TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. THE EASTERN SLOPES GRIZZLY BEAR PROJECT AND SCIENCE-BASED GRIZZLY BEAR CONSERVATION .......................................................... 1

CHAPTER 2. STUDY AREAS .................................................................................................................................................. 11

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODS REGARDING CAPTURE, HANDLING AND TELEMETRY ...................................................... 17

CHAPTER 4. GRIZZLY BEAR CAPTURE SUCCESS, AND MORPHOLOGY ............................................................................. 21

CHAPTER 5. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS .............................................................................................................. 25
  5.1 Grizzly bear demographics in and around Banff National Park and Kananaskis Country, Alberta ................................................... 26
  5.2 Grizzly bear demographics in and around Banff National Park and Kananaskis Country – Postscript for 2003–2004 ......................................................... 50
  5.3 Grizzly bear population density estimates within the Central Rockies Ecosystem ............................................................ 52
  5.4 The eastern slopes grizzly bear project’s population viability assessment for the Central Rockies Ecosystem .......................................................... 54

CHAPTER 6. ADDITIONAL GRIZZLY BEAR MORTALITY ANALYSES .............................................................................. 57
  6.1 Introduction ...................................................................................................................................................... 58
  6.2 Mortality of grizzly bears in the Bow River Watershed ......................................................................................... 61
  6.3 Grizzly bear mortality and human access in Banff and Yoho National Parks, 1971–98 ................................................................. 63
  6.5 Modelling the spatial distribution of human-caused grizzly bear mortalities in the Central Rockies Ecosystem of Canada .................................................................................................................................................. 95
  6.6 Spatial and temporal analysis of human-caused grizzly bear mortalities and their density in the Central Rockies Ecosystem, 1972/78–2002 .......................................................................... 111

CHAPTER 7. EAST SLOPES GRIZZLY BEAR FRAGMENTATION BASED ON GENETIC ANALYSES ........................................ 125

CHAPTER 8. NUTRITIONAL AND HORMONAL STATUS OF SOME EASTERN SLOPES GRIZZLY BEAR PROJECT BEARS AND POSSIBLE LINKS TO LOW REPRODUCTIVE OUTPUT ........................................... 133
  8.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................................................................ 134
  8.2 Study area and trapping location ......................................................................................................................... 137
  8.3 Comparison of select health data between the Eastern Slopes (ESGBP) and the Foothills Model Forest grizzly bear projects (FMFGBP) .......................................................................................................................... 138
  8.4 Diet of some eastern slopes grizzly bear project bears as determined using stable isotope analysis ................................................................................ 141

CHAPTER 9. HOME RANGE ANALYSIS .............................................................................................................................. 143

CHAPTER 10. RESOURCE SELECTION BY FEMALE GRIZZLY BEARS ...................................................................................... 153
  10.1 Context to resource selection models for female grizzly bears in the Eastern Slopes based on coarse-filter and fine-filter approaches ........................................................................................................ 154
  10.2 Greenness and security areas for female grizzly bears .............................................................................................. 156
  10.3 Resource selection by female grizzly bears with consideration to heterogeneous landscape pattern and scale ............................................................................................................ 161
  10.4 Comparison of results regarding resource selection models for female grizzly bears in the Eastern Slopes based on coarse-filter and fine-filter approaches ........................................................................ 178

CHAPTER 11. GRIZZLY BEAR RESPONSE TO HUMAN USE ........................................................................................................... 181

CHAPTER 12. HABITAT EFFECTIVENESS AND SECURITY AREA ANALYSIS .................................................................................. 193

CHAPTER 13. IMPLICATIONS OF HISTORICAL, CURRENT, AND LIKELY FUTURE TRAJECTORIES OF HUMAN LANDUSES AND POPULATION GROWTH TO GRIZZLY BEARS IN THE ALBERTA PORTION OF THE CRE .................................................. 201

FINAL REPORT OF THE EASTERN SLOPES GRIZZLY BEAR PROJECT – 2005
CHAPTER 14. DENNING ........................................................................................................... 223

CHAPTER 15. MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS: EASTERN SLOPES GRIZZLY BEAR PROJECT
FINAL REPORT ................................................................. 227

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS BY THE ESGBP ........................................................................... 243

AFTERWORD ..................................................................................................................... 245

APPENDICES .................................................................................................................... 247

CREDITS FOR CHAPTER TITLE PAGE IMAGES.......................................................................................... 248

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

CHAPTER 1. THE EASTERN SLOPES GRIZZLY BEAR PROJECT AND SCIENCE-BASED GRIZZLY BEAR
CONSERVATION

Figure 1. Current (darker) and historic (ca. 1800) distribution of grizzly bears in North America. Adapted from Servheen (1990) by Ross 2002. ................................................................. 2
Figure 2. Estimated distribution of grizzly bears in the contiguous lower 48 United States in 1922 (left) and 1999 (right). From Merriam (1922) and Servheen (1990, 1999a) by Ross 2002. ................................................................. 2
Figure 3. Current distribution of grizzly bears in Canada. Confirmed observations outside of normally-occupied range are identified by stars, by Ross 2002................................................................. 3
Figure 4. Approximate current distribution of grizzly bears in southwestern Canada (after McLellan 1998). Locations of North Cascades (N.C.) and South Selkirks (S.S.) population units are marked. (cont.) ........................................................................... 3
Figure 5. Billboards on the Trans Canada Highway west of Calgary, Alberta. ................................................................. 8

Table 1: Categories of conservation significance for species (Gittleman et al. 2001)................................................................. 8

CHAPTER 2. STUDY AREAS

Figure 1. Study Area Central Rockies Ecosystem................................................................................. 12
Figure 2. Study Area map showing management jurisdictions ........................................................................... 14
Figure 3. Bow River Watershed Area Map ................................................................................................. 15

CHAPTER 4. GRIZZLY BEAR CAPTURE SUCCESS, AND MORPHOLOGY

Table 1. Grizzly bear captures by method in the Bow River Watershed, AB, 1994-2003.......................... 22
Table 2. Grizzly bear capture effort and success in the Bow River Watershed, AB 1994-2003. .................. 22
Table 4. Morphological measurements of grizzly bears captured in the Bow River Watershed, AB 1994-2003. ........................................................................... 23
Table 5. Comparison of mean weight (kg) of grizzly bears from the Bow River Watershed, AB and Swan Mountains, MT........................................................................... 24

CHAPTER 5. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

5.1 Grizzly bear demographics in and around Banff National Park and Kananaskis Country, Alberta

Figure 1. Study area in the Bow River Watershed, Alberta, encompassing parts of Banff National Park and Kananaskis Country, where grizzly bears were caught and radiomarked during 1994–2002. ......................................................... 27
Figure 2. Reproductive records (considering only surviving litters) of radiomarked adult female grizzly bears in the Bow River Watershed, 1994–2002, aligned by age. (cont.) ........................................................................... 38
CHAPTER 6. ADDITIONAL GRIZZLY BEAR MORTALITY ANALYSES

6.2 Mortality of grizzly bears in the Bow River Watershed

Table 1. Age-sex class for known grizzly bear mortalities in the Bow River Watershed, Alberta, 1993–2002

6.3 Grizzly bear mortality and human access in Banff and Yoho National Parks, 1971–98

Table 2. Types of developments and land uses where human-caused grizzly bear mortalities occurred in Banff and Yoho National Parks, 1971–98 (n = 119).

PW = problem wildlife, H/RR = highway/railway, Other = research or unknown


Table 1. Causes and number of grizzly bear mortalities, and percentage of known human-caused mortality type in the Alberta study area of the Central Rockies Ecosystem, 1972–2002

Table 2. Causes and number of grizzly bear mortalities, and percentage of known human-caused mortality type, 1972–2002, in the BC study area of the Central Rockies Ecosystem, 1976–2002

Table 3. Numbers and percentages of human-caused grizzly bear mortalities by sex, age and cohort in the Alberta study area of the Central Rockies Ecosystem, 1972–2002 (n=69)

Table 4. Causes and number of grizzly bear mortalities in the BC study area of the Central Rockies Ecosystem, 1976–2002
Table 5. Numbers and percentages of human-caused grizzly bear mortalities by sex, age and cohort in the BC study area of the Central Rockies Ecosystem, 1976–2002. ................................................................. 84

6.5 Modelling the spatial distribution of human-caused grizzly bear mortalities in the Central Rockies Ecosystem of Canada

Figure 1. Study area map depicting elevation, study area boundary, Province border, places, and general location within Alberta and British Columbia, Canada (small inset map in lower left corner). ................................................................. 97
Figure 2. Distribution and concentration (density of recorded mortalities) of grizzly bear mortalities within the study area at 2 scales relating to the multi-annual 95% fixed kernel home ranges for female (a. 520-km²) and male (b. 1,405-km²) grizzly bears. (cont.).................................................................................................................. 101
Figure 3. The distribution of mortality risk ranks from very low to very high based on the global mortality distribution (random versus mortality locations) model in the Central Rockies Ecosystem of Canada. .......................................... 105
Figure 4. Percent composition of very low to very high mortality risk pixels in the Central Rockies Ecosystem of Canada based on the mortality distribution (random-based map) and the mortality risk (radiotelemetry-based map) models. (cont.)................................................................. 106

Table 1. Percent composition of qualitatively defined secure (0 recorded mortalities), secure but non-habitat (rock, snow, ice, water), and high mortality density sites (>31 mortality events) for the Central Rockies Ecosystem of Canada. (cont.).......................................................................................................................... 100

Table 2. Estimated coefficients (Coeff.) for GIS environmental predictor variables used to estimate if any spatial mortality differences existed among specific demographic status, sex-age, season, or mortality class when compared with other mortalities (e.g., berry season compared with non-berry season). (cont.).......................................................................................................................... 102

Table 3. Estimated coefficients (Coeff.) for models describing the relative probability of grizzly bear mortality within the Central Rockies Ecosystem of Canada by contrasting mortalities with random locations. (cont.).................................................................. 104

Table 4. Comparison of the mortality distribution (random versus mortality locations) and mortality risk (radiotelemetry versus mortality locations) with bootstrapped standard errors and significance. ........................................... 106

6.6 Spatial and temporal analysis of human-caused grizzly bear mortalities and their density in the Central Rockies Ecosystem, 1972/78–2002

Figure 1. Human-caused grizzly bear mortality locations in the Central Rockies Ecosystem: Alberta 1972 to 2002, British Columbia 1978 to 2002 ................................................................................. 113
Figure 2. Human-caused female grizzly bear mortality locations and densities for Alberta, Central Rockies Ecosystem: 1972 to 1989. ................................................................. 114
Figure 3. Human-caused female grizzly bear mortality locations and densities for Alberta, Central Rockies Ecosystem: 1990 to 2002. ................................................................. 116
Figure 4. Human-caused female grizzly bear mortality locations and densities for British Columbia, Central Rockies Ecosystem: 1978 to 1989. ................................................................. 117
Figure 5. Human-caused female grizzly bear mortality locations and densities for British Columbia, Central Rockies Ecosystem: 1990 to 2002. ................................................................. 118
Figure 6. Current access (linear corridors) within the Central Rockies Ecosystem ................................................................................. 119
Figure 7. Grizzly bear hunting within the Central Rockies Ecosystem ................................................................................. 120
Figure 8. Ungulate hunting within the Central Rockies Ecosystem ................................................................................. 121
Figure 9. Protected areas within the Central Rockies Ecosystem ................................................................................. 121
Figure 10. Land ownership within the Central Rockies Ecosystem ................................................................................. 122

Table 1. Area specific, human-caused, grizzly bear mortality locations and densities in the Central Rockies Ecosystem: Alberta 1972 to 1989 and 1990 to 2002; British Columbia 1978 to 1989 and 1990 to 2002 ............... 115

CHAPTER 7. EAST SLOPES GRIZZLY BEAR FRAGMENTATION BASED ON GENETIC ANALYSES

Figure 1. East Slopes study area in regional context of larger genetic-based movement and fragmentation study. East Slopes North and East Slopes South (ES South) areas are the primary focus of this report. Other outlined areas were also genetically sampled and boundaries are arbitrarily set for analysis purposes based on mountain boundaries, major highways and human settlement. (cont.) ................................................................. 128

Table 1. Summary of genetic differentiation in the East slopes area as measured by FST. Population pairs’ names and locations can be viewed on Figure 1. ESN and ESS are the areas north and south of Highway 1 in the East Slopes study area. (cont.) ................................................................. 128
CHAPTER 8. NUTRITIONAL AND HORMONAL STATUS OF SOME EASTERN SLOPES GRIZZLY BEAR PROJECT BEARS AND POSSIBLE LINKS TO LOW REPRODUCTIVE OUTPUT

8.3 Comparison of select health data between the Eastern Slopes (ESGBP) and the Foothills Model Forest grizzly bear projects (FMFGGBP)

Table 1. Comparison of Body Condition Index (BCI) values between the Eastern Slopes and Foothills Model Forest Grizzly Bear Projects for grizzly bears captured during either May or June. ................................................................. 138

Table 2. Comparison of reproductive hormone concentrations between the Eastern Slopes and Foothills Model Forest Grizzly Bear Projects for female grizzly bears captured by leg-hold snare during either May or June. ................................. 139

Table 3. Comparison of reproductive hormone concentrations between the Eastern Slopes and Foothills Model Forest Grizzly Bear Projects for male grizzly bears captured by leg-hold snare during either May or June. ........................................... 139

8.4 Diet of some eastern slopes grizzly bear project bears as determined using stable isotope analysis

Table 1: Male and female grizzly bear isotopic values and their implications regarding percentage composition of plant and animal matter in diet. ............................................................................................................. 142

CHAPTER 9. HOME RANGE ANALYSIS

Figure 1. Female Grizzly Bear Home Ranges, Banff Area ......................................................................................... 146

Figure 2. Female Grizzly Bear Home Ranges, Lake Louise Area ............................................................................... 147

Figure 3. Female Grizzly Bear Home Ranges, Kananaskis Area ............................................................................. 148

Figure 4. Male Grizzly Bear Home Ranges, Lake Louise Area .................................................................................. 149

Figure 5. Male Grizzly Bear Home Ranges, Banff Area .......................................................................................... 150

Figure 6. Male Grizzly Bear Home Ranges, Kananaskis Area .................................................................................. 151

Table 1. Multi-annual home range areas (km²) for female grizzly bears in the Bow River Watershed. .................... 144

Table 2. Multi-annual home range areas (km²) for male grizzly bears in the Bow River Watershed. ...................... 145

CHAPTER 10. RESOURCE SELECTION BY FEMALE GRIZZLY BEARS

10.1 Context to resource selection models for female grizzly bears in the Eastern Slopes based on coarse-filter and fine-filter approaches

Figure 1. The Bow Valley Watershed and the surrounding region. Human activity is illustrated by major transportation routes only. ................................................................................................................................. 155

10.2 Greenness and security areas for female grizzly bears

Figure 1. Map of relative probability of female grizzly bear occurrence throughout the Central Rockies Ecosystem, categorized by 3 equal intervals of low, moderate or high habitat quality .......................................................................................................................... 157

Figure 2. Update of the secure area model developed by Gibeau et al. (2001) for female grizzly bears using the most recent and accurate spatial data for motorized and non-motorized access across all jurisdictions in the CRE. ...... 158

Figure 3. Areas of secure high quality habitat for grizzly bears, displayed by combining the habitat quality map with the results from security area analysis. ......................................................................................... 159

10.3 Resource selection by female grizzly bears with consideration to heterogeneous landscape pattern and scale

Figure 1. Study area, specifically the Bow Valley Watershed, and the surrounding region during 1994 to 1999. Human activity is illustrated by major transportation routes only. ........................................................................................................ 163

Figure 2. Composite home ranges, pooled across seasons and years, for individual female grizzly bears investigated in the study area from 1994 to 1999 (Theberge 2002). .................................................................................................................. 163

Figure 3. Comparative illustration of results from two seasonal multi-scale models investigating resource selection for wary female grizzly bears. Within each row of squares, each square represents the relationship of a variable to a specific seasonal model (see legend). (cont.) .................................................................................................. 168

Figure 4. Relative probability of occurrence of adult female grizzly bears in the preberry season during 1994 to 1999 in the eastern slopes of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. (cont.) ........................................................................... 169

Figure 5. Relative probability of occurrence of adult female grizzly bears in the berry season during 1994 to 1999 in the eastern slopes of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. (cont.) .................................................................................. 170
10.4 Comparison of results regarding resource selection models for female grizzly bears in the Eastern Slopes based on coarse-filter and fine-filter approaches

Table 1. Similarities and differences in modeling approaches taken by Stevens (2002) and Theberge (2002) to determine habitat selection of female grizzly bears in the eastern slopes of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. ... 178

CHAPTER 11. GRIZZLY BEAR RESPONSE TO HUMAN USE

Figure 1. Box and whisker plot of the range of use of high quality habitat for wary and habituated adult female grizzly bear in the Bow River Watershed, Alberta, 1994-1998. (cont.) .............................................................. 183
Figure 2. Box and whisker plots of distance traveled by time period for wary and habituated adult female grizzly bear in the Bow River Watershed, Alberta, 1994-1998. (cont.) ........................................................................................................... 183
Figure 3. Mean distances between radio locations of adult female grizzly bears and Skiing Louise facilities in........ 184
Figure 4. Profile plots of the interaction between high quality habitat and time period for (A) TCH, (B) high use paved roads, (C) high use trails, and (D) high use features, for grizzly bears in the Bow River Watershed, Alberta, 1994-1998. ........................................................................................ 185
Figure 5. Average distance to the Ski Louise gondola, base lodge, high quality habitat and average habitat security for each subadult grizzly bear during the human active period (0700 h - 1800 h) and human inactive period (1800 h - 0700 h), ski hill data set, 1998-2000. .............................................................................................. 186

CHAPTER 12. HABITAT EFFECTIVENESS AND SECURITY AREA ANALYSIS

Figure 1. Habitat Effectiveness Map for bear management units in Banff, Yoho and Kootenay National Parks. .......... 194
Figure 2. Analysis of grizzly bear security areas for Banff National Park and Kananaskis Country for past (1950s), present (1999), and future (2020s). ........................................................................................................ 196
Figure 3. Secure Area map combined with habitat quality delineating secure high, moderate and low quality habitats in the Central Rockies Ecosystem. (credit: S. Stevens) ................................................................. 197
Table 1. Percent of the available land base that is secure high, moderate and low habitat quality for female grizzly bears in the East and West Slopes study areas. (credit: S. Stevens) ........................................................................ 198

CHAPTER 13. IMPLICATIONS OF HISTORICAL, CURRENT, AND LIKELY FUTURE TRAJECTORIES OF HUMAN LANDUSES AND POPULATION GROWTH TO GRIZZLY BEARS IN THE ALBERTA PORTION OF THE CRE.

Figure 1. The Canadian Rockies Ecosystem (CRE). Graphic prepared by Scott Jevons ........................................ 204
Figure 2. This Darksky satellite image (1990's) illustrates the belt of intensive landuse (shown as light emissions associated with the energy sector, transportation networks, settlements, cutblocks, and agricultural matrix) proximal to the foothill and mountain habitats of the grizzly bear in Alberta. (cont.) ........................................................................ 205
Figure 3. Historical and projected (at 2, 2.5, and 3% annual growth) future population of Calgary. Historical data provided by Statistics Canada. .............................................................................................................. 206
Figure 4. Historical and projected (at 2, 2.5, and 3% annual growth) future footprint (km²) of Calgary. Historical data based on air photo chronosequence. ........................................................................................................ 206
Figure 5. A comparison of the urban perimeter of Calgary in 1924 (18 km², 7 mi²) and 1998 (394 km², 154 mi²), right. The white box found in the left photo is a section (1 x 1 mile; 1.6 x 1.6 km). (cont.) ........................................................................ 207
Figure 6. Calgary's historic growth (1924 to 1998) and projected future footprint if growth occurs at 4.5% annually .... 207
Figure 7. Calgary's historic growth (1924 to 1998) and projected future footprint if growth occurs at 3% annually .... 208
Figure 8. Calgary's historical pattern of human density (number of people per square kilometer) ................................................................. 208
Figure 9. Looking down on Canmore from Wind Ridge. ......................................................................................... 209
Figure 10. These two air photos of Canmore (1950 left and 1999 right) illustrate the rapid growth trajectory and the fragmentation of an important wildlife movement corridor along the Bow River valley. (cont.) ........................................ 209
Figure 11. Historical and future projected human populations at 3 spatial scales: Canmore (within current Grizzly Bear distribution), Calgary (proximal to Grizzly Bear distribution), and Alberta. (cont.) ......................................................................................... 210
Figure 12. Temporal trends in number of building structures in each quarter section within the Municipal Districts of the Alberta’s East Slopes (Rockyview, Foothills, Ranchlands, Pincher Creek, Willow Creek, and Cardston). Data prepared by the Miistakis Institute............................................................................................................. 210
Figure 13. Total Number of building structures in each quarter section within the Municipal Districts of Alberta’s East Slopes (Rockyview, Foothills, Ranchlands, Pincher Creek, Willow Creek, and Cardston). Data prepared by the Miistakis Institute of the Canadian Rockies. ........................................................................ 212
Figure 14. Percent change in building structures between 1980 and 2002 in each quarter section within the Municipal District of Foothill. Data prepared by the Miistakis Institute of the Canadian Rockies. ........................................ 212

Figure 15. These two photographs (of approximately similar scale) of the hamlet region of Bragg Creek, one is 1950 (left) and one in 1997 (right), illustrate the growth of the community during a five decade period. (cont.) ........................................ 213

Figure 16. This air photo, taken west of Bragg Creek in 1997, illustrates the fragmentation and loss of grizzly bear habitat associated with the expansion of acreage complexes. (cont.) ........................................................................... 213

Figure 17. Although Calgary represents a relatively small portion of the overall landscape, it houses a large and growing human population that pursues a suite of recreational opportunities beyond its urban borders. ........................ 214

Figure 18. Trail riding is a popular and growing recreational landuse in the foothills of southwest Alberta (left). The total footprint of ski resorts has increased substantially during the past several decades. ............................... 214

Figure 19. The transportation network is not restricted to roads built to move commercial goods, but also takes many other forms (trails, ski runs, rivers) that serve a diversity of recreational activities. ................................................................. 215

Figure 20. Between 1990 and 2000, visitation to Banff National Park grew from 3.54 million to 4.56 million visitors, representing an average annual growth of 2.85% (Banff National Park Census data). (cont.) ........................................ 215

Figure 21. Infra-red photo of cutblocks in Alberta illustrating increased levels of landscape heterogeneity and inblock roads. (cont.) .................................................................................................................................. 216

Figure 22. Whereas the forest sector can increase the amount of young herbaceous vegetation and hence forage availability (left), the accompanying road networks often lead to increased levels of bear mortality. (cont.) ........ 216

Figure 23. An active well drilling site (left) and clearing associated with the installation of a pipeline (right). (cont.) .... 217

Figure 24. Historical pattern of wells drilling activity in the Oldman River Drainage Basin. Data provided by Alberta Energy and Utilities Board. .............................................................................................................................. 217

Figure 25. The east slopes of the Rockies in southwest Alberta provide grazing opportunities for livestock. (cont.) ... 218

Figure 26. An example of deforestation of white zone crown land northwest of Bragg Creek in the 1990s for purposes of range improvement to enhance cattle stocking rates. Photo from Alberta Air Photo Library. ................................. 218

Figure 27. The commercial transportation network continues to grow in the foothills landscape of western Alberta, and it takes many diverse forms based on moving people, electricity, wood fiber, hydrocarbons, livestock, crops, and aggregate materials across the landscape. ................................................................. 219

Figure 28. Many roads built in grizzly bear habitat today are constructed by the private sector. Among these, roads associated with the forestry and energy sectors, and acreage developments, are dominant features. (cont.) ...... 219

Figure 29. Projected development trajectory for new acreages and associated road networks for the MD of Rocky View (2000 to 2030). ........................................................................................................................................... 220