

# IGBC Virtual Summer Meeting 2020

## Part 1: June 24



**WELCOME! Thank you for being here, and thank you for your patience. We will start at 1pm.**

### **IGBC Members and Presenters**

- Join with the zoom link from your invitation.
- Make sure your name is clearly labelled and include your agency.
- Check audio and camera, and know where to find the mute button.
- As much as possible, keep your camera on. Try the Gallery View.

### **Members of the Public**

- Stream in listen only mode from <http://igbconline.org/meetings/>
- Send comments in writing to [dillon.tabish@mt.gov](mailto:dillon.tabish@mt.gov); AND/OR
- At 4:40PM MT, dial +1 646 558 8656; Webinar ID: 947 1501 5227; Password: 423811. To raise your hand, press \*9, and you will be unmuted and able to comment. At that time, please mute the video stream of the meeting on your computer. Please state your name and where you are from.

**This meeting will be recorded.**

# IGBC EXPECTED ATTENDANCE

<b>ID</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Toby Boudreau, Wildlife Bureau Chief, IDFG</li></ul>
<b>MT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Martha Williams, Director, MTFWP (IGBC Chair)</li></ul>
<b>WA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hannah Anderson, Policy Lead, WDFW</li></ul>
<b>WY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tim Woolley, Statewide Wildlife and Habitat Management, WYGF</li></ul>
<b>USFS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Melany Glossa, R1 (with Chris Savage)</li><li>• Jacque Buchanan, R2</li><li>• Mary Farnsworth, R4</li><li>• Eric Johnston, R6</li></ul>
<b>NPS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jennifer Carpenter, Intermountain Region</li><li>• Karen Taylor-Goodrich, Pacific West Region</li></ul>
<b>USFWS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Matt Hogan, Mountain-Prairie Region, R6</li><li>• Jim Unsworth, Pacific Region, R1</li></ul>
<b>BLM</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Michael Philbin, Montana / Dakotas State Office</li></ul>
<b>USGS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Claudia Regan, NOROCK</li></ul>
<b>Canada</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paul Frame, Alberta Environment and Parks</li><li>• Garth Mowat, BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development</li></ul>
<b>IGBC Subcomm Chairs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chuck Mark, Bitterroot Ecosystem Subcommittee, Salmon-Challis NF</li><li>• Kristin Bail, North Cascades Ecosystem Subcommittee, Okanogan-Wenatchee NF</li><li>• Randy Arnold, Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem Subcommittee, MTFWP</li><li>• Rodney Smoldon, Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem Subcommittee, Colville NF</li><li>• Tricia O'Connor, Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee, Bridger-Teton NF</li></ul>
<b>IGBC Coord.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vacant</li></ul>
<b>IGBC Advisors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hilary Cooley, USFWS</li><li>• Scott Jackson, USFS</li><li>• Lori Roberts, I&amp;E Chair, MTFWP</li><li>• Frank Van Manen, USGS</li></ul>

# AGENDA



- 1:00-1:15 Welcome
- 1:15-1:45 Agency Updates (WA, ID, MT, WY, BC, AB, USFS, NPS, BLM, USFWS, USGS)
- 1:45-2:05 Subcommittee Updates (BES, NCE, S/C-Y, NCDE, YES)
- 2:05-2:45 Business Items
- **2:45-3:00 BREAK**
- 3:00-3:15 IEO Summit Report
- 3:15-3:45 IEO Update
- 3:45-4:15 Conflict Reduction Report and Discussion
- 4:15-4:30 MTGBAC Update
- 4:30-4:45 Container Testing Program Update
- 4:45-5:00 Public Comment
- 5:00-5:15 Discuss Agenda for July 24 Virtual Meeting

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

WASHINGTON DEPT. OF FISH AND WILDLIFE



- Hannah Anderson
- KEY UPDATES:
  1. Possible recent grizzly bear cattle depredation in Washington. WDFW working to develop response protocols, communication plans in order to be prepared for any future events.
  2. Waiting for decision/update/next steps re: North Cascades Ecosystem recovery actions (i.e., EIS).
- COVID-19
  - WDFW offices remain closed; staff on mandatory telework
  - Covid-19 safety trainings and standard operating procedures have been developed, PPE procured and distributed
  - Field work that can meet SOPs underway as of June 1.

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## IDAHO DEPT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE



- Toby Boudreau
- KEY UPDATES
- COVID-19

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## MONTANA FISH WILDLIFE AND PARKS



- Martha Williams
- KEY UPDATES
- COVID-19

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## WYOMING GAME AND FISH DEPT



- Tim Wooley
- KEY UPDATES:
  - Teleworking continues for many agency employee
  - WGFD is initiating spending cuts this summer
  - In May we had 2 bear-human conflicts (Dubois & Cody)
- COVID-19
  - WGFD has been able to maintain a high level of service to our citizens despite the pandemic.

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## British Columbia



- Garth Mowat
- KEY UPDATES:
  1. Revised threat assessment
  2. Provincial Grizzly Bear Management Plan
  3. Grizzly bear population recovery in southern BC







# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## British Columbia



- **PROVINCIAL GRIZZLY BEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN:**

1. Next step is First Nations engagement
2. Will work closely with Federal government as they are preparing a national Mgmt Plan concurrently

### Understanding the Proposed **Grizzly Bear Management Plan** for the Province of British Columbia

#### Why the Province is Developing a Grizzly Bear Management Plan

Grizzly bears are an iconic species and are widespread throughout B.C. Overall, grizzly bear populations in B.C. are considered stable. However, due to some recent range declines in parts of Western Canada, and the sensitivity of grizzly bears to human disturbance, they have been designated a Species of Special Concern under the federal Species at Risk Act. **The management objective for grizzly bears in B.C. is to ensure all existing grizzly bear populations are sustainable, and to prevent grizzly bear populations from becoming endangered or threatened.**

The draft management plan summarizes the best available information on grizzly bears to help guide management actions and conservation measures. The management plan suggests draft goals and objectives, and recommends approaches for effective grizzly bear management

and conservation. As findings change based on new knowledge, these goals, objectives, and management approaches may be modified in the future.

Recommendations made within the plan, when finalized, may be used by individuals, communities, land users, conservationists, academics, and governments interested in grizzly bear conservation and management or regional grizzly bear management planning.

#### Current Status of Grizzly Bears in B.C.

The Canadian grizzly bear population is estimated at 26,000 bears, of which an estimated 15,000 are in B.C. There is evidence that bears are expanding in the far north and in parts of the southern fringe of their distribution. There is no evidence of a decline in the overall provincial population during the past 30 years, however, like all wildlife populations, there are fluctuations in numbers.



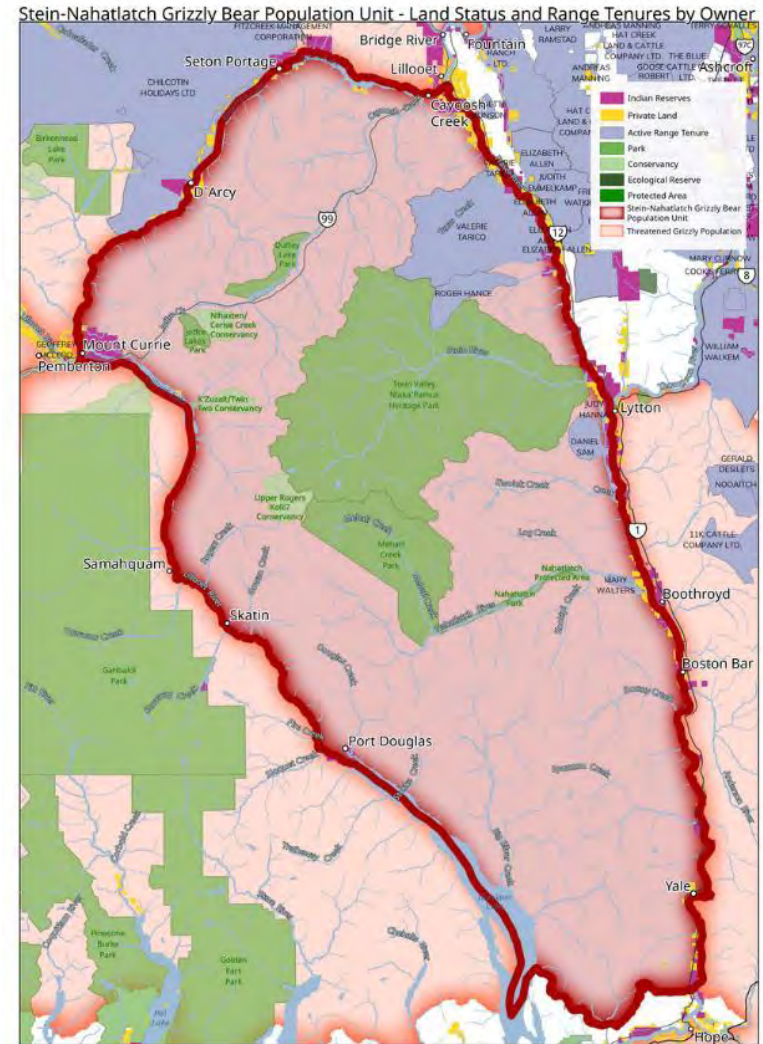
# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## British Columbia



- **GRIZZLY BEAR POPULATION RECOVERY IN SOUTHERN BC:**

1. Established a working group for southwest BC (2 reps from United States)
2. First on the ground action planned for Stein-Nahatlach population unit
3. Preparing information for North Cascades to seek government approval to recover the population
4. Strong First Nations support



# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## Alberta



- Paul Frame
- KEY UPDATES:
  1. AEP is about to release an updated recovery plan.
    - The new plan better defines management intent spatially and highlights the importance of access and attractant management to recovery.
  2. AEP will conduct a new species status assessment for grizzly bears. Target completion by the end of 2022.
  3. fRI Research Grizzly Bear Program is winding down with scheduled wrap up in March 2021.
    - Analysis of translocated bears is currently being worked on.

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## US FOREST SERVICE



- Melany Glossa, R1
- Jacque Buchanan, R2
- Mary Farnsworth, R4
- Eric Johnston, R6
- **KEY UPDATES:**
  - Grizzly bear-related litigation complaints have been received by the Forest Service pertaining to: failure to consult on grizzly bears (i.e., may be present); black bear baiting; effectiveness of road closure devices; conflicts with grazing; and road management in connectivity areas.
- **COVID-19**
  - Tremendous energy and time spent on this issue, most notably with respect to recreation management and disruption to field operations, including monitoring. Uncertainties remain relative to the length of field season and having fewer seasonal workers available.
  - Training tools (e.g., power points, videos) have been developed to not only help standardize bear safety and awareness messaging, but to provide remote instructional opportunities for field-going staff, incoming seasonal workers and firefighters.

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



- Jennifer Carpenter, Intermountain Region
- Karen Taylor Goodrich, Pacific West Region
- KEY UPDATES:
  - North Cascades Grizzly Bear Restoration Plan Draft EIS (DEIS), co-led by NPS & USFWS, received over 143,000 public comments during two formal public comment periods, to date; disposition of EIS process pending further direction from Dept of the Interior leadership.
  - Glacier NP has issues with the Bear Information Management System transition.
  - Yellowstone had a minor bear inflicted injury 6/22
  - No significant bear incidents at Yellowstone or Glacier this Spring.
- COVID-19
  - Yellowstone, Grand Teton, Glacier and the North Cascades National Park Service Complex all had closures to public use during Phase I COVID-19 outbreak this Spring. All are now stepping through reopening plans.
  - At Glacier NP the east side is still closed due to restrictions on the Blackfoot reservation. We have been taking advantage of the closures to more intensively trap bears for the NCDE population trend monitoring program.
  - At Yellowstone NP, bear management is fully staffed, but handling bear-jams differently - more drive-bys.

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## BLM Montana/Dakotas State Office



- Mike Philbin
- KEY UPDATES:
  - New Eastern Montana/Dakotas District Manager – Scott Haight
  - New Dillon Field Manager – Amanda James
  - Acting Butte Field Manager – Lindsey Babcock
  - Acting Missoula Field Manager – Maggie Ward
  - New Branch Chief for Biological Resources and Science – John Carlson
- COVID-19:
  - Most employees are back in their offices (80%+). The exception is the Miles City Field Office which had an uptick in cases.
  - Field season is underway. Fairly normal seasonal workforce and workload.
  - Fire season is underway with fuels treatments and support to other regions (primarily the Southwest).
  - Travel is allowed so long as the destination is not at an earlier recovery stage.

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



- Matt Hogan, Mountain-Prairie Region, R6
- Jim Unsworth, Pacific Region, R1
- KEY UPDATES:
  - “May be Present” Protocol - Section 7 Consultation
    - Development of protocol to identify where projects proponents should consider whether grizzly bears may be present when evaluating the potential impacts of a project in a consistent manner across Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming.
    - Reviewed by state and federal partners; currently addressing comments. Hope to have a final protocol this fall.
  - 5-Yr Status Review
    - Partner review of biological report July 13-Sept 11. Concurrent peer review.
    - On track to publish final review March 2021.
- COVID-19
  - Delay in field season by one month.
  - Reduction of hair snag/DNA crews from 4 to 1 due to 1 person/vehicle.
  - Cancellation of new DNA work targeting sightings between ecosystems.



# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## US Geological Survey

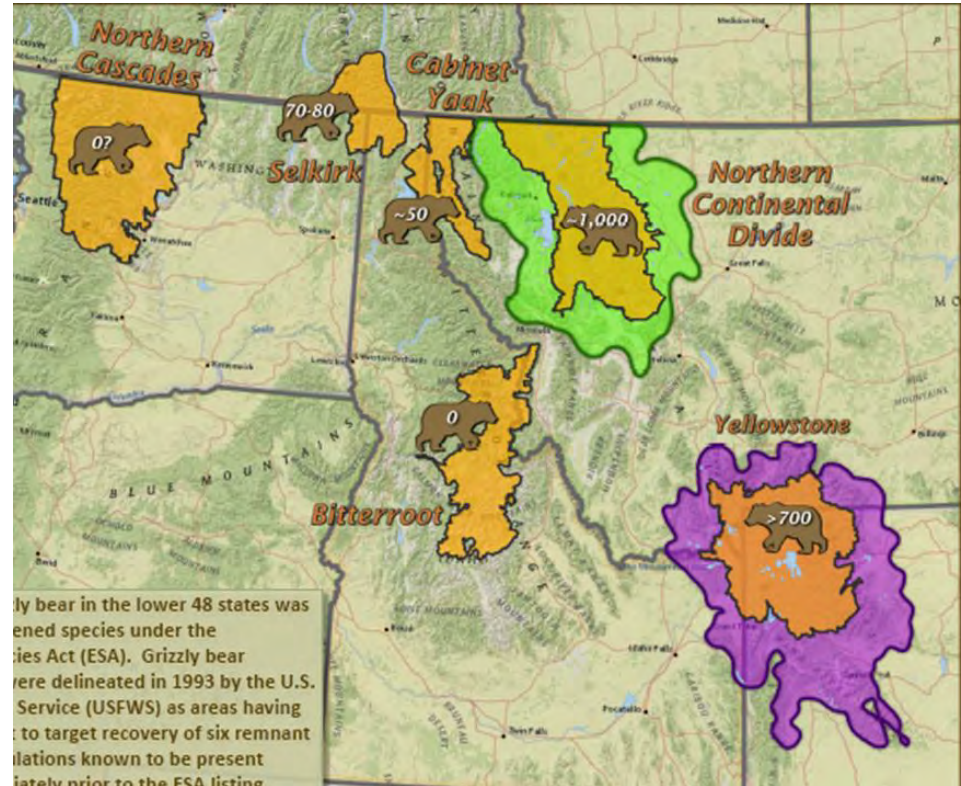


- Claudia Regan
- KEY UPDATES
- COVID-19

# Subcommittee Updates



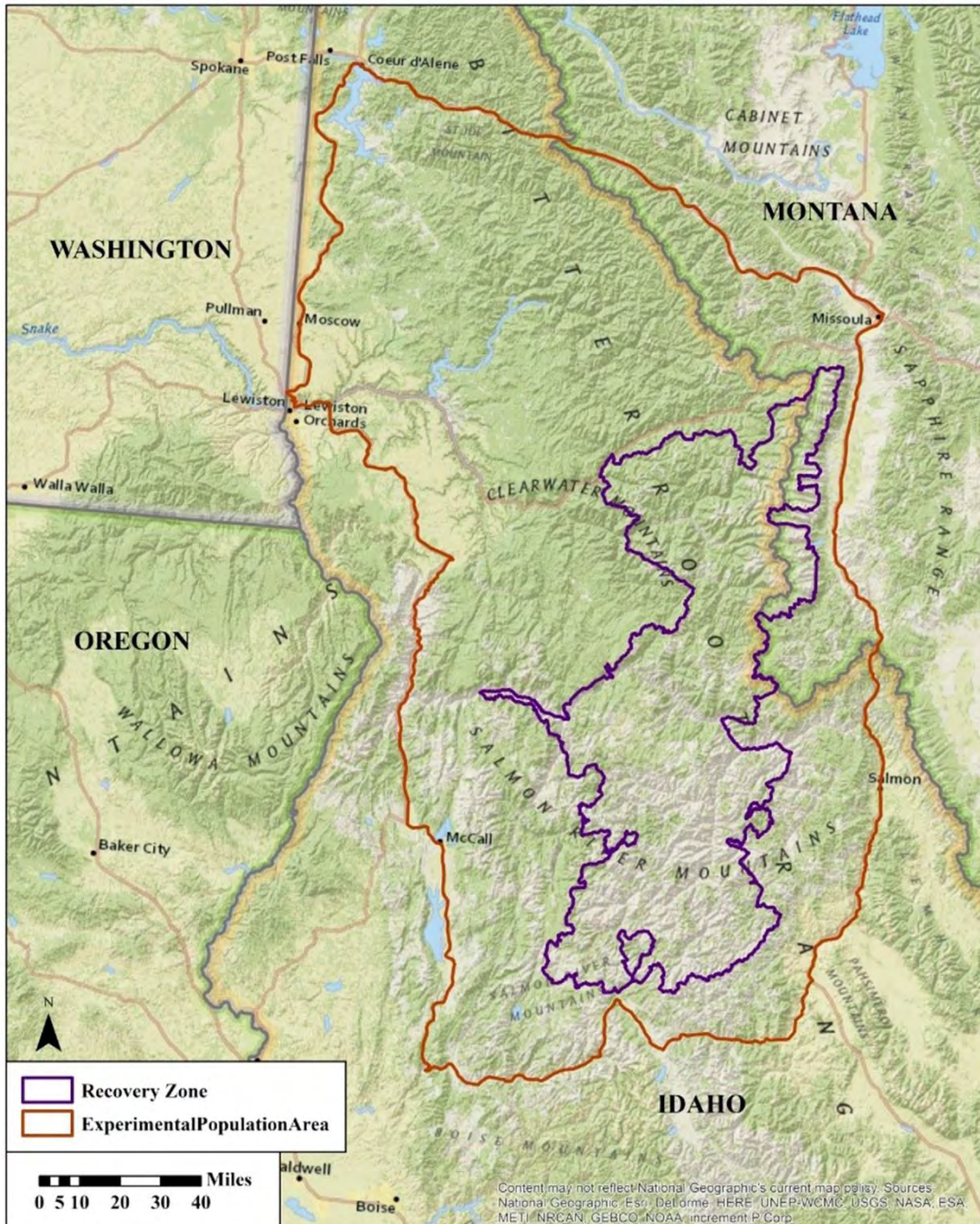
- Bitterroot (Mark)
- North Cascades (Bail)
- Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak (Smolden)
- Northern Continental Divide (Arnold)
- Yellowstone (O'Connor)
  - Charter Update



# Bitterroot Ecosystem



- Chuck Mark, USFS
- KEY UPDATES:
  - 4/15/20 Virtual Meeting
  - Bitterroot Ecosystem Meeting with Forest Service and Fish & Wildlife Service (January/June 2020)
  - Communication Plan
  - Formation of Science Team
- COVID-19
  - Impacts/Effects



# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## North Cascades Ecosystem



- Kristin Bail, USFS
- KEY UPDATES:
  - New Subcommittee Chair named: Kristin Bail, Forest Supervisor, Okanogan-Wenatchee NF
  - Annual Spring Subcommittee Tele-Meeting held in May
  - General interagency coordination continuing; current EIS process waiting on further direction from DOI

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## Selkirk / Cabinet-Yaak



- Rodney Smolden, USFS
- KEY UPDATES
  - 5/7 Virtual Meeting
  - Delay in trapping and field season of one month
  - Reduction of Hair snag/DNA crews from 4 to 1 due to one person per vehicle
  - Inability to get OK to purchase radio collars in a timely fashion which may limit trapping opportunities later
  - Colville Forest provides 15 trail cameras to the B.C. population estimate effort in the B.C. Selkirk which is in progress. That effort will take 2 years in the field and another year in analysis.
  - Four mortalities in Selkirk. Two adult females in B.C. (under investigation), subadult male US (under investigation) and subadult female US (vehicle collision).
  - No mortality so far Cabinet Yaak.

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update

## NCDE



- Randy Arnold, MTFWP
- KEY UPDATES:
  - NCDE subcommittee met (virtually) on May 29<sup>th</sup>
  - Most conflict specialists reporting higher conflicts this spring
  - Completed some administrative updates to Conservation Strategies

# IGBC Summer 2020 Update Yellowstone



- Tricia O'Connor, USFS
- KEY UPDATES
- COVID-19

# Business Items



- Executive Coordinator
- FY21 Budget
- WMI Workplan



IEO  
Subcommittee  
Business Items

Lori Roberts



# Business Item

- WMI FY2021 Work Plan
  - Support the bear-resistant container program.
  - Support for implementation of the IEO Strategy as requested by the IEO Subcommittee.
  - Contracting for the website upgrade.
  - Will administer the IEO project funds awarded to NGOs out of the Grant funds in December.

# Funding Criteria Old vs New

## Old Criteria

- Projects need to be information and education specific.
- Encourage use in multiple ecosystems.
- Encourage partners or in-kind matches.
- Limited funding so larger request may not be appropriate.
- Support projects that benefit multiple agencies and organizations.

## New Criteria

- Must be submitted by a qualified non-profit organization, an association, or be a state, federal, or tribal entity focused on grizzly bear conservation.
- Must be consistent with the mission statement of the IGBC and the roles and responsibilities of the IEO subcommittee.
- Must be in at least on ecosystem.

# Funding Criteria Old vs New

## Old Criteria

- Projects need to be information and education specific.
- Encourage use in multiple ecosystems. -Additional Consideration
- Encourage partners or in-kind matches. -Additional Consideration
- Limited funding so larger request may not be appropriate.
- Support projects that benefit multiple agencies and organizations. -Additional Consideration

## New Criteria

- Must be submitted by a qualified non-profit organization, an association, or be a state, federal, or tribal entity focused on grizzly bear conservation.
- Must be consistent with the mission statement of the IGBC and the roles and responsibilities of the IEO subcommittee.
- Must be in at least one ecosystem.

## IEO Goal in Changing Criteria

---

- Add opportunity for preventative or infrastructure projects to the funding program.
    - Examples: electric fence, bear resistant garbage bins, or contract groups like MCC to install preventative measures, etc.
- 



## Recommendation to IGBC

- Use some of the base funding that is given to WMI to fund more IGBC funding proposals.
- Due to COVID we are expecting to have less request for brochures.
  - Created QR Code to access IGBC Website

