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## BCWF Supports New Auditor General Report

**October 24, 2017**

**For immediate release:**

The BC Wildlife Federation supports the Auditor General's report on Grizzly Bear Management. It is clear the Auditor General engaged subject matter experts and identified the inadequacies for grizzly bears and effective resource management.

The pillars of sustainable natural resource management are: Funding, science and social support – the Auditor General indicates that B.C. has none of them.

The threats to grizzly bears, and B.C.'s ecosystems are anthropogenic change. Highways, roads, trains, oil and gas, fire suppression, and declining salmon are all having negative cumulative impacts on grizzly bears – B.C. currently sees these activities in isolation of each other. B.C. reassess and commit to a cumulative effects framework, which is meaningful for wildlife values.

The BCWF is disappointed in the Province's response to recommendation 10, the integration of legislation, policies and accountabilities between MoE and MFLNRO. The governance structure and processes is not collaborative and is not integrated. These Ministries and their branches operate in isolation.

The current structure of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, and the Ministry of Environment, has structurally and functionally hindered government staff's ability to manage ecosystems, fish and wildlife populations. Through the FLNRO model, Fish and Wildlife Branch regional staff are not accountable to provincial policy or headquarter staff. Fish and Wildlife Branch staff do not have access to the funding and tools required to restore fish and wildlife populations.

The FLNRO model, which has marginalized the Fish and Wildlife branch, has been an abject failure for everything other than resource extraction. Fish and Wildlife have not been a priority for more than three decades.

B.C. is one of the most biodiverse jurisdictions in North America and at the same time one of the most under-funded. B.C. has no meaningful objectives for habitat, fish and wildlife populations. While government committed to a new funding model and objectives, there has been no move in that direction.

Until B.C. turns its mind to a properly funded model with ecosystem restoration as a central part of land management, the threats grizzly bears and other species face will increase.

The BCWF sees this report as an example of effective oversight of government activities and is very pleased with this report. The BCWF will continue to advocate for a new funding



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model, a structural change that incorporates fish and wildlife values in decision making, and meaningful objectives at the landscape level.

**For more information please contact:**

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