



Photo Credit: Yellowstone NPS



Photo Credit: Grand Teton NPS



Bear Smart Community Framework OVERVIEW

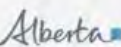





Background

- The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) supports recovery and delisting, and ongoing conservation of grizzly bear populations and their habitats in areas of the western United States through interagency coordination of policy, planning, management, research and communication.
- The IGBC supports collaborative community-led strategies that benefit both people and bears by reducing conflicts and improving human safety in areas where people and bears share the landscape.
- The IGBC Bear Smart Community Framework is intended to be consistent yet flexible to be adapted for the needs of individual communities.

Partner Agencies



A photograph of a brown bear standing in a grassy field with hills in the background. The bear is in the lower right foreground, facing left. The field is covered in green and yellow grass. In the background, there are rolling hills with sparse vegetation and some trees. The sky is clear and blue.

Why does this matter?

- Bears have ecological and cultural significance
- Bear and human populations increasing or expanding in some areas
- Challenges when bears and people share the landscape
 - property damage
 - livestock depredation
 - human safety concerns

Bear Behavior

- Opportunistic omnivores
- Wide range of habitats
 - Often food driven
- Need sufficient fat reserves for hibernation
 - Especially important for females
- Protective of food, young and personal space





Human-bear Conflicts

- Serious negative encounters rare
- Easier to avoid conflicts than deal with one
- Anything with an odor can be an attractant



Photo Credit: Kim Johnston

IGBC Bear Smart Community Framework

The overall goal is to support collaborative community-based strategies that benefit both people and bears by reducing conflicts and improving human safety in areas where people and bears share the landscape.

IGBC Bear Smart Community Framework

- Both people and bears have a place on the landscape
- No 'one-size-fits-all' solution
- Multiple strategies needed
- Bear management and removal will continue to be tools
- May be used by communities in the development of proactive strategies that are within the community's jurisdiction
- Provides guidelines but is intended to be flexible





Framework Overview

1. Establish a Bear Smart Committee
2. Complete a Bear Smart Community Assessment
3. Develop a Bear Smart Community Plan
4. Implement the Bear Smart Community Plan



Photo Credit: Wyoming Game and Fish



1. Establish a Bear Smart Committee

- Fundamental to community's success
- Should include a variety of perspectives that reflect the community
- Collaborative and community-based
- Operates on consensus
- Most successful communities will have a strong Bear Smart Committee



Bear Smart Committee Roles and Responsibilities

- Initiate and support development of Bear Smart Community
- Initiate, write and develop Bear Smart Community Assessment and Plan
- Work collaboratively to implement plan
- Monitor progress of program and evaluate community's management strategies
- Refine community plan as-needed
- Provide reports that share progress and provide direction
- Complete reporting as required by the IGBC certification program



Examples of Potential Committee Members

Representative community members

Local governments

Tribal governments

State and Federal Agencies

Non-governmental organizations

Educator

Solid waste management

Community grant writer

Local tourism representative

Community interest groups



2. Complete a Bear Smart Community Assessment

- Goal: identify current and potential risks for human-bear conflicts
- Compile pertinent data to guide future work
- Reflect on challenges community faces



Assessment Components

1. *Community Description*
2. *Bear Population*
3. *Habitat and Wildlife Corridors*
4. *History of Human-Bear Interactions*
5. *Community Attractants*
6. *Education and Outreach Efforts*
7. *Solid Waste Management*
8. *Community Development*
9. *Enforcement*
10. *Human Safety and Community Attitudes*
11. *Mapping (optional)*



3. Develop a Bear Smart Community Plan

- Addresses specific issues and concerns identified in the assessment
- Guiding document for Bear Smart efforts in the community
- Represents agreed upon path for moving forward



Plan Components



1. *Human Safety and Community Attitudes*
2. *Attractant Management*
3. *Green Space Management*
4. *Education and Outreach*
5. *Solid Waste Management*
6. *Enforcement*
7. *Evaluation and Monitoring*
8. *Timeline*
9. *Budget*



Photo Credit: Eric Johnston

4. Implement the Bear Smart Community Plan

IGBC Bear Smart Community Coordination

- Becoming Bear Smart may take time, and will require continued efforts over time.
- Feel free to share your work with the IGBC Bear Smart Community Technical Working Group, which will continue to coordinate best practices across the states of Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming.
- Each State will decide how to handle specific engagement with communities.
- Communities can look to their State wildlife agencies, and may also be able to find assistance from the US Fish and Wildlife Service in making progress on this framework.
- Communities are encouraged to develop and periodically review:
 - List of Bear Smart Committee members
 - Completed Bear Smart Community Risk Assessment
 - Completed Bear Smart Community Plan
 - Report on the implementation of Bear Smart Community Plan





Additional Information

- Full details are in manual, including resources and additional information
- Manual is available at IGBC website:
<https://igbconline.org/programs/bear-smart-communities/>





Questions?