

Ted Ayers

I've been hunting deer in WA since the early 60's. Since wolf populations have been on the rise I've watched the deer populations drop on the east side of the state. While hunting in GMU 101 last year (2018), I personally saw two wolves during the mule deer season. Our hunting camp has 20 people in it, family and close friends. With the dwindling deer populations we are looking to pursue out of state opportunities (ID, MT, or WY). It's a shame because I love hunting in WA. But when I saw two predators within a week and deer numbers that I've never witnessed this low, it is disheartening. I realize there are predators in the wild. I also realize WDFW has made some positive steps by culling wolves despite the protests by wolf protection groups. I've witnessed the mule deer populations dwindle to the point where I'd rather travel to hunt elsewhere. I'm proud to support small businesses on the east side of the mountains with our hunting dollars. But only seeing deer in farmers' fields and seeing wolves and even more wolf sign in recent years, I doubt our camp will continue hunting in WA with poor prospects because of the reintroduction of wolves. I appreciate the efforts WDFW have taken with the new director. However, I believe it is only a start and more needs to be done. Allow WA hunters to help regulate the wolf populations in our state.