

Wickman, Erik

From: Margarita McLarty <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 11:41 AM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Commissioners Montana Fish & Wildlife,

I'm writing to urge you to amend the draft rules permitting livestock owners to kill grizzly bears, and to limit such authority to the livestock owner's private land only.

SB 295 created authority for ranchers to kill grizzly bears "threatening" livestock even, but—unlike a similar permit system for wolves—this bill failed to protect grizzlies on public land from being killed.

While we understand why a rancher might need this authority in their own pasture, public lands are where grizzlies make their home and their living. Public lands are normally managed for multiple uses, including hunting, fish and other recreation—not to prioritize livestock grazing. FWP doesn't allow this for any other species it manages.

At a time when we have made real progress on grizzly bear conservation in some parts of Montana, this extreme measure threatens to set us back. Please amend the grizzly rule and reassure the public that the State of Montana will be a responsible steward of our treasured state animal, the grizzly bear.

Thank you.

Margarita McLarty
mclarty1@outlook.com
85 Chicory Rd
Livingston, Montana 59047

Wickman, Erik

From: mark <ravensdeer69@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 19, 2023 5:45 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Hello, On opening day of rifle season "October 21st" shot a 6x6 Bull elk that I tracked down the mountain to a creek bottom. Upon approaching the creek where I expected to find my Bull elk I was confronted by a Grizzly in the creek, behind some brush out of view, huffing, breaking branches and splashing water. My hunting partner and I immediately left the area and figured that Grizzly had my Bull elk since the last tracks we saw headed right to that bears location. Needless to say I lost a Bull elk to a Grizzly Bear and I want this documented as a Grizzly Bear Encounter. These Grizzlies need to be kept in check by taking them off the endangered species list and allowing for drawing hunts to keep their numbers down. There are far to many in the Lincoln area where I live and hunt. Mark Rex....

Wickman, Erik

From: Ramona Coyote <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 11:51 AM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Commissioners Montana Fish & Wildlife,

I'm writing to urge you to amend the draft rules permitting livestock owners to kill grizzly bears, and to limit such authority to the livestock owner's private land only.

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Thank you.

Ramona Coyote
ramona_coyote@yahoo.com
12808 Sunburst Drive
Bigfork, Montana 59911

Wickman, Erik

From: Zita Fekete <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, November 19, 2023 5:29 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Commissioners Montana Fish & Wildlife,

I'm writing to urge you to amend the draft rules permitting livestock owners to kill grizzly bears, and to limit such authority to the livestock owner's private land only.

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Thank you.

Zita Fekete
zita.m.fekete@protonmail.ch
1401 Merrill Creek Pkwy
Everett, Washington 98203

Wickman, Erik

From: Donald Bishop <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 12:06 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Commissioners Montana Fish & Wildlife,

I'm writing to urge you to amend the draft rules permitting livestock owners to kill grizzly bears, and to limit such authority to the livestock owner's private land only.

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Thank you.

Donald Bishop
db.flyz@gmail.com
55 Barry Ct.
Bozeman, Montana 59718

Wickman, Erik

From: Kari I Gunderson <cnd2543@blackfoot.net>
Sent: Sunday, November 19, 2023 12:51 PM
To: FWP Wildlife; Kari I Gunderson
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

To the FW Commissioners,

I was not aware of the ZOOM meeting scheduled for Friday, November 17 so I am submitting my public comments to meet the November 20 deadline.

I am a third generation Montanan who grew up on a dryland grain farm along the Rocky Mountain Front where grizzly bears are expanding onto their historical home range on the prairie. Our family farm has never seen grizzly bears and have not had any problems with them.

I am opposed to allowing ranchers to kill grizzly bears on public lands where ranchers may have grazing leases. These leases are a privilege, not a right, and can be revoked or not renewed if the rancher is in violation of the lease agreement. These public lands belong to ALL Americans, not just ranchers, and the majority of public land owners do not support giving ranchers carte blanche opportunities to shoot grizzly bears out of season without a permit or license from FWP. Ranchers operating on leased public lands should be held accountable by showing proof they have tried to apply non-lethal methods like electric fencing, guard dogs, bear relocations, and proper disposal of dead cows that serve as attractants to apex predators like grizzly bears. Retired FWP game wardens like Mike Madel should be actively engaged in discussions with ranchers along the Rocky Mountain Front and be the official officer to shoot a bear that is preying on cows on private property.

The FW commission, largely comprised of cattle ranchers, leaders of the MT Stockgrowers Association, and commercial hunting outfitters, who through self-interest, will benefit financially from these political decisions that do not reflect the will of most public land owners. I grew up knowing that the "shoot, shovel, and shut up" mentality of grizzly bears was widely acceptable, often ignored by FWP or USFWS, and difficult to prosecute. That needs to change.

I lack trust in the FW Commissioners and the FWP under the Gianforte administration to honor education efforts first, using nonlethal preventative measures before allowing ranchers to shoot a grizzly bear that they deem "threatening." This is ambiguous and lacks any transparency to considerations of other public land owners. My concern is that the so-called self-defense shootings are nothing more than a rancher seeing a bear close up and shooting it even though it's not charging or showing signs of aggression. I am a serious gardener and depend on what I grow to feed my family so should I be able to shoot any deer out of season with no license or permit who are grazing on my food source?

This proposed rule will be litigated if approved. The FW Commission was recently exposed in a lawsuit by Wolves of the Rockies to be in violation of open meeting laws by communicating internally prior to public meetings and making decisions before public testimony/written comments were even made. This is a serious breach of public trust in FWP.

Any and all dead grizzly bears should be counted towards annual quotas. Bears indiscriminately killed by ranchers should NOT be exempted, nor should trophy hunts be excluded if grizzly bears are delisted. This year's grizzly bear mortality is already high with 41 known deaths in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem. How many more have been killed intentionally by poachers or ranchers who actively practice the "shoot, shovel, and shut up" illegal practice?

Thank you for your consideration of my comments as a third generation Montanan.

Sincerely,

Kari Gunderson, PhD.
Swan Valley, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Rochelle Gravance <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 11:26 AM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Commissioners Montana Fish & Wildlife,

I'm writing to urge you to amend the draft rules permitting livestock owners to kill grizzly bears, and to limit such authority to the livestock owner's private land only.

SB 295 created authority for ranchers to kill grizzly bears "threatening" livestock even, but—unlike a similar permit system for wolves—this bill failed to protect grizzlies on public land from being killed.

While we understand why a rancher might need this authority in their own pasture, public lands are where grizzlies make their home and their living. Public lands are normally managed for multiple uses, including hunting, fish and other recreation—not to prioritize livestock grazing. FWP doesn't allow this for any other species it manages.

Other alternatives exist, and if implemented, would likely deter bear presence around people and livestock on public lands including and not limited to the use of rubber bullets used consistently. Please amend the grizzly rule and reassure the public that the State of Montana will be a responsible steward of our treasured state animal, the grizzly bear.

Thank you.

Rochelle Gravance
rmg13@hotmail.com
PO BOX 1205
Columbus , Montana 59019

Wickman, Erik

From: Sally Blevins <sallyandraven@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 19, 2023 8:31 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Ranchers should absolutely NOT be able to shoot grizzlies on OUR public lands even if they have a grazing lease.

The grizzlies are in their natural habitat -- the cows and any other livestock are not. They pay an admission to have the privilege of being on public lands. It is up to the ranchers to care for their livestock while at the same time protecting wildlife who depend on that habitat for their well-being. Be bear aware.

Respectfully,
Sally Blevins
295 Elk Range Way
Darby, MT 59829

Wickman, Erik

From: Joe Kipphut <joejb2008@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 19, 2023 7:20 AM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Dear Commissioners:

I urge you to make the rule stronger to require more than "demonstrating an effort " of using non-lethal means to deter a bear. Requiring several non-lethal practices would be more effective.

I also object to the taking of grizzly bears by the department, by individuals for self-defense, etc. not being counted towards the quota. All takings should be counted.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joe Kipphut
420 Woodford St.
Missoula, MT 59801

Wickman, Erik

From: Joan Daoust <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 1:21 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Commissioners Montana Fish & Wildlife,

I'm writing to urge you to amend the draft rules permitting livestock owners to kill grizzly bears, and to limit such authority to the livestock owner's private land only.

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Thank you.

Joan Daoust
jdaoust406@gmail.com
502 Madison Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601

Wickman, Erik

From: Sheri and Dan <sheridanb@montana.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 18, 2023 2:38 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Hello,

Apparently no one I know was informed of the zoom call/meeting held yesterday. And that is concerning as I'm sure you want comments from all sides of the issue. What can you do in the future to get the word out to people wanting to comment???

-1208-

MAR Notice No. 12-614 20-10/20/23

NEW RULE VIII (ARM 12.9.1411) ALLOWABLE NON-LETHAL MEASURES

OR PREVENTATIVE MEASURES OF THE GRIZZLY BEAR (1) As allowed by 87-

5-301 and 87-6-106(4), MCA, control of the grizzly bear includes a variety of non-lethal measures or preventative measures intended to decrease risk of, prevent, or resolve a conflict without killing the grizzly bear in question.

This should be at the top of the list... control without killing the bear. An owner of livestock should be required to show how he has done these things to prevent conflict before a bear is killed.

(2) Pursuant to 87-5-301(3), MCA, a livestock owner or other authorized person may take, without a permit or license, a grizzly bear that is attacking or killing livestock. Take by a livestock owner or other authorized person is limited to those areas that a livestock owner's livestock are legally authorized to be.

In reading your ARM proposal, I was concerned that it seems that anyone, without proof of threat to livestock, are given the go ahead to kill grizzly bears. I assume this means that if someone just does not like bears, that they will be able to shoot one just if they see it walking on their property, or on public land where they have livestock. We have grizzly bears that show up on game cameras near our house... we've never seen them ... they have caused no problems. But you are giving people the right to kill those bears just for being. This is wrong.

I have deer that regularly get into my flowerbeds and would be eating my garden and apples if given the chance. Do I have the right to shoot one of these predatory deer just because they are near my lettuce and beans?

And livestock owners should definitely not be allowed to kill bears on public land.

I also have a problem with:

NEW RULE III (ARM 12.9.1406) THE QUOTA AND ESTABLISHING AND
ADJUSTING THE QUOTA

2) Grizzly bears taken by the department, wildlife services, or an individual person in self-defense do not count towards the quota.

Dead is dead. If a bear is taken for any reason, it should count towards the quota. I assume the quota is based on numbers of bears in the area, so, death by any means... hit by a truck, killed in self defense... anything should count as part of the quota.

Just a few of my thoughts.

Thank you,
Sheri Burden
Swann Lake, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Sue and Bob Dickenson <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 2:03 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Commissioners Montana Fish & Wildlife,

I'm writing to urge you to amend the draft rules permitting livestock owners to kill grizzly bears, and to limit such authority to the livestock owner's private land only.

SB 295 created authority for ranchers to kill grizzly bears "threatening" livestock even, but—unlike a similar permit system for wolves—this bill failed to protect grizzlies on public land from being killed.

While we understand why a rancher might need this authority in their own pasture, public lands are where grizzlies make their home and their living. Public lands are normally managed for multiple uses, including hunting, fish and other recreation—not to prioritize livestock grazing. FWP doesn't allow this for any other species it manages.

At a time when we have made real progress on grizzly bear conservation in some parts of Montana, this extreme measure threatens to set us back. Please amend the grizzly rule and reassure the public that the State of Montana will be a responsible steward of our treasured state animal, the grizzly bear.

Again lethal permits on private land only.

Thank you.

Sue and Bob Dickenson
suedickenson6845@yahoo.com
620 Riverview Dr. E.
Great Falls, Montana 59404

Wickman, Erik

From: anned@blackfoot.net
Sent: Saturday, November 18, 2023 2:14 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the new rules regarding grizzly bear management.

The killing of grizzly bears by ranchers with leases on public land should not be allowed. Public lands belong to all of the public, most of whom are not ranchers. Public lands are the natural homes of grizzly bears. Livestock growers need to recognize this and accept occasional livestock losses.

All grizzly mortalities need to be counted regardless of cause or reason. The purpose of counting grizzly mortalities is to learn how many have died and how they died so better management decisions can be made. Miscounting by MTFWP or any other agency charged with wildlife management is irresponsible and reeks like a coverup.

Sincerely, Anne Dahl, Condon, Montana

Wickman, Erik

From: Carole Jorgensen <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 2:08 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Commissioners Montana Fish & Wildlife,

Please restrict livestock owners from killing grizzly bears on public property. The allowance to let ranchers kill bears base on their perceived “threat” is biologically and logically unsound, and should be dropped on ALL lands, but most importantly, ranchers have received huge supplements/reduced lease costs to lease public land for decades, primarily to give them a break from wildlife use and other values on public land. They should not be allowed to take public resources and wildlife for private benefit. (Not to mention a very powerful livestock lobby that unfairly gives private landowners benefits at the expense of the broader public).

Montana and other occupied bear habitat has undergone decades of proactive bear management to restore grizzly populations, which were in severely reduced numbers due to excessive depredation history, reduced habitat, and poaching. Allowing essentially unregulated killing of bears will set bear management back decades.

The I'm writing to urge you to amend the draft rules permitting livestock owners to kill grizzly bears, and to limit such authority to the livestock owner's private land only. Further, landowners should have to document proper livestock management to reduce predator attractants such as compost, fruit trees, leaving dead livestock available to predators, poor fencing, poor protection practices, prior to the taking of any predator. Landowners should have some responsibility to manage their animals appropriately.

SB 295 created authority for ranchers to kill grizzly bears “threatening” livestock even, but—unlike a similar permit system for wolves—this bill failed to protect grizzlies on public land from being killed.

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Thank you.

Carole Jorgensen
buystuffcj@gmail.com
723 Parkway Drive
Kalispell, Montana 59901

Wickman, Erik

From: Conservation Congress <denise@conservationcongress-ca.org>
Sent: Saturday, November 18, 2023 11:47 AM
To: FWP Wildlife
Cc: Conservation Congress
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear Arm

No. Grizzlies are not wanted on most public land and now welfare ranchers who graze public land and pay a pittance for the privilege want to be able to shoot grizzlies on public land “threatening” their livestock. Threatening can be just in the area. Unless they keep someone living on public land 24-hours a day to watch their “investment”, they have no right to complain about losing animals. If I leave my dog out in the wilds of grizzly country I should not be surprised if it gets eaten. For crying out loud, use some common sense. Livestock does not belong on public land. These “investments” should be kept on their own private land. And if not, losing some livestock to predators and omnivores on public lands is the cost of doing business in Montana. I seriously doubt that people who swim in the ocean where sharks are known to occur, expect marine fishery departments to arm them so they can shoot sharks that are simply in the area. Sharks live in the ocean. Grizzlies live on public lands. If ranchers don’t want any risk, then don’t graze public lands.

Denise Boggs

Conservation Congress

www.conservationcongress-ca.org [conservationcongress-ca.org]

Fate whispers to the warrior, you cannot withstand the storm. The warrior whispers back, I am the storm.

~author unknown

Wickman, Erik

From: edward callaghan <edxcallaghan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 12:19 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Dear Fish and Wildlife Commission,

It is critical we do all we can to use NON-lethal means in situations of bear -human contact.

New Rule I (ARM 12.9.1404), regarding criteria (for FWP issuing a permit to a private individual to kill a grizzly bear) should be clearly defined, and UNambiguous, so they can be consistently applied by managers.

Regarding New Rule VII (ARM 12.9.1410). Such permits should be issued ONLY AFTER two (2) non-lethal means to prevent conflict are employed LONG ENOUGH to have an effect, and have had an opportunity to be effective. These must be documented in writing and verified on site by FWP's bear management specialist.

Regarding New Rule V (ARM 12.9.1408), ALL grizzly bears killed under the new law should count toward the annual allowable quota and mortality threshold set by the commission.

Finally, FWP should promote the use of and require hunters to carry and utilize first, bear spray in encounters with bears, using guns as a method of last resort. Bear spray is scientifically proven to be a far more effective way than guns to protect yourself or others in a close encounter with bears. And it results in less injured or dead bears too. Grizzly bears that experience a bear spray encounter will remember and teach their cubs. Grizzlies killed by guns can't.

Sincerely,
Edward Callaghan
Lincoln, MT

Wickman, Erik

From: Mary Alexine <mkalexine@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 19, 2023 11:14 AM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear Arm

To: Montana FWP

Subject: Grizzly Bear Arm

Date: November 19, 2023

We are writing to share comments on the draft rules regarding Grizzly Bears. Although we have submitted comments previously opposing changes to the management of Grizzly Bears in our state, we understand this regrettable process is moving forward.

We have concerns about the wording of *New Rule I (ARM 12.9.1404) Definitions*. This draft rule contains language that is not clear. How is “threatening” defined? This word needs to be replaced. Grizzly bears live in “proximity” of people in Montana; that is a given as the population gradually recovering. When that “proximity” is problematic is a subjective judgment. Defining “proximity” in an intelligent manner that ensures it does not threaten the co-existence of bears and people is imperative. Clarity is paramount. There is a responsibility to insure that bears are not destroyed because a faulty or confusing definition has been utilized.

We have concerns about *New Rule V (ARM 12.9.1408) Grizzly Bear Mortalities that Apply to the Quota and Mortality Threshold*. We believe that scientific information from wildlife biologists needs to inform the determination of the appropriate mortality threshold of grizzly bears. They have not recovered. However, given that a new law not informed by science is being drafted all bears killed must count toward the annual quota including those destroyed outside of population cores or within critical linkage zones.

We believe that the language of *New Rule VII (ARM 12.9.1410)* must be clarified. We appreciate the existence of this draft rule that requires livestock owners to utilize non-lethal measures to address potential conflicts with grizzly bears. We encourage a system that will document clearly what two non-lethal measures were utilized by the livestock owner and for what length of time. Non-lethal methods can take time to prevent or ameliorate conflicts. Clear documentation or verification must proceed the issuance of a permit.

Respectfully submitted,

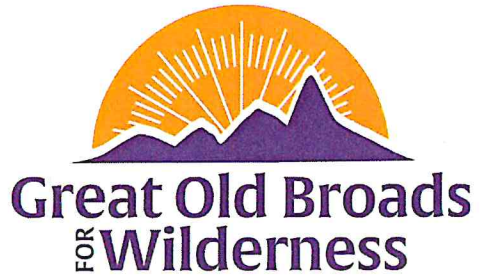
Mary Alexine, Co-leader

Rosemary McKinnon, Co-leader

Northwest Montana Great Old Broads for Wilderness

mkalexine@gmail.com

406-250-2548



Wickman, Erik

From: Stephanie McDaniel-Gilman <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 12:21 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

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Thank you.

Stephanie McDaniel-Gilman
smcdanielgilman@gmail.com
2319 Hillview Court
Missoula, Montana 59803

Wickman, Erik

From: Richard Landini <richganesh54@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 18, 2023 9:40 AM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

I would like to make a comment on the law that 'designated people' can kill Grizzly bears on our land leased for a pittance to sheep and cow ranchers.

This law is a short sighted, profit driven insult to our need to live on this planet without destroying it and is a wound on humanity's soul.

If we keep whittling away all that doesn't turn a profit, as we are increasingly doing faster and faster, we will make hell on earth sooner and sooner.

Is that what you want?

Good Government is not giving in to the wants of the few.

Thank you for your contemplation on this subject.

Rich Landini, Missoula.

Wickman, Erik

From: Deborah Hanson <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 3:49 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

Commissioners Montana Fish & Wildlife,

As a Montana citizen I'm writing to urge you to amend the draft rules permitting livestock owners to kill grizzly bears, and to limit such authority to the livestock owner's private land only. Most citizens do not believe that the livestock owners should kill our grizzly bears on public lands.

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Thank you.

Deborah Hanson
hans_deb@hotmail.com
1002 Pleasant
Miles City, Montana 59301

Wickman, Erik

From: Zita Fekete <info@email.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Friday, November 17, 2023 11:13 PM
To: FWP Wildlife
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Grizzly Bear ARM

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Thank you.

Zita Fekete
zita.m.fekete@protonmail.ch
1401 Merrill Creek Pkwy
Everett, Washington 98203