

Susan Bradford Harrison

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. Please explain that wolves are ecologically important and worth conserving. The wolf is a beautiful animal with an intelligent family system and good parenting. Farley Mowat had it right in his book *Never Cry Wolf*. The wolf plays a crucial role in our eco-system and is responsible for culling the weak in caribou herds so the herd survives, just one of the natural balance of nature examples of its need in our earth's survival. Please stop demonizing these beautiful animals and work to save them not extinguish them. Thank you for considering my comments.