

\Good Day,

I would like to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and the proposal to introduce grizzly bears into the North Cascades.

My grandchildren are the 6th generation to live in the Stehekin area. In all those generations, our family members have spent much time in the backcountry of this beautiful area. I believe that it could be argued that our family has spent more time in these mountains off the beaten path than any other family. In all that time, over 120 years, none of us have ever observed a grizzly, nor have we ever seen a track that appeared to be from a grizzly.

I would also like to reference the reported grizzly bear pelts that were sold by Hudson Bay Trading Company. Our family has been involved in the fur business through the generations. So, I have more than general knowledge of the fur trade. "Grizzly" is also a color or description of a pelt, and if you are in the business of selling hides, a "grizzly pelt" would be more valuable than a black bear, even though many of the hides were probably light brown pelted black bear. They would have been graded "grizzly" to inflate the price.

The practice continues today - modern day examples are bobcat pelts graded as "lynx cat" because of the color; pine marten pelts are sold as "sable" because it increases the value. This is common practice in the fur industry. I would suspect most of the "grizzly bear" pelts taken from this area were just plain old black bear with light brown or "grizzled" coats.

I believe that there is no historical evidence that there was ever a grizzly bear population that inhabited the proposed (re)location area.

I support Alternative A - "no action", for the following reasons:

1. -Any other alternative would be a very expensive experiment.
2. -Any other alternative would increase regulation for the backcountry user.

3. -Any other alternative would discourage backcountry use because grizzly bears are believed to be dangerously aggressive.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

- Mark Courtney, Lifetime Stehekin Resident