

## D. Hadley

I have an affinity to wolves, and greatly admire their species not simply for their necessary and rightful PLACE in ecosystems, but for their strongest personality trait - their capacity for making emotional attachments to other individuals, not just within their own families, but with other species, such as humans and dogs. Wolves also possess a basic aversion to fighting and only situationally resort to it. Dr. Gordon C. Haber, a noted wolf biologist in Alaska's Denali National Park and Preserve, has said that if you imagine the most unusually intelligent, emotional, and sensitive dog you have ever known, that's how ALL wolves are, and their extraordinariness is \*commonplace\* among them. With such a plethora of desirable traits (ones we humans don't often enough demonstrate ourselves!), we absolutely need to focus on critical wolf recovery, followed by their future preservation. Creating a "post-recovery" plan for wolves at this time is premature and a waste of valuable time and resources, since Washington is still far from meeting the goals set forth in the CURRENT plan. Instead of racing to create a post-delisting plan, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife must instead focus its attention on current wolf-management needs for wolves, as what they immediately need NOW. This includes: (1) Resolving, through NON-lethal means, conflicts between livestock and wolves, which are taking place in some of the state's best habitat for wolves; and (2) Conducting \*extensive\* public education on wolves. This is emphasized in the current plan but has not been done by you, despite the fact that all wolf experts say public education is THE single most important action to take for successful wolf preservation. Those old and utterly erroneous myths about wolves, merely made up by humans, must be replaced by the true FACTS AND SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATIONS about them. Additionally, under the current wolf plan and any future wolf plan, management guidance, policies and protocols — and especially those which could result in wolves being killed — must be developed through a \*science-based,\* public rule-making process that results in totally transparent, rational and enforceable strategies. Therefore I encourage you to: (1) Stop cherry-picking science to attempt to justify wolf-killing! (2) Answer the global call by scientists to protect and conserve vital apex predators. AND, (3) Use every opportunity to extol the value of top predators in keeping nature healthy, and cease current messaging that prioritizes the livestock industry, over wolves. Too many of the public won't see any, or enough, reason to coexist with wolves if the department itself fails in choosing to explain that wolves are ecologically important and absolutely worth preserving. Thank you for considering my comments.