



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton
National Park

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Grand Teton National Park News Release

Food-Conditioned Black Bear Euthanized in Grand Teton National Park

Superintendent Mary Gibson Scott announced that park biologists euthanized a 5-year-old male black bear today out of concern for public safety. This bear, and a 3-year-old female, have been frequenting the Colter Bay campground, RV Park, swim beach, and picnic area. During the past two weeks, both bears have repeatedly obtained food and garbage from park visitors. Due to the repeated food rewards, habituation to people, and increasingly bold behavior exhibited by the male bear, park officials made the difficult decision to remove it from the population, eliminating potential threats to visitors.

The 178-pound male black bear was captured in a research trap during July of 2005, when biologists were locating specific bears for the purpose of collecting research data. Although the bear received an identification tag at that time, he was not radio collared. The female black bear, also frequenting areas around Colter Bay, is wearing a radio collar. She has been exhibiting the same behavior as the male bear, and park biologists will be closely monitoring her activities.

Park officials remind visitors that disposing of garbage and storing food properly is extremely important – often a life or death situation. Human carelessness doesn't just endanger people; it can also result in a bear's death. Once a bear acquires human food, it often loses its fear of people and can become habituated and sometimes dangerous.

Bears are active in areas of high visitor use, as well as in the backcountry. For the health and safety of bears, as well as that of park visitors, please adhere to the following rules:

- Never leave food or backpacks unattended, even for a minute.
- Use available storage facilities when camping, or secure food in your car.
- Dispose of garbage in bear-proof garbage cans, provided at all campgrounds.
- When camping in the backcountry, hang food and scented items using the counter-balance method.
- Never run from a bear, and do not drop your backpack if a bear charges you.

Detailed information about how to behave in bear country is available at park visitor centers and ranger stations. Please take the time to educate yourself about bear safety before enjoying the park.

-NPS-

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