

Memorandum

TO : Dr. Thomas Baskett, Chief
Division of Wildlife Research

DATE: August 20, 1971

FROM : Dr. John Craighead, Leader
Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding on Grizzly Bear Research in
Yellowstone and Proposed Study Plan for Grizzly Bear Research

I received the revised Memorandum of Understanding between the Bureau and the National Park Service for conducting research on grizzly bears in Yellowstone National Park, and the revised study plan. The Memorandum of Understanding and the work plan as revised requires further revision if the objectives of the research are to be met and if, indeed, independent research is to be carried out at all.

It is my understanding that the purpose of this agreement and work plan was to make arrangements at the highest administrative level that would enable two research teams, one representing the National Park Service and one representing the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, to conduct independent research on essentially the same problem (how to establish a natural population of grizzlies with a minimum of danger to the public and to the bears) within Yellowstone National Park and to analyse and report findings and conclusions independently. It seems obvious from the problems that have developed in the field between the two research teams and from the differences of opinion expressed in research journals (see BioScience) that two independent but cooperative research efforts are necessary.

In order to conduct research in Yellowstone National Park, the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit needs an independent research team working closely with, but not dependent on, the National Park Service's biologists. We require freedom to continue to gather a wide range of data, to handle immobilized bears, to record first-hand information on the number of bears in campgrounds, the number of captures, the number of bears dispatched or killed in control actions, and the information concerning transplants and returns. This is the type of information that we have gathered for 12 years using techniques and methods developed by our research teams (see BioScience). It is essential that we have freedom to continue to do this; as well as freedom to analyse these and other data obtained directly from the Superintendent's office. In addition, it is necessary that we be encouraged to draw conclusions, and report independently of the National Park Service's research team. Our analyses and our reports will, of course, be submitted to the National Park Service for review prior to publication.

It was my understanding that the Memorandum of Understanding between the Bureau and the National Park Service, which I reviewed in Washington, D. C. on August 5, 1971 would be revised in accordance with recommendations specified by me and by Dr. Solberg, representing the University of Montana. It was also my understanding that the proposed research study plan reviewed by Dr. Loveless, Dr. Linn, George Gardner, and myself would not be substantially altered.

Dr. Thomas Baskett (continued)

Page Two

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I would like to comment on the revised Memorandum of Understanding and the work plan as it relates to a successful and harmonious research program in Yellowstone.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Page 2, Section 2, last paragraph

I object to this paragraph because it precludes publication by the Unit team of data that are the very essence of the problem to be investigated. I can only interpret this to mean that data will be provided under the terms of the work plan, but that we can really do nothing with it. Since the Bureau research team started collecting these data in 1959 and published these (see BioScience); and since we have recognized the importance of obtaining this information during 1971 and future years, I believe that the National Park Service should not have proprietary rights.

I suggest that if the intent of this agreement is to obtain the best possible analysis and interpretation of the effect of present management actions that both parties to the agreement should not only have the right but should be encouraged to interpret and publish separately. This is the essence of science.

Page 3, section 5, entire paragraph

In order to continue a food habits study of grizzlies we requested that section 5 be altered to read: "The capture, marking or collecting of biological specimens and samples (other than scats and portions of dead animals) shall be undertaken when mutually agreed by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife." Specifically, we wish to continue to collect the lower jaws and femurs of dead ungulates in order to age them and to determine their physical condition at the time of death. This has yielded important information on predation by grizzlies and the use of winter-killed animals. To inspect jaws and femurs at Park Headquarters (as specified by the revised work plan) would preclude us from sampling by area or time, or determining our sample sizes. This is not research.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED STUDY PLAN

General Objective I. Page 1, No. 3

We need to have authority to gather our own data (as we have in the past) in capture, release, control actions, confrontations, property damage, and visitation of grizzlies to campgrounds and developed areas. We need to supplement these with data from the log books of the sub-district rangers.

Dr. Thomas Baskett (continued)
Page Three
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I suggest that this objective should read: "Both the National Park Service and the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife shall be free to independently gather all data relating to capture, release, control, confrontations, property damage, campground visitations, transplants and returns. The objective of both parties to this agreement shall be to accumulate as complete a record as possible and to interpret the data independently in the best traditions of science.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

General Objective No. 1, Page 1

Specific objective No. 4 in our original work plan was eliminated with no explanation.

General Objective No. 1, Page 2, No. 4

Our research teams have handled nearly 600 grizzlies during the past 12 years. We need authorization to take our own measurements, make our own observations, etc., unless we specifically specify otherwise. It is recognized there may be times when it may not be possible to record our own information, however, we had no serious problem in this respect during many years of cooperative work with National Park rangers.

General Objective No. 2, Page 2

There is no purpose in fulfilling specific objectives No. 1 and No. 2 unless general objective 1 can be conducted in a scientific manner. This information is needed for comparative purposes.

General Objective No. 3, Page 3

Again it is essential that we gather and tabulate our own data. Weekly summaries are normally not recorded so the data can be statistically analysed. Independent recording of the raw data is the basis of research and when two research teams are working with very different hypotheses, one team should not be dependent on data gathered and summarized by the other team. The opposite approach should be encouraged so as to get the broadest possible prospective on the problem.

General Objective No. 4, Page 3

This is an impossible research arrangement and has already been commented upon under page 3, section 5, of the Memorandum of Understanding (see Page 2 of this memorandum).

Dr. Thomas Baskett (continued)
Page Four
August 20, 1971

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Procedure 2, Page 3

Is there a need to specify how and under what conditions we get the bear management data? A statement encouraging independent data gathering would, I believe, be more in keeping with the intent of the agreement. A point of friction in the past has been the provision of summarized statements rather than raw data.

It is with reluctance and concern that I withdraw my research efforts from Yellowstone National Park. I do not believe it is now feasible for me to conduct research on the effect of management actions on grizzly bears in Yellowstone. I regret that the attempt to resolve this was not successful, but I do appreciate the effort of those who tried.

Tom, I would like you to request the National Park Service to provide me with all records of capture, death, dispatch, and transplants of grizzlies marked by our research team. In view of the vast amount of data that we have made available to the National Park Service, and the cost of the grizzly bear project, I think this is a very reasonable request. (Under separate cover, I am sending you our latest report on research conducted in National Parks.)

I hope that we will have the opportunity to negotiate a contract to conduct research in Yellowstone National Park at a later date.

John J. Craighead

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John J. Craighead

Enclosure

~~8:45~~ 9:15

7:30

original

9:15 meeting

7:30

R. Solberg

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
AND
THE BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
PROVIDING FOR
RESEARCH ON THE GRIZZLY BEAR, URSUS ARCTOS
IN YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK BY THE
MONTANA COOPERATIVE WILDLIFE RESEARCH UNIT

WHEREAS: The National Park Service and the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife recognize the significant scientific and cultural values of a wild, free-ranging population of grizzly bear, Ursus arctos, in Yellowstone National Park, and

WHEREAS: The National Park Service has implemented a program to restore the grizzly bear population within said park to its natural abundance, distribution and ecology, through the removal of garbage and other introduced food items from the diet of the grizzly bear, and

WHEREAS: The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, through the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, has conducted a long-term study of grizzly bear population dynamics and distribution within the national park, and

WHEREAS: A cooperative study of the patterns of grizzly bear distribution, movement and behavior during the transition period from bears feeding on garbage to bears feeding on natural food sources would be a significant contribution to the understanding of this species,

Note: This is the memo with the alterations that we all
8/20/71 agreed should be made. J.F.C.

NOW THEREFORE: The Service and the Bureau mutually agree that a grizzly bear study program by the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit should proceed under the following conditions:

1. The objectives of all proposed research activities undertaken as a result of this agreement shall be consistent with the policies and objectives concerning the administration and management of Yellowstone National Park.
2. Original data obtained using research techniques employed by the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit shall be respected as being the property of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife in order that publication of original data may result, and that proper credit can go to the researchers and authors. However, all data and other pertinent observations that may result from research conducted by the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit within Yellowstone National Park or related activities under the agreement shall be made freely available by the Bureau to the National Park Service for the sole purpose of internal use in carrying out management activities for which the Service is responsible.

Any information (such as size and weight statistics and ear tag numbers) obtained by the National Park Service as a result of bear management actions (such as the capture and transplant of problem bears) will be made freely available to the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, which shall respect the source of such information, ~~and the~~ Both

*parties to this agreement shall have the right
- amend this*

(or something to this effect)

to publish independently.

~~proprietary rights of the National Park Service for the original publication of such information.~~

3. All oral and written statements, including, but not limited to, progress reports, popular and scientific articles and other publications, talks, and press releases prepared by the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit concerning grizzly bear research within Yellowstone National Park shall be submitted to the Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife for approval prior to publication or otherwise disseminated to the public.

4. The Bureau recognizes the National Park Service as having the responsibility and authority for all management activities within Yellowstone National Park and the Bureau will obtain the concurrence of the Director, National Park Service, prior to making any expressions relating to the management of grizzly bears within said national park.

5. The capture, marking or collecting of biological specimens and samples, ^{& portions of dead animals} (other than scats) shall ~~be~~ when mutually agreed be undertaken by the National Park Service and the BSFW.

6. Field research activities under this agreement shall be limited to the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit Leader, who shall serve as Principal Investigator, and to qualified, full-time students and faculty members of the University of Montana and other qualified employees or associates of the Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit who have attained their eighteenth birthday, and whose names

Why limited
only to
BSFW & W?
A similar
restriction should
apply to N.P.S.
biologists.

Research and publicity
separated

appear in an approved study plan as provided for in Item 8 below.

7. The Principal Investigator shall be responsible for insuring that all participants associated with research carried out under this agreement understand and abide by the conditions herein.

8. Research activities carried out in Yellowstone National Park under this agreement shall be contingent upon receipt of a study plan that meets with the concurrence of the Director, National Park Service, and is approved by the Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. The Study Plan shall be prepared for proposed research to be conducted for each calendar year and shall state specific objectives, methods, and activities involved in the project. This Study Plan shall be submitted annually in time for consideration by the two Directors (or their representatives) at the annual review as provided for in Item 12 below.

9. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall be construed as obligating either party hereto for the expenditure of funds or for the future payment of monies in excess of appropriations authorized by law.

10. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as limiting in any way the responsibility and authority of the Director, National Park Service, to manage Yellowstone National Park, and to engage in or permit others to engage in research required by him to carry out that management.