

Bryan Sabol

What is your gender?

Male

Age?

54

County (or Counties) of Primary Residence?

Pierce County

Residential setting:

Rural

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

Translocation

Land management

Habitat connectivity

Information and education

Research

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

I strongly believe that all wildlife management policy should be driven by good science. The state's move to delist wolves is premature at best, and counterproductive to restoring natural wild habitat. We've clearly seen ecosystem degradation when top predators are removed from an area: overpopulation of prey species--especially large herbivores--can strip the land of vegetation, promote erosion, and drive down species diversity.

I have a science background, so this is all abundantly clear to me. However, there is a huge amount of confusion and false assumptions in the public eye. The state should be focusing on education to help the public understand the inherent value in maintaining top predators like wolves. The state should also be working closely with ranchers and hunting organizations to find a consensus on ongoing management policy.

A key aspect of this education effort is to use the best available science to design and implement programs that minimize wolf-livestock conflicts and promote non-lethal responses, such as monetary compensation for documented incidents.

However, I don't believe the government at any level should be handing out dollars for all instances. We have a fundamental problem of allowing people to build in flood zones, and then pay disaster funds when the home is flooded. We allow ranchers to put livestock on public lands where there is a good likelihood of wolf interaction. This is where policy does NOT meet with good science. Use the science to define key wolf habitat, and create programs and policies to begin phasing out grazing rights in those locations. This is simple, smart, and straightforward.

I want to leave a wild legacy to my children--to go camping in the wilds and hear the howl of a wild wolf pack. I want to know that the ground we hike through resembles a natural landscape and not one that's been grazed down by cattle or stripped of vegetation by a starving oversized herd of deer or elk. The state must focus on good science first, and not be swayed by momentary political rhetoric. Politicians come and go, but once our wild lands and creatures are gone, there's no getting them back.