

TO: Doug Honnold
FROM: Louisa Willcox
DATE: September 9, 2008

RE: Funding shortfalls related to implementation of the Conservation Strategy

The final Conservation Strategy (page 154) outlines annual cost estimates by agency for implementing the Conservation Strategy, a total of \$3,496,337 annually. In the materials that I received through Senator Baucus from the Fish and Wildlife Service, I found serious shortfalls in funding related to human/bear conflict management by the Forest Service and human/bear conflict management by the state of Montana. These shortfalls exist even with the additional \$1 million per year provided by Fish and Wildlife Service for the two years following the delisting decision.

Regarding the Forest Service, the CS states \$650,000 annually are needed among all forests to implement human/bear conflict management programs. It says in a footnote that "30% currently funded: and 70% currently needed but unfunded and are currently necessary to minimize bear/human conflicts as per the recovery plan". In other words, using their calculations, approximately \$195,000 dollars are currently funded for this work, and they need an additional \$455,000 annually.

According to the materials received from FWS, the Forest Service spent \$201,465 in 2007 and \$208,270 in 2008 on this work. That is pretty much what they had been spending before Burns' supplement. So, a total shortfall of nearly \$.5 million annually for the 2 years. Note: other categories in the CS were not so clear cut, and more difficult to track.

Regarding Montana, in the Conservation Strategy, the state included a cost need of \$229,000 annually for human/bear conflict management. In a footnote it noted that \$35,000 is currently being spent per year on this work. This leaves a remainder of \$194,000 of new money needed. In materials received from the Fish and Wildlife Service, Montana spent \$26,063 on work related to human/bear conflict management and hunter outreach. (Montana only reported for 2007, not 2008.) Again, this is roughly what MT had been spending before delisting, raising questions of whether the funds were going into staff, or what. Thus, the state of Montana had a \$167,937 shortfall in the amount of money needed for human/bear conflict management. I might guess at a similar shortfall for 2008.

These numbers are hard to track, and the reporting is done differently between the agencies. Other records from other agencies were so incomplete, I could not make heads or tails out of them. One can say that there is well over \$400,000 shortfall per year in funding to implement the Conservation Strategy among two of the eight

agencies involved in the CS—even with the \$1 million that Fish and Wildlife Service has been giving the last two years. The problem could be much worse if complete and intelligible records from all the agencies were available. What will happen when that money dries up after this year is anybody's guess.