

Human-Grizzly Bear Conflicts in Montana

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During 2025 in Montana’s portion of the GYE, there were a total of 171 investigated human-bear conflicts and 14 documented grizzly bear mortalities. The number of conflicts is shown by type in Table 35. Annual variation in conflicts and grizzly bear mortalities are shown in Fig. 34. For 2016–2025 the average number of grizzly bear conflicts was 126 per year and 11.3 grizzly bear mortalities per year.

Table 35. Human-grizzly bear conflict types in the Montana portion of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, 2025.	
Conflict type	Number of conflicts
Livestock - cattle	40 (40 cattle killed or injured)
Livestock - sheep	0 (0 sheep killed)
Livestock - poultry	0 (0)
Livestock - swine	0 (0)
Property Damage/Vehicle Strikes	5/5
Anthropogenic foods	11
Anthropogenic foods with property damage	5
At developed sites–safety concerns	66
Encounters, DLP, Human Injuries	39
Total Conflicts	171
Bear Mortalities	14 (7 management removals, 5 vehicle strikes, 1 mistaken identity, 1 DLP)

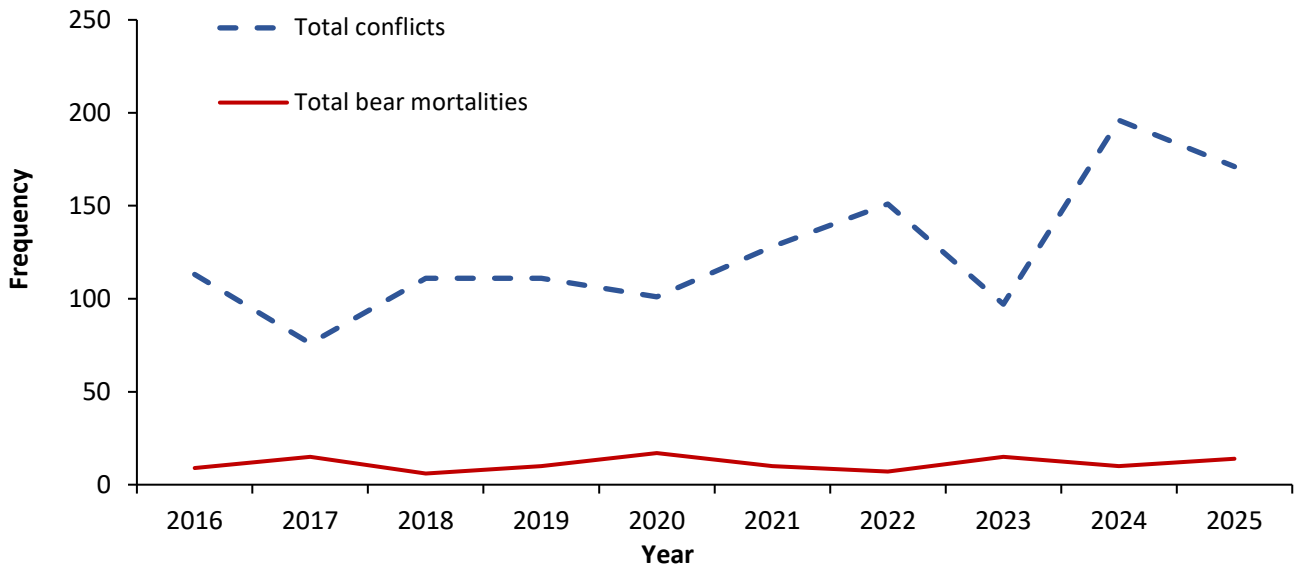


Fig. 34. Frequency of total grizzly bear conflicts and bear mortalities in the Montana portion of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, 2016-2025.

The distribution of grizzly bear conflicts by land jurisdiction is shown (Table 36). During 2025, the largest percentage (63%) of conflicts occurred on private land. The trend in close encounters that can lead to human injuries or defense of life grizzly bear mortalities from 2016 through 2025 are shown (Fig. 35). The yearly average of these conflicts is 16 close encounters, 2 human injuries, and 3 defense of life grizzly bear mortalities. During 2025, there were 39 close encounters resulting in 0 human injuries, 0 human fatalities, and 1 grizzly bear mortality.

Cattle depredations are increasing as grizzly bear numbers and geographic distribution increases (Fig. 36). The annual variation and overall increases in Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Region 3 and Region 5 combined are shown in Figure 35. From 2016 through 2025, the yearly average for Region 3 and 5 combined was 38. During 2025, there were 40 documented cattle depredations in Region 3 and 5 combined. Figure 37 displays a map of all 2025 grizzly bear mortalities in Montana's portion of the GYE. Figure 38 displays a map of all 2025 conflict types showing the distribution of management efforts and grizzly bear distribution. There is annual variation in these distributions and the numbers of conflicts in any geographic area.

Table 36. Total conflicts by land jurisdiction in the Montana portion of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, 2025.

Jurisdiction	Number of conflicts
Private	108
State	5
County or local government	3
Federal (Non Forest/BLM/USFWS land)	4
Bureau of Land Management	3
Custer Gallatin National Forest	22
Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest	25
USFWS–National Wildlife Refuge	1
Total	171

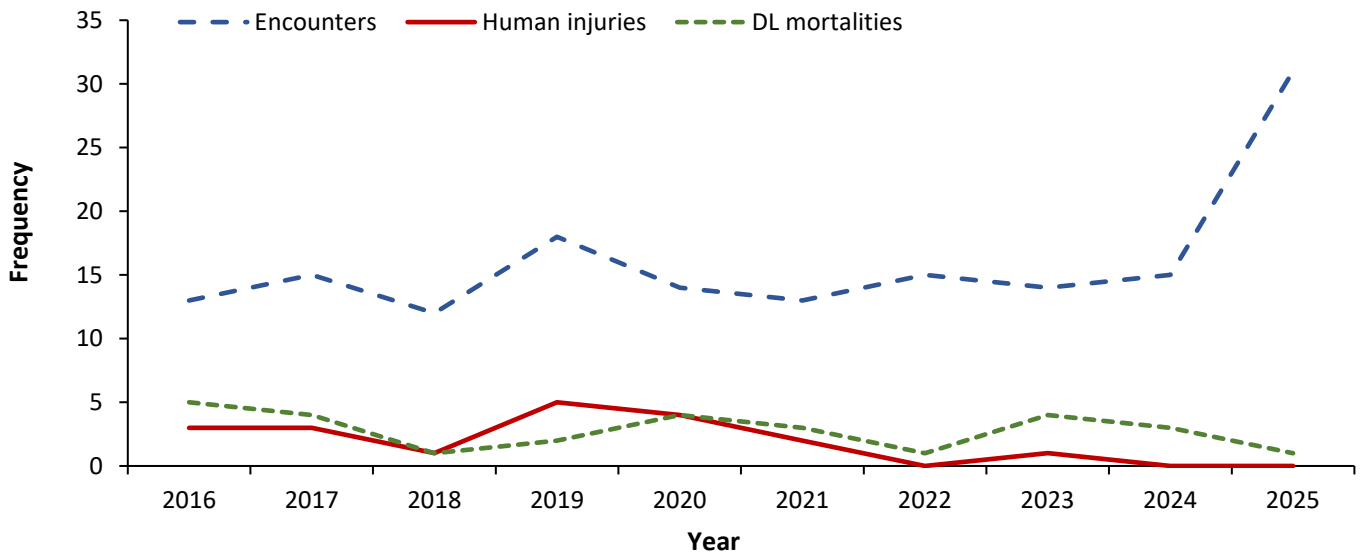


Fig. 35. Frequency of bear encounters resulting human injuries and defense of life (DL) bear mortalities in the Montana portion of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, 2016–2025.

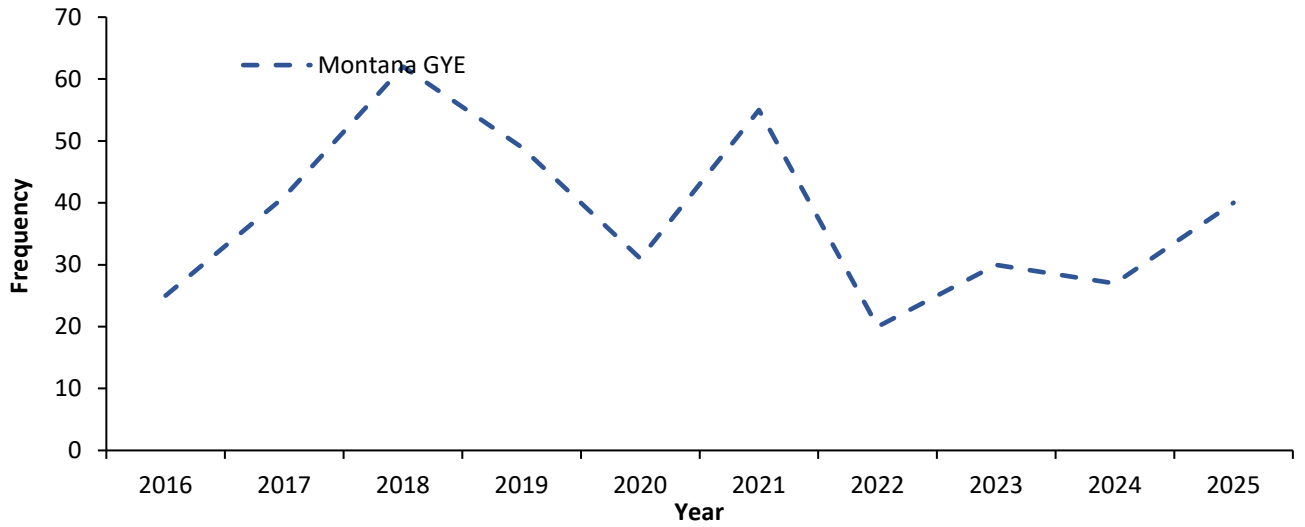


Fig. 36. Frequency of cattle depredation conflicts in the Montana portion of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, 2016–2025.

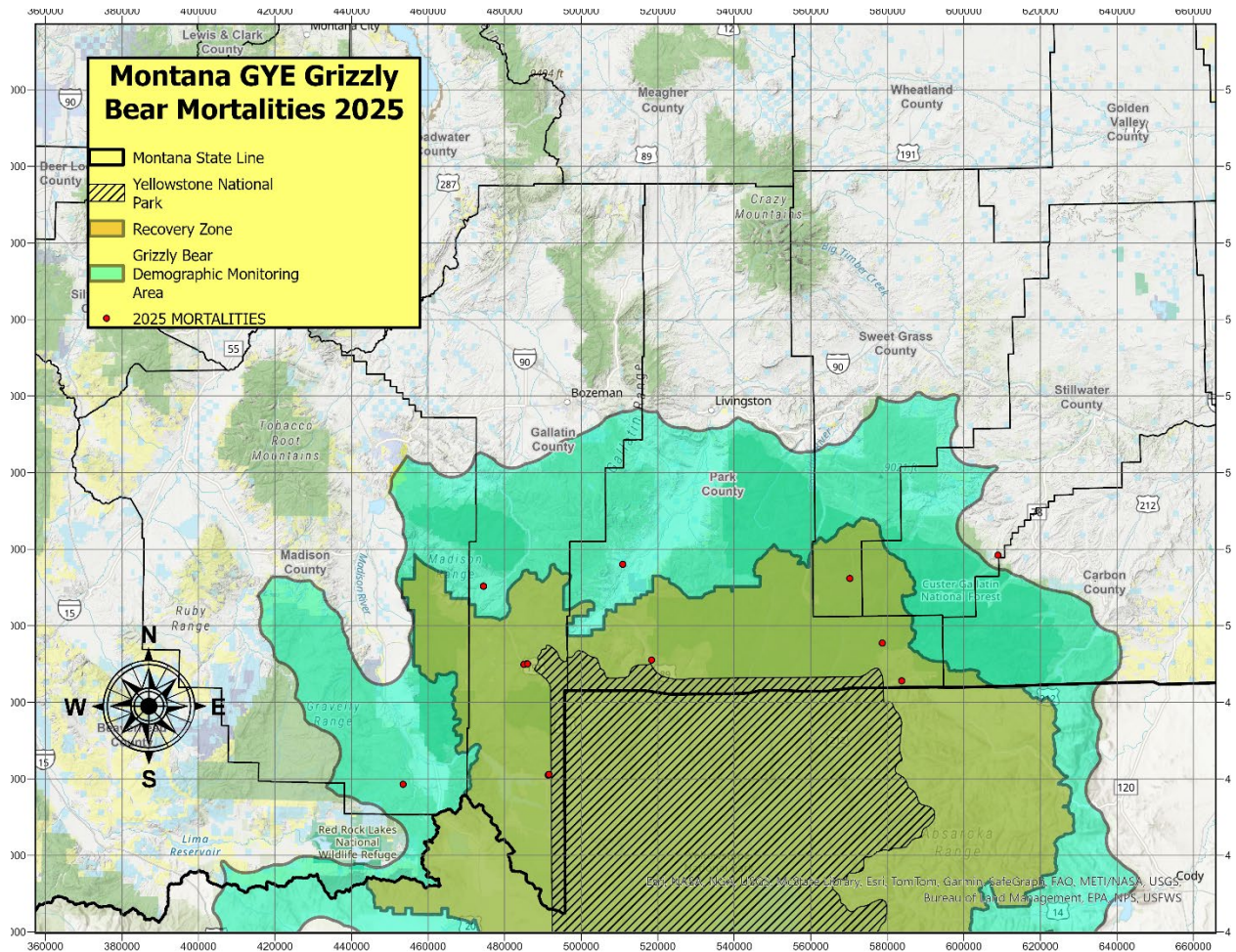


Fig. 37. Locations of all grizzly bear mortalities in the Montana portion of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, 2025. Base Map: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL.

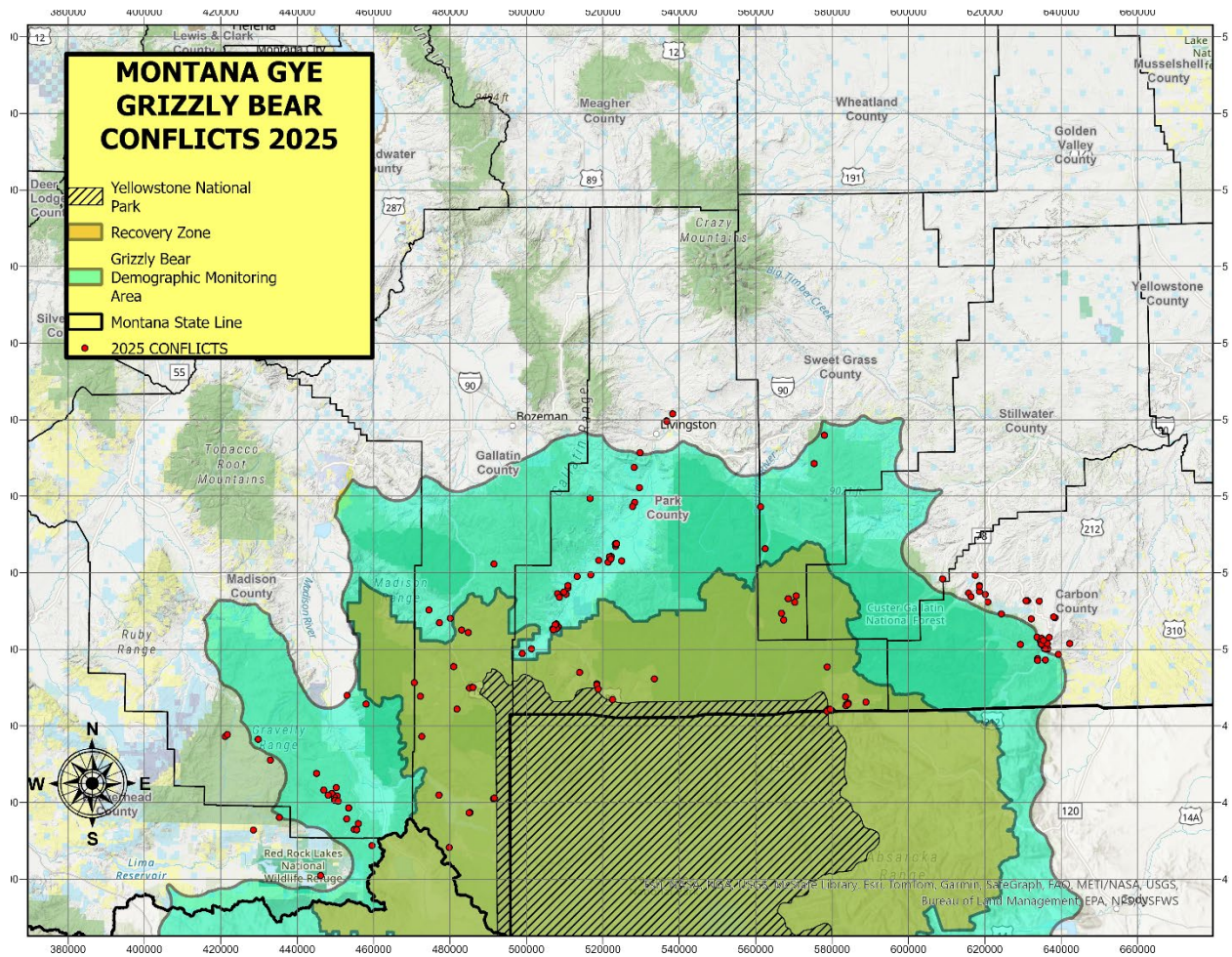


Fig. 38. Locations of all conflict types in the Montana portion of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, 2025. Base Map: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community.