



Washington Department of
FISH & WILDLIFE

Upper Methow Valley grizzly conflict prevention

A WDFW wildlife diversity grant project

Grizzly bears, a state endangered species, have not been confirmed in Washington's North Cascades since 1996, but having grizzly bears in the North Cascades is important for the species' recovery in Washington. In order for grizzly bear recovery to be successful, human-bear conflicts must be mitigated, and humans must have the proper tools available to coexist with bears, including grizzly and black bears.

This project provides upper Methow Valley communities with resources to prevent potential human-bear conflicts. By using secure garbage receptacles and following Bear Aware recreation practices, these communities adjacent to potential grizzly bear habitat can more effectively mitigate bear conflict, thereby making any future grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades more successful.



Credit: WDFW

Project name: Upper Methow Valley grizzly bear conflict prevention

Primary species benefitting: Grizzly bear

Grant total: \$63,757

Grantee & associated entity: Madelyn Hamilton, Methow Valley Citizens Council

In order for grizzly bear recovery to be successful long-term, it is imperative that human-bear conflict is kept to a minimum. Providing communities surrounding the North Cascades with tools and knowledge of how to live, work, and recreate alongside grizzly bears is key to preventing that conflict. This important preventative work will also help the community with current black bear conflict issues, while setting them up for success for future grizzly bear recovery.



Credit: Methow Valley Citizens Council



Credit: (left and right) Methow Valley Citizens Council

Project goals and outcomes

The top goals for this project are to increase the Methow Valley community's understanding of bear-smart practices while living, working, and recreating in bear country, and to provide the community with tangible conflict prevention tools and programs.

These include the option to participate in a community dumpster program and bear spray demos, and take advantage of electric fence cost-share and consulting and backcountry bear-smart food storage options through a new rental program. These resources will be shared with community members and members of various recreation user groups.

Supporting grizzly recovery efforts by strengthening coexistence measures

Bears play an incredibly significant role on the landscape in Washington, and conflict prevention efforts can increase communities' capacity to coexist with them. Communities' ability to confidently and successfully live, work, and recreate in bear country will support grizzly bear recovery. Recovering this keystone species is a pivotal component of the conservation landscape and a high priority for land managers.

Setting the North Cascades ecosystem up for successful recovery will also strengthen broader, regional grizzly bear recovery efforts. The coexistence programs that this project is spearheading in the Methow will serve as models for other communities in and around the North Cascades, strengthening the broader region's capacity to live alongside bears.



Credit: WDFW

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