



INTERAGENCY

GRIZZLY BEAR COMMITTEE

CHARTER

BACKGROUND

The Grizzly Bear was listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) throughout its range in the conterminous United States in 1975. The initial recovery plan for grizzly bears issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in 1982 called for a broad range of actions to reduce human-bear conflicts and human-caused mortality, provide secure habitat, and increase understanding of grizzly bear ecology. The recovery plan identified six recovery ecosystems: Yellowstone, Northern Continental Divide, Cabinet-Yaak, Selkirk, Bitterroot, and North Cascades. These ecosystems include a mix of federal lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service), National Park Service (NPS), and Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as well as state, tribal, and private lands.

Initial efforts to recover grizzly bear populations suffered from the complexity of land ownership and lack of coordination among the federal and state agencies with diverse missions and jurisdictions in the recovery ecosystems. Funding for implementation of grizzly bear recovery actions was also limited.

To address these problems, in 1983 the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture and the Governors of Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Washington signed a Memorandum of Agreement to establish the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC). Their purpose for creating the IGBC was to "coordinate [federal and state] management and research actions to the greatest extent possible to insure the best utilization of available resources and prevent duplication of effort."

To accomplish this purpose, the IGBC needed to bring together high-level administrators from the federal and state agencies with the authority to make and support policy decisions, allocate funding to advance recovery, and hold their staff accountable. It also required coordination at the field level among staff of all agencies with responsibility for land and wildlife management within the ecosystems.

The IGBC was initially structured with an Executive Committee consisting of senior officials, Ecosystem Subcommittees¹ composed of field-level staff charged with implementation of recovery efforts, an Information and Education Subcommittee charged with coordinating outreach efforts, and a Research Subcommittee charged with coordinating research. The Research Subcommittee was subsequently replaced by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team (IGBST) which served as a collaborative research unit to advance understanding of grizzly bear ecology, primarily in the Yellowstone ecosystem. The FWS Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, the U.S. Forest Service National Carnivore Program Leader, and the leader of the IGBST were identified as advisors to the IGBC. An Executive Coordinator was hired to provide program and administrative support.

Over the past 33 years, the IGBC has retained the same basic structure with an Executive Committee, ecosystem-level subcommittees, an I&E subcommittee, advisors and Executive Coordinator. However, turnover in IGBC member agency staff and advisors resulted in a lack of continuity and increasing uncertainty regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Committee and subcommittees.

In 2016, the Executive Committee agreed to create this Charter to document the mission, objectives, organization and governance processes to be used by the IGBC going forward. This Charter replaces and supersedes prior Memoranda of Understanding related to the IGBC.

MISSION

The mission of the IGBC is to achieve recovery and delisting, and to support ongoing conservation of grizzly bear populations and their habitats after delisting in areas of the western United States through interagency coordination of policy, planning, management, research and communication.

¹ Although referred to as "subcommittees," these organizational units do not consist of sub-sets of Executive Committee members, as is typical of a subcommittee. Rather, the IGBC Subcommittees consist of subordinate staff of Executive Committee member agencies.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the IGBC is:

- To coordinate grizzly bear policy, planning, management, research, and communication activities of state, provincial, tribal, and federal agencies to ensure the best utilization of available resources, prevent duplication of effort, and clearly articulate management intent and programs to decision makers and the interested public;
- To coordinate implementation of the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan through members' respective roles, responsibilities, and authorities as necessary to meet the requirements of the ESA;
- To support revisions to the Recovery Plan by the FWS as necessary to meet the requirements of the ESA and to ensure the recovery of the species, or distinct populations thereof, as defined by the ESA;
- To support development of conservation strategies² by state and tribal wildlife agencies and state, federal, and tribal land management agencies for recovered/delisted populations;
- To support actions by the FWS to delist populations upon achievement of recovered status;
- To support revisions to conservation strategies by state and tribal wildlife agencies and state, federal, and tribal land management agencies as warranted by new information regarding the status of the bear populations and associated habitats;
- To support ongoing conservation of grizzly bears and their habitat after delisting; and
- To enhance information sharing among IGBC member agencies.

ORGANIZATION & GOVERNANCE

The IGBC is a cooperative effort of its members. IGBC members recognize and mutually respect the authorities and mandates of all parties under federal and state law. Participation in the IGBC has no effect on the sovereignty or jurisdiction of any of its members.

The IGBC is not a governing body or legal entity. The IGBC is not a federal or state agency taking agency actions subject to the National Environmental

² * The term "conservation strategy" can refer to either a specific document, such as the "2016 Conservation Strategy for the Grizzly Bear in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem" or simply to the aggregation of other agency or interagency plans that document how grizzly bears and habitat will be managed after delisting to assure continued conservation.

Policy Act or Administrative Procedure Act, or their state equivalents, or ESA §7 consultation requirements for federal agencies. The IGBC is not a federal advisory committee subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

IGBC member agencies retain their authority to enter into other agreements and participate in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.

The IGBC consists of an Executive Committee and Subcommittees established by the Executive Committee (Fig. 1). Membership, roles, and responsibilities of the Executive Committee and Subcommittees are as follows:

IGBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Membership

The IGBC Executive Committee consists of the following members. These members may delegate responsibility to a designee, provided that the designee has the knowledge, information, and full authority to act on behalf of the member:

- Regional Foresters of Forest Service Regions 1, 2, 4, and 6;
- Regional Directors of the NPS Intermountain and Pacific Northwest Regions;
- Regional Directors of the FWS Regions 1 and 6;
- The State Directors of the BLM in ID, MT, WA, and WY;
- The Directors of the Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming state wildlife agencies;
- The Directors of the British Columbia and Alberta provincial wildlife agencies;
- The Director of the U.S. Geological Survey Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center.

Role and Responsibilities

The role of the Executive Committee is to provide policy-level oversight and direction to the Subcommittees' cooperative efforts to recover and delist grizzly bears. Upon delisting, the Executive Committee's role is to provide policy-level support to ongoing conservation of grizzly bears and their habitat.

Responsibilities of the Executive Committee include:

- Setting coordinated direction for planning, research, management, and communication related to grizzly bears and their habitat to achieve

recovery and ongoing conservation through development and adoption of five-year plans with input from the subcommittees;

- Securing and allocating resources to implement planning, research, management, and communication actions consistent with approved five-year plans;
- Monitoring progress on five-year and annual work plans based on indicators and taking actions necessary to address shortfalls in accomplishment of the goals and objectives;
- Communicating needs and recommendations to higher-level decision makers (e.g. federal agency heads, cabinet Secretaries and Governors);
- Resolving inter-agency disagreements to the extent possible or clarifying issues that cannot be resolved at the Executive Committee level and elevating those issues to higher-level decision makers in a coordinated fashion.

Executive Committee Chair and Vice Chair

The Chair of the Committee shall serve a two-year term and will alternate between representatives of the federal and state agencies. The Chair shall be responsible for calling meetings of the Executive Committee, establishing the agenda, and running the meetings of the committee with the assistance of the Executive Coordinator.

A Vice Chair will be selected at the beginning of the Chair's term by a consensus of the members or majority vote, if necessary. The Vice Chair shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the chair when requested to do so or when the chair is unavailable. The Vice Chair will assume the Chair upon completion of the Chair's term.

Executive Committee Staff and Advisors

The IGBC Executive Committee will be supported by an Executive Coordinator, employed by the U.S. Forest Service.

The following individuals serve as advisors to the IGBC Executive Committee:³

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator;
- The U.S. Forest Service National Carnivore Program Leader;
- The leaders of the Yellowstone Ecosystem Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team, the NCDE Science Team, the SCY Technical Team, and the NCE Technical Team;
- The Chair of the I&E Subcommittee.

³ These individuals also serve as advisors to the ecosystem subcommittees.

In addition to these individuals, the Ecosystem Subcommittee Chairs serve as advisors to the Executive Committee during Executive Committee meetings. However, neither the advisors nor Ecosystem Subcommittee Chairs participate in decisions of the Executive Committee.

Meetings

The Executive Committee will hold two regular meetings annually, one in summer and one in winter. The summer meeting will be a 2-3 day field retreat located in one of the grizzly bear ecosystems. The responsibility to host the summer meeting will be rotated through the ecosystems. The winter meeting will be a 2-3 day business meeting with the location decided by the members. The primary purpose of the winter meeting will be to review progress on 5-year plans and make any necessary adjustments to policy, planning, research, management, or communication. Additional meetings and telephone or video conferences may be held as needed in response to a call of the Chair and agreed to by the Executive Committee.

IGBC meetings will generally be open to the public and provide a time for public comment. The Chair may call for an Executive Session limited to committee members and staff for discussions of sensitive topics such as personnel matters, litigation or other confidential issues. Public notification of the meetings will be made by the Chair, IGBC I&E Chair, or the Executive Coordinator.

Executive Committee Decision-making

The power of the IGBC rests in the combined, collaborative efforts of its members. To that end, decision-making by the IGBC is based on consensus among the members to the greatest extent possible. The Executive Committee may make decisions using a simple majority vote of the members present⁴ at any meeting for matters that affect all IGBC member agencies equally (e.g. selection of the vice-chair, general policies). However, no vote may be taken to compel or preclude an action by any IGBC member agency without its concurrence.

Some potential Executive Committee actions, such as endorsement of a conservation strategy for a distinct population segment proposed for delisting, present unique circumstances. Not all IGBC members may have a role in implementation of the strategy for a specific ecosystem. In such cases, those members with responsibilities that are signatories to the strategy must reach a

⁴ Members or their designee must be present in person or by phone to participate in a vote; no proxies will be considered.

consensus on the content of the strategy. However, endorsement by the Executive Committee as a whole can demonstrate broad support for the strategy. Accordingly, it may be appropriate for the committee to vote to endorse the plan, recognizing that a dissenting vote by a member that is not a signatory to the strategy would have no binding effect.

ECOSYSTEM SUBCOMMITTEES

The Executive Committee has established the following standing ecosystem subcommittees. These subcommittees are chartered by, and report to the IGBC Executive Committee, as long as the bear population within a given ecosystem is listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Upon delisting, the subcommittees will transition to a different organizational entity that reports to the executive-level personnel of the state and federal agencies with jurisdiction for post-delisting management of the bear population and habitats. For example, upon delisting, the Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee will transition into the Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Coordinating Committee (YGCC), with membership and responsibilities as outlined in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Conservation Strategy (GYECS). The chair of the YGCC is welcome and expected to continue to participate in IGBC Executive Committee meetings, but the YGCC will receive direction only from the agencies that are signatory to the GYECS.

The membership, roles, and responsibilities of the subcommittees are as follows. As with the Executive Committee, these members may designate an alternate representative, provided that the designee has the knowledge, information, and full authority to act on behalf of the member.⁵

Membership

Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee:

- The Park Superintendents from Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks;
- The Forest Supervisors from the Custer-Gallatin, Beaverhead-Deer Lodge, Shoshone, Bridger Teton, Caribou-Targhee National Forests;
- The Supervisors of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Service offices in ID, MT, and WY;

⁵ Members or their designee must be present in person or by phone to participate in a vote; no proxies will be considered.

- A representative of the Bureau of Land Management from the states of ID, MT, and WY;
- A representative from each state wildlife agency in ID, MT, and WY;
- A representative from each of the Northern Arapaho, Eastern Shoshone, and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes;
- A representative from county government in each state of ID, MT, and WY.

Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem Subcommittee:

- The Park Superintendent of Glacier National Park;
- The Forest Supervisors for the Helena-Lewis and Clark, Kootenai, Flathead, and Lolo National Forests;
- The Regional Supervisors of Regions 1, 2, and 4 for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks;
- A representative of the Montana Department of Natural Resource Conservation;
- The Supervisor of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Service offices in MT;
- A representative from each of the Blackfeet Nation and the Confederated Salish/Kootenai Tribes;
- A representative of the Bureau of Land Management in MT;
- A representative from each of the wildlife agencies in British Columbia and Alberta wildlife;
- A representative of county government in MT.

Selkirk and Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystems Subcommittee:

- Forest Supervisors from the Idaho Panhandle, Kootenai, Colville, and Lolo National Forests;
- Representatives of the state wildlife agencies in ID, MT, and WA;
- A representative of the BLM in ID, MT, and WA;
- A representative of the Idaho Department of Lands;
- A representative of county government in ID, MT, and WA;
- The Supervisors of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Service offices in ID, MT, and WA;
- Representatives from the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho and the Kalispell Tribe of Indians;
- A representative of the British Columbia Wildlife Agency.

Bitterroot Ecosystem Subcommittee:

- Forest Supervisors for the Bitterroot, Nez Perce- Clearwater, Idaho Panhandle, Lolo, Payette, Salmon-Challis, Sawtooth National Forests;
- Representatives from the wildlife agencies in ID and MT;
- The Supervisors of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Service offices in ID and MT;
- A representative from the Nez Perce and Shoshone-Bannack tribes;
- A representative of county government in ID and MT.

North Cascades Ecosystem Subcommittee:

- Forest Supervisors of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests;
- The Superintendent of North Cascades National Park;
- A representative of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife;
- The Supervisor of the Ecological Services Office of the FWS in WA;
- A representative of the BLM in WA;
- A representative of the British Columbia wildlife agency;
- A representative of tribal governments;
- A representative of county government in WA.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of each ecosystem subcommittee is to coordinate implementation of the policy, planning, research, management, and communication established by the Executive Committee as necessary to implement the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan. Responsibilities of the ecosystem subcommittees include:

- Develop an annual work plan, consistent with the IGBC 5-year plan to implement Executive Committee direction for their ecosystem(s) for review and approval by the Executive Committee;
- Coordinate implementation of the approved annual work plan by member agencies;
- Establish necessary teams to implement approved actions (i.e. technical issues, law enforcement, information and education, access management, etc.);
- Report to the Executive Committee at each winter meeting on the progress of action items in the annual work plan and 5-year plan;
- Recommend revisions to the 5-year plan based on the best available science and management action necessary to achieve recovery;

- Identify funding or other resource needs to carry out the tasks assigned in the IGBC-approved annual work plan and 5-year plan and request support from the Executive Committee to meet resource needs.
- If directed by the Executive Committee, develop a proposed conservation strategy for the ecosystem to be implemented upon delisting.⁶
- Identify issues that cannot be resolved at the Subcommittee level and elevate them to the Executive Committee for resolution.

Chair and Vice Chair

The chairs and vice chairs of the ecosystem subcommittees will be selected and serve in the same manner as the chair and vice chairs of the Executive Committee.

Meetings

Ecosystem Subcommittees will meet as necessary to accomplish their responsibilities. At a minimum, subcommittees will meet prior to the Executive Committee winter meeting to evaluate progress on their annual work plan and 5-year plan and prepare their report to the Executive Committee. Meetings will be open to the public, except for discussions related to personnel or litigation. Public notification of the meetings will be made by the Chair.

Subcommittee Decision-making

The IGBC subcommittees' primary role is to implement the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan and other policy direction established by the Executive Committee within a given ecosystem. Accordingly, most decision-making by subcommittees will involve establishing responsibility for tasks and allocation of resources in the field. Given the autonomy each IGBC member agency retains, these decisions must be made by consensus. In other words, the members of a subcommittee cannot vote to require one or more of their members to take an action or to prevent a member from taking an independent action to advance recovery.

IGBC subcommittees may also be called upon to make recommendations to the Executive Committee on a variety of matters, such as five-year plans. A subcommittee may also be tasked with development of a proposed

⁶ A subcommittee may draft a conservation strategy, but the final decision to amend or adopt a conservation strategy will be made only by those Executive Committee members whose agencies are signatories to the strategy.

conservation strategy for approval by the appropriate signatory agencies. In such cases, although consensus should be sought, if the subcommittee members cannot reach agreement, the members may use a simple majority vote of the members present at a meeting to express the view of the committee with respect to the recommendation.⁷ However, no vote taken at the subcommittee level will be binding on any member of the subcommittee or the Executive Committee.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

The Executive Committee has also established a standing Information and Education Subcommittee. The Membership, roles and responsibilities of the I&E Subcommittee are as follows.

Membership

- The IGBC Executive Coordinator
- A representative from each ecosystem with knowledge and experience in information, education, or public outreach

Role and Responsibilities

The role of the I&E Subcommittee is to coordinate information, education and outreach among IGBC member agencies in support of grizzly bear recovery and conservation. Responsibilities of the subcommittee include:

- Coordinate the development and dissemination of consistent messages about grizzly bear ecology and behaviour; how to live, work, and recreate in grizzly habitat; how to safely secure bear attractants; how to use bear spray; how to avoid human-bear conflicts, etc.;
- Coordinate and oversee the annual IGBC I&E Funding Program;
- Maintain a web site (IGBConline.org) to provide the public with accurate and timely information about grizzly bear recovery and management, activities and upcoming meetings of the IGBC and ecosystem subcommittees, meeting notes, scientific publications and studies, and information and education on how to avoid or minimize bear-human conflicts;

⁷ Minority views should also be provided to the Executive Committee for their consideration.

- Promote effective actions and techniques to increase human safety and decrease the likelihood of bear-human conflicts.

Chair

The chairs of the I&E subcommittee will be selected by members of the subcommittee.

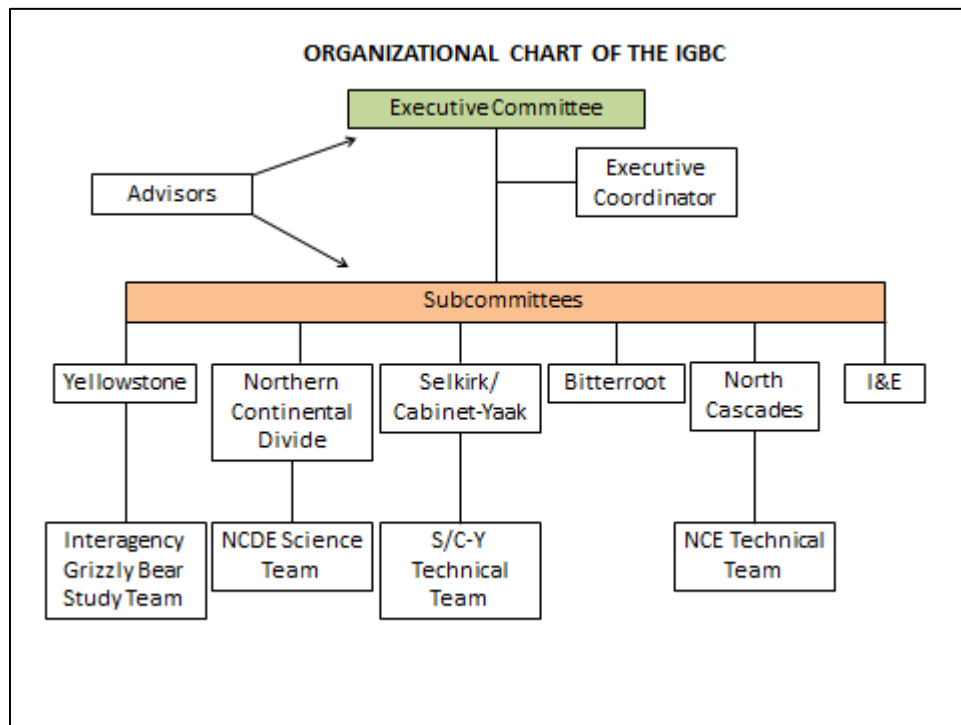


Figure 1. Organizational Chart of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this charter may be proposed at any time by any of the members. Amendments shall take effect upon the signature of all IGBC members.

IGBC MEMBER SIGNATURES:

Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service, Northern Region

Date

Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region

Date

Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service, Intermountain Region

Date

Regional Forester
U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region

Date

Director
Idaho Department of Fish and Game

Date

Director
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Date

Director
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Date

Director
Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Date

Regional Director
National Park Service, Intermountain Region

Date

Regional Director
National Park Service, Pacific Northwest Region

Date

Center Director
USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center

Date

State Director
Bureau of Land Management Idaho

Date

State Director
Bureau of Land Management Montana

Date

State Director
Bureau of Land Management Wyoming

Date

Regional Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1

Date

Regional Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6

Date

Director
Alberta Environment and Parks

Date