



Eagle Bend West Community Association, Inc.

In the greater Harbor Village community- a great place to live!

To: Members, Eagle Bend West Community Association, Inc.

From: Board of Directors

Date: June 8, 2020

Subject: Memo to Members: Bear Update and Reminders



Imagine seeing this new neighbor on an early Sunday morning!

That's what happened this past weekend when Dave and Jo Strawser saw over their morning coffee what Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP) identified as a grizzly bear that was tearing apart and eating seed from a front yard bird feeder.

At one point a window tap and a vehicle got the bear's attention and it ran between the northern-most homes on Harbor Drive toward the Flathead River. It has not been seen since.

Once it identified the bear as a grizzly, FWP made a decision quickly that it should be trapped and relocated. Part of that decision process involved other reports of a bear, possibly the same one, also foraging for things like chicken feed and garbage in nearby areas toward Somers to the west and also up the Flathead River. We also learned that several large blue residential trash containers had been tipped over and rummaged-through in our neighborhood some days before. In addition, a larger, but locked, commercial-sized container had been tipped over at the Yacht Harbor.

While FWP made plans to bring a trap to our area, it received Sunday evening reports of a bear foraging again in the other areas outside EBW. So, on the assumption our bear has been moving around, the trapping focus has shifted. We'll keep you updated.

It is important to remember that we live in bear country, this is the time of year when sows force their "teenagers" to find food on their own, and, while we love and want to maintain the natural beauty of our area, and enjoy our wildlife, we must also do what we can to prevent encounters. Habituation, or wildlife becoming accustomed to easy human-related food, is a real problem. Feeding wildlife, other than birds, is illegal in Montana (and feeding deer some grains can actually lead to their deaths).

FWP has asked us to remind our neighbors to: not put out trash the night before pickup; secure trash containers until they are put out for pickup; not leave pet food outside; take down bird feeders if they are not electrified; and, generally help prevent habituation.

We thank the Strawasers for the above photo. If you'd like a link to a fun video they took of the preoccupied bear, or have questions about this update, please call Bill Whitsitt at 406.309.0890 or send him an email at wfwhitsitt@aol.com. And you may always reach Property Manager David Roberts at 406.253.2840 with any comments, questions or information.