

RESOLUTION 4-23
GRIZZLY BEAR POPULATION IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

WHEREAS population assessments completed in 2014 and 2018 of Alberta's Grizzly Bear in Bear Management Area (BMA) 3, 4, and 5 revealed that population and density has increased in all three BMAs since the 2006-2008 estimates were completed; and

WHEREAS population assessment of BMA 7 in 2018 provided population and density figures for the first time, but the research institute performing the assessment warned the results should be interpreted with caution due to low precision of the data collected; and

WHEREAS population assessment of BMA 2 was completed in 2008 and revealed a density of 18.1 grizzly per 1000 km², the highest density in Alberta; and

WHEREAS programming exists in BMA 5 to mitigate the impacts of Grizzly Bear populations on agricultural production, there are few programs to mitigate impacts elsewhere in the province; and

WHEREAS rendering of deadstock is a difficult option, with rendering trucks not servicing north of Highway 16; and

WHEREAS there has been an increase of reported grizzly sightings in BMA 2 along with the associated impact on cattle, bees and grain storage.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

The Minister of Alberta Environment and Protected Areas to have BMA 2 population and density of Grizzly Bears assessed and develop a suite of programs for Agricultural Producers, like those available to agricultural producers in BMA 5, including a Provincial Grizzly Impact Mitigation Plan.

SPONSORED BY: Municipal District of Greenview #16

MOVED BY: _____

SECONDED BY: _____

CARRIED: _____

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Minister of Environment and Protected Areas

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The grizzly bear population estimate study in 2018 of Bear Management Area 4 indicated a 6% annual rate of increase and an increase in density from 4.39 grizzly per 1000 km² in 2005 to 9.64 grizzly per 1000 km².

The grizzly bear population estimate study completed in 2015 of Bear Management Area 3 indicated a 7% annual rate of increase and an increase in density of the population from 4.79 grizzly per 1000km² in 2004 to 8.42 grizzly per 1000 km². Population estimates on Bear Management Areas (BMA) Bear Management Areas (BMA) 2 and 7. BMA 7, Swan Hills, population survey conducted by Foothills Research Institute in 2018 suggested an estimate of 62 grizzly bears in BMA 7 be used for management purposes until a study with higher precision could be performed. The grizzly population density in BMA 7 is estimated at 12.6 bears per 1,000 km².

BMA 2, Grande Cache, was last surveyed in 2008, with no further surveys announced. The 2008 survey revealed an estimated population of 271 grizzly bears. The density of grizzlies stood at 18.11 bears per 1,000 km². This density was most concentrated in the Wilmore/Kakwa areas.

With the range of an adult male grizzly bear being 1800 km², the proximity of ranches in the BMA 2 increases the potential for conflicts. As populations appear to have rebounded in other BMAs, it would be prudent if the Alberta Government updated grizzly population estimates for BMA 2 and reassess with increased precision in BMA 7. With increased reports from residents of grizzly bears, the development of a Provincial Grizzly Mitigation Plan needs to be prioritized to address the safety of rural residents and inform agricultural producers as to what they can do to protect their livelihoods, potentially reducing wildlife conflicts.