

Kara Odegard

**What is your gender?**

Female

**Age?**

46

**County (or Counties) of Primary Residence?**

Spokane

**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-livestock conflicts

Habitat connectivity

Information and education

Research

Reporting and evaluation

Goals objectives strategies and tasks

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

RE: Post Recovery Management Plan Scoping Comment

Director Susewind,

I am a resident of Spokane, and in my work and personal life, conservation is a high priority. As members of our natural ecosystem, humans have an obligation to act as responsible participants. Prioritizing cattle grazing over preserving the natural ecosystem is an affront to these responsibilities. Personally, I have many issues with federal and state agencies allowing ranchers to graze on public lands, but that's not what you are asking. You are asking for comments as it pertains to wolf recovery efforts. Post recovery management of the gray wolf should prioritize the natural ecosystem. I ask that you manage as mandated and prioritize wildlife over the private industry of cattle ranching. Wolves and other native carnivores should not be hunted, and proactive management using non-lethal means should be the state's priority. Wolves deserve to exist on and live on our public lands, and in fact, the health and wellbeing of future human generations depends on their presence.

As you are aware, Washington has not met recovery goals laid out in the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan (pp 58-68). It could be said that regional recovery goals have been met in the Eastern Recovery Region, however regional recovery is not a goal of the plan. We understand the desire to plan ahead but focusing on post recovery management at this stage appears to be a diversion to draw attention from pre-recovery management and the repeated use of lethal force to manage gray wolf conflict on public lands. It misleads the public into believing we are close to recovery goals.

Post recovery management should focus on growth and maintenance of sustainable gray wolf populations and handling conflict using proactive non-lethal means. Meeting recovery goals is the first step down that path, not the last. The Department should focus on

continued population growth to reach sustainable population levels and restoration/preservation of gray wolf habitat as well as habitat connectivity allowing genetic exchange at a statewide level and beyond. Recovery numbers as they exist in the current plan were initially set too low not allowing for inter-regional genetic exchange, and are not based on best available science, this should be considered before moving forward with a post recovery plan.

There is strong public support for recovering and sustaining viable gray wolf populations in Washington and little support for lethal control and/or hunting of the gray wolf. Washington can provide a source population of gray wolves that can support national recovery. We can be a national leader promoting human-wildlife coexistence, using lethal control only when absolutely necessary.

Social tolerance is an important aspect for wolf recovery. The term frequently references people's tolerance for the wolf's presence. However, social tolerance is a two sided coin, and the coin is flipping. Social tolerance for the state's repeated killing of wolves is plummeting.

Finally, the Post Recovery Gray Wolf Conservation and Management Plan should be reviewed by an outside panel of wolf experts.

Once the gray wolf reaches recovery in the state of Washington, we would like the following incorporated into post recovery management of the gray wolf:

The Department will:

- Manage the gray wolf (and other carnivores) as a priority on our public lands, particularly in wild roadless areas, advocating for restoration of native ecosystems, at the federal and state level, and
- Oppose government, state and federal, sanctioned killing or hunting of the gray wolf and other native carnivores and,
- Outline and enforce penalties for illegal killing of gray wolves.
- Recognize zones of chronic depredation, areas of repeated wolf/livestock conflict; and no longer consider lethal management of wolves in these areas, and
- Work to coordinate interagency cooperation at the state and federal level into gray wolf and wildlife management plans to minimize conflict and prohibit permitted grazing in zones of chronic depredation. For example, collaboration with the US Forest Service Colville National Forest staff to discuss grazing modifications, suspensions and retirements on allotments with chronic depredations to ensure wildlife welfare is the top management priority, and Washington's wildlife is not negatively impacted by another

government agency's policy, and

- Work to reform policy to prioritize management of the gray wolf (and other carnivores) over private interests on state and federal public lands. For example, when there is conflict between wolves and livestock, move the livestock and stop killing wolves. Wolves and other wildlife should be allowed to thrive on open public lands, and
- Plan to fulfill its paramount responsibility of preserving, protecting, and perpetuating the state's gray wolf population, for future generations. While mandated to provide sustainable wildlife recreational opportunities, these opportunities shall be secondary to preservation and promotion of resilient sustainable carnivore populations, healthy ecosystems, healthy watersheds, and healthy populations of native prey like elk, deer, and moose. Hunting is not necessary to control carnivore populations, they self regulate based on prey availability, and
- Manage native carnivores in the state of Washington using the best available science, and
- Oppose the use of taxpayer funds to lethally manage wildlife.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,  
Kara Odegard

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Fax: 360-902-2947  
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