

INTERAGENCY GRIZZLY BEAR COMMITTEE – IGBC
Bitterroot Ecosystem Subcommittee
October 16, 2014

Location: Northern Regional Office Federal Building, 200 East Broadway, Missoula, MT

Michele Windsor	Kamiah, ID	Nez Perce – Clearwater NF
Ben Conard	Northern Idaho	USFWS
George Pauley	Idaho	Idaho Fish and Game
Chris Servheen	Missoula, MT	USFWS
Jodi Bush	Helena	USFWS
Rick Brazell	Idaho	Nez Perce – Clearwater NF
Russ Tulmo	Missoula, MT	Defenders of Wildlife
Chuck Bartlebaugh	Missoula, MT	Be Bear Aware.org
Erin Edge	Missoula, MT	Defenders of Wildlife
Ellen Davis	Missoula, MT	USFS/IGBC
Colleen Matt	Missoula, MT	WMI
Shanda Dekome	Coeur d’Alene, ID	Idaho Panhandle NF
Julie King	Hamilton, MT	Bitterroot National Forest
Tod McKay	Hamilton, MT	Bitterroot National Forest
Ryan Domsalla	Darby, MT	Bitterroot National Forest

-----**NOTES BY AGENDA TOPIC**-----

Welcome and introductions – Overview of Last Meeting Notes

– Julie King Chair

We had the above participants attend the meeting and we Shanda Dekome on the VTC.

Updates:

Chris Servheen

Ethel the Grizzly Bear:

Ethel is a collared grizzly bear and she traveled close to the Bitterroot Ecosystem this past year. She was located in the mountains near Alberton for a time, then moved north of Rattlesnake and into the Bob Marshall Wilderness. She made it to Glacier for the summer and then left this fall heading toward north Idaho.

Verification protocols for grizzly bear occupancy

Protocols involve 3rd party identification/verification of track/photos with no information on where collected. It has been two years since any sightings/tracks have been verified in the Bitterroot Ecosystem. Hair snares have been set up on the Nez Perce – Clearwater NF
Males and sub-adults are usually big movers (but then there is Ethel ☺)

Report on “Black Bear Linkage Report”:

Wildlife Crossings set up on I-90 in places thought to be likely passage areas for wildlife but are not being used much. A report will be done on the crossings next spring.

Awards for Felstet and Republic Services in progress.

- Bullets 5&6 from 5 year action plan on corridor ID and linkage (see excerpt from 5 year plan below).
- Possibilities for hair snare bait stations?

Colleen Matt:

I&E update - Information being posted on the web for meetings, videos on bear spray available on web, bear aware ID postcards and signs available.

Grizzly Bear Information/Education Working Group

-Tod McKay

The Bitterroot Ecosystem is starting up a working group for I&E. Tod has made contacts with folks who were on it previously and inviting folks to participate to get some diversity. Tod outreached for projects for grant money and prioritized three projects to be considered.

Following is the excerpt for the Bitterroot Ecosystem Committee from the 5 year plan. We have talked about some changes and they are shown as “add’.

IGBC Bitterroot Ecosystem Five Year Plan

1. Continue to monitor key areas of the ecosystem using scent lure hair collection sites and automatic cameras to document presence of bears.
 - **ADD:** Report credible sightings to USFWS
2. Continue outreach and education and sanitation efforts to minimize attractants that would cause mortality and conflict
 - **ADD:** Get process established for doing MRDG analysis for camera installation in wilderness R1 & R4 that would be consistent and approved at the District Ranger level.
3. Develop a comprehensive sanitation strategy for wilderness, non-wilderness, and private lands in the Bitterroot Ecosystem.
 - **ADD:** Facilitate/Coordinate with all Forests on food storage order status and consistency.
4. Enhance cooperative efforts with local communities, **ADD: organizations**, by working closely in partnership with local residents and county governments to build local support and understanding about grizzly recovery and ecosystem health.

5. Consider natural recovery options under fully threatened status through natural movement of grizzly bears into the Bitterroot Ecosystem from adjacent areas. Consider what would be necessary to facilitate natural movement into the Bitterroot area and implement all practical actions to facilitate these natural movements.
6. Define what changes, impacts, and restrictions to state and federal law, rules, litigation risk, workload, and policy changes/impacts would result from natural population expansion into the Bitterroot ecosystem under fully threatened status in comparison to reintroduction under 10j experimental status.
7. Build trust among local and state communities wary of additional ESA listed species because of wolves and issues with wolf recovery.

ASSIGNMENTS:

- for still needs to be completed and
- ✓ for completed.

Chris Servheen:

- Will send out the “verification of protocols for grizzly bear occupancy” and a report on The Black Bear Linkage Report to share with the group in the spring of 2015
 - The Black Bear Linkage Report will have language about corridor Identification and linkage between ecosystems (example: Carrolton/Davis Creek to Lantern Ridge linkage) that will also be applicable for Grizzly Bear movement.
- Recognize efforts from Felstet Disposal, Republic Services and Chuck Keller of the Ninemile Wildlife Movement Working Group with a plaque.
 - At the spring Bitterroot IGBC meeting Jamie and Chris said they could have a foot print cast of a grizzly made and fashioned into an award and let the subcommittee know how we can help.
 - At the fall Bitterroot IGBC meeting Chris said he would take the lead on getting the foot prints and the agencies would figure out how to fund the awards.

Erin Edge/Jamie Jonkel:

- Create a list of “hotspots” or “key areas” where we know there is predator activity and where we would mostly likely need the help of a “Bear Aware Working Group” and perhaps even a “Bear Ranger” position.

Ellen Davis:

- ✓ Routed a template for signs to get a larger order
- ✓ Map of IGBC Ecosystems areas location map.
 - Has this been posted on the web?

Scott Jackson:

- Checking in with Federal Highways Commission to assess effectiveness of crossing structures/investments.

Michele Windsor:

- ✓ Checked into process/protocol for installing cameras in wilderness for monitoring. RO Steve Kimball said the authorization could be done at the District level by the District Ranger case by case.
- Is there a need to develop a standard process and perhaps an MOU to enable and expedite the ability to put up cameras?

Tod McKay:

- ✓ Solicited proposals for grant money from our group and submitting a prioritized list. Due on to Tod by November 7 and sent to Ellen by November 21.