

June
2021

A Proposal for Change

Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee

IGBC MISSION

1. Achieve recovery and delisting.
2. Support ongoing conservation of grizzly bear populations and their habitats after delisting.

Geographic scope: Areas of the western United States

Approach: Interagency coordination of policy, planning, management, research and communication.





Why Change the IGBC?

**IF YOU ALWAYS DO WHAT
YOU'VE ALWAYS DONE,
YOU WILL ALWAYS
GET WHAT YOU GOT”**

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Henry Ford

What is Broken?

Grizzly bears populations are rewriting the recovery plans every day

- Change and adaptation is already happening in IGBC
- Bears are expanding far beyond the administrative lines
- Bears are moving between ecosystems
- BMUs in some ecosystems are too small to allow for recovery
- Science consistency between ecosystems is missing

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Change is Already Happening

IEO committee has a range wide group

Selkirk and Cabinet Yaak ecosystems are one subcommittee

- It was recognized that bear information was the same across the range
- Bears get in the same trouble everywhere
- Limited budgets and staff and needed to be utilized to the maximum extent
- Their efforts are making a difference all the boundaries and beyond

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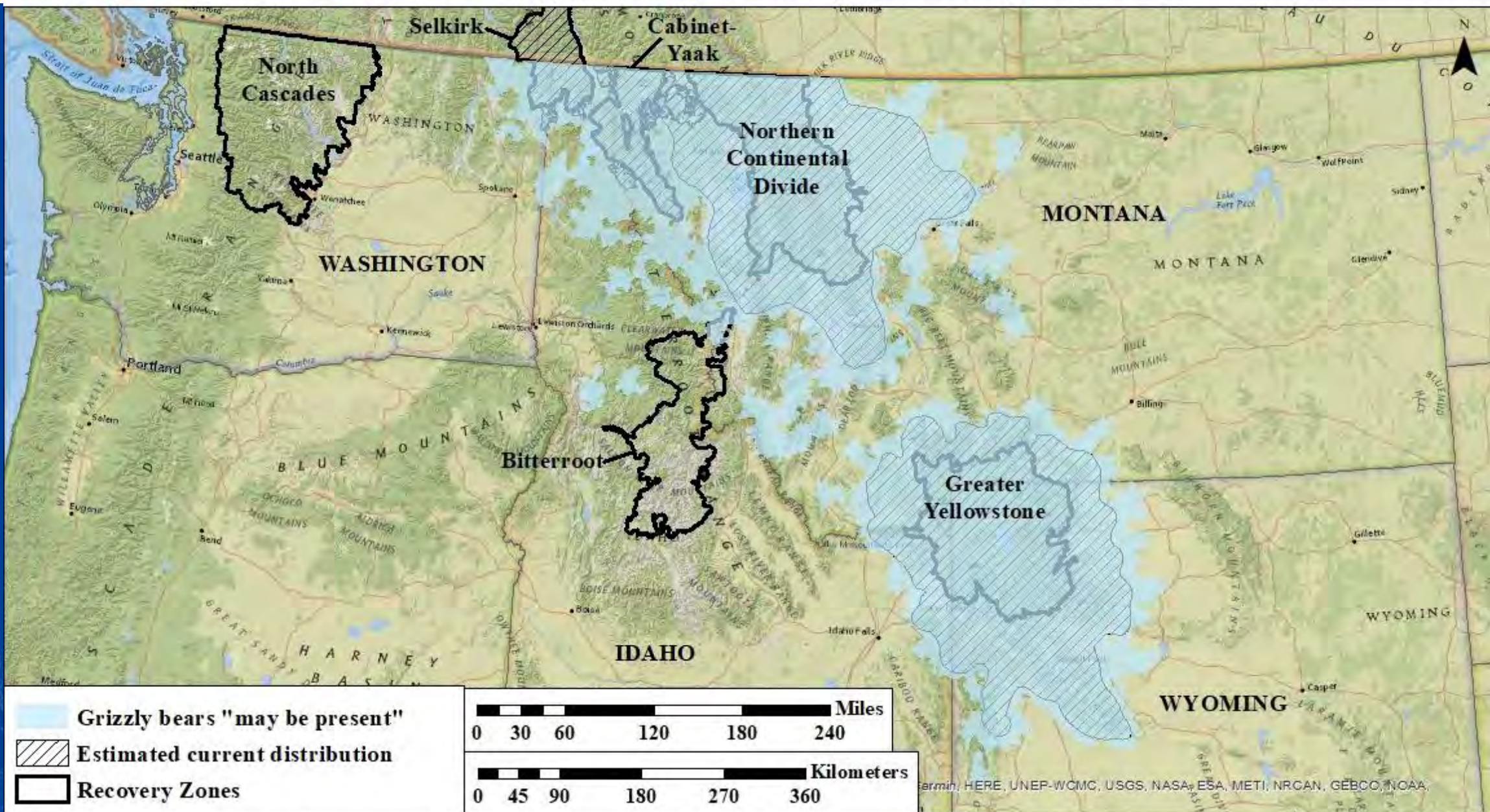
Bear are expanding beyond Administrative boundaries

- Land management agencies
- State wildlife agencies
- The public

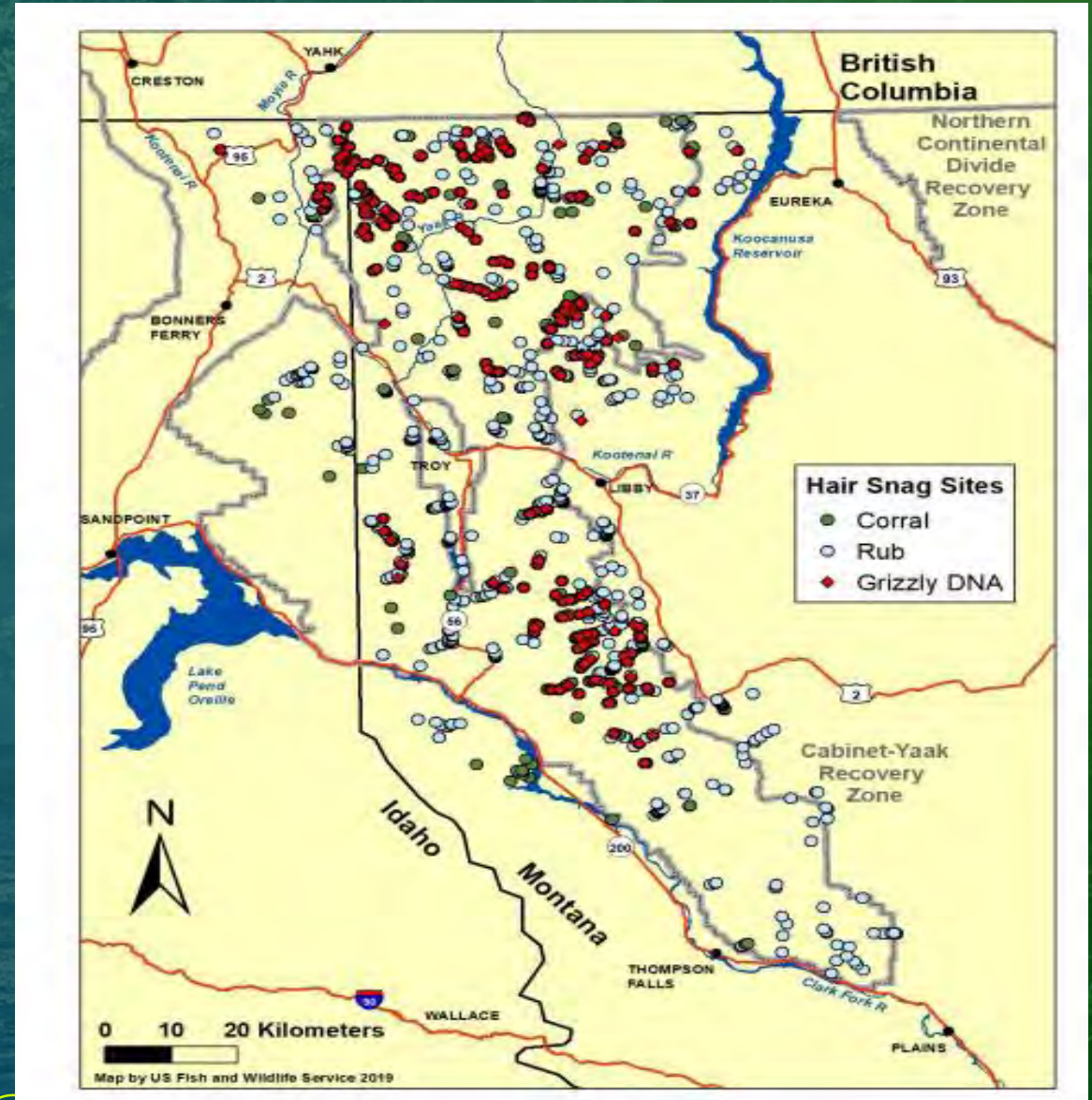
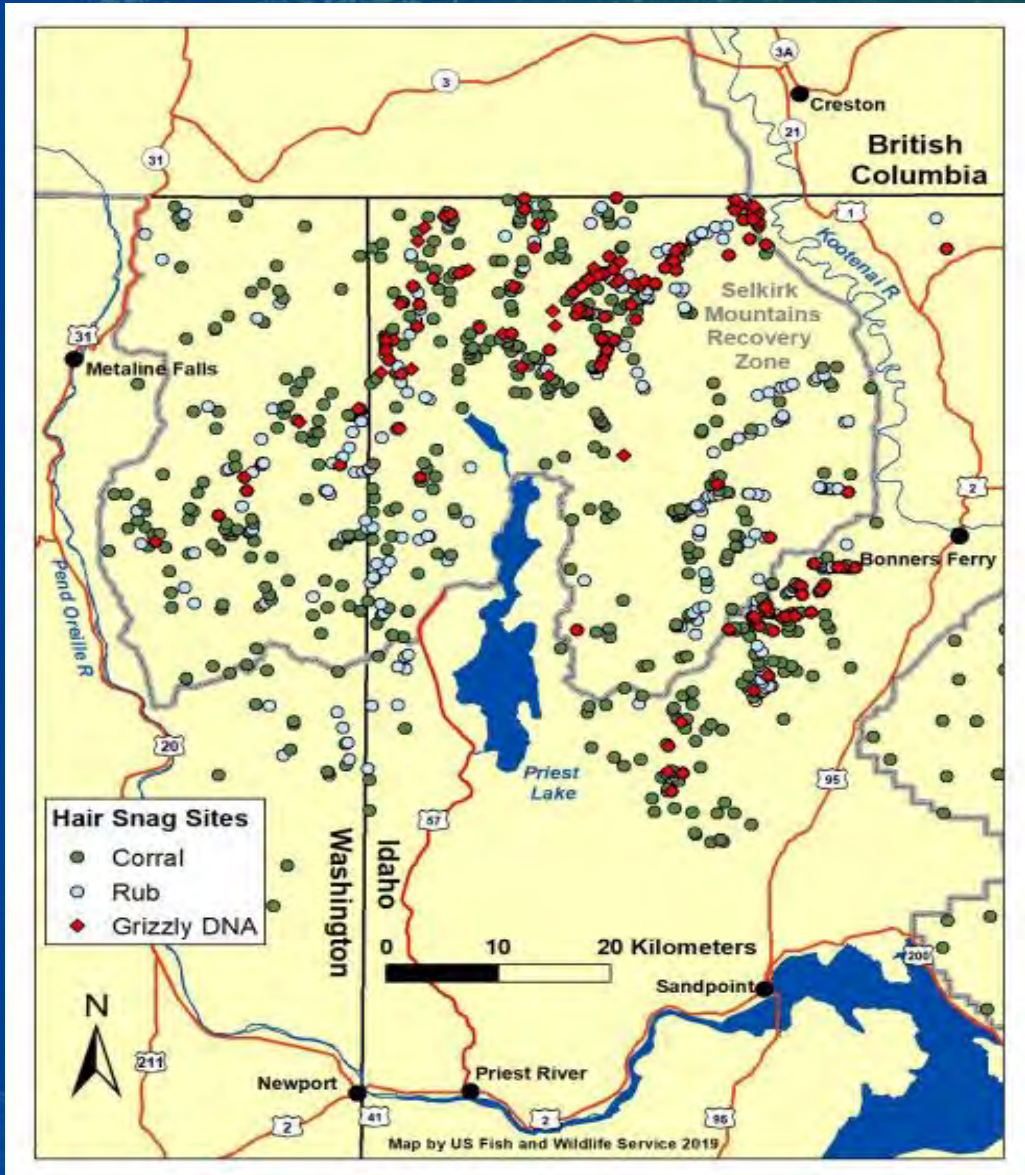
- More bears in more places
- NCDE- Bears are continually moving east into new territory
- GYE- Bears are expanding to the south into Wyoming and moving north into the Big Holes
- SCY- bears are expanding into the Kootenai Valley and beyond

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in close coordination with state and federal partners, has developed a methodology for the grizzly bear "may be present" map to meet requirements under Section 7(a) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). "May be present" maps help federal agencies determine where effects to listed species should be considered for consultation from actions they carry out, fund, or permit. As grizzly bears expand their range,





Science consistency between ecosystems

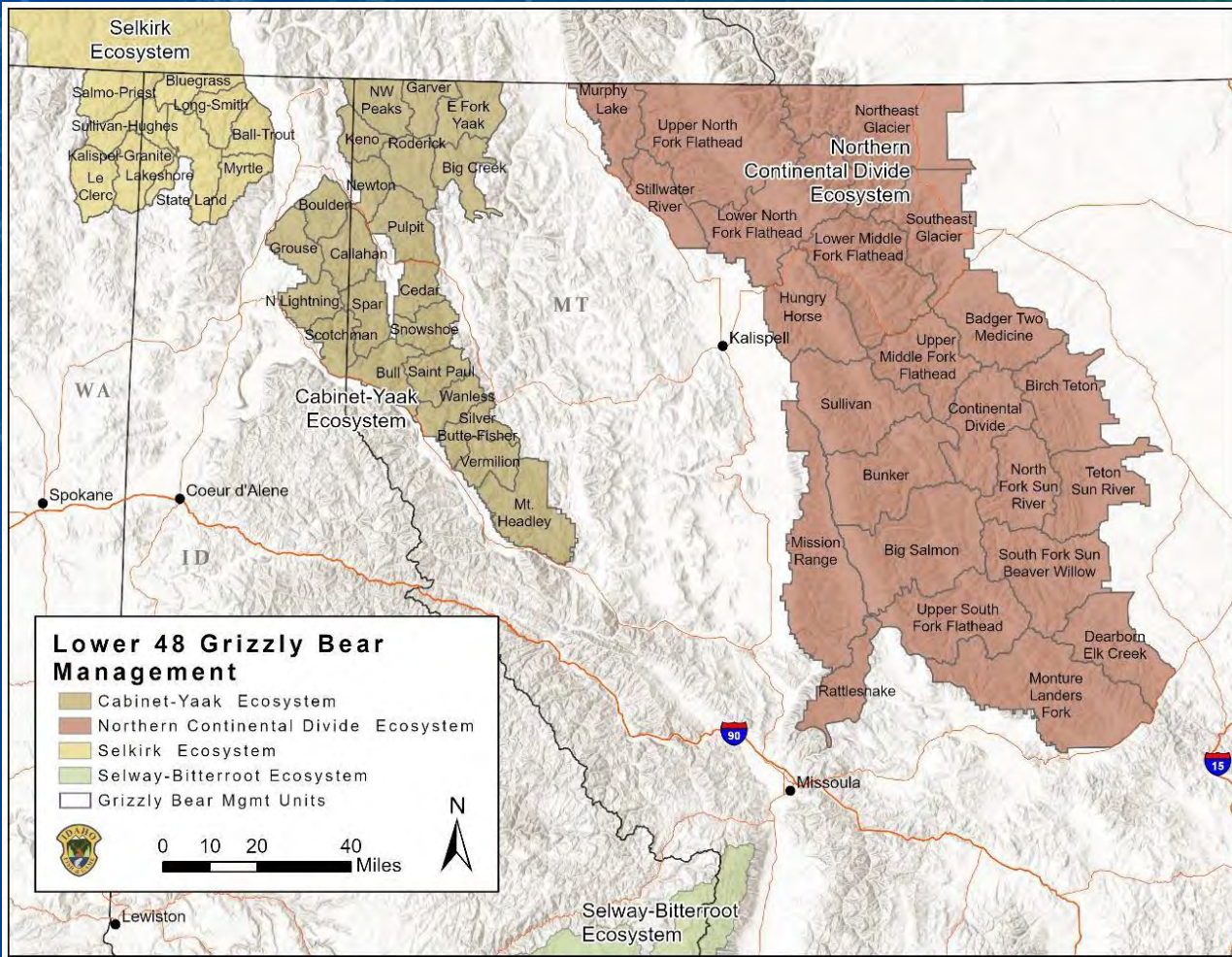
Populations estimation different for several ecosystems

Original bear management units need to be modified in some ecosystems

- It was recognized that bear information was the same across the range
- Bears get in the same trouble everywhere
- Limited budgets and staff and needed to be utilized to the maximum extent
- Their efforts are making a difference all the boundaries and beyond

Abundance Estimation

- GYE- Choa2- Aerial and Ground observations and data- USGS
 - NCDE- Genetic Mark recapture with annual monitoring- MFWP
 - Selkirk/Cabinet Yaak - Different than the others- USFWS
- We need consistency of how we estimate bears
 - Different agencies
 - Different techniques
 - “where’s waldo” for wide-ranging bears



_RZ	Area (mi ²)	Occupancy (BMUs)	avg BMU size (mi ²)	Min Density	# F w/ cubs
GYE	9,500	16/18	527	40 (mi ²)/bear	48
NCDE	9,600	21/23	417	24.5(mi ²)/bear	22
CYE	2,600 (?)	18/22	118	26 (mi ²)/bear	6
SE	1,080 (US)* *+ 880 in CAN	7/10 (US only)	108	21 (mi ²)/bear	6

We need to have comparable sized BMUs

So what does that mean for bears

If recovery and delisting of grizzly bears in the range is the objective-

We need to do better

People are the key to bear recovery

- People are the reason for the successes
- People will continue to shape the future of bear recovery
- People are struggling to coexist with bears in some areas
- Change could help people and bears
- Distinguish ESA recovery and state management of delisted population (risk of eroding public support if ESA recovery appears to keep moving goalposts and is unattainable)

Bears are telling us things have changed

- We cannot rest on what we thought recovery would look like 30 years ago
- Bears are expanding their range annually

Achieve the IGBC Purpose & Mission –

Why Change the Multiple “Ecosystem” Organizational Structure

1. Reduce needless duplication of effort in current “ecosystem” approach
2. Prioritize available resources to support more effective conservation
3. Capitalize on untapped potential for interagency coordination
4. Maximize knowledge sharing for planning, management, research, and communication/education
5. Address 9th Circuit ruling regarding “remnant analysis” more effectively
6. Acknowledge that “ecosystem” boundaries are not distinct ecosystems

So what are our options?

Three basic paths forward

1. Status Quo
2. Conservation Teams
3. Hybrid

Conservation Teams

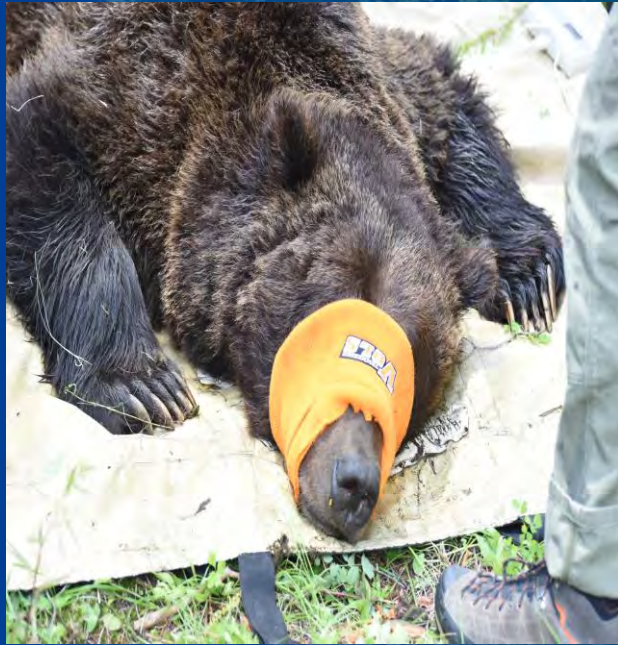
We can do better

- Realign subcommittees to focus on the 5 primary bear recovery tasks
 - Population Monitoring
 - Habitat Management
 - Conflict Management
 - Information & Education
 - Research (IGBST+)
 - Change the administrative ecosystem boundaries
 - Maintain involvement of area specific participation
- **Pros**
 - Benefit those outside the current lines
 - Would increase communication
 - Would encourage broader consistency
 - Would eliminate some redundancies
 - Would maximize budgets
 - **Cons**
 - Could reduce local engagement by shareholders
 - Could force some staff to be on multiple teams

The Hybrid Concept

Adaptation is the key

- Expand the overarching group to a range wide focus
 - IEO
 - Research (IGBST)
 - Conflict
 - Maintain the ecosystem subcommittees for local decision making, coordination, communication and maintaining partnerships
 - Habitat
 - Population monitoring
 - Change the administrative ecosystem boundaries
- **Pros**
 - It will maintain local communication and coordination
 - Will increase coordinated range wide efforts
 - Will promote consistent work across the range
 - Will be inclusive and representative of the range for both the public and people who manage the land and bears
 - **Cons**
 - Could cause more meetings for some people



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THANK YOU!
