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## NEWSLETTER

Featuring updates on grizzly bear conservation activities,  
and the latest *Grizzly Times* Blog and Podcast  
from [Louisa Willcox and David Mattson, PhD.](#)  
Co-Founders of *Grizzly Times*.

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April 14, 2022

Dear Friend of the Grizzly Bear,

Grizzlies are emerging from their dens as snow recedes and spring advances in the Northern Rockies. But pickings are slim, so winter-killed animals, especially bison, elk and moose, are especially prized right now. See one of David's cool "baseball cards" below for more on these bear foods.

We have a lot of exciting news to report – and an inspiring new podcast, featuring Bear Ranger, Tom Mazzarisi.

### **NEW PODCAST:**

#### **Meet Bear Ranger Tom Mazzarisi**

For the past 15 years Tom has worked as a bear ranger focusing on grizzlies, starting in Yellowstone National Park and now in Glacier. His career has fulfilled a lifetime dream that started when he was 12 years old. In this interview, you can hear Tom's conservation ethic shine through his stories about challenges keeping grizzlies and people safe in some of the country's most iconic landscapes – even as visitation explodes. He also shares perspectives about management of wildlife in the western US and Africa based in part on years of experience leading natural history safaris with his wife Amy as part of [First Light Safaris](#).

Tom is also a passionate environmental advocate who shares his views in this podcast on removing Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections for lower 48 states' grizzlies, trophy hunting, and more.

You might have heard the story – broadcast on national news – about how Tom reunited a teddy bear that had been accidentally lost last year in Glacier Park with its 7-year-old owner, Naomi.



*Tom Mazzarisi in his Glacier haunts*

### **A Few Quotes from Tom**

“I remember the glance Scarface [a famous Yellowstone grizzly] gave me. It’s tough to explain – it wasn’t aggressive, but it was so intense... Scarface was another example of a bear that was tolerant of us. As long we can show tolerance of them, they can make a life, a safe life on the fringes of humanity – if we’re willing to take the time to let it happen.”

“If there were bears being bears and using natural food sources, we do our best to manage people and keep people away and allow the bear to do bear things. I mean we don’t have to be there – the bear does.”

“Essentially during the elk season, hunting season in the fall, it is a grizzly season, because a lot of bears are being shot in self-defense... I think that people are just being a little bit too quick to the trigger.”

“As we’re seeing with wolves now, there’s no science – there’s no reason for the rate that wolves are being killed outside national parks right now. And what makes you think that’s going to be any different with bears?”

“I have spent my career and more than half my life in grizzly bear country. When I’m not working, I’d never carry a firearm. I’ve never felt the need to have a firearm hiking in grizzly bear country.”

“We’re killing our parks. I think recreation is underrated as far as its effects on wildlife and natural resources in the parks.”

<https://www.grizzlytimespodcast.org/post/tom-mazzarisi>

**“BEST OF” GRIZZLY TIMES BLOGS:**

After writing numerous blogs over the last seven years, we finally decided to high-grade the best, emphasizing those that are relatively timeless: <https://www.grizzlytimes.org/essays>.

They cover such topics as:

- Natural History: <https://www.grizzlytimes.org/yellowstone-natural-history>
- Science and Recovery: <https://www.grizzlytimes.org/deficient-science-recovery-standards>
- Coexistence: <https://www.grizzlytimes.org/coexistence>
- Litigation and Law: <https://www.grizzlytimes.org/litigation-law>
- Of Awe, Wonder and Cultural Connections with Bears: [https://www.grizzlytimes.org/cultural\\_connections](https://www.grizzlytimes.org/cultural_connections)
- Of Aldo Leopold, and the Leopold Family: Grizzlies and the “Fierce Green Fire:” [https://www.grizzlytimes.org/leopold\\_family](https://www.grizzlytimes.org/leopold_family)
- 399, The Matron Grizzly of Jackson Hole: [https://www.grizzlytimes.org/matron\\_grizzly\\_of\\_Jackson\\_Hole](https://www.grizzlytimes.org/matron_grizzly_of_Jackson_Hole)

## Foods of Yellowstone's Grizzly Bears

April-September

### Bison *Bison bison*

Grizzlies in Yellowstone are the only bear population to still eat bison meat, and constitute a living museum of a behavior that was once widespread wherever grizzlies and bison coexisted. Almost all of the meat from bison is obtained by scavenging, and bison are disproportionately important in this regard because there is so much meat on them—enough to swamp most smaller scavengers, and with hides thick enough to deter scavengers other than bears and wolves. Most bison meat is obtained during the spring from winter-killed animals, but there is a secondary peak in consumption during August-September associated with scavenging of bull bison that died during or shortly after the rut.



<https://www.mostlynaturalgrizzlies.org/ungulates>

Mattson, D.J. (1997). Use of ungulates by Yellowstone grizzly bears *Ursus arctos*. *Biological Conservation* 81: 161-177.

Green, G.I., D.J. Mattson & J.M. Peek (1997). Spring feeding on ungulate carcasses by grizzly bears in Yellowstone National Park. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 61: 1040-1055.

Craighead, J.J., J.S. Sumner & J.A. Mitchell (1995). *The Grizzly Bear of Yellowstone: Their Ecology in the Yellowstone Ecosystem, 1959—1992*. Island Press, Washington, D.C.

### IN THE NEWS:

#### Idaho, Montana and Wyoming Petition U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Delist Grizzlies - Again

During the past few months, the governors of Montana and Idaho followed Wyoming's lead in filing petitions with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to strip Endangered Species Act protections for grizzlies. Wyoming's petition was limited to Greater Yellowstone's grizzly bear population, while Montana's targeted Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem grizzlies. Idaho aims to delist all grizzlies in the state, including the beleaguered Selkirks and Cabinet Yaak grizzlies, and the few bears currently colonizing the Selway-Bitterroot ecosystem after having been extirpated decades ago.

These petitions reveal the deep-seated ambitions of state politicians and wildlife managers to wrest control over managing grizzlies from the federal government, remove ESA protections, and reduce grizzly bear numbers – including by sport hunting. If these petitions were to be successful, we would never see grizzlies fully recover as they remain extremely vulnerable to extirpation because of small population sizes, dwindling food sources, excessive killing, and isolation.

These petitions follow on decades of campaigning by state politicians to remove ESA protections for grizzlies – campaigns that rejected the best science on grizzly bear recovery and were consistently thwarted by federal courts. This last round of



state efforts ignores rulings by federal judges in 2018 and 2020 that restored endangered species protections for Yellowstone grizzlies – rulings that the FWS has not yet addressed.

Disappointingly, the FWS has so far given no sign that it intends to reject these petitions. That is why we are asking you to **“Take Action”** (see below).

- <https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/environmental/wyoming-idaho-and-montana-join-forces-to-seek-delisting-of-grizzlies>
- <https://montanafreepress.org/2021/12/06/montana-seeks-ncde-grizzly-delisting/>
- <https://idfg.idaho.gov/press/governor-brad-little-petitions-have-grizzly-bears-removed-endangered-species-act>

For more on why delisting is a bad idea see: <https://www.grizzlytimes.org/why-delisting-is-a-bad-idea>

### **Wildlife Managers Oppose Montana’s Anti-Carnivore Laws: A Roadblock to Delisting?**

Recently, 35 state, federal, and tribal biologists and managers who had previously worked for government agencies wrote a powerful letter, published in Montana papers, expressing opposition to delisting grizzlies because of the anti-carnivore laws passed by the Montana legislature during 2020. Former FWS Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator, Chris Servheen, penned the letter.

Here is the important bit: "While these regressive laws and the legislative anti-predator attitudes that produced these laws remain in place, we cannot support the delisting of grizzly bears in Montana. We strongly believe that grizzly bears must remain listed under ESA in Montana so that their populations remain healthy, and politicians are not able to reverse 40 years of grizzly recovery."

And this: "The management of grizzly bears (and wolves) in Montana must return to management based on science and facts instead of politically driven misinformation and anti-predator hysteria."

So far, the opinions of these credentialed managers and biologists have not had any obvious impact on the campaign to remove ESA protections – for the obvious reason that those pushing this agenda are driven not by rationality but by anti-carnivore ideology. But the views of these managers and biologists who publicly spoke out could create hurdles to another attempt at delisting primarily by helping make the legal case that current state laws are inadequate to ensure the health of grizzly bear populations under state management authority.

<https://missoulian.com/opinion/columnists/opinion-we-cannot-support-delisting-montana-grizzly-bears-unless-state-laws-are-changed>

### **GOOD NEWS:**

**Grizzly Bears Now “Regular Residents” of Manitoba**



*Hudson Bay grizzly. Photo by Doug Clark.*

Grizzly bear sightings in Manitoba have significantly increased during the past four decades. One of the recent sightings included a mother grizzly with two cubs, evidence suggesting that grizzlies now breed in Manitoba. The first author of the publication reporting this increase in sightings is Doug Clark, an Associate Professor in the School of Environment and Sustainability at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon.

Climate warming is likely a key driver of habitat changes that allow more grizzlies to live further north than in the past. This increase in sightings puts the spotlight on the Hudson Bay coast of Manitoba as the only place in the world where grizzlies, polar bears, and black bears have been confirmed to coexist. Clark said the apparent rise in grizzly numbers has implications for black bears, who tend to live inland from the coast, and polar bears, which only frequent the coast during months when there is no ice on Hudson Bay.

"There's a whole variety of things that go on when grizzly bears and polar bears meet: grizzly bears killing the polar bears, grizzly bears and polar bears also mate, and you've got everything going on in between," he said.

<https://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/more-than-we-expected-grizzly-bear-sightings-have-spiked-in-manitoba-since-1980-report-1.5829930>

For more on Doug Clark's research see: <https://www.grizzlytimes.org/single-post/2018/11/02/The-Grizzlies-of-Wapusk-an-Unfolding-Story-of-Change>

## **Forest Service Drops Terrible Logging Project for Now**

The Lolo National Forest recently dropped plans to defend its plans to log and road the Soldier-Butler project area in the Ninemile Ranger District west of Missoula, Montana after two defeats in federal court. This massive project would have degraded grizzly bear habitat and blocked grizzly bears from moving between the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem to the northeast and the vast Selway-Bitterroot Ecosystem that grizzlies are currently recolonizing.

After the Forest Service withdrew its appeal of a district court ruling that found the agency violated its own rules to protect grizzly bears and wildlife habitat, the court dismissed the case.

“We are thrilled that this case is now over,” Alliance for the Wild Rockies Executive Director Mike Garrity said. "This enormous project encompassed more than 70 square miles and would have added well over 44 miles of new roads to this already highly-roaded landscape. We hope that the Forest Service will now direct its attention to removing the 44 miles of illegal roads in the area that it promised the public it would remove over 16 years ago, but never did.”

Good going, bear warriors!

<https://missoulian.com/news/local/forest-service-drops-appeal-on-logging-grizzly-habitat>

## **An Inspired Idea: Transboundary Peace Park between Ukraine and Romania**



*Carpathian Mountains, Ukraine*

During a time of unthinkable suffering in Ukraine comes an inspired idea by Gabi Păun, President of Agent Green – and a dear friend and champion of the bear. Agent Green is an amazing Romanian organization that works to protect

Romania's – and Europe's – natural wonders, including bears. The country's Carpathian Mountains are home to the largest brown bear population in Europe – roughly 7,000 bears. This compares to a total of only 1,800 grizzlies or so in the contiguous U.S. Romania's Carpathian Mountains not only share a border with Ukraine, but also extend northward into the embattled country.

During recent months the Agent Green team has been transporting and providing for mothers and children fleeing Ukraine. But Gabi has also been thinking about the environmental side of this terrible war.

In what follows, Gabi summarizes the vision of a Transboundary Peace Park between Ukraine and Romania that could help heal this wounded land (aided by Google translations):

“We are pleased to announce that in these times of war, but with the thought of peace, the idea was born to establish the National Peace Park, which will unite the forests of Ukraine with those of Romania. A common park for the two countries that share the same Carpathian relief at the border, a symbol of peace in a moment of our existence that we no longer thought we would live.

Agent Green has taken the initiative to create the necessary premises for the establishment of the future National Peace Park. At the same time, the group has set its ambition to build the Peace Route, a path that will cross the entire Carpathian chain, from the Czech Republic to Serbia and crossing Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania. A symbolic route, perhaps the longest in the world, would honor the wildness and grandeur of the Carpathians, where the borders no longer matter but only Nature unites us.

The Peace Park will be a space for biodiversity protection, conservation of clean water, conservation of ancient natural and secular cultural landscapes, and support of ethnic diversity and traditional culture.

A nature enthusiast has already started to cross it this month from the north, crossing it completely and reaching the Danube by the end of July.

I have found extraordinary support both in the academic community and among county authorities in Romania for the idea. This gives us confidence to start talking to local authorities and counterparts in Ukraine. Will keep you posted.”

*Gabriel Păun*

For more on the Peace Park idea: <https://www.agentgreen.ro/parcul-national-al-pacii/>

For more on Gabi and his work, listen to these Grizzly Times podcasts:

<https://www.grizzlytimespodcast.org/post/gabriel-paun>

<https://www.grizzlytimespodcast.org/post/gabriel-paun-2>

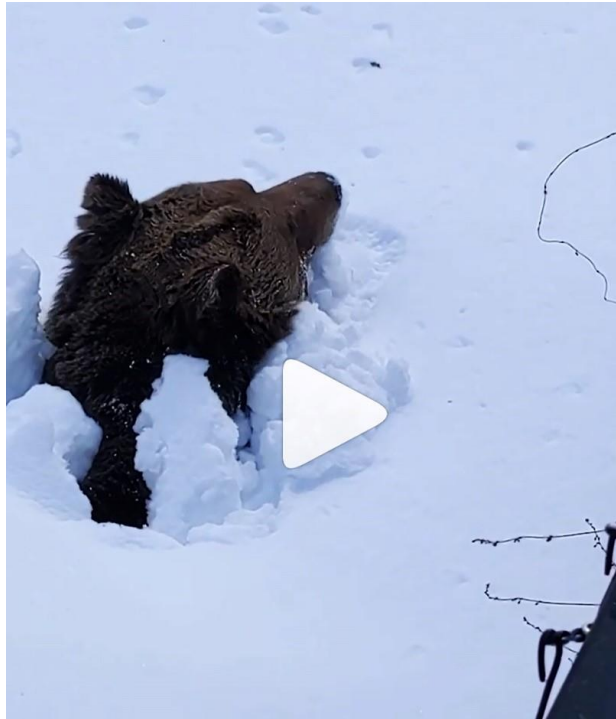


### **Fun video: Grizzly Bear Emerging from Winter Slumber**

See this fun video showing captive grizzly bear, Boo, waking up from his lengthy winter rest – for the 20th time.

Boo and his brother Cari were orphaned at just five months of age after their mother was shot – but the Kicking Horse Grizzly Bear Refuge in British Columbia was built to give them a second lease on life and a new home.

<https://www.fieldandstream.com/outdoors/grizzly-bear-hibernation/>



*Grizzly bear “Boo” wakes up! (Click on the link or photo to view video.)*

### **TAKE ACTION:**

#### **Tell Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to Reject State Petitions**

First, a little background on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Endangered Species Act – and why we are asking you to **Take Action Now**.

#### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Conservator of Endangered Species**

The Endangered Species Act gives the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ultimate authority over grizzly bear recovery, although more concrete actions affecting grizzly bears or their habitat are undertaken by a number of different wildlife and land management agencies that the FWS oversees. All grizzlies in the lower 48 states are listed as threatened under the Act.

The Act has greatly benefited grizzlies by requiring that management of this species on public, and even private lands, be guided by the precautionary

principle and informed by the best available science. Indeed, we may have lost the grizzly entirely were it not for the ESA.

The ESA prohibits people from killing grizzlies except in cases of self-defense. The ESA also requires that the FWS ensure that decisions by other agencies such as the Forest Service do not directly or indirectly jeopardize grizzlies.

Although these requirements may sound clear-cut, they are not because pressure from politicians and those invested in exploitation of natural resources distort the decision-making process, typically to the detriment of grizzly bears. The agency tends to neglect the best available science and contravene other ESA mandates – which is why many FWS decisions, including several attempts at removing ESA protections and routine approvals of destructive logging projects, have been overturned in court.

### **Outdated Recovery Plan**

The FWS has been reluctant to revise an outdated and defective Recovery Plan for grizzly bears that was last updated in 1993 – nearly 30 years ago. Since then, there has been an exponential increase in scientific information relevant to managing and recovering grizzly bears, none of which has been incorporated into the authoritative guidance that the Recovery Plan is supposed to provide.

Among the plan's most critical deficiencies are complete disregard for the threats posed by climate change, and perpetuation of standards for judging recovery of grizzly bear populations that are far too low and contravene the best available science.

### **Inadequate Law Enforcement**

Curbing the illegal killing and harassment of grizzlies by people is critical to recovery. But law enforcement in the FWS and the Forest Service has been woefully inadequate. Over the years, staffing of law enforcement positions, and the related capacity to investigate poaching cases, has significantly declined due to budget cuts. Prosecution of suspect cases has also been chronically lax.

These deficiencies matter because humans are responsible for nearly all grizzly bear deaths, and because many human-caused deaths involve suspect circumstances or are demonstrably caused by poachers. There is no doubt that poaching or questionable “self-defense” cases have increased during the last 10 years – but we do not know the actual extent of the problem.

### **What You Can Do**

Of the many agencies that are responsible for grizzly bears, the Department of Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are the most important – and one place where you can make a positive difference. The key decision-makers are Interior Secretary Deb Haaland (Interior oversees FWS); U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Director Martha Williams; and Grizzly Bear Recovery Coordinator Hilary Cooley.  
(See their contact info below.)

Tell these officials to keep grizzlies on the endangered species list and reject the states' petitions; strengthen enforcement of the ESA's ban on harassing and killing grizzlies; update the obsolete Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan; and give Tribes and conservation voices a meaningful role in recovery. These imperatives are all the more pressing because the alternative to ESA protections and FWS management is devolution of management to the states of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming – and more dead bears.

- Deb Haaland [feedback@ios.doi.gov](mailto:feedback@ios.doi.gov)
- Martha Williams: <https://www.fws.gov/staff-profile/martha-williams>
- Hilary Cooley: [hilary\\_cooley@fws.gov](mailto:hilary_cooley@fws.gov)

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### **Please Consider a Gift to Grizzly Times...**

We need your help! We have retired and are doing this full-time work pretty much gratis – despite the gradual dissolution of our physical bodies.

If you were following the most recent delisting court case, you know that David's role was vital to the litigation success that restored Endangered Species Act protections to Greater Yellowstone's grizzly bears. The skilled attorneys could not have won the case without David's scientific expertise. He also helped with the successful appeal to the Ninth Circuit Court, which has implications for delisting of Northern Continental Divide grizzlies, and perhaps all grizzlies in the lower 48 states.

As we do not have our own nonprofit, a not-for-profit tax-deductible organization, Conservation Congress, has agreed to be our fiscal sponsor. (*Thank you, Denise!*)

You can make a one-time contribution or sign up for a monthly donation through this link:

[DONATE HERE](#)

Or, you can mail a donation to:  
Conservation Congress  
C/O Denise Boggs  
1604 1st Avenue South  
Great Falls, Montana 59401

\* Be sure to note that your contribution is for Grizzly Times (GT).

Thank you for your continued support – in any way – it is greatly appreciated!

For the bears,  
*Louisa and David*