

Nicholas Hamm

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Nicholas T. Hamm. I am a science teacher, hunter, environmentalist, conservationist, member of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and Evergreen East Mountain Bike Alliance. I grew up in Montana and have spent extended amounts of time in the wild, and especially the National Parks. I have bore witness directly to the reintroduction of the wolves. I have researched, observed and learned.

My belief is that we need to follow a research scientifically based plan built upon data and measured decisions. We have laws in place that MUST be followed. If they are out of date than they must follow the process for changing them. We must not be guided by only public pressure, out dated personal belief systems, and wealthy powerful landowners.

Wolves are an inextricable natural part of our Pacific Northwest Ecosystem. The introduction of the wolves has led to the restoration of the riparian forests in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, and have also drastically effected the elk population. This has caused great distress to hunters (including myself), and the public. All of this has been caused by us though. We, humans, have thrown the ecosystems into a tangled mess. However, we cannot withdraw and let things be because that is impossible. We are the most powerful piece of the system. We must act methodically in a team atmosphere. We must find a way to make reasonable decisions that consider all, but don't prioritize anyone.

Socialized Ranchers that run government subsidized ranches must pay more for public land grazing. I am a public land owner and get zero benefit from these propositions. Ranchers pay less than \$2 a month to graze a cow and calf on my, and your, land. This is a ridiculously low price that doesn't cover damage to public lands. This damage drives native cervids (elk, deer, and moose) from the land. We must raise the price to raise money for lands protection and improvements.

Why do we pay for cows hunted by wolves on public lands? I understand paying for cattle killed on private land. If my dog is killed by a wolf on public land is it paid for? I believe we need to remove cattle from wolf territory. What do we expect from wolves? They hunt what is available and easy, just like us.

Wolves are a natural species to this area. We are not. We must learn to co-exist. I pray that one day we can have a thriving population of wolves for the public to view, and be managed by the Washington Fish Wildlife and Parks. They should be managed as any other games species.

Thanks, Nicholas T. Hamm