

**From:** [Jimenez, Benjamin S](#)  
**To:** [Szuszwalak, Joseph A](#); [Cooley, Hilary](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Interview request: Bighorn mountains  
**Date:** Friday, April 19, 2024 2:56:01 PM

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I responded to the question/comment on previous grizzly bear activity, and made one suggestion. Any reason to add something clarifying that while we do share concerns about increased conflict, that alone does not and would not constitute grounds for lethal removal?

Thanks either way,

Ben Jimenez  
Conflict Coordinator  
Grizzly Bear Recovery Program  
US Fish and Wildlife Service  
406-214-0497 (cell)

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**From:** Szuszwalak, Joseph A <[joseph\\_szuszwalak@fws.gov](mailto:joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 19, 2024 1:10 PM  
**To:** Cooley, Hilary <[hilary\\_cooley@fws.gov](mailto:hilary_cooley@fws.gov)>; Jimenez, Benjamin S <[benjamin\\_jimenez@fws.gov](mailto:benjamin_jimenez@fws.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Interview request: Bighorn mountains

Copy thanks! Just accepted those, will stand by for Ben to take a look.

**Joe Szuszwalak** (*He/Him*)  
Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Director, Office of Communications  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Southwest Region  
[joseph\\_szuszwalak@fws.gov](mailto:joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov) | 720-557-3848

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**From:** Cooley, Hilary <[hilary\\_cooley@fws.gov](mailto:hilary_cooley@fws.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 19, 2024 11:58 AM  
**To:** Szuszwalak, Joseph A <[joseph\\_szuszwalak@fws.gov](mailto:joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov)>; Jimenez, Benjamin S <[benjamin\\_jimenez@fws.gov](mailto:benjamin_jimenez@fws.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Interview request: Bighorn mountains

Thanks Joe. I provided a few edits.

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**From:** Szuszwalak, Joseph A <[joseph\\_szuszwalak@fws.gov](mailto:joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov)>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 19, 2024 10:59 AM  
**To:** Jimenez, Benjamin S <[benjamin\\_jimenez@fws.gov](mailto:benjamin_jimenez@fws.gov)>; Cooley, Hilary <[hilary\\_cooley@fws.gov](mailto:hilary_cooley@fws.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Interview request: Bighorn mountains

Ben and Hilary here is a first draft based on the info I have so far please jump in with any edits:

-  [Media Inquiry\\_Bighorn Mtns grizzly\\_4.18.24.docx](#)

**Joe Szuszwalak** (He/Him)

Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Director, Office of Communications

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Southwest Region

[joseph\\_szuszwalak@fws.gov](mailto:joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov) | 720-557-3848

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**From:** Jimenez, Benjamin S <[benjamin\\_jimenez@fws.gov](mailto:benjamin_jimenez@fws.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 18, 2024 4:06 PM

**To:** Szuszwalak, Joseph A <[joseph\\_szuszwalak@fws.gov](mailto:joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov)>; Cooley, Hilary <[hilary\\_cooley@fws.gov](mailto:hilary_cooley@fws.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Interview request: Bighorn mountains

Hi, you two. Yeah, Joe, if you want to write something up and send it my way, or if there's something I can provide for this, just let me know. Dealing with a conflict this afternoon, but should be in the office tomorrow morning and can have a look.

Thanks,

Ben Jimenez

Conflict Coordinator

Grizzly Bear Recovery Program

US Fish and Wildlife Service

406-214-0497

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**From:** Szuszwalak, Joseph A <[joseph\\_szuszwalak@fws.gov](mailto:joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 18, 2024 1:27:56 PM

**To:** Cooley, Hilary <[hilary\\_cooley@fws.gov](mailto:hilary_cooley@fws.gov)>; Jimenez, Benjamin S <[benjamin\\_jimenez@fws.gov](mailto:benjamin_jimenez@fws.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Interview request: Bighorn mountains

Thanks Hilary I can work that info up into a short statement - maybe more of a question for Ben but if someone could also add any info we have on recent confirmations of bears in the Bighorns/if we know of any others at the moment that might be good to include.

**Joe Szuszwalak** (He/Him)

Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Director, Office of Communications

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Southwest Region

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**From:** Cooley, Hilary <[hilary\\_cooley@fws.gov](mailto:hilary_cooley@fws.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 18, 2024 1:26 PM

**To:** Szuszwalak, Joseph A <[joseph\\_szuszwalak@fws.gov](mailto:joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov)>; Jimenez, Benjamin S

<[benjamin\\_jimenez@fws.gov](mailto:benjamin_jimenez@fws.gov)>

**Subject:** Re: Interview request: Bighorn mountains

Not sure we need to do an interview, but we could give a statement.

Bighorns is not a recovery zone and does not provide connectivity to a recovery zone. But we still could have bear movement there (and we did). However, that landscape between GYE and Bighorns does not have the protections that the GYE has, and we would expect more conflicts between GYE and Bighorns.

Also -bears are still listed there and we can't just remove them for being there.

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**From:** Szuszwalak, Joseph A <[joseph\\_szuszwalak@fws.gov](mailto:joseph_szuszwalak@fws.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 18, 2024 9:42 AM

**To:** Cooley, Hilary <[hilary\\_cooley@fws.gov](mailto:hilary_cooley@fws.gov)>; Jimenez, Benjamin S <[benjamin\\_jimenez@fws.gov](mailto:benjamin_jimenez@fws.gov)>

**Subject:** Interview request: Bighorn mountains

Hi Hilary and Ben,

Given WYG&F comments about grizzlies not belonging in the Bighorn's, we now have an interview request to discuss what the Service thinks about grizzly expansion in the Bighorns.

Wondering what your initial thoughts are on responding to this...we have some options, from granting the interview with one of you, or providing a statement, or declining the opportunity. I think they all have pros/cons.

**Joe Szuszwalak** (*He/Him*)

Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Director, Office of Communications

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Southwest Region

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