



## Inspection Report

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Bear Country U.S.A.  
13820 SOUTH HWY 16  
RAPID CITY, SD 57702

Customer ID: **5015**  
Certificate: **46-C-0005**  
Site: 001  
BEAR COUNTRY U.S.A.

Type: ROUTINE INSPECTION  
Date: 10-AUG-2023

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### 2.131(b)(1)

#### Handling of animals.

-Animal care staff took part in collecting bear cubs from dens in the larger bear enclosure. The bear cubs are pulled from the larger enclosure each year for the safety of the cubs and to allow for early preventive veterinary care and treatment. A facility representative in the inspection said that on a very limited basis in the past fireworks had been used at the entry of dens (not directed at animals) to get mother bears out and away from the dens and safely retrieve the cubs.

The use of fireworks in this manner can cause trauma, behavioral stress, physical harm or unnecessary discomfort to the bears. The facility representative said that fireworks will no longer be used to get animals out of their den.

\*\*Ensure corrective actions are taken and maintained.

-The facility representative confirmed that in a video in the press, animal care staff had been recorded suggesting handling the bear cubs in an aggressive and inappropriate manner such as "holding their muzzles," "pinching their noses," and "kicking or pushing them away" using their foot. The video did show a staff member pushing away and scruffing bear cubs away to keep them from climbing or grabbing the staff member's leg.

Suggesting to staff to handle bear cubs in this manner can cause trauma, behavioral stress, physical harm or unnecessary discomfort to the bear cubs.

The facility representative said that they have met with staff prior to this inspection, and animal care staff were advised that this type of handling of animals is not allowed and additional training is planned for the animal care staff in the near future.

\*\*Ensure corrective actions are maintained so that handling of animals is done as expeditiously and carefully as possible in a manner that does not cause trauma, overheating, excessive cooling, behavioral stress, physical harm, or unnecessary discomfort.

### 3.125(a)

#### Facilities, general.

On May 5, 2023 a lynx was found outside of the enclosure when the animal care staff arrived in the morning. Changes were made to the enclosure based on where the staff suspected the lynx may have been able to escape from.

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Prepared By: AMY JIRSA-SMITH  
USDA, APHIS, Animal Care  
Title: ANIMAL CARE INSPECTOR

Date:  
16-AUG-2023

Received by Title: Facility Representative

Date:  
16-AUG-2023



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The facility representative confirmed that on June 13, 2023, the second animal care staff to arrive on duty noticed and reported one of the lynx was missing from the enclosure. The staff initiated their animal escape protocol to try to locate the lynx. The lynx was found later that evening hiding far under a deck near the snack building. Per the representative, the facility used their tranquilizer protocol to capture and return it to an enclosure without incident. The facility reports they are still unsure of how the lynx got out of the primary enclosure.

Enclosures need to be constructed to contain the animals securely. The affected enclosure for the two lynx was not constructed in a manner to contain the lynxes.

Note: After the second incident (prior to this inspection), the two lynx were moved to a temporary enclosure while a larger enclosure was being modified to house them. The lynx have since been moved to the larger enclosure that was observed to be containing the animals securely. The facility does not plan to use the affected enclosure until it can be closely re-evaluated and to ensure the lynx containment.

\*\*Ensure that corrective actions are maintained.

This inspection and exit interview were conducted with the Director of Operations.

Additional Inspectors:

SCOTT WELCH, VETERINARY MEDICAL OFFICER

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**Prepared By:** AMY JIRSA-SMITH  
USDA, APHIS, Animal Care  
**Title:** ANIMAL CARE INSPECTOR

**Date:**  
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**Received by Title:** Facility Representative

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### Species Inspected

Cust No	Cert No	Site	Site Name	Inspection
5015	46-C-0005	001	BEAR COUNTRY U.S.A.	10-AUG-2023

Count	Scientific Name	Common Name
000002	<i>Martes pennanti</i>	FISHER
000002	<i>Canis latrans</i>	COYOTE
000002	<i>Vulpes lagopus</i>	ARCTIC FOX
000002	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	RED FOX (INCLUDES SILVER FOX & CROSS FOX)
000017	<i>Canis lupus</i>	GRAY WOLF / GREY WOLF / TIMBER WOLF
000005	<i>Puma concolor</i>	PUMA / MOUNTAIN LION / COUGAR
000002	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	CANADIAN LYNX
000002	<i>Lynx rufus</i>	BOBCAT
000002	<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>	NORTH AMERICAN PORCUPINE
000001	<i>Antilocapra americana</i>	PRONGHORN
000002	<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>	MULE DEER
000006	<i>Rangifer tarandus</i>	REINDEER
000009	<i>Bison bison</i>	AMERICAN BISON
000185	<i>Ursus americanus</i>	NORTH AMERICAN BLACK BEAR
000003	<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	AMERICAN BADGER
000001	<i>Martes martes</i>	PINE MARTEN
000002	<i>Lontra canadensis</i>	NORTH AMERICAN RIVER OTTER
000002	<i>Pecari tajacu</i>	COLLARED PECCARY
000002	<i>Procyon lotor</i>	RACCOON
000004	<i>Mephitis mephitis</i>	STRIPED SKUNK
000020	<i>Cervus canadensis</i>	ELK / WAPITI
000014	<i>Ovis canadensis</i>	BIGHORN SHEEP
000002	<i>Oreamnos americanus</i>	ROCKY MOUNTAIN GOAT
000003	<i>Marmota monax</i>	GROUNDHOG / WOODCHUCK
000005	<i>Cynomys ludovicianus</i>	BLACK-TAILED PRAIRIE DOG
000297	<b>Total</b>	