

Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee

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George Hamilton Wildlife Mgmt Branch March 24, 2017

Linda Hollis, Branch Chief U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Pesticide Programs Biochemical Pesticides Branch, Mail Code 7506C 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW Washington, DC 20460

Dear Ms. Hollis,

The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) is composed of state and federal agencies that have management responsibility for grizzly bears and their habitat. The IGBC was formed in 1983 with the goal of providing consistency in grizzly bear management, research and conservation. In line with that goal, our member agencies provide educational information and professional recommendations to the public relative to safely living, recreating and working in grizzly bear habitat.

Toward that end, the IGBC strongly encourages people to carry bear spray when in bear country. We firmly believe bear spray to be the most effective method of deterring a bear attack and reducing injuries to both people and bears. Accordingly, when we provide information to the public, we want to ensure it is suitable and reliable and will foster the use of effective bear spray products.

At this time, the IGBC recommends that when purchasing bear deterrent spray, consumers select a product that has been registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We believe EPA's current procedures for evaluating bear spray formulations and assessing canister performance are adequate for ensuring that effective bear deterrent sprays are being registered; especially with respect to the current requirements that the minimum container size for bear repellents is one with capacity for no less than 8 fl. oz. (225-230 g) of product to be contained in the canister, and that the concentration of active ingredients capsaicin and related capsaicinoids be within a concentration range of 1.0-2.0%.

IGBC member agencies have decades of experience with bears and have a great deal of information relating to the use of bear spray in actual bear encounters. We have a vested interest in maintaining our ability to confidently provide accurate and reliable information to the public about the effectiveness of bear sprays being registered. We believe that current EPA procedures for assessing product performance criteria and label requirements are adequate to provide that confidence. If, in the future, EPA re-evaluates its registration requirements for bear deterrent sprays, we request that the IGBC be contacted as a source of relevant and professional information.



IGBC Advisors

Hilary Cooley Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator Fish & Wildlife Service

Frank van Manen Team Leader Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team



The IGBC very much appreciates the effort that is required for EPA's diligent review and registration of effective bear deterrent sprays, which ultimately benefits both people and bears. If you wish to contact IGBC relative to this letter, or if we can be of other assistance, please contact Ellen Davis, IGBC Executive Coordinator at 406-329-3434, ellendavis@fs.fed.us, or through the IGBC website (www.IGBConline.org).

Sincerely,

Jim Unsworth IGBC Chair

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