

**Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak IGBC Subcommittee Meeting**  
**November 28, 2016 9:00-3:30, PST**  
**Kootenai River Inn**  
**Bonnors Ferry, ID**

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**Attendance:** members of the SCYE IGBC subcommittee: Mary Farnsworth (FS-IPNF (chair)), Chris Savage (FS-KNF (co-chair), Chip Corsi (IDFG), Ben Conard (USFWS-MT), Eric Besaw (IDL), Gary Aitken Jr. (Kootenai Tribe), Neil Anderson (MFWP), Ray Entz (Kalispel Tribe), Steve Pozzanghera (WDFW), Cindy Weston (BLM-for Linda Clark), Dave Hattis (FS-LNF), Kim Annis (MFWP), Karen Casey (USFWS-ID), and Technical Advisors Wayne Kasworm (USFWS) and Wayne Wakkinen (IDFG) . Additional agency representatives and the public in the audience.

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**Introductions**

- ✓ Welcome to new members on the Subcommittee including Dave Hattis (Lolo NF), Ray Entz (Kalispel Tribe) and Karen Casey (USFWS-Spokane).

**Grizzly Bear Recovery Updates-Wayne Kasworm:**

Summary of Research Efforts in 2106:

- ✓ Captured and released a 2 year male into the West Cabinets (Spar Lake) in 2016.
  - 19 bears released to date for augmentation since 1990
    - 6 bears known to be dead
    - 2 bears known to reproduced
- ✓ Captures in 2016 (Total of 8)
  - 1 male (Selkirks-state of WA) – first captured in 30+ years
  - 1 female (Selkirks-state of ID)
  - 1 adult males; 3 adult females; 2 subadult males (Selkirks-B.C.)
  - 1 adult male; 3 subadult males; 2 subadult females (Yaak)
- ✓ 2016 Monitoring
  - Yaak - 11
  - Cabinets - 3
  - BC Selkirks- 5
  - US Selkirks-6 (including 1 bear that is operating outside of the RZ)
- ✓ Mortality
  - Selkirks: 1 mortality of a male (September) hit on Union Pacific tracks just south of the wildlife refuge
  - Cabinet-Yaak: no known mortality
- ✓ Hair Sample Collection Efforts:
  - Corrals (May-Sept; every 2 – 3 weeks) and rub tree efforts (May-Sept)
  - SM Corrals 160 sites; 16 GB photos; 2 FWY; 1 FWC
  - SM Rubs 154 sites; 432 samples collected with more coming
  - SM Trail Cameras 3 sites with GB photos
  - CY Corrals 29 sites; 9 GB Photos; 4 FWY; 1-2 FWC
  - CY Rubs 764 sites 3708 samples collected
  - CY Trail Cameras 3 sites with GB photos
- ✓ Genetics Results
  - WGI lab
  - Spp, sex, individual genotype, parentage
  - 2015 genetics results
    - Selkirks (189 corral sites; 31 sites with grizzly photos; 24 sites w/ GB DNA)

- 20 individual bears identified from corrals individual bears identified from rubs sites
  - Cabinet-Yaak (48 corral sites; 9 sites w/GB photos; 5 sites w/ GB DNA)
    - 7 individual GB genotyped
  - CY rubs collected across 765 sites, 103 sites w/GB DNA
    - 36 individual bears identified from 765 rub sites (22 in Yaak; 7 in Cabinets)
    - **Will probably look at establishing more rub sites because appears to give us the biggest bang for our buck**
- Family Tree Discussion:
  - A single female can be *really* important!

Questions:

*Can you do a population estimate with reasonable confidence intervals from this rub site information?*

⇒ Wayne has completed one and it looks promising, but is not finalized (using mark-recapture techniques)...

*What about expanding the rub tree effort southward into the Cabinets?*

⇒ Wayne's employees have been using Kate Kendall's 2011-2012 sites to date, but may abandon some areas that are not providing results and expand further south (i.e. Vermillion area).

*What about rub sites in the Selkirks?*

⇒ 2016: Went from 32 in 2012 to 146 sites in 2016

*What about the Effort/Cost for Rub Sites—Is there utility to use this as trend data?*

⇒ Not ready to walk away from radio collaring at this point, but it may be useful in the future.

*General estimate of cost breakdown (collaring versus rub trees versus corrals)?*

⇒ Trapping is generally more expensive than the corrals which is more expensive than rub sites...

*Please provide more information about the mortality of the young male grizzly bear near Wallace in 2015.*

⇒ It was a case of mistaken ID. Bear was an augmentation bear that wandered out of the Cabinets southward and into the Coeur d'Alene's.

**Grizzly Bear Recovery Update-Michael Proctor:**

Seasonal habitat modeling using all radio collared grizzly bear information (See PPT). Focus on fine-scale habitat selection by females

- ✓ Canada needs to secure their core areas
  - ✓ US needs to secure the best habitat
  - ✓ Use/Availability Analysis based on GPS telemetry
  - ✓ Will test his latest model using Wayne's 2016 radio-collared bears which were not included in his RSF model analysis
  - ✓ 10 years of data; had enough females with seasonal breakouts for a reasonable sample size
- ⇒ Predicting and mapping huckleberry patches important to grizzly bears
- ✓ Modeled huckleberry 'patches' to help predict grizzly bear habitat selection.
  - ✓ This work has been completed in B.C.
  - ✓ Working on completing this work in the U.S. with Chris Servheen's help (has a student...)

⇒ Coming Soon: Male Habitat Use, Huckleberry, Density and Reproductive Surface modeling efforts.

## Questions:

*Linkage between BC and these ecosystems seems to be more important than the linkage between the SCY and NCDE. Is that the case?*

⇒ We demonstrated more connectivity on a North/South trending line than an East/West trending line.

*Is stand age a good predictor?*

⇒ Age did not come up as good predictor in the modeling. Greenness and Canopy Cover are better predictors.

*How is vegetation management influencing grizzly bear habitat use?*

⇒ Forest Management is an important tool, but need to remember that road density is a big predictor of bear use.

## **Information and Education Summary:**

**WDFW:** Kevin Robinette

- ✓ WDFW/IPNF CCS Agreement in 2016/17 (6K) for personnel and I&E supplies

**IDFG:** Brian Johnson

- ✓ Grizzly bear depredations (2 or 3)
  - Grain bin
  - Chicken feed
  - Cabin with corn feeder
- ✓ Funding (30K IDL) (12K IPNF) (11K Section 6 FWS recovery \$\$) (40K IDFG budget)

Community Support for your Efforts?

- ✓ Program in the schools over the years—still supported

**MFWP:** Kim Annis

- ✓ One of five bear management specialists in the state of the MT; cover almost 2 counties
- ✓ Summary of Information and Education, law enforcement and bear management incidents in 2015 and successes in county sanitation upgrades. See updates.
- ✓ Continues to be funding by Revett/NFWF grant; proposal to fund her out of state monies is before the legislature

## **Workshop Updates:**

- ✓ Recovery Plan criteria discussions
- ✓ I&E Task Force group discussions
- ✓ Likelihood of future workshops. Timing is good (winter)—prior to spring/summer season with report out at spring meeting. Chris (new chair) will pursue

## **Bog Creek EIS Update:**

- ✓ IPNF / CBP – issues focus on grizzly bear
- ✓ 5.6 miles long in Blue Grass BMU. Currently gated on both ends and slide closed approximately 20 years ago. BMU is not meeting access standards.
- ✓ CBP desires to have the road reopen
- ✓ P&N of EIS is to open/maintain the road while meeting Access Management Standards by 2019.
- ✓ Draft likely to be released in mid-December for 45 days.
- ✓ Four alternatives being analyzed—3 action alternatives being considered.
  - No Action

- Alternative 2—Bog Creek open for administrative use only with a series of other roads being closed
- Alternative 3—Bog Creek open for administrative use only with a different series of roads being closed
- Alternative 4—road left open for the public to use
- ✓ CBP is the lead entity, with FS co-signing the document to allow for ground disturbing activities.

Questions:

*Why is no alternative that puts the road to bed permanently?*

⇒ Doesn't meet the CBP need for the road. It is discussed in the document but is not carried forward because it will not meet both of the key objectives for the project

*What is the current timeline for the release of the draft EIS?*

⇒ Likely released in mid-December but if that doesn't happen, then it will be released in January after the holidays.

*There are no BMUs identified in B.C.—what about working with B.C. folks to come up with BMUs that are a better reflection of bear use, et cetera?*

⇒ Something to consider for future discussions.

**2016 IGBC Summer Meeting—June in Boundary County/Bonnors Ferry**

- Brief recap by Chip Corsi of tour/message (group effort – partners)
- Field trip well received in spite of some logistical difficulties!

**Grizzly Bear Recovery Delisting Process-Jennifer Fortin-Noreus:–** Notes from her powerpoint.

**Delisting Process as it May Apply to the SCYE at some Future Date:**

**⇒ Process Overview**

- ✓ **Conservation Strategy** (includes Habitat-based recovery criteria, Demographic recovery criteria, an area of recovery, and a distinct population assessment)
- ✓ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can pursue delisting after development and implementation (i.e. incorporation into federal/state plans) of a Conservation Strategy

**Habitat-Based Recovery Criteria**

- ✓ Convene a technical team to draft HBRC as a supplement to the Recovery Plan
- ✓ Publish the draft HBRC in the Federal Register with a public comment period and peer review
- ✓ Conduct a workshop to invite the public to contribute to the HBRC
- ✓ Respond to comments and finalize HBRC supplement

**Demographic Recovery Criteria**

- ✓ Convene a technical team to revise the Recovery Plan demographic recovery criteria if necessary
- ✓ Publication of the draft revisions in the Federal Register with a public comment period and peer review
- ✓ Respond to comments and finalize the revised demographic criteria

### **Distinct Population Segment Assessment**

- ✓ **Discreteness**
  - Markedly separate as a consequence of physical, physiological, ecological, or behavioral factors
- ✓ **Significance**
  - Unusual or unique ecological setting
  - Loss would result in a significant gap in the range
  - Only surviving natural occurrence
  - Differs markedly from other populations in its genetic characteristics

### **Area of Recovery**

- ✓ Determine configuration of management zones around the Recovery Zone
- ✓ Examples:
  - GYE: the Primary Conservation Area and the Demographic Monitoring Area
  - NCDE: the Primary Conservation Area and Zones 1,2, and 3 with Demographic Connectivity Areas within Zone 1.

### **Conservation Strategy**

- ✓ Assemble a technical team of scientists and managers from all partner agencies to draft a Conservation Strategy
- ✓ Make the draft Conservation Strategy available for public comment and peer review
- ✓ Consider and respond to all comments
- ✓ Finalize the Conservation Strategy

### **Incorporation of the Conservation Strategy by Partner Agencies**

- ✓ US Forest Service begins EIS process to incorporate habitat standards into forest plans or amendments
- ✓ National Parks incorporate habitat standards into compendiums or management plans as necessary
- ✓ State and Tribal agencies develop monitoring and management plans to maintain a recovered population in accord with the recovery criteria

### **Assess Recovery**

- ✓ Are we meeting the demographic recovery criteria?
- ✓ Are we meeting the habitat-based recovery criteria?
- ✓ Five-factor analysis
  - Present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range;
  - Over-utilization of the species for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes;
  - Disease or predation;
  - Inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and
  - Other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence.

### **Delisting**

- ✓ Develop and publish a draft proposed rule in the Federal Register with a public comment period
- ✓ Solicit peer review on the proposed rule
- ✓ Hold public workshops
- ✓ Respond to comments and make a final decision on delisting

### **Review of 2016 Priority Actions and Development of 2016 Desired Actions**

- Review of draft accomplishment report for 2016 and development of 2016 actions. Lydia will finalize and send to subcommittee for review/edit/finalization.

### **Transition to the New SCYE IGBC Chair**

- Chris Savage (Forest Supervisor, Kootenai NF) is the new Chair for the SCYE IGBC subcommittee.
- Rodney Smoldon (Forest Supervisor, Colville NF) was nominated to be the new co-chair. The subcommittee agreed to his nomination.

### **Public Questions:**

Paul Fielder mentioned a letter (May 15, 2014) regarding grizzly bear recovery plan and associated management plan. Has this been responded to? Mention of Swan Valley study which drove the development of the letter.

⇒ Wayne K noted that he thought Chris Servheen responded to Senator Brendan back in May of 2014. Wayne K. will try and find the correspondence and see if it can be brought forward to the parent IGBC committee meeting in December.

**Workshops:** February/March. Stay tuned for Doodle Poll

**Spring Meeting:** May xx, 2017 TBA Plains or Thompson Falls