

Attention: Shirley Bond, Chair and Mitzi Dean, Deputy Chair of the Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts

An Independent Audit of Grizzly Bear Management Released 10/17

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PAC Meeting Plan ¹	29/03/18	Prepared by: Jennifer Psyllakis, Wildlife and Habitat Branch	Reviewed by: Tom Ethier, Assistant Deputy Minister
1 st APPA Update	26/02/19	Prepared by: Jennifer Psyllakis, Wildlife and Habitat Branch	Reviewed by: Tom Ethier, Assistant Deputy Minister
2 nd APPA Update	26/02/20	Prepared by: Jennifer Psyllakis, Wildlife and Habitat Branch	Reviewed by: Tom Ethier, Assistant Deputy Minister

Rec. # Accepted? Yes / No ²	OAG Recommendations	Actions Planned & Target Date(s) ³	Assessment of Progress to date ⁴ and Actions Taken ⁵ (APPA update)
1. Yes	We recommend that the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of Environment create and implement a grizzly bear management plan that includes: clear indication of how the plan fits into the ministries' overall wildlife management planning (where is it in the priority) clear goals and targets prioritized activities and timelines, including accountabilities for those activities resources and expertise required to undertake	<p>1) Develop an approach to engage and collaborate with First Nations, communities and stakeholders aligned with mandate to improve wildlife management and habitat conservation.</p> <p>Collaborate with First Nations and engage with communities and stakeholders to confirm process and draft Provincial Grizzly Bear Management Plan*.</p> <p>Target Date: 31/03/2019</p> <p>2) Complete a provincial-scale management plan, that describes broad provincial goals for management and guides the development of area-based management plans where needed.</p> <p>(NOTE: The management plan will align with federal requirements for a <i>Species at Risk Act</i> compliant management plan, which would also likely align with any requirements under new BC endangered species legislation.)</p> <p>Target Date: Revised from 31/12/2019 to 31/12/2020</p>	<p>1) Progress Assessment: Fully or substantially implemented.</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion: Through the development of the Together for Wildlife Strategy the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy have met with over 50 stakeholder groups and 122 Indigenous communities across the province to listen to concerns related to wildlife management and habitat conservation. A BC-First Nations Wildlife and Habitat Forum was established with participation from First Nations from across the province. A Minister's Wildlife Advisory Council is also in development. These processes will support collaborative development of policy options for the province to support implementation of the Together for Wildlife Strategy and improvements to wildlife management and habitat conservation. The engagement sessions with First Nations and stakeholders has provided a venue to confirm the process of engagement to compete a provincial grizzly bear management plan. In addition, several nations have expressed particular interest in components of the management plan (e.g., commercial viewing). The social values regarding grizzly bear management are diverse among First Nation communities therefore the Province was advised to proceed with engagement on a Nation by Nation basis.</p> <p>A policy framework for the development of wildlife plans is also underway, which will inform a consistent approach to engagement and collaboration as well as identification of priorities for provincial and regional plan development and renewal.</p>

¹ The audited organization will be required to present their initial action plan at this meeting (i.e. First three columns completed for each OAG recommendation included in the audit report)

² For each recommendation, the audited organization should state whether or not they have accepted the recommendation and plan to implement it fully by typing either "Yes" or "No" under the number of the recommendation.

³ Target date is the date that audited organization expects to have "fully or substantially implemented" the recommendation. If several actions are planned to implement one recommendation, indicate target dates for each if they are different.

⁴The Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) will request that the audited organization provide a yearly update (i.e. completed "Assessment of Progress and Actions Taken" column) until all recommendations are fully implemented or otherwise addressed to the satisfaction of the PAC. This is for the APPA update.

⁵ This action plan and the subsequent updates have not been audited by the OAG. However, at a future date that Office may undertake work to determine whether the entity has implemented the recommendations. The results of that work will be reported in a separate report prepared by the OAG.

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	the activities in the plan.		<p>2) Progress Assessment: Partially Implemented</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion: Much of the technical/scientific background and content of the management plan has been drafted, and broad objectives for grizzly bear management have been identified internally by ministry professionals. A collaborative engagement process with First Nations, Stakeholders and the public is in development. Engagement with First Nations is anticipated to begin in early spring, 2020. The federal government is developing a management plan for grizzly bears in Western Canada, the Province and the federal government are coordinating their efforts to ensure consistency and minimize burden on Indigenous Governments.</p> <p>The coordination across provincial and federal jurisdiction and several First Nation organizations interested in participating has delayed the anticipated completion date.</p>
2. Yes	We recommend that the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of Environment develop and implement an adequately resourced inventory and monitoring strategy for grizzly bears.	<p>A grizzly bear inventory and monitoring strategy, which will identify priorities and implementation timelines, will be a component of the provincial grizzly bear management plan and follow the same timelines.</p> <p>Target Date: Revised from 31/12/2019 to 31/12/2020 (aligned with the revised target date of the Grizzly Bear Management Plan)</p>	<p>Progress Assessment: Partially implemented</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion: An Inventory and Monitoring Plan for grizzly bears is anticipated to be an appendix to the provincial Grizzly Bear Management Plan; the draft management plan includes a section on inventory and monitoring, which is subject to change pending engagement with First Nations and the public.</p> <p>The current system of classifying Grizzly Bear Population Units as “viable, threatened, extirpated” has been updated, improved, and approved by the executive of FLNRO and ENV. The new system is a defensible and modern system for classifying specific populations and will facilitate the prioritization for inventory and monitoring of grizzly bear populations.</p> <p>Early analyses into securing long-term funding to implement effective monitoring has included a survey of current funding and governance approaches to environmental monitoring (generally), as well as various third-party partnerships.</p> <p>Both the Species at Risk and Improving Wildlife Management and Habitat Conservation public engagement processes have enabled public, local governments, First Nations, Industry and stakeholders input and ideas on long-term funding solutions for species and habitat inventory, monitoring, and related reporting.</p> <p>DNA based grizzly bear inventories, historically confined to the Kootenay and the Southern Interior, are now being conducted on the Central Coast, North Coast, Omineca Region, and Skeena Region. These expanded datasets will substantively improve the monitoring coverage in the province.</p>

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3. Yes	We recommend that the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations revise its policy and procedures to determine how uncertainty will be accounted for when determining grizzly bear-hunt allocations and to be transparent about the process.	<p>The Province will consider the recommendations of the 2016 Scientific Review and McLellan et al (2017) to act on this audit recommendation.</p> <p>Engage First Nations and key stakeholders on proposed changes.</p> <p>Grizzly Harvest Management Procedure will be modified to address uncertainty explicitly, and guidance for documenting and reporting uncertainties in population estimates will be developed.</p> <p>Target Date: 31/12/2018 - Completed</p>	<p>Progress Assessment: Alternate Action Taken</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion: Licensed grizzly bear hunting in British Columbia was banned in the winter of 2017. The grizzly bear hunt ban negates the requirement to account for uncertainty in population estimates when allocating hunting opportunities.</p>
4. Yes	We recommend that the Ministry of Environment ensure the Conservation Officer Service has the appropriate resources and tools for preventing and responding to conflicts with grizzly bears.	<p>1) Review current resourcing and tools for preventing and responding to conflicts with grizzly bears. Identify options to appropriately resource and develop new tools based on review outcomes.</p> <p>Target Date: Revised from 31/12/2018 to ongoing</p> <p>2) Further review of resourcing and tools is anticipated pending the requirements of the Conservation Officer Service to support implementation of final of the Grizzly Bear Management Plan.</p> <p>Target Date: Revised from 31/12/2019 to ongoing</p>	<p>1) Progress Assessment: Fully or substantially implemented</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion: The Conservation Officer Service has developed an Action Plan that identifies roles and responsibilities, status of required actions, estimated resources required, and the estimated timelines. A 5 year Strategic Plan with WildSafe BC was completed, includes mitigation options (i.e. electric fencing programs) and strategies for program expansion for areas with human-grizzly bear conflict. Additional funding has been provided to mitigate human-bear conflict in the Bella Coola Valley and Kitimat.</p> <p>2) Progress Assessment: Partially implemented</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion: A draft section of the Provincial Grizzly Bear Management plan includes resourcing, tools, and actions to mitigate conflict between humans and grizzly bears. Collaboration and engagement with First Nations and stakeholders is pending.</p>
5. Yes	We recommend that the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of Environment develop clear policies and procedures for bear viewing.	<p>1) Approve Terms of Reference and work plan for collaborative working group, including First Nations and stakeholders, to support development of policies and procedures for wildlife viewing in the interest of bear conservation and sustainability of the bear viewing industry.</p> <p>Target Date: Revised from 31/09/2018 to 31/12/2020 (aligned with the revised dates for the Grizzly Bear Management Plan).</p> <p>2) Draft interim policy and procedure for bear viewing</p> <p>Target Date: 31/12/2019 completed</p>	<p>1) Progress Assessment: Partially implemented</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion: Initial meetings have occurred with representatives from the bear viewing industry, some First Nations and stakeholders; however, an approved Terms of Reference is not completed. Engagement with First Nations on a provincial bear viewing strategy is anticipated to commence in the spring of 2020.</p> <p>2) Progress Assessment: Fully or substantially implemented</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion:</p> <p>A review of the current bear viewing industry, including management issues, was completed which is helping to inform an overarching commercial bear viewing strategy. A draft Provincial Bear Viewing Strategy was completed and legislative tools to implement the policy are under development. Specific policy and procedure have not yet been actioned and are pending</p>

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			engagement with First Nations and the public. Throughout the engagement period, and while policy and procedure are finalized, the draft discussion paper will serve as the interim best available information to guide internal practices.
6. Yes	We recommend that the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of Environment identify those grizzly bear populations that are in need of recovery and outline what actions will be taken and when.	<p>1) Approve process to identify and prioritize specific populations for enhancement activities and population specific objectives. Target Date: Revised from 28/02/2018 to 31/04/2019 - completed</p> <p>2) Population specific enhancement strategies will be developed based on the prioritization process. Revised: Population specific enhancement strategies will be developed based on the grizzly bear management plan and assessments of specific population units and implemented through regional planning processes. Target Date: ongoing</p>	<p>1) Progress Assessment: Fully or substantially implemented Actions Taken & discussion: The current system of classifying Grizzly Bear Population Units as “viable, threatened, extirpated” has been updated, improved, and approved by the executive of FLNRO and ENV. The new system is a defensible and modern system for classifying specific populations and will facilitate the prioritization for inventory and monitoring of grizzly bear populations.</p> <p>2) Progress Assessment: Partially Implemented Actions Taken & Discussion: The Province has met with Indigenous groups and stakeholders regarding recovery options for grizzly bear populations in south western areas of the province where populations are high priority for recovery. Terms of Reference to guide the collaborative approach for recovery of these populations are being drafted, and hazard, habitat, and translocation assessments are underway to determine recovery feasibility, potential actions, and timing.</p>
7. Yes	We recommend that the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of Environment evaluate and adjust as needed the tools used to mitigate industries’ impacts on grizzly bear habitats.	<p>1) EAO will complete review of administrative inspections and effectiveness evaluations of conditions, including specifically in relation to grizzly bear conditions. In addition, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy’s review of professional reliance will be used to inform revisions to guidelines and policies. Target Date: 31/03/2019 – completed and ongoing</p> <p>2) FLNR will review and recommend guidelines and policies for commercial berry harvesting to ensure this important food source for grizzly bears is not overly impacted. Target Date: 31/03/2020</p>	<p>1) Progress Assessment: Fully or substantially implemented Actions Taken & Discussion: EAO Administrative reviews have been completed and are ongoing. The Province has received the final report on the independent professional reliance review and acted on several recommendations including the introduction of Professional Governance Act to strengthen governance of professionals. Other recommendations are being acting on including building government capacity for compliance and enforcement.</p> <p>2) Progress Assessment: Partially Implemented Actions Taken & Discussion: Berry harvesting in portions of the Kootenay Region was restricted through an order made under the <i>Land Act</i> and regulations have been enacted that prohibit motorized access to important berry patches in the vicinity of Squamish/Lillooet. Further action are planned to implement guidelines and policies for commercial berry harvesting at broader/provincial scales.</p>

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		<p>3) FLNR will continue to review and make improvements to tools used to mitigate industry impacts through ongoing commitment to updating the cumulative effects assessment and reporting on the status of select values.</p> <p>Target Date: ongoing</p>	<p>Provincial led research has confirmed that berries are a critical component of habitat for grizzly bear conservation in some areas of the province. Mapping programs and models for the entire province have been developed to gain a better understanding of their distribution and availability to grizzly bears.</p> <p>3) Progress Assessment: Fully or substantially implemented</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion: The Cumulative Effects Framework (CEF) is a set of policies, procedures and decision support tools to assess and track the current condition and trend of values to ensure they stay within government's existing objectives. The goal of the CEF Grizzly Bear Assessment Protocol is to provide a GIS indicator-based assessment procedure that will help evaluate the combined effects of multiple land uses and activities, resource sector development and natural disturbances on grizzly bear habitat and populations. The CEF assessment protocol is designed to support natural resource decision-making by: 1) providing current condition and trend information on land use and natural disturbance factors that represent potential hazards to grizzly bear habitat and population goals in support of strategic-level resource allocation decisions (e.g. AAC determinations) and modernized Land Use Planning tables; 2) evaluating the effectiveness of existing or proposed legal designations, policy and or guidance at mitigating current or projected impacts on grizzly bear; 3) providing landscape-level summary information (e.g. road density) and mapped products to support tactical-level (e.g. access management planning); and by 4) providing broader landscape-level information context for individual project-level authorization decisions to help understand the incremental effects of individual projects or transactions relative to other land-use and/or natural disturbance related factors that affect grizzly bear in the broader landscape.</p> <p>Using the CEF grizzly bear assessment protocol, assessments have been completed for Grizzly bear and published reports and/or results are publicly available for the Northeast Region and South Coast Region, with additional reports across the province anticipated to be published in FY 2020/21. Guidance to assist decision makers in using these assessments is under development and will include guidance on how the CEF assessments can inform the consideration of industrial development impacts on grizzly bears and their habitats.</p>
8. Yes	We recommend that the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of	The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy are currently evaluating these designations at the stand and landscape-scale through the reviews of established Government Action Regulation orders, Forest and Range Evaluation Program and Cumulative Effects Framework	<p>Progress Assessment: Partially implemented</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion: 740 Wildlife Habitat Areas for grizzly bears are currently in place, the most recent being established in February, 2019. Further Wildlife Habitat Areas specific to Grizzly Bears are being considered. An internal working group was established to assess whether these management tools were being deployed appropriately. Ministry of Environment and Climate</p>

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	Environment to evaluate and adjust as needed tools to conserve grizzly bear habitats.	<p>assessments. The effectiveness review of these tools will continue and adjustments (e.g., updates to the Forest and Range Practices Act, development of guidance, creation of fines) will be recommended as required.</p> <p>Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy will be leading a review of habitat protection tools as part of the mandate commitment to develop endangered species legislation for the province. That process will assess gaps and develop new tools to conserve habitat (potentially including grizzly bears)</p> <p>Target Date: ongoing</p>	<p>Change Strategy focus has been on species at risk and is assessing a number of policy options intended to create better outcomes for species and ecosystems at risk which will also help to inform improvements to management tools for grizzly bear.</p> <p>The 2017 government mandate commitment to improve wildlife management and habitat conservation in BC also contributes to this by undertaking a comprehensive review of the wildlife management and habitat conservation regime. The results of these key projects will inform the on-going delivery of existing habitat conservation tools and options for new tools. FLNRO and ENV are developing a pilot project to evaluate the potential risk of habitat loss and/or degradation within habitat designations, to allow for the monitoring and reporting on the condition of these designated areas.</p>
9. Yes	We recommend that the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of Environment report out to the public and legislators on how well it is managing grizzly bear populations throughout British Columbia.	<p>1) Revise provincial status assessment, web-based metrics and maps, and associated reporting pages on Environmental Reporting BC.</p> <p>Target Date: Revised from ongoing to Fall 2019 - Completed</p> <p>2) Complete review and provide recommendations for the effectiveness of ongoing grizzly bear management efforts in making the information available to the public and legislators</p> <p>Target Date: Revised from 31/09/2018 to 31/12/2020</p> <p>3) Continuation of the practice of publishing peer-reviewed literature/research. Commit to facilitating access for the public to source these publications.</p> <p>Target Date: ongoing</p>	<p>1) Progress Assessment: Fully or Substantially Implemented Actions Taken & Discussion: The current system of classifying Grizzly Bear Population Units as “viable, threatened, extirpated” has been updated, improved, and approved by the executive of FLNRO and ENV. The new system is a defensible and modern system for classifying specific populations and will facilitate the prioritization for inventory and monitoring of grizzly bear populations. A comprehensive and user-friendly version of this system is anticipated to be online and available to the public by April 1, 2020.</p> <p>2) Progress Assessment: Partially implemented Actions Taken & Discussion: A performance management framework for wildlife management and habitat conservation priorities as well as an improved communication strategy to better share information with First Nations, stakeholders and public are two priority activities for the Together for Wildlife Strategy. A Minister’s Wildlife Advisory Council will be implemented to support reporting to both the public and senior government.</p> <p>3) Progress Assessment: Fully or Substantially Implemented Actions Taken & Discussion: Provincial staff, in partnership with the scientific community, continues to publish peer-reviewed literature/research in locations accessible to the public. In the past year publications on the impacts of road densities on Grizzly Bear conservation, unreported mortality rates, and habitat modelling specific to berry crops have been published.</p>

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10. Yes	We recommend that government review the legislation, policies and accountabilities for wildlife management and ensure that roles, responsibilities and accountabilities allow the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of Environment to be fully effective in delivering grizzly bear management.	<p>The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy will work together to review the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for grizzly bear management and make recommendations for improved coordination, effectiveness and accountability.</p> <p>The ministries will also review how grizzly bear management fits into the larger approach for management and conservation of biodiversity in BC per recommendations under the Office of the Auditor General's Audit of Biodiversity in BC: Assessing the Effectiveness of Key Tools</p> <p>Target Date: revised from 31/03/2018 to 30/06/2019</p>	<p>Progress Assessment: Partially implemented</p> <p>Actions Taken & Discussion: In collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for wildlife and habitat management and stewardship activities are being reviewed including an assessment of coordination effectiveness. An independent review is also underway which will help inform final recommendations.</p> <p>The updated classification system for grizzly bear populations in the Province was a collaborative effort between ENV and FLNRO staff.</p> <p>A "Grizzly Bear Technical Team", with members from FLNRO and ENV, that discusses subjects related to grizzly bear management and conservation, has been in place since 2015.</p> <p>The results of assessments for cumulative effects and effectiveness of habitat conservation designations are supporting the understanding of how grizzly bear management is contributing the larger approach for management and conservation of biodiversity in BC.</p>

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