

## Ted Kozlowski

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. (I found it disgusting and cowardly, and also disrespectful of the opinions of a large number of Washingtonians, when the department quickly authorized wolf-killing by helicopter earlier this year. The economic interests of cattle ranchers should not take priority. The fast-approaching future calls for de-emphasizing the consumption of meat, and beef cattle take up far too many of the earth's limited resources. A horrible example: those vast fires in the Amazon, cutting off part of the world's oxygen supply --air taking priority over hamburger joints facing each other on busy corners-- as farmers clear land, kill species, to grow soybeans for cattle feed. Expand your scope-- do not hide behind compartmentalization any more. The dietary preferences of some cannot continue to accelerate climate change, if we want our descendants to thrive, or simply survive. The department could join with whatever researchers may be working on phasing out farsighted ranchers from beef cattle, to other ways to live on the land, not degrade that along with the water supply and the atmosphere.) Thank you for considering my comments.