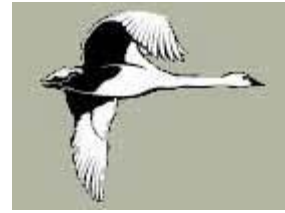


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**The Politics Of Grizzly Bear Management**



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A central premise of this paper is that politics, through government, will determine the survival and quality of the grizzly bear.1. (*Ursus arctos*) in the contiguous United States. Politics is a dominant factor which permeates the entire spectrum of government, including grizzly bear management and other areas of natural resources management,.2. which affect the grizzly bear and its habitat. The way problems are shaped, defined, perceived, and prioritized for grizzly bear management is basically a function of values and politics. This premise would also encompass research which is management oriented and management which is research oriented.

A framework for politics involves:

1. *Values* (including identification and analysis of involved values and their conflicts as well as their related alternatives and options with attention to consequences and projections of values).
2. *Human Interactions* (relating and correlating the above to individuals, groups, and organizations which are directly or indirectly involved with the values and interests associated with the problems or issues on a formal and informal basis).
3. *Power or authority* (relating the above to formal and informal authority and/or power in terms of influence and/or spheres of influences as based on values and human interaction).
4. *Decision or policy* (analysis and evaluation of the authoritative allocation of values for the final stage or determination with the recognition that much depends on how the selected values will affect other values associated with the implementation of the decision or policy).

Grizzly bear management is very much an interrelated part of natural resources management whether on a specific or collective basis. Most personnel in natural resources affairs are more involved with managing the interrelationships between people, development, society, and the living resources environment than they are with actually managing the living resources/environment as such. Here, at the environmental administrative interface of these interrelationships, is where the decisions and problems occur. Governmental manipulation of natural resources, including the grizzly bear, or "management" actually represents a small proportion of environmental and natural

resources administration in the United States. In this sense, management can often be considered a myth, as if it were done by some kind of giant hand of technology under the orchestrated direction of natural resource professionals.

The majority of natural resource managers are actually administrators who spend much of their time in offices rather than in the field. They are basically concerned with the management of people's behavior as based on values relative to natural resources, including the grizzly bear, rather than on the natural resources per se. The main function of natural resource management is to interpret and decide the various uses or degrees of use for activities such as grazing, logging, recreation, and mining to be granted to private individuals and organizations. Special arrangements like the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee for coordination between agencies and the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team (interagency research) are still operating within the framework of human administration of natural resources.

Natural resource personnel usually recognize that the great preponderance of their time is spent on uses, issues, and problems affecting the human population at large. Hence their decisions involve value perceptions and determinations which are further complicated by changing complexities of society, technology, economics, and population. The Reagan Administration appears to have placed strong emphasis on economic development, deregulation, and de-emphasis on government with obvious effects and mandates for natural resources management. Personnel are required to make value judgements within the political environment of competing and conflicting values and interests. Further, these decisions are complicated by the limited mental picture of the world which everyone has. This "picture" is, in turn, influenced by the individual's personality, past experience and education, specialization, and agency. But the entire process for value judgements and decisions hinges upon politics and values. And this would certainly include values toward the grizzly bear. No one can claim to be "value free."

Much of the management (includes research) of the grizzly bear appears to operate on technoscientific assumptions or images that science and technology can solve all the problems in this complex area. This may reflect the cornucopian belief system and science- object view that science and technology can solve all societal and environmental problems. However, some complex problems including the grizzly bear, simply have no scientific and technical solutions. Rather, the solutions are more in the area of values. Values underlie the political and governmental process for deciding what to do with the grizzly bear in terms of actual priorities relative to human and economic development activities and impacts. It should also be recognized that technoscientific approaches and professional images can sometimes simply follow and justify a given value premise based on vested interests and expediences, as contrasted to the best interests of the grizzly bear.

Degrees or tokens of efforts to protect or exploit the grizzly bear and its needed habitat involve human behavior and institutions which are, in turn, motivated and guided by values. Politics involves conflicts and the struggle for power between competing values associated with environmental, economic, and other forces. Thus it is essential to examine the complexities and interrelationships of conflicting human values and behavior in this context. This is particularly needed where protection oriented values and considerations for the grizzly bear come into conflict with values and considerations that emphasize development or non- protection, with the resultant power struggles and resistance. Through the political process, values form the underlying basis, through human and institutional interactions, for determining the role of government and its degree of intervention or non- intervention in grizzly bear management.

Values provide a frame of reference, a "philosophy," a general guide or determination of behavior, and a perception of "reality." In this sense, values are individual and collective conceptions which have emotional, judgemental, and symbolic components about that which is important, desirable, good, bad, right, or wrong for people and institutions. The

public administration of natural resources, including grizzly bears, essentially involves values and value judgements in policymaking and decisionmaking processes under broad governmental guidelines directed at protecting and promoting the public interest. Yet the public interest itself is a symbolic and subjective concept which is laden with value interpretations and judgments. Thus the values that are able to attain the necessary power through human and institutional interactions become the values that are actually implemented. However, the values that are implemented are often reduced, compromised, or combined under the realities of politics or the art of the possible.

Decisionmaking for the grizzly bear and its interrelated natural resource management is an ongoing, dynamic process; few decisions are of a final nature. Uncertainties and conflicts interfere with agreement among various interests on values and alternatives. Too often, the basic thrust may be to simply accept that proposal or alternative to which no one strongly objects and to avoid pressing the search for basic values. This pattern would avoid threatening cohesion and alliances with the numerous agencies and interests involved. It would also result in incrementation or small additions to existing decisions and policies which agencies and personnel can embrace for different reasons, while not really getting down to basic value choices or decisions. For example, grazing allocations or logging operations can be increased or started in prime grizzly bear habitat while efforts to mitigate their effects are negotiated. Yet the basic value choice is whether or not the grizzly bear can really survive in the area under these developments.

Marginal, incremental, and compromise orientations toward decisionmaking often ignore long term and crucial values for the grizzly bear while focusing on short term, practical, and expedient considerations. The latter considerations are often associated with quantitative and economic development aspects of private interests as contrasted to abstract public interest concerns for the grizzly bear and its needed habitat. The values of personnel who formulate and implement the decisions of this nature are important because they can have a powerful effect on higher level decisions and policy. Higher level administrators and interagency arrangements cannot reclaim important and neglected values for the grizzly bear; they are restricted to values and alternatives recommended at lower levels.

Thus it is important to incorporate important values at the initial phases. But the political process interferes with this incorporation and it may involve local political, community, and economic pressures as well as "higher pressures" on personnel to open up critical grizzly bear habitat to grazing, logging, and mining, with current examples around Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks. Consequently, important values for the grizzly bear are often excluded, reduced, or assigned low priority in contrast to more acceptable, quantifiable, or economic values associated with non-protection. Token and mitigating efforts at protection often cannot protect the integrity or sustainability of the grizzly bear and its habitat under this direction. In cases of this nature, value choices are, in reality, made that the grizzly bear will simply have to go.

Political and value aspects affect the following governmental considerations involved in grizzly bear management:

*1. Mission Orientation:* Governmental agencies operate under narrow objectives and missions which may involve an historical time lapse in values and value priorities for the grizzly bear and its habitat. Lip service, negotiations, mitigations, and token efforts may not add up to strong values and measures for the protection of the grizzly bear. This is in contrast to strong emphasis and priorities associated with the values which are more traditional values for missions of a given agency. For example, the following agencies have traditional missions in selected areas: Forest Service — logging and grazing; National Park Service — mass recreation and wildlife/scenery protection; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks — hunting and fishing; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Wildlife and Parks — hunting and fishing; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service — wildlife; and Bureau of

Land Management — grazing and mining. Organizational survival and expansion along with clientele and pressure groups associated with an agency add emphasis to these agency missions. The end result is that values and considerations for grizzly bear management generally take low priority when in conflict with mission values. Various legislation and governmental arrangements calling for more attention to the overall environment and grizzly bear may also be assigned low priority in this regard. This was particularly true under the Reagan administration with its strong emphasis on economic and developmental values over environmental ones.

2. *Interagency Relations*: Grizzly bear management requires strong interagency coordination, yet the missions of agencies may preclude unified and effective actions. Good cooperation may occur among specialists, particularly at the field levels, but it may lack the realistic backing of higher administrative levels and the agencies. By not addressing value concerns and conflicts, a false front of harmony may be compromised, papered, and established with each agency continuing on its own way to the overall detriment of the grizzly bear. Token efforts at interagency cooperation, including exchanges of information and research, may result in unintended and hidden values being neglected with unanticipated, negative consequences emerging such as logging operations near a grizzly bear den. Under strong pressures for economic development agencies may be more inclined to avoid bringing up values and points which seriously conflict with developmental missions. Compromises and papering over differences may avoid value considerations and conflicts in Environmental Impact Statements, reports and other interagency involvements with the status quo and old missions continuing without serious conflicts. However, the values and considerations for the grizzly bear and its habitat may be greatly diminished. A case in point is the Ski Yellowstone EIS by the Forest Service (lead agency) which neglected important data on the grizzly bear collected by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Compromises and mitigations to reduce impacts may look good on paper as interagency cooperation, but, in reality, they may do little to protect the grizzly bear and its habitat.

3. *Personnel*: Governmental personnel from involved agencies are operating under three conceptual frameworks which involved: (a) *technoscientific and professional specializations* which are based on the values, models, principles, methodologies, and terminologies of that particular discipline such as forestry and wildlife management; (b) *individual perspectives* which are based on the value systems of their personalities and of their personal view of the world. Personal conceptual frameworks can vary greatly in terms of priorities, considerations, and exposure to a diversity of values among personnel in similar positions; (c) *agency indoctrinations* which come through association and commitment to a specific agency. The development of the agency conceptual framework involves internalization of agency missions, policies, and values as well as learning to "think" in agency terms. For example, a wildlife management specialist with the National Parks Service (protection) will develop a different agency conceptual framework from wildlife management specialists who are associated with a state wildlife agency (hunting) or the Forest Service (multiple use). Professional, individual, and agency conceptual frameworks enter into their value judgements and decisions in grizzly bear management. Value conflicts are bound to emerge between the three frameworks. The resultant divided or multiple loyalties and interests may result in overemphasizing the commitments to given specialized professions in order to present "value free" images of professionalism in the controversial and conflicting areas associated with grizzly bear management. Further, forces for conformity are prevalent in most agencies for influencing personnel to follow value positions and vested interests as selected and determined by a given organization.

4. *Interpretations*: Numerous questions are raised in interpretations of legal and governmental arrangements which pertain to the grizzly bear. Some of the legislation like the National Environmental Policy Act can be broad and idealistic and general which, in turn, makes it subject to various values, bias, and interpretations. Value interpretations and considerations usually permeate scientific, technological, and qualitative data in the very selection of the problems studied and in the inferences, conclusions, and recommendations that result. It is also common knowledge that this data can be oriented or manipulated in terms of given biases or value. Judgements and decisions in grizzly bear management generally require a great deal of scientific and technical data, but the data does not necessarily yield the values and judgements for

required decisions. Further, the political climate and backing obviously effects degrees of interpretations and implementations of legal and governmental arrangements. With overriding political backing for economic development and governmental de-emphasis today, various protection measures for the grizzly bear may not gain needed weight in decisionmaking. Interpretations also present problems with national park legislation which provides enjoyment for the public while protecting the scenery and wildlife. Current policies appear to emphasize keeping people away from the bears, including closing some back country areas, while earlier policies involved removal of the bears. 5. *Public Participation*: The involvement, informing, and consultation of the public in planning, decisionmaking, and management for the grizzly bear has been very limited. Public participation requires adequate nontechnical information for inputs as well as adequate encouragement and opportunities on an open system basis. There appears to be strong public support for efforts to protect the grizzly bear on a national and statewide basis. For example, the Montana State Legislature, largely as a result of a youth campaign, passed legislation designating the grizzly bear as the official state animal. However, local economic interests, including those associated with logging, mining, and grazing interests, have had strong inputs into decisionmaking for development on public lands involving grizzly bear habitats. The exclusiveness of professionalism and scientism associated with some elements of grizzly bear management and research may also serve to discourage more public participation. Yet, much of public participation in this area is basically associated with defensive measures to protect critical grizzly bear habitat from developments. Public participation, without value orientations and nontechnical information, can become a farce with technocrats making the value decisions behind technical data, professional images, and bureaucracy on a closed system basis.

## **Conclusion**

Much of the political and governmental considerations of grizzly bear management hinge on whether or not it can be proactive rather than reactive to serious threats for the very survival of the bear. Management must, in this sense, become more research oriented while research must become more management oriented on a preventative and anticipatory basis. Both management and research can be considered to be affected by political and governmental considerations and hence were combined throughout this paper under grizzly bear management. Value oriented and interdisciplinary approaches are needed more for administration which is concerned with using a holistic approach to manage the relationships between people, society, development, and the environment/living resources to the grizzly bear. This definitely involves values and value judgements in the policy and decision making processes under comprehensive and interdisciplinary orientations.

In the final analysis, political and governmental considerations will determine the degree and priority of efforts made to protect or exploit the grizzly bear and its needed habitat. Many judgements and decisions tend to reflect value orientations which do not encompass the bear and its habitat; this results in the grizzly bear being given little consideration in the overall management processes. Thus a logging and roading operation in a critical area of grizzly bear habitat may be encouraged and approved without realistic consideration of other alternatives or values and constraints pertaining to the grizzly bear. In the same manner, an environmental impact statement (EIS) by personnel with little orientation toward values associated with grizzly bears and its habitat can be a farce requirement with a predetermined judgement.

Having personnel from other agencies involved in the above processes on a cooperative and public participation basis may make a difference. However, it will make a great deal of difference to the grizzly bear if it is not being granted priority under its threatened and critical situation. It will then be mitigated or ignored as pending and inevitable development occurs. The compromising and mitigating middle ground may be the burying ground for the grizzly bear as more and more developments are approved for its

wild habitat. Political and governmental considerations can and will determine the future survival or extinction of the grizzly bear in terms of its gaining or losing values associated with priorities for protective and preventive measures at this time.

## Notes

1. The grizzly bear is currently classified as a threatened species which the Endangered Species Act of 1973 defines as "any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range." This is in contrast to the Act's endangered species definition which is, "any species which is in danger of its extinction throughout all or part of its range." Some federal officials, however, indicated that an endangered classification for the grizzly bear would not make any difference in consultations and management, i.e., it would have the same effect as the current threatened status. The most commonly quoted figures for the grizzly bear population in the contiguous United State (the lower 48) are approximately 800 to under 1,000. However, the key to the grizzly bear's survival is the number of breeding females which may make up only a small percentage of the total population.

2. Specific or focused efforts by government in grizzly bear management include interagency arrangements like the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee and Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team (research) which involves agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and state wildlife agencies. However, the greater majority of grizzly bear management is integrated into wildlife management aspects of natural resources management in terms of the decisionmaking processes as to what will actually effect or not effect the grizzly bear and its' habitat. Ideally all management should be oriented along interdisciplinary, holistic, and ecosystem lines.

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