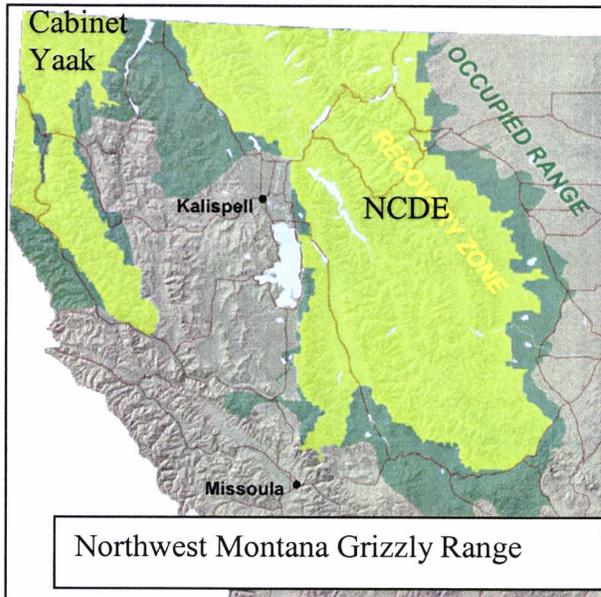


## GRIZZLY BEAR RECOVERY ISSUES IN NORTHWEST MONTANA

The grizzly population in northwest Montana is composed of 2 separate populations – the northern Continental Divide ecosystem (NCDE) and the Cabinet/Yaak ecosystem. The NCDE includes Glacier National Park and is over 765 bears while the Cabinet/Yaak is only 30-40 bears. Montana is home to the largest number of grizzlies outside of Alaska. Of the 16 western states (other than Alaska) that once had grizzlies, only 4 states still have any and Montana has the largest remaining number.



- The grizzly was listed as a threatened species in 1975.
- The grizzly recovery program has been ongoing for 29 years.
- The NCDE population has increased from perhaps 300 in 1981 to 765 today. The grizzly population continues to expand eastward as grizzlies follow river bottoms toward the Missouri River. This expansion onto private lands is a challenge to wildlife managers.
- Management of grizzlies that come into conflict involves cooperative state-federal decisions. Bears that come into conflicts can be removed if the offense is serious or they are repeat offenders. We usually do not remove bears just because they show up in places outside normal

range.

- The cooperative efforts of state, federal, and Tribal agencies working with the general public and cooperating NGOs have made great progress toward grizzly bear recovery.
- The Fish and Wildlife Service is currently working on a 5-year status review for all grizzly populations and this will be complete in 2010. This summarizes the current state of knowledge on the grizzly bear and its recovery progress.
- The Service is working in partnership with state and other federal and Tribal agencies on the development of post-delisting management plan for the NCDE to assure adequate regulatory mechanisms after delisting for this population. This document is called the NCDE Conservation Strategy. It will be completed before the end of 2012. The management details within this plan include:
  - Limits on mortality to assure population health.
  - Habitat management standards on public lands.
  - Procedures for management of bear/human conflicts.
  - Monitoring systems to assure that we know about bear population health and that required habitat standards are being met.
  - Monitoring systems to measure bear population size and trend.
- The overall objective is that recovery and delisting of the NCDE area grizzly population can be achieved within the next 5 years.
- The Fish and Wildlife Service and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department are cooperating to augment the Cabinet Mountains grizzly population with young grizzlies from the NCDE.

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