

GYCC Wildlife Subcommittee Overview



Chair – Tammy Fletcher, R1 Wildlife Program Leader
Vice-chair – Diane Probasco, CTNF Zone Wildlife Biologist

Wildlife Subcommittee Members

Include biologists from:



- Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest
- Bridger-Teton National Forest
- Caribou-Targhee National Forest
- Custer-Gallatin National Forest
- Shoshone National Forest



- Yellowstone National Park
- Grand Teton National Park
- National Elk Refuge
- Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge
- Bureau of Land Management



Idaho, Montana and Wyoming

Wildlife Subcommittee & History

- Our Mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of native and desirable non-native species across the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.
- Newest subcommittee within the GYCC
 - Spring of 2013 we officially developed our Charter and Strategy.
 - We physically meet twice a year in conjunction with the YES Meetings.
 - Emails and updates are sent out as needed.
 - Every member has opportunity to rank wildlife proposals.

Proposed Program of Work

1. Develop the “species on the brink” framework.	Used for salary to develop a list of species, criteria for placement on the list, identify threats to those species, and describe a landscape-level approach to improve species’ status.
2. Campground improvements for wildlife safety	<p>Used for material to purchase vent covers on pipes of vault toilets to prevent bird and mammal mortalities.</p> <p>Provide proper food storage facilities in grizzly bear occupied habitat using campground assessment and other data.</p>
3. Linkage Assessment	Develop a linkage assessment for wildlife, with an emphasis on the larger species (e.g. grizzly bears, wolverine), within the GYE and between the GYE and other ecosystems.
4. Wolverine distribution and winter recreation	<p>Assess wolverine habitat use and distribution across the GYA.</p> <p>Determine the impacts of winter recreation on wolverine habitat use and develop management strategies</p>
5. Bat Assessment	Cooperative project with State agencies to identify species and critical habitats and assess WNS potential impacts

2014 & 2015 Project Proposals

- Species on the Brink Report
- Toilet Screens (Poo Poo Project)
- WY Atlas of Wildlife Migration
- G. Bear Use of Forest Successional Stages in Island Park
- Campground Infrastructure for Bear Management
- Winter Recreation and Wolverine Monitoring
- Boreal Toad Genetics & Chytrid Infection



Species on the Brink Summary

(Condition of Wildlife in the GYA)

- Listed as Federally Sensitive, Management Indicator Species or State Listed Species
 - 37 Mammals
 - 102 Birds
 - 10 Reptiles
- 5 Threatened species include:
 - Grizzly Bear, Lynx, Black-footed Ferret, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and Wolves in WY.
 - 1 (or 2) species extirpated
 - Whooping Crane and Black-footed Ferret (may be found in Mesteesse)
- Threats to Wildlife – Nonnative plants and animals, disease, climate change, recreation, land use, and land conversion.



Wildlife is found on 100% of the GYA!

This park gives a hoot!

This Boreal Owl was rescued from a toilet near the South Fork Salmon River Drainage by Joe Foust. Photo courtesy of USDA Forest Service.

This park has made it safer for owls by implementing the

Port-o-Potty Owl (Poo-Poo) Project—

installation of vent pipe screens on vault toilets to prevent wildlife entrapment.

Vault toilets on America's public lands have open, vertical ventilation pipes that pose hazards to birds and other wildlife. Each year, *thousands* of cavity-nesting birds that prefer dark, narrow spaces for nesting and roosting enter these open pipes and become entrapped in effluent, eventually dying. This widespread problem impacts several species of concern.

In 2010, Teton Raptor Center (TRC), a non-profit raptor education, conservation and rehabilitation organization located in Wilson, WY, addressed this problem by installing vent screens. The Port-O-Potty Owl Project was soon nicknamed the Poo-Poo Project. In 2012, TRC developed its own vent screen to prevent wildlife entrapment on a national scale. TRC vent screens are easy to install, affordable, and effectively protect wildlife without compromising pipe ventilation.



This Northern Saw-whet Owl died after being rescued from a vault toilet in the Hume Lake Ranger District in Sequoia National Forest. Photo by Diane Diebold.



A Teton Raptor Center vent screen. The Poo-Poo Project's goal is to prevent wildlife entrapment within vent pipes without compromising ventilation by installing these screens across the U.S. Right: A TRC volunteer installs a vent screen on a vault toilet in Jackson, Wyoming.



Teton Raptor Center
307-203-2551
raptors@tetonraptorcenter.org
www.tetonraptorcenter.org

Be a Poo-Poo Partner!

With hundreds of species of cavity-nesting animals found throughout the U.S., *open pipes everywhere threaten a wide variety of wildlife*. If you are interested in bringing the Poo-Poo Project to your area, please contact:

Toilet Screen Project

- Screens cost \$30
- Need ~ 761
- Purchased 425 with 2014 funding from GYCC.
- Purchase the rest of the screens for the ecosystem in 2015.
- Completed Fall 2015!!

We need your help to keep wildlife safe on America's public lands.

Vault Toilet Screens Summary:



- COMPLETED
 - Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF
 - Shoshone NF
 - USFWS Refuges
 - Grand Teton NP
 - Yellowstone NP
 - BLM in Pinedale, Cody and Billings
- TO BE COMPLETED IN 2015
 - 6 on BLM in Dillon
 - 106 on Bridger-Teton NF
 - 120 on Caribou-Targhee NF
 - 100 on Custer-Gallatin NF
- Ordering 332 more in 2015

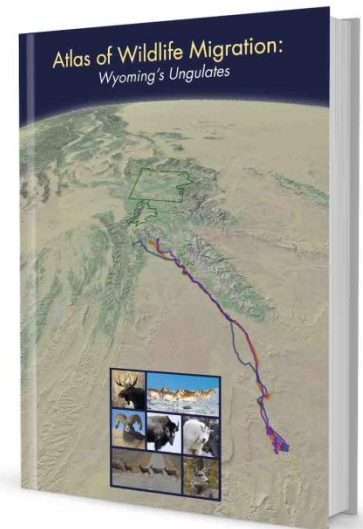


Wyoming Atlas of Wildlife Migration



- The Atlas will depict the journey of Wyoming's migratory ungulates and synthesize disparate spatial data on migration as a means of advancing conservation and management efforts.
- To be completed in 2015.

www.migrationinitiative.org



Examples of pages from the Atlas

Loss of Migration in Bighorn Sheep

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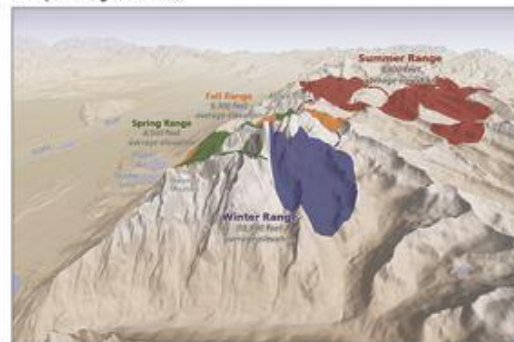
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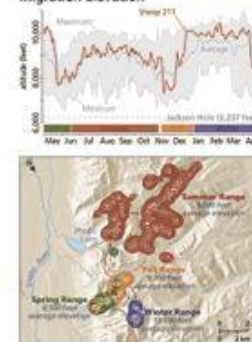
Bighorn Sheep Distribution, Western US



Sheep 211 Migration Loss

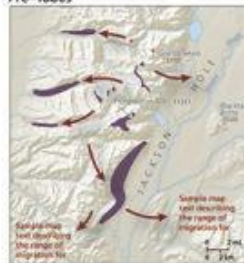


Migration Elevation



Bighorn Sheep Range

Pre-1880s



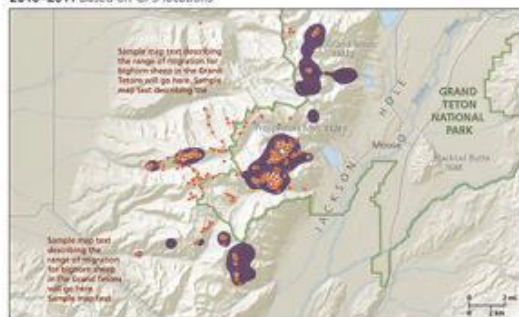
Circa 1880-1940



1940-1968



2010-2011 Based on GPS locations



Grazing Allotments, 2009



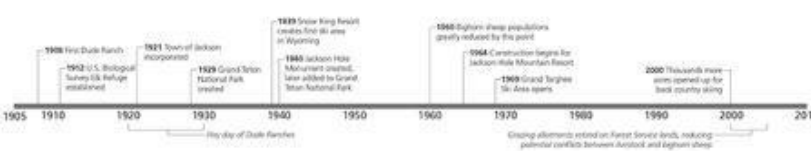
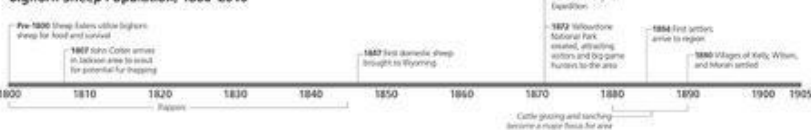
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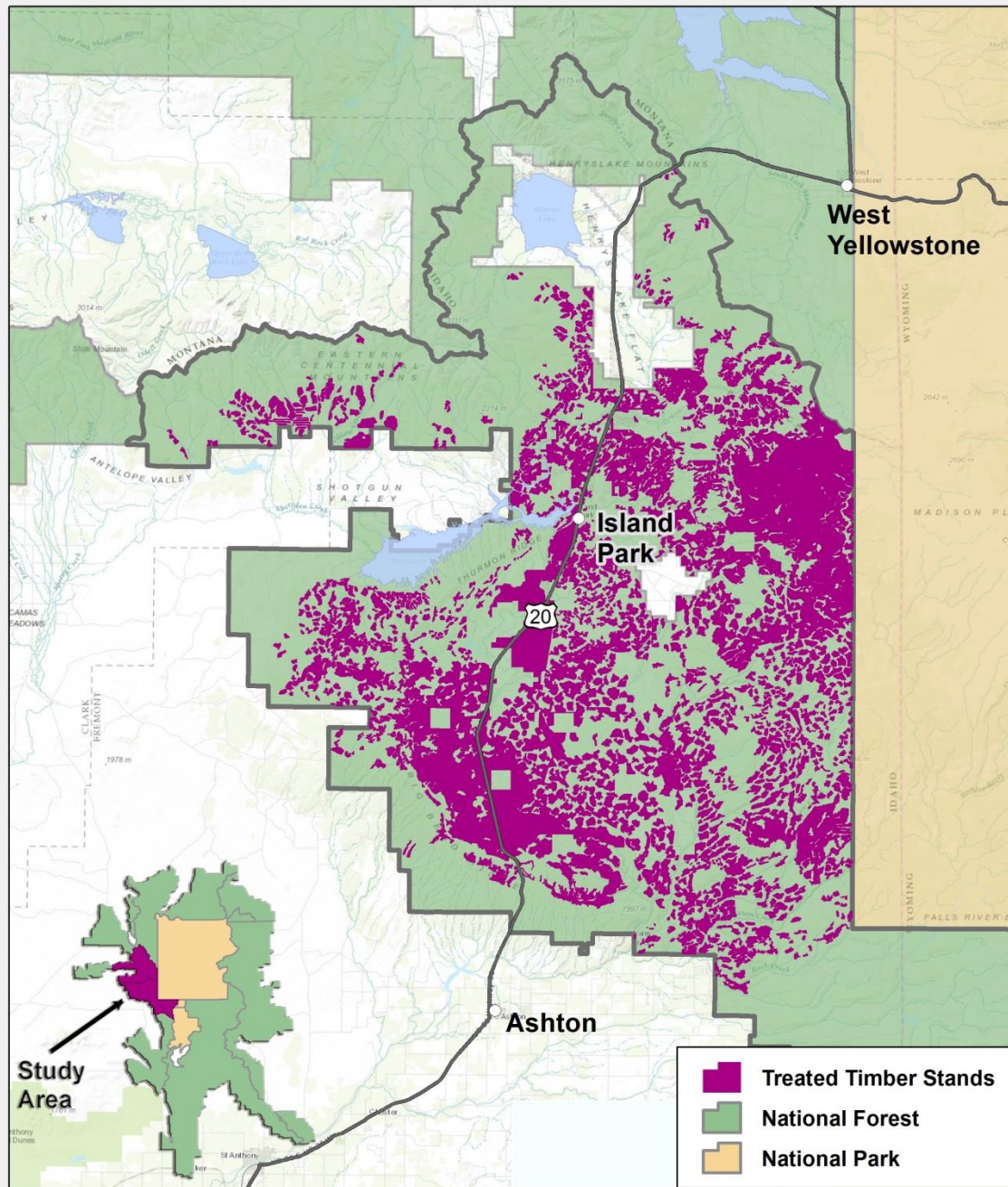
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Bighorn Sheep Population, 1800-2010



Grizzly Bear Use of Forest Successional Stages in Island Park

- Large portion of the Island Park area was silviculturally treated between 1950 – 1980s.
 - Determine which successional cover types are preferred for foraging by grizzly bears.
 - Compare diets of Island Park bears to other bears within the ecosystem.
- Thesis to be completed by a graduate student at Montana State University in Fall of 2015.





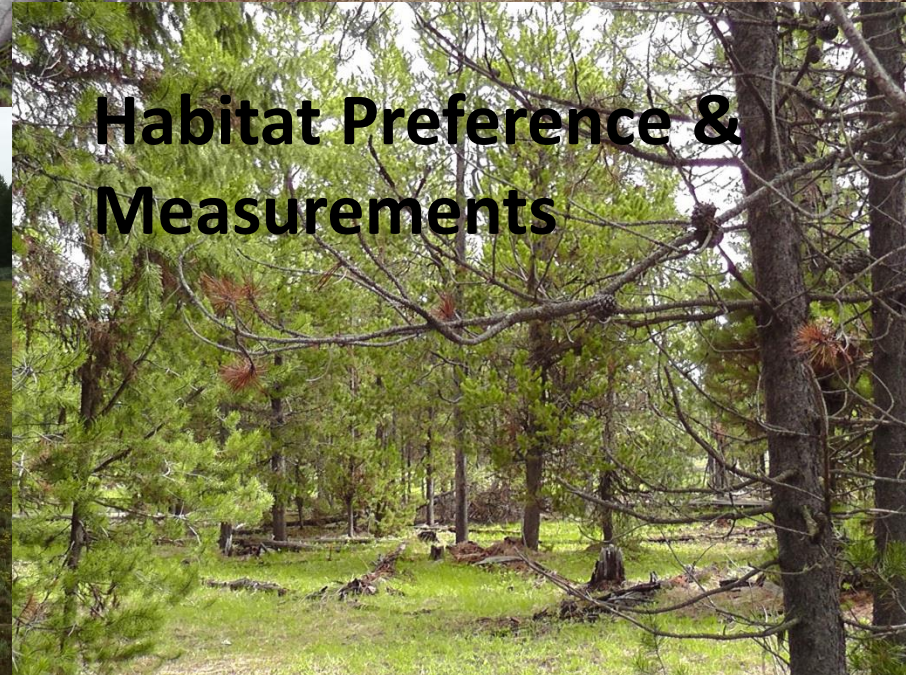
**Grizzly Bear
Day Bed**



**Feeding on
a Carcass**



**Foraging on
Biscuit Root**



**Habitat Preference &
Measurements**

Campground Infrastructure & Bears

- A total of 167 campgrounds were inventoried for bear management related infrastructure (boxes, dumpsters, kiosks, and gates)
- 2015 – received \$25,000 of GYCC funding to purchase more infrastructure.



Winter Recreation and Wolverines



- Map Recreation Use on the forest.
 - Voluntarily carry GPS
 - Flights
- Collar wolverines and monitor frequently during winter months.
- Just finished final field season.
- Final Report in a year.

Boreal Toad Genetics & Chytrid Fungus

- The genetics information would provide critical information in determining population interactions and the range for potential listing status. Eastern Clade is a candidate species.
- The chytrid analysis will improve our distribution knowledge of the disease in boreal toad populations and implications of infection rates on population trends.



Summary for GYCC Wildlife Subcommittee

- Officially 2 years old but we have accomplished a lot and excited about the future.
- More biologists in the ecosystem are starting to participate (33 total on email list).
- Great conservation work at an ecosystem scale and better communication and data sharing.