

Joanne Hesser-James

I am nearly 70 years old and have lived most of my life in WA state. I am an Audubon member, and have been a farmer and raised livestock. I have primarily grown up and lived in Skamania county, Benton county, and Walla Walla county. I am no stranger to the wilderness, having hiked and back packed, ridden horses, camped, fished, and hunted from the deepest forests to the deserts. I have had very close encounters with wildlife and even a wolf within feet of me as a child. I have never advocated the 'planting' of the Canadian wolves to our lower 48. We have always had a number of wolves, and now what this has created, in my humble opinion, a huge outcry among the wolf lovers to protect all of these large predators. Most all of these people live in cities and suburbs and have never had any encounter with a wolf. They do not raise livestock, they have no feeling for ranchers who have lost not only valuable animals but animals that are dear to them. We MUST control the wolf populations. And since they have been promoted, this is something that wildlife management needs to stand up and take care of when the number of packs, the predation on livestock and the encroachment into residential areas occurs! No, it is not a pleasant position, but it has been created! The outcry will always be there from the lovers of wolves, but management of these wolves is vital since they are a top predator and the other wildlife that they are taking is not really accounted for. I think of every smaller animal that they hunt and kill. Our Canadian Lynx is just one that I have fear could be on a decline due to the wolf over population. Therefore, please remove the wolves from a protected status.