

Salmon-Challis NF Communication Plan Feedback

- January 2020 Regions One and Four of the Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service in both states Idaho and Montana got together in Missoula for 2 days to get us all on the same page in regard to where we've been with grizzly bear recovery in the Bitterroot and where we think we need to go.
- One of the tasks that we identified for folks to accomplish for the short term future was putting together a comprehensive communication plan.
- Investment in relationships at multiple scales is going to be important to grizzly bear recovery in the Bitterroot ecosystem as well as involvement of communities and local government.
- Communication is crucial in establishing a foundation for us, not only in the subcommittee and the IGBC, but also with the communities that surround and depend on the lands in the Bitterroot ecosystem and in preparing for grizzly bear recovery. We also need to talk about preparing folks for bears come into the forest, showing the public and our partners what we want to do, what that plan of action looks like and having something more concrete moving forward. We've had questions over the last year and a half or so from people that are wondering what we are doing for the recovery of grizzly bears in the Bitterroot ecosystem and we need to be able to answer those questions.
- Need consistent internal messaging that employees can utilize when asked questions regarding grizzly bear recovery in the Bitterroot ecosystem. Messaging should be specific to grizzly bear sightings and encounters, and any black bear conflicts. We don't want to overwhelm local wildlife managers with black bear sightings and encounters.
- It's critical to talk about where we've been, how we've gotten to today, and where we're moving forward with grizzly bear recovery and then how we share that information so that we're being inclusive enough so that people understand what grizzly bear recovery means in the Bitterroot ecosystem.
- It's key that we're on the same page with this communication plan. If this communication plan is a federal thing it isn't going to benefit us very much, it needs to include the states, Idaho Fish and Game and Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks and County government needs to be included. Having a diverse united front moving forward about what grizzly bear recovery looks like is going to be important especially with how that gets presented to the public.
- It's going to be important to get this federal communication strategy with state input to look at these communities as we develop this. We need to acknowledge that people

haven't lived with grizzly bears for a long time or understand the impact they will have on their recreation and in their lives. It will be important as we move forward to be transparent with this history and share with these communities how it is going to impact them. Also show them the successes in the Flathead Valley with bears, how in Bonners Ferry they're living with bears and in the Greater Yellowstone, where there are good examples moving forward that we do have places that people are living with bears.