



NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION®

People and Nature: Our Future Is in the Balance

Northern Rockies Project Office ♦ 240 North Higgins, # 2 ♦ Missoula, MT 59802
406-721-6705 ♦ 406-721-6714 [fax] ♦ www.nwf.org

FACT SHEET

January 2007

Contact:

Hank Fischer 406-549-0761 [O] - hfischer@nwf.org

Tom France 406-721-6705 [O] - france@nwf.org

Bacon Creek/Fish Creek Allotments



© Lisa Robertson



© William Rideg
wmez@blackfoot.net

(USFS) will result in closure to live-stock of 100,000 acres and creation of a “forage reserve” on the other 80,000 acres. Livestock grazing could only occur in the forage reserve if it improved winter range for elk and did not result

in conflict with large carnivores. Grazing would only be temporary and infrequent (perhaps once every ten years).

BACKGROUND

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) has been working since 2002 on retiring livestock grazing allotments in the Yellowstone Ecosystem that experience chronic conflict with wildlife, especially grizzly bears and wolves. During this time, we have initiated or partnered on the retirement of 21 grazing allotments totaling 300,000 acres. These retirements, which are completely voluntary, have been strongly supported by livestock producers. Our payments have allowed ranchers to secure grazing in new locations that do not have wildlife conflicts.

THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY

We now have the opportunity to retire the 178,000-acre Bacon Creek/Fish Creek cattle grazing allotments, located in the Bridger-Teton National Forest in northwestern Wyoming. This portion of the upper Gros Ventre River drainage contains some of the finest habitat for grizzly bears, wolves, elk and moose

anywhere in Wyoming. Its proximity to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks and the Teton Wilderness makes it an integral piece of this core conservation complex.

Our agreement with the U.S. Forest Service

These public lands are a stronghold for grizzlies (see map on back). Researchers have identified more than 50 grizzlies using these allotments since 1978. Conflict with livestock has been substantial: since 1999, more than \$1.1 million in damage claims have been filed and 36 dead livestock have been verified. These grizzly/livestock conflicts create pressure on public agencies to kill or move bears. Three grizzlies have been moved from the allotments since 1999.

The upper Gros Ventre has been frequented by wolves almost continuously since 2000. As of late 2006, three wolf packs are using the area: the Gros Ventre pack (6 members); the Buffalo pack (17 members); and the Teton Pack (3 members). Wolves have killed livestock virtually every year cattle have been present on the allotments; since 2000, they have killed 14 cattle and 3 herding dogs. In response, government control agents have killed two wolves in these allotments.

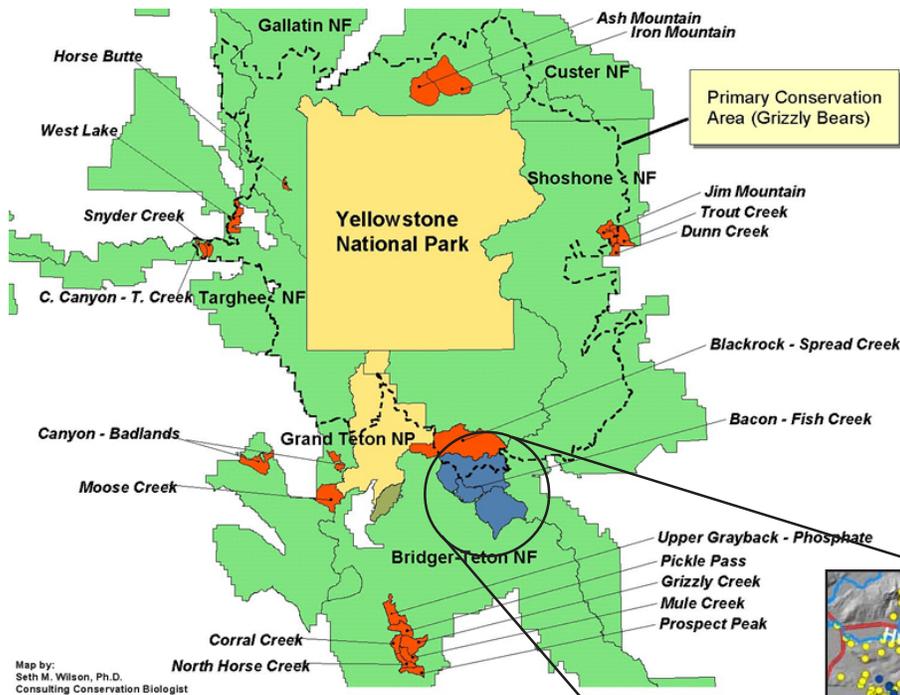
Wolves are attracted to this area because of its outstanding prey base. The upper Gros Ventre has exceptional winter range for elk and



© Robin Poole
www.robinsnaturepics.com



© Robin Poole
www.robinsnaturepics.com

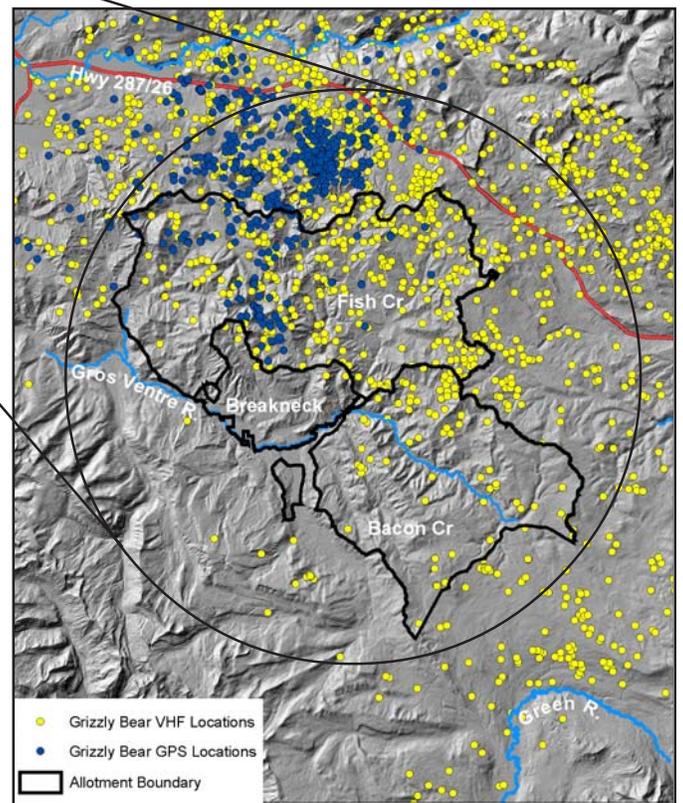


wildlife near core conservation locations surrounding national parks and wilderness areas.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

The cost of retiring an allotment is based primarily on the amount of forage that the USFS deems available for public grazing. Ranchers routinely sell their allotments to one another, so a market has been established. We negotiate a final price with the livestock permittee. NWF needs \$450,000 to retire the Bacon Creek/Fish Creek allotments. We believe that creating conflict-free wildlife habitat for a little more than \$2.50 per acre provides excellent value, and encourage you to support this effort with a tax-deductible gift. ◀

moose. WGFD estimates these allotments contain more than 50,000 acres of critical winter range. Agreements between the USFS and the WGFD call for wildlife to have primary consideration on these winter ranges. Retirement of these livestock grazing allotments would further honor those agreements. Moreover, some experts believe that if cattle grazing were eliminated from these key winter ranges, it could reduce the dependency of elk on supplemental feed in the Gros Ventre area, where WGFD currently manages three feed grounds.



SEEKING SOLUTIONS

The NWF does not seek to remove all livestock grazing from public lands. Rather, we focus on specific situations where conflicts are prolonged and irresolvable. In such situations, ranchers are often as motivated as conservationists to find solutions. Allotment retirement can benefit both parties. Ranchers can use the payment provided by NWF to secure new grazing opportunities without wildlife conflicts. NWF retirements can eliminate costly government management actions and compensation payments. Grazing retirements provide an equitable and effective means of reconfiguring where livestock occur on public lands. NWF's goal is to provide better protection for

Other National Wildlife Federation Allotment Retirements (in order of retirement)

<u>NAME/NUMBER OF ALLOTMENTS</u>	<u>LOCATION/ NAT. FOR.</u>	<u>SIZE [acres]</u>	<u>TYPE OF LIVESTOCK</u>	<u>DATE COMPLETED</u>	<u>NATURE OF CONFLICT</u>
Horse Butte [1]	SW MT/Gallatin	2,200	Cattle	Apr-03	Bison
Blackrock/Spread Creek [2]	NW WY/Bridger-Teton	87,000	Cattle	Aug-03	Grizzly bears, wolves, bison
Moose Creek [1]	NW WY/Targhee	24,500	Sheep	Jan-04	Grizzly bears, wolves, bighorn sheep
Carrot Canyon/Snyder Creek/ West Lake [3]	E ID/Targhee	12,526	Sheep	Apr-04	Grizzly bears, wolves
Canyon Badlands [2]	NW WY/Targhee	12,000	Sheep	May-04	Grizzly bears, wolves, bighorn sheep
Jim Mountain/Dunn Creek/Trout Creek [3]	NW WY/Shoshone	16,800	Sheep	May-05	Grizzly bears, wolves, bighorn sheep
Wyoming Range [7]	NW WY/Bridger-Teton	67,500	Sheep	May-05	Wolves, bighorn sheep
Ash Mountain/Iron Mountain [2]	SW MT/Gallatin	74,000	Sheep	Feb-06	Grizzly bears, wolves, bighorn sheep
TOTAL [21]		296,526			