



## Grizzly Comeback Recognized by U.S. Authorities

Over the last thirty years, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has placed a high priority on the recovery of grizzly bears. Now, with grizzly population levels in the Yellowstone area up from a low of around 250 to over 600, FWS is proposing to remove them from the endangered species list.

Needless to say, the proposal was immediately attacked by some environmentalist organizations but the recovery of the grizzly provides an interesting case study in species management. The North American grizzly population once stood at around 50,000 but declined rapidly as humans migrated to the west coast. Four other grizzly populations have not yet recovered and will continue to be listed as a threatened species.

U.S. Interior Secretary Gale Norton

said, “Thanks to the work of many partners, more than 600 grizzlies now inhabit the Yellowstone ecosystem and the population is no longer threatened. With a comprehensive conservation strategy ready to be put into place upon delisting, we are confident that the future of the grizzly bear in Yellowstone is bright. Our grandchildren’s grandchildren will see grizzly bears roaming in Yellowstone.”

Habitat issues are central to the Conservation Strategy and the population of Yellowstone grizzly bears will not be allowed to decline even when limited hunting is allowed to resume. The situation has changed dramatically from 1975 when the animals faced continued loss of habitat and high mortality from conflict with humans. Since the 1990s, the Yellowstone grizzly



population has grown at between four and seven per cent per year.

Of course, this won’t stop protests from those who have ideological aversions to hunting and delistings, but the U.S. Administration is demonstrating that it is prepared to make scientifically justified decisions even if they risk being taken out of context in the media. The recovery of the Yellowstone grizzly, famously hunted one hundred years ago by America’s President Theodore Roosevelt, is a welcome development and the proposal to delist is backed by extensive research and an adaptive

*(Continued on page 7)*

### In This Issue

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Grizzly Comeback Recognized by U.S. Authorities .....           | Page 1 |
| Editorial:Conservation & Confrontation / Eugene Lapointe ..     | Page 2 |
| Caspian Caviar Trade .....                                      | Page 2 |
| Japanese Antarctic Research Whaling Program Begins .....        | Page 3 |
| British Columbia Considers<br>Move Against Trophy Hunting ..... | Page 4 |
| Food as a Political Weapon .....                                | Page 5 |
| Drilling for Oil in Alaska’s National Wildlife Refuge .....     | Page 5 |
| Big Guns and Butterflies .....                                  | Page 6 |
| Obituary: John Heppes .....                                     | Page 7 |
| Subscriptions / Submissions .....                               | Page 8 |

## Editorial: Conservation and Confrontation By Eugene Lapointe



Unfortunately, the protest is advocating the preservation of animals that are abundant, while spinning the idea that they are not. This takes attention away from how to solve real conservation problems with species that are genuinely threatened.

The spectacle of anti-whaling protesters disrupting Japanese whaling vessels in the Antarctic flouts maritime safety regulations and puts crews from all the vessels concerned at unnecessary risk. It is dangerous enough to sail in these challenging waters for long periods of time without having to contend with the risks of potential collisions. And to what end?

understanding about how species interact and, ultimately, support conservation by helping regulators establish catch limits in the future that will properly protect whales from overfishing.

Of course, we realize that the real purpose of the protest is to gain worldwide media coverage for the campaign groups and thereby encourage members of the public to make donations. This quest for cash, disguised as selfless acts of courage, should not be confused with conservation. By moving in cycles designed to satisfy the requirements of the media, rather than basing campaigns on the abundance of species, the real objective of the campaigners is not hard to discern. Were the Japanese hunts in 2003/4 and 2004/5 acceptable and therefore unworthy of protest, or was the absence of inflatables in those years related to the news cycle, which tires of repetition and is constantly seeking something new to broadcast?

But the greatest irony is that the protest takes place when all whaling nations are fully prepared to tie themselves to extremely conservative commercial whaling quotas set by the International Whaling Commission (IWC). The Revised Management Scheme (RMS) – if agreed – would guarantee proper protection for whales by establishing a robust system of quotas and safeguards. And who campaigns against the establishment of an RMS and lobbies countries – successfully – to oppose it? The very same protest groups who gain financially from their dangerous and illegal antics in the Antarctic.

If the world cannot regulate the hunting of a species when it is abundant and the consuming nations are willing to establish limits, what hope is there of doing so when a species is truly endangered and consuming nations are rejecting the idea of international regulation? ■



Abundant species are being caught in limited numbers. There will be no impact on overall population figures because the whales will reproduce far faster than the rate at which they are caught. And the JARPA II program will provide valuable information about the Antarctic marine eco-system that will improve

## Caspian Caviar Trade

The Secretariat of CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, has announced that it cannot publish 2006 export quotas for sturgeon products, including caviar, from shared stocks because it has not received sufficient information on catch sustainability from exporting countries. The decision amounts to a

recommendation to potential importing countries not to allow imports until 2006 quotas have been officially announced by the Secretariat.

Surprisingly, this significant and unilateral step was communicated through a press advisory “for use of the media only; not an official document”, and the Parties received

no formal notification. One result was that media organizations around the world immediately reported that the United Nations had banned or suspended all trade in caviar. With various non-governmental groups being quoted, and the Parties being caught unprepared, there was widespread erroneous reporting and commentary.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Japanese Antarctic Research Whaling Program Begins

The Institute of Cetacean Research (ICR) has begun its new Antarctic research whaling program, JARPA II, under permits issued by Japan's Fisheries Agency. JARPA II will allow better interpretation of whale abundance estimates, enable trends to be identified and improve understanding about the role of whales in the Antarctic ecosystem.

The objectives of the program are to monitor the Antarctic ecosystem, model competition among whale species and develop management objectives, study changes in stock structure and improve the management procedure for minke whales.

Internal organs of whales, such as ovaries, earplugs and stomachs, will be examined, with up to 850 minke whales and 10 fin whales being harvested this year. Non-lethal research techniques, such as sighting surveys, biopsy sampling, acoustic surveys and the collection of oceanographic data, will also be carried out.

JARPA II replaces the original 18-year JARPA research program that concluded in the spring of 2005. JARPA II has no end date but a comprehensive review will be conducted after 6 years. After the first 2 years, up to 50 fin and 50 humpback whales will be harvested. According to the International Whaling Commission, there are approximately 760,000 minke whales in the Antarctic.

Article 8 of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling states that "any Contracting Government may grant to any of its nationals a special permit authorizing that national to kill, take and treat whales for purposes of scientific research subject to such restrictions as to number and subject to such other conditions as the Contracting Government thinks fit, and the killing, taking, and treating of whales in accordance with the provisions of this Article shall be exempt from the operation of this Convention."



Two Greenpeace vessels, the Arctic Sunrise and the Esperanza, together with the Sea Shepherd vessel Farley Mowat, are disrupting the research program and sending video images of their protest by satellite to news organizations in Australia. In an open letter to Greenpeace Japan dated 27 December 2005, Dr. Hiroshi Hatanaka, Director-General of the ICR, warned: "Your boats and your obstructive activities are creating a situation where, sooner or later, an accident involving serious injury or worse may happen. If any other such accident happens as a result of your illegal disturbance, Greenpeace will be to blame: it is

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### Article VIII of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling

1. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Convention any Contracting Government may grant to any of its nationals a special permit authorizing that national to kill, take and treat whales for purposes of scientific research subject to such restrictions as to number and subject to such other conditions as the Contracting Government thinks fit, and the killing, taking, and treating of whales in accordance with the provisions of this Article shall be exempt from the operation of this Convention. Each Contracting Government shall report at once to the Commission all such authorizations which it has granted. Each Contracting Government may at any time revoke any such special permit which it has granted.
2. Any whales taken under these special permits shall so far as practicable be processed and the proceeds shall be dealt with in accordance with directions issued by the Government by which the permit was granted.
3. Each Contracting Government shall transmit to such body as may be designated by the Commission, in so far as practicable, and at intervals of not more than one year, scientific information available to that Government with respect to whales and whaling, including the results of research conducted pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article and to Article IV.
4. Recognizing that continuous collection and analysis of biological data in connection with the operations of factory ships and land stations are indispensable to sound and constructive management of the whale fisheries, the Contracting Governments will take all practicable measures to obtain such data.

your organization that is creating this risky situation. Any accident involving your activists will be your exclusive responsibility.”

According to the *Syracuse Post-Standard* newspaper, two of the American Sea Shepherd activists have previously been arrested in the U.S. during animal rights protests.

Australia and New Zealand, the countries that lead opposition to whaling at the IWC, both criticized the program. However, Australian Prime Minister John Howard said, “I do not support action which endangers lives or breaks the law.”

Separately, Norway announced that its fishermen can harvest 1,052 minke whales in 2006, an increase from the quota of 796 for the previous year. Helga Peterson, Norway’s Minister of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs, said that the quota is a step on the road towards an ecosystem based regulation of the whale hunt. The North Atlantic contains around 100,000 minke whales. □

### Principal Scientific Results of JARPA (1987-2005)

- Confirmed that Antarctic minke whales and common minke whales are 2 separate species
- Provided information on key biological parameters such as natural mortality and changes in the age of maturity
- Narrowed the parameters of relevance for stock management
- Identified 2 Antarctic minke whale stocks with different geographical boundaries than those used by the IWC
- Determined that the Antarctic is one of the cleanest oceans in the world with low concentrations of heavy metals and PCBs

## British Columbia Considers Move Against Trophy Hunting

An anti-hunting group in British Columbia may have forced the province to end commercial sport hunting in the Great Bear Rainforest, a 20,000 square kilometer area that is home to deer, mountain goats, moose, grizzlies, black bears, wolves and cougars.

The Raincoast Conservation Foundation paid \$1.35 million to long-time guide Leonard Ellis for his outfitters guide license. Ellis had held the guide-outfitting rights to this area since 1981, taking trophy hunters into the bush for the opportunity to find and bring back prize specimens of local fauna. Raincoast will not use the license for hunting purposes, but will conduct “eco-tours” and it claims that it now owns the license in perpetuity.

That situation will be reviewed by the provincial government because guide outfitters have to continue to use their licenses. To get around this requirement, the new owners may facilitate just the hunting of ungulates.

Raincoast did not disclose its financial backers but said it raised the money to purchase the license from “individual donors from nine countries, the vast majority from Canadian sources.” According to the *Vancouver Sun*, one of the major donors is Michael Mayzel and his business partner Uwe Mummenhoff, operators of Daymen Photo Marketing, a distributor of up market photographic and digital imaging products.



Daymen claims to have been “a significant participant in the campaign to preserve the spirit bear, whose habitat was threatened by clear log-cutting” and also touts its active support for the Conservation Alliance, “a group of companies in the outdoor industry which provides substantial grants to grassroots

(Continued on page 7)

## Food as a Political Weapon

The government of Zambia has agreed to import genetically modified corn. According to the Center for Consumer Freedom, Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa had resisted this policy move for years, allegedly due to pressures from Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, along with not very heavily veiled threats of economic retaliation by the EU, if Zambia should accept food aid or commercially traded foods that are genetically modified (GM) agricultural products.

In 2002, when the domestic policy to ban acceptance of donated GM foods was revealed in Zambia, starving people rioted. The *Washington Times* reported that a U.S. government official named the two NGOs as perpetrators of the anti-GM food policy, and a Zambian agricultural official condemned the groups, stating that the policy would increase human deaths.

Americans have been consuming GM food crops for years without ill effects. The genetic modifications

that have been introduced into “natural” food grains include the ability of plants to repel insects, to be resistant to “natural” plant diseases, and to thrive in environmental conditions that kill off “natural” versions of these crops.

Some GM versions of foods such as rice now contain increased, or previously unavailable, nutrients such as vitally important B vitamins. GM foods also require less use of chemical pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers in food production. ■

## Drilling for Oil in Alaska’s National Wildlife Refuge

The U.S. Congress recently voted against drilling for oil in ANWR, dashing the hopes and dreams of Alaskan native people who live in Kaktovik, the only village within the boundaries of the reserve. The following information is excerpted from a statement by Tara Sweeney, a native Alaskan woman from Barrow, Alaska. She has tried for the last decade to bring the truth about the ANWR debate to the American people. Tara has the following to say about this issue and the destructive influence of protectionist NGOs that have convinced Gwich’in Indian people to oppose the right of Alaskan natives to control the development of resources on their own lands:

“If you listened only to the news media and environmentalists, you’d think the debate over oil development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was about caribou and ecology. It’s not.

ANWR is about land. It is about Alaskan Natives’ rights of self-



determination – our right to decide how our own lands and resources will be used. About whether the United States will honor its agreements with Natives who ceded their claim to vast ancestral lands and resources, in exchange for the right to determine our destiny on the lands we retained – or so we were told.

Anyone who professes to respect Native rights, civil rights, human

rights and property rights has only one choice in this matter. They must support what Native Americans who live in ANWR overwhelmingly want: drilling in accord with guidelines that we will negotiate ourselves.

Anything less is cultural and environmental imperialism. It is stealing our Native lands, resources and futures. It will keep our people on the edge of poverty forever. It is wrong.

Right now, it’s 30 below zero in Kaktovik, the only village within the entire 19.6 million acres of the federally recognized boundaries of ANWR. The PURE LUXURY of running water, flush toilets, local schools, local health care clinics, police and fire stations, were unavailable prior to the discovery of oil at Prudhoe Bay, America’s largest oil field, 90 miles to the west. Kaktovik was the last community on Alaska’s North Slope to get these wondrous things, courtesy of tax

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Big Guns and Butterflies

The United States and Mexico are both concerned about individuals crossing their common border. Yet there is one kind of crossing on which both agree and have mutual interests: the Monarch butterfly population annually migrates from one country to the other.

In winter, Mexico is home to millions of these beautiful creatures, where they find shelter in the carpet fir trees of the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve. Illegal logging by poachers has been blamed for depletions of their unique habitat. After a group of 100 loggers armed

with shotguns and machetes held three park rangers hostage for six hours while they chopped down trees, the Mexican government organized a heavily armed cadre of park rangers to protect the preserve.

Last year only 22 million Monarchs came to the 124,000 acre preserve, an 80 percent drop from the year before. Because the migration has been studied for only the past ten years, it is not yet known if this fluctuation is normal, or is a danger signal for the species. Mexican authorities expect that some 60 million of the butterflies may show up in the area this year. Time will tell.



Not only Mexico's reputation as a responsible steward of the environment, but also the economy of the local countryside, benefits from this environmental protection program. The annual Monarch migration now attracts some 200,000 tourists to the area.

Next year, Mexico plans to add even more soldiers and to encourage local farmers to help guard this national treasure for the good of the land, the people, and the visiting hordes of butterflies. ■

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*(Caviar Trade .. Continued from page 2)*

Jaques Berney, Executive Vice-President of IWMC, said that, "While a large volume of trade in caviar is of illegal origin, we have serious concerns about the Secretariat's decision, the basis on which it was taken and the way it was published. We hope that quotas will be established without the type of excessive delay that happened in 2003 and 2004 when they were published very late in the year. Delays have a very detrimental effect, only benefiting unscrupulous traders."

In the light of the Resolution on sturgeon and trade in their products adopted by the Parties to CITES,



many people will now be questioning the right of the Secretariat to have taken this decision. If the current situation

continues, leading to an actual ban, importers who are still willing to follow CITES rules warn that the official and legal caviar market could collapse. They say that all existing safeguards for sturgeon populations would be removed while local caviar consumption and illegal activities would continue.

In recent years, these importers say, they have made great efforts to push CITES to act reasonably and effectively. They do not want to see their traditional businesses further damaged by the adoption of inappropriate regulations. ■

*(Trophy Hunting .. Continued from page 4)*

environmental initiatives.”

The two donors claim to have a “special regard for bears” and, according to the Raincoast Foundation, bears will no longer be hunted in the Great Bear Rainforest. There are around 14,000 grizzly bears in British Columbia, 14 of

which can be killed in the licensed area by out of province hunters in 2006.

The six first nations that occupy the territory – the Heiltsuk, Kitasoo, Xai'xais, Wuikinuxv, Gwa'Sala-Nakwaxda'xw and Nuxalk – support the purchase and agree with the plan to put an immediate end to all commercial hunting in the area.

With Raincoast, they are lobbying the provincial government to change the terms of the license so that a complete hunting ban can be imposed.

Raincoast Conservation Society, the parent of the Foundation, campaigns against the hunting of grizzlies, salmon farming, oil exploration and the sterilization of wolves. ■

## Obituary

IWMC regrets to inform you of the death of John Heppes. John died suddenly on December 28 from a heart attack at his home at the age of 79. Many of you will remember John who pioneered the development and implementation of CITES in Canada from 1972 and was the first administrator of this Convention until his retirement in 1991. ■

*(Alaska Wildlife Refuge .. Continued from page 5)*

revenue from oil operations at Prudhoe Bay. What would Americans in the Lower 48 States do if they were denied these basic necessities? They'd scream bloody murder!

Yet these are the basic amenities that radical environmentalists of the Sierra Club and Wilderness Society say the Inupiat Eskimo people should be denied. Some Gwich'in Indians in Alaska's interior agree. They can afford to. They are funded quite lavishly by green groups for opposing oil development on Inuit lands – even as they leased and drilled for oil on their own tribal

lands, in the middle of caribou migration areas.

Even the hypocritical Gwich'in – who want to stop all development in ANWR – operate Gwich'in Ensign Oilfield Services, Mackenzie Aboriginal Corporation, Mackenzie Valley Construction, Camp MGK, Gwich'in Helicopters and Inuvik Commercial Properties. Every one is directly involved in oil field services and contracts. This enables Gwich'in men and women to return to nice homes with decent paychecks and the satisfaction that comes from being involved in managing their own land for the benefit of their families and people.



Kaktovik wants its rights and wishes honored. This shameful, unconscionable treatment of Alaska's Native Inupiat people – in the name of protecting lands that are in no danger – must end.” ■

*(Grizzly Comeback .. Continued from page 1)*

management framework.

In its submission to FWS, IWMC commends the agency for its work on grizzly bears and proposes that the reasons for the successful recovery be properly evaluated so that lessons can be learned and applied to other conservation programs.

IWMC also suggests that the costs of the grizzly conservation program should be published so that poorer nations can determine if they can afford to follow a similar path. The suspicion, however, is that the program would be too costly for most nations to emulate. Finally, IWMC has recommended that

income from hunting licenses be recycled and used to compensate local ranchers who lose livestock from bear attacks.

Supporters wishing to know more, should visit the website listed below. Submissions to FWS must be made by 15 February 2006. ■

[mountain-prairie.fws.gov/species/mammals/grizzly/yellowstone.htm](http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/species/mammals/grizzly/yellowstone.htm)

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