

## Scott Slocum

Washington is still far from meeting the goals set forth in the current, “post-recovery” plan for wolves, so revising the plan now wouldn't be appropriate. Instead of racing to create a post-delisting plan, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife should focus on current needs for wolf management needs, including the following: (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, 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. It is imperative for the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife to make the following changes: (1) Stop cherry-picking science to justify wolf-killing; (2) Answer the global call by scientists to protect and conserve apex predators; (3) Use every opportunity to declare the value of top predators in nature, and cease current messaging that prioritizes livestock over wolves.