

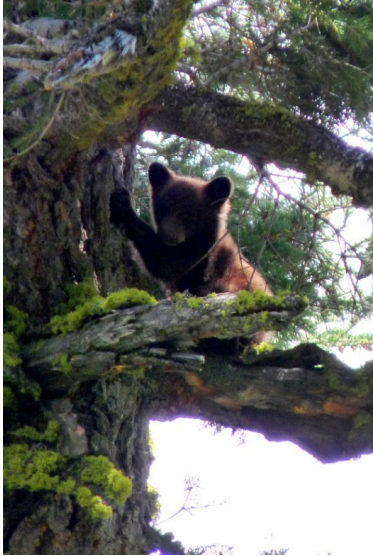


CDFW Tahoe Bear Team

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Outline:

- Bear Biology
- CDFW Management and Policy
- Tahoe Interagency Bear Team

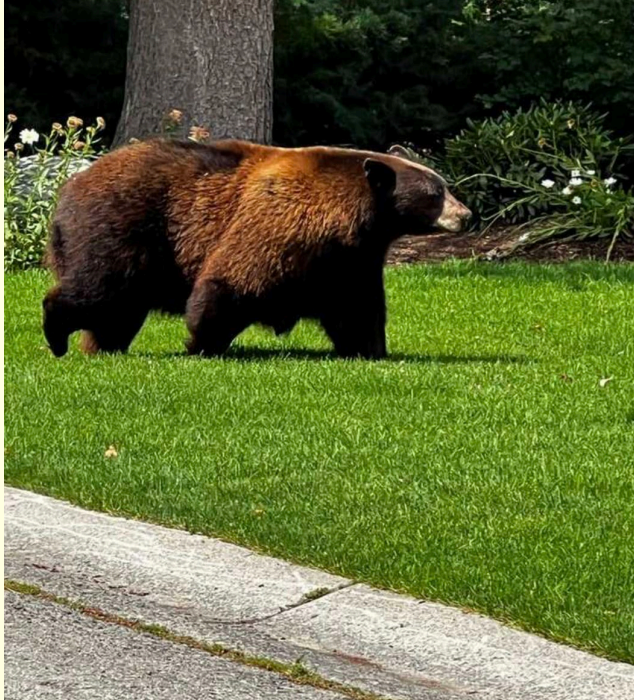


Bear Biology



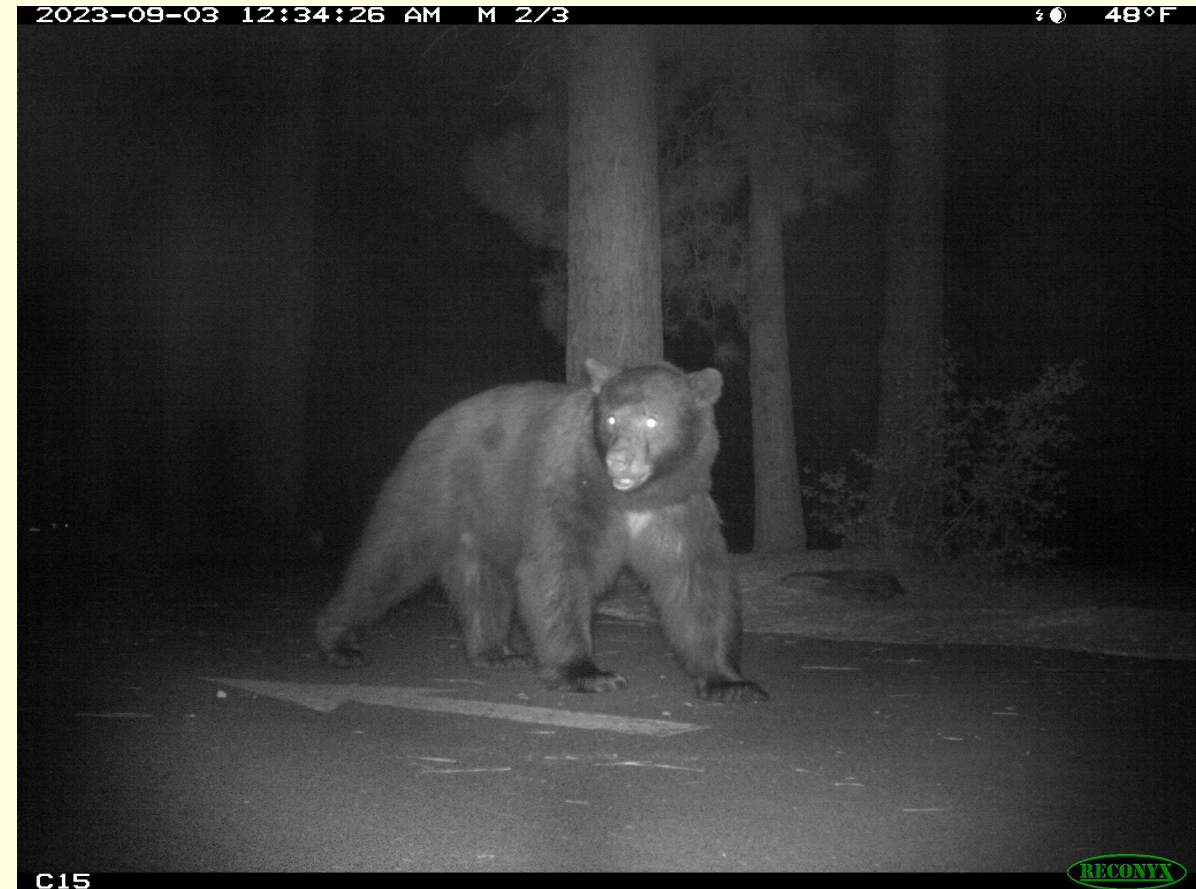
Overview

- Bear Biology Basics
- Bear Necessities
- Habituation



Bear Biology

- Crepuscular
 - Active in the evenings through the night into the early morning hours
 - Typically bed during the heat of the day
- Mating Season June
 - Yearlings Disperse
- Delayed Implantation
- Innate caution towards humans



Seasonal Food/behavior

- Spring
 - Grasses/Sedges
 - Winter Kill
 - Deer and Elk Fawns
- Summer
 - Berries
- Fall/Hyperphagia
 - Fish
 - EVERYTHING



Hibernation

- Sows & Dependent Young
 - Go in first come out last
- Boars
 - Later and Early
- Food availability, not necessarily snow level



How do we get here?



Habituation

- Habituated Bear/Food Conditioned Bear: A bear that shows little to no overt reaction to people as a result of being repeatedly exposed to anthropogenic stimuli without substantial consequence.

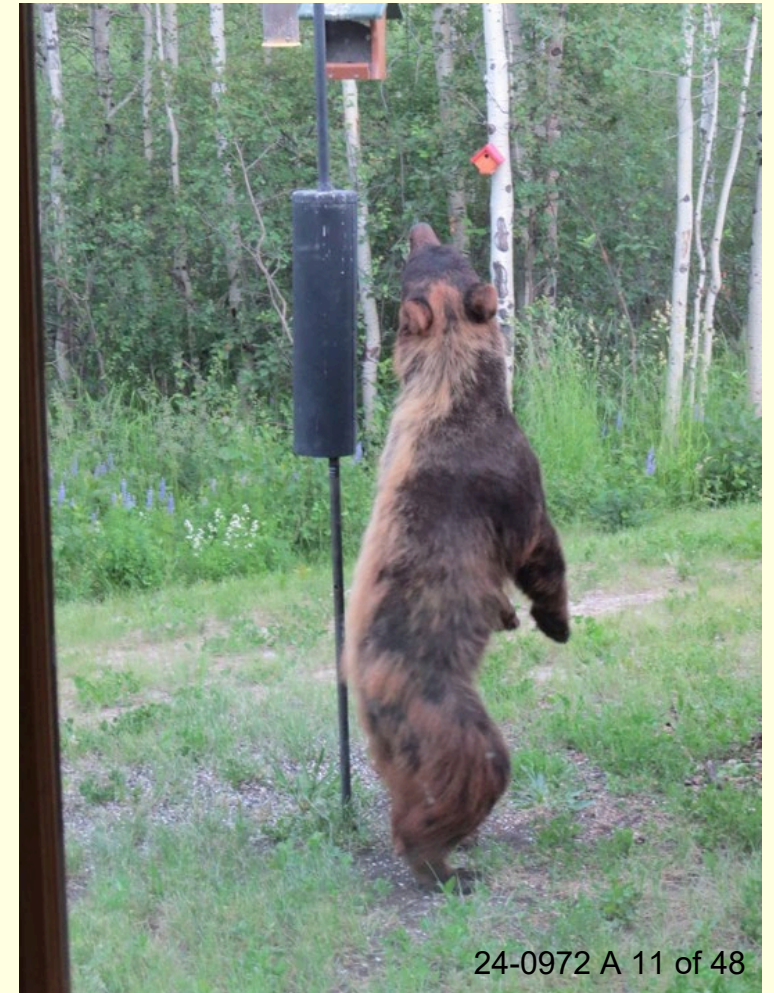
Why Bears enter Town

- Over population
- Competition
- Following their nose
- Bird Feeders, Unsecure trash
- Results in them getting comfortable around human presence



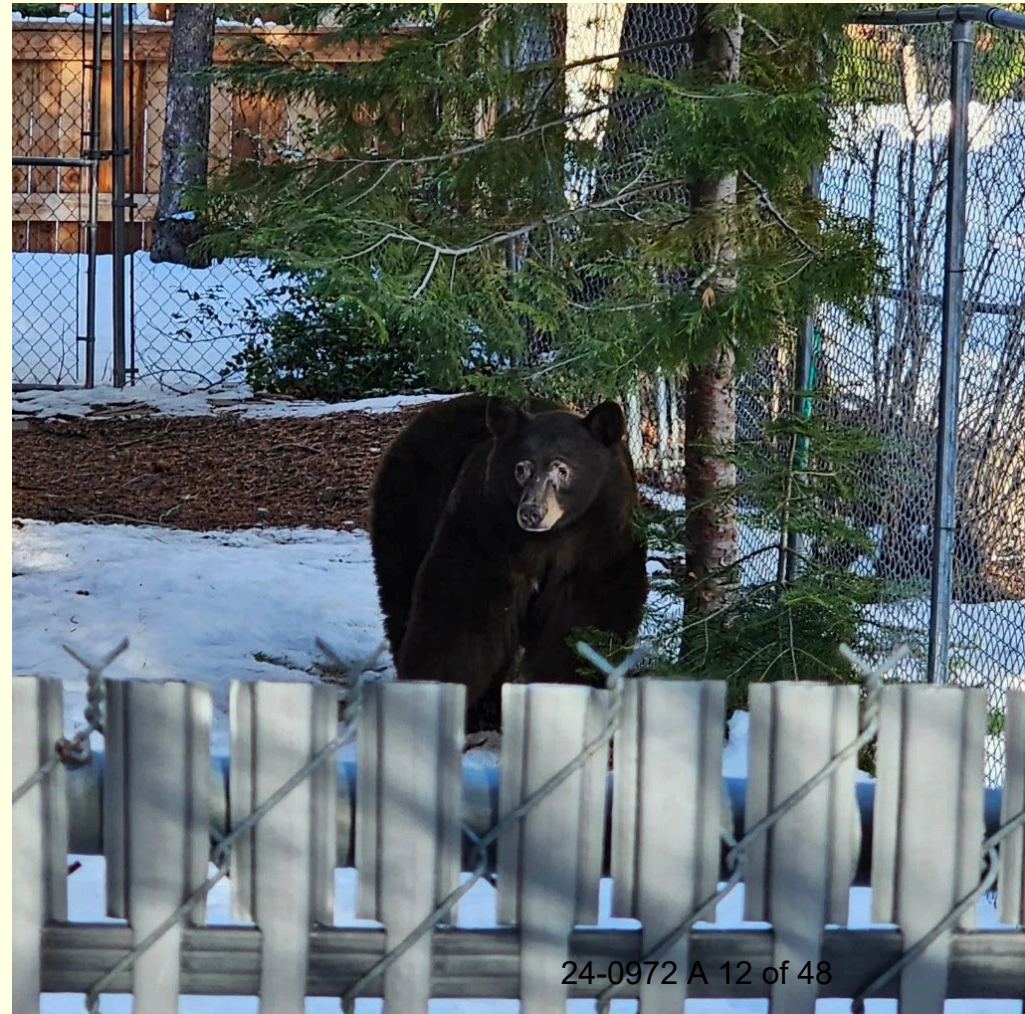
Habituation Example

- Bear finds a bird feeder
 - Next to a house
- Goes to the next house hoping for a bird feeder
 - Finds a BBQ Grill instead
- Goes to the next house
 - Finds Trash



Habituation Example

- Goes to the next house
 - Finds Nothing but the garage smells good
 - Uses strength to break in
- Next House
 - Willing to go inside the house where they smell food
- Next House
 - Smells good but there's a human inside
 - Doesn't matter Human food is too addicting



Unoccupied structures



Unoccupied Structure With No Food Reward



**DEAD BOLT THAT HAD
LAUNCHED ~10' From Door**

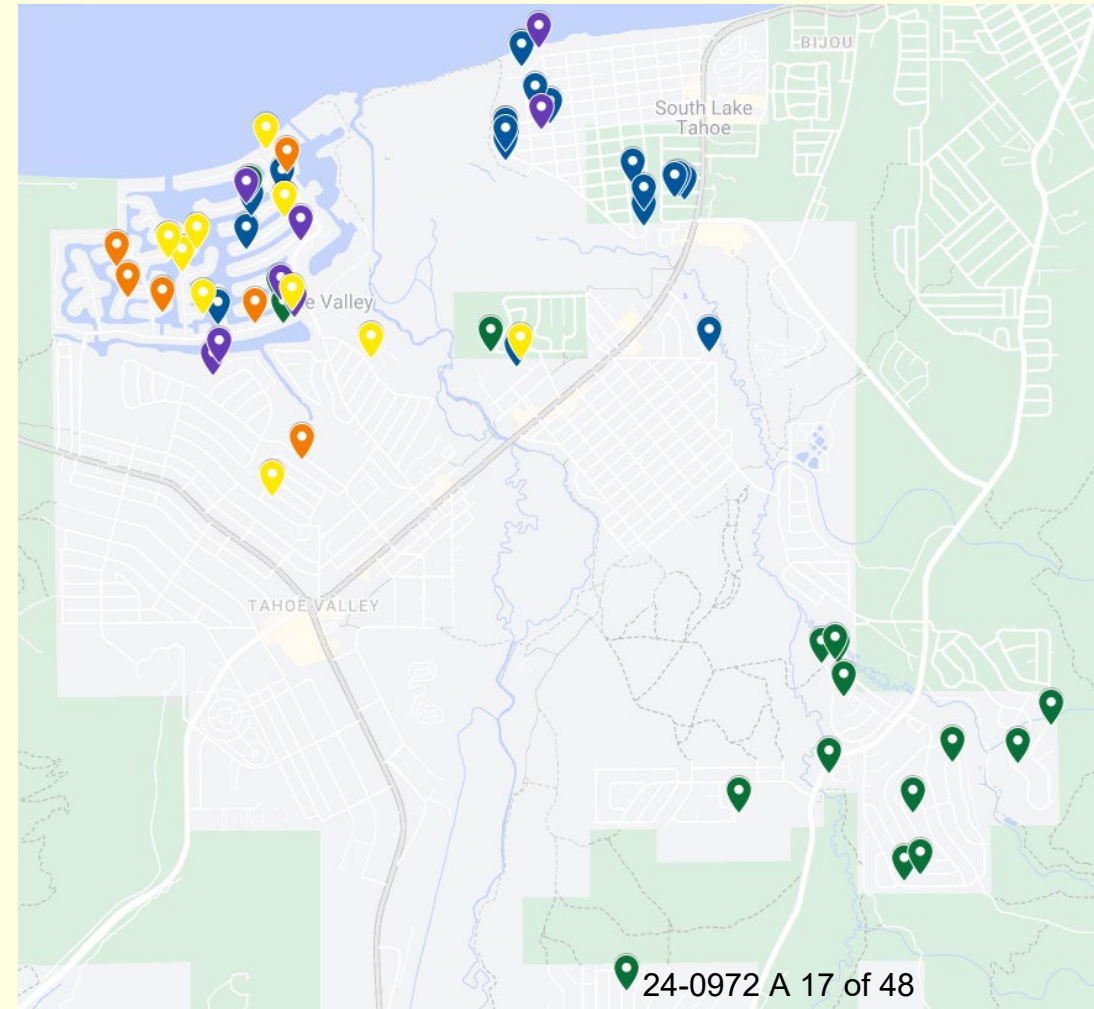
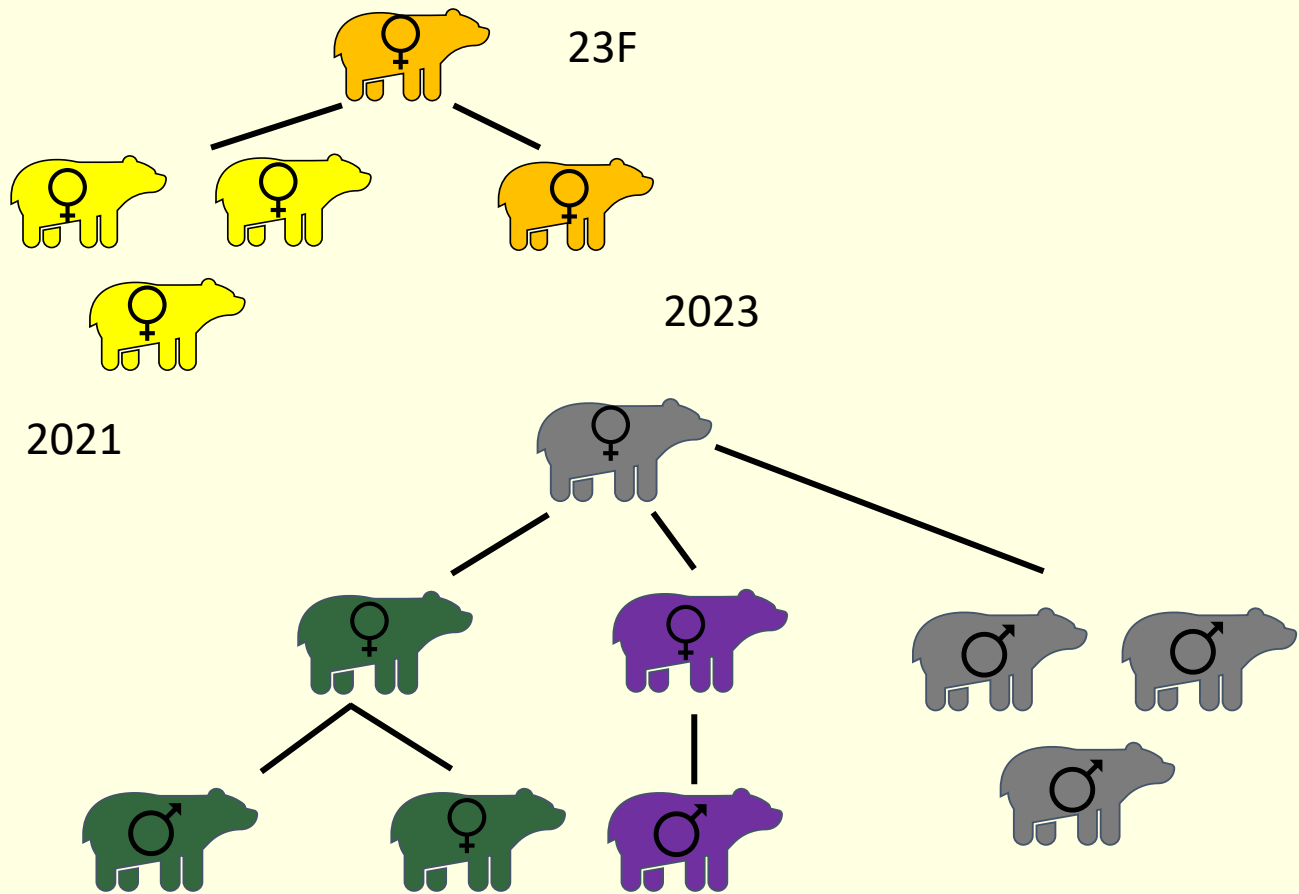
Leads to Occupied Structures



Once Habituated

- Bears don't leave town
- Females have cubs in town
- Creates a generation of animals not cautious of humans
- Male cubs grow up and disperse further
- Female cubs don't disperse and tend to stay in town
- Growing up to raise the next generation of cubs to do the same
- Less Competition, smaller home ranges, and a higher density of bears

Recidivism in Black Bear Family Units



Leads to attacks

- Food Conditioned Bears in town and homes leads to attacks
- Contrary to popular belief Black Bears DO attack



Von Hoffmann-Curzi Family
Laurel-Rose Von Hoffmann-Curzi had to have stitches after being attacked by a bear in her Tahoe Vista cabin in late October.

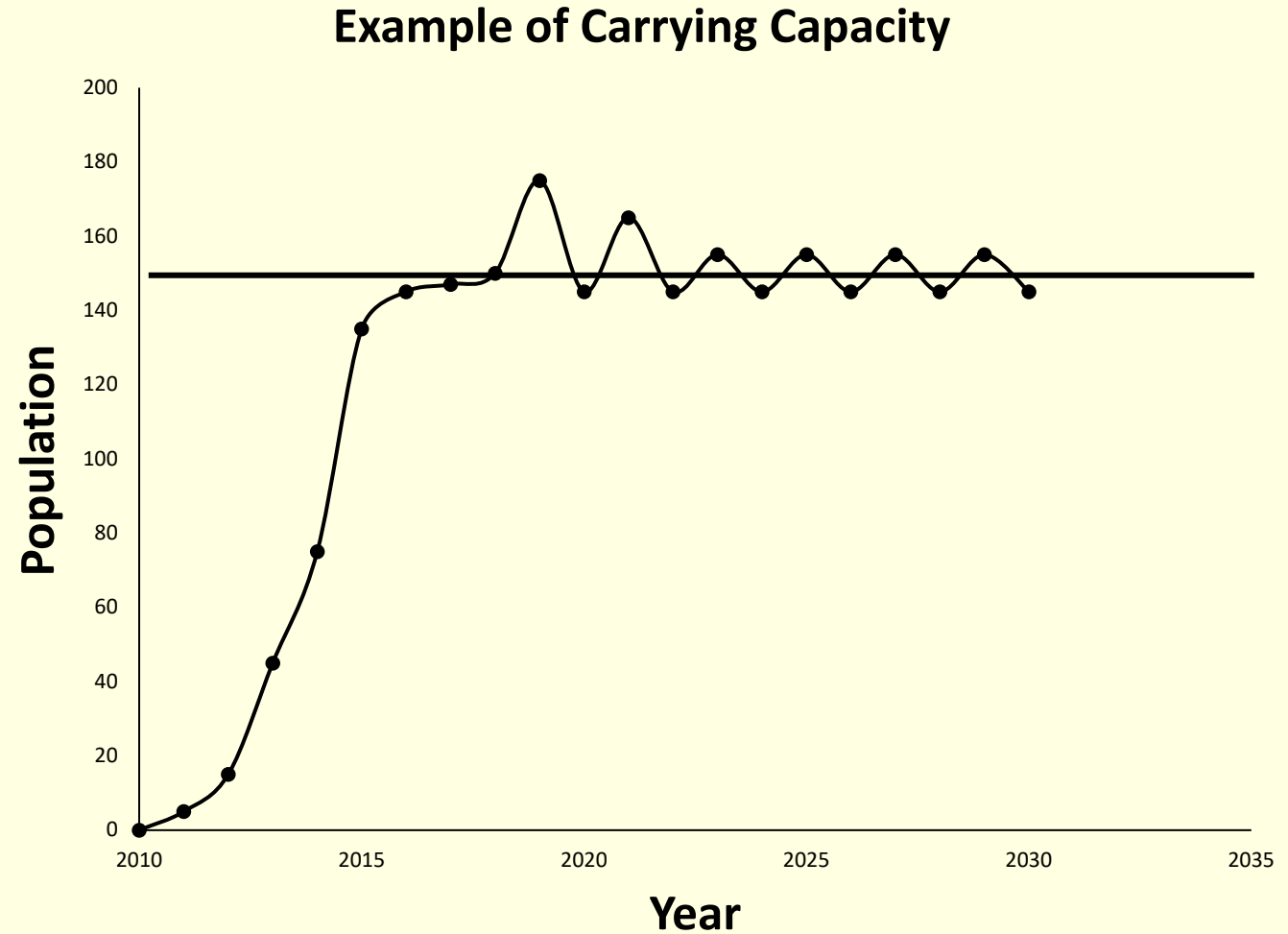
What does Habituation do to Populations?

- Effectively gets rid of Carrying Capacity
- Why Starve when I can go into town and get food

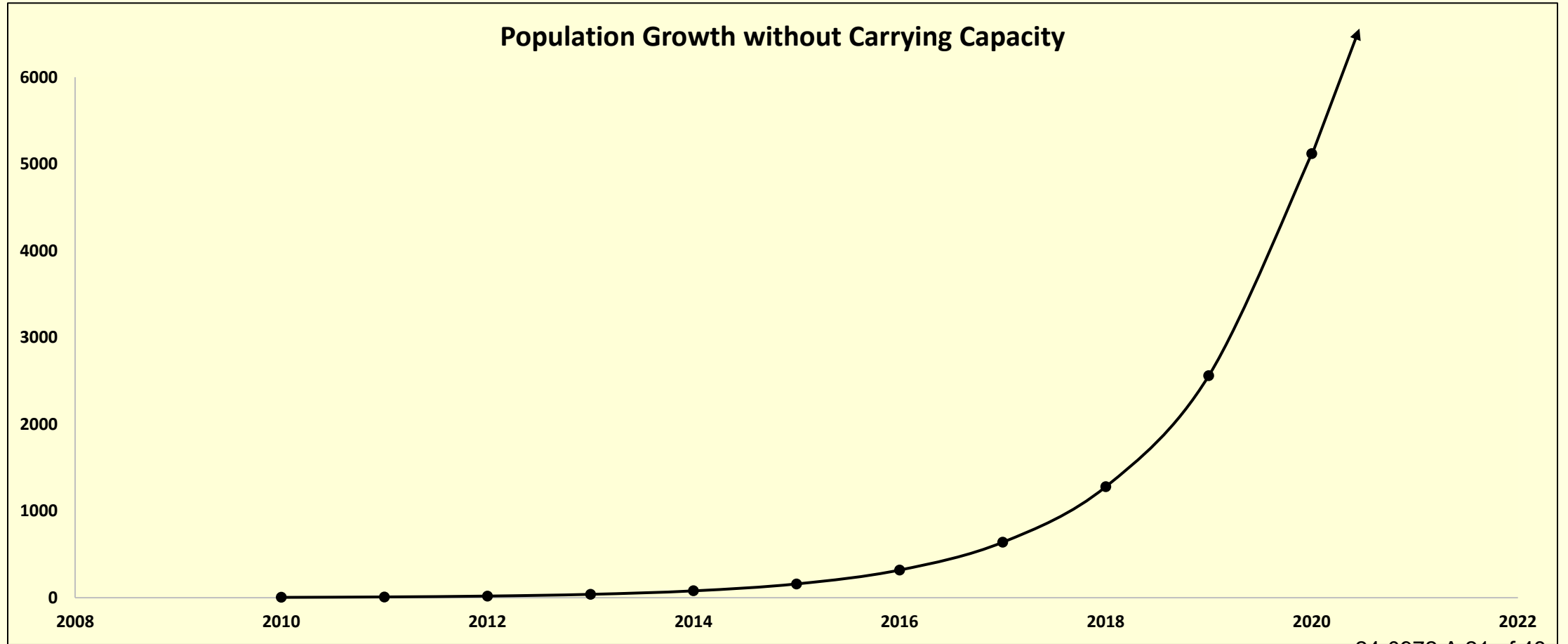


Carrying Capacity

- Always Changing
- Populations Typically regulate
 - Disease
 - Starvation
 - Hunting
 - Management removals
- ~234 bears on DNA since 2019



Carrying Capacity with a largely Habituated population



***SAMPLE POPULATION**



CDFW Bear Management and Policy

How its applied on the ground

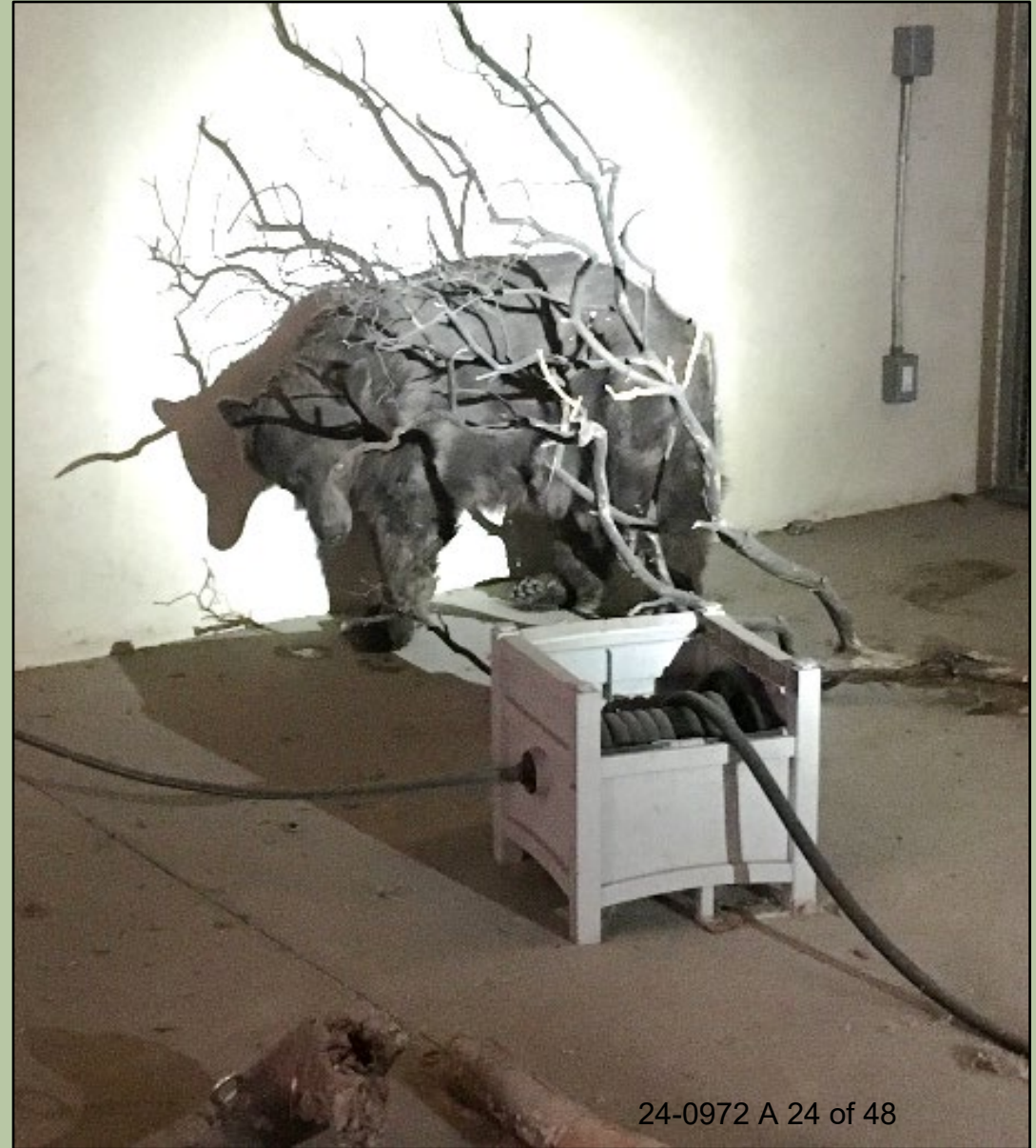
What Is A Conflict Bear?

- “A bear that requires action by the Department or the public due to its behavior or its situation”
- Includes “**No Harm/No Foul**”, “**General Nuisance**”, “**Food Condition**”, “**Habituated**”, and “**Public Safety**” bears
- Type of conflict will influence management response for individual bear
- Wild bears usually avoid people and direct interactions - BUT they will seek food, water, shelter in urban/suburban areas



Conflict Bear: No Harm/No Foul Bear

- Wrong place, wrong time
- Give space and time to leave
- Haze or move to nearest habitat



Conflict Bear: General Nuisance



- General nuisance – Getting into trash cans and dumpsters but no extensive property damage or aggression directed towards a human.
- Responds positively to light hazing
- Educating property owners on trash management and removing attractants.

Conflict Bear: Food Conditioned



- Majority of diet is human food.
- Causing property damage and decreased response to hazing tactics
- Recommend immediate removal of attractants and aggressive hazing.
- Potential for depredation or management removal

Conflict Bear: Habituated



- Not deterred by human presence, often food conditioned as well.
- Causing property damage and no response to typical hazing tactics.
- Recommend immediate removal of attractants and aggressive hazing.
- Potential for depredation or management removal

Conflict Bear: Public Safety



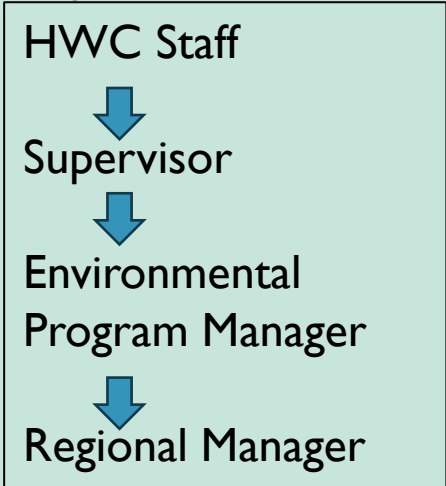
- Bear has made physical contact with a human, or is exhibiting an **immediate threat** to public health and safety
- **Immediate threat** = bear exhibits one or more aggressive behaviors directed toward a person
- **Only Law Enforcement personnel can determine immediate threat**

Response to Food Conditioned and/or Habituated Bears: Depredation/Management

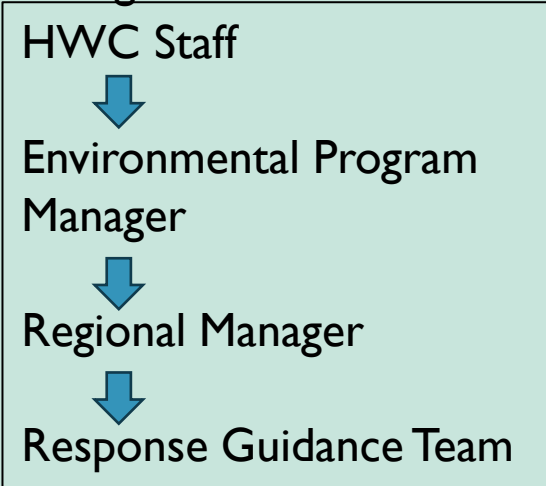


Decision Tree

Depredation



Management



CDFW DEPREDATION PERMIT IN THE TAHOE BASIN

- Property owner needs to have done everything in their power to deter bears and protect their property.
- DNA required
- Significant property damage



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PERMIT IS ISSUED IN THE TAHOE BASIN?

DNA Verification



CDFW MANAGEMENT BEAR IN THE TAHOE BASIN

HWC Staff Create Management Briefing



Decision Tree

Environmental Program Manager



Regional Manager



Response Guidance Team



WHAT IS A MANAGEMENT BEAR BRIEFING?

- Timeline of events
- Pictures
- Recommended Action
- Purposed Capture Plan



WELFARE ANIMAL: ABANDONED CUBS AND YEARLINGS

- Orphaned/abandoned cubs to rehab
- Yearlings are often too large for rehab.



WELFARE ANIMAL: INJURED OR SICK

- CDFW does not rehabilitate or treat adult bears. Only assess for euthanasia candidate.
 - A CDFW vet is consulted to assess a sick or injured bear in the field.

handling or disposition of the bear. Bears with severe trauma that includes severe bone breaks or severe head trauma should be considered for immediate euthanasia in the field due to poor prognosis and to reduce suffering of the animal.

Decision Tree:



CONFLICT AND BEAR POPULATION DATA COLLECTION

- DNA collection
- Trap-Tag-Haze
- Collar Deployment
- Conflict calls



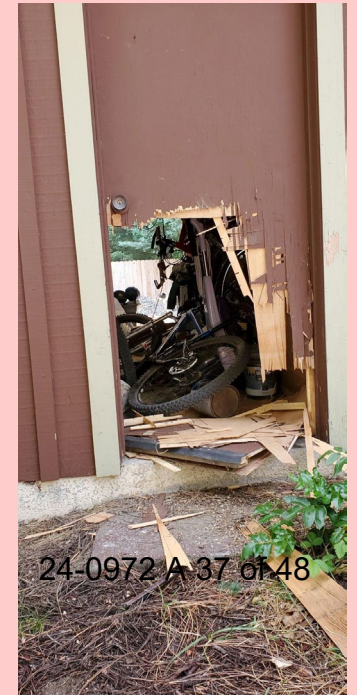
CONFLICT DATA

2022:

- 902 Conflict Calls
- 235 home-invasions
- 31 permits issued

2023:

- 660 Conflict Calls
- 217 home-invasions
- 38 permits issued



DNA DATA

- 258 individual bears identified through the end of 2023 in the entire Tahoe Basin
- 76 males & 147 females
- 298 locations with home-invasion in CA through the end of 2023
- 16 repeat offenders in CA

	CDFW		
Total Breakins	Total Repeat Offender Breakins	% of Breakins of Repeat Offenders	
298	164	0.55033557	55%

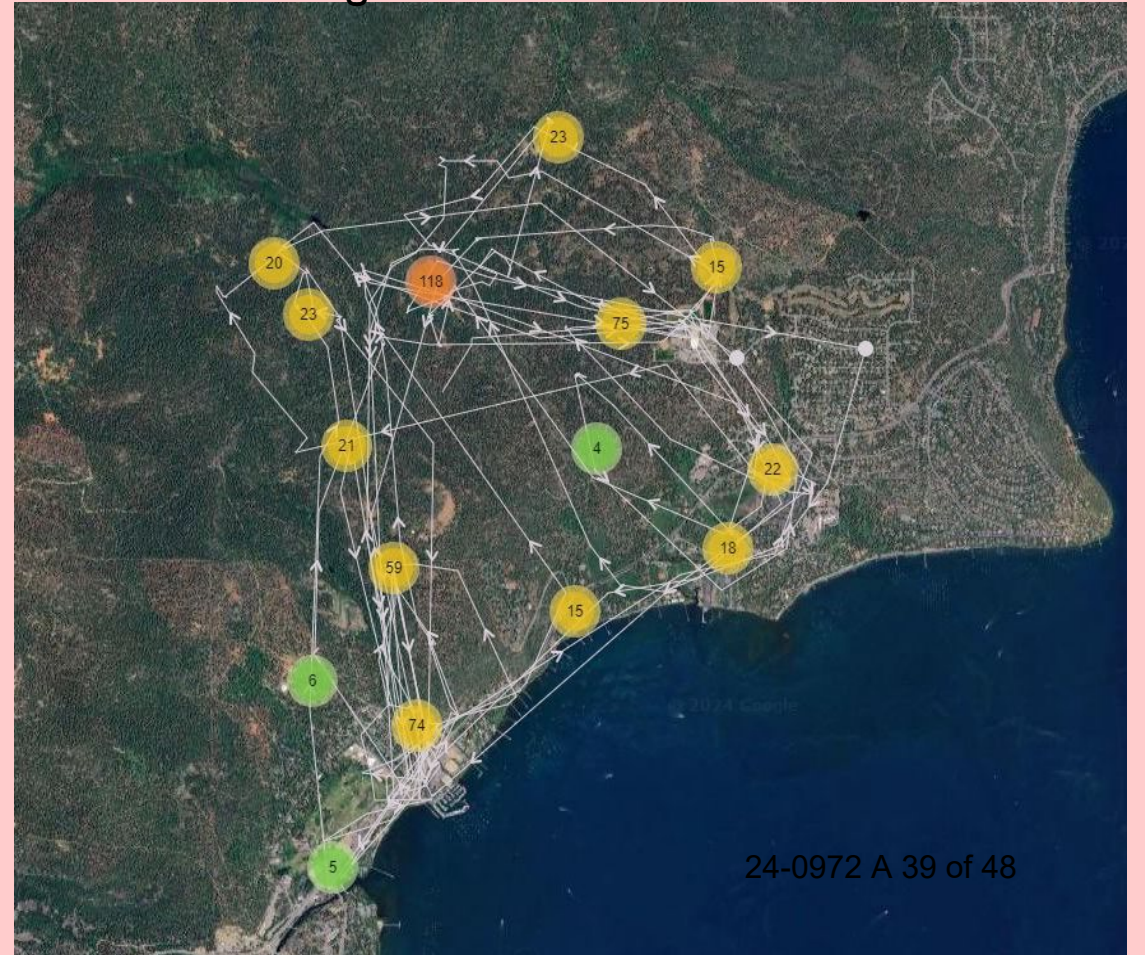
Repeat Offenders of 5 or more from 2022-2023 in CA			
Individuals	Bear ID	Sex	# of Incidents
1	13M	M	9
2	51F	F	6
3	56F	F	10
4	64F	F	19
5	70M	M	16
6	89M	M	5
7	101M	M	11
8	119M	M	5
9	122F	F	9
10	124F	F	10
11	130M	M	20
12	134F	F	10
13	136F	F	12
14	180M	M	5
15	188M	M	17
16	192F	F	6
		Total	164

COLLARS

DNA: I94M Tag: Orange 1988



DNA: I95F Tag: Red 999



CDFW FUTURE IN THE BASIN

- Permanent staff
- Developed education/outreach program
- Tahoe Basin Bear Population Monitoring program





TAHOE INTERAGENCY BEAR TEAM



TAHOE
REGIONAL
PLANNING
AGENCY





MISSION

To safeguard the balance between human activities and the natural ecology of bears in the Tahoe basin. Through education, collaboration, and enforcement, we strive to promote responsible practices that minimize human-bear conflicts, protect the well-being of both people and bears, and work to maintain a healthy bear population for years to come. By raising awareness, proactive management, and implementing effective policies, we aim to foster coexistence between humans and bears through science, expertise and a shared passion to re-wild the bears in our region.

Empowering Responsible Coexistence With Bears

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HISTORY OF TAHOE BEAR MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

2002 - 2017

2002 // Tahoe Council for Wild Bears (TCWB)

TCWB started around 2002 and produced a model Ordinance, a video CD for businesses in Tahoe, and a logo. It disbanded after a couple years due to funding. Some agencies represented.



2007 // Sierra Front Working Group

No agency representatives and no bear managers involved.

2017 // Incline Bear Collaborative

Started by NDOW's former director and only included community members and non-profit entities. Did not include other agency partners and no bear managers were involved. Lasted about 2 years.



THE TAHOE INTERAGENCY BEAR TEAM WAS BORN!

est. 2016



OVER 65 YEARS OF COLLECTIVE BEAR EXPERTISE

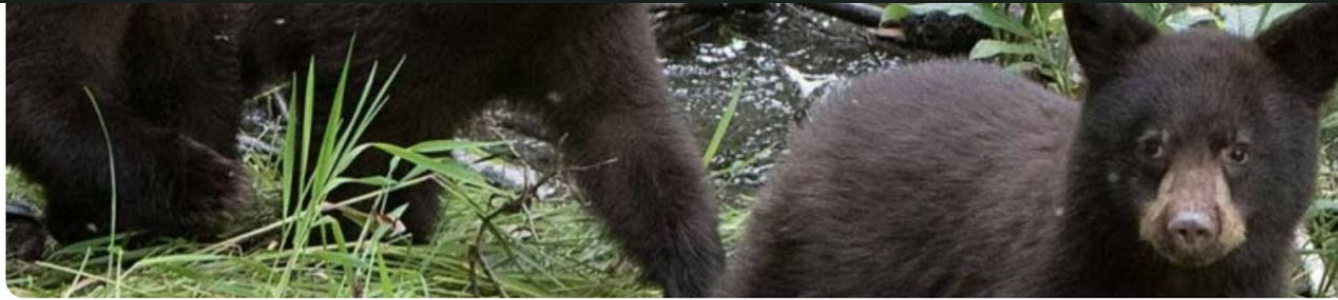
- **Science-Based Approach to Management**
- **Credibility and Trust**
- **Responsible and Cohesive Messaging**
- **Community Influence and Cultural Sway**

STRENGTH IN PARTNERSHIP

- Monthly Press Releases & Updates
- TRAP / TAG / HAZE Program
- Bear Naked Truth Blog
- High Quality Educational Videos
- Cohesive Messaging
- TahoeBears.org & Logo
- Community Management Plan (SOP)
- Politically and Emotionally Challenging Work



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Tahoe Interagency Bear Team

@tahoebearteam · 19 subscribers · 4 videos

Empowering responsible coexistence with bears in the Tahoe basin and beyond. >

tahoebears.org

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Videos



Black Bears in Autumn

889 views · 6 months ago



Secure Your Crawl Space From Bears!

694 views · 6 months ago



When Bears and Humans Collide

1.3K views · 9 months ago

CC



Bear Cubs vs. Yearlings: How to Tell the Difference

1.4K views · 10 months ago

CC

TAHOE INTERAGENCY BEAR TEAM



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Fact Check:

Debunking Misinformation About Lake Tahoe's Black Bears *Keep Tahoe bears wild!*

LAKE TAHOE, Calif./Nev., Feb. 15, 2023 – In recent weeks, misinformation about black bears has been circulating online and on flyers posted throughout the Lake Tahoe community. The Tahoe Interagency Bear Team (TIBT) is a collective of bear experts across state and local agencies who study and understand these animals and have devoted much of their professional lives to ensure the health and well-being of the Lake Tahoe Basin's black bears. TIBT would like to set the record straight by debunking some of those claims and educating the public about the real issues and dangers this misinformation poses.

Tahoe bears may at times seem like a unique bear species due to their general lack of fear and boldness around humans, but these black bears follow the usual biological patterns of black bears across California and Nevada. Whether living in or visiting bear country here in the Tahoe Basin or beyond, this information should clarify what is really needed to help wild bears survive and thrive.

The Claim: Bears Need Human Help Denning During Hibernation

Many have seen photos and videos perpetuating the myth that property owners and residents should allow bears to den under homes and in crawl spaces. Some may have even seen people encourage this unwanted behavior by laying out hay and other materials for bears. But most homeowners don't even know a bear is under or around their home until it has already established a makeshift den.

Bears can tear out wood and insulation, exposing pipes to freezing temperatures or damaging them in the process. Once a bear gets nice and cozy, it can be difficult to make it to leave. This increases the chances of human-bear conflict and habituated behavior. Bears have evolved to comfortably survive winter without human help, so it is very important to board up all crawl spaces around homes to discourage bears from setting up camp and damaging property. For more information about securing crawl spaces, watch this [video](#).

The Claim: Bears Are Starving, and People Need to Feed Them

False! Black bears are some of the most resilient and adaptive animals and they can tailor their diet to what is available around them. It is true that bears need A LOT of calories, especially in preparation for winter but giving them handouts will not set them up to thrive. Giving a bear food teaches it to keep coming back and possibly investigate further by breaking into homes, vehicles, and garbage bins. This behavior will also condition cubs to do the same and continue

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Questions