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## Newsletter and Blog

Featuring updates on grizzly bear conservation activities,  
and the latest *Grizzly Times* Blog  
from [Louisa Willcox and David Mattson, PhD.](#)  
Co-Founders of *Grizzly Times*.  
[www.GrizzlyTimes.org](http://www.GrizzlyTimes.org)

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*Dear Friends of Grizzlies,*

### **NEW PODCAST: Estella Leopold, Part Four**

This week, we are featuring the last of the four episodes of Louisa's interview with Estella Leopold, the last remaining offspring of the legendary conservationist, writer, and philosopher Aldo Leopold. Our conversation here ranges from grizzly bears to climate change, and the legacy of her father and the Leopold family, including younger relatives who are emerging leaders in the environment and scientific research. And Estella's views about the future of this poor planet are well worth hearing.

We thought you might enjoy this snippet from her about the potential for a grizzly bear hunt in Greater Yellowstone: "Oh, that's such a horrible development [hunting grizzlies in the Yellowstone ecosystem]. I can't imagine – Starker [Estella's brother and a famous wildlife biologist] would turn over in his grave. And Dad!

Episode 38: <https://www.grizzlytimes.org/the-grizzly-times-podcast>

### **Custer/Gallatin Forest Plan Revision: Please Comment by June 6!**

Louisa is moving a bit more slowly this week as a result of a major back surgery, but David is taking phenomenal care, despite being a tad worn down. With heavy pain medications, she regrets that she could not finish an essay on the revised Custer/Gallatin Forest Plan, which is coming soon. David also is writing a wonderful piece, slowed down for now by nursing duties.

The Forest is critically important to the future of grizzlies and all wildlife as it encompasses 3 million acres – 150% of the size of Yellowstone Park – and includes the largest unprotected roadless area in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem – the Gallatin Range. The Forest, which also includes the wild Pryor, Bridgers, and Crazy Mountains, lies at a vital crossroads between ecosystems to the north, west and east, in lands grizzlies are now recolonizing. All roadless lands on this vast Forest deserve protection from roading, and use by off-road vehicles and mountain bikes, which have been allowed by the Forest Service to trespass in the heart of the wilderness. Only Alternative D gives the most protection for the Forest's unsurpassed wild country.

Here is a nice article signed by a slew of world class scientists, as well as former Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt, Yellowstone Park Service Superintendent Mike Finley, Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard, as well as David and Louisa:

<https://mountainjournal.org/gallatin-wilderness-debate-goes-national-with-prominent-people-weighing-in>

**ACT NOW:** Please send the Forest Service a note that you support Alt. D and add any other details on why you think these roadless lands must be protected. The Forest Service also treats grizzly bears abysmally, mindlessly reciting errors propagated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in its overturned rule to delist Yellowstone's grizzlies. More on that later. The deadline for public comment is June 6 at midnight. You can submit your comment here:

<https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?Project=50185>

And you can find the plan here:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/custergallatin/landmanagement/planning/?cid=fseprd601607>

And here is great background piece:

<http://www.gallatinwilderness.org/>

And many thanks to Montanans for Gallatin Wilderness, Nancy Ostlie and Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Phil Knight, George Wuerthner, Joe Gutkoski, Don Bachman, Howie Wolke, and other ferocious warriors for the Wild!



*Photos of Mt. Blackmore and paintbrush in the Gallatin Range by George Wuerthner*

### **Fish and Wildlife Service Appeals Relisting Ruling**

Predictably, on May 24th, the US Fish and Wildlife Service submitted its appeal to the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Judge Christensen's ruling that restored endangered species protections to Yellowstone grizzlies. The brief follows the USFWS's statement of intent to appeal last December. The USFWS takes issue with the judge's determination that the agency's Yellowstone delisting decision must consider the totality of what the agency deemed endangered when grizzlies were listed in 1975.

[https://www.wyomingnews.com/news/from\\_the\\_wire/federal-government-appeals-grizzly-ruling/article\\_d79288b4-8367-11e9-8ead-efab8b3a8ac3.html](https://www.wyomingnews.com/news/from_the_wire/federal-government-appeals-grizzly-ruling/article_d79288b4-8367-11e9-8ead-efab8b3a8ac3.html)

In a classic move, intervenor livestock groups, represented by the notoriously conservative Mountain States Legal Foundation, claimed that FWS unnecessarily conceded important issues:

[https://www.capitalpress.com/ag\\_sectors/livestock/ranchers-attorney-criticizes-grizzly-appeal/article\\_323d0628-824a-11e9-98f2-3f2016a04c09.html](https://www.capitalpress.com/ag_sectors/livestock/ranchers-attorney-criticizes-grizzly-appeal/article_323d0628-824a-11e9-98f2-3f2016a04c09.html)

There is little doubt that this case will drag on and on and on...

### **Dead Reckonings**

Already grizzly bear deaths are mounting at alarming levels. Seven grizzlies have died in Greater Yellowstone – 4 in the lethal Cody area, and 2 from vehicle collisions.

<https://www.usgs.gov/data-tools/2019-known-and-probable-grizzly-bear-mortalities-greater-yellowstone-ecosystem>

An astonishing 11 grizzlies are dead this year in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem, one for killing "several" chickens. Despite the availability of nearly free electric fencing from at least 3 nonprofits, the handful of chickens were not protected by electric fence. And the involved subadult male appears not to have had a record of prior conflicts with humans.

"Back to the lander" chicken farmers are exploding in the remaining stronghold for the 900 grizzlies in the NCDE, that are part of the 2% remnant of the grizzlies that we once had. Former Fish and Wildlife Service Recovery Coordinator Chris Servheen has called chickens "the new garbage." About 410,000 chickens are raised in Montana, very few as a commercial venture.

Meanwhile 3 grizzlies have been killed in the Selkirks in north Idaho – a population of perhaps only 40 grizzlies – in retaliation for depredation on domestic sheep, another bear food that is notoriously incompatible with recovery of endangered grizzlies.

[https://www.dailyinterlake.com/.../chicken-killing\\_griz\\_captu...](https://www.dailyinterlake.com/.../chicken-killing_griz_captu...)

We will be creating a button on the *Grizzly Times* home page soon to track the dead.

### **More Hot Air from Terror Entrepreneurs**

We regularly write about "Terror Entrepreneurs," a term taken from studies of the early modern Witch Craze to typify people who incite violence against innocent and defenseless people as a way to accumulate and hold power. Back then they mostly burned women who were healers, but now their targets include immigrants, minorities, grizzlies, wolves, and more who are relatively defenseless.

Lifetime NRA member, outdoor TV host and real estate broker, Phil Phillips spares little in calling out "misguided animal rights extremists" in a recent NRA newsletter, and comes close to blaming them for grizzly fatalities. This killer of 200 big-game animals (and nearly 60 species worldwide) disdains environmentalists as "anti-science." How then did we win the relisting case? <https://www.nrahl.org/articles/2019/6/2/antis-cry-to-close-hunting-as-grizzlies-expand-range/>

Along similar lines, a Codger from West Virginia complains that "we can't stop hunting grizzlies because they won't stop hunting us."

[https://www.bdtonline.com/sports/stop-hunting-grizzlies-they-won-t-stop-hunting-us/article\\_0ea5c0b4-867e-11e9-b069-fb9b52bd2823.html](https://www.bdtonline.com/sports/stop-hunting-grizzlies-they-won-t-stop-hunting-us/article_0ea5c0b4-867e-11e9-b069-fb9b52bd2823.html)

### **The Problem of Mountain Bikes in Grizzly Country**

Two recent articles highlight the risks posed by mountain bikers to grizzly bears. Bear experts, including Chris Servheen, warned that mountain biking in grizzly and black bear habitat can be dangerous, in large part because speeding bikers might surprise innocent bears that respond defensively.

In June 2016, after a grizzly bear killed mountain biker Brad Treat in the Flathead National Forest near West Glacier, a board of review investigating the incident, concluding: “The incident appears to be a surprise encounter with a grizzly bear due to the high speed and the lack of noise of bike travel, combined with a blind curve on a trail.”

“Mountain bikers have the potential to compromise and diminish the value of grizzly bear habitat by displacing bears from bike trail areas,” said Servheen, who served on the board. “Mountain bikers also put themselves at serious risk of surprise encounters with both black and grizzly bears because they travel quietly at high speed. This is exactly what we tell people not to do when traveling in grizzly habitat.”

[https://www.dailyinterlake.com/local\\_news/20190526/experts\\_warn\\_bikes\\_and\\_bears\\_a\\_risky\\_combination](https://www.dailyinterlake.com/local_news/20190526/experts_warn_bikes_and_bears_a_risky_combination)

This Mountain Journal story criticizes claims by mountain bikers that bikers are not a threat to grizzlies, specifically in context of prospective plans to open up even more of the Custer-Gallatin National Forest to thrill-seeking bikers:

<https://www.adventure-journal.com/2019/06/griz-expert-says-mountain-bikes-are-a-grave-threat-to-bears/>

### **Wildlife Advocates Challenge Black Bear Baiting in Grizzly Habitat**

Today, wildlife advocates [challenged](#) in federal court a U.S. Forest Service policy granting the states of Idaho and Wyoming authority to allow black bear baiting in National Forests, despite evidence that such practices have resulted in the deaths of threatened grizzly bears. Hunters have killed grizzlies attracted to bait stations that are typically stocked with human food such as donuts and rotten meat intended to lure black bears. The challenge comes as Congress considers a [bill](#) to enact expanded protections for threatened grizzlies.

The case is brought by Western Environmental Law Center on behalf of Western Watersheds and WildEarth Guardians. David has been helping litigants with his scientific expertise.

### **Togwotee Grizzly 863: Between Scylla and Charybdis**

Much has been happening on Togwotee Pass near Jackson, WY involving a roadside grizzly, Number 863, who emerged this spring with two cubs. A first-time mom, she sought safety near the highway after being harassed and stalked by male grizzlies. (It is breeding season, when males often attempt to kill the cubs to prompt the mother to go back to estrus so they can breed with her.)

Grizzly 863 is literally a rock in a hard place, choosing to live near photographers, and people generally, so as to avoid males, who tend to avoid roads. (Her behavior is much like 399 and 610 of Grand Teton Park). Being near a highway is hardly safe either – but she had no way of knowing that. At one point she lost her cubs, and a day later found one. (The other is mostly likely dead). During this period of her frantic search, she was hazed in a callous way by Wyoming Game and Fish. She has been hazed since -- and in fact needs to learn to stay off the road if she is going to survive – but hopefully in a manner that is compassionate and consistent.

*Grizzly Times* helped raise awareness on this issue through Facebook. Working on the ground is the tireless Deidre Bainbridge, who successfully secured the attention of Wyoming Dept of Transportation. WYDOT put up road signs that lowered the speed limit in the area where she is. In the NCDE, MTDOT has joined the managers' group because of the

importance of roads and vehicles to the future of grizzlies – and such a move makes sense in Greater Yellowstone.

This is a much bigger issue than this bear, as more and more bears are getting killed in vehicle collisions around the entire ecosystem. A system of tools, including aversive conditioning, outreach to motorists, and slower speed limits need to be examined and applied to reduce the potential of collisions – not only for grizzlies but other wildlife as well.

<https://buckrail.com/grizzly-becoming-a-lot-to-bear-on-togwotee/>  
[https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/environmental/roadside-bear-raises-management-questions/article\\_a11edd75-851d-53ac-b0dc-0001c3050f8e.html](https://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/environmental/roadside-bear-raises-management-questions/article_a11edd75-851d-53ac-b0dc-0001c3050f8e.html)

Incredible bunch of posts here – passions have been super high:

[https://www.facebook.com/GrizzlyTimes/posts/2285125361806818?\\_tn\\_=-K-R](https://www.facebook.com/GrizzlyTimes/posts/2285125361806818?_tn_=-K-R)

### **Now for the Good News!**

**Brian Peck, Warrior for the Wild:** A beautiful article in the Flathead Interlake puts a deserved spotlight on long-time grizzly bear warrior Brian Peck. Brian has lived in the Flathead for over 3 decades fighting tirelessly for grizzlies, wolves, and other vulnerable wildlife. Working side by side with him nearly that long at the Sierra Club and Natural Resources Defense Council, Louisa considers him a pillar of conservation with a delightful sense of humor. Brian is an entertaining and talented educator, constantly recruiting new energy into the fight for the Wild. Thank you, Brian! Please don't "retire!"

[https://www.dailyinterlake.com/front\\_page\\_slider/20190603/wildlife\\_advocate\\_carves\\_career\\_awash\\_in\\_wonderment](https://www.dailyinterlake.com/front_page_slider/20190603/wildlife_advocate_carves_career_awash_in_wonderment)

Here is a piece by Brian in Grizzly Times that captures his inimitable spirit:

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/brian-pecks-story>

**Montana Grizzly Encounters Gives Captive and Orphan Cubs a Better Life:** NBC Montana ran this sweet story about Montana Grizzly Encounter, a captive grizzly bear facility near Bozeman that provides a quality home for bears from sketchy zoos, as well as orphaned wild cubs that would otherwise be dead. Started by Casey Anderson, owner of a lovely bear Brutus that he rescued as a cub, the facility also provides tourists a solid education about grizzlies and how to behave in their midst.

<https://nbcmontana.com/news/local/montana-grizzly-encounter-home-to-rescued-bears>

Here is a *Grizzly Times* podcast with Casey – well worth listening to:

<https://www.grizzlytimes.org/the-grizzly-times-podcast> Episode 3

### **Please Consider a Gift to *Grizzly Times***

We need your help! David and I have retired and are doing this full-time work pretty much gratis, and despite the gradual dissolution of our physical bodies.

If you were following the recent delisting court case, you know that David's role was vital to the litigation success that restored protections to Yellowstone's grizzly bears. The skilled attorneys could not have won the case without David's scientific expertise. There will be continued demands on David's time with the appeal of this case to the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court, potential delisting of NCDE or even all Lower-48 grizzlies, and mounting threats to the Cabinet-Yaak population.

As we do not have our own nonprofit, Conservation Congress, a not-for-profit tax-deductible organization, has agreed to be our fiscal sponsor. (Thank you, Denise!)

You can make a one-time contribution or sign up for a monthly donation through the Conservation Congress link below.

<https://www.conservationcongress-ca.org/give>

Or, you can mail a donation to:  
Conservation Congress  
2234 Sierra Vista Circle  
Billings, MT 59105

\* Be sure to note that your contribution is for *Grizzly Times* (GT).

Thank you for your continued support - in any way - it is greatly appreciated!

***For the Bears,  
Louisa and David***