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May 22, 2026

Honourable Grant Hunter, Minister of Environment and Protected Areas:
402 Legislative Building,
10800- 97 Avenue,
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6
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Honourable Mr. Hunter,

The Crowsnest Conservation Society (CCS) is a charitable organization working together with community to inspire collective action to protect our natural world through advocacy, research, education, and habitat restoration. We advocate for responsible land uses and resource management practices that prioritize conservation. We are located in the Crowsnest Pass, Alberta, and represent almost 300 active members, including 29% non-residents who support our goals and actions, and almost 500 newsletter subscribers.

The Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) has recently passed a policy resolution calling to "advocate to the provincial government to implement a regulated grizzly bear hunt administered through a draw system." We stress the need for a **science-based** approach for grizzly bear management, due to a lack of recent population research.
Conservation groups call for 'science-based' approach to Alberta grizzly bear hunt proposal | CBC News

Objections against reopening a grizzly bear hunt

1. Lack of scientific evidence

- Conservation organizations — including the Alberta Wilderness Association and Exposed Wildlife Conservancy — stress that **no province-wide grizzly population study** has been completed since 2018.
- Current policy discussions rely on **outdated or speculative data**, making it impossible to know whether the population can withstand hunting pressure.
  albertawilderness.ca cbc.ca

2. Threatened species status

- Grizzlies are legally listed as **"Threatened"** under Alberta's Wildlife Act. The population still falls below international thresholds for recovery (~1,000 mature adults).
- Critics argue that **reintroducing hunting contradicts recovery efforts** and may hinder progress made under the province's **Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan**.
  naturealberta.ca

3. Questionable effectiveness of hunting in reducing conflict

- Studies and wildlife managers note that **hunting doesn't necessarily reduce encounters**; it can even destabilize bear populations by removing dominant individuals and increasing younger bears 'risky behaviour near humans.

- Non-lethal measures — bear-proofing programs, electric fencing, relocation, and public education — have proven more effective at mitigating conflict.
  naturealberta.ca

4. Transparency and accountability concerns

- Critics object to **recent ministerial orders** allowing citizens to kill "problem" bears without clear oversight or data tracking.
- NGOs have filed **access-to-information requests** to determine how many bears were killed, why, and whether non-lethal options were attempted first.
  albertawilderness.ca

5. Moral and ecological implications

- Grizzly bears are **slow-breeding keystone species**, crucial for healthy ecosystems. Trophy or control hunting undermines their symbolic and ecological value.
- Opponents frame the hunt as a **"political gesture"** catering to special interest groups rather than a conservation necessity.
  naturealberta.ca

6. Crowsnest Pass Population

- Grizzly bears in the Crowsnest Pass area of Alberta are part of a **threatened** population that is highly vulnerable to human-caused mortality, despite showing high densities compared to other parts of the province.
  https://programs.wcs.org/canadaarchive/What-We-Do/Yellowstone-to-Yukon/Crowsnest-Pass.aspx
- The region (Bear Management Area 5 and 6) is a critical corridor for movement but experiences high rates of human-bear conflict due to residential expansion, recreational use, and infrastructure like railways and Highway 3.
  wcshttps://programs.wcs.org/Portals/42/media/file/crowsnest_sum_en.pdf
  https://newsroom.wcs.org/News-Releases/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/4661/Alberta-Plan-Fails-to-Protect-Headwater-Havens-for-Vulnerable-Wildlife.aspx

We strongly urge the collection of updated grizzly bear population data and a continued focus on coexistence and recovery prior to any consideration of hunting of grizzlies.

Respectfully Submitted,
Brenda Davison, President, Board of Directors.

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