

Linda Jo Hunter

I see wolf recovery as a very positive move for Washington, State. Washington still has enough wild areas to be a state that people come to to see wildlife. However, in order to be that place we need to take some dramatic action. If there were a five year moratorium on elk and deer hunting in Washington, the herds would recover despite the human encroachment that has happened so far. If the moratorium extended to salmon fishing as well, we could see dramatic recoveries of all sorts of animals. Wolves keep herds healthy by keeping them moving and eliminating the weak. Hunting of either the prey or predators hasn't shown effective results in keeping the ecosystem healthy. The economic and health benefits to the people of Washington would far outweigh the temporary sacrifices of a sport that has become too technically efficient. The lost revenue from hunting licenses to the state could easily be made up for by using some of the fish hatcheries around the state to make bear viewing spots for the public like they do in Alaska. The spawned out salmon could be made available to bears while humans are contained in viewing areas. Most hatcheries already have parking, bathrooms, gates and containment so it wouldn't be very expensive to switch to bear viewing.

I know these are radical ideas but sometimes real positive changes can come about by taking radical ideas and working into them slowly.

I would just love to see Washington State pass up Alaska as a pristine, wildlife packed gem. No other state in the lower 48 still has that opportunity.