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Subject: Fwd: Grizzly Bear Captured Near Stevensville
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From: Montana FWP <montanafwp@public.govdelivery.com>
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Subject: Grizzly Bear Captured Near Stevensville
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Grizzly Bear Captured Near Stevensville

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) captured a young male grizzly bear on Saturday, October 27 on the Whitetail golf course, north of Stevensville along the Bitterroot River.

Over the past few weeks, FWP received multiple reports of a bear extensively digging and causing damage to the golf course. Because the bear was staying in the area and damaging the property, wardens set a trap in response, expecting to capture a black bear. FWP trapped the bear early Saturday morning and later confirmed it was instead a young 249-pound male grizzly.

Through the years, several grizzly bears have been confirmed in the Sapphire Mountains and in the northwest portion of the Bitterroot Valley, including the Lolo Creek drainage, and as far south as the Big Hole Valley. Grizzly bears in the Bitterroot remain relatively uncommon, compared to other parts of northwest Montana, but there have been increasing reports in recent years.

Northwest Montana’s nearby Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE) is the closest grizzly bear recovery zone with an established population of grizzlies. “The NCDE is not far away, and grizzly bears are expanding in several directions from there, slowly recolonizing historic ranges,” said FWP Region 2 Bear Management Specialist, James Jonkel.

The grizzly was relocated Sunday to the lower Blackfoot Valley, on the southern edge of the NCDE, in a spot previously identified as a good relocation area for bears.

This time of year, Jonkel added, it is common for bears to routinely follow drainages down into the rich valley bottoms, where food and water are more plentiful. “Where the bear was captured along the river, foods like rosehip, snowberry and various forbs are attracting bears right now. Therefore, it’s extra important to contain things that are under our control, like garbage and fruit trees, so that bears keep on moving to their natural foods and aren’t tempted to stay in our neighborhoods.”

Hunting News



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