

**EVALUATING MOTORIZED-ACCESS IMPACTS ON GREATER YELLOWSTONE
GRIZZLY BEAR: A POPULATION SLATED FOR DELISTING^{MAS}**

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Several goals must be met for the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to determine that the Yellowstone grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) population has recovered from its Endangered Species Act 'threatened species' status. These goals are broken down into both demographic and habitat objectives. Although some debate exists surrounding the attainment of demographic goals, the USFWS anticipates meeting these goals soon. On the other hand, the realization of habitat requirements for recovery seems unlikely. Recent literature demonstrates that

roads, motorized trails and snowmobile routes all pose serious threats to Yellowstone Ecosystem grizzly bear habitat. The US Forest Service (USFS) is the most extensive land manager in the Yellowstone Ecosystem. Predator Conservation field inventories reveal that USFS of motorized access are incomplete and inaccurate. As part of the Conservation Strategy, the USFWS is developing a scientifically defensible cumulative effects model to evaluate motorized impacts to grizzly bears. This model is needed to both declare recovery and manage the landscape after delisting. However, because the US Forest Service has yet to demonstrate that it can effectively inventory, monitor, and regulate motorized impacts to bear habitat crucial to the long term health of this grizzly population, the inputs for this model are not adequate to produce a reliable output. Due to this problem, I recommend not delisting this population of grizzly bears, until such time that the USFS significantly improve its ability to assess and control motorized impacts to grizzly bear habitat.