnerable in Canada, which means it requires special management consideration.



The Endangered Species Act requires that federal agencies and projects or agencies receiving federal funding act to protect and recover threatened or endangered species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers the Act. The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee was formed in 1983 to help the Service coordinate grizzly bear recovery. Committee members are regional and state directors of the Forest Service, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, wildlife agencies of Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and Washington, and Canadian management authorities. These officials review grizzly bear issues and make recommendations to the Fish and Wildlife Service on recovery activities.



The Service approved the first recovery plan for grizzly bears in 1982 and the plan was updated in 1993. The plan addresses six grizzly bear ecosystems: the Yellowstone, North-



ern Continental Divide, Cabinet-Yaak, Selkirk, North Cascades and Bitterroot. Four of the ecosystems were established as recovery areas in the 1982 plan. The other two ecosystems, the North Cascades and the Bitterroot, were to be evaluated to determine if they could support viable grizzly bear populations. Following five-year evaluations of both areas, they were determined to be capable of supporting viable grizzly bear populations and were added as recovery areas. Plans are being developed for the two ecosystems. When completed, they will be added to the 1993 Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan.

## General Grizzly Bear Biology

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**What is the life history of a grizzly bear?**

Grizzly bears usually have one to four cubs (average two), which are born in the den in late January. At birth their



eyes are closed, they have very little hair, and they weigh less than a pound. Grizzlies have cubs every three years on average, and cubs accompany their mother until she has another litter. Grizzly bear mothers are highly protective of their young and will risk death to protect them. Female grizzlies usually begin to breed at 5 to 6 years of age. Male bears do not participate in caring for the young and may attempt to kill cubs. The average life span of a grizzly is 15 to 20 years. The oldest grizzly bear ever captured in North America was a female in the Cabinet Mountains of Montana which was 35 years old.

## What do grizzly bears eat? How much do they eat?

Grizzlies are omnivores, which means that, like humans, they eat both plants and animals. They are also opportunists, meaning that they take advantage of whatever is available. Most of their diet is from vegetable materials such as berries, roots, and grasses. They also scavenge meat from winter-killed animals, dig for rodents, and eat termites, ants, grubs and other insects. If the opportunity arises they can become adept at fishing. Because they must live off stored fat for 6 months of the year, they eat large quantities during the time that



they forage. An adult male may consume the caloric equivalent of 10 huckleberry pies per day during the height of the berry season.

## **Do grizzly bears kill big game animals?**

Yes. Grizzlies sometimes prey on elk calves and deer fawns. They generally are not very proficient at killing the adults of those species. In some areas, such as Yellowstone, big game can be an important food source.



## **Do grizzly bears do anything besides eat?**

Eating occupies much of a grizzly bear's time during the summer, but they also engage in a wide range of other activities. Grizzly bears are extremely intelligent animals and each individual has a personality of its own. Adult bears are sometimes observed on the highest peaks. Entire family groups of mother and cubs have been seen sliding down steep snow slopes on their rumps and then climbing back up to do it again. They also enjoy water, and on hot days can be seen splashing and diving in pools and streams. They will play with each other for hours, both as cubs and when older, and will sometimes amuse themselves by playing and wrestling with logs and sticks.



## **What months do grizzly bears spend in the den? What does a den look like? How are grizzlies able to survive long periods in the den?**

Grizzly bears generally den in October or November, emerging in mid-April. They often enter their dens during a snowstorm, but they may also den in the autumn before the onset of winter weather if they are very fat. They usually dig a den in a hillside or under the roots of a tree or use a natural cave. They've also been known to simply crawl into thick brush and let the snow cover them. They almost always den at elevations above 6000 feet. A bear rarely uses the same den year after year. Dens dug in a hillside usually collapse by mid-summer.

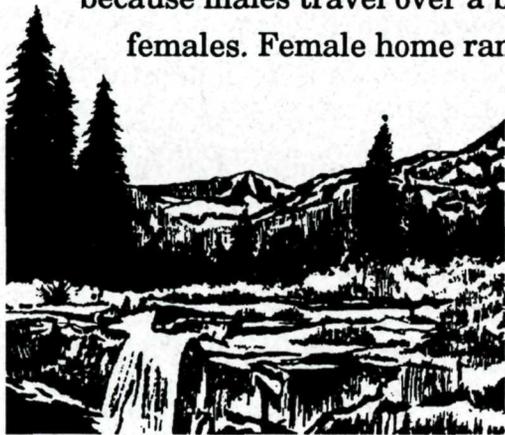
During winter when bears are in the den, their heart and breathing rates and body temperatures are reduced. In this way they conserve energy so that they are able to survive on the fat they have stored during the summer. Bears can gain 50-100+ pounds during the 6 months they are active. Bears do not eat, drink, urinate, or defecate while they are in the den. Water is produced as their fat is metabolized, and this provides their body with necessary liquid. The functioning of a bear's kidneys is not well understood and is being studied to provide potential benefits for human kidney research. Bears may come out of their dens for a day or two during warm periods and sit in the sun at their den entrances. Also, they will awaken if disturbed.



## How large an area does an individual grizzly bear require?

That depends upon how rich the habitat is in bear foods. Grizzly bears are not territorial. They do not stake out and defend a well-defined area but follow food availability. A food source that is rich in the spring often fizzles out by late spring, causing bears to move to other food sources. As a result, home ranges generally change from year to year. Most bears move through an area of several miles during a 24-hour period, but daily movements may vary widely by season, food availability, age and sex of the bear, security cover, and level of disturbance.

The average home range size throughout North America for an adult female grizzly bear is 70 square miles. Adult males have much larger home ranges, often 300-500 square miles. Male home ranges are generally larger because males travel over a broader area to find females. Female home ranges are usually smaller



because the limited mobility of cubs confines them to an area just large enough to supply food, water, and security. Research is needed to learn about grizzly

bear home ranges and habitat use in the North Cascades.



## **Does a bear keep other bears out of its range?**

No. Grizzly bears are not territorial. Home ranges of bears overlap. Each bear does have a certain “personal space” that it will not let another bear invade, and the bears will defend a limited food source such as a carcass.

## **How big are grizzly bears? Are they different from the brown and Kodiak bears of Alaska?**

The average spring weight of an adult male bear in the Rockies is 350-400 pounds; a female weighs about 250 pounds. A grizzly may gain 50 to 100+ pounds during the summer and fall. Brown and Kodiak bears are the same species as our grizzly bears, but they are much larger as a result of their richer food source and the dominance of larger bears in breeding.

## **What is the difference between a grizzly bear and a black bear?**

The black bear is a different, smaller species of bear, and it is more common in for-



## Can You Identify a Grizzly Bear?

Color and size are sometimes misleading

### Black Bear

Straight face  
profile

No hump



Front track of  
black bear



### Grizzly Bear

Concave  
face profile

Hump



Front track of  
grizzly bear



Look for a combination of several characteristics

ested habitats than the grizzly. Black bears are found in 32 states, much of Canada and parts of Mexico. In Montana black bears and grizzly bears live in similar habitats except the black bear is rarely found above timberline. Black bears and grizzly bears range in coloration from nearly white to cinnamon-like to black, therefore color alone is not a good way to tell the two species apart. Young grizzlies are no larger than black bears, so size is not a good indicator. Diagnostic features of a grizzly are long, curved front claws, a concave-shaped nose in profile, and a muscular hump at the shoulders.



## Can grizzly bears climb trees?

Yes, but they rarely do. Cubs climb trees well but this ability decreases as the bear grows larger and older. How well an adult bear can climb is usually determined by the size of the tree and arrangement of branches.

## How fast can a grizzly run?

Though grizzlies may look slow and clumsy, they can run as fast as a horse and are quite sure-footed.

## What do grizzlies use their long front claws for?

Primarily to dig for rodents, roots and bulbs and to tear apart rotten logs and stumps for insects.



# North Cascades Grizzly Bear Biology

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## What is the history of the grizzly bear in the North Cascades?

The historical record is clear that grizzly bears have long been present in the North Cascades. The earliest evidence

is found in religious ceremonies and folklore of several Cascade Mountain Native American tribes. Between 1827 and 1859 Hudson's Bay Company trapping records show 3,788 grizzly hides shipped from North Cascades area trading posts.

Some of the grizzly bears killed in the North Cascades have been preserved in various museums across the U.S. The hide and skull of a grizzly bear killed during the survey of the U.S./Canada border in 1859 was sent to the U.S. National Museum in Washington, D.C. The skull is still in the museum collection.

Another grizzly bear taken from the Chelan area in 1913 was used by C. Hart Merriam in 1916 as the type specimen for his taxonomic description of Pacific Northwest grizzly bears. In 1952, a grizzly bear was killed just east of the Okanogan River, near Molson; this specimen is in the Conner Museum at Washington State University.

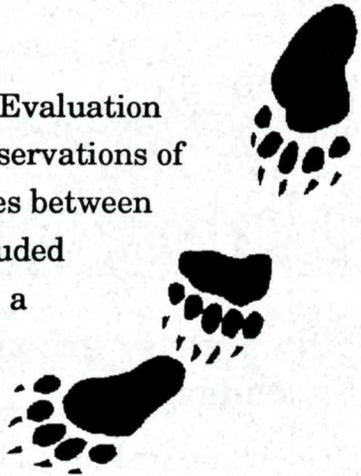
From the early 1900's to present agencies have collected anecdotal information indicating the presence of grizzly bears throughout the Cascade Mountains. In the early 1900's, miners, sheep herders, and ranchers killed grizzly bears indiscriminantly as vermin. This was followed by a period of predator control by government hunters and wardens, who trapped and shot grizzly bears throughout the Cascades. Members of the public have reported seeing

grizzly bears in the Cascades from the 1800's to the present.

## How do we know there are grizzly bears in the North Cascades?

In 1983, a Washington Department of Game researcher collected and classified grizzly bear observations from the North Cascades. For the U.S. portion of the North Cascades, more than 20 reports between 1960 and 1983 were rated as highly reliable. One of the reports described the killing of a grizzly bear on Fisher Creek south of Ross Lake in 1967. Biologists of the Washington Department of Game inspected this bear and recorded a detailed description of it.

The North Cascades Grizzly Bear Evaluation project (1986-1991), verified 21 observations of grizzly bears in the North Cascades between 1964 and 1991. These reports included observations by wildlife biologists, a grizzly bear food cache, several different grizzly bear tracks, and a grizzly bear skull. The skull, found in 1987, was from a bear estimated to have died ten years earlier. Tracks were either photographed or cast in plaster. The skull, photographs and plaster casts are maintained by the Washington Department of Wildlife and National Park Service.



The project also rated another 81 reports of grizzly bears in the North Cascades from 1964 to 1991 as highly reliable. All of this information is available for public review.

## **Are North Cascades grizzly bears transients from Canada or residents?**

Because bears do not recognize political boundaries, it is likely that some North Cascades grizzlies regularly cross and re-cross the international boundary. Based on the numbers and distribution of confirmed observations, it is likely that others live entirely south of the border. Research is needed to learn more about North Cascades grizzly bear distribution and movement patterns.

# **The Endangered Species Act & Recovery in the North Cascades**

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## **Why recover grizzly bears in the North Cascades?**

The Endangered Species Act requires recovery of threatened or endangered plants and animals. Grizzly bears were listed as a threatened species in 1975. A national grizzly bear recovery plan was prepared in 1982. It identified four ecosystems that had grizzly bears and sufficient

habitat to support a viable bear population and two that needed to be evaluated. The North Cascades was one of those two. Between 1986 and 1991 biologists evaluated the habitat quantity and quality and the status of grizzly bears in the North Cascades. Their report and an independent evaluation of the information concluded that bears were present and that the quality and quantity of habitat in the North Cascades could support a viable grizzly bear population. Based on that information, the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee and the Fish and Wildlife Service made the decision to designate the North Cascades as a grizzly bear recovery area.

## **What is a recovery plan? What is a recovered population? Delisting? Downlisting?**

When a species is listed as endangered or threatened, a recovery plan is written by a team of biologists. The plan outlines actions that should be taken to increase the population to the point where it is no longer threatened and no longer needs federal protection. The implementation of the actions in a recovery plan are done through management documents such as forest plans, following the appropriate public planning processes.

“Downlisting” occurs when the status of a population is changed from endangered to threatened. When the population increases to the point that it is no longer considered

threatened, it is considered “recovered”. At this point it is “delisted”, or removed from the threatened species list.

## **Does the proposed recovery area include sufficient habitat to recover the bear?**

The North Cascades Grizzly Bear Ecosystem Habitat Evaluation concluded that the 10,000 square mile area in the U.S. was adequate to sustain a population of 200 to 400 grizzly bears.



The study found that the North Cascades have ample plant and animal diversity and abundance to support grizzly bears. Most plant species used by bears in other ecosystems occur in the North Cascades, as well as some unique plant species which may add to the richness of the bears’ menu.

## **What number of grizzlies make a recovered population?**

A recovered, or self-sustaining grizzly bear population must be genetically viable; able to withstand natural and human-caused mortality and catastrophic disasters; and be well distributed throughout the ecosystem. Although a viable grizzly bear population cannot be exactly specified

at this time, scientists currently estimate that it would be somewhere between 200-400 bears.

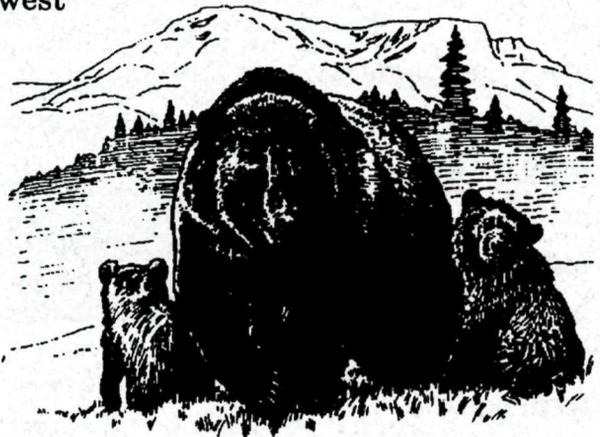
Additional research will be needed to determine the population objective for the North Cascades ecosystem. The Recovery Plan is updated at five-year intervals and these updates provide opportunities for determining the population objective based on new information.

## How long will it take to achieve a healthy grizzly bear population in the North Cascades?

It will take many decades before the North Cascades has a healthy grizzly bear population. Bears are slow to increase because of their reproductive biology. Grizzly bears are the second slowest

reproducing land animal in North America, second only to the musk ox. Females are not sexually mature until at least four years old and then

have an average of two cubs every two to four years. Not all of these cubs survive to maturity. Growth of



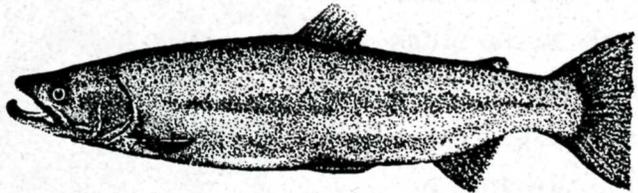
the North Cascades grizzly bear population, under the best conditions, is expected to be slow.

## **What effects will grizzly bear recovery have on other wildlife in the North Cascades?**

The wildlife of the North Cascades evolved and coexisted with grizzly bears and are unlikely to be adversely affected by grizzly recovery. Land management practices to recover grizzly bears generally benefit other wildlife.

## **Will grizzly bear recovery affect salmon and steelhead populations?**

Grizzly bears, black bears, salmon and steelhead all evolved together and an increasing grizzly bear population is not likely to have a significant effect on salmon and steelhead populations in the ecosystem. Fish populations in some creeks and streams may be affected in the short term by the activities of individual bears, but are unlikely to sustain long-term decline.



## **Can corridors be established to allow grizzly bears to move between ecosystems?**

Habitat corridors between recovery areas could benefit grizzly bears by allowing genetic interchange, natural colonization of unoccupied or underutilized areas and improved distribution.

No one yet knows whether corridors linking areas of grizzly habitat will be feasible within the lower 48 states and southwestern Canada given the development of many areas and the pattern of land ownership.

Evaluation of potential linkage zones among the six designated recovery areas is proposed in the second edition of the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan. The evaluation, similar in some ways to the evaluation undertaken in the North Cascades during the 1980's, would take five years. Computerized mapping would be used to relate topography, vegetation, land ownership and use, human population centers and density, road density, resource extraction industry activities and recreation activities. The computerized maps would help determine possible routes for corridors between ecosystems.

It should be noted that there is nothing land managers can do to make grizzly bears move between areas. The existence of linkage zones does not mean grizzly bears will use them.

# The Recovery Plan Process

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## **Will recovery plans for the North Cascades be reviewed by the public, including independent grizzly bear experts not involved in developing these plans?**

Yes. The public has been invited to participate in development of the recovery chapter, and will continue to be asked to participate throughout all facets of the recovery process.

The public will have the opportunity to review the draft grizzly bear recovery plan chapter specific to the North Cascades prior to finalizing the document. Public meetings will be held and the public will be invited to review and suggest changes to the recovery chapter.

During the approval process, grizzly bear experts from other areas will also review the draft chapter prior to adoption.

## **Will there be opportunities for the public to participate in specific land-use decisions?**

Most of the management decisions of the federal and state agencies involved in recovery of grizzly bears include a process for involving the public. The National Environ-

mental Policy Act (NEPA) and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) require public participation in most land use decisions. Recovery Plans do not dictate land uses and are not considered decision documents. Recovery Plans provide guidance and a menu of management approaches which should be implemented in order to benefit the listed species. Any decision to implement these recommended approaches from the recovery plan would be subject to public review as required by NEPA and SEPA.

## **What role will British Columbia play in the recovery process?**

British Columbia is committed to grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades Ecosystem. The Province is prepared to cooperatively manage shared grizzly bear populations with Washington State.

British Columbia has a good population of grizzly bears overall (10,000 to 13,000), but estimates only 10 to 20 individual bears now occur in the Canadian portion of the North Cascades ecosystem. Even if all the habitat presently remaining in the British Columbia portion of the ecosystem were preserved for grizzly bears, it would only support 50 to 75 bears. This population size is below the level required to prevent extinction. The continued existence of grizzly bears on both sides of the border depends upon ongoing international cooperation.

## **How much money is the government spending to recover grizzly bears? Is that an adequate amount?**

The dollar cost of the North Cascades Recovery program is difficult to assess and has not been calculated. It probably totals less than \$500,000 since 1986, including \$400,000 for the original habitat evaluation. We have a long way to go before we can assess the adequacy of this effort.

## **Is Washington state's wildlife fund, which is generated largely by the sale of fishing and hunting licenses, being used for grizzly bear recovery?**

State funds used for grizzly bear recovery are predominately those of the Nongame Program of the Washington Department of Wildlife. The Nongame Program is funded by proceeds from the sale of personalized license plates. Some Department of Wildlife staff outside of the Nongame Program (e.g. Information and Education specialists, Administrators) are involved in grizzly bear recovery to a lesser degree and their salaries are, at least in part, paid from license revenue.

# Grizzly Bear Management

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## How will grizzly bear recovery affect existing land use practices such as hunting, grazing, timber, mining and recreation?

Hunting regulations will be reviewed to ensure compatibility with grizzly bear recovery objectives. This may affect the regulation of hound hunting and black bear bait types and placement within the recovery area. The use of hounds to hunt other wildlife species (black bear, cougar, bobcat, coyote) will be evaluated and, if necessary, regulated to minimize the potential for harm to grizzly bears.



Grazing conflicts between grizzly bears and livestock in other ecosystems have been largely with sheep. Where these have occurred, many of the allotments were changed to other forms of livestock. There are few sheep allotments on federal lands in the North Cascades. Since the grizzly bear population is currently extremely low, it is not anticipated that such changes would be necessary for many years, if at all.

There has generally been little conflict between timber harvest and grizzly bear management. Grizzly bears are disturbed by use of roads remaining after logging is completed, making road management an essential tool of grizzly bear management. Some road closures should be expected. With coordination of timber sale design and implementation, little change in timber harvest is expected due to grizzly bear management.

Proposals for mineral activity would be coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to reduce the effects of the activity on grizzly bear recovery. Currently the areas available for mineral extraction in the North Cascades are very limited. Many of the areas expected to be used by grizzly bears, such as wilderness areas and national parks, have already been withdrawn from mineral entry.

Effects on recreation in the North Cascades are expected to be minimal. There could be some seasonal trail closures for the safety of recreationists or the safety of bears. For example, if a carcass of a large animal is near a trail and black or grizzly bears are feeding on it, it is in the best interests of all concerned to close the trail until the carcass is moved or consumed and the bears have left the area. If grizzly bears, especially sows with cubs, are known to be using a high-use trail, the trail may be closed until the bears leave the area. New recreational developments on federal lands will be coordinated to minimize effects on grizzly bears.

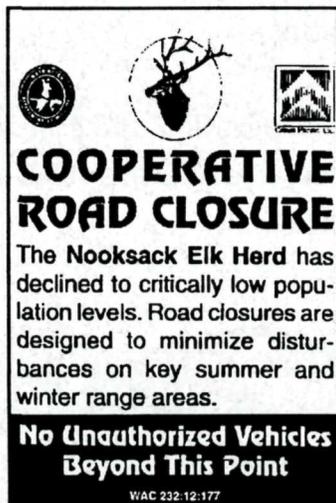


## What management is necessary to have logging and grizzly bears?

While timber harvest activity may temporarily displace bears, it does not necessarily cause long-term detrimental effects if road access is limited after the activity is complete. Logging can sometimes improve bear habitat by providing openings favorable to plants that the bears use for food. Grizzly bears do not like to get far from hiding cover and may not use large openings, especially if open roads are nearby. Post-logging treatments like broadcast burning that preserve the soil layers and the roots of berry-producing shrubs are beneficial to production of grizzly foods.

Effective road closures are one of the best ways to maintain both grizzly bears and timber harvest. Closing and replanting roads when timber harvest is finished and closing nearby established roads while new roads are open can provide bears with the undisturbed habitat they need. Road management is used to benefit other species of wildlife as well.

Seasonal time of entry management is also a useful tool to allow harvest and not disturb important habitats when they are needed by bears.



The sign features three logos at the top: the Washington Department of Ecology logo on the left, a circular logo with an elk head in the center, and the Washington Department of Natural Resources logo on the right. Below the logos, the text reads: **COOPERATIVE ROAD CLOSURE**. The main body of text states: "The Nooksack Elk Herd has declined to critically low population levels. Road closures are designed to minimize disturbances on key summer and winter range areas." At the bottom, a black box contains the text: **No Unauthorized Vehicles Beyond This Point**. A small reference number "WAC 232-12-177" is located at the very bottom of the sign.

## **How will grizzly bear recovery affect state and private lands?**

The Endangered Species Act primarily directs management of federal lands, or projects receiving federal funding, for the conservation of threatened or endangered species. Under the law, it is illegal for activities on federal, state or private land to result in “taking” of grizzly bears. There is also some potential for impact on state or private lands from state regulations such as the Forest Practices Act or the State Environmental Policy Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will respond to grizzly bear conflicts on state or private lands and, when necessary, trap and remove the bear. Landowners will be encouraged to reduce attractants to bears to reduce potential problems.

Cooperation and coordination will be the most effective ways to address state or private lands within the recovery area.

## **How will habitat within the recovery area be managed to ensure recovery of grizzly bears?**

As more information on grizzly bear distribution and habitat use becomes available, habitat on federal lands within the recovery area will be divided into management situations following the IGBC guidelines for grizzly bear

management. These allow several management scenarios, from managing primarily for grizzly bears to managing primarily for humans.

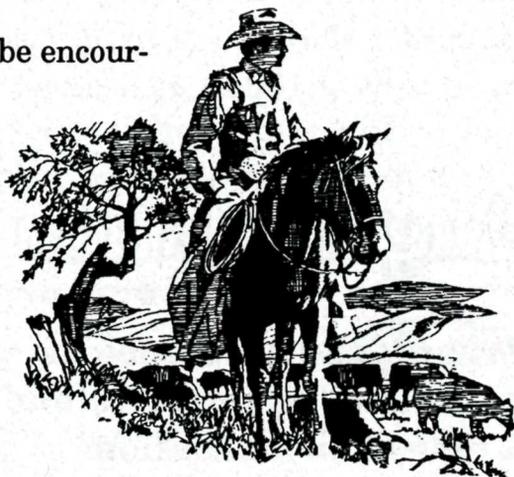
## **How will grizzly bear recovery affect the wilderness character of the North Cascades?**

Grizzly bears in the North Cascades are consistent with its wilderness character. Grizzly bear recovery would enhance the wilderness character by restoring ecological processes previously altered by the near eradication of the species.

## **How would grizzly bear predation on livestock be handled? Will livestock growers be compensated for losses to grizzly bear predation?**

Livestock growers will be encouraged to follow practices which will not attract grizzly bears.

When a report of a suspected grizzly bear predation is received, a federal agent will



investigate to document and verify the kill and determine, if possible, the cause.

In the event of grizzly bear predation where the bear is judged to be a nuisance, (food conditioned or habitually preying on livestock) it will be removed or destroyed in accordance with a nuisance bear plan which will be prepared for the North Cascades.

In other ecosystems, private organizations have set up funds to compensate ranchers and farmers for losses from grizzly bears. This has been discussed for the North Cascades but no firm obligations have been made.

### **May ranchers and farmers kill grizzlies that inflict damage on their stock or property?**

No. Protection of human life is the only condition where individuals may kill a grizzly bear. Federal agents will respond to all reports of grizzly bear damage to livestock or property and appropriate action will be taken.

## **Augmentation**

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**What is the difference between “augmentation” and “re-introduction” as those words are used in discussions of grizzly bear recovery?**



Augmentation refers to adding animals to an existing grizzly bear population. Re-introduction refers to relocating grizzly bears into an area previously inhabited, but no longer occupied, by grizzly bears.

## **Has augmentation been used in any other grizzly bear recovery area?**

Yes, in the Cabinet-Yaak area of western Montana. Following a multi-year public involvement process, a proposal was approved to add four bears, with no history of human conflict, during the first five years. From 1990-1993, three subadult female grizzly bears were taken from similar ecosystems in Canada and placed in the Cabinet-Yaak. The bears are monitored weekly and their approximate locations are passed on to the public on a weekly basis. To date (1993), the bears have remained within the target area and only one has been seen by the public since its release.

## **Will grizzly bears from other places be moved to the North Cascades as part of the recovery effort?**

That decision has not been made.

Biologists believe that adding bears to the North Cascades population would increase the probability of recovery and decrease the risk of extinction. They estimate

there are currently very few grizzly bears in the North Cascades, perhaps as few as 10 to 20 animals in the U.S. portion. Small populations such as this are highly vulnerable to extinction.

Any augmentation proposal would be subject to provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which includes large amounts of public participation.

### **Would problem bears be moved into the North Cascades?**

No. No bears with a history of conflict with humans would be moved into the North Cascades.

### **How will the public participate in deciding if or how grizzly bears would be moved into the North Cascades from other places?**

A decision on whether or how augmentation might be done could only be made after completion of an analysis prescribed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPA requirements include public input and consideration of issues raised by the public.

# Human Safety

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## How much danger do grizzly bears pose to humans?

The potential for having an adverse encounter with a grizzly bear is extremely low. Even when they occur, most bear encounters do not lead to human injury. Adverse encounters can usually be avoided through awareness of conditions that may cause an encounter. Keeping a clean camp, not approaching wildlife too closely, and avoiding situations which might unknowingly surprise a bear will greatly decrease the risk of having an unwanted bear encounter, or causing someone else to have one. Proper sanitation practices and familiarity with bear behavior are likely to be the best safeguards against unwanted encounters.

Grizzly bear management will focus on minimizing or eliminating conditions which could attract bears to humans, such as improper garbage disposal or sanitation, and promoting increased awareness among people of how best to reduce the possibility of an adverse bear encounter. Proper management will minimize the potential for conflicts, particularly over the near future when grizzly bear densities in the North Cascades will remain low.



Over the long term, as grizzly bear populations approach recovery levels and recreational use of the parks and forests increases, the statistical chances of an adverse human/bear conflict will rise. However, the overall number of visitors having an adverse encounter can still be expected to be very small in comparison to the total number of visitors. For example, in Yellowstone National Park, where there are currently over 240 bears, approximately one person per 1.5 million visitors using the park is injured by a bear. From 1900 to date, fewer than 20 people have been killed by grizzly bears in the continental U.S. Many bear-human conflicts resulting in injury could have been avoided by following safety measures or using good outdoor etiquette in bear country.

## **How will the land management agencies be able to protect the increasing number of recreationists within the recovery area?**

Taking steps to reduce or eliminate human-bear conflicts is probably the most important aspect of a grizzly bear recovery program. Land management and wildlife agencies will work to educate people about safe behavior in bear country. Agencies will also work toward installation of bear-resistant



dumpsters, poles for hanging packs in the back-country and other bear-resistant fixtures. These measures have proven to be successful in maintaining separation between people and bears in other grizzly bear areas.

Land management agencies will move aggressively to control nuisance animals through relocation or, where required, lethal removal.

### **In the event a person is injured by a grizzly bear, is there a liability issue?**

No. Use and enjoyment of public lands is done at the user's own risk. Whether a person is stung by a bee, hit by a branch, suffers a fall while climbing, or is injured by a bear, the land management agency may not be held liable, unless negligence by the agency can be shown.

### **How can people in grizzly bear country avoid attracting bears?**

There are many specific things people can do to avoid attracting bears, either grizzly or black. Good sanitation is the key to many of these. Odors attract bears to potential food items. Carefully controlling odors associated with food and products which humans use helps prevent bears from being conditioned to being near people. This means that we need to store our food, garbage, cooking gear, and

cosmetics where bears cannot get them. Once conditioned, a bear is dangerous. It may approach humans closely and come into camps or near homes to search for food.

The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) has published pamphlets and posters describing how to hike and camp safely in bear country.

## Here are some of the specific things you should do:

- Keep a clean camp.



- Pitch your tent 100 yards uphill from the area where you're cooking and storing your food.
- Store only sleeping gear and clean clothing in the tent. Never sleep in the clothing worn while cooking.
- Never use the stuff sacks for tents or sleeping bags to store food, garbage, cooking gear, or cosmetics. This may transmit smells attractive to bears to tents and sleeping bags.

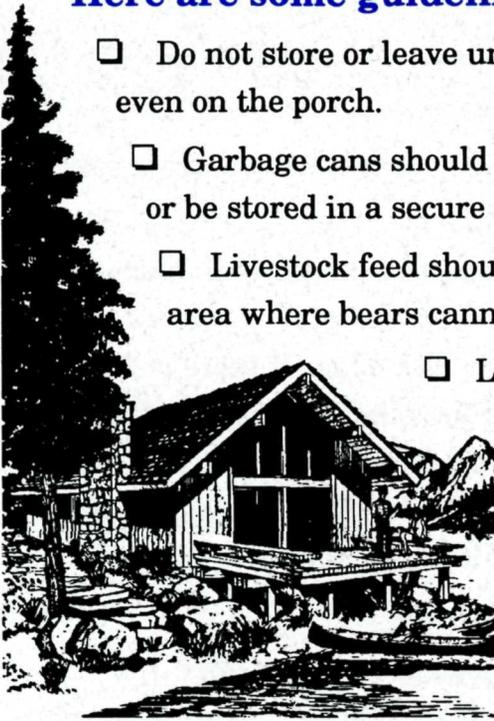
- Never cook in or near the tent.
- Avoid cooking strong-smelling foods and use dehydrated foods when possible.
- Use a stove instead of a cooking fire whenever possible.
- Hang all food, garbage, cooking gear, and cosmetics in a tree at least 10 feet above the ground and 4 feet from the tree trunk or nearby branches. If there is a device provided for storing or hanging your food and other items, use it. If you are camped near your vehicle, store these items in the trunk. Use PCV-type float sacks for storing such items to minimize odors.
- Never bury or burn garbage.
- Store horse feed the same as human food.
- Dispose of used tampons or sanitary napkins by packing them out in a sealed plastic bag.
- Where hunting is permitted, store game meat as you would human food. Dispose of fish entrails by puncturing the air bladder and dropping in deep water to allow natural decomposition.
- If dogs are permitted in the area, keep your dog on leash; a free ranging dog may lead a bear back to you.

It is important for people living in bear country to recognize and remove potential bear attractants around the home and on other private property.



## Here are some guidelines:

- Do not store or leave uneaten pet food outside, even on the porch.
- Garbage cans should have bear-resistant lids or be stored in a secure site.
- Livestock feed should be stored in a secure area where bears cannot reach it.
- Livestock carcasses should not be piled as a bone yard; carcasses should be professionally rendered, deeply buried, or moved away from areas of human activity.



## How will garbage disposal be addressed in the grizzly bear recovery process?

Making garbage unavailable to bears is important in avoiding the conditioning of bears to foods and places associated with people. Years of experience with limiting bears' access to garbage in other areas will help land managers and property owners in the North Cascades take practical steps ranging from installing bear-resistant dumpsters to trucking garbage away from areas frequented by bears.

## **What will be done to educate people about grizzly bears?**

Information and education are part of the Recovery Plan for grizzly bears. As the plan goes into effect, existing information and education programs will continue, such as trailhead signs providing park and forest users information on proper camping techniques in bear country, special alerts in hunting regulations to ensure proper identification of grizzly bears, and field identification cards distinguishing characteristics of black and grizzly bears.

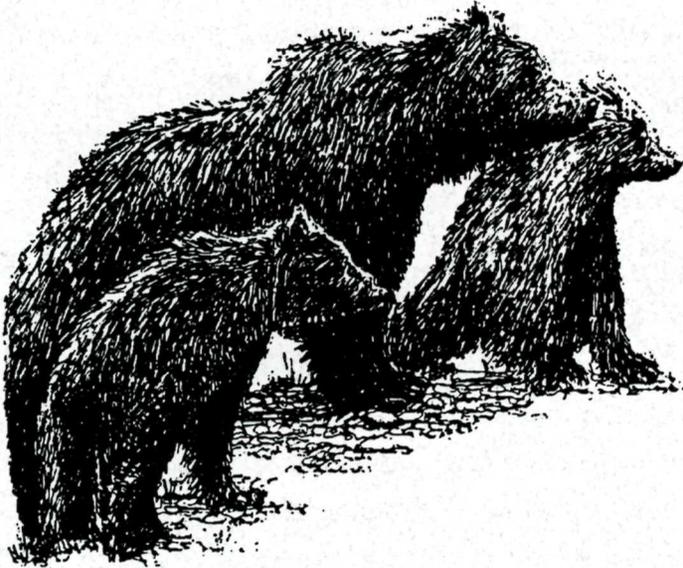
The Recovery Plan Chapter for the North Cascades specifically highlights the need for a widespread educational effort. This will include regularly updated information about bear biology, management and safety tips, fact sheets, an information pamphlet specific to the North Cascades, initiation of an educational program for school children as well as adult audiences, creation of slide/tape programs, videos, or other materials, and programs and exhibits in park and forest information stations.

## **How can humans and grizzly bears live together?**

Living with bears is simply a matter of sharing the land. Humans have the ability to weigh the effects of their actions on other species and the land; bears simply make

choices about basic things like food selection, cub protection, mating or travel.

There will occasionally be conflicts between humans and grizzly bears. The challenge is to use our knowledge of bears to minimize these conflicts.



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