

Office of the Governor

May 19, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary
Department of the Interior
Main Interior Building
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell:

The recovery of grizzly bears in the Yellowstone Ecosystem is a conservation success story of our time. Wyoming has worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and other state and federal agencies to compile and evaluate food sources data and the effect of those food sources on grizzly bear populations in the Yellowstone Ecosystem. This work substantiates that grizzly bears forage on a broad variety of food. Science demonstrates grizzly bears are expanding – in population and geography – beyond recovery criteria established by FWS and the State of Wyoming.

Both the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee and the Yellowstone Ecosystem Subcommittee have reviewed the data and both recommend FWS delist the grizzly bears. All regulatory requirements and biological objectives have been met or exceeded. It is appropriate to publish a delisting proposal and return management of the grizzly bear to the State of Wyoming and other states in the Yellowstone Ecosystem.

Based on your September 2013 letter, I had expected to see a delisting decision in early 2014. There is no reason to wait. I encourage the FWS to work with Wyoming Game and Fish Department to develop and publish a proposed delisting rule expediently.

Sincerely,



Matthew H. Mead
Governor

MHM:mdm

cc: The Honorable Steve Bullock, Governor of Montana
The Honorable Butch Otter, Governor of Idaho
Dan Ashe, Director, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service