

FSM 2600 – WILDLIFE, FISH, AND SENSITIVE PLANT HABITAT MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER 2670 – THREATENED, ENDANGERED AND SENSITIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS

2676 - SPECIFIC DIRECTION ON INDIVIDUAL SPECIES

2676.1 - Grizzly Bear

Nineteen National Forests in Regions 1, 2, 4, and 6 are involved in grizzly bear conservation and management. Human-caused mortality and loss of suitable habitat has caused a significant decline in the distribution and abundance of grizzly bears (*Ursus arctos horribilis*). In 1975, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) listed the grizzly bear as a “threatened” species in the lower 48 states. The Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan identifies six recovery zones. In the Greater Yellowstone recovery zone, as a result of sustained and coordinated management across agencies and land ownerships, all demographic recovery criteria have been met since 1998.

2676.11 - Authority

The Endangered Species Act, National Forest Management Act, Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act, and other laws, regulations, and policies direct Forest Service land managers to carry out active programs for the conservation of the grizzly bear.

1. Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan. The Recovery Plan identified six grizzly bear recovery zones and defined demographic recovery criteria for the Yellowstone, Northern Continental Divide, Cabinet/Yaak, and Selkirk ecosystems in terms of numbers of females with cubs, occupancy of Bear Management Units (BMU), and human-caused mortality limits. Two requirements that must be met before de-listing are: 1) attainment of demographic recovery criteria within the specified monitoring period, and 2) completion of an interagency conservation strategy that will ensure that the population and habitat within the recovery zone will be conserved after de-listing. The recovery plan is available at: http://ecos.fws.gov/docs/recovery_plans/1993/930910.pdf
2. Interagency Guidelines on Management of Grizzly Bear. (Volume 51, Number 228 Federal Register 42863-42866, November 26, 1986). The Guidelines identify and describe five management situations and set forth the specific guidelines for managing resources in these areas in a manner that is compatible with the goal of achieving recovery of the grizzly bear in the contiguous United States. The guidelines are available at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/wildlife/igbc/Information/guidelines.pdf>
3. Conservation Strategy for the Grizzly Bear in the Greater Yellowstone Area. The Conservation Strategy (2003) identifies a Primary Conservation Area (PCA, formerly the Recovery Zone) where occupancy by grizzly bears is anticipated and acceptable, and will provides guidance for coordinated management and monitoring within and outside the PCA when the grizzly bear is delisted. The grizzly bear in the GYA was delisted in 2007. The Recovery Plan and Interagency Grizzly Bear Guidelines no longer apply to the Greater Yellowstone Area, and were replaced by the conservation strategy. The

“Memorandum of Understanding Detailing Agency Agreement to Implement the Conservation Strategy”, which is included as pages 12-13 of the conservation strategy, was signed by the affected Regional Foresters in 2003. The conservation strategy is available at:

http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/wildlife/igbc/ConservationStrategy/replacement_cs.pdf

The GYA National Forests are now manage grizzly bears under the 2006 Forest Plan Amendment for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation for the Greater Yellowstone National Forests FEIS.

2676.12 - Objectives

1. Assure that grizzly bear habitat on National Forest System lands is maintained or enhanced in accordance with goals and objectives and management guidance established in the recovery plan or applicable conservation strategy, and in the National Forest Land Management Plans.
2. Eliminate preventable mortality of grizzly bears and minimize the potential for grizzly bear-human conflicts on National Forest System lands.
3. Accomplish planning and management for grizzly bear conservation in an integrated and cost-effective manner.

2676.13 - Policy

1. Cooperate with state agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and other agencies and groups to carry out active programs to conserve the grizzly bear over the long term.
2. Implement Forest Service commitments for the conservation of grizzly bears and their habitat through coordinated planning and management.
3. Provide appropriate protection for individual grizzly bears that roam outside of delineated recovery zones and primary conservation areas. Work with the states to identify the areas where management for grizzly bears is biologically suitable and socially acceptable, and to coordinate management of nuisance bears.

4. Establish and implement uniform planning and management procedures concerning grizzly bears and their habitat. These should include cumulative effects analysis processes, public information and education, sanitation and management of unnatural foods, and coordinated management of motorized access.

5. Establish and implement communication, education, assistance, and land management programs to eliminate preventable mortality of grizzly bears and to minimize grizzly-human conflicts.

6. Conduct multiple-use management of grizzly bear habitat in a manner that is compatible with the goal of grizzly bear conservation.

7. Periodically monitor and report on habitat and population conditions and trends at appropriate spatial and temporal scales.

2676.14 - Responsibility

2676-14a - Regional Forester

In addition to the responsibilities listed at FSM 2670.44, Regional Foresters in Regions 1, 2, 4, and 6 shall:

1. Serve as members of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) to:
 - a. Ensure coordination with other regions, state and Federal agencies, local and tribal governments, and Canadian provinces to implement the recovery plan or applicable conservation strategy to establish and achieve regional objectives for conservation of the grizzly bear.
 - b. Assure the implementation of approved projects applicable to National Forest System lands.
 - c. Guide and plan research direction.
 - d. Evaluate the effectiveness of management actions in contributing to established goals for grizzly bear conservation.
 - e. Provide direction, advice, and assistance to IGBC Subcommittees.
2. Ensure coordination with other Regions and agencies to implement the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan or applicable conservation strategy, and to establish and achieve Forest Service management objectives. In recovery zones that are contiguous with portions of British Columbia and Alberta, seek to coordinate with appropriate representatives to identify and achieve mutual objectives for the conservation of the grizzly bear.
3. Coordinate with other regions to develop and ensure funding continuity for essential long-term grizzly bear habitat management, information and education, research, and monitoring programs.

4. Coordinate with other regions to develop and implement consistent procedures, guidelines, and actions to sustain grizzly bears and their habitat.
5. Coordinate as appropriate proposed decisions on wildlife damage management activities in grizzly bear habitat (FSM 2676.16e), grizzly bear translocation (FSM 2676.17a), and the use of helicopters for grizzly bear management in wilderness (FSM 2676.17b, FSM 2326.04b).
6. Develop and ensure implementation of criteria and methods to prevent human-caused mortality of grizzly bears.
7. Collaboratively develop public information programs concerning safety and proper behavior by national forest visitors in grizzly bear habitat (FSM 2676.16a). Actively disseminate information about the grizzly bear and important habitats, practices to minimize the potential for grizzly-human conflicts (such as the proper use of bear spray), and other conservation efforts.
8. In coordination with the IGBC, develop policy, guidance, testing procedures, and other programs to assure proper handling and storage of attractants on National Forest System lands.
9. Ensure accurate accounting of costs of grizzly bear conservation and management activities, and ensure that activities are implemented in a cost-effective manner.

2676.14b - Forest Supervisor

In addition to the responsibilities listed at FSM 2670.45, Forest Supervisors in Regions 1, 2, 4 and 6 shall:

1. As assigned, serve as a member of Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) Subcommittees which have the following responsibilities:
 - a. Implement management actions in a coordinated fashion.
 - b. Propose management policy or programs to the IGBC.
 - c. Establish task forces to develop recommendations or implement approved actions when needed (such as law enforcement, information and education, food storage, habitat improvements).
 - d. Identify research needs and financial needs for management and submit to the IGBC.
 - e. Report to IGBC on progress concerning management actions necessary to conserve the grizzly bear.
2. Implement national and regional direction concerning grizzly bears through forest-wide procedures and actions, including, but not limited to, habitat mapping and modeling,

land adjustments, motorized access management, sanitation programs and special orders, and information and education materials.

3. Ensure inter-agency coordination at appropriate levels and maintain contact with interested publics.

2676.14c - District Ranger

In addition to the responsibilities listed at FSM 2670.46, District Rangers in Regions 1, 2, 4 and 6 shall:

1. Contribute to grizzly bear conservation through site-specific planning and management actions.
2. Ensure that conservation provisions for grizzly bears and their habitat are included in leases, permits, contracts, and other authorizations affecting grizzlies and their habitats, and inspect sites under contracts, leases, permits, or authorizations for compliance with grizzly bear conservation measures.
3. Develop and implement practices to minimize potential for grizzly-human conflicts (for example, monitoring of livestock allotments and hunting camps, managing access, or providing bear-resistant containers) and to maintain or improve habitat effectiveness.

2676.17 - Grizzly Bear Population Management

2676.17a - Translocation

Translocation may be an appropriate management technique to restore or augment populations or improve genetic diversity, and to resolve conflicts involving nuisance grizzlies. Bear trapping and transportation are the primary responsibility of the states or National Park Service, with assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for listed populations.

The Forest Service will support the translocation of grizzly bears for conflict resolution, population restoration or augmentation and to maintain the genetic health of established populations. When carrying out such activities on National Forest System lands, the Forest Service and lead agency(s) responsible for the action will cooperate and involve the public as appropriate. Select grizzlies that have a high probability of survival and reproductive success and low probability of conflicts with humans.