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Dr. Laurence M. Gould
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Dear Dr. Gould:

I was interested to get your letter of January 7 with its attachments. This prolonged misunderstanding between the Craigheads and other field scientists and the Administration of Yellowstone National Park is a most unfortunate situation, but as I said in my earlier letter to John, it is not unusual for a park to consider that they have the sole right to undertake research within their boundaries. One of the real problems is that there is a failure at the Headquarters Office to develop a policy concerning the access to parks for research purposes by university scientists. Instead, it seems to be left in the hands of the local superintendent - and if he happens to be hostile to certain individuals or to the general idea, the circumstances arise where a park may simply be closed to many scientists.

When we were holding our hearings in Yellowstone, we were assured by Mr. Anderson, the superintendent, that they had a number of university people working on research projects within the park and that these people were welcome and received cooperatively.

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I have no doubt that this is so, but it seemed to me also that they are all in areas which the park does not consider to be 'sensitive' and they are not in areas of study in which some of the park's personnel feel that they have some competence. I have always felt that one should apply criteria to the selection of research to be undertaken in National Parks. If research can just as easily be done outside the park as inside, then there is no particular reason for introducing research workers into the park. However, most behavioral research on large game mammals and populations of many large species which are almost confined to National Parks can be done almost nowhere else but within the National Park's surroundings. There are also many kinds of research that can lead directly to improvements in our management approach - which again should be done in our National Parks because there it is important to undertake the research work within the immediate ecological environment within which management must take place.

Turning next to the immediate matter of the Grizzly bear population in Yellowstone and our views on it and its future, the first point I should make is that within the two years previous to the

completion of our study the park authorities had shown a capacity to greatly reduce the number of removals of nuisance bears. In the last year, as I recall, there were none or almost no bears removed. At the same time, we emphasized that during the period following upon the closure of the garbage dump there had been approximately 100 more bears removed from the total population of the ecosystem than would have been the case during a similar span of years prior to this management action. Removal at this rate was clearly intolerable. There was evidence that the population was responding by improved survival rate of young. There was also some evidence, but not too conclusive at that time, that the birth rate had probably declined, though the problems in arriving at a truly comparable birth rate in the previous period made it impossible for us to be absolutely certain of this fact. There are several different ways in which birth rates can be calculated and John Craighead's figures were equivocal in this matter.

With the figures available to us, it was impossible to be precise as to the losses that the population of bears could suffer from human sources and still recoup its numbers to the capacity of the environment. Obviously the number of man induced losses that the population could tolerate depends, in part, upon the natural losses and these depend upon matters completely out of human control in most cases - such as progressive aging of a population and so on. It is for this reason that we felt the population should be the subject of detailed study sensitive enough to provide reliable information on year-by-year ^{changes} stages in the population size and in its age and sex structure. It was our view that the kind of research about which we were told by the National Park's authorities at the time of our visit would not do this and that only a research program which included the attachment of recognizable marks to bears would provide the data.

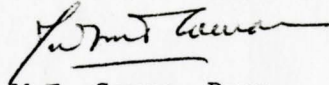
In the interim, we felt we should come up with an approximation of the numbers that we felt the population could lose through the instrumentality of man on an annual basis without experiencing continuing decline. Obviously this is a 'guesstimate' but we tried to be on the safe side in specifying the number 10. It should be understood that this number was to include all losses due to human activity - that is, control by cattlemen where bears are destroying stock, other damage-control activities outside the park, the hunting kill, poaching losses, as well as actions within the park. It follows that if, for some reason, there have had to be several control actions within the park within a given summer it will be impossible to have an open season for hunting in the adjacent State. We hope that this will emphasize that those in control of the Grizzly population over the entire ecosystem have a joint and inseparable responsibility for the management of the animals. What happens in one part of the ecosystem has its immediate impact on what can be permitted to happen in other parts of the ecosystem.

I have not been informed about the control actions in the park this year and whether or not bears were killed or removed from

the park. John Craighead told me recently that it was his information that perhaps 13 bears had been removed by man in the entire ecosystem this year. In our estimation this is too many, though I must admit that we have no hard data to support the view. It is only an informed judgement.

You inquire about my earlier letter to John Craighead. I have no objection to your showing this to others, but I don't want to see it published in the press as it was a personal letter.

Sincerely yours,



I. McL. Cowan, Dean
Faculty of Graduate Studies

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