

Joshua Judd

What is your gender?

Male

Age?

25

County (or Counties) of Primary Residence?

Stevens County

Residential setting:

Suburban

Do you identify yourself as any of the following?

Hunter

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-livestock conflicts

Wolf-ungulate interactions

Wolf interactions with other species

Wolf-human interactions

Wolf hunting

Translocation

Land management

Habitat connectivity

Information and education

Research

Reporting and evaluation

Goals objectives strategies and tasks

Costs and funding priorities

Economic analysis

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

I am fortunate enough to be in the forest for work and for fun on a regular schedule. I spend roughly 200 days per year in the mountains of northeast Washington, from the Canadian Border south to Davenport, and the Idaho border to Tonasket. I have personally seen wolves from almost every wolf pack territory. I have around thirty trail cameras placed in multiple mountain ranges and have countless pictures of wolves.

I do believe our wolf numbers are much higher than estimated. When the "Smackout Pack" was an estimated 7 wolves including two with collars, I had photos of 11 different wolves and only one with a collar.

That is only one example, our wolf pack territories are running into each other enough that the entire northeast section of the state is wolf territory with packs in between the known and observed packs.

I am afraid the wolves will be so far out of control by the time WDFW allows the help of trappers, hunters, and ranchers, that our

moose, elk, and deer will have no chance to keep a healthy population.

Our states hunting participation is already lower than in the years past. The more wolves hunters see and hear about, the less they will be wanting to purchase a Washington license to hunt in Washington. With less hunting licenses sold means less funding for wildlife research and management.

Right now I currently buy every hunting license and tag available to a Washington resident, including special draws, taxidermy license, and trappers license. If I don't see more efforts to manage our predators I will no longer buy any license in Washington. I purchase deer, bear, elk, cougar, waterfowl, two turkey tags, and apply for every special draw I can. I do not expect to win a special draw tag and I do not elk hunt, cougar hunt, or turkey hunt. I do this for two reasons.

The first reason is because I know the money is going to something that will help with research and management and keep our wildlife habitats and populations where they need to be so my family and I will be able to enjoy Washington's wilderness for years to come. If WDFW is going to ignore the signs of too many predators, and not follow the history of what other states have dealt with from too many wolves, take a slow and useless approach for wolf management, I will never buy another Washington license. I would rather spend a few extra dollars to hunt as a non resident in other states that allow predator control and also higher success rates, which I believe go hand and hand. I will also encourage other family, friends, and hunting partners to do the same. I have around a dozen people I am in contact with that come to Washington state as a non resident to hunt multiple species. They spend close to, or more than, a thousand dollars each on combo hunting and fishing licenses. We have had the conversation on numerous occasions to hunt other states because of the predator issues we are already noticing in Washington

The second reason I purchase every tag possible is because we have the opportunity to harvest those species all in one area. We have a very rare situation that a hunter can step foot on a mountain and have an opportunity to fill a deer, bear, elk, cougar, and turkey tag, all on the same ridge. Unfortunately, when the wolves move into an area and teach there young to kill, that area remains vacant for long periods of time, with only carcasses of moose calves, elk, deer and much more, lying there mostly hole, with little or none eaten off of them. When an area as small as a couple acres, and as big as a

section mile get over run with wolves, it forces animals to run and try to live in areas they are not adapted to. It makes prey species scatter to a point that an elk herd of thirty becomes six small pods of five, and an even easier target for not only wolves but mountain lions and bears to wipe out the scattered calves that cannot fend for themselves. While hiking, hunting, and checking trail cameras, I have found these areas that would only be found by putting time on foot in the hills. Neither a survey in a helicopter, nor a drive down a logging road would find these such areas.

The more I run into these areas, the more I consider traveling out of state to an area that is allowed to manage predators and has a plan that benefits the animals and the people.

As of right now, wolves are still an animal that can only be shot in self defense. My question is how long will we be in the defensive stage? We may never be able to get an exact number of wolves in a given area. Stop trying to say we have to wait until a magic number comes up to say we need to start eliminating some of the wolves in a pack. Start allowing efforts for wolf management right now, but make it limited. I don't believe every wolf in Washington needs to be killed and forced into extinction, like that very predator did to the Selkirk caribou herd. I do not believe that is possible at this point even if we tried.

My final comment:

Let trappers, hunters and ranchers start taking action right now. Use a quota system. Let everyone purchase a tag. A reasonable priced wolf tag will be like a cougar tag. Most people buy it for a slim chance they may see one in the wild and have a chance to punch that tag. The majority of hunters have bought a cougar tag every year and have never punched their tag. A wolf tag will be the same situation. It will generate more revenue for WDFW and help manage a predator all at once. Make it a mandatory report within 24 hours of a wolf harvest. Give each area a number of wolves that can be taken in a certain amount of time. There is already a system for cougars after January 1st that tells hunters which areas are open. Do that for wolves. These are predators at the top of the food chain. They are smart. They are not going to be over harvested in a weekend. Prevent a problem before it gets even more out of control than it already is.