Over 100 years ago, new settlers to Washington killed thousands of grizzly bears, nearly eliminating them from our state. Because this bear population is threatened, federal agencies are required to study how we can restore grizzly bears in Washington’s North Cascades. The Friends of the North Cascades Grizzly Bear Coalition supports grizzly bear recovery and invites you to join the movement to bring back a missing piece of our heritage.

RECREATION IN GRIZZLY BEAR COUNTRY
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated the North Cascades Ecosystem (NCE) as a Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone (GBRZ)—a wild area of abundant quality habitat to support a viable grizzly population. Connected to the GBRZ is British Columbia’s Manning Provincial Park, which provides several thousand square miles of additional quality grizzly bear habitat. These are also areas where people enjoy camping, hiking and fishing, so how does grizzly bear recovery affect outdoorspeople?

To answer this question, we can look to other grizzly bear regions like Montana’s Flathead National Forest. The Flathead has the highest density of grizzly bears of any national forest in the lower 48 states, and hosts thousands of recreation users per year; yet repeated access closures rarely occur and dangerous encounters between humans and grizzlies are infrequent. Occasionally back-country managers will close a trail for safety precautions, such as a grizzly bear feeding on a carcass near the trail, but these restrictions are atypical and short-term.

The North Cascades would likely be managed in a similar way with minimal impacts to recreationists. And like all good outdoor ambassadors, people recreating in bear country should stay updated on their bear awareness education, including how to keep a bear-safe camp and hike bear-smart.

Wherever grizzly bears thrive, so does wildness, clean water, and abundant native fish and wildlife.

The Friends of the North Cascades Grizzly Bear Coalition supports restoring a healthy population of grizzly bears to the North Cascades.

Get educated about bear safety at northcascadesgrizzly.org
For centuries, grizzly bears have called Washington state home.

**RECOVERING A MISSING ICON**

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, settlers and trappers throughout our region killed thousands of grizzly bears, significantly reducing or completely eliminating grizzly populations in some areas. This rapid loss led to a threatened grizzly bear listing under the Endangered Species Act in 1975.

Despite protection, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates fewer than 10 grizzly bears exist in Washington state's North Cascades, making them the most at-risk population in the U.S. This is supported by the lack of sightings—the last confirmed grizzly seen in Washington's North Cascades was in 1996.

The National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other state and federal agencies are now evaluating strategies to restore grizzly bears to the North Cascades. In 2015, the agencies solicited public comments regarding recovery, and will soon release a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) outlining alternatives and offering another opportunity for public input.

Environmentally, culturally and ethically, restoring grizzly bears in the North Cascades is the right thing to do.

**THE TRUTH ABOUT GRIZZLIES**

Grizzly bears are among nature's most misunderstood species. Thought to be voracious predators, grizzly bears are actually semi-reclusive omnivores. Eighty percent of a typical grizzly's diet consists of berries, green plants, roots and insects. A large portion of the meat they eat consists of small mammals such as ground squirrels or carrion killed by other predators or harsh winters.

Grizzly bears play a vital role in ecosystem health. After feasting on berries, unbroken seeds pass through the bear, germinate and use fresh manure for fertilizer. Grizzlies use their long claws to dig up roots, bulbs, small mammals and insects. This foraging stirs up the soil and increases plant diversity…and the cycle starts all over again.

Culturally and spiritually, grizzly bears are significant to First Nations and American Indians throughout the Pacific Northwest. They are seen as teachers, guides, and symbols of strength and wisdom to some indigenous peoples.

Finally, grizzly bears have been part of Washington's landscape for thousands of years. Many believe we have an ethical, as well as legal, obligation to restore grizzlies. They are a regional icon and part of our natural heritage.

**JOIN US! HELP RESTORE GRIZZLY BEARS TO NORTH CASCADES WITH TWO SIMPLE ACTIONS:**

- Visit northcascadesgrizzly.org and sign our statement of support. Be sure to include your email to receive updates.
- In early fall 2016, submit a comment to the DEIS in support of grizzly recovery. We'll send you a note when it's time!