## **Robin Gregory**

Wolves have a ways to go before they are "post-recovery". The wolves are a crucial part of our ecosystem and their existence promotes a healthy environment for Washington. People and wolves can learn to co-exist for the good of all. Be patient with the uninformed people as they have not had wolves in their world for long. In any plan the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife makes for wolf management, it must include: (1) Wolf - livestock conflict resolution, through education and nonlethal means, in some of the state's best habitat for wolves; and (2) Public education on wolves and the impact they have on erosion, wild herd health, varmint reduction, etc. This is emphasized in the current plan and should be carried out by your Department. 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, must be science-based, taking into consideration the pack structure (alphas should not be killed). Use public rule-making processes that result in transparent, rational, and enforceable strategies to protect our wolf populations and the future of our natural environments. Therefore I urge you to: (1) Stop justifying wolf-killing when other alternatives exist; (2) Answer the global call by the public and scientists to protect and conserve apex predators, and thereby, our ecosystems; and (3) Use every opportunity to educate RE: the value of top predators in keeping nature healthy; immediately cease current messaging that prioritizes livestock over wolves. The department must get the message across that wolves are ecologically important and worth conserving and help the public to see many reasons to coexist with wolves. Thank you for your consideration in this matter of paramount importance to the future of our forests.