

Bear Identification

Grizzly bears and black bears look different in several ways. Color and size cannot be used for identification because they vary greatly in both species. Look for a combination of the following characteristics:

Grizzly Bear



- The shoulder hump (muscles to assist digging roots) is usually much more pronounced on a grizzly bear than a black bear.

- The facial profile of a grizzly bear is more *concave* than the *roman nose* profile of a black bear.

Black Bear



- Grizzly bear front claws are as long as a human finger, while black bear claws are much shorter and more curved to assist in climbing.

- Grizzly bear ears are shorter and rounder than black bear ears.

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Report Grizzly Bear Sightings

Why report a grizzly sighting? Information contributed by the public helps management agencies monitor bear distribution and provides valuable information on bear recovery.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife:
509-892-1001

Idaho Department of Fish and Game:
208-769-1414

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
509-893-8014

Idaho Panhandle National Forests:
208-263-5111

Colville National Forest:
509-446-7500

To report an Idaho sighting on-line:

www.fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/grizz_report/index.cfm

Or visit the *Grizzly Bear Outreach Project* website:
www.bearinfo.org for more reporting options.

Poaching Hotline

Idaho
800-632-5999 or 208-769-1414

Washington
800-447-6224 or 509-456-4101

Grizzly Bear Outreach Project contributors:

US Fish and Wildlife Service | Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife | Woodland Park Zoo | USDA Forest Service |



Grizzly Bear Outreach Project (GBOP)
(360) 734-6060

www.bearinfo.org

Bears of the Selkirk Ecosystem

Grizzly Bear Outreach Project



Photo: Daniel J. Cox/NaturalExposures.com

Promoting an accurate understanding of grizzly bears and their recovery in Washington and Idaho through community education and involvement



Grizzly Bear Outreach Project (GBOP)
www.bearinfo.org

The Ecosystem

The Selkirk Mountains of Washington, Idaho and British Columbia is home to two species of bear, the grizzly bear and the black bear. This ecosystem supports some of the highest densities of black bears within the states of Washington and Idaho. This unique ecosystem is also the only place within the lower 48 states that still supports a few woodland caribou.

Photo: Thomas D. Mengelson



Grizzly Bear Recovery

Recovery of the grizzly bear population within the Selkirk ecosystem began in the Selkirk Mountains in 1981 after the grizzly bear was federally listed as a threatened species in 1975.

Being the smallest of the six designated grizzly bear recovery areas, the Selkirk Recovery Area is approximately 2,000 square miles with roughly half located in the United States. It includes portions of northeastern Washington, northern Idaho and southern British Columbia, and is the only grizzly bear recovery area that includes a portion of Canada.

The current grizzly bear population within the entire Selkirk Recovery Area is estimated to be between 50 and 70 bears.

The Road to Recovery



It is estimated that approximately 100 grizzly bears represent a recovered population within this ecosystem and may take several more decades to achieve.

The management of motorized vehicle access is an important aspect of grizzly bear recovery within the Selkirk Recovery Area. Scientific research conducted within the Selkirk ecosystem has shown that grizzly bears usually tend to establish their home ranges within areas where there are fewer roads open to motorized vehicles. Some major obstacles for grizzly bear recovery in the Selkirk Recovery Area include illegal poaching, misidentification, and "food conditioning" where bears partake in eating human foods or garbage.



Grizzly Bear Use of Habitats

Grizzly bears are habitat generalists, which means they may be found over a variety of habitats. Their overriding motivation is the search for food.

In the spring, grizzly bears make extensive use of lower elevation meadows, riparian areas, and the first areas in the southern exposures to become free of snow. These areas provide lush green vegetation, which bears seek out.

During the summer season bears feed mainly on berry crops such as huckleberries, service berries, elderberries and mountain ash, although their diet is not limited to these foods.

In the fall months bears make a broader search for food which may include more variety. They will eat carrion almost anytime they find it.

Grizzly bears usually begin entering dens for winter dormancy after the middle of October and may remain in the den until April.

Photo: Thomas D. Mengelson

