

U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration
4404 South Technology Drive
Sioux Falls, SD 57106



February 12, 2024

Bear Country USA, Inc.
and its successors
13820 U.S. 16
Rapid City, SD 57702
HR@bearcountryusa.com

Dear Mr. Casey:

Section 21 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act authorizes OSHA to train employers and employees about workplace hazards and appropriate abatement methods. During an inspection conducted at the jobsite located at 13820 U.S. 16, Rapid City, SD 57702 on October 12, 2023, some conditions were observed which are considered significant enough to be brought to your attention with the intent of encouraging your efforts to reduce exposure or to eliminate it completely.

The nature of that hazard is described below:

OSHA ACT of 1970 Section (5)(a)(1): The employer did not furnish employment and a place of employment which were free from recognized hazards that were causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm in that employees were exposed to direct contact with black bears:

- (a) Bear Country USA, Inc. at 13820 U.S. 16, Rapid City, SD 57702:** On or about and at times prior to October 12, 2023, the employer did not ensure employee protection from apex predators in that employees were allowed to have unrestricted direct contact with adult black bears during the process of collecting black bear cubs. This condition exposed employees to mauling hazards associated with no physical barrier in place while having direct contact with an apex predator.

In the interest of workplace safety and health, however, I recommend that you take the following steps voluntarily to eliminate or reduce your employees' exposure to the hazards described above.

1. Establish a corrective action plan which engineers, creates, and implements a physical barrier which protects employees from potential contact with adult black bears during the bear cub weaning process.
2. Establish company policies, procedures and training clearly outlining every employee and employer's role while implementing the use of a new physical barrier system to protect all employees involved in the process of the collection of bear cubs.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact me at (605) 361-9566.

Sincerely,

**SHEILA
STANLEY**

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Sheila Stanley
Area Director