



Proposed Grizzly Bear Rule Talking Points (Please Personalize)

Key takeaway: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) made the right decision in rejecting Montana and Wyoming’s petitions to remove federal protections for grizzly bears. However, the proposed rule poses serious risks by expanding states’ authority to kill bears, potentially allowing individuals to shoot them, and even opening the door to sanctioned trophy hunting. With grizzly mortality reaching record highs last year, now is the worst time to weaken protections. Instead of rolling back safeguards, we need a science-driven recovery plan that ensures a connected and resilient grizzly population. Strengthening habitat protections, prioritizing non-lethal conflict reduction, and promoting natural population connectivity are critical for achieving true and lasting recovery.

Support USFWS decision to keep grizzly bears on the Endangered Species list as a threatened species. It has taken decades to achieve even the partial recovery of grizzly bears in their former range and continued protection is the only way to prevent a reversal of conservation success.

The USFWS should not limit ESA protections to the geographic areas within the proposed Distinct Population Segment (DPS). Grizzly bears in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming should be protected and managed as one single, unified Northern Rockies population. This would exclude prime habitat that USFWS should retain threatened species status under the ESA for all grizzlies in all parts of current and future ranges.

The USFWS has acknowledged the persistent risks to grizzly survival. Scientific analysis for the proposal concludes that conflicts with humans, human population growth, and habitat change could threaten the resiliency of the grizzly bear population and even risk extinction in the “foreseeable future.” Climate change also poses a major threat to grizzly bears and their food sources, making their future ability to migrate and find new habitats even more critical.

The USFWS should not weaken requirements for livestock owners or make it easier for them to “take” a grizzly bear. Under the current proposal, USFWS could authorize the harassment, injury, and killing of grizzlies by ranchers on public lands. On private land, ranchers would be allowed to harass, injure, or kill a grizzly bear before providing any evidence that they didn’t intentionally feed the bear or that the bear was harming domestic animals.

A grizzly bear hunting season should NOT be allowed under any circumstances. In the proposal, USFWS asks whether states and Tribes should be allowed to oversee and regulate hunting in areas where grizzly bear populations are expanding. The only logical answer is no. Hunting could turn the clock back decades of work to recover grizzly bears and advance human-wildlife coexistence.