

## Karen Estok

Creating a “post-recovery” plan for wolves at this time is premature, as Washington is still far from meeting the goals set forth in the current plan. Instead of racing to create a post-delisting plan, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife must instead focus its attention on current wolf-management needs. This includes: (1) Resolving, through nonlethal means, conflicts between livestock and wolves, which are taking place in some of the state's best habitat for wolves; and (2) Conducting extensive public education on wolves. This is emphasized in the current plan but has not been done by you, despite the fact that all wolf experts say public education is the single most important action to take for successful wolf conservation. Additionally, under the current wolf plan and any future wolf plan, management guidance, policies and protocols — and especially those which could result in wolves being killed — must be developed through a science-based, public rule-making process that results in transparent, rational and enforceable strategies. Therefore I urge you to: (1) Stop cherry-picking science to justify wolf-killing; (2) Answer the global call by scientists to protect and conserve apex predators; and (3) Use every opportunity to extol the value of top predators in keeping nature healthy, and cease current messaging that prioritizes livestock over wolves. The public will fail to see any reason to coexist with wolves if the department fails to explain that wolves are ecologically important and worth conserving. "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated" Gandhi The destruction of our majestic wolves for the benefit of greedy special interest groups is not only shameful, it's a national disgrace! The American people pay tax dollars to protect and preserve our public lands for the Animals that call these pristine places home. Certainly not to provide grazing lands for private ranchers livestock! The majority of Americans have spoken and we want our wolves protected! What you choose to save is what you say about yourself....and what you say about yourself will directly influence the support and votes of your constituents! Do the right thing! Thank you for considering my comments.