



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240

DEC 31 2024

The Honorable Cliff Bentz  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bentz:

Enclosed are responses to questions for the record submitted to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Martha Williams following her appearance before your Subcommittee at the May 16, 2024, oversight hearing on the Fiscal Year 2025 budget request. These responses were prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to you on this matter.

Sincerely,

Pamela L. Barkin  
Legislative Counsel  
Office of Congressional and  
Legislative Affairs

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Jared Huffman  
Ranking Member

Questions for the Record  
House Natural Resources Committee  
Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries  
Oversight Hearing *“Examining the President’s Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Proposal for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.”*  
May 16, 2024

**Questions from Rep. Dan Newhouse**

**Question 1: Please provide an exact dollar amount that is requested in the FY25 budget for grizzly bear introduction.**

**Response:** There is no requested funding in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (Service) proposed FY 2025 budget that is specifically for grizzly bear relocation, reintroduction, or translocation. In instances where the Service determines that a relocation, reintroduction, or translocation of a species in a specific area is in the best interest of conservation of the species, and where we have followed the appropriate procedures outlined under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the Administrative Procedure Act, we may use recovery funding to do so. We regularly work with partners to move grizzly bears from one area to another to prevent human-bear conflicts and to improve genetic health of small or isolated populations. We also note that the only current reintroduction planned for grizzly bears is in the North Cascades Ecosystem, where the Service and the National Park Service do not yet have a timeline for the translocation of bears.

**Question 2: Please provide a timeline, including dates, for planned grizzly bear introduction into the North Cascades Ecosystem.**

**Response:** The Service understands there is broad interest in timelines for action. No date is set for when the restoration of a grizzly bear population through the translocation of animals from other ecosystems may begin. With the completion of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and ESA section 10(j) rule, the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have initiated development of an implementation strategy and will communicate with partners and the public as grizzly bear reintroduction moves forward.

**Question 3: Please provide a detailed explanation for the increase in administrative fees for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program in Washington State.**

**Response:** The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in Washington has not changed administrative fees related to its use of base program funding. In FY 2023, the field office began charging recovery fees for its implementation of two earmarked funds: the WA Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups and Environment Data Quality and Access (WA Salmon). Prior to FY 2023, the field office provided support for implementation of those two earmarked funds at a reduced rate or free of charge. However, due to increased costs associated with the planning, processing, and monitoring required for implementation of these earmarked funds, the field office recently began charging recovery fees consistent with or below established cost recovery rates across the agency. We recognize the challenge this poses to our partners and will continue to work collaboratively to achieve conservation on private lands with available resources.