



# MONTANA OUTDOORS MAGAZINE LITERACY PROGRAM EVALUATION

## “Ready for the Handoff”

name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Refer to the timeline at the end of the article. Based on their 12-year study, what did Frank and John Craighead determine had become the most important source of food for Yellowstone grizzlies?

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2. What significant event happened in 1973?

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3. According to information provided on the timeline, by how much did grizzly bear populations increase between 1975 and 2022 . . .

. . . in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE)? \_\_\_\_\_

. . . in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE)? \_\_\_\_\_

4. According to the timeline, what nine towns have Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) bear management specialists (Butte/Anaconda is considered one town)?

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5. What is the major difference between the actions and events on the left side of the timeline and those on the right?

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6. Go back to the beginning of the article. List two reasons why Montana has such healthy populations of all four major predators.

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7. At the time the article was published (July 2023), who had management authority over grizzly bears in Montana? Circle one.

the Federal Government (USFWS)

the State of Montana (FWP)

8. What is the ultimate goal of the Endangered Species Act?

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9. Why have recent attempts to delist grizzlies in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem been unsuccessful?

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10. At the time the article was published, what was the status of grizzly bear populations in the NCDE and the GYE? Circle one.

They will be delisted in 2024.

The decision to delist is under review.

They will not be delisted.



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In the spaces below (11-13), summarize the three safeguards that Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho must have in place to resume management responsibility of grizzly bear populations.

11. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks hired bear specialists in several communities. List three things these specialists do to help residents minimize conflicts between bears and humans.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

15. Senate Bill 295, which was passed by the Montana Legislature in 2023, would take effect upon grizzly bear delisting. What two things does the law require?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

16. Why did FWP recently hire two new specialists to relocate some grizzlies from the NCDE to the GYE?

\_\_\_\_\_

17. What has been the biggest controversy surrounding the possible delisting of grizzlies in Montana?

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Approximately how many grizzlies have been euthanized per year over the past decade? \_\_\_\_\_

19. Is it legal, under current federal management, for a rancher to kill a grizzly that is near the rancher's cows? \_\_\_\_\_

20. If grizzlies are delisted and Montana failed to protect them, what might the consequence be?

\_\_\_\_\_



## **MONTANA OUTDOORS MAGAZINE LITERACY PROGRAM EVALUATION**

### **Teachers . . .**

1. Begin by discussing the Endangered Species Act. Here are some possible bell-ringers . . .
  - a. In 2023, the USFWS announced that it is once again considering delisting grizzlies in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. What does “delisting” mean?
  - b. What are the four major large carnivores in Montana that are sometimes the source of controversy?
  - c. What does “tolerance” mean in the context of wild animals like grizzly bears?
2. There are several important acronyms used in this article. Go over them before assigning the article.
  - a. FWP = Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
  - b. USFWS = United States Fish & Wildlife Service
  - c. ESA = Endangered Species Act
  - d. GYE = Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem
  - e. NCDE = Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem
3. Give students a copy of the article. Take a few minutes to introduce students to the timeline shown on the last two pages of the article. The first few questions on the worksheet pertain to the timeline.
4. Have students read the article silently, read it as a class, or read it to them.
5. Give students a copy of the evaluation (worksheet) and have them answer the questions.
6. If the assignment seems to be too much for the grade level you teach, consider assigning a certain number of questions (you decide how many, and then each student gets to pick which ones they answer). Any questions they answer correctly beyond the required number can count as extra credit.

### **Answer Key**

1. Garbage
2. Congress passed the Endangered Species Act.
3. It increased by 1,000 in the NCDE and 964 in the GYE.
4. Libby, Kalispell, Conrad, Choteau, Missoula, Hamilton, Anaconda-Butte, Bozeman, Red Lodge
5. The actions to the left are ones initiated by the federal government, whereas those on the right were initiated by the state government (of Montana).
6. Possible answers include “massive geographic size, sparse human population, intact ecosystems, relatively few roads, Montanans (generally) have a good level of tolerance”.
7. The federal government (USFWS)
8. The ultimate goal is to recover species, so they no longer need protection under the ESA.
9. Bear advocacy groups have successfully sued to reverse decisions to delist the bears.
10. The decision to delist is under review.
11. There must be healthy, abundant habitat where bears can live.
12. There must be a sufficient number of bears and they must be well-distributed.
13. Montana must prove that it is continuing to reduce conflicts between bears and people.
14. Must have at least three: help residents keep food away from bears, relocate problem bears, euthanize bears that are troublesome, work with nonprofit groups (range rider, operate livestock carcass station, pick up fallen fruit)
15. SB 295 requires that FWP adopt rules for when bears can and cannot be killed. It also states that there is a limit to how many bears can be killed.
16. The goal is to ensure genetic mixing and continued genetic health.
17. Some people want more bears to be killed and some don't want any to be killed.
18. About 14 per year.
19. No.
20. Montana would lose its credibility with the USFWS and the American people.