

## **TRAINING OF WORKERS WITH RESPECT TO BEARS**

NOTE: Training workers with respect to other wildlife and insects is necessary and could take a similar form to bear training.

- **All information must be presented in written form.**
- **Training could include oral presentations, audio/visual presentations, handouts and posting of written information.**

# **SUGGESTED OUTLINE OF TRAINING**

## **INFORMATION ABOUT BEARS**

1. Recent statistics regarding bears and bear sightings or activities in camp and work areas.
  - include information regarding bear attacks in BC
2. Bear Ecology and Biology (both Black and Grizzly)
  - habitat
  - diet
  - annual cycles (spring/summer, fall/winter)
3. Bear identification (both Black and Grizzly)
  - physical attributes
  - differences in tracks
  - coloring
  - include a discussion as to why people must know how to distinguish bear type
4. Bear signs
  - tracks
  - tree markings
  - digging
  - scat
  - carcasses
  - bedding sites
  - include a discussion as to significance of signs
5. Clear, written instructions as to what actions workers are to take when evidence (signs) of bears or bear activity is detected.
  - communication
  - evacuation of area
  - mustering
  - continuance or stoppage of work

## **INFORMATION ABOUT BEAR AVOIDANCE**

1. A general written discussion re; feeding habits (slopes and hillsides, creeks and streams, open areas, covered areas, etc.)
2. Noise and noise making devices. Stress the importance of making noise while traveling and working in bear country.
3. Garbage in camps and work areas
  - include discussion of food storage at or near work areas.
  - include discussion regarding no food stored in sleeping tents.
4. Bear senses - a discussion about the acute sense of smell and hearing of bears.
5. Wind direction - a discussion about the need to stay downwind of bears whenever possible.

## **ENCOUNTERS WITH BEARS (SIGHTINGS, ETC., BUT NOT INCLUDING ATTACKS)**

1. The importance of having an escape mechanism thought out prior to entering and working in bear country. All bear encounters do not result in attacks.
2. Trees
  - the pros and cons of climbing trees (depends on bear type)
  - good climbing trees, poor climbing trees
  - climbing techniques, etc.

## **BEAR ATTACKS**

### Predatory

1. What are the traits bears will exhibit if a predatory attack is eminent?
2. What can be done to minimize the continuance of this type of attack?
3. Guidelines re; how to fight or fend off the bear.

### Provoked (resulting from people stressing the bear)

- sudden or surprise encounters
  - female bear defending her cubs
  - any bear defending a food source
1. What are the traits that bears will exhibit if an attack is eminent?
  2. What can be done to minimize the continuance of such and attack?
  3. Guidelines re; how to "play dead".

## **INFORMATION ON HOW TO CONTROL BEARS**

### Bear Repellent Aerosols

- which workers are issued bear repellent aerosols
- training in the safe use of bear repellent aerosols - carry/wear it "ready to use"
- training in the proper storage and transport of bear repellent aerosols
- control of the product
- follow-up investigation whenever bear repellent aerosols is used
- return of unused full canisters to the employer
- the disposal of used or partially used canisters

### Guns

- control of the guns and ammunition
  - who controls
  - who is licensed to have and use the guns
  - hunting license permit, permit to carry a gun, BC resident
  - hunter number card
  - proper storage of guns and ammunition
- written rules as to use of the guns (when, under what circumstances, who, etc.)
- follow up accident investigations whenever guns are used

### Ministry of Environment Conservation Officers

- when to call them
  - who is responsible to call them
- using CO's for bear control or remove bears

### Bear Watch Persons (if utilized)

- training for the watchperson
  - bear signs
  - bear recognition (types of bear)
  - use of control mechanisms (guns, mace, etc.)
  - communication with crew and supervisor
  - mancheck on the watchperson
  - proper use of evacuation/mustering procedures

### Worksite and Camp Communication

- written instructions regarding bear sightings/encounters
  - workers→supervisor→workers - define proper mechanisms for communication.

## **CAMPS (If Utilized)**

### Location

- written guidelines regarding how to choose the safest site
- take into account
  - rivers, streams and creeks
  - known bear trails or travel routes
  - known bear activity in the area of camp

### Layout

- written guidelines regarding camp layout
- cookhouse considerations
  - relation to sleeping tents
  - relation to eating tents
  - relation to garbage storage
  - written guidelines as to "bear proofing" garbage storage
  - location of kitchen waste water pits and "bear proofing" where possible, because these waters can contain food wastes
- food storage areas and practices
  - "bear proofing" where possible
  - not located near sleeping tents
- location of latrines and showers
- layout of sleeping tents
  - avoid circling or enclosure type layouts which may confuse or panic bears
  - avoid "loners" - keep tents relatively close together

### Cooks and Helpers

- written instructions as to their response to bears in camp (this may be a different response than the general response to bears at camp because cooks and helpers often work alone and camp is their workplace)
- written instructions as to how to contact or call for assistance
- written instructions as to a mancheck system

# **WILDLIFE PROCEDURES CHECKLIST**

## **SAFE WORKPROCEDURES FOR WORKING IN AREAS FREQUENTED BY BEARS**

**(REGULATION NUMBER NOTED IN EACH SUBSECTION BELOW REFER TO WCB OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY REGULATION)**

### **TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION OF WORKERS:**

- not provided  
- 3.4(c), 3.22, 3.23
- provided but inadequate  
- 3.22, 3.23
- information provided and available but not in written format  
- 3.4(c)

### **INFORMATION ABOUT BEARS**

- not provided  
- 3.22, 3.23
- provided but inadequate  
- 3.22, 3.23
- informaton provided and available but not in written format  
- 3.4(c)

### **INFORMATION ABOUT BEAR AVOIDANCE**

- not provided  
- 3.22, 3.23
- provided but inadequate  
- 3.22, 3.23
- information provided and available but not in written format  
- 3.4(c)
- are workers knowledgeable about bear avoidance?  
- 3.22, 3.23

### **INFORMATION ABOUT ENCOUNTERS WITH BEARS (sightings, etc. but not including attacks)**

- written evacuation or escape plans not provided  
- 3.4(c)
- are workers knowledgeable in the operation of the plans  
- 3.22, 3.23

### **INFORMATION ABOUT BEAR ATTACKS**

- not provided  
- 3.22, 3.23
- provided but inadequate  
- 3.22, 3.23
- information provided and available but not in written format  
- 3.4(c)
- are workers knowledgable about bear attacks?  
- 3.22, 3.23

### **INFORMATION ABOUT CONTROL OF BEARS**



- not provided  
- 3.22, 3.23
- provided but not adequate  
- 3.22, 3.23
- information provided and available but not in written format  
- 3.4(c)
- are workers knowledgeable about control of bears?  
- 3.22, 3.23

### **BEAR REPELLENT AEROSOLS**

- who is it issued to ?  
- 3.21, 4.10(1) and (2), 3.24(1)
- training in the safe use, storage, transport and disposal of bear repellent aerosols  
- 3.4(h), 3.20, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8
- follow-up after use of bear repellent aerosols to control bears  
- 3.8(c)

### **GUNS**

- control of guns and ammunition  
- 3.21, 3.22, 3.23, 4.10(1) and (2)
- licensing for use and transport of guns  
- 3.21, 4.10(1) and (2), 3.24(1)
- rules as to the circumstance of the use of guns to control bears  
- 3.4(c), 3.20, 3.21
- follow-up after use of guns to control bears  
- 3.8(c)

### **MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION OFFICERS**

- rules as to who calls them and under what circumstances  
- 3.22, 3.23

### **BEAR WATCH PERSONS**

- training for the watch person  
- 3.22, 3.23
- bear control mechanisms  
- 4.10(1) and (2), 3.24(1)
- communication  
- 3.20
- evacuation procedures  
- 3.2(h), 3.4(c)
- mancheck  
- 4.21, 4.22, 4.23

### **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

- instructions not in written format  
- 3.4(c)

## **INFORMATION ABOUT CAMPS**

- location
  - written guidelines as to selection of camp location 4.02(5)(c)
  - 3.4(c), 4.1, 3.15
- layout
  - written guidelines as to camp layout
  - 3.4(c), 4.1, 3.15, 3.22, 3.23
- cooks and helpers
  - written instructions as to response by camp personnel to bears at camp
  - 3.4(c), 3.22, 3.23
  - mancheck 4.21, 4.22, 4.23

## **BEAR INFORMATION REFERENCE SOURCES**

1. Safety in Bear Country Manual (1992)
  - Northwest Territories Renewable Resources
    - Conservation EducationDepartment of Renewable Resources  
600, 5102 - 50th Avenue  
Yellowknife, NT X1A 3S8  
Attn: Supervisor, Conservation Education
2. Bear Encounter Survival Guide (1995)
  - Author - James Gary Shelton
    - Prince George Public Library (599.74446 SHE)
    - Or other Public Libraries
    - Retail book stores
3. Bear Attacks: Their Causes and Avoidance (1985)
  - Author - Stephen Herrero
    - Prince George Public Library (599.74446 HER)
    - Or other Public Libraries
4. Safety Manual - Mineral Exploration in Western Canada (1989)
  - BC and Yukon Chamber of Mines
    - 840 West Hastings Street
    - Vancouver, BC V6C 1C8
5. Minimum Safety Guidelines for Tree Planters (1995)
  - Province of BC, Ministry of Forests
    - Silviculture Practices Branch31 Bastion Square  
Victoria, BC V8W 3E7
6. BC Parks Qualification Course (1995)
  - Province of BC, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks
    - 2nd Floor, 800 Johnson StreetVictoria, BC V8V 1X4
7. Bear Aware Video (1993)
  - BC Forest Service
    - Regional Offices
    - District Offices

NOTE: THIS REFERENCE LIST IDENTIFIES THE REFERENCE MATERIALS UTILIZED IN DEVELOPING THESE SAFE WORK PROCEDURE GUIDELINES. IT IS NOT DESIGNED TO BE A COMPLETE LIST OF REFERENCE MATERIALS.

## **CONTENT FOR TRAINING AND SAFE WORK PROCEDURES**

This section summarizes the content for training and safe work procedures for five categories of potentially hazardous wildlife/insects.

Note: In actual training sessions, this core material is supplemented with more detailed information and a variety of handouts.

### **BEAR TRAINING CONTENT**

#### **Information About Bears**

##### Population Levels

There are 120, 000 to 160, 000 black bears in BC and 10, 000 to 13, 000 grizzly bears.

##### Fatalities and Injury Rates in BC

For information, see the attached appendices.

##### Bear Ecology and Biology

###### *Black Bears*

Habitat: Black bears are found throughout the province of BC. Black bears usually live in mountainous forests and bush lands. In the northeast, they also inhabit the muskeg swamps.



Black bears are good tree climbers.

**Diet:** Black bears are omnivorous, eating a wide variety of plants and animals. (Both black bears and grizzlies will eat approximately 10 to 25 percent of plant species in a given area.) Preference is given to berries, nuts, tubers, insects and their larvae, small mammals, eggs, honey, carrion, fish, and human garbage when available. Their diet may vary based upon seasonal availability. Some researchers suggest that the black bear of the northern boreal forest has evolved a high level of predatory skill and preys frequently on moose, elk, and deer calves.

**Annual Cycles:** Black bears emerge from their den anywhere from March to April depending upon regional weather patterns and the spring thaw. Two to three cubs are usually born in late January or February and emerge with the mother in April or May. Early spring is spent seeking out and eating early spring grasses, clovers, and skunk cabbage to flush their system

after hibernation and begin the restoration of fat reserves. The summer months are usually spent foraging for food. The females also raise their young. By late summer, the bear begins to consume food in anticipation of the coming winter. At this time, they may spend as much as 20 hours per day eating, consuming up 20,000 calories a day. In the fall, the black bear seeks out a denning site in an area that will provide shelter from the winter elements (overturned trees, hollow trees, or constructed caves). Denning usually occurs around late October or November.

### *Grizzly Bears*

Habitat: In BC, grizzly bears are found in most areas of the province except for Vancouver Island, the Queen Charlotte Islands, the Lower Mainland, and limited portions of the South Central Interior. Grizzlies are found in a wide variety of biogeoclimatic zones including coastal estuaries to alpine meadows. Food availability, suitable denning areas near by, and the presence of other bears primarily influence habitat. This last factor is very important to the grizzly bears, as they require a home range that may vary in size from 50 to 100 square kilometers. The grizzly bear prefers mountainous areas, floodplains, skunk cabbage swamps, and the lower slopes of coastal valleys. The grizzly is usually associated with wilderness areas, but like the black bear, when its habitat is diminished, it can adapt to more populated areas.



Grizzlies are found in many different zones, from coastal estuaries to alpine meadows

Diet: Grizzly bears are omnivores. In the spring, they feed on a variety of grasses including horsetail, peavine, and hedysarum roots. Grizzlies can also be effective predators, seeking out moose and elk calves and mature animals that are weakened by injury, age, or sickness. In the summer months, their forage includes red elderberry, currants, salmonberry, red-osier dogwood, and devil's club. These plants will be supplemented with carrion, fish, small and large mammals, and any carcasses left by other predators. In the fall months, the grizzly turns to bear berries, wild strawberries, wild raspberries, blue berries, huckleberries, and buffalo berries.

Annual Cycles: The grizzly mating season is usually in May, after the animal has reached at least 3 years of age. The summer months are usually spent foraging in the lower valley and south facing slopes. As summer draws to a close, the grizzly enters a ravenous feeding cycle attempting to build fat reserves for the coming hibernation months. At this time, the grizzly also begins to seek out a denning site (the grizzly may dig their own den). Den construction usually begins in September or October. The dens are usually situated at higher elevations than those of the black bear. The hibernation cycle of the grizzly is very similar to that of the black bear, with the exception that the grizzly usually emerges earlier in the spring.

### Distinguishing the Two Bear Species

It is important to distinguish the two species as black bears and grizzly bears can react very differently to human encounters. The ability to effectively distinguish between the two may give you the advantage in knowing what protective or defensive action may be required on your part. Learning about bear habitat, ecology, and physical attributes are an aid in helping you identify what bear you are being confronted with, why the confrontation has occurred, and from this, more effectively determine what measures can be taken in the future to avoid or mitigate any negative encounters.

The following chart, photographs, and drawings will help you differentiate between the two.

### Bear Identification Comparisons

<b>GRIZZLY BEAR</b>	<b>BLACK BEAR</b>
Dished/concave facial profile from tip of nose to top of forehead	Straight line (Roman) facial profile from tip of nose to top of forehead
Relatively small, short, rounded ears	Larger, more erect pointed ears, especially on cubs and immature bears
In spring and fall, mature animals may have a ruff of fur under chin	No ruff of hair under chin
Hump over front shoulder	No hump over shoulder, but some body postures give the appearance of a hump
Shoulder hump is highest point on body	Back is the highest point on body
Front claws usually 3 to 4 inches long, slightly curved, and often light coloured	Front claws rarely exceed 1 ½ inches, dark coloured, and sharply curved for climbing.
Track of hind foot has pointed heel	Track of hind foot has rounded heel
No wedge in instep of hind foot	Wedge in instep of hind foot
Straight line drawn across top of main pad on front foot track won't cross toe pads	Straight line drawn across top of main pad of front foot will cross smaller toe pads
Adults often have grizzled (gray-tipped) cape of long hair over shoulders, fur can be black, grizzled, or blond	Not, grizzled, although they can appear to have a grizzled coat in certain lighting conditions, fur can be blond, red, brown, or black
<b>SIZE</b>	<b>SIZE</b>
Body length, 180–213 cm (6–7 feet)	Body length, 152–183 cm (5–6 feet)
Height at shoulders, 91–107 cm (3–3.5 feet)	Height at shoulders, 61–91 cm (2–3 feet)
Weight, 146–382 kg (315–850 lbs.)	Weight, 90–214 kg (200–475 lbs.)
<b>SPEED</b>	<b>SPEED</b>
40–50 km/h (25–30 Miles)	56–66 km/h (35–41 Miles)
<b>VISION</b>	<b>VISION</b>
Good rule of thumb, if you can see them, they can see you	Same
<b>HEARING</b>	<b>HEARING</b>
Evidence suggests that they can hear human conversation at distances of 275 m (300 yards)	Same
<b>SMELL</b>	<b>SMELL</b>
Sense of smell is exceptional	Same



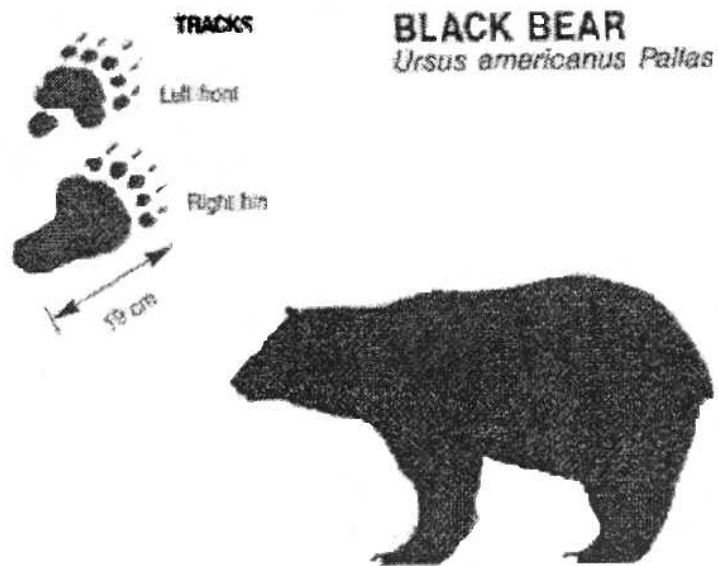
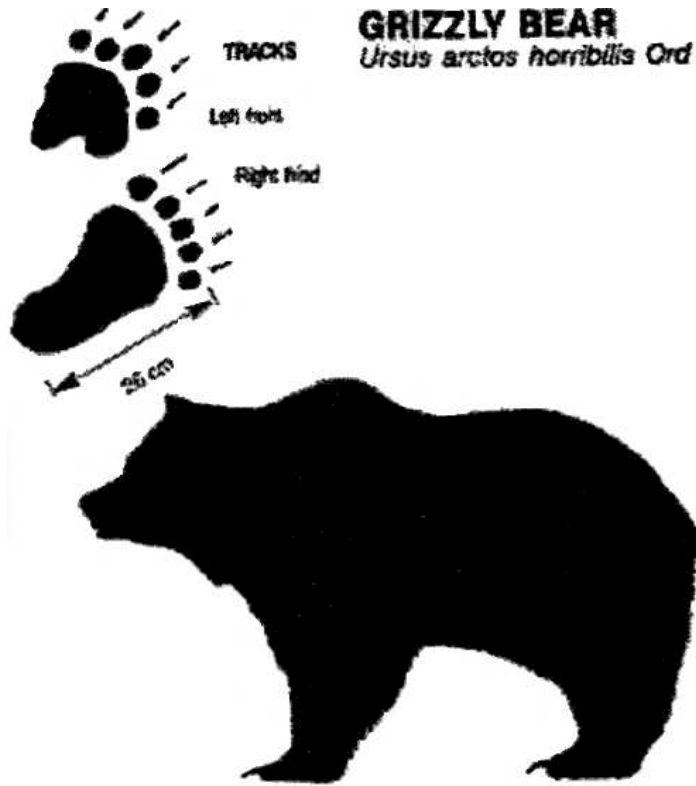




*A Grizzly Bear*



*A Black Bear*



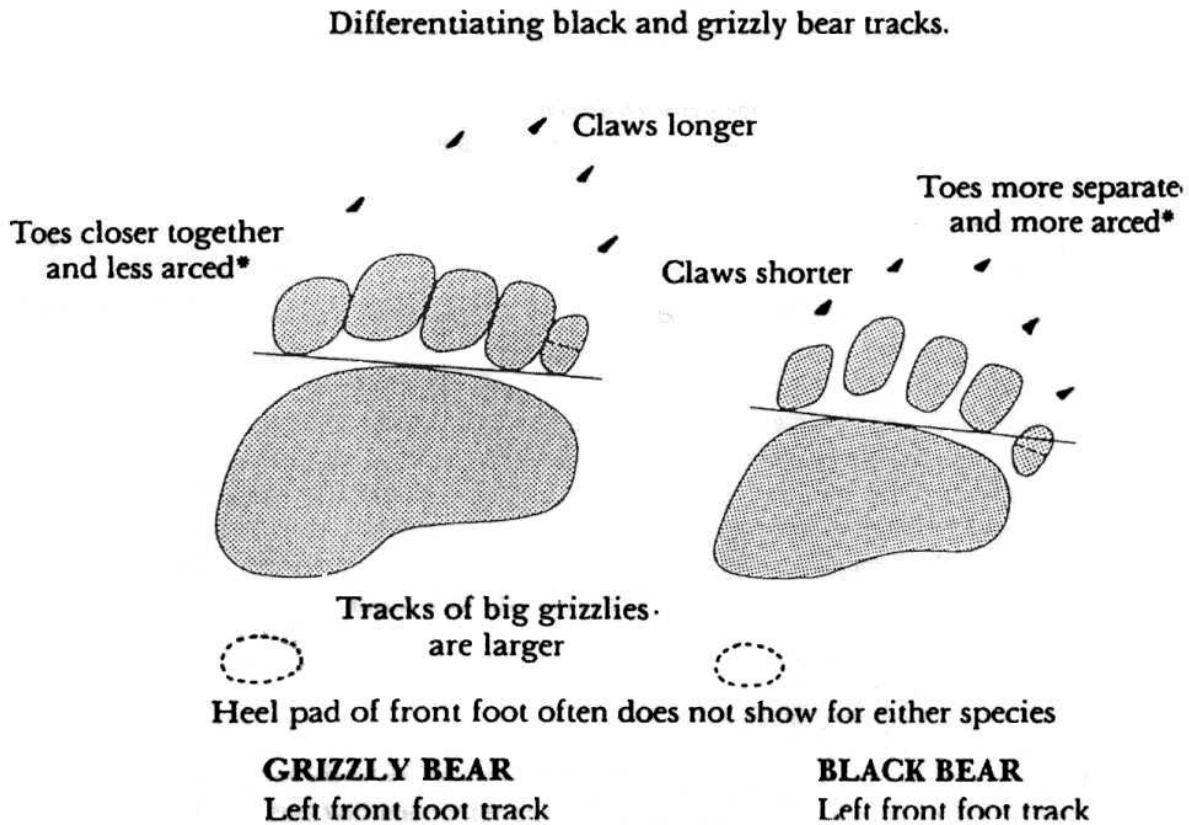
*Drawings of a Grizzly Bear and Black Bear*

## Bear Signs

The following bear signs may indicate bear activity in an area depending upon freshness and frequency of the signs. When recent evidence of bear activity is encountered, the WCB employee must refer to the “Risk Assessment Procedures” section in this document for guidance when working in this area. Failure to take adequate precautions can lead to unwanted and often unnecessary bear encounters.

### *Tracks*

The following diagram shows the difference between black and grizzly bear tracks.





## Tree Markings

Both black and grizzly bears make tree markings. These are usually found along well-established travelled bear trails. The role of marked trees is not yet well understood by bear biologists, but it is suggested that they function as some form of chemical communication post for the animal. The animal bites, claws, and rubs against the marker tree producing bear markings. This activity results in obvious sap wounds to the tree, and the shredded bark and running sap call attention to the location. Examining these locations often produces hair samples that may aid you in identifying which animal has been using the tree; that is, white tipped hair may indicate a grizzly and single colored strands may indicate a black bear.

## *Digging*

The practice of digging for small mammals, roots, and tubers is primarily the activity of the grizzly bear. Black bears may break up rotten logs and stumps seeking insects and grubs, but seldom actually dig holes to forage for food. The excavated areas created by the grizzly may range in size of 2–3 ft in depth and 2–3 feet across when seeking small mammals, to small surface holes when seeking tubers and roots.

## *Scat*

Bear droppings are usually found along their travel corridors, feeding areas, and bedding sites. The following guidelines are suggested by some bear biologists as a means to assess whether the scat is from a black or grizzly bear: droppings in excess of 2.5 inches in diameter or 2.5 quarts of volume are from a grizzly. Scat of lesser size is usually from a black bear. These are general guidelines only as the scat from larger black bears may be equal to the grizzly volume, or juvenile grizzlies may produce less. The consistency and odor of the scat may suggest the feeding activity of the bear. Bear scat produced when they are feeding on meat is usually black and tar-like, with a strong smell, and may contain hair and small bones. When feeding on vegetation, the scat is more like that of a horse, with much fiber or berry seed content, and the odor is less.

## *Carcasses*

Evidence of mammals killed by bears is most often encountered in the spring and fall. It is during these seasons that bears will encounter animals that have been weakened by the winter survival (or winterkill) or mating, and newly born young. The grizzly around the province is considered to be an efficient opportunistic hunter. It is suggested that the black bear of the northern boreal forest has evolved greater hunting skills than his southern cousin due to increased pressure to find high quality protein needed to build the fat reserves to survive the longer northern winters. The grizzly and the northern black bear have developed the needed skills to regularly prey upon the calves of large ungulates and occasionally upon the adult animals. A large pile of dirt, sticks, and debris usually

covers the carcasses of a large animal killed or claimed by a grizzly. Both the black and grizzly bear will also claim animals killed by other predators including man or machine.

Any carcass encountered in the bush should be avoided and all workers immediately evacuated from the area. Both bears will aggressively defend these food sources.

### Bedding Sites

The bedding sites of bears are usually selected based upon weather, season, and visual advantage. Bears will often select bedding areas offering a good view of the area so as to see any intruders approaching. This is a primary concern of female bears with cubs. In the warmth of summer or late spring, grizzlies will often seek out pockets of snow left in avalanche shoots or north facing slopes, or they will excavate holes in cool sandy areas or under heavy shade trees or bushes. In rainy wet weather, bears will seek out dry nests under the overhanging branches of coniferous trees. Bear beds can range in size from slight ground scrapes to large excavated holes. Day beds (depressions in grassy areas) are usually littered with scat and may indicate a popular feeding area.

### **Bear Avoidance**

#### Plan Ahead

As with most safety issues, preparation for a trip into bear country begins before you leave the office. Being well versed in the issues of bear identification, habitat, and feeding patterns will aid you in avoiding unnecessary travel in prime bear feeding or travel corridors, such as south facing slopes in spring, open hill sides, berry patches, riparian zones, near salmon bearing streams in fall, and along bear trails. To be aware of the increased potential of bear encounters in these areas and taking steps to avoid these areas when possible is the first step in a bear avoidance strategy.

#### Noise and Noise Making Devices

In most cases, bears want to avoid confrontation with humans. Building on this fact, the next step in an avoidance strategy is to make noise that is not associated with the sounds of nature. Banging two sticks together could be associated with antlered animals fighting and may actually attract bears, and squealing could be associated with a small mammal in distress, so sounds like these should be avoided. It is suggested by bear experts that metallic noise such as bear bells or the human voice in loud conversation, a loud yodel, or a “hey bear” yell are very effective in alerting bears to your presence and allowing them to take evasive action. It is very important to remember that when travelling along areas of running water, sound is very effectively masked. Along these watercourses, especially where bear signs are encountered, it is very important to travel slowly, stopping regularly to shout and alert the bears to your presence.

#### Wind Direction

Remember that bears have an acute sense of smell. Your own scent can assist you in alerting bears to your presence. To do this, travel with your back to the wind, if possible. This will send your scent in front of you, alerting bears to your presence. Wind can also mask your presence should you sight a bear and want to take evasive actions. In this case, stay down wind (the wind between you and the bear should be blowing in your face) and move quickly and quietly away from the bear and out of sight, leaving the area.

Wind can also muffle your noise, so in areas of high wind and active bear signs, it is important to make loud noises, such as shouting regularly.

### Care of Food and Refuse

The next step in our bear avoidance strategy is proper containment of food and disposal of garbage. As previously discussed, bears have an exceptionally well-developed sense of smell and can isolate and track odors for great distances. To discourage bears from seeking out any food that you may be carrying, food must be stored in some form of plastic, airtight, resealable container. Even when using a vehicle, food must be stored in an airtight, resealable container. The following is a list of food and products that may attract bears: all human food, pop, water containing flavored mix, plastic bottles, any food dispensing or cooking tools, clothes with food odors, lotions, ointments, sunscreens, and other toiletries.

The best rule of garbage disposal is to return any unused portions or wrappers to the resealable container and pack it out for proper disposal. Do not leave garbage lying around or bury it. This practice leads to bears being attracted to an area seeking human food and this may endanger yourself or others coming behind you. If you must dispose of garbage in the back country, the best alternative is to burn the items in a very hot fire, ensuring total combustion of the item. Do this away from any pathways, work areas, or camps.

### **Bear Sightings/Encounters**

Bear sightings and encounters do not necessarily lead to attacks. Bear biologists suggest that in the majority of instances when bears sense people, they will leave the area. Bears can also be curious animals at times, and not knowing what you are, they may decide to simply observe your actions and behaviour and may even approach you to gain more sensory insight into what you are.

### Escape Plans

The first rule of any bear encounter is to initially **stand your ground**. Quickly assess the encounter to see if the bear has sighted you or sensed your presence. If not, you may want to quietly back away in the direction you have come. Watch for the bear to look down or away and quickly move out of sight. **Never run**. This sudden movement may alert the bear to your presence and trigger a predatory chase response.

Should the bear begin to follow you, continue to move away in the direction you have come or to a point of safety. Placing your pack or a personal item on the trail may serve to distract the bear and allow you to retreat from the area. The BC Ministry of the Environment suggests that you leave food out only as a last resort, should you feel that an attack is imminent.

### Prohibitions (Don'ts)

When encountering bears, remember these don'ts:

- Do not run as you cannot out run a bear.
- Do not throw objects at the bear unless an attack is imminent as this may be viewed as a sign of aggression.
- Do not turn your back to the approaching bear; always face the animal. This way you will be able to see and anticipate their actions.
- Do not make eye contact with the approaching bear. This may be viewed as aggression and you do not want to appear threatening or provoke an attack.
- Do not ever approach bear cubs. The mother will be close by and this will be perceived as a threat.
- Do not attempt to climb trees unless the following conditions are available:
  - The approaching bear is an adult grizzly. Black bears of all ages are exceptional tree climbers, as are juvenile grizzlies.
  - The tree is large enough to support your weight and will withstand aggressive pushing by a grizzly bear.
  - The tree is tall enough to allow you to climb at least 4 metres (16.5 feet) from the ground. Large grizzly bears can reach and jump to lesser heights.
  - You have over 100 metres of distance between the bear and yourself and the climbing tree is immediately available. This is necessary because a grizzly can cover this 100 metre distance in just over 6.5 seconds.

### Bear Attacks/Close Encounters

Attacks or close encounters can be generally grouped into two categories:

1. Provoked or defensive aggressive
2. Predatory

### Provoked or Defensive Aggressive Encounters

These encounters usually occur when you have inadvertently or deliberately stressed the bear. These can be grouped into the following categories:

- Surprised encounter, such as walking along a creek on a trail where your sounds and scents are masked and you have a face-to-face encounter
- Encountering a female (sow) with cubs
- Encountering a bear defending a food source, such as an animal carcass
- Bear sighting you and is curious about what you are and what threat you are



In this kind of situation/encounter, the bear may:

- Continue to approach, sniffing the air and often standing up on its rear legs to see and smell better
- Stare intently at you
- Charge directly at you, stopping short or veering off to the side
- Stomp its feet and begin to clack its teeth together rapidly
- Make loud woofing noises by blowing out air rapidly

These actions show that the bear is attempting to determine if you pose a threat to it or if you are a viable food source.

### *Response to a Provoked Encounter*

Again, the first rule is to **stand your ground**. Have your defensive tools ready for action as this close encounter could turn into an attack at any point. You want to show the bear that you are not going to be easy prey by making yourself appear as large as possible, waving your arms, jumping up and down, and yelling at the bear. Should the bear not be deterred and continue to approach, use your defensive weapons. If the bear is deterred, move out of the area quickly and cautiously.

### Predatory Encounters

A provoked or defensive aggressive encounter can become predatory should the bear determine that you are viable prey. As such, any of the above stated bear behaviours can be exhibited in a predatory encounter.

Attacks that are focussed upon predation can begin with the bear sighting you and stalking you. Any bear that begins to follow you may be attempting a stalk. Bear attacks without the previously outlined warning signs are usually predatory attacks, that is, the bear runs directly at you without stopping or making excessive noise. As well, any attack that makes physical contact with you and lasts more than one minute should be regarded as predatory.

### *Response to a Predatory Encounter*

Any predatory encounter should be responded to with the use of your defensive weapons. If you don't have these or they have been rendered ineffective, you must attempt to fight the bear with any resources available, for example, knife, rocks, noise, or getting behind trees. You want to convince the bear that you are not easy prey. **Remember**, in a predatory attack you are being viewed as a food source, and your survival depends upon your proper use of your defensive weapons or your ability to fight off the bear. **Do not** give up, as many people have successfully survived these encounters.

Due to the **high** degree of skill required in assessing the intention of the bear in the encounter/attack, the “playing dead” defense strategy is not recommended. There are several documented fatal predatory maulings that were the direct result of people playing dead as a defense when the intention of the bear was predatory. This miscalculation resulted in these persons being killed and eaten by the bear when they may have survived if they had attempted to fight off the bear.

**Note:** Information about the resources used for controlling bears, as precautionary measures and for encounters/attacks, is found in Section 4 of this document, “Risk Assessment Procedures.”