



Name _____ Date _____ List #: ____ - ____

Yellowstone Grizzlies to Lose Protections

By Jim Carlton
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The Trump administration said it will remove endangered-species protections for the Yellowstone grizzly bear, a move that was initiated by the Obama administration after the numbers of the West's largest land predator rebounded sharply over the past four decades.

The decision, criticized by environmentalists, paves the way for grizzly-hunting to resume in some places after a 40-year ban.

Grizzly bears in and around Yellowstone National Park had plummeted to as few as 136 by 1975, when they were listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

Because of a ban on hunting and other protections, the number of grizzlies in a Greater Yellowstone ecosystem that includes parts of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming has increased more than fivefold to an estimated 700, according to the Interior Department.

The federal government aimed to boost the population to 500 grizzlies. The animal can weigh up to 600 pounds.

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, a former Montana congressman who announced the delisting Thursday, hailed the recovery as one of the nation's greatest conservation success stories.

"As a kid who grew up in Montana, I can tell you that this is a long time coming and very good news for many communities and advocates in the Yellowstone region," Mr. Zinke said in a statement.

Environmental groups condemned the move and vowed to try to fight it in the courts.

Lawsuits filed by environmentalists succeeded in blocking efforts by the Bush administration to delist the grizzly in 2007, when their numbers already were considered recovered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Environmentalists say grizzlies have a slow reproduction rate and would be imperiled as a result of hunting and other dangers.

Once the rule by the Fish and Wildlife Service takes effect later this year, states will regain their authority to resume trophy hunts that have been banned for 40 years.

The grizzlies would remain protected from hunting in Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks.

"This premature decision to remove endangered-species protections could set grizzly recovery back by decades," said Michael Brune, executive director of the Sierra Club, in a statement. "The end result will be fewer bears restricted to an even smaller area," Mr. Brune said.

Supporters of the delisting, though, say there are so many Yellowstone grizzlies that conflicts with humans have increased, as well as attacks on livestock. "Grizzly bears have met or exceeded recovery objectives since 2003 and have long warranted delisting," Wyoming Republican Gov. Matt Mead said in a statement.

The Wyoming governor, among other Westerners, asked the Obama administration to resume the delisting process. In 2016, the Fish and Wildlife Service issued a draft notice to take the bears off the list, as states including Wyoming gave assurances they would continue to manage the grizzlies so their numbers remained healthy.

The debate over grizzlies is reminiscent of the one over the gray wolf, another iconic predator that was reintroduced to Yellowstone in 1995 under endangered-species protection.

But as the number of wolves exploded, they were delisted in both Idaho and Montana.

- _____ 1. What did the Trump administration decide to do regarding endangered species?
- A. Increase endangered-species protections for the Yellowstone grizzly bear.
 - B. Allow states to hunt a variety of animals that are protected under the Endangered Species Act.
 - C. Move endangered grizzly bears out of Yellowstone National Park.
 - D. Remove endangered-species protections for the Yellowstone grizzly bear.
- _____ 2. Supporters of the decision to remove endangered-species protections for the Yellowstone grizzly bear argue there are so many Yellowstone grizzlies that conflicts with humans have increased, as well as attacks on livestock.

What do critics of this decision argue?

- A. They argue the decision should expand to other parts of the country where grizzly bears live and search for food near human populations.
- B. They argue the decision will lead to other types of animals becoming at risk of dying out.
- C. They argue the decision will cause grizzly bears to stop reproducing which will lead to their populations shrinking.
- D. They argue the decision is premature because grizzlies have a slow reproduction rate and could be in danger due to hunting and other threats.

___ 3. Read the following sentences:

Because of a ban on hunting and other protections, the number of grizzlies in a Greater Yellowstone ecosystem that includes parts of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming has increased more than fivefold to an estimated 700, according to the Interior Department.

Based on this information, what can be concluded about the effectiveness of the ban on hunting and other protections for grizzly bears?

- A. They were very effective.
- B. They were not very effective.
- C. They were less effective than other methods used to protect grizzly bears.
- D. They were more effective than other methods used to protect grizzly bears.

___ 4. Based on the text, what may have been one reason why the grizzly bear population decreased to just 136 bears by 1975?

- A. People were killing too many bears.
- B. Many bears were fighting and killing each other.
- C. Many bears did not have enough food to eat.
- D. Many bears got an illness and died.

___ 5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. Environmentalists argue grizzly bears have a slow reproduction rate and would be threatened by hunting and other dangers if endangered-species protections for Yellowstone grizzlies were removed.
- B. Because of a ban on hunting and other protections, the number of grizzlies in a Greater Yellowstone ecosystem that includes parts of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming has increased more than fivefold to an estimated 700.
- C. The number of Yellowstone grizzly bears has increased significantly, so the Trump administration has decided to remove endangered-species protections for these grizzlies, a decision that has been praised by some but criticized by environmental groups.
- D. The number of conflicts between humans and grizzly bears as well as the number of grizzly bear attacks on livestock have increased as the number of grizzly bears in the Yellowstone area have increased.

___ 6. Read the following sentences:

"The Trump administration said it will remove endangered-species protections for the Yellowstone grizzly bear, a move that was initiated by the Obama administration after

the numbers of the West's largest land predator rebounded sharply over the past four decades."

What does the word "rebound" mean as it is used here in the text?

- A. To bounce away after hitting something.
- B. To recover or increase.
- C. To decrease very quickly.
- D. To change very little over many years.

____ 7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

A ban on hunting and other protections were put in place to help grizzly bear populations recover. _____, the number of grizzlies in a Greater Yellowstone ecosystem that includes parts of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming has increased more than fivefold.

- A. On the contrary.
- B. Especially.
- C. Otherwise.
- D. As a result.

8. Why do some people support the decision to remove endangered-species protections for the Yellowstone grizzly bear? Use information from the text to support your answer.

9. Why might the executive director of the Sierra Club have described the decision to remove endangered-species protections for Yellowstone grizzlies as "premature," or too early? Use information from the text to support your answer.

10. Explain whether or not endangered-species protections for the Yellowstone grizzly bear should be removed. Use evidence from the text to support your argument.