MEETING THE URGENT MOMENT FOR WILDLIFE

For people and wildlife alike, it’s been an undeniably challenging year in the Northern Rockies. The wildfire season was both long and intense, with a warming climate forcing grizzly bears and many other species to move farther to meet their needs. Meanwhile, people are pouring into the Mountain West in unprecedented numbers, with new development pressures threatening to fragment habitat and the regional real estate market accelerating into overdrive.

It adds up to unprecedented urgency for the conservation movement, and thanks to supporters like you, Vital Ground is meeting the moment. Newly-conserved habitat in a key Montana corridor (p. 3) is already seeing grizzly traffic, and several more projects are in line for completion over the final months of 2021. During a challenging year, we’ve tripled our typical project load on the strength of your support. Thank you!
Returning Grizzlies and Their Benefits to Historic Range

Shortly after becoming Vital Ground’s executive director in 2015, I wrote the superintendent of North Cascades National Park in Washington state. A public comment period was scoping the preferred elements to include in the Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s joint North Cascades Ecosystem Grizzly Bear Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.

The express purpose of that effort was to determine how to restore the grizzly bear to the North Cascades Ecosystem (NCE)—the last portion of the species’ historic range that contains a federally-delineated grizzly recovery zone but does not currently contain any documented grizzlies.

On behalf of Vital Ground advisors and supporters, I joined the vast majority of commenters supporting grizzly recovery in the NCE. I urged the two services to do better than a wait-and-see approach and actually include alternatives providing for the relocation, reintroduction and active management of the species. (Read more on how that process progressed—or didn’t—on pages 14-15.)

At a time when Americans are showing a relentless appetite for connecting with nature and the outdoors—as evidenced by national park visitation numbers, Western states’ campgrounds brimming over capacity, and portions of the nation’s population physically relocating to the Rocky Mountains and surrounding areas in great enough numbers to drive dramatic real estate market escalations—it’s time to revisit the benefits that would stem from proactive efforts to recover grizzlies in the NCE.

Embracing grizzly recovery in the North Cascades would focus additional energy and resources from around the nation on ensuring a future for both bears and people on that landscape. Grizzlies stimulate positive economic impacts far beyond national park boundaries. Tourism industries anchored on the lower 48’s two model areas where grizzlies have recovered—the Greater Yellowstone and Northern Continental Divide ecosystems—show the benefits that large, charismatic megafauna bring to local economies.

The places where grizzlies are already recovering show that people and bears can coexist (see pages 6-8). Millions of people live and recreate in grizzly bear country on an annual basis, and numerous highly effective educational outreach programs are already in place to ensure that this could occur in the NCE.

Leadership changes are pending at the federal agencies responsible for these decisions, offering a new opportunity to advance the discussion. I urge you to join Vital Ground in watching for timely and strategic ways to engage and inspire support for actively restoring grizzlies to the North Cascades. Studies documenting the ecosystem’s high-quality habitat illustrate that it is far too important to leave the area devoid of its flagship species. Bringing the grizzly back to the NCE would simply help make it healthy and whole.

Ryan Lutey, Executive Director
A cedar grove and tributary stream extend through the Bull River Linkage project area. Fueled by supporters like you, Vital Ground and the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y) purchased 80 acres near the confluence of the Bull and Clark Fork rivers, a vital connection between the Cabinet and Bitterroot mountains.

By Matt Hart

Drive Montana’s scenic Highway 200 west from Missoula and you’d be forgiven for occasionally taking your eyes off the road. The Mission Mountains rise jagged and snowy in the rearview while the broad Clark Fork River winds beneath rocky bluffs and the timbered foothills of the Bitterroot Range. The waterway swells in size as the Flathead River drains into its flow. Farther west, the Bull River tumbles out of the rugged Cabinet Mountains to the north.

The communities along this stretch of the Clark Fork remain small and self-contained, but amidst a region-wide development boom, the open stretches of this landscape could quickly turn into subdivided real estate goldmines. That would spell trouble for wildlife that use the valley as seasonal lowland habitat and a corridor between mountain ranges.

Thanks to conservation supporters like you, one of the area’s key linkage zones for grizzly bears, elk, wolves and countless other species will remain open and wild. Earlier this year, Vital Ground and the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y) conserved 80 acres near the confluence of the Bull River and Clark Fork.

Purchased from a landowner committed to protecting open spaces, the project helps maintain a crucial habitat connection between the Cabinet and Bitterroot mountains. Vital Ground now owns the acres and will steward them to maintain fish and wildlife habitat while preserving the rural character of the state’s northwestern corner.

“This project is aligned with our shared values of maintaining the rural, remote and wild characteristics of this important location,” says Jessie Grossman, U.S. program manager for Y2Y. “Private lands are important to sustaining natural connections for wildlife and we’re excited to continue to work with Vital Ground and landowners in this area.”

(continued on page 4)
(continued from page 3)

A CRUCIAL CONNECTION FOR GRIZZLIES

The Bull River-Clark Fork linkage area provides a habitat connection of regional importance for grizzly bears. In Montana’s northwestern corner, grizzlies endure in much smaller numbers than they do in and around Glacier and Yellowstone national parks. The project conserves a southward pathway from the Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem, home to a recovering population of around 60 grizzlies. Biologists have documented only a handful of movements over the years between that population and neighboring ones but consider connectivity between ecosystems crucial for the species’ long-term survival.

To the south of the project, the Bitterroot Ecosystem extends deep into the Idaho wilderness. This historic and expansive grizzly habitat still lacks a resident grizzly bear population, seeing only periodic wandering bears from other areas. As a potential connector between western Montana, northern Idaho and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, conservation biologists point to the Bitterroot as key to the goal of a thriving, interconnected grizzly population in the Northern Rockies.

“Grizzly bear linkage across the Clark Fork River is important for the future of bears in the Bitterroot,” says Wayne Kasworm, a bear biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who has documented several grizzlies near the project area in recent years, including a female bear that crossed the Clark Fork at least twice this summer. “This project is a start and a stepping stone to protecting habitat for bears to make that journey.”

By conserving an open, undeveloped movement area between the Cabinet and Bitterroot ranges, the Bull River-Clark Fork project becomes a strong

Aspen trees reclaim a meadow at the Bull River Linkage project site, 80 acres conserved by Vital Ground and the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y) earlier this year. With a high risk of development, this lush valley-bottom area serves as a key regional habitat connection for wildlife, linking the Cabinet and Bitterroot mountains.
puzzle piece in Y2Y and Vital Ground’s joint work to build regional connectivity for wildlife. The area also represents a priority in Vital Ground’s One Landscape Initiative, our strategic effort to conserve the most crucial private lands connecting the Northern Rockies’ wild strongholds.

“We’re at a critical juncture in our work connecting these isolated populations of grizzly bears and other wildlife,” says Mitch Doherty, conservation director for Vital Ground. “The current real estate boom is rapidly eroding opportunities like these to make landscape-scale habitat connections. This project at the confluence of the Bull River and Clark Fork adds to the network of linkages we’ve already conserved in the region.”

**BENEFITS BEYOND BEARS**

Lying in a natural bottleneck area for wildlife moving through the Bull River and Clark Fork valleys, the project will maintain important range for elk, moose and sensitive species like wolverine and Canada lynx. With a tributary stream running through the acreage, the effort also protects habitat for native trout and water quality in the larger Lower Clark Fork watershed.

With Montana ranking among the nation’s fastest-growing housing markets, the project carries benefits far beyond wildlife. Increased subdivision and dense development in the Lower Clark Fork would not only impose further habitat fragmentation and increase the risk of conflicts between bears and people but also threaten public access to popular areas for hunting, fishing, hiking and other activities central to the region’s rural identity.

The purchase builds off Vital Ground and Y2Y’s previous Wild River project, a multiyear effort in the next major valley to the north that conserves a similarly important confluence area along Montana’s Kootenai and Yaak rivers. That project has now totaled nearly 200 acres, and together with the Bull River-Clark Fork effort sets a standard for sustaining open space and habitat in linkage areas with great value to wildlife and people alike.

“These corridors matter,” says Grossman. “They support wildlife that need to feed and breed across the West and they support the natural processes that sustain life on Earth. Thinking at the scale nature needs is one step to improving our lands and waters for wildlife and people.”

Grizzly bears are not stationary creatures. With a range that historically stretched from the Pacific Coast across the Great Plains, bears evolved to thrive on many landscapes. Individual grizzlies will traverse habitats from mountain ridgelines to river valleys to prairie grasslands—as long as roadblocks don’t get in the way.

As their recovery from near-extinction in the lower 48 states continues, grizzlies are gradually returning to more of their historic range. In 2021 alone, sightings have been confirmed in parts of central Idaho, southwestern Wyoming and the central Montana prairie that haven’t seen grizzlies in many decades.

These new habitat frontiers include a wider variety of human land ownerships and usages than the species’ core recovery zones in protected wilderness areas and national parks. As bears cross agricultural lands and pass near communities, coexistence practices are essential to their safety and our own, as well as to larger conservation goals for the species.

In 2021, your support of Vital Ground is helping fund 16 coexistence partners as a complement to our primary work of directly conserving habitat for grizzlies and other wildlife. From electric fencing to educational events, our partners are performing crucial work on the land and in communities. By preventing bear-related conflicts in our One Landscape Initiative’s identified priority areas, these partnerships help grizzlies expand and reconnect their fragmented range in the Northern Rockies, a key part of ensuring a durable future for the Great Bear in the lower 48.

**PREVENTING CONFLICTS ON THE PRAIRIE**

In greater numbers and at greater distances, grizzly bears are leaving Montana’s Rocky Mountain Front Range and following the high-quality habitat of its river corridors that wind east onto the state’s central prairies. They are traversing farms, ranches and communities in the process, making...
Coexistence efforts vital to bear and human safety as well as the broader social attitudes surrounding grizzlies in the state.

Across central Montana, our partners are hard at work: In Blackfeet country east of Glacier National Park, the Blackfeet Nation Stockgrowers are adding electric fencing to their 4H livestock program while the Conservation Science Collaborative helps tribal students study conflicts on Blackfeet ranches.

Farther south, the Western Landowners Alliance held a conflict reduction workshop for Rocky Mountain Front agricultural communities adapting to grizzlies. Meanwhile, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is equipping a new central Montana bear manager to respond to grizzly-related incidents and provide resources to landowners to prevent future conflicts.

**Balancing Growth in the Northwest**

West of Glacier National Park, the Flathead Valley is one of the nation’s fastest-growing regions. As new houses and roads sprout forth in northwestern Montana, remaining habitat needs protection while residents and visitors both new and old need to be ready to coexist with a grizzly bear population that is also expanding.

Our partners at People and Carnivores are working across the Flathead region to provide electric fencing for farms, fruit orchards and more, while the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes held an educational cider-pressing and fruit-gleaning event to help landowners secure their fruit trees and other common attractants. With protecting habitat a key part of mitigating bear conflicts in this rapidly-developing area, we’re also proud to join a large collaborative effort led by Flathead Land Trust to purchase 772 acres of habitat between the Swan and Whitefish Ranges and transfer this vital connectivity zone into a state Wildlife Management Area benefitting bears, migratory birds and countless other species.

Farther south down the Swan Range, the scenic Swan Valley has long served as an important grizzly crossroads. The Clearwater Resource Council continues to improve the valley’s coexistence efforts with the installation of several new bear-resistant sanitation facilities for business in the community of Seeley Lake.

In Montana’s northwestern corner, meanwhile, the community of Troy will continue to benefit from landowner education and fruit pressing at the Troy Farmers Market’s annual apple festival. Other crossroads communities in the Montana-Idaho-British Columbia border region will also see their

(continued on page 8)
coexistence work improved with an expanded electric fencing cost-share program provided by the Trans-border Grizzly Bear Project.

BUILDING SAFE CONNECTIONS TO THE BITTERROOT AND YELLOWSTONE

Biologists predict that the Bitterroot Mountains along the Montana-Idaho border could serve as a primary route for the eventual co-mingling of grizzlies from northwestern Montana, northern Idaho and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. With recent sightings confirmed in the Bitterroot Valley and farther south into the wilds of central Idaho, this expansion has begun, but numerous human-related roadblocks make it far from a free-flowing option for bears.

In the Bitterroot Valley, coexistence efforts are ramping up thanks to partners like the Wind River Bear Institute, which provides an alternative resource in the form of guardian dogs. Meanwhile our longtime partners at the Great Bear Foundation have expanded their coexistence work into the Bitterroot, bringing their fruit pickup program to the valley in addition to the Missoula and Ninemile areas.

East of the Bitterroots, other narrower pathways also carry the potential to connect northwestern Montana’s bears with Yellowstone’s. As grizzlies expand from both core areas, the mountain ranges, valleys and agricultural lands of southwestern Montana are crucial zones for conflict prevention.

In the Deer Lodge Valley, the Watershed Restoration Coalition established a new composting facility for livestock carcasses, a common bear attractant when left on the landscape. Continuing south, the Big Hole Watershed Group is expanding the reach of its carcass removal program, and on the doorstep to Yellowstone, the Madison Valley Ranchlands Group is growing its coexistence impact with continued carcass pickups and a new composting facility near Norris.

Finally, just like bears, coexistence doesn’t have to be a stationary endeavor, and we’re proud to once again support Be Bear Aware’s traveling outreach work. From the Rocky Mountain Front to the Bitterroot Valley and northern Idaho, their educational trailer brings crucial information and resources to residents and visitors throughout grizzly country, with a heightened focus for 2021 on supporting agricultural communities and popular recreation campgrounds.

Whether it’s a new electric fence or bear-resistant garbage bin, an informational brochure or a helping hand securing attractants, the crucial work of sharing the landscape with grizzlies moves forward thanks to the collaborative efforts of wildlife agencies, nonprofit partners and conservation-minded supporters like you. As grizzlies continue to reclaim range, protecting habitat corridors and building the social habitat of coexistence go hand-in-hand. We all have important parts to play in building a safer, more sustainable future for wildlife and people. 🙌
A new interactive “story map” helps viewers visualize Vital Ground’s One Landscape Initiative, our push to conserve habitat linkages on private land in order to connect the Northern Rockies’ wild strongholds for wildlife and people. You can learn more and find a link to the story map at vitalground.org/one-landscape.
Earlier this year, Rick and Diana Brown honored the memory of their son Ian by protecting grizzly bear habitat in northwestern Montana. Ian grew up with a passion for wild animals and wild places. By permanently and directly conserving about three-quarters of an acre of habitat as part of Vital Ground’s Wild River project, the Browns led more than 30 friends and family members in building a conservation legacy for Ian.

“Ian loved the mountains and the stars and the peace they gave him,” says Rick. “Ian especially loved grizzly bears and took on the nickname ‘Grizzly’ when he was young. His room is full of grizzly blankets, posters, ornaments, trinkets, t-shirts and other items.”

The Wild River project was the perfect opportunity to memorialize Ian’s love of grizzlies. It is a project about long-term hope and resilience, a chance to turn an area once planned for dense development into a thriving wildlife corridor that will benefit grizzlies and countless other species for generations to come. Alongside our partners at the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y), Vital Ground has purchased and protected more than 55 acres in a proposed subdivision and returned them to secure wildlife habitat within a crucial linkage area.

Together with Vital Ground’s neighboring Yaak Mountain project, grizzlies and other wildlife...
The Young Living Foundation is honored to partner with The Vital Ground Foundation. Through this partnership, the Young Living Foundation donates a portion of all proceeds from Young Living’s Animal Scents™ product line sales directly to The Vital Ground Foundation.

The Young Living Foundation is committed to empowering individuals to defy limitations by providing education, wellness, conservation and business opportunities. Since the establishment of its first farm, Young Living is dedicated to protecting plants, wildlife, and natural habitats. Known for its unique Seed to Seal® process, Young Living Essential Oils ensures its seeds are planted in soil free from chemicals or harmful pesticides. Prior to sale, Young Living’s Animal Scents products have been through the 5-step Seed to Seal® process of purity testing.


To purchase Animal Scents products and support The Vital Ground Foundation, visit Young Living’s Animal Scents product page.

To learn more about protecting habitat to honor a loved one or leaving a landscape legacy through planned giving, contact Kim Davitt: kdavitt@vitalground.org or 406-552-2544 (cell)
Three New Business Partners Join the Conservation Effort

Business partners are a key part of Vital Ground’s push toward a connected, protected landscape for wildlife and people. Whether through a business membership, company grant or royalty agreement, business partnerships provide opportunities for companies of all sizes and types to align with habitat protection for grizzly bears and other species while showing products, services and branding to a conservation-minded audience.

It’s been a banner year for business partnerships and Vital Ground is excited to welcome three more teammates to the fold. Those familiar with recreating in grizzly country will know the name UDAP Bear Spray (bearspray.com), a Montana-based manufacturer of deterrent pepper sprays. UDAP’s products have long helped people and bears avoid calamity when they cross paths and their new investment in habitat protection as a Vital Ground partner only furthers the company’s positive impact.

A can of bear spray is only as effective as its user, however, and carrying the spray comfortably and accessibly has long been a puzzle for recreationists, especially those who like to move fast and light. Enter Wyoming-based Scat Belt (scatbelt.com), another new Vital Ground business partner combining a useful safety product with a commitment to habitat conservation. Their comfortable, lightweight bear spray holster belts are an excellent option for trail runners, anglers or anyone else who’s tired of feeling that bear spray can swinging against their hip!

Finally, our new partnership with Black Bear River (blackbearriver.com) offers you the chance to show your support of wild places while feeling good about your fashion. The apparel company grew from formative outdoor experiences in California’s Sierra Nevada, combining art and a spirit of adventure in their shirts and hats, some of which feature striking bear-themed visuals. Designed and printed in the U.S. with eco-friendly, water-based inks, their newest product will be co-branded coexistence-themed hoodies and tees celebrating their conservation partnership with Vital Ground.

Kodiak Cakes Step Up Their Habitat Protection Investment

Grizzly bears and pancakes—it sounds like a sticky situation, right? Not so fast.

Fortunately, we’re not talking about dumpster raids at your neighborhood IHOP. For several years, Kodiak Cakes—best known for their hardy pancake mixes that you can find on grocery shelves nationwide or online at kodiakcakes.com—have supported habitat protection for the species whose likeness adorns their products. Now, our business partners from Utah are taking their conservation commitment to another level.

Earlier this year, Kodiak Cakes led a fundraiser for several current Vital Ground projects in celebration of World Nature Conservation Day.
Totaling $100,000, their efforts are leading crucial work to conserve movement areas for grizzlies.

“Preserving open, wild spaces is incredibly important,” says Joel Clark, CEO of Kodiak Cakes. “When we learned about what Vital Ground was doing to preserve grizzly bear habitat and open space, we got really excited and passionate about that, because if you have a healthy grizzly bear ecosystem then really what that means is you have a healthy wildlife ecosystem with open space and open lands where all wildlife can thrive.”

Going Back to Our Roots

Bears and humans have evolved alongside each other for millennia. The relationship between the species has always involved give and take. Sometimes, the evidence is right under our feet.

Oshá (*Ligusticum porteri*) is a Rocky Mountain herb in the carrot family. It grows in moist subalpine areas, sharing habitat with bears and providing them with an important food source. Indigenous peoples have long recognized the plant’s value, giving it the nickname “bear root” or similar translations in many Native languages. The Diné credit bears with leading them to the plant, and many ethnobotanical practices prize the oshá root’s medicinal value, using it as a tea, powder or infusion to treat body aches, colds and fever.

Two members of our Vital Ground family who know bears intimately—co-founders Doug and Lynne Seus—recently had the opportunity to gather oshá near their home in Utah. “It is a gift of Nature, growing at 10,000 feet in the Rockies,” says Lynne. “Oshá is an amazing healing plant, yet another reason our high wild places are so sacred.”

Vital Ground co-founder Lynne Seus gathers oshá (or “bear root”) in Utah. The herb has long provided food and medicinal value for bears and people alike.

Photo courtesy of Lynne Seus
Grizzly bears have an up-and-down history in the state of Washington. From the Selkirk Mountains in its northeastern corner to the mighty North Cascades and the Olympic Peninsula’s coastal range, all of the Evergreen State’s diverse ecosystems once knew the grizzly’s footprint. After a century of fragmentation and persecution, however, biologists now consider the Selkirks to host the state’s only resident grizzly bear population.

New data will soon help inform conservation efforts for that population. State and federal biologists announced this summer that they captured a mother grizzly on the Washington side of the Selkirks and fitted her with a tracking collar. Afterward, she was released and safely rejoined three yearling cubs.

The collaring is especially significant as the sow will become the first female grizzly tracked in Washington in 40 years. State biologists have collared several male bears in recent years, all of them in the Selkirk area surrounding the state’s northeastern borders with Idaho and British Columbia. The Selkirks are home to an estimated 70-80 grizzlies, with about half on either side of the U.S.-Canada line. Last year, one of those grizzlies crossed a Vital Ground project site on the eastern edge of the range in Idaho.

**KEYS TO CONNECTIVITY**

Why is collaring a female important? While male bears—particularly young ones seeking to establish a home range—are more likely to venture out of the species’ core recovery zones, it’s females who hold the key to reconnecting the grizzly’s fragmented range. The arrival of a new bear to an area only helps if it leads to reproduction and increased genetic diversity for the population. By following the movements of a female grizzly in her reproductive years, there’s a chance biologists could document her moving to a neighboring ecosystem or even staying put and mating with another bear who arrived from elsewhere, a story that could be read through collection of hair samples from one of the region’s remote corral sites.

“Seeing bears move is all well and good but what we ultimately want to see is bears moving and...
reproducing,” explains Wayne Kasworm, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s lead grizzly bear biologist for the Cabinet-Yaak and Selkirk ecosystems. “Movement alone is not the entire picture. We want to see gene flow and gene flow is represented by reproduction.”

Even if she doesn’t offer evidence of new genetic diversity in the Selkirks, movement data from the grizzly’s collar will provide biologists information about habitat selection for female bears in the region. That knowledge could help inform future habitat protection efforts as Vital Ground and other conservation partners seek to secure the most crucial places for the Selkirks’ recovering grizzlies.

A prime example is Bismark Meadows, located in the heart of the Selkirks near Priest Lake, Idaho, just a handful of miles from the Washington border. A low-elevation wetland complex, Vital Ground has protected nearly 1,000 acres of habitat there over the past two decades, and we’re currently working to conserve the final portion of the wetland that remains unprotected. Biologists have documented at least eight different grizzlies foraging at Bismark Meadows, including multiple sows with cubs, but detailed movement data from a tracking collar could affirm the project’s importance—or help indicate the next crucial haven to conserve.

THE LARGER LANDSCAPE PICTURE

Vital Ground has also supported habitat conservation farther west on the Washington side of the Selkirks, with a partner grant supporting the Western Rivers Conservancy’s 2,400-acre Bennett Meadows project in 2014. But will habitat protection in the Selkirks help grizzlies return to more of Washington? Perhaps—eventually.

The return of grizzlies to the North Cascades remains a fraught possibility ensnared by politics. While a resident population exists to the north in British Columbia’s portion of the Cascade Range, biologists have only documented occasional wandering bears on the Washington side of the border. Natural migrants from the Selkirks would have to cross many of miles of human-dominated landscapes as well as the deep Columbia Gorge—or make an unlikely circuitous journey north and west through Canadian wildlands then south again.

As a result, federal reintroduction remains the most likely path to returning grizzlies to the North Cascades and their prime habitat of deep, wet valleys and high summer meadows. For a brief time during the Trump presidency, it appeared that then-Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke would make the reintroduction a priority, with several proposals of varying timescales and intensities opening for public comment. Despite around 80 percent of those comments voicing support, backlash from grizzly opponents in the state led to a swift shelving of the topic and it has remained on the federal backburner. A species status report issued this spring by the Fish and Wildlife Service steered clear of the North Cascades and dismissed the possibility of reintroduction in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado and California’s Sierra Nevada, two ecosystems farther from the grizzly’s current range.

Will Washington’s first collared female grizzly in decades make an historic trek west to the North Cascades? Probably not. She’d be more likely to venture east into the Cabinet or Purcell mountains, perhaps crossing a Vital Ground project in Idaho’s Kootenai Valley on her way. Or she might travel south through Idaho toward the Bitterroots, part of the gradual convergence of the lower 48’s northern grizzly populations with the fragmented bears of Greater Yellowstone.

Any of those movements would be a revelation of its own, and as long as the Selkirk sow keeps her collar, her travels great or small will offer biologists new insight. Even if she and her cubs stay put in their corner of the Selkirks, the conservation community will benefit and take heart knowing a grizzly family is surviving—and hopefully thriving—in Washington. 🐻
The Vital Ground Foundation’s mission is to protect and restore North America’s grizzly bear populations for future generations by conserving wildlife habitat, and by supporting programs that reduce conflicts between bears and humans.

In support of this mission, we:

• Protect habitat that grizzlies need to survive including other species that share their range;
• Work where private lands and human impacts meet some of the wildest places left on the continent;
• Target projects that conserve critical lands, sustain habitat connections and prevent conflicts between bears and people;
• Ground our projects on current science and strong collaborative partnerships.

As a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit, our success depends on you! Visit www.vitalground.org to donate or become a member.

● Printed on PEFC certified paper with soy-based inks.

© The Vital Ground Foundation
Contact us at: (406) 549-8650 (Office)
The Vital Ground Foundation info@vitalground.org
20 Fort Missoula Road www.vitalground.org
Missoula, MT 59804

Has your email or mailing address changed? Please let us know!