A GRIZZLY BEAR DEN

Definition

An excavated hole that descends below ground or under a tree root system, or is a naturally occurring tree cavity that either (1) is currently used for winter denning, or (2) is habitually used and still capable of providing for winter denning.

Location

- Primarily on moderate to steep slopes (40-90%) in mountainous or alpine habitat on cooler, north or east-facing aspects
- In flat topography, ground dens may be located on high spots or small knolls
- Grizzly bears generally den above treeline in areas where there is no alpine, bears may den in upper elevation forests (ESSF). This is most likely to occur in the Boundary and South Purcells.

Features

- Den chamber usually lined with shrub branches, tree boughs, duff, or grass
- Often large piles of soil, rocks, or wood (called a "porch") are found downslope of the den entrance
- Entrance diameter: approx. 75 cm
- Chamber diameter: 150-225 cm
- Chamber height: approx. 125 cm

Notes

- Den sites can be reused year after year
- Sensitive during beginning - end of winter (Nov 1 – Mar 31)
- Designated a Species at Risk under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and is Blue-listed in British Columbia.
- Designated as a species of Special Concern by COSEWIC

Similar features to a Grizzly Bear Den

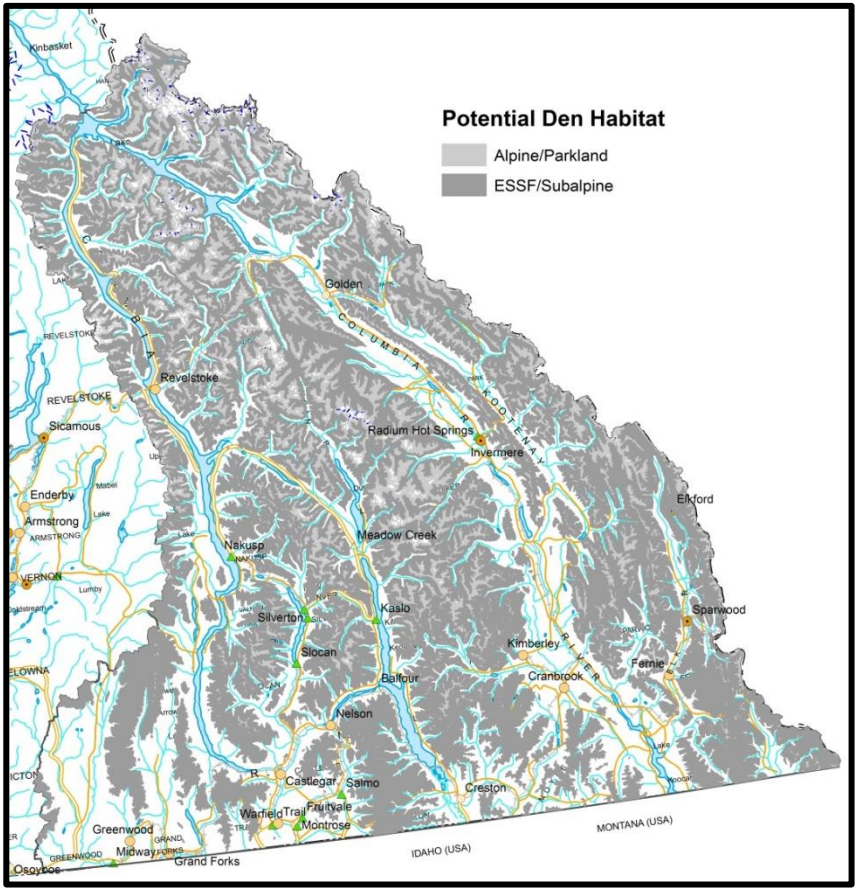
Black bear den - how to distinguish:

- Black bear dens are often located on or near valley bottom
- Most dens are lined with leaves, grass, or rotted wood.
- Commonly den in or under large-diameter trees (>85 cm in diameter), snags, logs, or stumps.

Wolf den - how to distinguish:

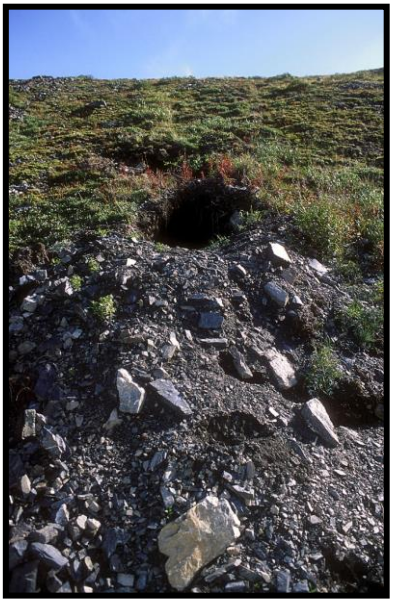
- Den entrance is usually less than 60 cm in diameter, may be > 1 entrance
- Wolf dens often have prey remains near their entrance whereas grizzly bears do not bring food to their den
- Den sites are often at lower elevations (e.g. valley bottoms and lower slopes) in areas with low slope angles.

Photo: Stefan Himmer



Information to Consider

- **Sensitive Timing: November 1 – March 31**
- If you find dens that have been used in the last 2 years, consult a qualified professional about how to manage the area within 200 m of a den.
- Establish a minimum 250 m no machine zone for low machine activity during the winter, and up to 500 m for higher-level machine activity.
- Buffers may be altered if topography will reduce the transmission of sounds and vibrations, or if existing disturbance is already within 500 m of the den.



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