

Life History:

Grizzly bears as a species are long lived and slow to reproduce. This is true in Nunavut, but here they also have a much later age at first reproduction (8 years) and the largest reported home range in North America. On barren lands, they need large tracts of habitat to meet their ecological requirements. Barren ground grizzly bears have a predominantly carnivorous lifestyle and decline in caribou numbers may further increase risk of population decline. These are very important considerations in the context of species management.

Current Management:

Current legislation does not allow restrictions to be placed on Inuit harvest of grizzly bears. Inuit harvest bears for domestic use with no restrictions, with voluntary quotas used for sport hunting in the Kitikmeot region. Amendment to the federal *Nunavut Act* is required to resolve ambiguity about the GN's jurisdiction for the management of grizzly bears.

An annual harvest rate of 24 bears in Nunavut is considered sustainable. In recent years, grizzly bear harvests in the Kivalliq have increased substantially. The current removal rate in Kivalliq may not be sustainable over long-term. DOE is working with co-management partners and is in the process of developing a grizzly bear management plan to implement community-based management, and is dealing the issue of unregulated harvest through bylaws. A listing under SARA does not preclude or impede any management plan that Nunavut may develop. A management plan developed by Nunavut may in fact be recognized within the SARA-required National Management Plan.

Management Concerns:

Resource development on the tundra has the potential to increase bear/human contact. An increase in bear-human conflict is caused by more people being on the land through increased accessibility via road development as well as through mining camps and mine sites. Increased bear human contact can lead to an increase in defense-of-life-and-property kills. An assessment of bear densities and harvest rates through hair snagging and harvest monitoring is on-going. DOE recently completed a scientific study to assess distribution and abundance in west Kitikmeot and proposed a study in Kivalliq.

Benefits of Listing:

Whether or not NWMB support listing there will be no impact or change in grizzly bear management in Nunavut. A listing of "Special Concern" does not in itself require harvest restrictions or any changes to harvesting practices. The listing will require development

of a National Management Plan within 3 years, and Nunavut will participate in this process. This National Management Plan will be beneficial to the management of grizzly bears and to the long-term viability of the species. The environmental assessment component requires industrial proponents to identify, monitor, and mitigate impacts on SARA-listed species resulting from a development project.

An additional benefit that may occur with official listing is increased funding for research and new FPT (federal, provincial, territorial) partnerships which would also benefit management of the species.