

## David J Hunt

I am a retired teacher and counselor. I am nearing my 64th birthday. I have spent much of my recreational time hiking, camping, kayaking, canoeing, and sailing in Northeastern Washington and North Idaho. I find my personal balance and spiritual renewal in our wild places and habitats. I feel, and have always felt, a personal responsibility to advocate for our natural places and the species whose survival depend upon those places. A “post-recovery” plan for wolves is premature. Washington is far from meeting the goals set forth in the current plan. WDFW needs to focus its attention on current wolf-management needs, including: A. Resolving, through nonlethal means, conflicts between livestock and wolves, which are taking place in some of the state's best habitat for wolves. This is especially true regarding grazing on PUBLIC lands. I am sick of hearing from the LOUD, totally self-interested “sagebrush rebellion” and their red-neck values!! B. EFFECTIVE public education about 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.