

Judith Akins

What is your gender?

Female

Age?

71

County (or Counties) of Primary Residence?

Whatcom

Residential setting:

Urban

Do you identify yourself as any of the following?

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 management areas

Wolf-livestock conflicts

Land management

Information and education

Research

Reporting and evaluation

Goals objectives strategies and tasks

Economic analysis

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

Wolf Management Plan: Scoping Comments
November 15, 2019

Director Susewind,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the scope of the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) Wolf Post-Recovery Planning.

I have become very acquainted with the wolf recovery effort as part of my interest in the forests, state and national; national parks and all the flora and fauna that live there. I spend many hours hiking in our forests and backcountry in WA State and have visited almost all the National Parks. I have also visited Wolf Haven International in Tenino, WA. These are magnificent animals and I feel that we have an obligation to make sure they survive and thrive in habitats that can sustain them.

While there are so many questions to be answered about wolf recovery I will just focus on a few. I feel, the Scoping Document for Wolf Post Recovery should address the following questions at a minimum.

How is the WDFW going to sustain the ongoing recovery? The current use of public lands by ranchers need to be evaluated if the wolves are going to be allowed to live and thrive in certain areas. Ranchers have been allowed to use certain lands for their cattle to graze because we (the public) decided that native species should be hunted to almost extinction in the early 1900's. Now, we are realizing the value to the entire ecosystem of certain species. Wolves are a keystone species which by definition means they exert both direct and indirect effects on their ecosystem, influencing their prey, which influences plant and animal species beneath them and so on. Some ranchers have used all means available to them to keep their cattle AND the wolves safe while others, in particular one in WA State, has not used any of the prescribed techniques to keep his cattle from being killed by wolves. I believe we must evaluate the land use by all species. If ranchers, cattle and wolves can coexist then that

would be good but if they can't then maybe a rancher should not be allowed to use certain public lands which is wolf habitat.

What plans does the WDFW have to monitor all wolf takings, including hunting, poaching, depredation? A wolf pack is an exceedingly complex social unit with the family unit and extended family, taking care of the old and young; teaching and feeding all within the pack unit. There is only one breeding pair with the alpha female keeping the pack together. So when a member of the pack is killed, in particular the "parents" of the unit or the female alpha it is devastating to the pack however they mourn any loss, . They have history, homeland and knowledge in their particular pack and this is their culture. So if hunting is allowed then how will all this be managed? I believe we should look at scientific evidence to see if wolves should be managed as other wildlife or should we consider the special nature of the pack and manage them in a different category altogether. What will the consequences be for those who poach, hunt without a license or allow depredation because of poor management of livestock..

What plans does WDFW to educate the public about wolves and their value? Is there a way to incorporate other wildlife partners into the Wolf Management Team.