



Interagency
GRIZZLY BEAR
Committee

Board of Review

Fatality of Craig Clouatre

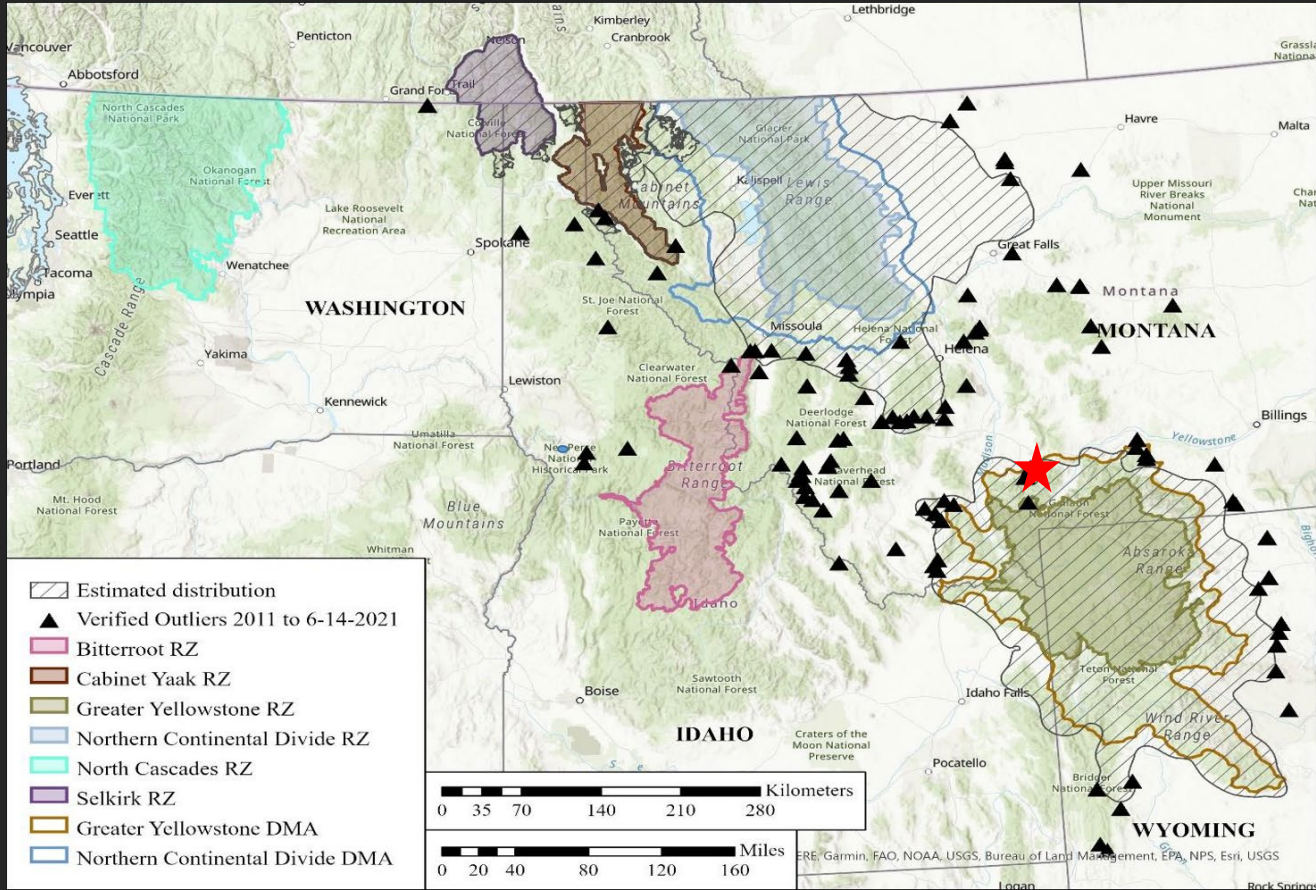
Park County, Montana on March 23, 2022
Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem

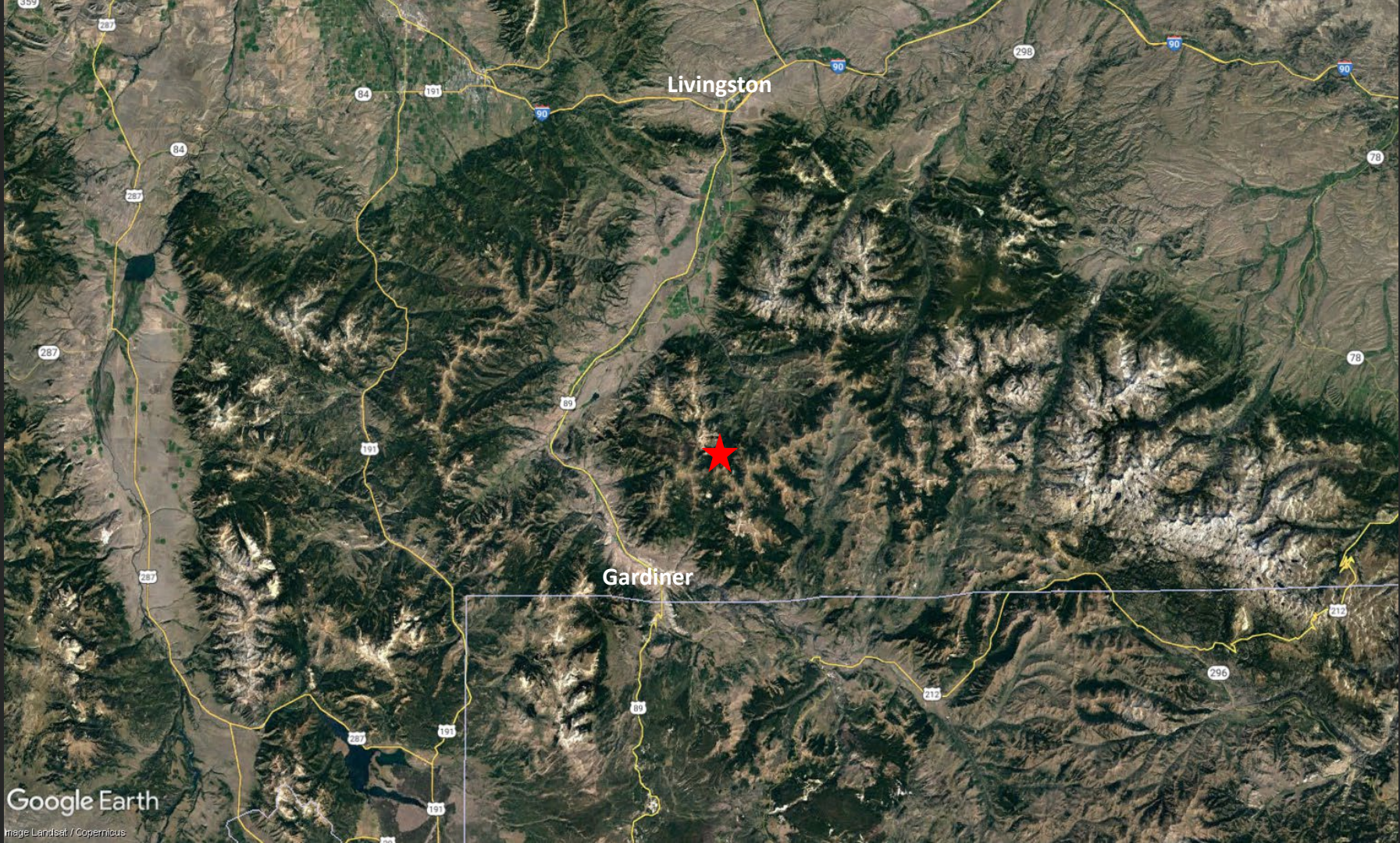
BOR Interagency Team



- **Response & Investigation:** Park County Sheriff's office, MTFWP, USFS
- **Interagency Team:**
 - MTFWP: Adam Pangratz, Warden Captain, Jeremiah Smith, Lori Roberts
 - USFWS: Hilary Cooley, Ben Jimenez
 - NPS: John Waller (Glacier NP), Kerry Gunther (YNP)
 - WGF: Brian Debolt
 - IDFG: Curtis Hendricks
- **Location :** Red Mountain, Park County, MT
- 20th Human Fatality in GYE since 1892.

Red Mountain, Park County, Montana



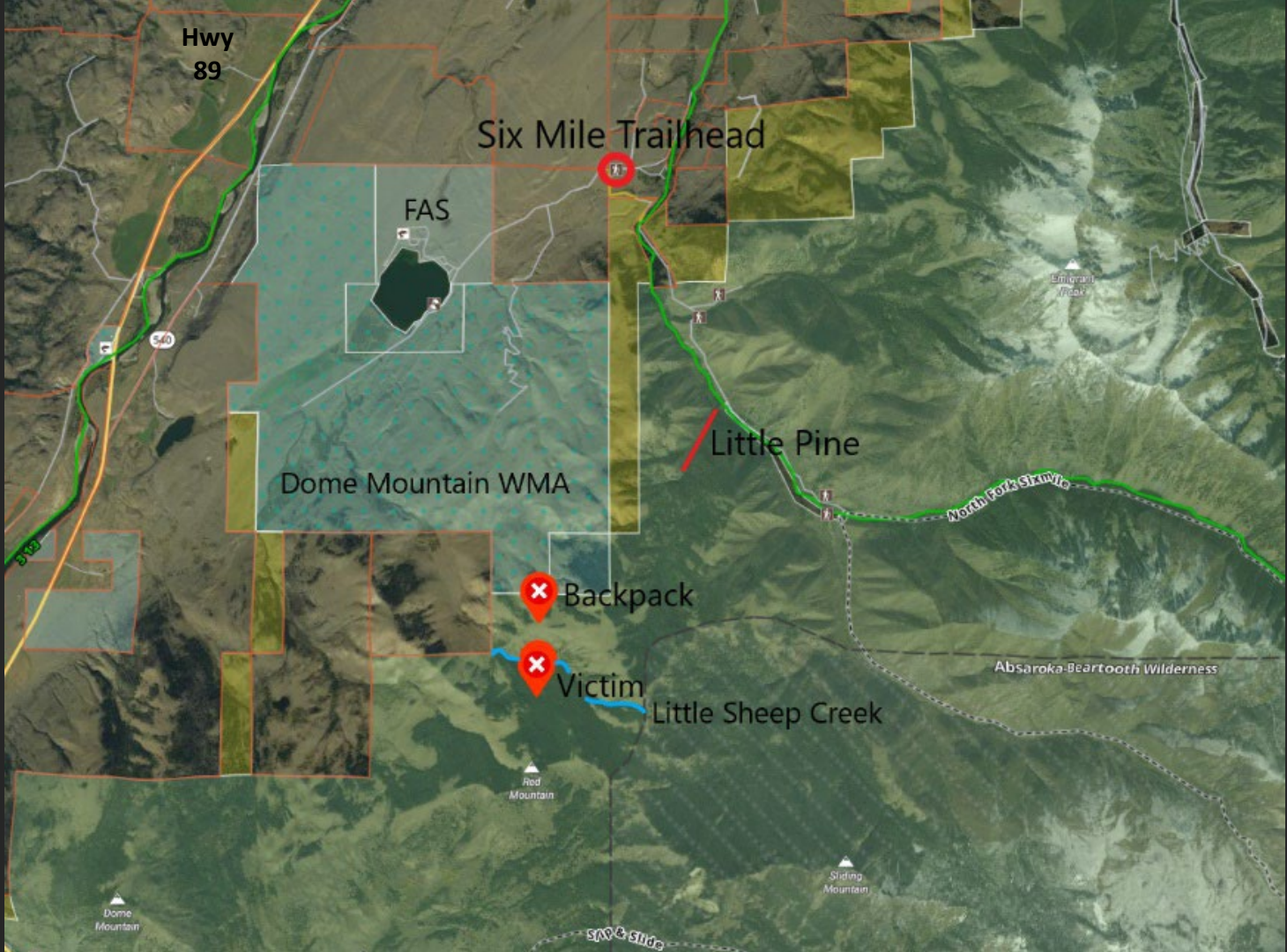


Livingston

Gardiner

Google Earth

Image Landsat / Copernicus



Summary of Incident



On the afternoon of March 23, 2022, Craig Clouatre was alone in search of elk antler sheds on USFS lands just north of Red Mountain in Park County Montana. Clouatre did not return to his vehicle when expected. Park County Search and Rescue conducted a search for Clouatre over the following days. On March 25th, 2022, Clouatre was located deceased. The subsequent investigation conducted by the Park County Sheriff Office (PCSO), US Forest Service (USFS), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) determined the injuries that lead to the victim's death were likely caused by a defensive attack from a nearby denning grizzly bear.

Timeline



March 23

04:30 Clouatre and partner arrive trailhead, begin hiking.

10:45 Clouatre and partner split up. Clouatre heads to Stands Basin.

13:20 Clouatre sends text message, "in a hole."

13:22 Last known cell location, ~1 Mile NE of attack site.

Clouatre removes pack with bear spray, descends into heavily timbered basin.

Clouatre enters the basin with snowshoes and traverses area in a southerly direction, crossing Red Mountain Road numerous times.

Clouatre walks within 25 yards of an active bear den, and is killed during a defensive bear attack.

Timeline



March 23

20:50 Hiking partner places call to Park County Sheriff

21:08 Park County Search and Rescue dispatched to the area to begin search

March 24

All day Extensive search efforts from ground and air (Two Bear Air)

March 25

10:00 Search and Rescue locates Clouatre's pack on ridge

11:30 Clouatre found deceased

18:00 Clouatre recovered from scene

Conclusion



- Mr. Clouatre likely surprised a resting grizzly bear at close range and suffered fatal injuries resulting from a defensive grizzly bear attack.
- Clouatre did not have bear spray or any other defense tool with him at the time of attack.
- There was no evidence that the body had been moved, cached, or fed on.
- Subsequent aerial searches and review of radio-telemetry data found no grizzly bears in the area.
- Because no bears were found in the vicinity and all evidence indicated a defensive encounter, no additional management actions were taken.

Recommendations



Standard safety practices can reduce the likelihood of human-bear encounters and the risk of injury or death when a human-bear encounter occurs:

- 1) Carry Bear Deterrent (carry more than one)
- 2) Be Vigilant (look for bear activity -tracks, scat, carcasses)
- 3) Make Noise (reduce chance of surprise encounters)
- 4) Do Not Hike Alone (larger groups are more intimidating)