

Laura Wellington

What is your gender?

Female

Age?

53

County (or Counties) of Primary Residence?

King

Residential setting:

Urban

Do you identify yourself as any of the following?

Environmentalist

Outdoor Recreationist

WDFW has identified a list of impact topics to include in the Plan/EIS. Impact topics are a means of organizing the discussion of issues and analysis of impacts. Impact topics can be thought of as chapter or section headings in the Plan/EIS.

Please review this list and add other topics, or items that fit under these headings.

Please check the topics you view as most important.

Wolf conservation and monitoring

Wolf classification/status

Wolf management areas

Wolf-human interactions

Wolf hunting

Habitat connectivity

Research

Costs and funding priorities

Economic analysis

Do you have general comments about the scope of Washington's updated wolf conservation and management plan?

A successful de-listing plan includes eventual hunting and species-management practices. Macro economic impacts should be considered (like industry-wide or on a county-level), but individual economic impact (such as a single farmer/rancher's business) should be minimized and dealt with at another time. While considering wolf management options (such as possible hunting, relocating, etc.), it is imperative to understand the social structures of the wolves. Wolves cannot be managed like bears, because of their social structure. Just as doe tags are released on a limited basis due to the species social structure, wolf alpha pack members need to be regarded with the same protection levels. Shooting a doe/cow impacts the species more than shooting a stag/bull, shooting an alpha pack member may sentence the entire pack to death. Another essential element that needs to be in place is a moratorium on shooting collared wolves. Wolf movements need to be monitored, and pack lineages traced. By collaring alpha wolves, both of these essential needs would be met.

Additionally, research should be done to find ways to make livestock less attractive to wolves, so the economic needs of businesses may be reduced (although not eliminated).

To summarize, I believe wolves should be eventually de-listed in areas where their numbers are stable and where they have become an integral part of the local ecosystem. In order to track their numbers, trace pack lineages, and prevent catastrophic pack demise, at least all alpha wolves should be collared. In areas where the wolf population has increased beyond the ability of the local ecosystem to sustain it, managed hunting should be allowed. It should be unlawful to kill a collared wolf with strict penalties.

Thank you for your consideration.