



Dear Premier Gordon Campbell,

Recently my Dad took me on a boat trip to BC's Great Bear Rainforest on the Central Coast. This beautiful Grizzly Bear walked by me about ten feet from where I was digging for rice root. Later that night I learned that it was okay in British Columbia to kill Grizzlies for fun. Please look at his face.

In BC each year, trophy hunters kill as many as 1,000 Grizzly Bears; half that number are killed illegally. Many of these hunters don't come from Canada. They don't kill the bear for food; they kill the bear so they can put its head or soft coat in their home as a trophy to show friends that they were able to conquer nature.

You do understand that the reason they come to kill BC bears is that they have killed all the bears in their own countries? Don't you find that crazy?

It doesn't take a 12-year-old to know it's time to end this blood sport. Not only is it bad for our long term economy and environment, it is an ugly part of our past that needs to die. Alberta stopped the Grizzly hunt two years ago because they needed to count the bears, something BC might think about.

Grizzlies play an essential role in keeping our forests alive. As salmon move up a river system Grizzlies consume them and leave the remains along the river and creek's edge. These remains provide nutrients to the entire ecosystem. We wouldn't have a forest industry without the Grizzly. This is the circle of life and we need to understand that we cannot continue killing this animal for sport without it having dire consequences for the rest of BC.

Besides the science, they are beautiful and mystical creatures. My friend Deepak Chopra, who helped write this letter, has taught me that we can no longer look at the environment around us as something separate from ourselves. When you take a breath, a tree is also taking a breath and therefore this tree is part of your lungs. Every part of the ecosystem is part of us. Killing such a vital part of our ecosystem for the sake of killing is no longer cool.

We don't know how many Grizzlies live in BC. How governments in the first place allowed hunters to kill Grizzlies for sport without knowing their population is astonishing when you think about it.

The Grizzly is a threatened species and at current kill rates we are witnessing their last days. With record low returns on salmon in most rivers this year, some female Grizzlies will abort their babies and some will simply starve to death. I learned that Grizzlies are called a Keystone Species, which means that when they disappear, dramatic changes will occur to their, and ultimately, our ecosystem. All life gets hurt by their dwindling numbers.

We have to share our province with the Grizzly. We don't own them. We need them for our own survival. These bears are not things. You must see this.

As a people we have evolved past this now. The trophy hunting of Grizzlies is part of the Wild West era and it's now time for the law to reflect the evolution of our people. We used to shoot Killer Whales, can you imagine that?

Regardless of what you do, remember this: one day it will be illegal to kill Grizzlies for fun. We will look back on the Grizzly Bear in the same light we now look at the killing of whales in BC waters. Future generations will only wonder how it was possible that we killed them for fun.

It's not always easy making tough decisions. You will be told by the hunters that they know how many Grizzlies live in BC. They will use words like "manageable harvest". They will try to scare you, saying that jobs will be lost and revenue will disappear. We can meet with you to present the facts if you want to.

BC now has a great eco-tourism industry standing ready to make up any revenue losses to the Province with the elimination of the trophy fee. Think of the great attention BC will get by your government taking this step. This is called a Wisdom Based Economy. What is the point of killing the Grizzly when people will pay to come and take photographs of them in their natural environment? Think of all of the spin-off benefits for the Province.

Mr. Premier, you were given the name "Chamtook" by BC First Nations people. It means, "The one who is able to do the right thing and bring harmony." Please restore harmony and do the right thing. Please ban the trophy hunt of BC's Grizzly Bears now.

Sincerely,

Kali Brauckmann
Grade 7 Student
Crescent Park Elementary
Surrey, British Columbia

Deepak Chopra
Author



Kali Brauckmann,
Grade 7 Student



Deepak Chopra,
Author