

Grizzly Bears for the Selway-Bitterroot

An Appraisal of Proximal Remedies for Threats and Impediments to Recovery of Grizzly Bears in the Selway-Bitterroot

The following appraisal is structured around threats or impediments to achieving the goal and related objectives of recovering grizzly bears in north-central and central Idaho. The appraisal accordingly starts with a statement of the goal and subsidiary objectives, followed by three sections, each organized around an articulation of key threats or impediments to achieving each objective. Each threat or impediment is accompanied by an identification of the entities (i.e., targets) with direct authority over implementing prospective remedies. Where appropriate, either the map at the end of this appraisal or a specific section in *The Grizzly Bear Promised Land*¹ is referenced for additional relevant information.

This appraisal is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather simply a starting point for orienting to the problem of recovering grizzly bears in the Selway-Bitterroot Ecosystem and adjacent areas of Idaho. The appraisal also does not broach the political, legal, media, and organizational strategies and tactics that will be necessary for achieving any of the proximal remedies described here.

Goal

A reproducing and eventually viable population of grizzly bears in north-central and central Idaho

Objective 1

Facilitate the successful movement of colonizing grizzly bears into the region

Objective 2

Ensure that colonizing bears survive after they arrive

Objective 3

Facilitate/expedite the movement of female grizzly bears into the region

A. Threats/Impediments to Achieving Objective 1: Successful movement into the region

Report Reference: See Section 8

A.1. Interstate 90: Avoidance and vehicle strikes

Authoritative Targets: U.S. Department of Transportation; Montana Department of Transportation

Remedies: (i) Strategically placed underpass and overpasses with associated barriers

Map Reference: See 06-I90 Lookout in panel A

¹ Mattson, D. J. (2021). *The Grizzly Bear Promised Land*. The Grizzly Bear Recovery Project Report GBRP-2021-1.

A.2 Highway 200 and the associated Montana Rail Link railway: *Avoidance and vehicle/train strikes*

Authoritative Targets: Montana Department of Transportation; Montana Rail Link; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Remedies: (i) Strategically places underpasses and overpasses with associated barriers; (ii) Reduced train speeds, track sanitation, and deterrent devices on trains and at strategic locales

A.3. Road infrastructure on the St. Joe, southern Kootenai, and northern Lolo National Forests: *Avoidance, displacement, poaching, and hunter-caused mortality*

Authoritative Targets: U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Idaho Fish & Game

Remedies: (i) Permanent protection of Inventoried Roadless Areas; (ii) Road closures and permanent road retirement; (iii) Elimination of black bear baiting and hunting (Idaho); (iv) Increased law enforcement; (v) Increased hunter education

Map Reference: See Coeur d'Alene and St. Joe in Panel D

A.4. Loss of roadless areas on the Lolo National Forest in the Sapphire Mountains: *Displacement, poaching, hunter-caused mortality, mortality from conflicts over livestock*

Authoritative Targets: U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Remedies: (i) Permanent and meaningful protection of Inventoried Roadless Areas; (ii) Road closures and permanent road retirement; (iii) Retirement of grazing allotments; (iv) Improved husbandry on allotments; (v) Increased law enforcement; (vi) Increased hunter education

Map Reference: See B-Garnet, G-Two Bear, and H-Sapphire in Panel C

A.5. Highway 93 and associated human habitations and livestock operations in the Bitterroot Valley: *Avoidance, displacement, mortality from conflicts over garbage, mortality from conflicts over livestock, vehicle strikes*

Authoritative Targets: Private Land Owners; Ravalli County; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Montana Department of Transportation; U.S. Department of Transportation; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Remedies: (i) County ordinances mandating sanitation of residences; (ii) Improved storage and transfer of garbage; (iii) Increased outreach and education for property owners; (iv) Assistance with coexistence infrastructure on private lands; (v) Increased law enforcement; (vi) Collaborative coexistence efforts; (vii) Livestock carcass disposal operations; (viii) Strategically-placed road-crossing infrastructure

Map Reference: See 09-I90 Clark Fk and 15-US93 in Panel A

A.6. Road infrastructure and grazing allotments on Forest Service and other federal lands in the Centennial Mountains: *Mortality from conflicts with livestock, poaching, avoidance, displacement*

Authoritative Targets: U.S. Forest Service; U.S.D.A. Agricultural Research Service; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Idaho Fish & Game; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Remedies: (i) Permanent and meaningful protection of Inventoried Roadless Areas; (ii) Road closures and permanent road retirement; (iii) Retirement of grazing allotments; (iv) Improved husbandry on allotments; (v) Increased law enforcement; (vi) Elimination of black bear baiting and hunting (Idaho)

Map Reference: See 16-ID28 Leadore and 17-I15 Monida in Panel A; I-Big Hole, J-Salmon, and M-Centennial in Panel C

B. Threats/Impediments to Achieving Objective 2: Survival of Colonists

B.1. Road infrastructure on the Nez Perce-Clearwater NFs: *Avoidance and displacement, etc*

Authoritative Targets: U.S. Forest Service; Idaho Fish & Game; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Remedies: (i) Permanent and meaningful protection of Inventoried Roadless Areas; (ii) Road closures and permanent road retirement

Report Reference: See Sections 7.b and 7.c

B.2. Poaching

Authoritative Targets: Idaho Game & Fish; U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Remedies: (i) Increased law enforcement; (ii) Road closures

Report Reference: See Section 7.a

B.3. Unsanitary conditions on U.S. Forest Service and Private Lands: *Mortality from conflicts over garbage and as a result of bear being food conditioned*

Authoritative Targets: U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Clearwater, Shoshone, & Idaho Counties

Remedies: (i) Deployment and maintenance of comprehensive sanitation infrastructure on Forest Service lands; (ii) County ordinance requiring sanitation on private lands; (iii) Improved storage and transfer of garbage; (iv) Increased outreach and education for property owners; (v) Collaborative coexistence efforts

Report Reference: See Section 7.a

B.4. Baiting and hunting of black bears: *Mistaken identification of grizzlies and mortality as a result of bears being food conditioned*

Authoritative Targets: U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Idaho Fish & Game

Remedies: (i) Elimination of black bear baiting; (ii) Elimination of black bear hunting; (iii) Increased hunter education

Report Reference: See Section 7.a

B.5. Elk hunters: *Mortality from surprise encounters and contestation of elk carcasses, and policy conflicts over disposition of elk for hunters versus predators*

Authoritative Targets: U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Idaho Game & Fish

Remedies: (i) Hunter education; (ii) Require that hunters carry pepper spray; (iii) Limit late-day hunting; (iv) Require the surrender of a contested carcass; (v) Deployment of poles to hang game at all outfitter and hunter camps...

Report Reference: See Sections 6.d and 7.a

B.6. Grazing Allotments on the Nez Perce National Forest: *Mortality from conflicts over livestock*

Authoritative Targets: U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Remedies: (i) Permanent retirement of grazing allotments; (ii) Conversion of sheep allotments; (iii) Improved husbandry; (iv) Changes in timing of grazing; (v) Improvement of allotment infrastructure; (vi) Conversion of cow-calf to yearling grazing

Report Reference: See Section 7.a

C. Impediments to Achieving Objective 3: Colonization by Females

C.1. Limited dispersal of females

Authoritative Targets: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Remedies: (i) Assisted movement of adolescent female grizzlies from other ecosystems

C.2. Impediments to movement and survival of colonizing females (*see A and B, above*)

