The North Cascades

Grizzly Bear Outreach Project [GBOP]

About Us
The GBOP is an independent project guided by community members and facilitated by Insight Wildlife Management (IWM) and the Conservation Partnership Center (CPC). The project began in Okanogan County in 2002 and was expanded to encompass Whatcom and Skagit Counties in 2003.

Our Mission
GBOP promotes an accurate understanding of grizzly bears and their recovery in the North Cascades Ecosystem through community education and involvement.

Current distribution and recovery areas

Grizzly bear and black bear characteristics

Grizzly bears in the North Cascades – a chronology

Pre-1850s: Grizzly bears present in all western United States south to plateau area of Mexico. Lower 48 population between 50,000 and 100,000.

1827—1859: Hudson’s Bay Company records show 3,788 grizzly bear hides shipped from three forts around Washington’s North Cascades (3,477 from Fort Colville, 236 Fort Nez Perce near Walla Walla, 75 Thompson’s River in British Columbia).

1975: Grizzly bear listed as a “threatened” species in the lower 48 states by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the Endangered Species Act.

1981: Washington Department of Game listed grizzly bear as an “endangered” species under Washington law.

1983 through 1991: 153 reports of grizzly bear sightings. 21 of these were confirmed and are considered verified Class 1 grizzly bear sightings.

1983: Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC) established with goal of recovering the grizzly bear population in the lower 48 states.

1986 through 1991
North Cascades Grizzly Bear Ecosystem Evaluation completed by agency biologists and submitted to Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC). IGBC committee concluded that the North Cascades Ecosystem contains sufficient quality habitat (i.e. food, space, isolation, etc.) to maintain and recover a viable grizzly bear population.

1991
North Cascades Ecosystem (NCE) designated as a grizzly bear recovery zone by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The NCE recovery zone is nearly 10,000 square miles. 90% of the recovery zone is public land (federal or state). About 68% of the recovery zone has no motorized access. IGBC directed U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal agencies to begin efforts to recover the grizzly bear in the North Cascades. North Cascades Grizzly Bear Subcommittee formed one month later.

1992
NCE Recovery zone boundaries developed and recommended by an interagency group working on the North Cascades Grizzly Bear Recovery Chapter.

1992 and 1993
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service held public informational and scoping meetings in Seattle, Mount Vernon, Wenatchee, and Winthrop to identify concerns and familiarize the public with grizzly bear ecology and the recovery process.

1995
Public informational meetings held to gather comments on the draft North Cascades Grizzly Bear Recovery Chapter.

1996
Survey of 430 Washington residents commissioned by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to determine public’s knowledge and attitudes about grizzly bear biology and recovery in NCE. Survey results showed: 77% support for recovery (statewide respondents); 73% support for recovery (western NCE respondents); 64% support for recovery (eastern NCE respondents).

1997
Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan Chapter for the North Cascades Ecosystem signed by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

2002
North Cascades Grizzly Bear Outreach Project (GBOP) began in Okanogan County (north-eastern NCE) and is expanded to Skagit and Whatcom Counties (north-western NCE) in 2003. GBOP commissions 2003 attitude and knowledge survey of rural Whatcom and Skagit County residents living in or next to recovery ecosystem. 76% of 506 respondents are supportive of recovery (52% strongly supportive).
Did you know?

- Grizzly bear home ranges are generally 50-300 square miles for females and 200-500 square miles for males.
- Surveys have shown that the majority of people living in the North Cascades ecosystem support grizzly bear recovery.
- Grizzly bears are omnivores with a typical diet of less than 10% meat or fish.
- More than 100 plant species in the North Cascades have been identified as grizzly bear foods.
- The North Cascades grizzly bear population will be considered “recovered” when it numbers 200-400 bears. It will take up to 100 years to achieve this population.
- Grizzly bears den for up to 6 months each year to avoid times of low food availability. During this winter sleep they can lose 40% of their body weight.
- For more interesting facts about grizzly bears and the GBOP, please go to: [www.bearinfo.org](http://www.bearinfo.org) or pick up a brochure.

Many thanks to our contributors:

- Defenders of Wildlife
- US Fish And Wildlife Service
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- Seattle City Light
- National Park Service
- Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self Determination Act
- Northwest Ecosystem Alliance
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- USDA Forest Service
- Woodland Park Zoo

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