

(BOCC Letterhead)

~~September 4~~ October 15, 2019

Karen Taylor-Goodrich
Superintendent, North Cascades National Park Service Complex
810 State Route 20
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

Dear Superintendent Taylor-Goodrich,

This letter is in response to the reopening of the comment period on the Draft North Cascades Grizzly Bear Restoration Plan/Environmental Impact Statement. As we stated in our past correspondence the proposal to transplant grizzly bears into the North Cascades is in conflict with our comprehensive plan adopted in 2014 by resolution 119-2014. On page 6 and page 33 the comprehensive plan recognizes the importance agriculture and other natural resource based industries such as mining, timber harvest, hunting, and fishing has for our local economy, customs, and culture. As the land held in trust by the federal government is the site of much of our resource based activities the release of grizzly bears into these areas will have a profound impact on those activities.

Also stated in previous correspondence is your responsibility to coordinate with local government. As stated in our comprehensive plan adopted in 2014 by resolution 119-2014 on page 33, elements are listed that are essential to meeting coordination requirements.

In our comments provided earlier, we pointed out several flaws in the analysis of available habitat for a large grizzly population. The analysis supports the reasonable conclusion that food sources in sufficient amounts to support the desired grizzly population is scattered over a large area. If the bears wander into other uninhabited areas in search of food it amounts only to a failed program. If on the other hand the bears wander into areas where livestock is the most plentiful food source you have set up an unnecessary conflict. Page 9 of our comprehensive plan again recognizes the important role agriculture and timber related industries plays in our local economies. The direct impact of bears preying on livestock is obvious but as protection measures are advanced to support the effort to increase the grizzly populations the pressure to eliminate grazing on the public land will increase as well. As noted above our comprehensive plan recognizes the importance of agriculture industry jobs to our local economy.

Timber harvest on federal land was once a significant source of timber harvest tax revenue and indirect revenues derived from the creation of jobs in the timber industry. If the relocated bears wander outside of the park and wilderness areas, as they likely will in search of food sources, the pressure to curtail timber harvest in these areas will increase. As noted above our comprehensive plan recognizes the importance of timber industry jobs to our local economy.

In addition to timber and agriculture recreational tourism is an important component to both our local economy and to our customs and culture as Okanogan County residents. In particular, this will impact local outfitter guide services which are dependent on going into the wilderness. This

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