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PM

To: grizz@selway.umt.edu,
susan_linner@fws.gov.sharon_r_rose@fws.gov
cc:
Subject: Draft talking points for IGBC call

All,

Attached are the draft talking points Susan requested for the IGBC call on Tuesday. They are longer than you'll need, but you can keep what is appropriate and delete the rest. Please check the bullet on the budget, especially the discussion of the rider language. I did not have a copy of the rider, and summarized the language from memory.

If you need me to revise, let me know. I'll be in Missoula Thursday and Friday. You can reach me at Chris' office, or get a message to me through Laird (406-329-3434). I'll also be checking e-mail...please reply to johnna_roy@fws.gov.

-Johnna



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Talking Points for IGBC Conference Call on Bitterroot ROD and Final Rule

Selected Alternative: Alternative 1 "Restoration of Grizzly Bears As a Nonessential Experimental Population with Citizen Management."

Schedule for release of ROD and Final Rule:

Tuesday October 10	IGBC Conference call to coordinate with members ROD signed by R-6 Director Final Rule signed by Assistant Secretary Director calls ID and MT Governors and Senators (or early Weds.)
Wednesday October 11	In-state MT and ID Governor and Congressional Briefings - MT (Servheen and Robinson), ID (Ruesink) Media Conference Call - Morgenweck, Bosworth, Servheen Rod, Rule, and Outreach package available on R-6 website
Friday October 13	ROD and Final Rule published in Federal Register
As Requested	D.C. Congressional briefings

Distribution of ROD and Final Rule and Outreach Materials:

- The ROD and Final Rule will be published in the Federal Register Friday October 13.
- The FWS Denver website will have all pertinent documents and outreach materials available for viewing and downloading on Wednesday afternoon October 11.
(www.r6.fws.gov/endspp/grizzly)
- 4,000 copies of the ROD and Final Rule are being printed and will be distributed to the Bitterroot EIS mailing list, local libraries, and extra copies will be distributed to FWS, Forest Service, and State agency offices. These will not be mailed until approximately the week of October 23.
- A 4-page newspaper insert will be included in the Missoula, Lewiston, and Boise Sunday editions in late October. This insert explains how the decision may impact local folks around the Bitterroot, and also provides basic information on grizzly bears and their management.

Schedule for Implementation of the Selected Alternative:

- Implementation will begin after the mandatory 30-day waiting period following publication of the ROD and Final Rule.
- Stage 1: We will request the Governors nominate members of the Citizen Management Committee. The CMC will be formed as soon as possible and will begin to develop operational procedures and accomplish tasks associated with implementing the final rule.
- Stage 2: Simultaneous with Stage 1, a public outreach and education campaign and sanitation improvement program will be initiated. The Bitterroot Subcommittee of IGBC in collaboration with agency partners will develop and implement these programs. Partners in both programs will

include FWS, USDA Forest Service, state fish and game agencies, Nez Perce Tribe, permittees, conservation organizations, and other NGOs.

- Stage 3: Reintroduction of grizzly bears. Will not begin until the second year following the signature of the Record of Decision and final rule, which would be early summer of 2002 at the earliest

Issues of Concern to IGBC:

- Budget - FY 2001 Interior Appropriations Bill includes a rider authored by Senator Conrad Burns providing \$100,000 for formation of the Citizen Management Committee, and for a peer review of the habitat-based population assessment conducted for the Final EIS. The rider prevents the physical placement of bears in FY 2001. The W.O. has indicated this is "new" money added specifically for the Bitterroot project. Funding for the Bitterroot beyond FY 2001 cannot be guaranteed at this time.
- Source Populations for the Bitterroot Reintroduction - Concern about removal of bears from existing threatened populations was addressed by clarifying that bears will not be removed from within the Yellowstone or Northern Continental Divide recovery zones or within 10 miles of these recovery zones so as to not remove any bears from these core areas for any listed population. There will be no significant adverse impact to recovery of these source populations by removing 10-15 bears over a 5-year period from outside the 10-mile buffer which surrounds each recovery zone.

How the Selected Alternative Responds to Significant Issues Raised in the NEPA Process:

- The Service received 14,800 public comments during the 30-day final review period on the Final EIS. Most issues were redundant of those received throughout the NEPA process. The ROD describes the few new issues identified, and only minor modifications were made to the selected alternative in response to these issues.
- The Service received over 40,000 public comments during the NEPA process, and the selected alternative has been modified to the significant public issues, as highlighted below:
 - Lack of local public involvement in the management of the reintroduced species was addressed by development of the CMC concept.
 - Lack of sufficient scientific input was addressed by adding two scientific advisors to the CMC to be nominated by the Universities of Idaho and Montana, and requiring the CMC to use the best available science in decision making.
 - Public safety on private lands in the Bitterroot Valley, Montana was addressed by making these private lands an exclusion zone where any grizzly bear would be immediately captured and relocated into the wilderness.
 - Possibility of political interference from the Secretary of the Interior on the CMC was addressed by establishing a scientific review panel that would be formed if the Service representative determined (after consultation with the CMC) that the CMC was not making decisions that would lead to recovery.
 - Concern about removal of bears from existing threatened populations was addressed by clarifying that bears will not be removed from within the U.S. grizzly bear recovery zones or within 10 miles of bear recovery zones so as to not remove any bears from these core areas for any listed population.
 - Concern that the CMC would make land management decisions on public lands was

addressed by clarifying that the CMC will not make land management decisions on public lands, but may make only recommendations about changes in public land management or public hunting seasons, and any changes regarding these issues would have to be made with public involvement by the land management or State fish and game agencies after complying with NEPA or other appropriate laws.

- Adequacy of the habitat in the Bitterroot Ecosystem was addressed by adding an appendix report from the Craighead Wildlife-Wildlands Institute documenting the abundance and distribution of grizzly bear food groups in the Bitterroot Ecosystem, and by a habitat-based population assessment by Dr. Mark Boyce of the University of Alberta detailing how many grizzly bears can be expected to live in the Bitterroot Ecosystem.
- Lack of a corridor between the Bitterroot Ecosystem and areas where grizzlies presently exist was addressed by noting that the linkage zone evaluation task in the recovery plan will be completed in 2000, and will identify where possible linkage zones exist and what can be done to maintain the opportunities for such linkage in the future; and
- Impacts to listed steelhead and salmon species will be minimized through Service adherence to the conservation recommendations of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Biological Opinion for this project dated May 1998.

Other Highlights of the Selected Alternative:

Citizen Management Committee:

- A 15-member Citizen Management Committee (CMC) will be appointed by the Secretary of Interior:
 - 5 Montana citizens recommended by Governor; includes 1 MDFWP representative
 - 7 Idaho citizens recommended by Governor; includes 1 IDFG representative
 - 1 Nez Perce Tribe member
 - 2 agency representatives from USFWS and USFS
- The governors will accept recommendations from interested parties, and then make recommendations to the Secretary. If either Governor fails to recommend members, the Secretary will accept recommendations from interested parties.
- Two Scientific Advisors will be appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, as non-voting members, to attend all meetings of the CMC and to provide scientific expertise to the CMC.

Management of the Bitterroot population:

- CMC will be tasked with management implementation responsibility for the Bitterroot nonessential experimental grizzly bear population. CMC management decisions must lead to recovery of the grizzly bear in the Bitterroot Ecosystem while considering social and economic impacts.
- Grizzly bear management will allow for resource extraction activities to continue. Formal section 7 consultation will not be required for land management activities in the experimental population area, however, the conferencing requirements of section 7(a)(4) will apply.
- The Service may issue a permit to allow a livestock owner to harass a grizzly bear that is attacking livestock. A livestock owner may be issued a permit to kill a grizzly bear killing or pursuing livestock on private lands.
- CMC will not make land management decisions on public lands, but may make only recommendations about changes in public land management or public hunting seasons, and any changes regarding these issues would have to be made by the land management or State fish and

game agencies after complying with NEPA or other appropriate laws.

- The Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and/or the Nez Perce Tribe, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and the USDA Forest Service, in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will jointly carry out on-the-ground management of the grizzly bears with guidance from the CMC.

Reintroduction:

- A minimum of 25 grizzly bears will be reintroduced into the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness portion of the Recovery Area over a period of 5 years beginning in 2002, at the earliest. Source populations include the YE, NCDE, and the Kootenay Region of B.C. Bears will only be removed if there is no adverse impact to source population health or recovery. The Service may also consider increasing the number of bears released in the first few years as appropriate, to increase their probability of survival in the first few years. We will also consider the possibility of reintroducing interior Rocky Mountain (non-salmon eating) bears from Alaska as appropriate, and will coordinate any such decision with the CMC.
- Bitterroot Recovery Area will consist of the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness and the Frank Church - River of No Return Wilderness: 5,785 square-miles (3.7 million acres).
- Experimental Population Area will surround the Recovery Area and encompass approximately 25,140 square miles (16.1 million acres).
- Because of the low reproductive rate of grizzly bears, estimates indicate that it will take a minimum of 50, and likely more than 110 years for the reintroduced population to reach the recovery goal of 280 bears.

Measures that will be taken to reduce the risk of human injury:

- Within the Experimental Population Area, a person can kill a grizzly bear in defense of their life or the lives of others. Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee nuisance grizzly bear management guidelines will be applied to problem bears.
- Only grizzly bears with no known history of conflicts with humans or livestock will be considered for reintroduction.
- Suitable bears will be released at remote wilderness sites to reduce the likelihood of encounters with humans.
- All released bears will be fitted with radio collars and their movements monitored to keep the public informed of general bear locations and recovery efforts.
- Bears that frequent areas of high human use, act aggressively toward humans, or kill livestock will be relocated or destroyed by management agencies.
- If a grizzly bear enters private lands in the Bitterroot valley area of Montana, it will be captured and returned to the Recovery Area, or destroyed, or placed in captivity. Grizzly bears will be actively discouraged from this area.
- If a grizzly bear occupies inhabited human settlement areas on private land within the Experimental Population Area and presents a clear threat to human safety it may be relocated by management agencies.
- A proactive public information and education program will be initiated to inform the public about the recovery program, grizzly bear biology, and how to safely recreate in the Bitterroot. Sanitation improvements will be made to campgrounds and backcountry campsites.

