



OKANOGAN COUNTY

Board of Commissioners

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Clerk of the Board

October 28, 2019

Lisa Wood
SEPA/NEPA Coordinator
WDFW Habitat Program, Protection
PO Box 43200
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Ms. Wood,

We, as Okanogan County Commissioners appreciate the opportunity to comment on Wolf Post-Recovery Plan Scoping. We believe it is past time for the State of Washington to de-list the wolf. We believe the scientific evidence supports the conclusion that the gray wolf has been successfully recovered. The wolf is present in sustainable numbers in significant portions of its historic range and is under no threat of either extinction or becoming threatened in the foreseeable future.

We see a post recovery plan that includes a hunting season to help maintain the wolf in sustainable populations while generating revenue from the sale of licenses and tags. We are concerned that there has been a violation of the current goal of maintaining healthy ungulate populations in the wolf management plan. It is important culturally and economically to sustain the ungulate population, and management of the wolf population is a component of that management strategy.

Appropriate management of the wolf population in Washington State would also likely reduce the number and frequency of livestock depredations. We need to minimize this conflict proactively through multiple management techniques which allow the Department to open up for tags and permits. There needs to be an element in the post recovery management strategy outlining avenues for protection of livestock and more importantly people. In the summer of 2018 we had a human/wolf interaction that led to an after action review meeting in our hearing room involving law enforcement from WA DFW, USFS, and Okanogan County Sheriff's office.

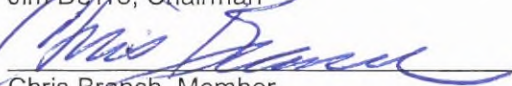
Another aspect of wolf management that bears consideration is the ongoing depredation of livestock. We believe that removing the wolf from protection and opening it up to management including harvest may instill a healthy respect of humans by the wolf. They are able to prey on livestock multiple times before action is taken, perhaps if the first time an attack happened; consequences happened as well, the depredations would decrease.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the Wolf post-recovery scoping.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OKANOGAN, WASHINGTON**



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ABSENT

Andy Hover, Member