Yellowstone Bear Deaths Explained

Yellowstone Park rangers were forced to destroy another grizzly bear last week. The tranquilized bear, scheduled for transplanting by helicopter to another area, regained consciousness when being loaded into a cargo net and stood up to threaten the men handling her. According to Yellowstone Park biologist, Glen Cole, "There was a malfunction of the tranquilizer dart and the bear didn't get a full dose."

Biologist Cole, who is research supervisor for all the Rocky Mountain National Parks, explained that this was one of 47 management actions this summer involving capture, transplanting, "and when we have to do this, it involves destruction of certain animals."

Cole emphasized that the management problems are arising from a particular group of bears which frequent developed areas and are linked with food supplied by humans. The Park Service is attempting to move the bears and get them back to a wild state.

This year attempts at relocating bears have resulted in ten grizzly deaths. Two were destroyed when they charged the ranger control teams attempting to live-capture them with drugs. Two deaths resulted from overdoses of tranquilizers. The one last Wednesday was shot when she awoke, and five have been intentionally destroyed because they had been repeatedly transplanted and returned to the campground areas.

As to methods used for transplanting the grizzlies, 11 have been taken by helicopter and to date four of these have returned. Some have been moved by vehicles, up to 49 miles away, with several returns. One was removed by boat to the southeast arm of Yellowstone Lake. This one also returned.

Cole stated that out of 37 captured, 31 have been transplanted within the park and six were shipped to zoos. Twenty, or 65% of the relocated grizzlies have not returned.

Noting that there is a population of about 200 grizzlies in the park, Cole stated, "It is in the interest of all concerned and particularly for preserving the grizzly that we get it back to the wild." He estimates that there are over 30 cubs produced each year and "what we are taking for control is not going to depress the population over the long haul."

The Park is gradually phasing out the dump grounds which have been a food source for generations of bears. One dump has been completely covered over and fenced. "It is working beautifully," said Cole. "It's not the bears' fault," he went on, "it's what man has done to them that causes the problem. To break this link we must trap and transplant these habitual, semi-domesticated bears. Maybe some of them will end up as scientific specimens but that isn't a bad situation. There are schools that could use this kind of scientific material."

Cole pointed out Glacier Park as an example of where grizzlies have been through the relocating program and now are completely wild and free ranging. They have only had one injury in three years.

Educating the public on proper camping methods is needed according to Cole. In 41 years there have only been four injuries attributed to grizzlies in the wild while 60 accidents have been linked to bears associated with artificial food. Careless camping and handling of food is a prime cause of trouble." Too many people don't know how to camp," said Cole. "You can get away with being sloppy around chipmunks -- but bears are something else."

June 28/80

Met Dyan Zaslowsky
at Wort Hotel 9:00 A.M.

Discussed grizzly bear situation
+ helicoptering of bears.
I let her read & record Dick
Randall's letter of Nov. 22, 1974.
Referred her to: Savvy Rook,
Dick Knight, Joe Cutter.

Working for
Defenders of Wildlife

Dick Randall
Box 507
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901
November 22, 1974

Mr. Frank Craighead
Environmental Research Institute
Moose, Wyoming 83012

Dear Frank:

I just recieved your November 4th letter. It was addressed to box 4507--instead of 507--and the postoffice managed to get it lost for awhile. They don't need much of an excuse.

Thanks so much for your grizzly bear publication. I would gladly have given a months salary to have been nearby with my camera when you were doing the bear tagging.

I hope to get up your way before long. I want to do some calling for coyotes--for pictures. All the counties in southern Wyoming now have a bounty on coyotes and it seems like there is a caller behind every sagebush--and the coyotes are wild. I hope I catch you home, and we can visit.

The attached information was taken from a telephone conversation with Ben Morris in 1973. I haven't attempted to put it together in a readable form.

Do you ever hear from Paul Buser anymore? I've lost contact with him.

Best regards,

Dick Randall

Dick Randall

Telephone conversation--and related information--with Ben Morris of Wray Colorado in May, 1973 (with Dick Randall).

Ben Morris flew a Bell helicopter in Yellowstone Park for all of the 1971 summer season and half of the 1972 summer season. He was involved in helicopter rescue work in the Tetons and was one of the two pilots that transplanted grizzly bear, via helicopter, to locations that were remote from people problems, The other pilot was Dan Rich. Both pilots were stationed at West Yellowstone.

Roughly, here is what Ben told me.

All they ever transplated were grizzly bear. If a black bear was causing trouble "they just killed them". Ben seemed quite concerned about this. He said the Park VIPs felt that they couldn't afford to waste helicopter time and money hauling black bear.

Regarding the grizzlies, Ben told me that they sometimes would haul a grizzly away from people areas as many as three times. If they came back after that--and they didn't have a standing request from a zoo for a grizzly, they disposed of the bear.

Ben said that most of the bear he hauled out were brought back to life on a steep divide that sloped out of the Park--usually right on the Park border. After the bear was revived they would attempt to drive the bear down the divide and out of the Park.

Ben said they lost several bear to the tranquilizers--Ben called it an overdose administered by people who really didn't know what they were doing. The people working with the drug called it a bad batch of tranquilizer.

In 1971 Ben said that they lost three grizzlies in two days to the tranquilizer. He said that he thought that there were several more grizzlies lost in this manner, but didn't know for sure.

Ben told me that Dan Rich accidentially dropped a grizzly and of course, the bear was killed. ~~He thought~~

Ben said he thought there was another incident where a grizzly was dropped, and killed, but couldn't document it.

In 1971 Ben Morris relocated 12 grizzlies--via copter. In 1972 he hauled out 6 grizzlies.

In 1971, 24 grizzlies--and in 1972, 12 grizzlies were relocated by Dan Rich.

These figure are approximate. Ben said that they could be off one bear--more or less.

Ben said that the largest grizzly he hauled weighed 650 pounds. I don't know how they weighed it.

Ben seemed quite concerned about the whole bear problem. He was very put out about what he called "the black bear slaughter"--and I join him in that feeling. He was also concerned that in the last stronghold of the grizzly, in the lower 48, that people were allowed to take precident over a species that is having a hard time surviving.

The last address I had on Ben was--Hale Star Rt.--Wray,Colorado. Telephone, Wray, 303-338-2594--and in Denver at 303-344-3749.

Ben is in a position where he is making his living by hiring his copter to Federal agencies-and to sheep people--to hunt coyotes, haul grizzlies--etc. I'm not sure that he will want to put his livelyhood in jepordy by revealing much more than he has told me--but you might talk to him.

Rick Randall
Nov. 23, 1974

GRIZZLY BEAR NOTES, 1974

Grizzly Bear Mortalities

On September 25, 1974, I learned that a very large boar was killed in the area of Arizona Creek. Fish & Game have the information, and I'll check further with them. About the same time, Brad Bucy, who has been working for the Yellowstone Park Company in Yellowstone, stopped by and mentioned that the Park Service had apparently killed a cub or yearling at Lake. Apparently they overdosed it.

2

Bucy's address is:

476 Bowling Avenue
Cumberland, Maryland 21502

check with Petra

Zoo Grizzlies Shot in Pocatello

A 209-pound grizzly sow, called "Griselda," and her 65-pound female yearling cub escaped the Ross Park Zoo in Pocatello, Idaho, early Sunday morning and were shot dead by police officers after roaming city streets for several hours.

The two bears were obtained by the zoo September 9 from Yellowstone National Park, following a mauling incident.

According to Carol Burnan, "Idaho State Journal" staff writer, police were notified about 1:15 a.m. Sunday of the escape by a man who said his car had been pursued by the sow as he drove past the two bears.

The bears escaped through a 12-inch hole in the roof fencing of their pen and had to climb a steep rock wall in order to be free. Assistant Parks Director Leonard Carlson remarked, "I didn't think they could climb like they do."

City Parks and Recreation Director Tom Knapp said the decision to shoot the bears was made because the zoo had no means of capturing them.

The grizzlies made their way to a residential area in the north end of town where the cub was felled with three rounds fired from a 12-gauge shotgun. At approximately the same time the cub was shot, the sow was killed by a police officer as the bear was charging him.

Dr. Frank Craighead, together with Dr. John Craighead, has been studying the grizzly in Yellowstone Park since 1957 and was familiar with "Griselda" and her cub.

"She was an unmarked animal," Craighead said, "apparently relatively young. She was captured for the first time following the September 7 mauling in Grant Village."

Craighead added that she probably was not the bear that mauled the two campers in the park.

Another older sow and her cub, which the Craigheads had tagged "number eight" in 1959, were destroyed by park officials September 12 at West Thumb. Craighead said it is possible she may have caused the mauling, and not "Griselda."

"Number eight was not a troublesome bear at all," Craighead explained. "She as well as many other bears had never been a problem until the last couple of years, " he added, "and we observed her from 1959 until she was killed. Until the incident at Grant Village she had never been a problem bear."

Said Craighead, "As far as we know, the younger animal (Griselda) probably didn't cause the mauling but was moved off to a zoo because of the possibility that she might have."

The sow and her cub were two of a total 20 bears killed or sent to zoos this year by Yellowstone Park.

Yellowstone Acts To Control Grizzly

One of man's first acts, upon trapping wild animals for his own pleasure, is to give the animal a name. Thus is the fate of a 400-pound grizzly sow, designated "Griselda" by her keepers, and her cub who has yet to be named. Both were recently donated by Yellowstone Park to the Pocatello City Zoo.

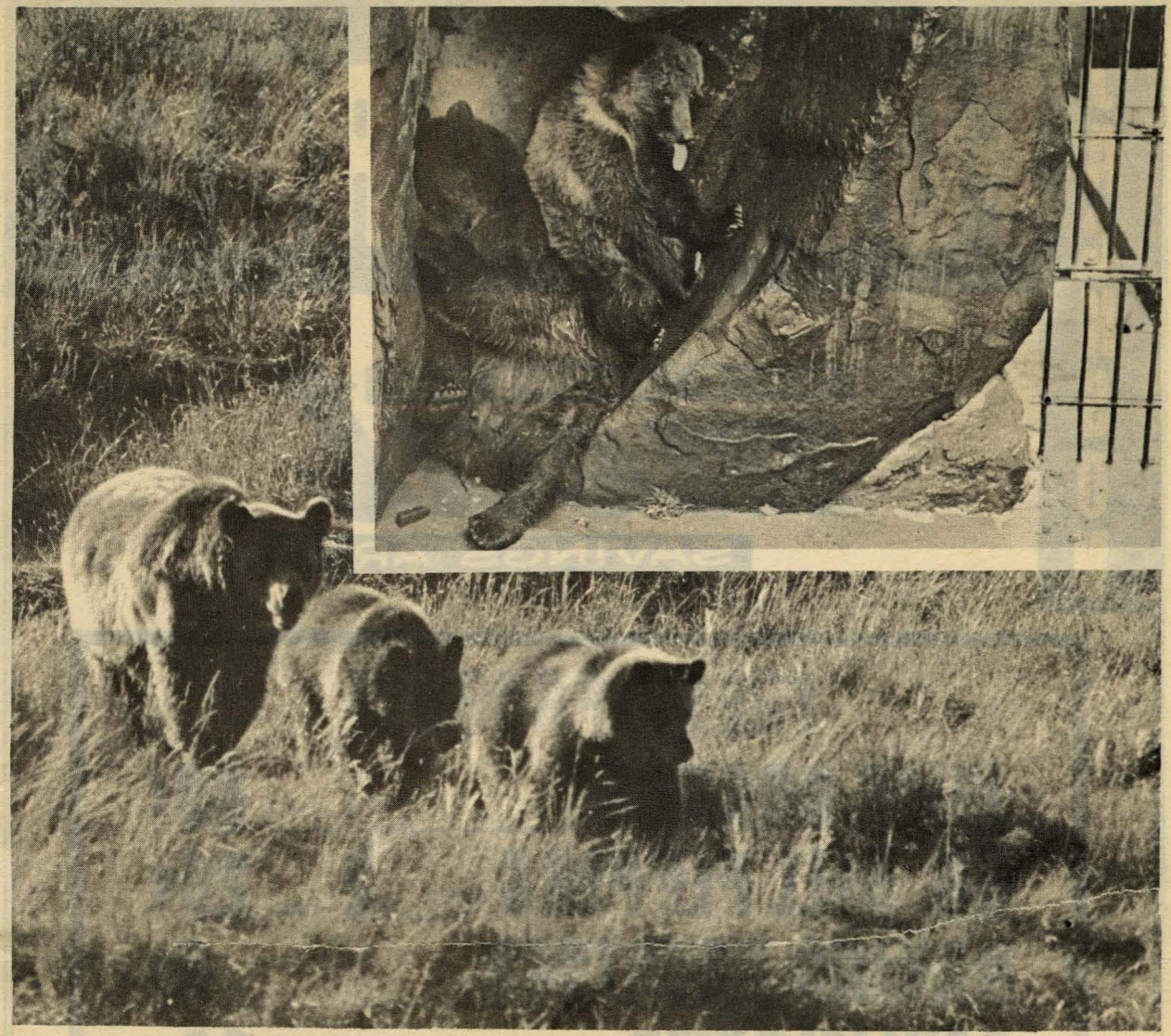
"Griselda" and her cub are among eight grizzlies donated to zoos by the park this year. Park officials believe one of them may have attacked two campers in a campground a week before Labor Day.

According to Pocatello's assistant zookeeper, Lee Lemmon, the two animals are the "biggest attraction we've had here in a long time." Said Lemmon, "The way I look at it prison is better than a death sentence."

Yellowstone Park Supervisory Research Biologist Glen Cole explained that there were 56 "management actions" by the park this year, which means capturing and immobilizing grizzly or "dispatching" (killing) them. 36 bears he said, were transplanted within the park and 12 were destroyed. Of those destroyed, two charged the control team attempting to capture her, three died from an overdose of the morphine-derivative tranquilizer, and seven were considered too dangerous and were purposely destroyed.

Said Biologist Cole, "We have a secure grizzly policy in Yellowstone --they'll still be here when we're long gone." Mr. Cole is optimistic despite the fact that he feels their policy has been exploited. "Some people's good intentions have not

Continued on page 6



Bears such as "Grizelda" and her cub, (upper right) are often unfortunate victims when they mistake the lush meadows of Yellowstone for free, wild country. Because of their habits, they may face distruction or an existence in a zoo such as this one in Pocatello, Ida. Left, National Park Service photo

Grizzly Policy

Continued from page 1

helped an already difficult job," Cole said, "we've been overly criticized by people who say 'there's nothing wrong with the bear, it's poor management.' "

In explaining the management policy, Cole said, "In the 1950's we had quite a program -- it was essentially what we're doing now but we had fewer bears to deal with. The injury rate was one per 2.7 million visitors, then as a result of concern for the bear as an endangered species we got into trapping and transplanting. In less than a 10-year period we had bears in campgrounds. Prior experience suggests that what may look like a temporarily harsh approach will have good results in the long run." He added, "If we didn't do this we'd have pressure to get rid of the bear altogether."

Two fatalities from grizzly, in 1907 and 1916, have occured in Yellowstone over the past 97 years. Records show that 63 persons (1 per 750,000 visitors) were injured by grizzly bears over the past 40 years and of those, 47 were minor and 16 required hospitilization for one night or more. Hiking encounters with female bears defending young were responsible for the three backcountry injuries.

Besides trying to educate visitors by distributing bear information leaflets and warning them against feeding bears and sloppy camping habits, the park felt that by closing certain dumping grounds and providing sanitary landfills in high-visitor-use areas, they could wean bears away from garbage and get them back to natural foods. Four small ones were closed, then Rabbit Creek dump near Old Faithful was abruptly closed this year. Trout Creek dump in Hayden Valley is scheduled for closing next year, which will eliminate the last garbage food source. "If grizzly intrusions into campgrounds begin to exceed control capabilities, or lead to excessive numbers of animals being destroyed," Cole said, "the Trout Creek closure will be carried out on a 'phase out' basis."



An orphaned brown bear cub now makes his home at the Pocatello Zoo.

Dump grounds, Cole said, were used by the park from 1930 to 1942 for bear feeding and viewing areas. Bears were purposely fed so visitors could see them. Bleachers were even set up around the three dumps, which attracted up to 70 bears at a time. Eventually the dumps were closed because people got too close and there were some injuries.

Cole feels there are certainly better alternatives to destroying the grizzly. One possibility, he explained, which the park is now exploring is to use them as transplant stock to wilderness areas which once held grizzly populations. "This is the probable route to go," Cole said, and added that he is working with Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado to arrange some transplants but has had no orders to date.

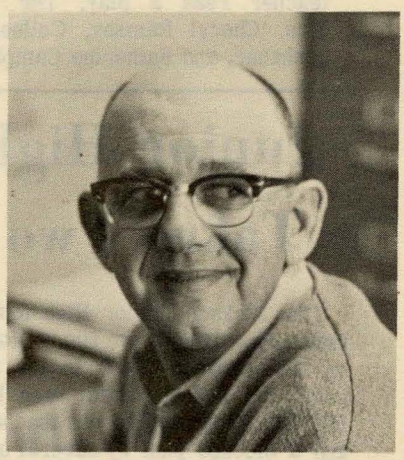
Grizzly transplanted within the park can be taken a distance of only 49 miles by helicopter and some have been transplanted as many as six times in a two year period. This indicates that the animals cannot be transplanted sufficient distances inside the park to overcome their homing capabilities.

Another alternative, Cole believes, is to take the campground out of the center of the bears' habitat. "Maybe this is where you go look at the bear rather than sleep where the bear lives," Cole said, "this is the guy's home--you're visiting it. Parks are for people? Well so is New York City but parks are for animals, and for people to view."

Yellowstone has an estimated population of about 250 grizzly. Out of 30 cubs born each year the survival rate is 60 per cent, according to Dr. Frank Craighead. Some cubs are destroyed or sent to zoos along with their mothers, and some are transplanted, but Cole said they only have "a chance of making it because it's pretty tough on them."

The park also has an estimated population of 500 black bears. This summer many tourists complained that there weren't any bears along the roadsides. Cole explained that in a good pine nut and huckleberry year, as this was, bears don't look for food along roads. Nevertheless, there were some troublesome bears. Five orphaned cubs were given to Pocatello City Zoo this summer because two of the sows that mothered the cubs died as the result of an overdose of tranquilizer. Two of the cubs were traded to the Ogden zoo and three remain at Pocatello.

Cole, who is research supervisor for Glacier, Yellowstone, Teton and Rocky Mountain National Parks, said that in Glacier bears don't come into camps anymore, and that very few of them are linked to garbage, primarily because there are not as many campgrounds in the park. Glacier has virtually solved the problem, Cole said, since their bears are now totally wild and are not feeding artificially.



RESEARCH BIOLOGIST GLEN COLE

Jackson Hole News

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Grizzly in Jeopardy

The never-ceasing conflict of man and nature is vividly demonstrated with the present problem of dealing with grizzly bears and humanity on a common ground in Yellowstone Park.

Although they have caused minimal injury in years past, the grizzly under the present management is causing a threat to man, and even more to his own survival.

We recognise that able and conscientious men are dealing with the bear problem in a way they consider right. They are attempting to return the grizzly to the wild.

Yet it is a simple fact of life that Yellowstone Park, the habitat of the bears, is not itself wild. Granted there are large expanses of wilderness, but within a bear's normal range of travel there is a great loop of highway, carrying masses of humanity and feeding them onto camp grounds.

We question that transplanting bears within the park will ever be entirely effective. Distances are not sufficient to deter the bears' homing capabilities. And death at the hand of man is being meted out to many bear "returnees."

Other alternatives must be considered before the grizzly "the threatened species" is exterminated. This seems an emergency when the man-caused death rate of grizzly during the last two years (more than the replacement rate) is considered. Those in charge of manage- seek new answers.



LOOKING FOR A WAY OUT--Grizelda and cub found freedom by climbing the wall behind her. Police found them and ended their three hours of freedom with a shotgun. See full story on page 3.

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The sow and her cub were two of a total 20 bears killed or sent to zoos this year by Yellowstone Park.

Fish & Game in Atlanta, Georgia called - will call back around 1:00 or so.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service — Andrew J. Pursley

Tenn. N. Carolina Valley. Transportation of bear

Shooting pressure — 1 — 50 grizzlies in 1 year (civil)

Shooting pressure — 8,900 bears in ten years

$8,000

400 bears tranquilized

Part of John's Critique of NPS EIS. 1974

Appendix

Grizzly Bear Kills, 1974 - Yellowstone Ecosystem

(pers. comm., Mr. Larry Roop, Wyoming Game & Fish Department).

1. Legal kill. May 31. 3/4 mile above Game & Fish cabin on North Fork Shoshone. Lg. dark phase male.

2. Legal kill. June 11. 5 miles up Grinnell Creek on snow slide. Medium sized female.

3. ?? Spring killed bear in Teton Co. Legal kill by resident from Big Piney. Warden Petera did not remember details when I talked to him, but he stated he included it in his monthly reports. Will check with Bill Morris on this for info.

4. Legal kill. Sept. 1. South Crandall Creek., Clark's Fork. Non-res. Old male. Marked w/ Craighead tatoo and ear streamer.

5. Depredation kill. Sept. 8. Arizona Creek about 1½ miles above Teton Peak boundary. Pinky Bonner's camp. Young male.

6. Natural death. Sept. 21 (?) Sulphur Creek on Sunlight Creek drainage. Large male that was brought from West Yellowstone one month earlier. Found by use of radio telemetry equipment. Discovered in 11,000 feet glacial cirque, extremely rugged terrain. Possibility that bear was shot, but could find no sign of open wounds. More likely animal was killed in rock slide since there were several abrasions and skinned areas. Attempt to remove carcass by helicopter for autopsy was unsuccessful.

7. Legal kill. Sept. 24. Jones Creek about 3 miles above junction with North Fork. Adult male.

8. Legal kill. Sept. 29. North Crandall Creek. Old female. Evidently a Craighead bear but no tatoo or ear tag discovered. Had green and white braided plastic loop in left ear. Loop still had part of blue streamer attached. Also notch in lower (rear) edge of left ear where tag might have been.

9. Illegal kill. Oct. 4. About 4 miles above Turpin Creek, T45N R112W Sec. 2. Old sow shot and left lay. Investigated by Warden Petera. Had Montana Fish & Game tag # H1583.

10. Illegal kill. Cub of the year with above sow. Only one paw found according to Petera. Another cub in area -- aggressive, had to be driven away from carcass of sow. Part of jaw removed from sow by Petera and given to Frank Craighead.

11. Legal kill. Oct. 24. Timber Creek. Old female. Had Yellowstone National Park tag # 7187.

12. Control action. Nov. 11. Yellowstone National Park. Carcass sent to Montana State Fish and Game laboratory in Bozeman.

GRIZZLY BEAR MORTALITIES - 1974

On November 3, 1974, John Hirtle stopped by for a visit. He had recently come from Dubois, Wyoming and heard about two young Grizzly Bears, apparently cubs, that had been killed there recently. I want to check on these mortalities to see if they definately are Grizzly Bears.

Grizzly Bear Mortalities 1974

Boar killed in May on Pacific Creek — Bud Nelson 1

Casper Star Tribune Nov. 16 1974

'Aggressive' grizzly meets death

YELLOWSTONE PARK, Wyo. (UPI) — An aging female grizzly apparently forced out of the wild by younger bears was killed for trying to claw its way into a mountain cabin in a search for food in Yellowstone National Park, rangers said Thursday.

"She had become very aggressive and dangerous," said a park spokesman. "The bear exhibited bold and unwary behavior towards humans."

The grizzly attacked the cabin home of a park employe and his family three times, officials said. The occupants were inside during the first attack Nov. 3, but drove the bear away after it broke a window trying to get inside.

Glen Cole, chief biologist at Yellowstone, said the bear returned last Saturday but could not get inside and again Sunday when it ripped shingles from the cabin and broke window panes to get food inside.

The park said the bear, trapped and killed Monday after the third attack, had been trapped and transplanted to a wild area of the park in 1972. The animal returned, forcing two later transplants in September, but each time the grizzly returned to occupied areas of the park.

"This particular bear was almost beating us back to the capture area after being transplanted," said Cole. "This meant that she was not every going to stay out in the wild."

Cole speculated the aging grizzly may have been forced from wild areas by younger bears. The dead animal's body was sent to the Montana State Fish and Game's laboratory at Bozeman.

The grizzly was the second killed in the park in 1974. The first grizzly died from an overdose of drugs used to put it to sleep before rangers tried to transplant it in the wild.

Cole said the practice of transplanting grizzlies began in 1969 and that it was not unusual for some bears that caused trouble near populated campgrounds to be transplanted six times in one summer.

Hospital gets n

CODY — A successor has been chosen for Hospital Administrator Larry Smith here.

Smith had been administrator of the West Park County Hospital for about two

Bear report issued

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK — A draft environmental impact statement on a management program of the Yellowstone grizzly bear has been published.

The National Park Service said the statement follows by two months the completion of a special study on the population dynamics of the grizzly bears by a committee of the National Academy of Science.

The committee found no evidence that the Yellowstone grizzly is approaching extinction, according to the park service.

The program proposed by the service is directed towards encouraging the bears to return to a wild, free-ranging existence. As the first move towards this goal of discouraging human feeding, the park service in 1970 closed garbage dumps within the park.

The draft statement will be submitted to 12 federal and state government agencies and more than 20 conservation, environmental and citizen's groups for review and comment before final preparation of the final statement.

Copies will also be sent to libraries, colleges and universities throughout the Rocky Mountain region.

MONTANA COOPERATIVE WILDLIFE RESEARCH UNIT

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
MONTANA FISH AND GAME COMMISSION
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

MISSOULA, MONTANA 59801

13 November 1974

Dr. Frank Craighead
P.O. Box 156
Moose, Wyoming 83012

Dear Frank:

We've been busy, but I finally found time to run down the marked bears that were killed in Wyoming.

The female killed at Turpine Meadows is No. 120; she was marked at Trout Creek as an adult on 9-4-61 and last observed alive at Trout Creek in 1970. This is a good record.

The male bear taken at Crandall Creek on 9-1 almost has to be male No. 190. This is an 11-year old that was marked at Trout Creek and last seen at Trout Creek in 1970. I suspect that there was either an error in reading the tatoo or in recording it since we have no bear marked No. 091 with a tatoo, and No. 190 did have a yellow braided rope in the left ear. This bear meets all the criteria.

If you get any additional marked ones, let me know, and we'll try to run them down. What about the two grizzlies supposedly killed at Big Piney? Can you get us more information on these?

Regards.

Sincerely yours,

John

John J. Craighead, Leader
Mont. Coop. Wildl. Res. Unit

JJC:nlh

Data On Grizzly #120

Grizzly #120 ~~Instrumented~~ 10/25 - 10/29 - 1966 - first signal
Very old female

~~Instrumented~~ marked at Trout Creek Sept 4, 1961 when 12½ to 13½ years old.

Killed at Tumpin Meadows Oct. 4/74 illegally - cub also killed, one escaped.

Age at death 26.5 years

#120 - yellow tape 00339 - H 1583 (R. Ear) (L Ear)

See table 3
p. 182
IUCN Gren 1974

July 1 - Aug 1 - 2
2
3

GRIZZLY BEAR NOTES: "Mortality, 1974"

#120
24.5 yrs old.

Today, October 8, 1974, I received a call from Conservation Officer Pete Petera. He said that a sow and one cub had been killed in the Teton Wilderness area, and that the other cub weighing about 150 lbs. would not leave the body of the mother. The sow was apparently killed Friday, October 4, and the cub is still hanging around and still trying to nurse. He wondered whether the cub could survive the winter. I told him I thought it could. Also, whether it might attack if they got too close. I suggested that he use cracker shells to scare off the cub as he has to get to the body before it's too bloated in order to get the bullets. He will have to work up a case against this hunter for an illegal kill. Here in Teton County I believe there was one legal grizzly kill in spring, and there was another one in Brown's Meadow this fall. There was a young bear, probably a yearling, killed in Yellowstone, and now this sow and cub. (5)

2

Pete called back in evening. Sow had marker no. H 1583 (square tag) in ear. Last 2 figures were hard to read & might be off. He will get the lower jaw if possible.

Oct. 16/74

Larry Roop called. Said there were already 11 grizzly kills this year in Wyo. — 6 legal

3

Knows of 2 kills at Big Piney or Pinedale
ear tags on both

On Sept. 1 a grizzly was killed at Crandall Creek
tatoo 091 yellow braided rope in left ear.

No. 188 had also detected and approached this source of food. The sow and her yearling usually waited on a nearby river terrace