

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Conservation Organizations Welcome Minister Loewen's Commitment to Prioritizing Grizzly Bear Recovery, Urge Investment in Non-Lethal Wildlife Management

Conservation Groups Call for Conflict Prevention and Community Safety

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Amiskwaciwâskahikan/Edmonton, Alberta – Conservation organizations are welcoming a recent response from Alberta Minister of Forestry and Parks Todd Loewen confirming that "there is no open hunting season for grizzly bears in Alberta, and no work is underway to reinstate a grizzly bear hunt," and that Alberta continues to "prioritize recovery, stabilization, and long-term population viability" for the species.

The Minister's comments were provided in response to a joint coalition letter from Exposed Wildlife Conservancy, the Grizzly Bear Foundation, and the Alberta Wilderness Association calling on the province to maintain the closure of the grizzly bear hunt, fully implement Alberta's Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan, and prioritize evidence-based coexistence and conflict-prevention programs.

"We thank Minister Loewen for his response and welcome the province's stated commitment to grizzly bear recovery," said Nicholas Scapillati, Executive Director of the Grizzly Bear Foundation. "The opportunity now is to turn those priorities into action. Recovery of this threatened species requires investment in evidence-based, non-lethal solutions—not a hunt."

In a [newly released official statement](#), the organizations emphasize that there is no established scientific consensus demonstrating that recreational hunting reduces the frequency or severity of conflict involving large carnivores such as grizzly bears.

"The key to addressing conflicts with bears is to prevent those incidents from happening in the first place," said John E. Marriott, Co-founder and Chair of Exposed Wildlife Conservancy. "We know that the primary drivers of negative bear encounters are unsecured attractants and human behaviour, not simply the presence of grizzly bears on the landscape."

The organizations point to a growing body of research indicating that coexistence measures such as attractant management, electric fencing, bear-resistant waste systems, public education, and livestock husbandry improvements are among the most effective tools for reducing unnecessary interactions between people and wildlife.

“There is no credible evidence that recreational hunting functions as an effective way to reduce conflicts with grizzly bears,” said Ruiping Luo, Conservation Specialist at Alberta Wilderness Association. “If the province really wants to reduce conflict, the focus should be on prevention-based strategies that are already proven to work.”

The organizations note that many of these approaches are already prioritized within Alberta’s own 2020 Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan, though several recommendations surrounding coexistence infrastructure, monitoring, and conflict prevention remain underfunded or incomplete six years after the framework’s release.

The organizations also emphasize that grizzly bears remain designated as Threatened under Alberta’s *Wildlife Act* and have already been extirpated (made locally extinct) from the prairie regions of the province.

As part of the second phase of the campaign, members of the public are being encouraged to participate in a coordinated letter-writing initiative urging Alberta’s government to:

- Maintain the current closure of the provincial grizzly bear hunt
- Prioritize evidence-based coexistence and conflict prevention programs
- Strengthen attractant management standards and enforcement
- Fully implement Alberta’s Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan
- Invest in non-lethal wildlife management infrastructure and education

The initiative is part of a broader effort to strengthen public awareness around coexistence strategies, improve accountability in wildlife governance, and encourage long-term solutions that support both community safety and grizzly bear recovery.

“Protecting communities and protecting wildlife are not opposing goals,” said Maggie Spizzirri, Executive Director of Exposed Wildlife Conservancy. “The challenge is not whether effective coexistence measures exist, but whether we are willing to prioritize and implement the solutions already proven to reduce preventable conflict while supporting the recovery of a species that remains threatened in Alberta.”

Learn More

[Send a Letter: Part 2](#)

[Read the Official Statement Part 2](#)

[Read more about the campaign](#)

Media Contacts

Exposed Wildlife Conservancy

Maggie Spizzirri

mspizzirri@exposedwc.org

250-814-3840

Grizzly Bear Foundation

Nicholas Scapillati

nscapillati@grizzlybearfoundation.com

604-551-2489

Alberta Wilderness Association

Ruiping Luo

Rluo@abwild.ca

403-283-2025