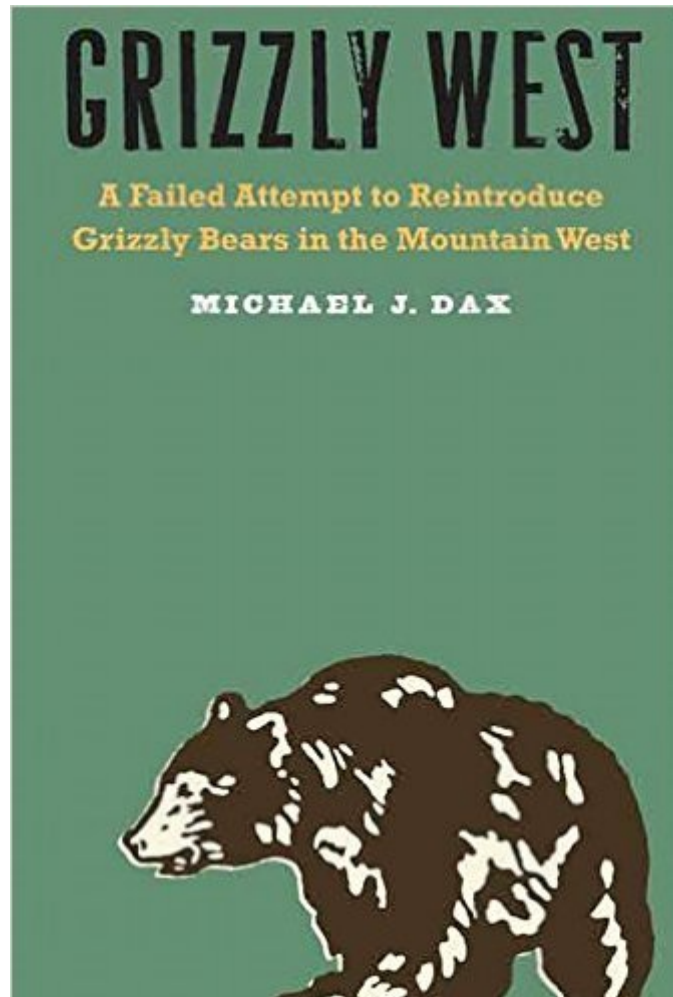


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# Grizzly West: A Failed Attempt To Reintroduce Grizzly Bears In The Mountain West



## Synopsis

Environmentalists and the timber industry do not often collaborate, but in the years immediately following gray wolf reintroduction in the interior American West, a plan to reintroduce grizzly bears to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness of Idaho and Montana brought these odd bedfellows together. The partnership won praise from diverse interests across the country and in 2000 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approved a plan for reintroduction. When the Bush Administration took office, however, it promptly shelved the project. In *Grizzly West* Michael J. Dax explores the political, cultural, and social forces at work in the West and around the country that gave rise to this innovative plan but also contributed to its downfall. Observers at the time blamed the project's collapse on simple partisan politics, but Dax reveals how the American West's changing culture and economy over the second half of the twentieth century dramatically affected this bold vision. He examines the growth of the New West's political potency, while at the same time revealing the ways in which the Old West still holds a significant grip over the region's politics. *Grizzly West* explores the great divide between the Old and the New West, one that has lasting consequences for the modern West and for our country's relationship with its wildlife.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 312 pages

Publisher: University of Nebraska Press; 1st Edition edition (August 1, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0803266731

ISBN-13: 978-0803266735

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.1 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars See all reviews (9 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #858,734 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #112 in Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Animals > Bears #2328 in Books > Science & Math > Environment > Environmentalism #4448 in Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Conservation

## Customer Reviews

In "Grizzly West" Michael Dax not only crafts a captivating historical narrative but also tells one hell of a good story. I was fascinated to learn about the dichotomy between the Old and the New West, an element of Western culture that I've been surrounded by my whole life but have never considered in the context of major environmental policy. For anyone interested in both the past and

future of public lands and wildlife conservation, this is a must-read!

Mr. Dax has written a readable, well-informed, balanced, and immensely important book-- it is a must-read for anyone interested in gaining an understanding of the intricacies of the cultural and generational clashes that underpin many developments in the western states. This volume should serve as a cautionary guide to all of us who might consider attempting any efforts at coalition-building. Bravo.

Grizzly West is an engaging, thought-provoking story of conflicts. Michael Dax reports these conflicts objectively and with careful attention to the motivation of the players; he has not written a morality play about "good versus evil". Readers will, no doubt, superimpose their own values upon these conflicts and might perceive slowly-evolving, malleable policy versus expedient, always-malleable, politics; the self-defeating zealotry of "true believers" versus what appeared to be perfectly reasonable compromises; and stumbling Federal government versus state governments versus local governments versus organized business and environmental groups versus citizens. Mr. Dax is a remarkably skillful and insightful storyteller. It seems both unfortunate and difficult to believe that the innocent "victim" in this well-told story is a creature as powerful as "ursus horribilis"; the grizzly bear. It is, of course, easier to feel pity for these fearsome beasts at a safe distance |

Grizzly West: A failed Attempt to Reintroduce Grizzly Bears in the Mountain West By Michael J. Dax is a must read by anyone with an interest in environmental, legal or scientific matters. In this book, Michael J. Dax tells the interesting story of the attempted reintroduction of Grizzly Bears (as the title suggests) in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. As an environmental studies graduate student, I feel that this book would be relevant in many of my classes and should be used by Universities and Colleges. Dax does an amazing job describing the environmental, legal, social, moral, scientific and historical sides of this issue while at the same time, keeps the story interesting throughout. A major theme discussed in this book is the rift between the Old West and the New West. Dax skillfully describes how both sides actions have impacted environmental policy in the West. If you are a fan of Samuel P. Hays or Jared Diamond, you will enjoy this book. I know I did!

Michael J. Dax thoroughly tells the story of the failed attempt to reintroduce the grizzly bear to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. He explains very clearly what led up to the attempt, the well thought

out plan and why it failed. Ultimately, the failure was due to people not being able to compromise. Many other environmental controversies large and small can be related to what happened to prevent the grizzly from being allowed to live once again in their historical territory. From trying to get approval for a small wetland restoration on public school property to banning drift nets off the coast of California, getting enough support to make changes to help make it possible for endangered species to survive is always a battle. The message in this book is one that we all must learn from. I am so proud of my cousin for bringing this tragic story to light. Laura Dax Honda

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