

Mark Pidgeon

What is your gender?

Male

Age?

58

County (or Counties) of Primary Residence?

Ferry

Residential setting:

Rural

Do you identify yourself as any of the following?

Hunter

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 classification/status

Wolf-livestock conflicts

Wolf-ungulate interactions

Wolf interactions with other species

Wolf hunting

Research

Reporting and evaluation

Goals, objectives, strategies, and tasks

Costs and funding priorities

Economic analysis



Hunters Heritage Council

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(509) 775-8836 (fax)

September 17, 2019

Lisa Wood, SEPA/NEPA Coordinator
WDFW Habitat Program, Protection Division
PO Box 43200
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Ms. Wood:

I am submitting these comments about the post delisting plan on behalf of the Hunters Heritage Council, Washington State's largest hunting-rights' organization. The first priority should be to maintain healthy and robust ungulate populations that provides abundant prey for wolves and other predators as well as ample harvest opportunities for hunters. This can only be accomplished by the WDFW applying a robust integrated predator/prey management policy and applying adaptive management into achieving this balance. We do not want to see loss of hunting opportunity because of wolves or other predators.

Following up on the point above, control wolf, cougar, and black bear populations to provide a robust prey base. We cannot sustain a predator pit. Neither prey base, predators, or wolves can be managed in isolation. Prey base and all predators must be managed together. Single species management has never worked, it won't work now, and it will never work. There will need to be studies done on the prey base with emphasis on the effects of predators on the females and the neonates. Through scat monitoring we need to determine what prey species are being eaten by predators.

Wolves must be managed to minimize livestock depredations. The most effective way to minimize depredations is to have a healthy prey base. With a healthy prey base, there is no need for wolves to attack livestock. If lethal control needs to be done, lethal control should be applied after the first lethal depredation of livestock. A permit should also be issued to landowners and livestock owners after the first lethal or probable depredation to control one or more wolves. A caught in the act permit by landowners and livestock owners should be retained on a permanent basis. USDA Wildlife Services should be contracted to do all lethal removal or control.

Maintain wolf populations at a self-sustaining size, while not negatively impacting the long-term perpetuation of that population. Through DNA determine wolf populations. No recovery regions, wolves are delisted statewide.

One of the most important factors in wolf recovery will be important in long-term wolf sustainability, and that is social tolerance of the people that live with wolves. Rural communities need to know that people are listening to them. Those people aren't going to sit idly while their way of life is being destroyed by wolves. You can help by educating people that don't live near wolves that they are predators and they create hardships for ranchers and other in rural areas. Closing that gap will help.

Finally, as a hunting organization, we would like an opportunity to hunt wolves, but the hunting of wolves will be allowed when determined necessary by WDFW to control wolf populations.

I appreciate you giving me the opportunity to submit my comments through the SEPA process. Thank you very much.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark Pidgeon". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Mark Pidgeon
President