

RALPH BAARSLAG

I would like to address the issue of wolf depredation/landowner compensation/wolf recovery and lethal removal. Wolf depredations on livestock adversely affect the livelihoods of persons living and farming in recovery areas. Those persons need and deserve compensation. I propose that a continuing fund be generated through donations by private citizens, not any government agency, from which affected landowners can be compensated. Those who truly want wolves in our State, regardless of cost, may contribute privately to this fund. As long as the money is available landowners can be compensated for losses. If the money runs out through donor apathy then lethal removal should occur to a level where the pack has little effect on ranchers. If an attack on a person or persons occurs then the entire pack needs to be eliminated. A second but parallel scenario should result in lethal removal if the wild ungulate populations are in danger of dropping below replacement levels. I live in a major city and am neither strongly for or against wolves in our State but would like to help formulate a solution equitable to landowners, ungulates, wolves and those who would like to see wolves prosper. This comes at a cost and protectionists should be willing to share this cost.