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Comment from Kappelman, John

Posted by the **Fish and Wildlife Service** on May 11, 2026

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It is critical that the F&WS continue to follow the rules that were set to help establish grizzlies as an experimental population of an endangered and threatened species. Data collection by the ESA is essential for protecting individuals of experimental populations and aiding in monitoring its successful reintroduction and recovery efforts. The grizzly lived in the western US long before humans arrived on the scene, and its reintroduction will aid the restoration of habitats to their previous ecological balance by adding an apex predator. Yellowstone is once again Yellowstone because its ecosystem is on the path to recovery. The group that is usually most opposed to grizzly reintroduction are cattle ranchers, a very small but vocal group that places their interests above those of many others including the much larger number of people who recreate on public lands. Not only do the majority of cattle ranchers benefit from grazing their livestock on public lands at a heavily taxpayer subsidized fee of \$1.69 per animal unit, a fee that is about 15 to 20 times LESS than commercial grazing fees, this much lower fee does not come even close to covering the costs involved in restoring riparian habitats damaged by cattle. Also, most ranchers are reimbursed for proven livestock depredation. Public lands belong to ALL Americans, and everyone has an equal say in how the lands and populations of wild animals are managed and restored to their previous state. There is a middle ground here and everyone should cooperate on the restoration of this species. Once grizzlies are successfully reestablished, it is likely revenue related to grizzly tourism will offer a new means for ranchers to increase their income.

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