

Friday, November 4, 2019

Ms. Julia Smith [<mailto:julia.Smith@dfw.wa.gov>]
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
PO Box 43200
Olympia, WA 98504-3200

Re: Public Comments - Wolf post-delisting planning

Dear Ms. Smith

I've been to WAG and WDFW commissioners' meetings and have given input at both but I've been pretty disappointed in the result I saw. I felt my comments went in one ear and out the other... When I commented at the commissioner's meeting in Olympia last year, one of the commissioners, Jay Holzmilller decided to argue with me about my position and comments. His arguments were extremely weak and I felt that was a bit inappropriate when the commission was asking for public input...

It seems to me the WAG is mainly stocked with agricultural people (ranchers and farmers) who are openly anti-wolf and two of the four environmental orgs that are represented are more bent toward being ranching lobbyists than wolf and wildlife advocates. Conservation Northwest and Wolf Haven International have both blocked or attempted to block litigation efforts to stop the lethal removal of wolves over the past two years. Efforts that my wife and I were working in favor of.

As a retired business owner and Washington Taxpayer who was born here in Spokane and who has lived in Eastern Washington for most of my life, I am appalled at the actions of the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife in regard to lethal removal of wolves in this state while doing nothing to mitigate the problem of wildlife/livestock conflict. This last summer WDFW killed eight wolves (four of them puppies) literally hours prior to issuance of a court order to stop the lethal removals. What's worse, these eight wolves were removed to protect the private ranching operations at Diamond M Ranch. I believe these most recent kills total 25 wolves that Diamond M has been responsible for. This is a significant majority of the overall count of wolves that have been killed by WDFW since 2008. It's a fraudulent waste of our tax dollars when a great majority of our citizens do not want wolves killed.

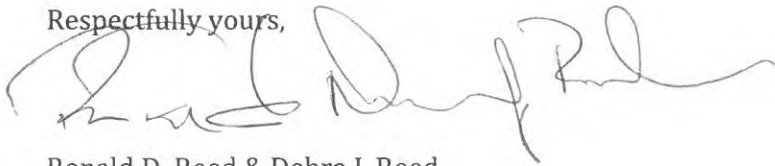
The problems we face with these wildlife conflicts are not that wolves are living in perfectly suited wolf habitat. The problems are that non-native livestock are being introduced into our very rugged terrain in our national public lands where our native wildlife will naturally reside. It's impossible for ranching operations to manage their livestock in these areas but instead of finding places that make more sense to place grazing allotments, WDFW kills our wolves. Why is WDFW not working to mitigate these ongoing conflicts instead of working to define "post-recovery" policies? This seems to me a colossal waste of time and our tax

dollars at this point? The two-million dollars paid to the "facilitator" at the WAG in 2018(?) was another example of considerable waste.

The way WDFW has and continues to manage these matters is a travesty! My tax dollars are being spent/wasted to fly helicopters with hired marksmen to kill families of wolves that neither I nor 70%+ of Washington taxpayers want killed! We want our wildlife to flourish. I hope my comments will be viewed with careful consideration.

Thank you.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald D. Reed & Debra J. Reed". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ronald" being the most prominent.

Ronald D. Reed & Debra J. Reed
7510 S. Mountain Springs Road
Spokane, WA 99223-1816

cc:

Director Kelly Susewind
Governor Jay Inslee

Friday, November 1, 2019

Ms. Julia Smith [<mailto:Julia.Smith@dfw.wa.gov>]
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
PO Box 43200
Olympia, WA 98504-3200

Re: Public Comments - Wolf post-delisting planning

Dear Ms. Smith

My wife Debbie and I are writing today as a lifelong citizens of Eastern Washington, and retired business owners here of 28 years. We are also writing on behalf of those ~70% of Washington's citizens who want our gray wolf population to thrive.

We want to ask those of you who develop policy for managing wildlife in Washington State a very important question:

Why is the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife spending tax dollars on post gray wolf recovery de-listing policies before recovery has taken place and is nowhere near to being in place yet?

It seems to us it would make far more sense to be spending our time and money on developing reasonable pre-recovery policies for managing our gray wolf population and toward mitigating the ongoing wildlife/livestock conflicts that result in killing the wolves we are working and (as taxpayers) paying to recover in Washington State?

After several years and ongoing efforts to better understand how to resolve these ongoing problems I've come to believe that Washington's Department of Wildlife and its director are more concerned with placating private ranching interests than they are in effectively managing our wolves and developing science-based policy to alleviate these conflicts that ultimately end in lethal removal of this precious natural resource. This approach would surely bring a real recovery much more quickly and effectively.

These private ranching operations that are seemingly being subsidized by our tax dollars are also destroying our publicly owned forest lands by grazing livestock in the middle of what used to be pristine forests and that are prime wolf (and other predator) habitat. These are areas where it's impossible to manage livestock and keep them safe.

The ***Lands Council*** in Spokane has developed what they refer to as their "***Meadows Plan***", based on empirical and scientific evidence of what can potentially resolve many of the problems that we are facing between wildlife and livestock interests. The ***Meadows Plan*** outlines areas that are manageable for grazing livestock and where ranching operations could easily keep their livestock together and safe from attack by predators, thereby protecting both the ranchers' investments and our precious wildlife and environment.

If WDFW are doing their job and working to execute their mission ***“to preserve, protect, and perpetuate the state’s fish, wildlife, and ecosystems”*** they should be working to better understand this plan and to working with The Lands Council and the USFS to get it implemented as quickly as possible.

The contact person for this plan is Chris Bachman, the Wildlife Programs Director at [The Lands Council](#) in Spokane. He has been instrumental in developing this plan and has met and discussed it with staff from WDFW and USFS. Please stop wasting our tax dollars on working for post-recovery delisting policies and get to work on recovering our precious natural wildlife resources!

What makes all of this even more frustrating and wrong is that science and empirical evidence have proven time and again that killing wolves over wildlife conflict does nothing to solve these problems, but instead makes matters worse. This is born out in the fact that wolves have been and continue to be lethally removed in the same areas of our state repeatedly with no long-term solution in sight. Areas where packs are obliterated just repopulate each time and WDFW goes back in and kills more wolves, over and over again. It’s overt brutality and borders on insanity.

It has been proven through scientific research that killing wolves disrupts the wolf family units, creates general chaos among the wolves, disperses packs (resulting in more new packs of wolves) and the results leave us with increasing numbers of dead wolves, increasing problems and no real solution in sight.

The efforts that WDFW have undertaken to date and are continuing to employ are wrong-headed and are wasting millions of taxpayer dollars to help a minute portion of our state’s economy while destroying one of our most precious of Washington State’s resources; our natural wildlife and our wonderful Pacific Northwest environment and culture. We want our natural wildlife to flourish!

Please, we implore you; Stop killing our wolves at the behest of private ranching interests whose cattle ruin some of the most beautiful and pristine public lands that our state holds. Stop putting private ranching interests above those of a huge majority of Washington residents and taxpayers!
Please stop killing our wolves!

Respectfully yours,

Ronald D. Reed & Debra J. Reed
7510 S. Mountain Springs Road
Spokane, WA 99223-1816

cc:

WDFW Director Kelly Susewind
Governor Jay Inslee

Chris Bachman, The Lands Council Wildlife Programs Director
Mike Petersen, The Lands Council Executive Director