



FOR RELEASE

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Yukon government accepts Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board's recommendation on roadside bear hunting

WHITEHORSE—The Government of Yukon will maintain the roadside hunting of grizzly bears while developing the territory's first grizzly bear management plan, Minister of Environment Wade Istchenko announced today.

"Given the significance of this issue we received considerable feedback from First Nations and the public," Istchenko said. "After careful consideration, we are accepting the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board's recommendation to continue to allow roadside hunting, but would note that we will revisit this matter in the future."

A proposed regulation change would have made it unlawful to hunt grizzly bears during the spring hunting season within 30 metres of the centre line of a highway in southwest Yukon. In lieu of that change, the board recommended that the Yukon government support the development of a grizzly bear management plan and educational initiatives.

"The board is very pleased with the minister's decision," chair Bob Dickson said. "Although a legislated local area closure would have addressed part of the issue, there is clearly a need to consider all the feedback we received and establish an overarching management plan in advance of any piecemeal approach."

The Department of Environment and the board will work to develop a management plan to ensure that the varied interests in the conservation and management of Yukon's grizzly bear population are heard and addressed, including federal Species at Risk concerns. The working group will engage with Renewable Resources Councils (RRCs), First Nations and others to enable informed community-based management.

"The board is keen to help RRCs fulfill their roles addressing local issues and, if needed, recommend area closures," Dickson said. "RRCs are a primary instrument for local renewable resources management within Traditional Territories, as set out in First Nation Final Agreements."

On average, about 83 grizzly bears are harvested annually in Yukon, with 26 harvested by Yukon resident licensed hunters. One or two are harvested each year within the 30-metre highway right-of-way in the Southern Lakes region.

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