



## FWP NEWS RELEASE

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### **Grizzly bear killed following West Yellowstone attack**

*Safety closure remains in effect*

**WEST YELLOWSTONE** – A grizzly bear was shot and killed Friday while Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks staff investigated the scene of a bear attack that happened Thursday near West Yellowstone.

Thursday's attack involved a 40-year-old West Yellowstone man, who was mauled just south of the Baker's Hole campground, about three miles north of West Yellowstone. He was transported to Idaho Falls for treatment of severe injuries. He remained in serious condition Friday.

FWP staff have not yet been able to talk with the man, who was alone during the bear encounter. The man had bear spray with him, but it's unclear whether he was able to deploy it during the attack.

The U.S. Forest Service issued an [emergency public-safety closure](#) in the area Thursday afternoon. The closure remains in effect.

A group of seven investigators, including FWP game wardens and bear specialists, as well as Forest Service personnel, revisited the site Friday to assess ongoing public safety risks and continue the investigation.

They yelled and made continuous noise as they walked toward the site to haze away any bears in the area. Before they reached the site, a bear began charging the group. Despite multiple attempts by all seven people to haze away the bear, it continued its charge. Due to this immediate safety risk, the bear was shot and died about 20 yards from the group. The bear was an older-age male grizzly.

Investigators later found a moose carcass cached within 50 yards of Thursday's attack. This indicates the bear was defending a food source during the attack.

Recreationists, residents and people who work outdoors can be prepared for a surprise bear encounter. Activities that are deliberately quiet or fast moving, such as hunting, mountain biking or trail running, put people at greater risk for surprising a bear. When you're outside, keep these precautions in mind:

- Be aware of your surroundings and look for bear sign.
- Read signs at trailheads and stay on trails. Be especially careful around creeks and in areas with dense brush.
- Carry bear spray. Know how to use it and be prepared to deploy it immediately.
- Travel in groups whenever possible and make casual noise, which can help alert bears to your presence.
- Stay away from animal carcasses, which often attract bears.
- Follow food storage orders from the applicable land management agency.
- If you encounter a bear, never approach it. Back away slowly and leave the area.

Grizzly bears in the lower 48 states are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Management authority for grizzlies rests with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, working closely in Montana with FWP, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services, the Forest Service and Tribal lands. This collaboration happens through the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee.

For more information on bear safety, visit [igbconline.org/bear-safety](http://igbconline.org/bear-safety).

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