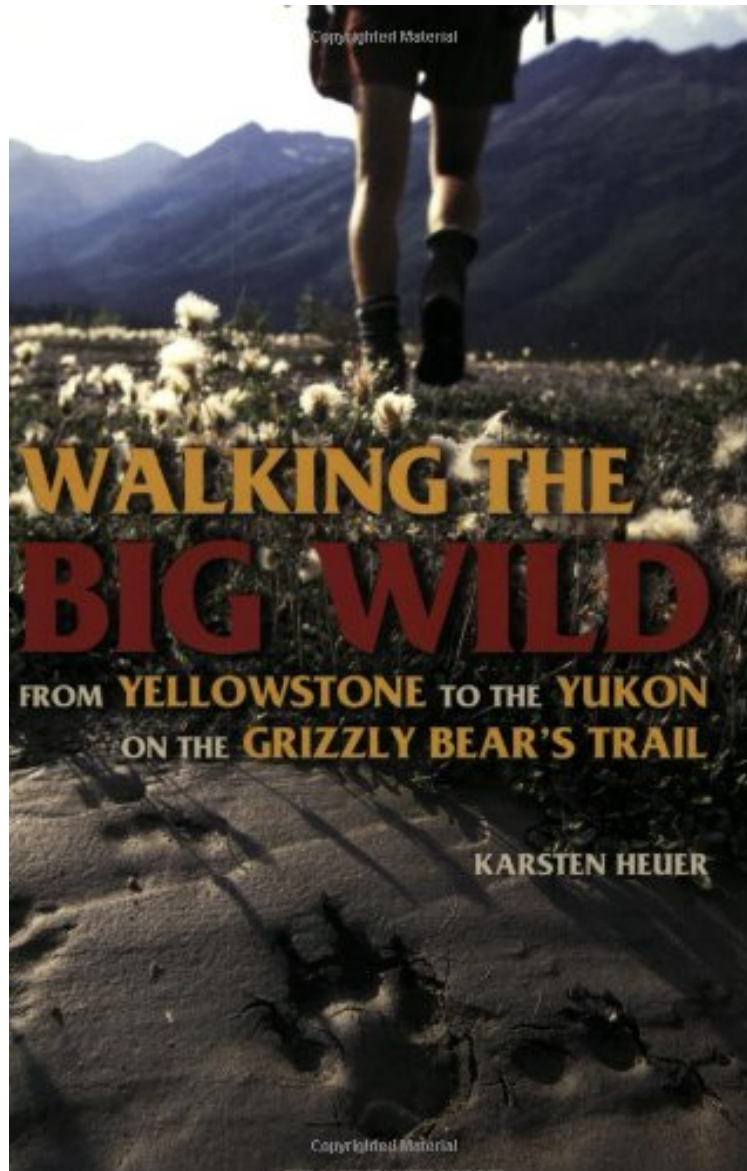


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## Walking the Big Wild: From Yellowstone to Yukon on the Grizzly Bear's Trail

*Karsten Heuer*

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**Karsten Heuer** : **Walking the Big Wild: From Yellowstone to Yukon on the Grizzly Bear's Trail** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Walking the Big Wild: From Yellowstone to Yukon on the Grizzly Bear's Trail:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Walking the Big Wild: Get informed before we lose our national treasures forever! By Mastercard This book first caught my attention as I was searching for books on grizzly bears. It drew my interest first of all because the author had a border collie named Webster who did most of this hike with him. Several years ago my son was looking in the dictionary for a name for his new border collie puppy. Not finding a name he liked inside, he closed the dictionary, and "Bingo," he saw the title "Webster's." That became the puppy's name, and he was so smart he probably could have read the dictionary if someone had turned the pages for him! When I saw that the book was about a plan to walk from Yellowstone to the Yukon to do research to help establish a connecting corridor for wildlife from the lower 48 states north, I was excited to read it. The book is very informative, though a little slow at times. It was a courageous, sometimes dangerous journey for someone to take, but hopefully, it gave a lot of people who had a negative attitude about bears and the preservation of habitat for all wildlife a different view of how man can learn to live with nature, prosper in their livelihoods, and still preserve the habitat and wildlife that cannot be replaced if we lose it. I've been blessed to live in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem for the last 10 summers. Having lived near a large city in the South for the first 45 years of my life, the peace and magnificence of this area has completely captured me. I've traveled all over the country, and this is almost the only place in the lower 48 states where you can experience unspoiled beauty, nature, and animals in their natural habitat very close to the way it was long ago. Bears have always been a particular favorite. They are one of the most unique, fascinating creatures on the planet. I'm not a total "tree hugger." I realize there are times when an animal may have to be destroyed for the safety of people or property, but only in extreme circumstances. An open-minded understanding and cooperation between conservationist, ranchers, farmers and the general public can lead to new attitudes and ideas of how to coexist with nature and preserve our national treasure. I believe the ideas found in "Walking the Big Wild" can educate us on how this can be accomplished before it's too late. I recommend that anyone who is interested in preserving our wild spaces and animals read this book. We can always build another ranch, farm, ski resort, etc., but when it comes to our wilderness and its inhabitants, once they're gone, they're GONE!

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Not what I expected, but an eye-opening book By Lisa Kearns I bought this book thinking it was the journals of someone who, with his dog and girlfriend, hiked the wild places from Yellowstone to the Yukon where the grizzly bear roams. At first I was weary of his un-relenting attack on human development and the frequent message of "save the wilderness". There are millions of acres of national parks within the United States and Canada, and many more acres of private preserves and state and local parks. I get tired of reading about how awful humans are and having to apologize for breathing air and taking up space on this planet. Heuer's purpose in taking this journey was to promote the Y2Y movement - connecting parks from Yellowstone to the Yukon with wildlife friendly corridors. The title and back cover didn't give me any indication of this subject when I bought the book. But upon reading more, I learned that many animals are suffering from inbreeding due to being isolated in parks too far from others of their species in other parks. Some animals, like the wolverine, are just not breeding at all if crowded by humans and limited in their preference for true wilderness. Many animals who would naturally migrate hundreds or thousands of miles are stopped by development, or killed trying to cross highways. And I think most people feel the same way about the intrusion of ATVs into the wilderness - they are loud, destructive and take all the "natural" out of hunting and camping. I'm not sure I agree with Heuer on the subject of logging. Logging companies are careful to replant areas after harvesting, if for no other reason than to give them something to harvest in future years. I've personally hiked along old logging trails in Missouri and don't see any long term damage from the roads and even clear cut areas. Forest fires naturally clear large areas of land, which for millennia hasn't affected wildlife populations. Within a few years of a logging company pulling out (or a wildfire), wildlife, trees and bushes return and flourish. Deer, bear and other animals use the most accessible routes through the wilderness, which is sometimes a logging trail. And it's a fact that deer prefer young forests, where low bushes and branches provide shelter, camouflage and food. I enjoyed the journal entries and daily details of Heuer's adventure, especially his descriptions of animal encounters and the beauty of the areas he traversed. I also enjoyed reading about Webster, his dog. After finishing the book, I agree that North America should set aside areas to act as corridors between parks, so wildlife can migrate naturally and add diversity to their genes. One of the ideas put forth was building tunnels under highways, or overpasses over them - safely linking wildlife areas and allowing gene-mixing through migration. Overall this is a well written, informative and interesting book on a subject I hadn't considered fully before. I hope that the Y2Y movement continues to grow, to preserve not only the wilderness areas for the future, but also the many animals who live in them. I just hope that while we limit development in wildlife areas, we don't make these areas totally off limits to man.

5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Trying to make Y2Y real, and problems on BOTH sides of the border By S. J. Snyder Y2Y, if you're not eco-minded, is "Yellowstone to Yukon." The idea behind is that large animals, above all grizzlies, need a lot of room to roam -- and this room needs to be adequately networked and connected, with as few human-disturbed chokepoints as possible. Well, Karsten Heuer, a native of Canmore, Alberta, and a former Parks Canada ranger at Banff, decided to hike all the way from Yellowstone National Park to the British Columbia-Yukon border -- more than 2,000 kilometers/1,200 miles, and involving skiing and canoeing, not just hiking. Breaks in the trip were jam-packed with PR work on both sides of the border. This book is about his trip. It's also about some of the problems the development of

Y2Y corridor would face. Surprising for many from the American side of the border (and contrary to one brief reviewer, this is about preserving ALL the Rockies, not just the American portion of those mountains) overall, more of the problems are probably on the Canadian side of the border. And that's in spite of the often anti-environmental leadership that currently resides in Washington, D.C. Both exploratory oil drilling and coal mining crowd closer to the heart of the Rockies north of the border. Logging in the north involves more rapacious cutting, often clear-cutting in places it wouldn't be allowed in the U.S. What's driving this is Canada's governmental structure, which is even more "provincial rights" in \*reality\*, in many ways, than the U.S.'s is "states rights" in \*hyperbole.\* And the Alberta and B.C. provincial governments have generally been as knee-jerk pro-development as California's anti-environmental Congressman Richard Pombo -- and in a position to do more with that. Read this book, complete with stunning photos, to show why Y2Y needs preserving.

\* Karsten Heuer walks with North American mammals from Yellowstone to the Yukon (Y2Y) to document the animals that use this natural corridor and learn its importance\* Preserving the Y2Y corridor has become one of the most critical environmental issues of our day\* Winner of the Banff Book Award for Mountain Literature\* Grants will fund a multi-city author tour for lectures and presentations related to the Y2Y initiative Walking the Big Wild is the story of Karsten Heuer's extraordinary 18-month journey of hiking, skiing, and paddling across 2100 miles of mountains, forests, and rivers from Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming to the Canadian Yukon. Accompanied by occasional human companions and a remarkable border collie named Webster, Heuer encountered immense challenges: storms, avalanches, floods, and grizzlies. At the end of the journey, Heuer proved that there is nearly continuous wilderness that can support wildlife along the length of the Rockies--and is salvageable if the right decisions are made now.

From Publishers Weekly Far-ranging grizzlies, elk and wolves don't know where the parks and preserves established to protect them end and much less hospitable public (and private) land begins. Thus, environmentalists have focused on creating wilderness corridors along which animals mammals, birds and even fish can migrate from one seasonal "island" habitat to another. Canadian wildlife biologist Heuer gives a harrowing, humorous, engagingly personal and unabashedly polemical account of his 2,100-mile trek along one such potential link, from Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming to Watson Lake in the Canadian Yukon, along what activists hope will become the Y2Y (Yellowstone to the Yukon) corridor. Heuer hiked, skied, snowshoed and canoed his way along Rocky Mountain ridges, across icy rivers and through near-impenetrable forests; he encountered heart-stopping beauty and soul-soothing calm, as well as harsh winter storms, clouds of voracious mosquitoes and fierce opposition from logging and mining interests. He also found signs that the grizzly the animal most vulnerable to the creeping incursion of logging roads, oil pipelines and suburban sprawl was somehow hanging on. Heuer's journey is exciting, and his passionate vision of a network of protected pathways connecting two mostly pristine wilderness areas is inspiring. Photos, maps. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Recommended for all environmental collections, particularly in areas impacted by the Y2Y proposal. (Library Journal) The book belongs to the animals: grizzlies, wolves, caribou, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, wolverines [Heuer] is an engaging guide to both the idea and the terrain. When he gets up north into pristine wilderness, skiing in late winter through the mountains, dodging avalanches and falling through a crack in a snow cornice, the book gets downright thrilling. And for wildlife, Heuer has taken a step -- a hike, if you will -- in the right direction. (National Geographic Adventure) Canadian wildlife biologist Heuer gives a harrowing, humorous, engagingly personal and unabashedly polemical account of his 2,100-mile trek Heuer's journey is exciting, and his passionate vision of a network of protected pathways connecting two mostly pristine wilderness areas is inspiring. (Publishers Weekly) It's a wonderful paean to the natural world -- wrapped up in the tale of a grand adventure. (Blue Ridge Outdoors) From the Publisher Karsten Heuer walks with North American mammals from Yellowstone to the Yukon (Y2Y) to document the animals that use this natural corridor and learn its importance Preserving the Y2Y corridor has become one of the most critical environmental issues of our day Awarded 2003 Wilburforce Foundation Conservation Leadership Award Grants will fund a multi-city author tour for lectures and presentations related to the Y2Y initiative Walking the Big Wild is the story of Karsten Heuer's extraordinary 18-month journey of hiking, skiing, and paddling across 2100 miles of mountains, forests, and rivers from Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming to the Canadian Yukon. Accompanied by occasional human companions and a remarkable border collie named Webster, Heuer encountered immense challenges: storms, avalanches, floods, and grizzlies. At the end of the journey, Heuer proved that there is nearly continuous wilderness that can support wildlife along the length of the Rockies--and is salvageable if the right decisions are made now.