

# REGIONAL CARNIVORE MANAGEMENT GROUP FACT SHEET

## Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts in Support of Grizzly Bear Conservation

The forested area within the Alberta Yellowhead ecosystem is rich in resources and opportunity. Many people within this west-central area of Alberta enjoy a multitude of activities and reap numerous benefits associated with such a landbase.

Some of the activities include recreational and/or commercial pursuits such as off-highway vehicle use, skiing, hiking, hunting, and trapping, as well as industrial activity pertaining to the forest, mining, and oil and gas industries.

Multiple land-use and human activity have resulted in a variety of impacts, for both habitat and wildlife species such as the grizzly bear. It is widely recognized that the grizzly bear is an important indicator species of the ecological health of a natural system. Maintaining conditions favourable for this species will result in conditions beneficial to a wide range of other wildlife.

### Supportive Partners

The land and resource managers operating in the Alberta Yellowhead ecosystem recognize that along with the privilege of using these resources, comes environmental stewardship.

The co-operation and strength of the partnerships established through integrated efforts (i.e.: Foothills Model Forest Grizzly Bear Research project, Grizzly Bear Conservation in the Alberta Yellowhead Ecosystem - A Strategic Framework, and the Regional Carnivore Management Group), will result in effective interim and long-term management decisions for the land-base.

The collaborative approach used throughout these grizzly bear initiatives has resulted in numerous partners participating at a variety of levels. Progress and success is possible only with involvement from stakeholders, including land and resource managers who are directly affected by resource management decisions and actions.

For more information contact Russ Stashko at 780-723-8527 or go to the following website:  
<http://www.gov.ab.ca/env/regions/nes/hilites.html>

### Stakeholder Activities

Many industrial stakeholders are aware of the adverse environmental impacts associated with their activities. They realize that often, land disturbance results in increased access and fragmentation of important wildlife habitat. Some of the actions currently being taken that will help to mitigate these impacts include:

- Retention of undisturbed islands within development areas;
- Reclamation of abandoned exploration roads;
- Limited use of access controls in exploration areas and road safety programs on existing roads (reduce speed limits; identify wildlife crossings);
- Research study financial/in-kind support;
- Road archive programs; reduce permanent road infrastructure; reclaim abandoned roads;
- Restrict access on some roads and into areas; increase use of access controls;
- right-of-way vegetation management;
- Implement carcass management strategy;
- Identify critical habitat and travel corridors;
- Bear Awareness programs: promotion of appropriate activities in grizzly bear habitat to avoid human/bear conflicts;
- Prohibit carrying of firearms by workers in the field;
- Structure retention in harvest blocks that provide cover for bears.

However, much more is yet to be done. Disturbance and human-caused mortality as a result of greater access is one of the most significant impacts to grizzly bears, therefore, access management is one of the major issues on which the Framework members must focus.

Other important issues include:

- A more inclusive, comprehensive planning and decision-making process is still required to ensure the cumulative impacts of all activities are considered.
- Awareness and understanding of the issues needs to reach a broader audience in a more effective manner.
- Not all stakeholders see grizzly bear conservation as a priority.

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## Who?

Numerous partners have provided financial support to the Foothills Model Forest Grizzly Bear Research project. Many of these partners and others have also provided input into the development of the Strategic Framework, as well as the current work of the Regional Carnivore Management Group (RCMG).

Examples of partners and involved stakeholders include representatives from the oil and gas, coal and forest industries, as well as environmental groups, municipal governments, hunters and trappers, the Alberta Fish and Game Association, the Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association, outfitters and First Nations. Stakeholder involvement will continue to be an important element of the RCMG's work.

## Regional Carnivore Management Group Members

- Russ Stashko, Chair; Alberta Environment
- Rick Bonar, Weldwood of Canada (Forest Industry)
- Brent Schleppe, Alberta Environment
- Kevin Van Tighem, Jasper National Park
- Al Watson, Cardinal River Coals (Mineral Industry)
- Peter Zimmerman, BP Canada Energy (Oil & Gas Industry)



*Photo Credit: Foothills Model Forest*

## Foothills Model Forest Grizzly Bear Research Project Partners

Significant resources and expertise are required to successfully develop and implement a meaningful conservation program for grizzly bears. Numerous partners have provided substantial financial support to the Foothills Model Forest Grizzly Bear Research project (for year one and two collectively \$1,334,000.).

- Ainsworth Lumber
- Alberta Conservation Association
- Alberta Environment
- Alberta Newsprint
- Anderson Resources Ltd.
- AVID Canada
- Blue Ridge Lumber
- BP Canada Energy Company
- Burlington Resources Ltd.
- Canada Centre for Remote Sensing
- Canadian Forest Products
- Canadian Hunter
- Cardinal River Coals Ltd.
- Foothills Model Forest
- GeoAnalytic Ltd.
- Gregg River Resources
- Inland Cement
- Millar Western Ltd.
- National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC)
- Parks Canada
- Petro Canada
- Petroleum Technology Alliance of Canada (PTAC)
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Sundance Forest Products
- Sundance Forest Industries
- Sunpine Forest Products
- Telemetry Solutions
- Trans Canada Pipelines
- University of Alberta
- University of Calgary
- University of Lethbridge
- University of Washington
- Weldwood of Canada
- Western College of Veterinary Medicine
- Weyerhaeuser Ltd.

