Black Bear Monitoring in Southwestern Alberta: *Using existing resources*

**WHO?**
Waterton Biosphere Reserve has partnered with the Drywood Yarrow Conservation Partnership, Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development, Parks Canada, and Alberta Parks to complete this project. Additional support has been provided by Riversdale Resources and Southwest Alberta Sustainable Community Initiative.

**WHAT?**
Preliminary data from southwestern Alberta Grizzly Bear Monitoring Project has shown that roughly 40% of hairs sampled from rub trees from 2011-2013 are black bear. Please see the map on page 2.

The last black bear population estimate for southwestern Alberta was completed in 1993. Since then, populations have been changing. Based on Fish and Wildlife occurrence records from 1999-2011, sightings have expanded eastward, and have increased in frequency.

We are interested in the following questions:

- What do black bear populations, densities, and distributions look like in SW Alberta?

- How do grizzly and black bears interact at a population level? Landowners and residents of SW Alberta have indicated they rarely see black bears in areas where grizzly bears are now common.

**WHERE?**
As part of the larger Crown of the Continent ecosystem, southwestern Alberta represents a critical area for maintaining connectivity to those in B.C. and Montana. Using hair samples already collected during the Grizzly Bear Monitoring Project, which extends north to Hwy 3, west to the B.C. border, south to the U.S. border, and east of Cardston, we hope to raise funds towards a Master's degree at the University of Alberta, starting Fall 2015.
This map represents black and grizzly bears detected at rub objects in southwestern Alberta. Rub objects are primarily trees, but can also include power poles, fence posts, sign posts, and fence crossings. From 2011-2014, the grizzly bear monitoring project established 876 rub objects in the study area (BMA 6 and east).

This map is a visual representation of bear activity at rub objects. The map highlights areas where bears have been detected, providing insights into their movement patterns and preferences. The information is crucial for conservation efforts aimed at preserving bear habitats and ensuring the safety of both humans and wildlife.