



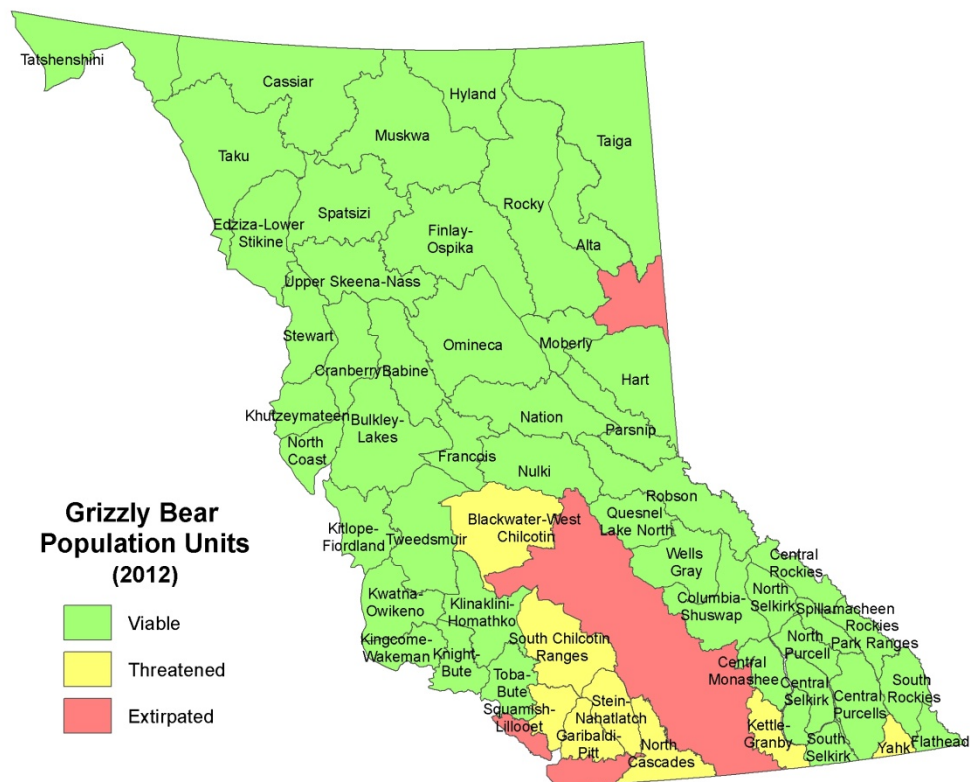
Plants and Animals

Grizzly Bear Population Status in BC (2012)

- There are approximately 15,000 Grizzly bears in British Columbia¹; this is about a quarter of the entire North American population.
- Of the 56 extant Grizzly bear Population Units in British Columbia, 9 are classified as threatened.
- Grizzly bears are an important part of the British Columbia landscape in many ways:
 - They are a symbol of ecological integrity that represents much of what British Columbians and visitors alike appreciate about BC's natural beauty.
 - BC is host to some of North America's last remaining places where large predators and their prey play out their millennia-old roles; Grizzly bears are a key part of these systems.
 - They are an important "umbrella" species, as landscapes that support healthy Grizzly bear populations will be able to sustain many other species.
 - Grizzly bears play a key role in maintaining healthy ecosystems, for example, by distributing salmon nutrients into forests (often far from streams), and transporting seeds through their feces.
 - They are an important part of the culture of First Nations People living in B.C.
 - Grizzly bear viewing and hunting are important economic and social components of BC's tourism and recreation industries



- Grizzly bears are ranked S3 (Vulnerable; 2012) in BC by the [Conservation Data Centre](#), and are classified as a species of Special Concern by the federal Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada ([COSEWIC](#)).
- Grizzly bears are extirpated from much of their southern range in the USA, as well as several areas in BC:
 - The dry southern/central interior from the US border to north of Quesnel
 - The Peace Lowlands around Ft. St. John and Dawson Creek
 - The lower Fraser Valley/Lower Mainland and the Sunshine Coast
- Habitat quality and population density vary widely across the province.
- The cumulative effects of human development is the greatest threat to Grizzly bears in BC; these effects impact bears in three main (often overlapping) ways:
 - Conflicts between bears and humans increase in frequency, often resulting in bears being killed or relocated;
 - Bear populations become isolated because of human settlements, agriculture, and utility corridors in major valley bottoms;
 - Habitat may be lost or degraded by development, alienated through bears' avoidance of humans and human activities, or fragmented (for example, by high density road networks with high traffic volumes).
- Roads are known to have a negative effect on Grizzly bear habitat use when they reach a density of about 0.6 km of road per sq km; this effect gets stronger when road density increases over ~1 km/sq km. In addition, new or improved roads bring people into contact with Grizzly bears more frequently, and sometimes those encounters are lethal for bears.
- In addition to the nine threatened population units, there are an additional five where hunting is not allowed due to small population sizes or special designations. There are additional areas in the province where hunting is not allowed (e.g., National and some Provincial Parks, Grizzly Bear Management Areas, etc.).
- Since 1976, an average of 340 Grizzly bears are known to have been killed from human causes each year (all known Grizzly bear mortalities are recorded by the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations in the Compulsory Inspection database). On average: 297 are legally killed by hunters, and 31 are killed by animal control officers due to human/bear conflicts. An average of eight are known to be killed illegally, and four are known to be killed on roads and railways, however some illegal and road- and rail-caused deaths go undetected.

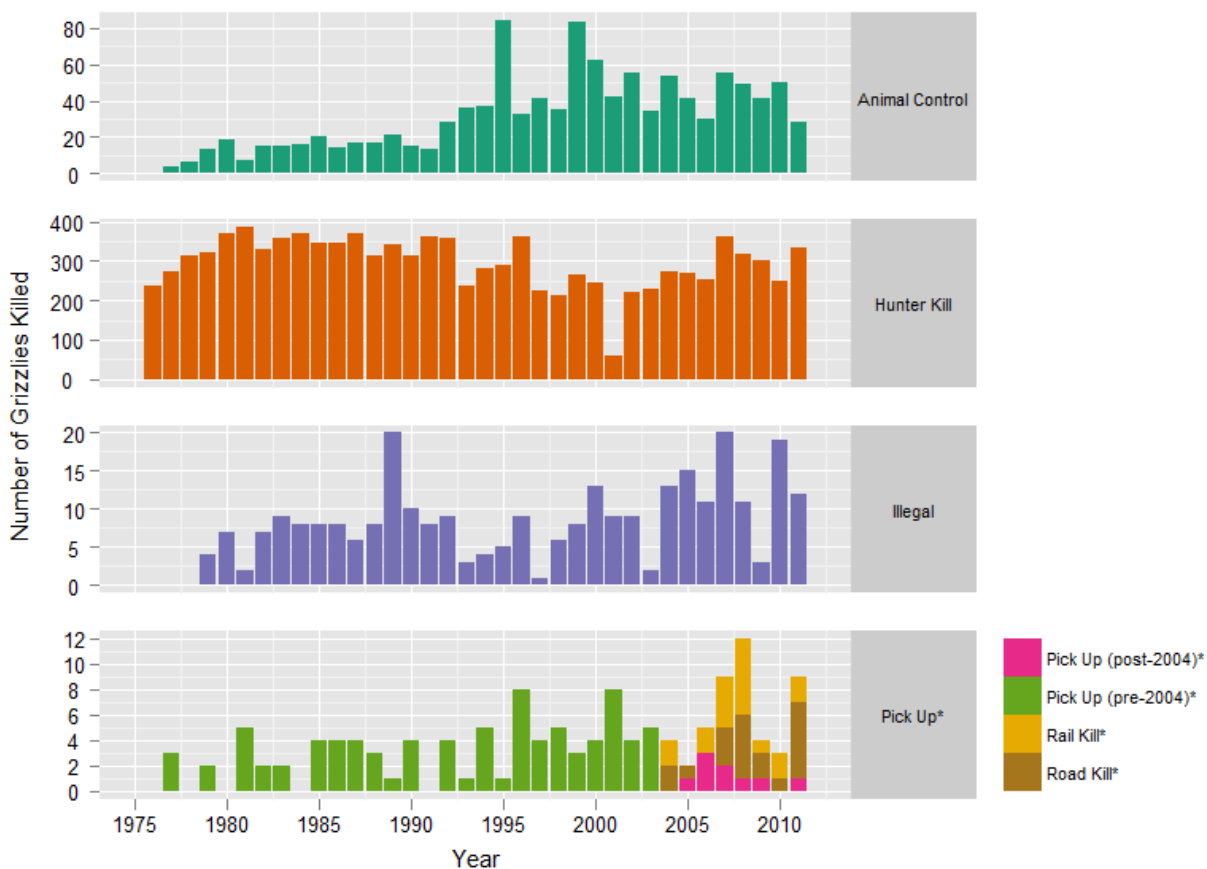


2012 Grizzly bear population estimates and Grizzly Bear population unit status in British Columbia.

GBPU Name	Population Status	Population Estimate (2012)	Area of useable habitat (sq km)	Estimated population density (Grizzly bears/1000 sq km)
Blackwater-West Chilcotin	Threatened	53	20416	3
Garibaldi-Pitt	Threatened	2	6031	<1
Kettle-Granby	Threatened	86	6519	13
North Cascades	Threatened	6	9731	1
South Chilcotin Ranges	Threatened	203	15220	13
South Selkirk	Threatened	58	3996	15
Squamish-Lillooet	Threatened	59	5019	12
Stein-Nahatlatch	Threatened	24	7510	3
Yahk	Threatened	20	2670	7
Alta	Viable	132	13240	10
Babine	Viable	313	13805	23
Bulkley-Lakes	Viable	439	22554	19
Cassiar	Viable	612	35803	17
Central Monashee	Viable	147	6155	24
Central Purcells	Viable	176	11288	16
Central Rockies	Viable	169	6205	27
Central Selkirk	Viable	188	5512	34
Columbia-Shuswap	Viable	346	14426	24
Cranberry	Viable	349	11489	30
Edziza-Lower Stikine	Viable	398	14317	28
Finlay-Ospika	Viable	971	29886	32
Flathead	Viable	175	3324	53
Francois	Viable	58	7778	7
Hart	Viable	244	19509	13
Hyland	Viable	231	17053	14
Khutzeymateen	Viable	280	7440	38
Kingcome-Wakeman	Viable	199	5005	40
Kitlope-Fiordland	Viable	214	9323	23
Klinaklini-Homathko	Viable	251	11677	21
Knight-Bute	Viable	250	5524	45
Kwatna-Owikeno	Viable	229	9612	24
Moberly	Viable	71	7399	10
Muskwa	Viable	840	35492	24
Nation	Viable	170	17551	10
North Coast	Viable	190	6222	31
North Purcell	Viable	234	5196	45
North Selkirk	Viable	265	5455	49
Nulki	Viable	44	16499	3
Omineca	Viable	402	28723	14
Parsnip	Viable	455	10793	42
Quesnel Lake North	Viable	187	8727	21
Robson	Viable	534	19165	28
Rockies Park Ranges	Viable	116	5689	20
Rocky	Viable	538	37870	14
South Rockies	Viable	305	8119	38
Spatsizi	Viable	666	21454	31

GBPU Name	Population Status	Population Estimate (2012)	Area of useable habitat (sq km)	Estimated population density (Grizzly bears/1000 sq km)
Spillamacheen	Viable	98	3877	25
Stewart	Viable	358	9376	38
Taiga	Viable	94	49578	2
Taku	Viable	575	27956	21
Tatshenshini	Viable	407	14174	29
Toba-Bute	Viable	116	6303	18
Tweedsmuir	Viable	368	17258	21
Upper Skeena-Nass	Viable	755	16725	45
Valhalla	Viable	83	3383	25
Wells Gray	Viable	317	12248	26
TOTAL (British Columbia)	--	15070	753269	<1 to 53

Mortality history for Grizzly bears in British Columbia, 1976-2011



Notes about this chart:

The vertical axes are scaled differently in each panel of the graph.

*Prior to 2004, road and rail kills were not distinguished and were documented with 'Pick Ups'.

A Limited Entry Hunt (LEH) was instituted province-wide for grizzly bears in 1996.

There was a province-wide moratorium on hunting grizzly bears in the spring of 2001.

References and other useful links

BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations. [Grizzly Bear Ecology, Conservation, and Management.](#)

¹BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations. 2012. [2012 Grizzly bear population estimate for British Columbia](#)

BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations. [Grizzly bear hunting in BC FAQ](#)

BC "Bear Aware" Program: www.bearaware.bc.ca

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Data

*By accessing these datasets, you agree to the license associated with each file, as indicated in parentheses below.

[Grizzly bear population units](#) (License: [BC OGL](#))

[Grizzly bear mortality history in British Columbia \(1976-2011\)](#) (License: [BC OGL](#))

[2012 Grizzly bear population estimate](#) (License: [BC OGL](#))

Published and Available On-Line at Environmental Reporting BC (October 2012):
<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/soe/indicators/plants-and-animals/grizzly-bears.html>