



Dear Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta, Honourable Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks, Honourable Grant Hunter, Minister of Environment and Protected Areas, and Honourable Andrew Boitchenko, Minister of Tourism and Sport,

Subject: Formal Request for Meeting in Regards to Alberta's Grizzly Bear Hunt

Grizzly bears are designated as a Threatened species under Alberta's Wildlife Act¹ and remain at risk of becoming endangered. This status carries a clear statutory obligation to prioritize recovery, stabilization, and long-term population viability across their range.

Recent public statements from the Minister of Forestry and Parks indicating that reopening Alberta's grizzly bear hunt is under consideration² have raised concern among conservation, tourism, and scientific stakeholders. Exposed Wildlife Conservancy in collaboration with the Grizzly Bear Foundation and Alberta Wilderness Association, formally request that the Government of Alberta maintain the current closure and refrain from initiating steps toward reinstating a grizzly bear hunting season.

In the absence of transparent, province-wide population data demonstrating sustainable recovery, and with no credible evidence to indicate that hunting reduces human-wildlife conflict^{3,4,5,6,7}, there remains no scientific support for a reinstated hunt of this threatened species.

While current public opinion data indicates broad opposition to hunting large carnivores^{8,9,10}, Alberta's existing Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan¹¹ emphasizes non-lethal management, conflict prevention, and habitat protection over hunting as a management tool. At this time, strengthening protections for species-at-risk within legislation, implementing the province's own Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan, and aligning policy with Alberta's 2026 Strategic Commitments¹² would support both ecological integrity and public confidence in wildlife governance.

Albertans expect calm, measured leadership grounded in proactive conservation and transparent reporting.¹³ **The 2010 closure of the grizzly bear hunt represents a meaningful legacy for conservative governments, demonstrating commitment to reconciliation and evidence-based conservation. Reactive**

¹ <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=28501FF40EEF0-D53C-C48F-6FF952CC62DDEF7C>

² <https://www.ctvnews.ca/calgary/article/were-looking-at-everything-alberta-considers-lifting-20-year-hunting-ban-on-grizzlies/>

³ <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-44341-w>

⁴ <https://www.nature.com/articles/srep25936>

⁵ <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2018.05.003>

⁶ <https://wildlife.org/jwm-bear-hunting-doesnt-decrease-conflict-in-ontario/>

⁷ <https://doi.org/10.1002/jwmg.22363>

⁸ <https://researchco.ca/2026/04/09/conscience-rights-can/>

⁹ <https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13657>

¹⁰ <https://researchco.ca/2025/12/04/na-animals/>

¹¹ <https://www.alberta.ca/grizzly-bear-recovery-plan>

¹² <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/3393a7b5-07bf-4b9f-8aaf-a6d89273297b/resource/e3a600ae-3561-48bd-b91a-bbb2dcf18f43/download/budget-2026-goa-strategic-plan-2026-29.pdf>

¹³ <https://cpaws-southernalberta.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Alberta-Opinion-Poll-June-2025-Final.pdf>

policy shifts, such as a reinstated hunt in response to isolated events and anecdotal evidence, risk undermining that trust.

Importantly, lethal measures are, at best, temporary responses that do not address the root causes of conflict¹⁴¹⁵¹⁶, which are most often linked to human behaviour and inadequate attractant management. Decisions affecting a threatened species should not be framed in a way that amplifies fear or positions hunting as a primary public safety tool, as **there is no established scientific consensus indicating that hunting reduces the frequency or severity of conflict between humans and large carnivores.**¹⁷¹⁸

From a broader ecological perspective, research¹⁹²⁰²¹ suggests that the lethal removal of grizzly bears does not reliably reduce conflict and, in some cases, hunting carnivores may contribute to altered behaviour, destabilized population dynamics and increased human-wildlife interactions over time. These findings reinforce the importance of preventative, non-lethal approaches over reactive removal.

With this in mind, we encourage the Government to prioritize evidence-based alternatives²² that are well established in Alberta's own recovery framework, such as coexistence education, enforced attractant management, the hiring of human-bear conflict specialists, the use of effective deterrents such as electric fencing, and implementing livestock husbandry practices that reduce depredation risks.

At the community level, enforced attractant management remains one of the most impactful tools²³ for preventing conflict and reducing unnecessary wildlife deaths. Non-lethal methods have consistently received public support, with the Rural Municipalities of Alberta's request for stable coexistence funding in 2024 being a notable example.²⁴

A renewed focus on evidence-based community coexistence measures, habitat conservation, and transparent reporting would align strongly with the Province's commitments to community safety, reconciliation, conservation and the ambitious growth of Alberta's tourism sector.

Beyond ecological benefits, thriving wildlife populations contribute significantly to Alberta's non-consumptive tourism economy. Nature-based tourism depends on intact ecosystems and healthy predator populations, generating long-term value while supporting Alberta's global reputation as a premier wildlife destination.

Studies indicate the economic value of living wildlife far exceeds that of many extractive activities that diminish populations and critical habitat, with **each living grizzly bear generating sustained, long-term economic value through tourism and ecosystem services.**²⁵²⁶

¹⁴ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0006320717310418?via%3Dihub>

¹⁵ <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-44341-w>

¹⁶ <https://doi.org/10.1038/srep25936>

¹⁷ <https://doi.org/10.1002/fee.1312>

¹⁸ <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2018.05.003>

¹⁹ <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2024.110500>

²⁰ <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2018.05.003>

²¹ <https://www.nature.com/articles/srep25936>

²² <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-72343-6>

²³ <https://phvs.org/news/2021-06-strategy-human-bear-conflict.pdf>

²⁴ <https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/17-24f-improved-grizzly-bear-management-to-ensure-human-livestock-and-wildlife-safety/>

²⁵

<https://www.responsibletravel.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/213/2021/03/economic-impact-bear-viewing-bear-hunting-gbr-bc.pdf>

²⁶ <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/fort-collins-science-center/news/how-much-grizzly-bear-window>

If the government hopes to draw additional billions in revenue from tourism²⁷ and leverage wildlife²⁸ as an attraction, reinvesting in the conservation of iconic species remains a critical step in achieving this goal.

Protecting Alberta's remaining grizzly bears is a clear, effective action that will support ecological and economic resilience for generations to come, while preserving the Province's reputation.

This economic value reflects a broader public priority. Albertans across political lines care deeply about responsible conservation, with many hunters, educators, scientists, tourism operators, Indigenous leaders, and rural communities in agreement that killing a threatened species under the guise of conflict management is not a credible approach.²⁹

We therefore encourage broad consultation with Indigenous Nations, independent scientists, conflict specialists, rural communities, conservation organizations, and economic stakeholders to ensure wildlife policy is balanced, transparent, and aligned with shared values and long-term ecological responsibility.

With this clear lack of evidence to support hunting as a conflict management tool, the Government is encouraged to demonstrate leadership consistent with its strategic commitments to community safety, ecological integrity, and Alberta's economic future.

We respectfully request a meeting to discuss the following recommendations in further detail:

- The maintained closure of the grizzly bear hunting season
- Implementation of Alberta's Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan
- Prioritization of evidence-based coexistence and conflict prevention programs
- Support of nature-based ecotourism and wildlife stewardship

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your prompt response.

Respectfully,

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²⁷ <https://calgaryherald.com/news/alberta-tourism-long-term-strategy-update>

²⁸ <https://www.travelalberta.com/things-to-do/outdoor-activities/wildlife-viewing>

²⁹ <https://cpawsnab.org/all-news/new-poll-conservation-is-a-core-value-not-fringe-concern-for-most-albertans/>