



Protecting Montana's wildlife, land, waters, and hunting & fishing heritage for future generations.

Board Resolution on Grizzly Bear Management in Montana

Whereas grizzly bears are valued native species in Montana and the state animal and Montana has more grizzly bears than any state other than Alaska;

Whereas most Montanans are proud of grizzly bears and that grizzly bears are one of the features that make Montana a special place;

Whereas MWF has long supported management actions that would lead to healthy and robust grizzly bear populations and the recovery and delisting of the grizzly bear, a return of grizzly bear management to the state, and the potential for limited fair chase hunting;

Whereas grizzly bears in Montana are dependent on a careful stewardship approach by FWP that emphasizes acceptance, tolerance, and coexistence with grizzly bears built on outreach and efforts to help residents minimize conflicts with bears;

Whereas most grizzly bears do not get into conflicts with people and grizzly bear conflicts can best be reduced with efforts to make attractants unavailable to bears;

Whereas grizzly bear recovery and delisting requires more than numbers of grizzly bears but also requires adequate regulatory mortality and habitat mechanisms;

Whereas delisting grizzly bears will require that Montana is committed to and capable of managing all sources of mortalities to sustainable levels and to maintain populations at or above recovered levels without political interference;

Whereas connectivity between grizzly core areas is valuable to maintain healthy grizzly populations; and

Whereas the 2021 Montana legislature departed from science and facts and passed several laws that will result in dead or injured grizzly bears including:

- HB 224 allows the use of neck snares to kill wolves that will result in the deaths of many other non-target species such as grizzly bears.
- SB 314 allows the use of bait around wolf traps and neck snares that will result in the deaths of many other non-target species such as grizzly bears.
- HB 225 extends the wolf trapping and snaring season into the time grizzly and black bears are active, which will result in grizzly bears being maimed or killed in traps and snares.
- HB 468 allows hound hunting of black bears in places where grizzly bears may be present that will result in conflict with and death of grizzly bears.

Whereas actions such as state legislation that inhibit or prevent the management of mortalities to sustainable levels by introducing uncontrollable activities that increase grizzly mortalities will prevent and confound the adequate regulation of mortality and thereby prevent delisting grizzly bears in Montana; now, therefore, be it resolved that the Montana Wildlife Federation (MWF):

1. Urges Montana FWP to enhance efforts to cooperate with other agencies and partners to better



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assist residents and communities in their efforts to reduce conflicts and increase coexistence with and tolerance of grizzly bears.

2. Urges the legislature to repeal HB 224, SB 314, HB 225, and HB 468.
3. Urges the FWP Commission to prevent the application of harmful practices that will result in the death or injury of grizzly bears anywhere grizzlies may be present in Montana including hound hunting of black bears in grizzly habitat, and wolf trapping and snaring with bait in grizzly habitat when bears are out of dens between March 15 and December 31.
4. Opposes political intervention in grizzly bear management that interferes with and impedes science-based management.
5. Opposes any policies that promote or direct that non-conflict grizzly bears should be killed or trapped and removed just because they exist.
6. Opposes any kind of grizzly hunting in connectivity areas between all grizzly bear ecosystems.
7. Urges that all land management agencies manage recreation use levels and site developments so that secure habitat for grizzly bears and other wildlife is maintained and that grizzly bears and other animals are not displaced onto less secure areas by continuing increases in recreation and site developments.

Moved: Skip Kowalski

Seconded: Tom Puchlerz

Passed 14 for 0 against

April 15, 2023, at the 87th Annual meeting of the Montana Wildlife Federation