

## Scott Harrison

WA doesn't have that many wolves, and we're culling them for the sole benefit of ranchers who are intentionally moving cattle onto public land every year where there is known conflict. There is no meat shortage in America, so "Feeding America" has become more about increased revenue and supplying other countries, where much of the increased production is going. We have enough meat, and ranchers have enough revenue. The American taxpayer is under no obligation to make ranchers wealthy. They continue to receive very cheap rates on taxpayer owned grazing land under the outdated guise that they can't make enough money to operate, and therefore can't provide needed food for our citizens. 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. Thank you for considering my comments.