

**Preliminary Report for Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Northwestern portion of the NCDE (2013 Field Season)  
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**Grizzly Bear Conflicts:** During the 2013 field season, we received over 60 calls that were reported as grizzly bear conflicts. Of those calls, about 70% were confirmed as being grizzly bears. The other 30% ended up being black bears or unknown. Approximately 95% of the calls were from private landowners that lived in grizzly bear habitat. Of those calls the majority were of bears that were habituated to humans or were seeking unnatural foods in yards. During 2013, there were a large number of calls involving grizzly bears killing chickens. There were also calls about a grizzly northwest of Kalispell that was killing sheep and goats. The rest of the calls were bears that were actively trying to access food either in vehicles or buildings. None of the calls involved aggressive bears or human injury.

**Grizzly Bear Captures:** A total of 10 individual grizzly bears were captured 12 times on the northwest portion of the NCDE. Of those 10, five were new bears that had never been captured previously for management reasons.

Of the 10 individual grizzly bears captured, 2 were adult males, 1 adult females, 4 subadult females, 2 subadult males, and 1 female cub of the year.

Ten of the twelve captures were on private lands. Of the 12 captures, 2 were in the Middle Fork of the Flathead drainage, 1 in the South Fork of the Flathead drainage, 5 in the Tobacco drainage, 1 in the Swan drainage, and 3 in the Flathead Valley.

**Grizzly Bear Mortalities or Removals:** Six of the grizzly bears captured were removed through management actions. Four of these bears were euthanized due to repeated conflicts and property damage. One was a subadult male that was along the railroad tracks near Whitefish Lake. This bear was not responsive and was removed and sent to the Bozeman lab for a necropsy. The last bear was a female cub of the year that was orphaned due to the death of the adult female. The cub was sent to the Bronx Zoo. The death of the adult female is under investigation.

**Prevention:** As in previous years, we continued working with landowners, agency personnel, and organizations to continue prevention efforts. We continue to loan out bear resistant garbage containers, critter gitters, and electric fencing to make attractants unavailable to bears.

**Bear Fairs:** The bear fair that had been scheduled for 2013 was cancelled due to a lack of funding. A bear fair will be planned for 2014 at Polebridge.

**Grizzly Bears and Livestock:** 2013 was definitely a year in which we saw a continuation of grizzly bears killing chickens. Three of the 10 individual grizzly bears that were captured were known to have killed chickens. Several other grizzly bears were killing chickens but were not captured.

**Cabinet Mountains Augmentation Program:** A subadult male was captured in the North Fork of the Flathead and released in the West Cabinets. As of last report that bear has moved into the main Cabinets. An effort was made to capture a subadult female, but only males or adult females with cubs were captured. Augmentation trapping will continue in 2014.

**Flights:** I conducted a total of 15 radio-tracking flights during 2013. These flights were for both management and trend bears. Average flight time was about 3 hours and was conducted with the use of a helicopter.

**Volunteers:** Six volunteers assisted us throughout the field season with the trapping, handling, and monitoring of grizzly bears.