



# Global Indigenous Council

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **RELEASE: Unyielding Opposition by Tribal Nations to Grizzly Trophy Hunt Puts Wyoming Officials on Notice**

*Riverton, WY* — In expectation of an upcoming vote later this month on a proposed fall grizzly bear trophy hunt, Tribal Nations from across Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Arizona, Alberta and British Columbia, Canada, sent strong letters to Wyoming Game and Fish Commission officials opposing a hunt of the great bear, considered a sacred relative integral to their culture since time immemorial. The letters outline breaches of historic treaties enshrined in the US Constitution, and violations of laws including the American Indian Religious Freedom Act and the National Historic Preservation Act, should Wyoming proceed with a hunt. The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs has demonstrated to Wyoming's governor, Matt Mead, how the trophy hunt will contravene the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Rather than killing grizzly bears in a trophy hunt, over 200 Tribal Nations who are signatories to *The Grizzly: A Treaty of Cooperation, Cultural Revitalization and Restoration* -- the most signed treaty in history -- are calling for relocation of grizzlies to tribal lands in the bear's historic range with suitable habitat. The Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council recently raised this "win-win" alternative with Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), the fourth-ranking GOP senator.

See the [just-released letters](#) from the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council, Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association, Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, the member tribes of the Great Sioux Nation, Northern Arapaho Elders Society, GOAL Tribal Coalition, and the Piikani Nation of the Blackfoot Confederacy. Learn [more](#) about Tribal Nations' proposed alternative to Wyoming's hunt and perspectives on the legal ramifications of the state's flawed approach.

**Highlights from the letters include the following statements:**

"The grizzly bear is integral to the religious and cultural practices of our tribes. The area where Wyoming intends to hold its grizzly trophy hunt is, in fact, a virtual matrix of sacred sites with fundamental ceremonial significance to our member tribes," **said Crow Nation Chairman Alvin Not Afraid Jr. and Chairman Gerald Gray of the Little Shell Tribe for the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council.** "Should Wyoming formally implement its grizzly trophy hunting plan, it will strike a devastating blow to tribal communities - for which there is no justification, given the existing, viable alternative."

"If Wyoming institutes this trophy hunting season on the sacred grizzly bear, it will not only kill our sacred relative but also kill economic and cultural revitalization for tribes across the Western United States," **said Harold C. Frazier, Chairman of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and Chairman of the Great Plains Tribal Chairman's Association.**

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“The grizzly bear is fundamental to our ceremonial lifeway and foundational to our culture. The notion that you are considering the “sport” killing of 14 females of a species with one of the slowest reproductive rates of any terrestrial mammal that has only just had Endangered Species Act protections lifted, should be sufficient to give the Commission pause,” **said Brandon Sazue, former Chairman of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe and Chief Councilor of the Global Indigenous Council.**

“The grizzly bear is not a ‘trophy game animal’; the grizzly is our relative, an ancient teacher of sacred ways and a two-legged being, like us. What do you propose next? A trophy hunting season on us?” **said Crawford White Sr. of the Northern Arapaho Elders Society.**

“We are this continent’s original hunters. Our founder, Northern Cheyenne Spiritual Leader, Don Shoulderblade, articulates this succinctly: ‘This is not a hunting issue, it is a killing issue. We come from a subsistence culture, where there is ceremony and great respect accorded those beings you ask to offer their lives so that you might live. That is what you call a hunting tradition, not a killing tradition.’ Wyoming’s Chapter 68 Grizzly Bear Hunting Season is a continuation of that killing tradition,” **said David Bearbow Bearshield, Chairman of GOAL Tribal Coalition.** Ultimately, it will cost Wyoming millions of dollars in lost tourism revenues and litigation costs, and the state will be perceived as a bastion of regressive 19th Century attitudes that have no place in the 21st. Make no mistake, if you start trophy hunting the sacred grizzly bear on our sacred lands, we will ensure that the world will be watching as the international media will descend upon Greater Yellowstone.”

“Wyoming from the governor’s office down to its game and fish department, has contributed to setting the tone toward tribal nations and tribal rights throughout the grizzly delisting process, which extends into this proposed grizzly hunt. The norm has been flagrant violations of mandated consultation requirements, violations of spiritual rights and violations of treaty rights,” **said Stanley C. Grier, Chief of the Piikani Nation and President of the Blackfoot Confederacy Chiefs.**

“This is the first of the slaughters, aimed at reducing the already threatened grizzly bear population in the region. The Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) expresses its shock and grave concern for this ill-conceived course of highly irresponsible action which will have a profound impact on Indigenous peoples on both sides of the border, many of which regard the grizzly bear as a sacred being. The UBCIC calls on the State of Wyoming and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and to immediately withdraw its plan to trophy hunt grizzly bears,” **said Chief Judy Wilson, Executive Member of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs.**



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