

GRIZZLY BEAR, WESTERN POPULATION

Summary of the Draft Federal Management Plan (June 2025)

Conservation Status

Grizzly Bear, Western Population (*Ursus arctos*) is listed as Special Concern under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA).

Under the SARA, a management plan must be developed for a species listed as Special Concern. The draft management plan outlines the needs of Grizzly Bear, and the actions required to support their conservation, including the key sections highlighted below.

Range

In Canada, Grizzly Bears are currently found in British Columbia, Alberta, northern Manitoba, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Grizzly Bear historic range also includes parts of the prairie region of Alberta, Saskatchewan, southern Manitoba, as well as northern Quebec and Labrador (Ungava Population).



Description

Grizzly Bears are large, muscular, and powerful. They can be distinguished from other bear species including Black Bear and Polar Bear by their prominent shoulder hump, concave facial profile and long front claws. In many instances, the fur on their shoulders and back is tipped with white, grey or silver which gives them a 'grizzled' appearance. Grizzly Bears have well developed sense of smell and hearing and can run at speeds of up to 55 km/hour.

Habitat Needs

Grizzly Bears are wide-ranging mammals with large home ranges. They require high food supply and appropriate habitat for denning sites to support reproduction to maintain a stable population. Grizzly Bears are omnivores, eating both meat and plants, and have a diet that varies with location and season. As a result, habitat associations are strongly seasonal and typically reflect local plant growth, timing of ungulate calving, and onset of migratory fish spawning, for example. Grizzly Bears hibernate during the late fall, winter and early spring months. Winter den building requires loose, well-drained substrate for digging.



Threats to Grizzly Bear Survival

Agriculture – Reduces habitat and can result in loss of landscape connectivity. Increases in human-bear conflicts.

Climate Change – Increased temperatures and unpredictable weather events may result in reduced abundance or altered timing of food availability.

Forest Fires – Fragments habitat making it harder to travel on the landscape and decreases suitable habitat and food availability.

Housing & Commercial Development – Expansion of communities and other infrastructure destroys habitat and fragments home ranges and natural corridors.

Industrial & Logging Activities – Large landscape disturbances from habitat destruction, fragmentation, road development, increased human presence, and pollution.

Recreational Activities & Tourism – Backcountry activities (e.g.: hiking, camping, skiing, off-road vehicles, etc.) can cause habitat modifications, pollution and change Grizzly Bear behaviour as they avoid human presence.

Roads & Corridors – Fragments habitat making it harder for travel to access food and mates. Increases risk of mortalities from vehicle and train collisions. Facilitate human access to remote areas and increases human-bear conflicts.

Management Objective

Maintain the long-term stability and resiliency of Grizzly Bear, Western Population through the diversity of ecosystems it currently occupies in Canada, by mitigation the primary threats to the species, improving and fostering respectful and sustainable human-bear coexistence, and restoring and maintaining ecological connectivity in parts of its range where human impacts have been most severe.

Strategies to Help Meet Objective

- Promote and support improving respectful and sustainable human-Grizzly Bear coexistence and minimize Grizzly Bear mortality.
- Address knowledge gaps required to inform decision making processes for Grizzly Bear management, conservation, and recovery.
- Support Indigenous-led initiatives and collaboratively apply Indigenous Knowledge to operations and plans aimed at supporting healthy Grizzly Bear populations.
- Maintain and enhance interconnected habitats to support ecosystem integrity and processes that Grizzly Bears require.
- Improve policy implementation and species conservation through promoting and improving information sharing and collaboration across local, regional, Indigenous, provincial, territorial and federal jurisdictions.



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