



For Immediate Release

Jumbo Fact Flaw: Grizzly populations in decline near proposed resort *New Grizzly Study shows Jumbo E.A. Process Flawed*

September 6, 2007 (**Kimberley, British Columbia**) A new study reveals there are far fewer grizzly bears than previously estimated near the proposed Jumbo Glacier Resort. A report released earlier this summer by seven of the world's leading grizzly experts reveals inaccuracies in information used in the Environmental Assessment (EA) process for the controversial proposed Jumbo Glacier Resort. Although the proponent in the Jumbo EA process used a figure of 93%, the new study shows grizzly populations in the Purcells are actually at a mere 54% of their potential. A species population is deemed 'threatened' when populations fall below 50% of carrying capacity.

The report, entitled 'Abundance and density of Central Purcell, South Purcell, Yahk, and South Selkirk Grizzly Bear Population Units in southeast British Columbia', was co-authored by both US and Canadian grizzly experts, and is based on years of fieldwork and DNA analysis. The report's experts include local grizzly biologist Dr. Michael Proctor, world-renowned DNA specialist Dr. David Paetkau, and the long-standing US Fish and Wildlife Service Grizzly Recovery Coordinator, Chris Servheen.

In the controversial EA process for the Jumbo proposal, the resort was given a list of actions that were intended to mitigate the resort's impacts on the Purcell grizzly population.

These actions include: deactivation of unnecessary roads, strategic harvest of merchantable timber, and a reduction of the density of active roads in adjacent drainages by strategic deactivation.

However, Dr. Michael Proctor now suggests these actions will simply assist in only recovering Purcell grizzly populations.

"Our results indicate that there are two new pieces of information that should be integrated into the Jumbo resort decision. First, the grizzly bear population in the Central Purcell GBPU is much lower than thought and is relatively close to the 'threatened' population threshold. Second, because of the lower population size, the management actions that were available for mitigation of the Jumbo resort will now be required to 'recover' these populations without the impacts of the resort."

"This peer reviewed information clearly reveals the misinformation presented by the proponent, and used in the Environmental Assessment process in regard to impacts on grizzly bears in the Purcells," says Wildsight Program Manager Dave Quinn. "If peer reviewed science of this significance is not enough to influence a government decision around Jumbo, clearly the

provincial government is not living up to its commitment to a meaningful environmental assessment that is not politically influenced.”

“This confirms the two-decade long assertion of Kootenay residents that the heart of the wild Purcells is not an appropriate place for a city-resort of 6200 people.”

Many Kootenay residents have strongly opposed the proposed Jumbo resort for nearly 20 years, and have recently been calling for a referendum on the issue, which has been called “BC’s most controversial land-use decision.” Although many voices remain unheard it is still only the bears that cannot speak, and they have been found far fewer than thought before.

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Attached:

REPORT: ‘Abundance and density of Central Purcell, South Purcell, Yahk, and South Selkirk Grizzly Bear Population Units in southeast British Columbia’

LETTER: Dr. Michael Proctor addressing the Ministry of Environment

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About Wildsight

Wildsight works locally, regionally and globally to protect biodiversity and encourage sustainable communities in Canada's Columbia and Southern Rocky Mountain region. This area is internationally recognized as a keystone to conservation in western North America. Wildsight received the *2005 Canadian Environmental Award for Conservation* in recognition of its successful work to protect the region's wildlife and wildlands. For more information, please visit www.wildsight.ca.