Sharen Oxman

I strongly believe creating a "post-recovery" plan for wolves is premature since Washington hasn't met the goals set forth in the current plan. Instead of racing to create a post-delisting plan, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife should focus its attention on current wolf-management needs which include: (1) Resolving, by nonlethal means, the conflicts between livestock and wolves currently taking place in some of the state's best habitat for wolves. (2) Conducting extensive public education on the importance of wolves. Although, this is emphasized in the current plan, it has not been done by your dep't 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 plans, management guidance, policies and protocols, 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. 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 stop messaging that livestock has more value than 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. Thank you for considering my comments.