

Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategies



Joint Meeting of the IGBC Selkirk/Cabinet-Yaak and
Northern Continental Divide Subcommittees

Spring 2024

Overview

- Purpose
- Process
- Timeline
- Contents
 - Vision
 - Geography
 - Demographic Objectives and Monitoring
 - Habitat Objectives and Monitoring
 - Conflict Reduction and Management / IE&O
- Implementation

Purpose: Recovery Plan

The 1993 Recovery Plan outlines 2 requirements for delisting:

- 1) Attainment of population demographic parameters
- 2) Development of a Conservation Strategy that will ensure that adequate regulatory mechanisms will continue to be present after delisting

Purpose: Status Assessment

- Five Factor Review required for any consideration of status review (ESA Section 4(a)(1))
 - Adequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms
- Post-Delisting Management Plan must be in place prior to delisting to guide and direct management so that grizzly bear remain recovered. The CS may serve as this plan.

USFWS
Species
Status
Assessment,
1/21/22

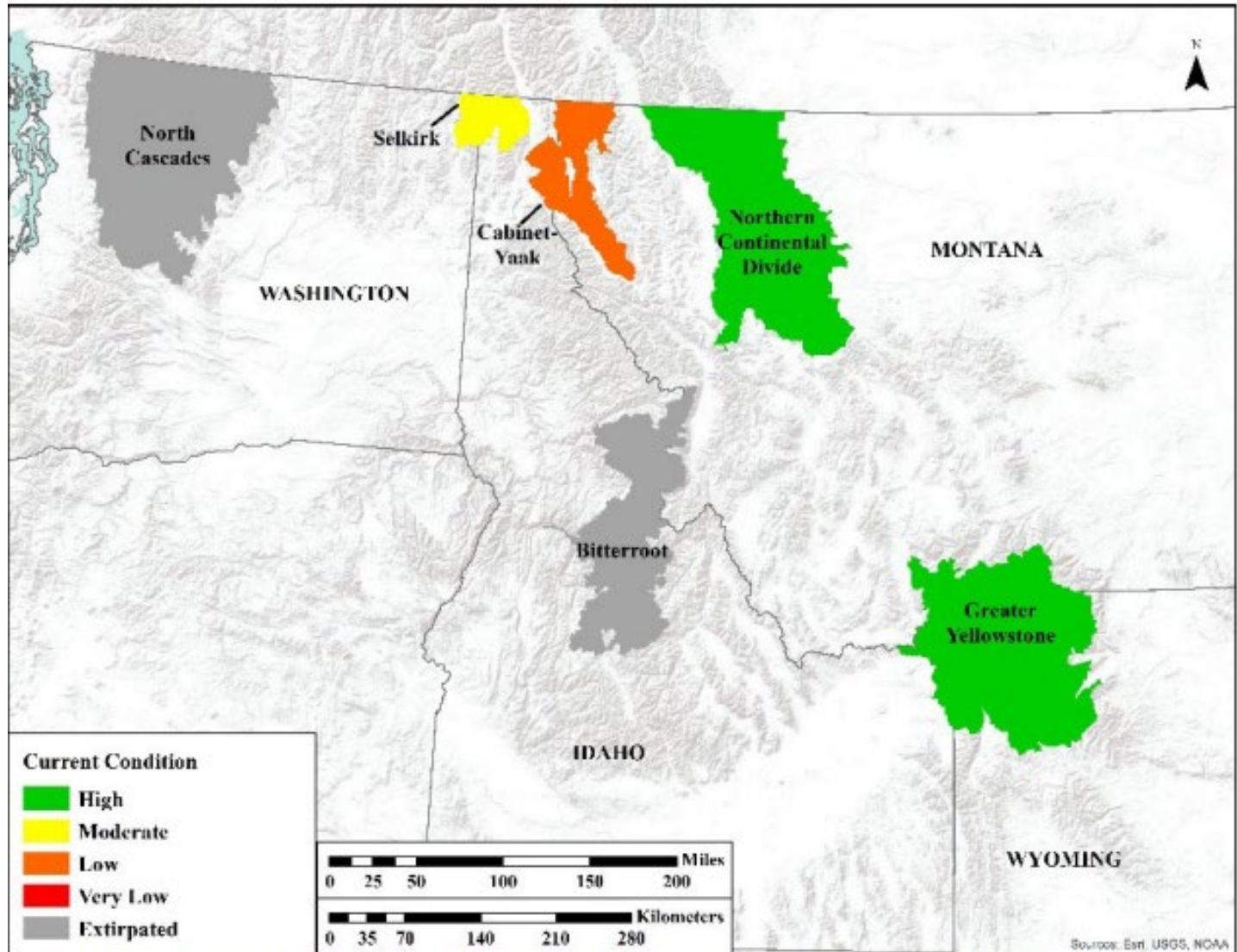
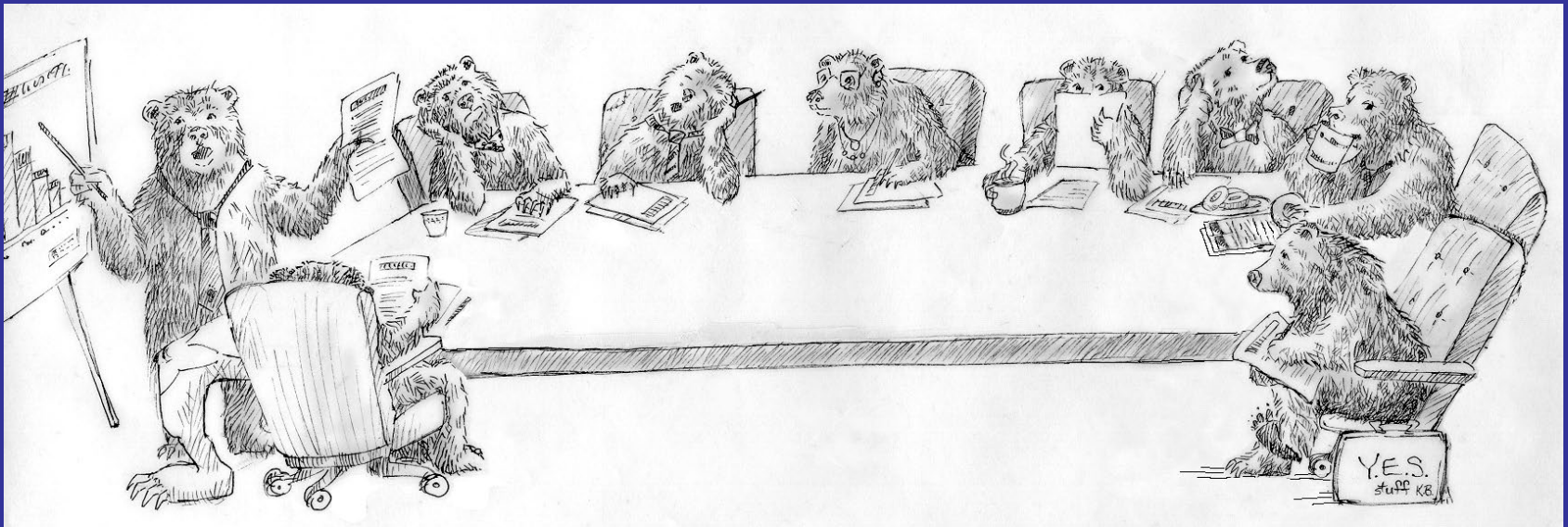


Figure 5. Map of the overall current condition for the six grizzly bear ecosystems in the lower-48 States, in terms of resiliency, redundancy, and representation. Colors represent the current resiliency for each ecosystem, based on the current condition of two habitat factors and six demographic factors for each ecosystem. Ecosystems with higher levels of resiliency are at less risk from environmental and demographic stochasticity. Currently, the Greater Yellowstone (GYE) and Northern Continental Divide (NCDE) ecosystems have high resiliency, the Selkirk ecosystem (SE) has moderate resiliency, and the Cabinet-Yaak ecosystem (CYE) has low resiliency. The North Cascades and Bitterroot (BE) ecosystems are in an extirpated condition currently, so have no resiliency. Four ecosystems (GYE, NCDE, SE, and CYE) distributed as illustrated on the map contribute to redundancy and these ecosystems feature a diversity of ecological types used by the grizzly bear for representation.

Process: Development and Review

- Interagency Grizzly Bear Technical Team drafts CS
- Agencies review and approve draft CS
- Draft released for public review and comment



NCDE Current Tech Team

- NCDE Team Leaders/Executive Summary – Lee Anderson (FWP), Scott Jackson (USFS)
- Chapter 1 (Intro) –Cooley (USFWS), Fortin-Noreus (USFWS)
- Chapter 2 (Demographics) – Costello/McDonald (FWP)
- Chapter 3 (Habitat) - Ruby / Lydia Allen (USFS)
- Chapter 4 (Conflict) – Sarmento/Anderson (FWP), John Waller (NPS)
- Chapter 5 (Implementation & Evaluation) – TBD, was Arnold (FWP)
- Chapter 6 (Regulatory Framework) – Emily Platt (USFS)
- Map Updates – Kathy Ake (USFS)
- Appendix & Abbreviations – Lori Roberts (FWP)
- Other Members – Kari Kingery (CSKT), Payton Adams (CSKT), Tamara MacKenzie (USFS)

SCYE Current Tech Team

- WDFW: Annemarie Prince
- IDFG: Barb Moore, Norm Merz
- MTFWP: Cecilly Costello, Garret Tovey
- IDL: Colton Finch, Dan Brown
- BLM: Cynthia Watson
- USFS: Heather Fuller, Jeremy Anderson, Nicole Cloud, Bryson Bell
- Kalispel Tribe: TBD
- Kootenai Tribe of Idaho: Shelby Therrian
- USFWS ES: Eddie Whitcomb, Shauna Brinkman, Kat Sorenson, Carly Lewis, Kim Annis
- USFWS RO: Hilary Cooley, Justin Teisburg, Wayne Kasworm

Process: Approval and Signing

- Ecosystem Subcommittee approves document for consideration by the IGBC
- IGBC provides comment and approves document
- IGBC agencies sign the Memorandum of Understanding to implement the CS

Timeline: GYE

- 2000 Draft CS released for public comment
- 2003 CS Completed
- 2007 Delisted; Final CS
- 2009 District Court Vacates Delisting; Relisted
- 2010 9th Circuit Ruling; Remain listed
- 2016 Draft CS public comment, and Final CS
- 2017 Delisted
- 2018 District Court Vacates Delisting; Relisted
- 2020 9th Circuit Ruling; Remain listed
- 2022 Approve CS Chpt 3 revisions; Start Chpt. 2
- 2024 Updated CS approved by YES, to IGBC in June

Timeline: NCDE

- 2009 Appointment of technical team to draft CS
- 2013 Draft CS released for public comment
- 2017 Reassembly of tech team to revise CS
- 2018 CS completed
- 2020 Updated CS released with editorial changes
- 2023 Reconvene tech team, 5 year review
- 2024 Chapter 3 discussions (ongoing)

Contents: Conservation Strategy

Chapters

- Executive Summary
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Introduction and Background
- Population/Demographic Objectives and Monitoring
- Habitat Objectives and Monitoring
- Conflict Prevention and Management
- Information and Education
- Implementation and Evaluation
- Existing Laws, Regulations, and Agreements
- Appendices

Contents: Overview

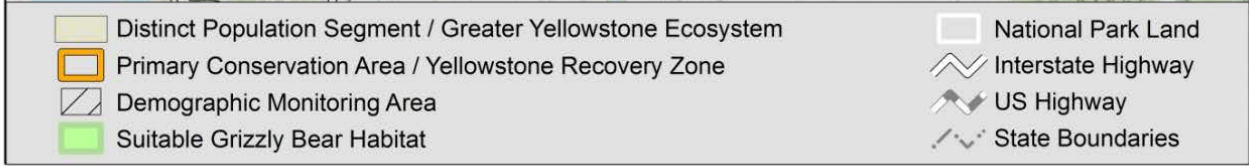
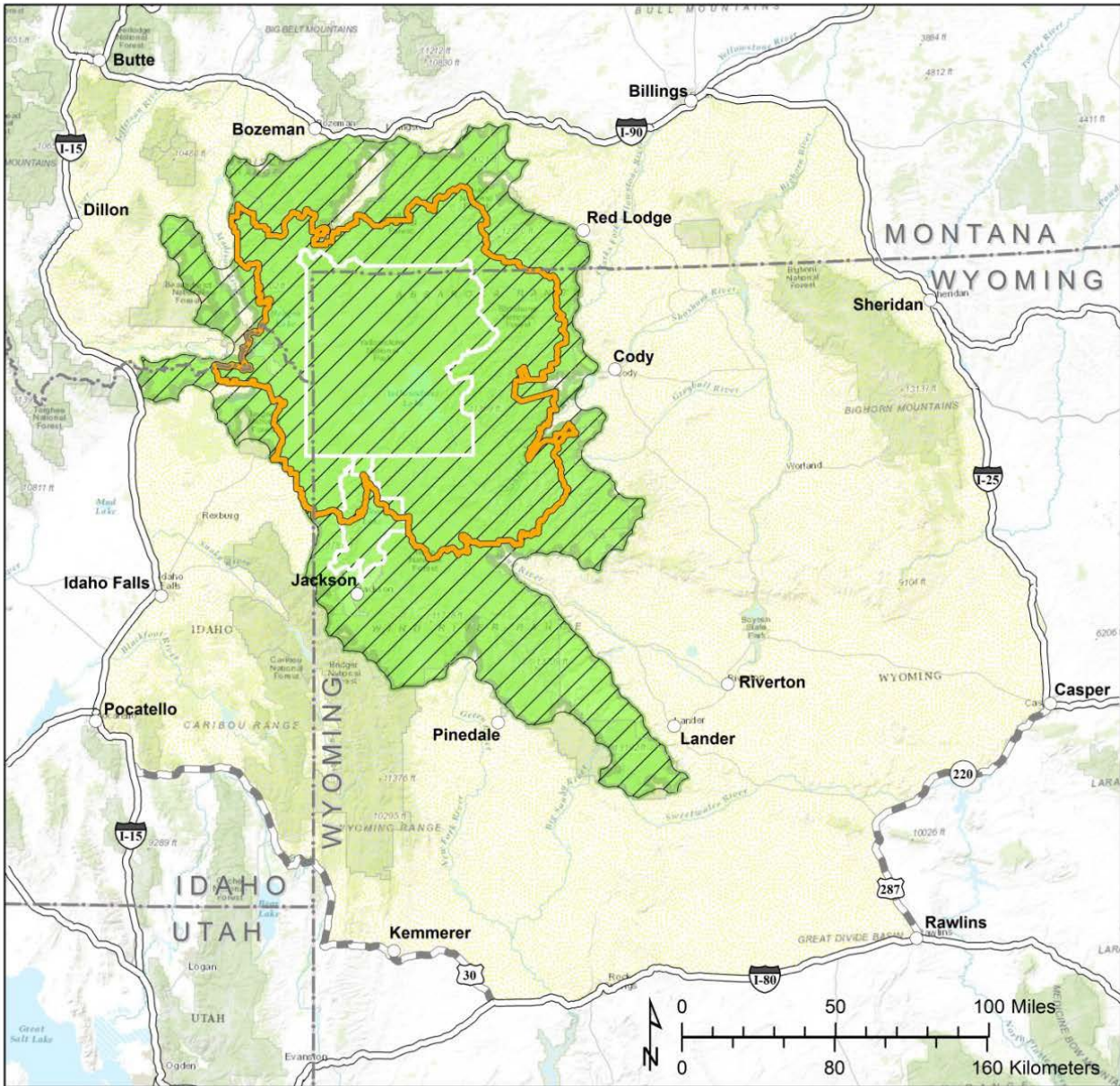
- Outlines legal authorities, policies, management programs, and the continued commitment of management agencies to maintain a high standard of management after delisting
- Reviews current status
- Includes best available science

Vision Statement: NCDE

Maintain a recovered, genetically diverse grizzly bear population throughout the DMA while maintaining demographic and genetic connections with Canadian populations and providing the opportunity for demographic and/or genetic connectivity with other ecosystems (Cabinet-Yaak, Bitterroot, Greater Yellowstone).

Vision Statement: GYE

The PCA (recovery zone) will be a secure area for grizzly bears, with population and habitat conditions maintained to ensure a recovered population is maintained for the foreseeable future and to allow bears to continue to expand outside the PCA.



Vision Statement: GYE

Outside of the PCA:

- grizzly bears will be allowed to expand into biologically suitable and socially acceptable areas.
- the objective is to maintain existing resource management and recreational uses and to allow agencies to respond to demonstrated problems with appropriate management actions.
- the key to successful grizzly bear management lies in considering the needs of bears while also recognizing and accommodating the legitimate role of other uses on the same landscape.

Vision Statement: GYE

Outside of the PCA:

- Manage the GYE grizzly bear population within the area called the Demographic Monitoring Area (DMA), to ensure a recovered population in accordance with the established Post-Delisting Demographic Criteria.
- Expand public information and education efforts.
- Provide quick responsive management to address grizzly bear conflicts.
- Manage grizzly bears as a game animal; including allowing regulated hunting when and where appropriate.

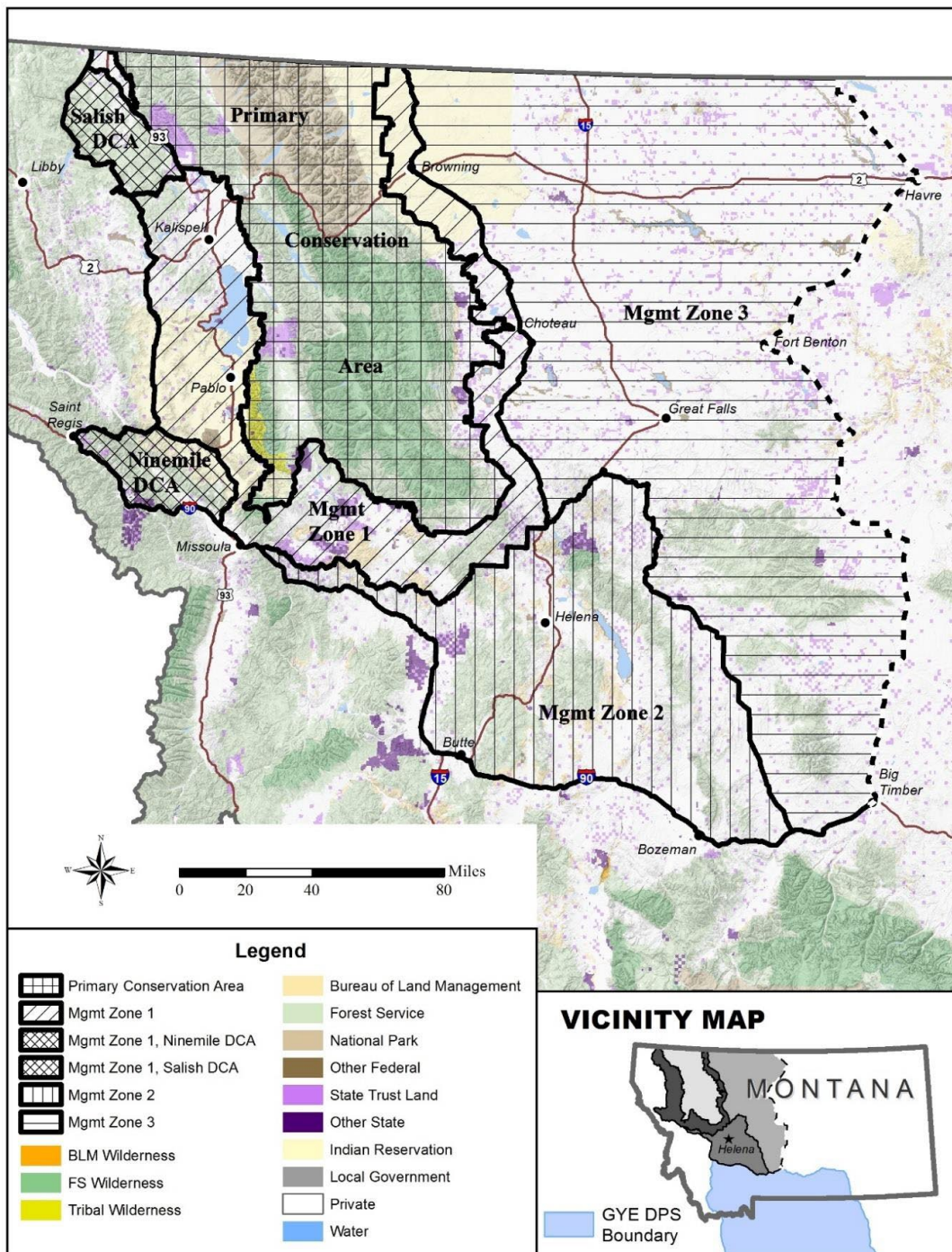
Vision Statement: NCDE

Maintain a recovered, genetically diverse grizzly bear population throughout the DMA while maintaining demographic and genetic connections with Canadian populations and providing the opportunity for demographic and/or genetic connectivity with other ecosystems (Cabinet-Yaak, Bitterroot, Greater Yellowstone).

NCDE Management Zones

PCA (Recovery Zone)

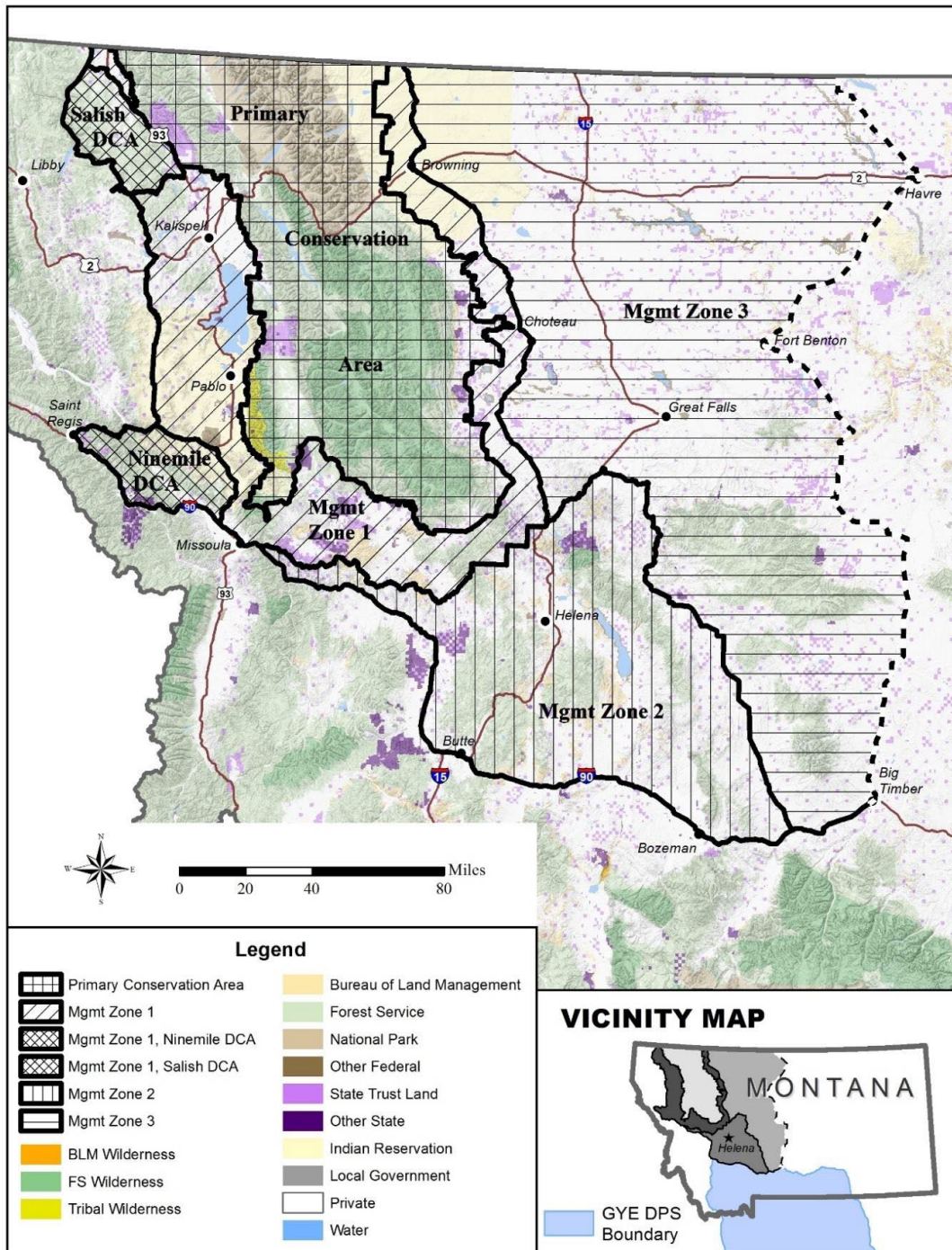
- Most conservative habitat protections
- Maintenance of habitat conditions compatible with the increasing population from 2004-2011.



NCDE Management Zones

Zones 1 & 2

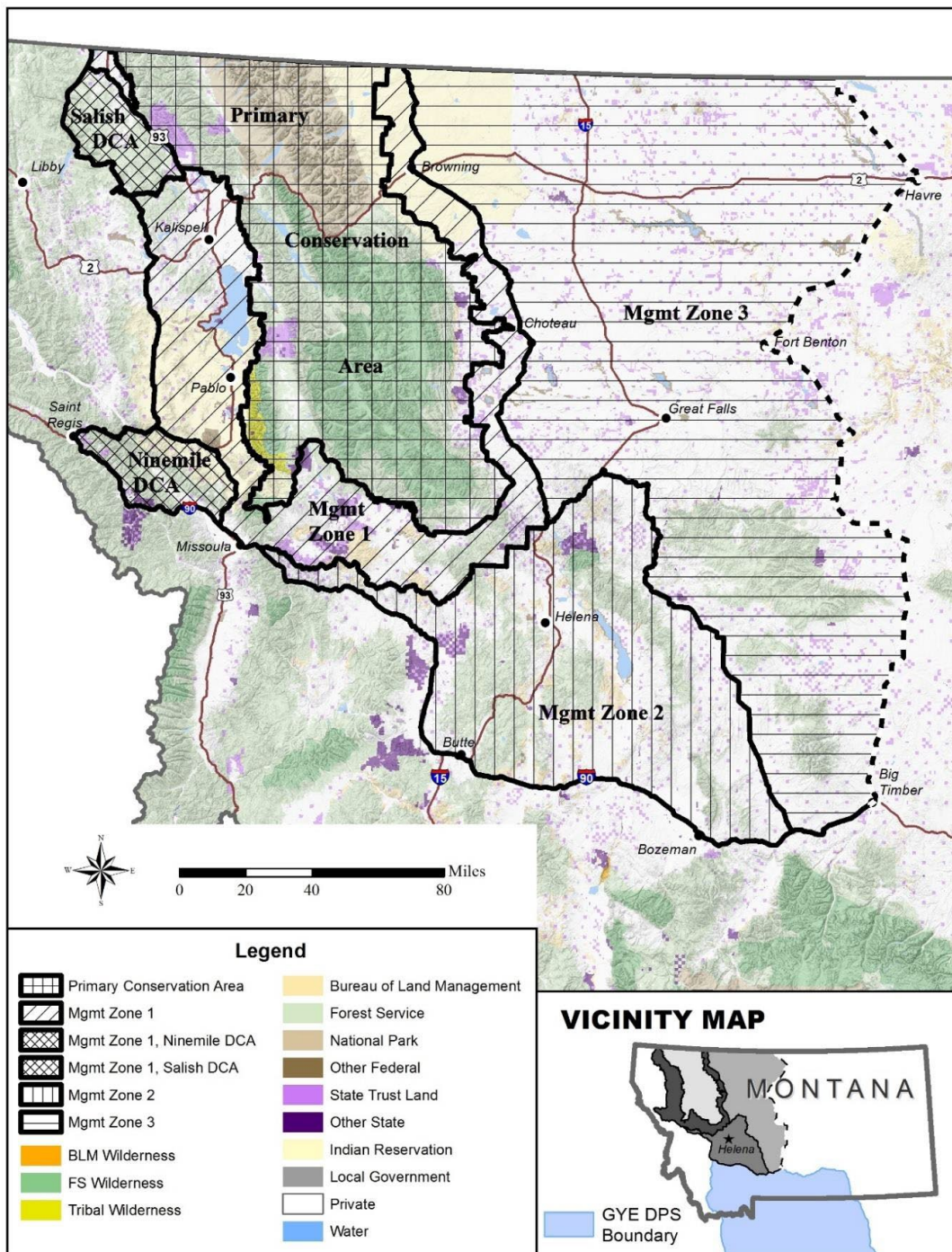
- Bears serve as a source population to other grizzly bear ecosystems
- Habitat and population protections vary by management objectives
- More protections in areas identified as Demographic Connectivity Areas (DCAs).



NCDE Management Zones

Zone 3

- No habitat linkage to other grizzly bear ecosystems
- Grizzly bear occupancy not actively discouraged
- Management via conflict response



Content: Demographic Objectives and Monitoring

- Specific to Demographic Monitoring Area (DMA)
- Population objective
 - GYE: Maintain population within or above the 800-950 range based on IPM estimates
 - NCDE: Manage for a population with an estimated probability of at least 90% being above 800 individuals
- Distribution of females with young (as measured by Bear Management Units (BMUs))
- Mortality threshold to maintain population objective

Content: Additional Demographic Monitoring Objectives

- Population trend
- Genetic management of isolated populations
- Estimated distribution
- Monitoring reports



Content: Habitat Objectives and Monitoring Within the PCA

- Maintain baseline that was compatible with a stable to increasing population
 - Secure Habitat
 - Developed Sites
 - Livestock Allotments
- Measured and reported for each bear management subunit
- Monitoring reports



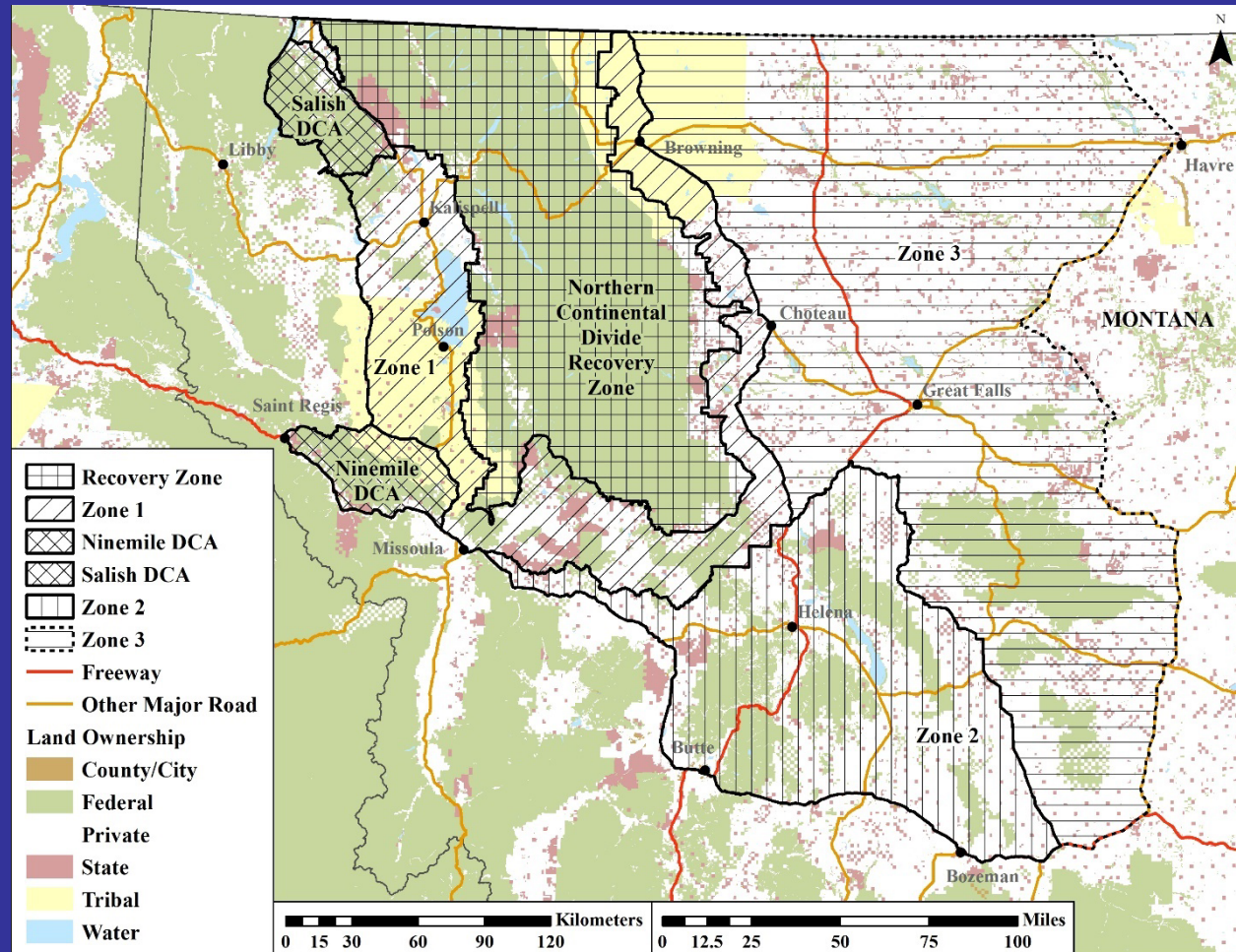
Content: Habitat Objectives and Monitoring Outside the GYE PCA



Existing land protections through designation as Wilderness, Wilderness Study Area, or Inventoried Roadless Area

Content: Habitat Objectives and Monitoring Outside the NCDE PCA

Zone 1: Maintain linear miles or density of motorized routes/roads consistent with continual occupancy and a stable to increasing population



Content: Habitat Objectives and Monitoring Outside the NCDE PCA

- Demographic Connectivity Areas (DCAs): Limit linear miles of motorized routes to facilitate continual occupancy connectivity to other ecosystems
- Zone 2: maintain existing habitat protections to facilitate genetic connectivity
- Zone 3: Habitat management not necessary because does not provide linkage to other grizzly bear ecosystems

Content: Additional Habitat Objectives and Monitoring

- GYE:
 - Monitor 4 high caloric food items (Cutthroat trout, ungulates, whitebark pine cone production, and army cutworm moth aggregation sites)
 - Habitat connectivity: transportation planning and food storage orders
- NCDE:
 - Body condition and stable isotope analysis as surrogates for habitat quality
 - Food storage orders

Content: Conflict Reduction and Management

- Minimize conflict
 - Sanitation efforts
 - Information, education and outreach programs
- Reflect individual state, federal, and tribal plans
- Annual conflict reporting



Content: Implementation

- Implementation after delisting is responsibility of the involved agencies
- Agencies sign the agreement, signifying their commitment to maintain the standard of management required to conserve and maintain a viable population
- After delisting, Coordinating Committee formed
- Coordinating Committee responsible for maintaining up-to-date Conservation Strategy to reflect current laws, regulations, plans, and commitments

Evaluation

- Review at least every 5 years
- Revisions to the CS to incorporate the best available biological data and science
- Revisions subject to public review and comment
- Thresholds:
 - Biology and Monitoring Review
 - USFWS Status Review

Further Considerations

- Currently maintained CS ensures that adequate regulatory mechanisms will continue post-delisting
- Potential needs for revisions:
 - New state regulations
 - Court decisions
 - New information

**Thank you NCDE and GYE
technical team members**

