

Wolf Management Plan

Public Scoping Meeting Listening Post Comments

Clarkston, Aug. 14, 2007 (30 attendees)

Wolf Conservation/Population Objectives:

- Would like to see Washington's wolf population recovered to "pre-exterminated" numbers.
- Would appreciate and enjoy the return of wolves in a balanced ecosystem.
- Optimum approach may be to first look at "breeding pairs", but leave flexibility to look at other approaches, like packs or individuals.
- Look into "resident native" wolves versus new or newly introduced wolves. Are they different, physically or behaviorally? Make sure we retain native wolves.
- Look at population objectives in terms of numbers of individual wolves because of the high human population in Washington.
- Clarify population objectives to coincide with suitable habitat and manage accordingly in Wolf Management Units (WMUs).

Wolf-Livestock Conflicts:

- Protection of stock and working dogs needs to be in plan, even if wolves are still state endangered.
- Need verifiable losses on public land; hard to find losses early.
- Need to be able to shoot a depredating wolf.
- What about protecting pets (dogs, cats, etc.) from wolves?
- Have generous compensation for livestock losses.
- Simplify depredation reporting systems.
- Want local response to depredation; create partnership between landowners and WDFW.
- Manage wolves so they do not negatively impact livestock.
- Concerned that wolves will be attracted to areas with livestock by the game populations that are also present.
- Subsidize wolf deterrents with operators incurring cost of monitoring deterrents.
- Train ranchers on use of wolf deterrents during convenient times.
- Create an appendix in the wolf plan on where to obtain deterrents.
- Need to know how to assess livestock losses associated with stress, disturbance, weight loss, change in distribution, etc. from local wolf activity.
- Concerned that there will be pressure from environmentalists to vacate public grazing allotments.
- Investigate the use of large dog breeds to protect livestock from wolves (European and Asian countries have bred dogs for this purpose).
- Compensation for livestock kills on private lands is appropriate, but kills on public lands might be better addressed by the owner protecting their own livestock with guard dogs, etc.

- Increase education on the number of wolf attacks on livestock.

Wolf-Game Species Interactions:

- What will the wolf impact be on Lick Creek (Asotin County) elk herd?
- Manage wolves so they do not negatively impact game.
- Need to look at survey data from Idaho, which shows that elk populations are impacted by many factors, not just wolves.
- A reduced white-tailed deer population is desirable.
- What impact will wolves have on mule deer populations?
- Address elk-wolf management objectives in elk management plans.

Wolf-Human Interactions/Miscellaneous Issues:

- Increase education on the number of wolf attacks on humans and pets.
- Provide information on how to behave when having a direct encounter with wolves when hiking or recreating; see V. Geist “Conservation Connection” FNAWS 2006 or 2007.
- Concerned that wolves will be attracted to homes and other locations used by people by the wild game populations that are present.
- Due to Washington’s high-density human population, provide information on recreating in areas occupied by wolves.
- In the last 100 years, only two human deaths have been attributed to wolf attacks; get this actual data out to the public.
- Advertise how people can report wolf sightings, or where they can go to encounter or find wolves.
- What are the criteria for “verifying” wolf sightings?
- Afraid to report sightings over fear of land use restrictions.
- Create an online forum where people can interact with each other about their wolf experiences as a way to document the qualitative, not just quantitative, aspects of encounters with wolves, both pro and con.
- Write and implement the wolf plan with as little money as possible and with minimal bureaucracy.
- Why wolves were originally removed?
- Who set up wolf plan’s sideboards?

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Public Scoping Meeting Listening Post Comments

Spokane, Aug. 15, 2007 (71 attendees)

Wolf Conservation/Population Objectives:

- The wolf population in northeastern Washington needs to “co-exist” with other listed or candidate species.
- Model the management of wolves and other species along the lines of endangered salmon management.
- Spend ample time modeling impacts on non-game wildlife.
- Ensure that the wolf plan addresses translocation of wolves to “appropriate” areas as a management tool.
- Have particular wolf recovery areas with specific population goals in those areas.
- Management of wolves should include classifying them as a game species and allowing to them to be hunted.
- Establish guidelines to keep genetic diversity in the wolf population.
- Look at wolf populations on regional levels.
- Need a well-balanced conservation and management plan.
- Ensure funding sources for monitoring wolves.
- Would like to see wolves self-managed in the environment (i.e., “natural self regulation”), with as little human management as possible.
- Gauge wolf population objective levels on overall ecological principles and the overall health of the ecosystem.
- Solicit “citizen science” volunteers, including students from local colleges, in monitoring wolves.
- Consider population growth of humans in the population objectives for wolves.
- Designation of wolves as a game species may encourage poaching and excessive mortality; instead, only remove individual wolves in problem areas and only by WDFW.
- Clarify federal versus state jurisdictions and time goals.
- Encourage tribal interaction and as potential funding source.
- Once recovered, consider wolf trophy hunting as a funding source for wolf monitoring, management.
- Don’t spend time trying to come up with actual population numbers, but wait and see the actual wolf dispersal numbers and packs, then consider trophy hunting.
- Through public education, dispel the myth about “explosive” population growth of wolves.
- Don’t allow any translocation of wolves.
- Control problem wolves with hunting.
- Look at alternatives to controlling wolves through hunting.
- Start with a conservative goal for a minimum viable population.
- Use a recovery goal that maximizes the number of wolves based on habitat carrying capacity.

- Use an ecosystem-based population recovery goal.
- Washington is different from Montana and Idaho because we have less open space, so we may have less or more wolves, depending on ecoregion.
- Determine population objectives based on best science related to ecosystem health, while protecting sheep and cattle.
- Manage wolves as a game species, just like with cougars, bears, elk, and deer.
- Classify wolves as a huntable game animal.
- Define how soon wolves can be lawfully hunted in Washington.

Wolf-Livestock Conflicts:

- Livestock operators need clear guidelines on their responses to wolf depredation.
- Is compensation for confirmed wolf depredations standardized, market-based, or what exactly? Consider investments in the herd.
- Have all citizens contribute to pay for compensation on confirmed wolf depredations rather than just one or a few citizen groups.
- How will WDFW/USFWS deal with livestock losses that cannot be validated?
- Need quick response time on potential wolf depredations so that evidence is not lost and the likelihood of finding the offending wolf(ves) is not reduced.
- Livestock owners need a baseline loss rate that can be used to compensate for unconfirmed losses.
- Compensation should be used for stress-induced weight loss in livestock and the rancher's personal time loss.
- Similar to Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for farmers, ranchers with wolves on their range should be compensated just for having them present.
- Protect the compensation fund from fraudulent claims.
- In economic analyses, include the monetary value of having wolves disperse native ungulates off private grazing lands, which represents a benefit to livestock operators.
- As soon as wolves are federally delisted, landowners should be allowed to kill problem wolves during the act of depredation, just like coyotes or non-listed carnivores.
- Need sufficient funding for non-lethal control measures, such as Defenders of Wildlife's "Bailey Fund."
- Need a legal mechanism to protect working dogs from wolf attacks.

Wolf-Game Species Interactions:

- Address wolf predation and management in ungulate herd plans.
- Spend ample time modeling impacts on prey populations.
- Wolves assisting in the control of deer is a good thing.
- Develop a standard based on elk and deer numbers that would trigger a wolf management action, and tailor that management to different areas.
- Differentiate between habitat-induced versus predator-induced changes in elk and deer numbers.
- Control wolf numbers if they are found to be impacting mountain caribou.
- Wolves assist in maintaining the health of deer and elk herds.

- Allow wolves, deer, and elk to self-regulate, with as little management as possible.
- Increase scientific monitoring of deer and elk populations to evaluate wolf-related impacts.
- Will there be any compensation to counties that suffer economic losses due to reductions in deer and turkey numbers from wolf predation?
- Contact insurance companies for information on vehicle-deer collision rates when assessing the economic impact of wolves on deer numbers.

Wolf-Human Interactions/Miscellaneous Issues:

- Allow people to protect pets from wolves if attacked.
- Emphasize facts on number of human attacks by wolves and circumstances around attacks.
- Concerned about possible habituation, domestication of wolves through feeding, etc.
- Need a legal mechanism to protect pets from wolf attacks.
- WDFW should post wolf activity areas to inform the public of their presence.
- Publish information to counteract wolf myths (“reverse propaganda”).
- Incorporate public education about wolves.
- Need to be proactive in wolf outreach and education.
- Survey public on attitudes towards wolves.
- Ask outdoorsmen to report sightings or signs of wolves in a very broad spectrum.
- Examine how wolves interact with coyotes in an urban interface.
- Build continuing reviews into the wolf plan; don’t operate a static plan.
- Manage conflicts between small versus large landholders, urban versus rural landscapes.
- Foster ecotourism and “watchable wildlife” goals by using wolves as a target species to promote economic benefit to communities. Make sure Washington Community Trade & Economic Development (CTED) and other agencies consider wolf-related tourism an asset.
- Offer personalized license plates featuring wolves as a funding source for wolf management.
- Institute a statewide wildlife tax for all non-game species to help fund wolf management.
- Consider timber companies with mitigation and forest plans as cooperative sources.

Wolf Management Plan

Public Scoping Meeting Listening Post Comments

Yakima, Aug. 16, 2007 (21 attendees)

Wolf Conservation/Population Objectives:

- Create a sustainable (i.e., ecologically, environmentally, and socially acceptable) wolf population. Once the population exceeds that level, some acceptable management action should occur.
- Why is re-introduction not a current option?
- Re-introduction should be an option in the southern Cascades and Olympic Peninsula. These are locations that are distant or wolves are unlikely to migrate to naturally.
- Can the National Park Service reintroduce wolves on their own lands, such as Mt. Rainier and Olympic National Parks?
- Depredating wolves should be translocated to an appropriate area.
- No bounties on wolves!
- Would hunting of wolves as a game species be allowed?
- If wolves become a game animal, how would harvest be set?

Wolf-Livestock Conflicts:

- Need to have a compensation mechanism that goes beyond present value of the animal lost and is based on projected value.
- Need method to capture losses beyond loss of animal, like rangeland compensation model, to account for weight loss, etc.
- Ranchers must have method of verification as it relates to projected values and losses beyond individual animal to receive compensation.
- What actions can producers take against wolves?
- Who will be the lead agency to respond to livestock conflicts once wolves are federally delisted and the plan is implemented?
- Need rapid depredation reporting and agency response time.
- Need clear criteria for reporting and preserving depredation sites (i.e., protocol to preserve evidence, reporting deadlines, etc.).
- Wolves should be a game species in areas of documented livestock depredation.

Wolf-Game Species Interactions:

- In areas with too many wolves affecting big game numbers, would we try to reduce wolf numbers?
- What if wolves show up at elk feeding sites or in areas of human-induced concentrations, such as fenced locations? Can we trap or shoot them?
- Will big game population effects be considered in developing wolf recovery goals?
- What about potential “crowding” of wolf packs into narrow bands of elk winter range in eastern Washington?

- Address prey-predator interactions; what is occurring with cougar and black bears once wolves return?
- Will we have wolf-related problems with artificial concentration points for game, such as at elk crossings along I-90 or at game feeding sites?

Wolf-Human Interactions/Miscellaneous Issues:

- Need to get the facts out on wolves and what they don't do (i.e., they don't prey on horses, people, etc.).
- Will backcountry horsemen be excluded from areas because of wolves?
- Can wolves be shot in self-defense when personal safety is feared?
- Use captive wolves, like those at Wolf Haven, to teach children and adults about wolves; ask about Defenders of Wildlife program.
- Develop a volunteer corps of wolf educators.
- Wolf-dog hybrid breeders need to be required to register animals, use DNA database; even if all don't register, it's a start to help protect wolves.
- What is the projected cost for managing wolves and where is the money being taken from?

Wolf Management Plan

Public Scoping Meeting Listening Post Comments

Twisp, Aug. 20, 2007 (31 attendees)

Wolf Conservation/Population Objectives:

- Population objectives should be specific to needs of the Okanogan region.
- Would translocation within the state be considered in instances of isolated areas, such as the Olympics?
- Ensure sustainable, biologically viable population before state delisting.
- WDFW should enhance the wolf population.
- Identify recovery areas as those with appropriate habitat and minimal conflicts.
- Focus on dispersal of wolves for recovery until established.
- Using other states as a model, could we predict an appropriate wolf population based on unit area to human interaction ratio?
- Consider allowing wolves to be shot if threatening homes or livestock after delisting occurs.
- Need to identify limiting factors that to date have prevented wolves from re-establishing to ensure they can re-colonize Washington effectively.
- Need to look long term; recovery will take decades; process needs to be dynamic.
- Want wolves recovered to the point of being able to hunt them.
- Against any hunting of wolves as long as wolf population is self-regulating.

Wolf-Livestock Conflicts:

- Define "livestock" species.
- Prefer compensation for wolf-related losses on private lands only.
- Verification process for livestock losses needed.
- Need fair compensation for all livestock losses. This will allow livestock owners to be part of the recovery process.
- Want compensation for wolf-related losses on all public lands.
- Would like full compensation for wolf-related losses on private land.
- Compensation for wolf losses needs to be flexible.
- Redefine boundaries of cattle grazing leases on public lands to reduce potential livestock loss.
- Need ability to issue "take" permits for offending wolves.
- If wolves are threatening livestock, the plan needs to address giving the public the ability to kill wolves, as is allowed for other predators like cougars.
- Need additional manpower to deal with conflicts in rural areas.
- Use adjacent states for model of how to conduct wolf control methods.
- Producers may miss out on compensation due to the time involved in submitting claims.
- Would WDFW become involved in grazing lease appropriations to reduce livestock losses?

Wolf-Game Species Interactions:

- Consider wolf effects on elk, deer, and other wildlife.
- Wolves will improve herd fitness and ecosystems in general.
- Lack of elk in some areas will put predation pressure on deer and livestock.
- Could we consider enhancing prey populations to reduce wolf-livestock interactions?
- Concerned about wolf effects on caribou, hoary marmots, other wildlife.
- Structure of game hunting season needs to consider wolf social structure.

Wolf-Human Interactions/Miscellaneous Issues:

- If wolves are threatening humans, the plan needs to address giving the public the ability to kill wolves, as is allowed for other predators like cougars.
- Public education needs to be a big part of this plan; part of education should be how not to disturb wolves, especially at den sites.
- Public education needed to teach the public on how to identify wolves and distinguish them from coyotes.
- Educate the public to tolerate wolves.
- Need to address negative impacts of wolf viewing and perhaps regulate viewing.
- Wolves could have a beneficial economic impact to small businesses.
- I would like to experience a wolf-human interaction!
- How or who will fund wolf management in Washington?
- Address potential for illegal hunting of wolves.
- Need to identify funding for law enforcement and personnel to investigate depredation, illegal hunting, monitor populations, etc.
- Consider wolves' economic impact on real estate and development. Wolf presence could decrease property values.
- Encourage prohibition of wolf-dog hybrids.

Wolf Management Plan

Public Scoping Meeting Listening Post Comments

Sequim, Aug. 21, 2007 (95 attendees)

Wolf Conservation/Population Objectives:

- Wolf plan needs to set a statewide target population size.
- There is concern over how the state wolf plan will interact with past discussions and plans to reintroduce wolves to Olympic National Park. There may be conflict between the current wolf plan and the past Olympic plan.
- If Idaho's kills most of its wolves, then recruitment of wolves into Washington could fall to zero. In this case, the WDFW wolf plan needs the adaptability to reconsider the sideboard preventing reintroductions of wolves into Washington.
- Reintroduction should be an option if wolves do not move into Washington naturally. The ultimate goal is have wolves back in the state.
- Address translocation as a tool to start populations in areas such as Olympic National Park.
- The Olympic National Park wolf reintroduction plan found that the area had an adequate prey source to sustain a viable wolf population.
- Recovery goal for Washington should include a viable population on the Olympic Peninsula. Natural recolonization there is so unlikely that reintroduction should be reconsidered.
- Wolf plan needs to describe the circumstances and wolf population level for when translocation will occur.
- Tranlocations should be done to achieve a statewide distribution for wolves.
- Wolves should be allowed to re-establish in Washington.
- The WDFW wolf plan should be unique and not based on the plans of other states. However, the plan should be open to the knowledge and lessons learned in other states.
- Wolf recovery should be discussed in a plan separate from the management plan.
- Population goals should be based on ecosystem function rather than wolf population viability.
- What tool will be used to determine viability of population? What is the timeframe? There should be measurable outcomes.
- There should be discussion of possible impediments to recovery.
- Wolf plan should identify suitable habitat for wolves.
- Estimated baselines for different issues should be established before wolves arrive for comparison with after they arrive.
- Wolves should not become a game species after delisting. Hunting should not be a management tool.
- Delineation of eastern third of Washington captures USFWS guidelines.
- Should eventually consider wolves as a potential game animal that might allow trophy hunting and the selling of licenses.

Wolf-Livestock Conflicts:

- Want funding for livestock compensation to be well established.
- Want to know where the money for livestock compensation will come from.
- There needs to be a fairly easy process (with less “red tape”) for livestock owners to gain compensation for losses.
- Quantify levels of depredation in other states.
- Would existing livestock levels impede wolf recolonization in suitable wolf habitat? How would this compare relative to degradation of habitat?
- Different compensation levels should exist for livestock losses on public lands vs. private lands. More losses already occur on public lands than on private lands.
- Should assess the level of livestock mortality caused by coyotes before wolves arrive, then determine if less coyote mortality occurs after wolves return.
- Need to address livestock conflicts with non-lethal means.
- Address non-lethal incentives for landowner/livestock owner and wolf conflicts.
- Research “biological fencing,” which uses a chemical to simulate scent marking to keep wolves away from designated areas.
- Consider using volunteers to assist livestock owners in protecting their animals. They could help put out fladry, fencing, and other non-lethal methods.
- Proper disposal of livestock carcasses should be mandatory to prevent wolf depredations.
- Hold ranchers accountable for poor husbandry practices, such as having calving areas located near a wolf den site.
- Reward ranchers using better management and protection of their livestock herds. If they can show active management, then they should receive higher compensation for livestock losses by wolves.
- Would the Defenders of Wildlife compensation program apply to Washington after federal delisting?
- Should address why there’s a need to compensate for livestock losses.

Wolf-Game Species Interactions:

- Limit hunting of prey species until wolf populations meet their objectives.
- How do wolves affect prey species?
- Should refer to the wolf reintroduction study from the late 1990s for the Olympic peninsula for information on wolf impacts on game.
- There could be benefits to prey species by having wolves.
- Wolves will have impacts on prey species.
- There should be acknowledgement that wolves and prey species have evolved together and therefore should be able to co-exist at some level.
- Wolves can have a positive effect on natural habitats by limiting overabundant prey populations.
- Limit grazing on state land with the goal being to improve forage for deer and elk.
- Use grazing and land management to improve habitat for prey (water, salt, forage), with land managers/grazers providing funds or direct improvements.

- Federal agencies and WDFW have authority to manage US Forest Service and DNR lands to create, maintain, or restore habitat for prey species to attract wolves.
- Politics is involved in setting permit levels for game species.

Wolf-Human Interactions/Miscellaneous Issues:

- Must address public fear and emotion around wolves. Case in point is the snarling wolf photo on the front page of the *Peninsula Daily News* that was printed the day of this meeting.
- Healthy wolf populations equate to healthy human populations (in terms of the mental outlook of people).
- Information and education programs should tell people what to do when encountering an aggressive wolf, similar to what is done in bear information.
- Must consider the impacts of not having wolves in Washington.
- Do wolf diets include non-game species?
- Develop the ecotourism component in the wolf plan.
- Wolf-related ecotourism needs to be responsible.
- Provide sites for potential wolf viewing.
- Public education component in wolf plan will be important.
- Education about wolves is needed in communities affected by wolf recovery. School groups should be targeted.
- There is a need to destroy the myths about wolves through education.
- Education is needed on the role of wolves in ecosystem.
- Educational messages on wolves should reach all of the public.
- Wolf education materials should be prepared for schools.
- Concerted education effort needed to show effects on: economy, people, habitat, prey.
- Education important to reach various cultural backgrounds and perspectives.
- Wolf presence will not restrict land access.
- Presence of wolf populations should not affect public access.
- Work with timber industry to allow wolves to occupy private timberlands.
- WDFW should be given more control to manage wolf habitat on state and federal lands because wolves are endangered.
- Where will funding come from for wolf management after delisting?
- NGO's should be integrated into the wolf management process.
- Keep as many people interested in wolves involved throughout the process (from listing to delisting and management) as possible.
- Wolf plan needs to be flexible and adaptive.
- Wolf plan should anticipate problems that may develop. Review other plans and cases would be helpful in this regard.
- Wolf plan needs to include rules, regulations, and laws that are enforceable and respected.
- Enforcement of wolf protection is important. Should make shooting a wolf a felony.
- Wolves will bring impacts to agriculture, tourism, human-wolf interactions.

- Wolves will bring ecological changes and impacts to second-tier predators.
- Volunteers should be used to document the impacts of wolf recovery.
- Wolf plan should address the potential negative genetic effects that wolf-dog hybrids can have on wild wolf populations.
- People need to be aware of their politicians' environmental stance.
- Landowners control their land. WDFW has more control of habitat on public lands.

Wolf Management Plan

Public Scoping Meeting Listening Post Comments

Bellingham, Aug. 22, 2007 (38 attendees)

Wolf Conservation/Population Objectives:

- People feel strongly about wolves and value them. Wolf conservation is a priority.
- Establish wolf population recommendations by individual ecoregions or regions.
- Population targets should aim for “healthy” wolf numbers.
- Different wolf population goals should be set for different areas using spatially explicit modeling.
- Delisting and relisting targets for wolves should be the same number.
- A recovered wolf population should be geographically well distributed. For example, half of the ecoregions should be occupied before downlisting occurs and about 80% of ecoregions should be occupied before delisting occurs.
- Conduct translocations to the Olympic Peninsula and other appropriate areas.
- Translocations between ecoregions should be conducted.
- Reconsideration of the wolf plan’s sideboard for prohibiting translocation is needed, especially for national parks.
- Use social and political factors, land ownership patterns, and ecoregional targets to establish recovery goals.
- Preserve travel corridors (and their habitat) between areas occupied by wolves.
- Maintain winter and spring habitats for wolves in lowland areas.
- Consider ecological benefits to plant and wildlife communities provided by wolves when developing wolf recovery goals.
- Recovery goals should be high enough to promote genetic variability and provide a buffer against catastrophic loss.
- Establish higher recovery goals for wolves than presented in the Oregon wolf plan.
- Should communicate with people who have donated easements for conservation to learn whether this would work for wolf conservation.
- Encourage government-to-government agreements between Washington and British Columbia to promote wolf recovery in Washington, with attention especially given to reducing or halting the hunting and trapping of wolves in British Columbia along the Washington border.
- Encourage cooperation between WDFW and British Columbia natural resource agencies.
- Endorse cooperative research efforts with Canadian biologists.
- Let nature manage itself – let’s not overmanage nature.
- Make wolves huntable before they are lost from other causes, such as loss of habitat, other predators, etc.

Wolf-Livestock Conflicts:

- Compensation for depredation is important. A compensation program should be established as soon as possible and publicized among ranchers.
- Compensate cost of avoiding loss.
- Ranchers using federal lands need to graze their stock responsibly (e.g., properly disposing carcasses) to prevent avoidable depredations. Education of grazing allotment holders will be necessary.
- Some cattle (e.g., bulls, special cows) more valuable, thus consideration of future values is reasonable. State should set aside some money.
- Wolves coming to livestock operations cost money. There needs to be a compensation method for rancher having to change their operations because of wolves.
- Wolves need to be allowed to survive on public lands. Regarding the issue of livestock grazing on public vs private land, perhaps compensation for depredation on public lands should be less than on private lands.
- Private charities could help with cost of compensation.
- Ranchers should be required to use a certain level of protection against wolves to be eligible for compensation. If they don't use the required protection, then they should have fewer options for killing problem wolves.
- How do cattle managers protect large areas and monitor for predation?
- Ranchers required to keep very young and very old animals protected.
- Provide education and resources to prevent depredation.
- Two different angles of education are how to reach ranchers and provide compensation only to ranchers using wolf-friendly measures.
- What about livestock guard dogs and other deterrents?
- Encourage ranchers to raise and sell "wolf-friendly" beef as a specialty item.
- Marketing of "predator friendly" livestock should begin.
- Make special effort to emphasize non-lethal control of wolves when addressing conflicts.
- "Range riders" already help protect cattle from grizzly bears.
- Electric fencing should be used to protect livestock from wolves.
- Government should provide non-lethal options, such as fencing, anti-wolf odors, noises, etc.
- Non-lethal methods for preventing wolf depredations should be a priority. Deterrence is the goal. At least until wolf recovery methods insure adequate compensation for ranchers. Conflicts can be limited by keeping livestock out of wolf areas during birthing seasons.
- Provide ranchers and farmers with incentives for fencing and other simple things.
- Education outreach is needed for ranchers and farmers. Should use WSU extension agents to help with this.
- Provide ranchers with incentives to give up their grazing allotments. Much like the "buy out" of fishing rights.
- Stop grazing on public lands if it results in wolf-livestock conflicts.
- Ranching on public land is already subsidized. Should livestock producers using public lands receive more assistance from the government?

- Federal agencies should look at what lands shouldn't be grazed.
- Encourage ranchers, farmers, the Washington Department of Transportation, and others to dispose of animal carcasses properly to avoid attracting wolves.
- Wolf conservation should use the carrot approach. Give support to ranchers who don't use practices that attract wolves to their property.
- There must be a way for those from the public who benefit from wolves (e.g., tourists) to pay for the costs of depredation compensation.
- Avoid the problems that Oregon had in getting a compensation plan approved by its state legislature.
- Ranchers should use non-lethal management to reduce wolf depredation.
- Forest Service falls under the Department of Agriculture, which tries to make money off public lands.

Wolf-Game Species Interactions:

- Monitor and maintain prey populations.
- Wolves will control deer and elk populations in a good way by culling old or sick animals.
- Will prey selection of wolves change over time? Will wolves switch from sick or old prey to healthy prey?
- Wolves will prevent deer and elk from overgrazing their habitat.
- Wolves could eliminate problems created by the overpopulation of elk and deer in some areas.
- What happens to game animals when wolves return? Hunters are concerned. Other wildlife uses public lands.
- What happens if wolves lower deer/elk populations below acceptable levels?
- Exactly what effect will wolves have on hunting opportunities for ungulates?
- If deer/elk populations decline because of wolves, hunting should be reduced to compensate for those losses.
- Should manage hunting around livestock areas to influence wolf distribution. Less hunting would provide more prey for wolves, which would then be less likely to kill cattle.
- Education is needed on the role of predators in ecosystems.

Wolf-Human Interactions/Miscellaneous Issues:

- An aggressive information and education campaign is needed to teach people about avoiding potentially dangerous situations involving wolves.
- Wolves need to be kept wild. The wolf plan needs to include strategies for keeping wolves in natural habitats and out of semi-urbanized areas. People should be educated not to intentionally or unintentionally attract wolves to areas inhabited by humans through careless handling of pet food, garbage, etc.
- We must make sure our human habitat does not draw wolves in.
- Educational campaign is needed to teach folks what wolves will and will not do. This will help clear up misconceptions about wolves.
- The wolf plan needs to be implemented without political interference.
- What effect will wolves have on other endangered and threatened species?

- What effects will wolves have on other indicator species in the same range?
- Monitor populations of indicator species with similar ecological niches as wolves.
- Wolves could damage other species through predation or benefit some species by allowing for recovery of habitat.
- Need to keep non-game animals safe from wolves.
- Wolves could have a positive economic benefit for Washington through ecotourism.
- The wolf working group needs to take ownership of the wolf plan and represent/defend/modify the plan with the general public as the plan is implemented. Everyone on group should be invested in the plan.
- The wolf working group is well balanced. It should be a “decision final” group rather than an advisory group.
- How about capturing and sterilizing wolves to control their population, instead of hunting them?
- Are wolves moving into our territory or are we moving into theirs?

Wolf Management Plan

Public Scoping Meeting Listening Post Comments

Vancouver, Aug. 23, 2007 (25 attendees)

Wolf Conservation/Population Objectives:

- Setting goals for and establishing a sustainable wolf population should be science-based and err on the side of having a healthy wolf population.
- What number of breeding wolf pairs is enough – how will we determine what is enough?
- It would be fabulous to have wolves back in Washington.
- In wolf recovery areas, identify core habitat for a fully independent, self-sustaining wolf population within the state.
- When population objectives are established, consider ecological effectiveness and take into account ecosystem benefits.
- Identify safe haven areas for wolves and for translocation. Examples might be the Olympic peninsula and the Gifford Pinchot National Forest.
- Identify habitat corridors for wolf movement within the state.
- Work with state and federal agencies and tribes to reduce road densities in key wolf areas.
- Ecosystem benefits from wolves should be considered. For example, wolves may cause elk to move more, which can result in increased vegetation, increased plant and animal diversity overall.
- In all conflicting situations involving animals, people, or ecosystems, killing the wolf should be the last resort/option.
- Once wolf population goals are reached, consider possible management of wolves by making them a game species to allow regional hunting of packs/individuals.
- If wolves are treated as game species, do not allow unethical means of hunting them, such as aerial hunts, traps, or motorized means.
- If wolf population goals are exceeded and wolves are treated as game, do not allow additional systematic government control through bounties, trapping, aerial kills, poisoning, etc.

Wolf-Livestock Conflicts

- Support compensation for ranchers.
- Use Defenders of Wildlife compensation program for wolf depredation as a template for a similar program in Washington. Make sure this program is well publicized among ranchers.
- Lethal control should be last option and used only after a viable wolf population is established.
- Explore non-lethal control measures. Many are effective to some degree. Publicize and educate ranchers on non-lethal control alternatives and keep current on new research on non-lethal methods.
- Develop non-lethal means of dealing with wolf-livestock interactions.

Wolf-Game Species Interactions:

- Need to strive for balance with hunting opportunity for people and food resources for wolves
- Herd management plans should incorporate wolves, elk, deer, moose, etc.
- Wolves provide management of elk populations.
- Do not allow shortcomings in game management goals/objectives to drive wolf management plan. Do not lower wolf population goals and wolf lethal control standards/triggers based on game objectives.
- Implement robust models and monitoring of predator and ungulate populations.

Wolf-Human Interactions/Miscellaneous Issues:

- Do wolves move to human habitation for food when they can't find any in the wild?
- Develop non-lethal means of dealing with wolf-human interactions.
- The need for controlling wolves to protect human safety should be based on more than just sightings of a wolf.
- More and better public information is needed about wolf-human interactions. Information could be provided at fairs, schools, etc.
- Active and reliable relationship with the media is very important when dealing with wolf-related issues.
- Wolf information should be provided at elementary schools for children.
- Hunters and other groups should be educated on how to interact with wolves in the wild.
- Support having opportunities for viewing wolves in the wild.
- Extra funding for enforcing wolf protection laws. There should be dedicated funding for management and enforcement.
- Washington State should have stricter policies/penalties for unlawful wolf take than the federal Endangered Species Act.
- What types of diseases are possible? Testing for diseases should occur.
- Where will "nuisance" wolves go?