

## Speak Up for Grizzly Bears—write a letter to the editor!

Politicians in Montana (along with Idaho and Wyoming) are pushing hard for grizzly bears to be delisted from the Endangered Species Act. We need to show support in Montana for keeping grizzly bears protected.

### **Keep Grizzly Bears Protected—sample talking points for Letters to the Editor** ***(please put into your own words):***

- I am writing in support of keeping Endangered Species Act protections for grizzly bears in Montana and throughout the N. Rockies.
- Grizzly bears are our state animal, and are part of what makes Montana special.
- But some politicians and government bureaucrats in Helena are hostile to grizzly bears and have created legal loopholes and regulations that will make it easier to kill (or even trophy-hunt) grizzlies if they lose current protections.
- Grizzly bears are beginning to return, but biologists warn that grizzlies haven't fully recovered, and the state of Montana doesn't have adequate rules and safeguards in place.
- The Yellowstone and Glacier grizzly bear populations are isolated and disconnected from each other, and other grizzly populations are struggling to recover from a century of persecution.
- Keeping grizzlies protected is important to me because \_\_\_\_\_.
- Grizzly bears are one of the slowest-reproducing mammals on earth, making it very difficult to stop a population decline once it starts.
- We have a moral duty to protect our grizzlies and their ecosystems for future generations.
- As more people move to Montana and the N. Rockies, grizzly bears and other wildlife need MORE habitat protection—not less.

### **General Letter-to-the-Editor Tips**

- *Be timely*--Responding to a current hot issue or a recent article or editorial is one of the best ways to increase your chances of getting published. Be sure to mention the name of the article and the date it was written in the beginning of your letter.
- *Get a new signer*--Most newspapers won't print multiple letters from one person over a short period of time. If you've already published a letter recently, ask someone else to sign and submit one.
- *Keep it simple*--Keep your points short and clear, and stick to one subject.
- *Keep it short*--Make your first sentence short, compelling and catchy. Keep it well under the word limit.
- *Get local*--Newspapers, at their core, are community entities. Editors will be much more likely to publish a letter, and the letter will have much more impact, if it demonstrates local relevance.
- *Use personal stories*--Try to personalize the issue you are writing about. Say why you care and what it means to you. *For example, if you've seen grizzlies in Yellowstone or Glacier, reference these experiences in your letter.*
- If you are a licensed hunter or angler, please indicate that somewhere in your letter.

### **Sending your Letter**

- Paste your final letter into the body of an email (don't send as an attachment).
- Put the editor's email address in the "To" field.
- Put "letter to the editor" in the "Subject" line.
- The salutation should read, "Dear editor," and then be followed by your letter.
- Make sure to include your name, address and phone number with the letter. They won't print your contact info, but papers must call to confirm authorship before running a letter.

- If you don't hear from the paper within 2 days, call the editor to ask whether it will run.

### **Montana Newspapers Contact info**

Missoulian, [oped@missoulian.com](mailto:oped@missoulian.com) 406-523-5200, (200 word limit)  
Billings Gazette: 406-657-1200, online form- [Click here](#), 250 words  
Bozeman Daily Chronicle: 406-587-4491, [Click here](#) 300 words  
Great Falls Tribune: 406-791-1444, [letters@greatfallstribune.com](mailto:letters@greatfallstribune.com) 200 words  
Helena Independent Record: 406-447-4000, online form- [Click here](#), 250 words  
Montana Standard (Butte): 406-496-5500, online form- [Click here](#) 350 words  
Kalispell Daily Interlake: 406-755-7000, [edit@dailyinterlake.com](mailto:edit@dailyinterlake.com) 300 words  
Flathead Beacon: 406-257-9220, online form-[Click here](#)

**Thanks for speaking up for grizzly bears and other wildlife!**