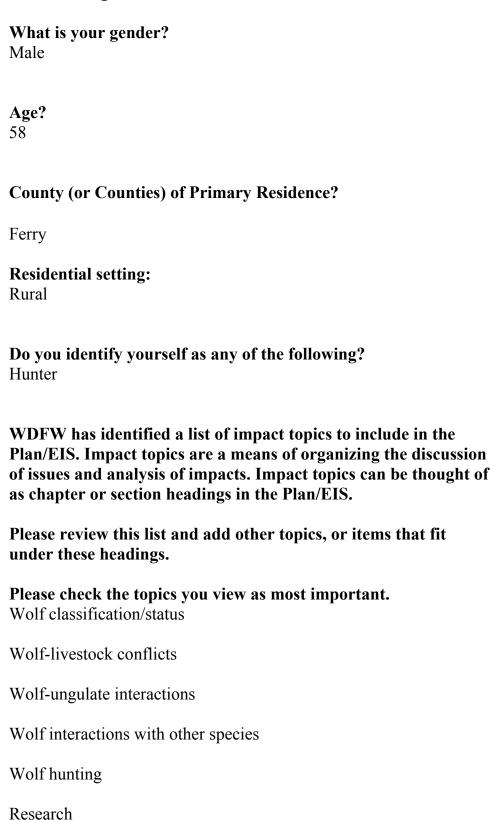
## Mark Pidgeon

Reporting and evaluation



Goals, objectives, strategies, and tasks

Costs and funding priorities

Economic analysis



## **Hunters Heritage Council**

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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 be 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,

Mal Velgeon
Mark Pidgeon

President