Environment & Society Portal

Multimedia Library Collection: Periodicals

"'It's Just a Matter of Time': Lessons from Agency and Community Responses to Polar Bear-inflicted Human Injury"

Schmidt, Aimee L., and Douglas A. Clark

Schmidt, Aimee L., and Douglas A. Clark. " 'It's Just a Matter of Time': Lessons from Agency and Community Responses to Polar Bear-inflicted Human Injury." *Conservation & Society* 16, no. 1 (2018): 64-75. doi: 10.4103/cs.cs_16_94.

Bear-inflicted human injuries or deaths are often widely publicised, controversial, and evoke substantial social responses that articulate public expectations about bear management. In this paper, we examine how local people and management agencies (i.e. Manitoba Conservation, Parks Canada, and the Town of Churchill) responded to a polar bear-inflicted human injury in Churchill, Manitoba, Canada. On November 1st, 2013, two people in Churchill were badly mauled by a polar bear. The incident shocked the community, highlighted problems such as a lack of bear safety education, and led to reviews of institutional policies for preventing polar bear-human conflicts. We used qualitative analysis methods to describe what is said (about polar bears, about people, and about management) and what is done (changes in behaviours and changes in policies/practices) when someone is attacked by a polar bear in Churchill. Results show that polar bear management agencies in Churchill respond remarkably well to errors in procedure, but are often unable to address the many underlying systematic drivers of polar bear-human conflict. Hence, managerial reactions to bear-human conflicts are successful at addressing the proximate cause of the problem, but offer few long-term solutions. (Text from authors' abstract)

© Aimee L. Schmidt, and Douglas A. Clark 2018. *Conservation & Society* is available online only and is published under a Creative Commons license (CC BY 2.5).

Download:

PDF: https://www.environmentandsociety.org/sites/default/files/key_docs/conservatsoc16164-3781148_103011.pdf

Related links:

Periodicals Collection, Multimedia Library, Environment & Society Portal

"'It's Just a Matter of Time': Lessons from Agency and Community Responses to Polar Bear-inflicted Human Injury"

Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/8444

Print date: 04 November 2026 05:45:40

- *Conservation & Society* website
  http://www.conservationandsociety.org/
- *Conservation & Society* 16, no. 1
  http://www.conservationandsociety.org/showBackIssue.asp

Periodicals Collection, Multimedia Library, Environment & Society Portal
"'It's Just a Matter of Time': Lessons from Agency and Community Responses to Polar Bear-inflicted Human Injury"
Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/8444
Print date: 04 November 2026 05:45:40