

Joanne Kelly

Wolves are an extremely important trophic cascade species as has been witnessed in Yellowstone area. In Washington, they have yet to fully recover from being endangered. I hope that WDFW will not rush into declaring them no longer endangered and will allow them to fully recover and stabilize their population. That is going to take some time, their population numbers are far from meeting the goals set forth in your present plan, so I am confused as to why WDFW is already considering making post recovery plans. In assisting the recovery of wolves, attention would be far better spent working out and implementing plans to resolve conflict issues with livestock owners, resolutions that would not be lethal to the wolf population. Many countries have found ways to do this. In the Himalayas, the endangered Snow Leopard is recovering through a well thought out plan in dealing with livestock conflict issues. You might consider contacting WWF to learn of ways to save populations that can be predators of livestock. One of the most effective aspects of the success in the recovery of Snow Leopards was from educating livestock owners on their importance. Why haven't you had outreach public education? I believe that this is part of the mandate of the current plan but I am unaware of you implementing such a program. Are you not aware that the single most effective method of increasing population numbers of predatory endangered species is through educating the public? But instead, I've learned that you are considering wolf killing. I frankly feel that either your department has been lazy or it is simply understaffed. Education is the key for this species to fully recover. You could educate livestock owners on the critical ecological importance of wolves, help them to appreciate the need for this species. Please stop planning ahead for a possible future. Instead work on your present program. complete it by educating yourselves and livestock owners. Please prioritize wolves over livestock. If you don't implement the education mandate, the public will fail to appreciate this most unique species. It will fail to see any reason to co-exist with wolves. And the Wolf Recovery program will fail. Thank you for considering my comments.