
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

HB 1825

Brief Description: Concerning grizzly bear management.

Sponsors: Representatives Springer, Fitzgibbon, Berg and Ramel.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Repeals the specific duty of the Fish and Wildlife Commission to protect and develop management plans for grizzly bears.
- Repeals the requirement that the Department of Fish and Wildlife fully participate in discussions and negotiations with federal and state agencies relating to grizzly bear management.
- Repeals the prohibition on transporting or introducing grizzly bears into the state.

Hearing Date: 2/14/25

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

Grizzly bears are currently listed as a threatened species under the Federal Endangered Species Act in the contiguous 48 states. The federal Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan identifies six recovery zones: Greater Yellowstone, Northern Continental Divide, North Cascades, Selkirk, Cabinet-Yaak, and Bitterroot. The overall federal Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan is coordinated by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee, which is comprised of representatives of several federal agencies as well as representatives from state wildlife agencies in Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and Washington, and Canadian management authorities.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The state Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) and the state Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) operate under a statutory mandate to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage the state's fish and wildlife. Under its authority to classify state protected and endangered species, the Commission has classified the grizzly bear as a state endangered species. The Commission has an additional specific duty to protect grizzly bears and develop management plans on publicly owned lands to encourage natural regeneration of grizzly bears in areas with suitable habitat, and the WDFW is required to fully participate in all discussions and negotiations with federal and state agencies relating to grizzly bear management. Grizzly bears may not be transported or introduced into the state. Only grizzly bears that are native to the state may be used by the WDFW for management programs.

Summary of Bill:

The requirement that the state Fish and Wildlife Commission protect grizzly bears and develop management plans on publicly owned lands to encourage natural regeneration in areas with suitable habitat is repealed. The requirement that the WDFW fully participate in discussions and negotiations with federal and state agencies relating to grizzly bear management is repealed. The prohibition on the transportation or introduction of grizzly bears from out of state into Washington is also repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.