

particular interest in developing conservation and management guidelines for predators and ungulates in concert. There was also concern for making sure wolves did not adversely affect ungulate numbers (particularly at-risk ungulate populations) and hunter opportunity.

wolves naturally recolonize suitable habitat rather than being moved.

Wolf-livestock conflict

- Comments about this topic focused on emphasizing, requiring, and assisting livestock producers with non-lethal tools for conflict mitigation. Another significant topic was the prioritization of wolves and other wildlife over livestock on public land and acceptance of the inherent risk of grazing livestock on public land. Opposition to lethal removal of wolves was expressed, particularly on public lands. Some requested a literature review on the efficacy of lethal removal for conflict mitigation and an evaluation of the process for implementing lethal control. Those in favor of lethal removal felt it was an important tool for wolf-livestock conflict mitigation and some felt it should occur more quickly and/or by issuing depredation permits in conflict scenarios.

Research

- Some commenters felt ongoing research was important and raised concerns about who would conduct and fund future research.

Translocation

- Commenters suggested translocating wolves to meet 2011 recovery objectives, with emphasis on translocating wolves to the Olympic Peninsula. Others suggested translocating wolves involved in conflict with livestock, while others opposed this idea. There were commenters with concerns about translocation and preferred that

Until a new plan is completed, and wolves are considered recovered in Washington, WDFW will continue to use the 2011 Wolf Conservation and Management Plan to guide wolf conservation and management in the state.

This plan is now nine years old and was developed specifically to inform and guide wolf recovery in the state while wolves are considered endangered. The new wolf plan will focus on how WDFW will conserve and manage wolves in the long term after wolf recovery objectives are achieved.

Next steps

The next steps in this process involve preparing a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will be available for public review and comment. That document will evaluate actions, alternatives, and impacts related to long-term wolf conservation and management. A draft EIS is expected to be available in 2021.

Stay engaged

Learn about wolves in Washington:
wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/at-risk/species-recovery/gray-wolf

Stay informed about post-recovery planning:
wdfw.wa.gov/wolves-post-recovery-planning

Sign up for wolf updates e-mailed to your inbox:
wdfw.wa.gov/about/lists

Learn about the Wolf Advisory Group and attend a meeting:
wdfw.wa.gov/about/advisory/wag

For more information, please contact:
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 wildthing@dfw.wa.gov • 360.902.2515



Wolf Post-recovery Planning in Washington: A Summary of Public Scoping Results



On August 1, 2019, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) invited the public to comment on the scope of a post-recovery plan for wolves in Washington.

A post-recovery conservation and management plan for wolves will guide long-term wolf conservation and management where wolves are managed under state authority. This will happen once the wolf population in Washington is considered recovered and no longer designated as state or federally endangered.



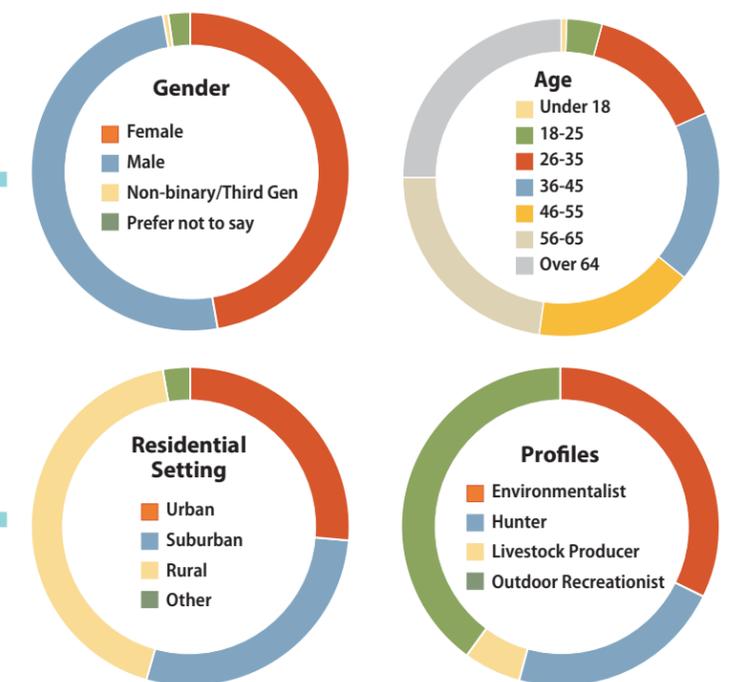
WDFW is following the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process to develop the plan. The first step of the SEPA process was scoping, which helps us to determine proposed actions, alternatives, and impacts to be discussed in an impact statement. Scoping improves decisions and encourages collaboration, cooperation, and early resolution of potential conflicts. It is intended to narrow the impact statement to the relevant issues.

The public scoping comment period for this process was open from August 1, 2019 through November 15, 2019 (107 days).

7,798
public comments
47%
Washingtonians
13%
From Washington
wolf country

The Department received over 7,798 comments. About 47 percent came from within Washington state, and another three percent came from Idaho, Montana, and Oregon, states that also have wolf populations to which Washington wolves are connected. About 13 percent of the comments from within Washington came from areas where wolves are known to occur.

One of the options for providing input was taking an online questionnaire. 2,102 respondents completed the questionnaire and provided information about themselves.



Comment topics and summary

The following categories represent general topic headings under which most scoping ideas were categorized. For a full summary of scoping comments, please visit wdfw.wa.gov/wolves-post-recovery-comments.

Collaborative process

- WDFW received comments on the need for continued collaboration in post-recovery wolf management among stakeholder groups in addition to tribal and interagency coordination. Other commenters expressed concerns with the Wolf Advisory Group and whether or not it is representative of stakeholders in Washington.

Compensation

- WDFW received comments stating livestock producers should continue to be compensated for livestock losses to wolves, while others felt that livestock killed by wolves, particularly on public lands, should be the financial responsibility of the business owner. Other comments addressed ongoing funding sources for compensation.

Conservation and monitoring

- Commenters expressed their desire to see wolf populations managed for abundance and occupation of all suitable habitat or based on population viability analyses/effective population sizes. Commenters touched on the importance of maintaining wolf social structures for population stability. Others felt wolf populations should be limited by thresholds in numbers or impacts to people and ungulates. Many requested emphasis on limiting illegal taking of wolves and enforcing associated laws and penalties.

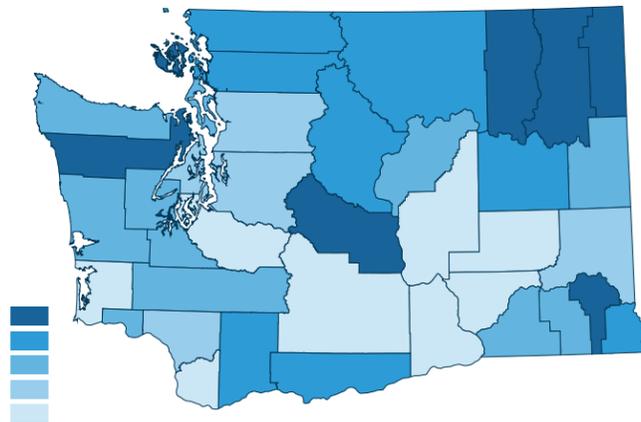
Diseases in wolves

- Some commenters stated that testing wolves and wolf scat for various diseases (hydatid disease, rabies, Chronic Wasting Disease, etc.) is important for human health and safety.

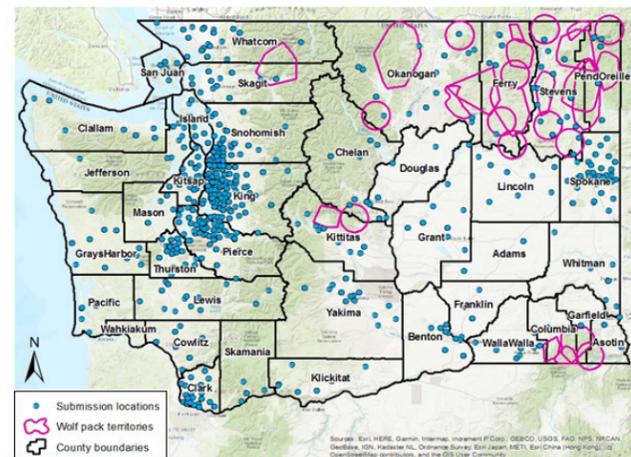
Ecotourism

- WDFW received comments about emphasizing wolf ecotourism (the ability to see or hear a wolf in the wild) in Washington and highlighting the positive economic benefits wolves have in other places where tourists travel from around the world to see them.

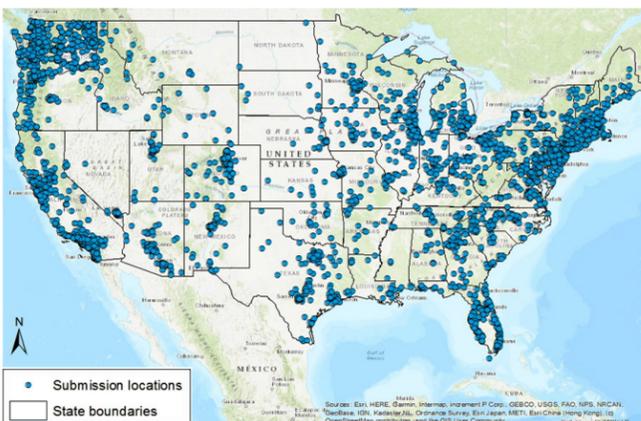
Comments came from across the state and country



This map shows comments per capita (the number of comments by the size of the county population), with darker colors showing more comments per person in the county. The top five counties were Stevens, Garfield, Pend Oreille, Ferry, and Jefferson, all of which currently have wolf populations (except Jefferson).

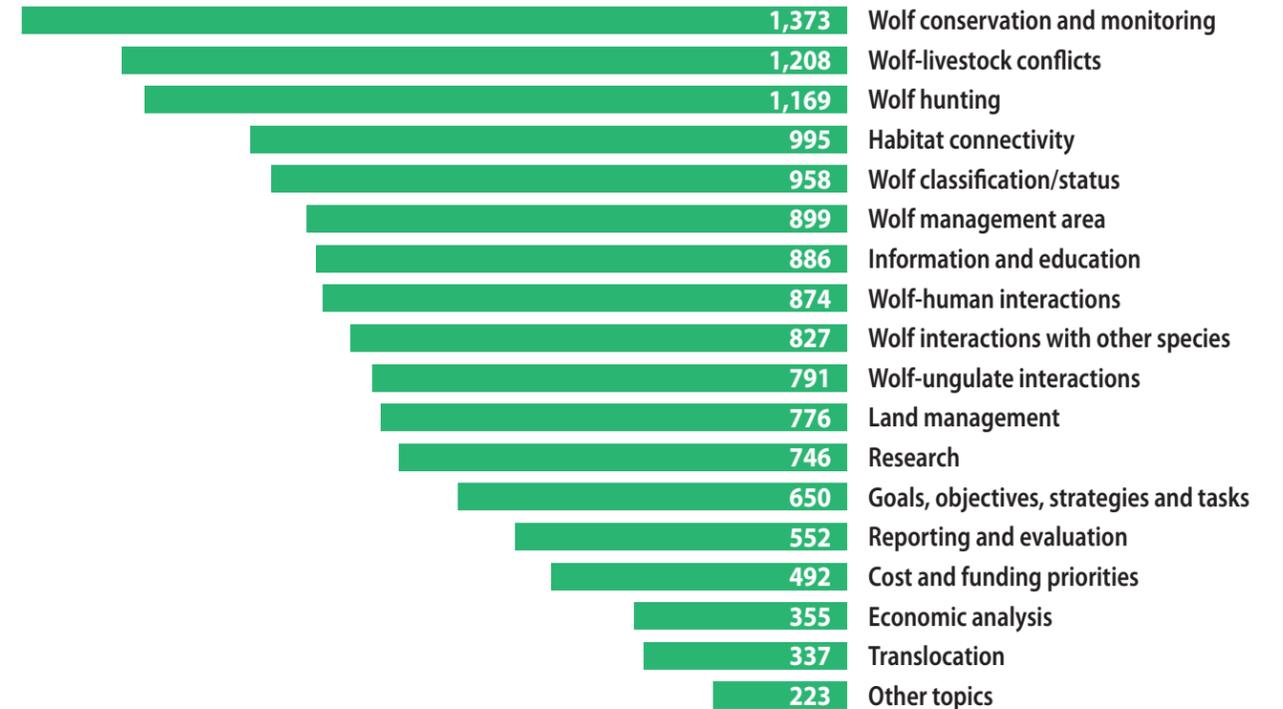


About 47 percent of scoping comments came from within Washington state. WDFW received input from every county in the state. About 13 percent of the comments from within Washington came from areas where wolves are known to occur.



About 53 percent of scoping comments came from all across the United States, including all 50 states.

Which topics are most important to you?



Education and outreach

- Commenters wrote about the ongoing importance of outreach and education about wolves, focusing on coexisting with wolves, conflict avoidance, and the role wolves play in ecosystems.

Funding and economic impacts

- Comments focused on sources of funding for specific wolf management activities (e.g., not allowing taxpayer dollars to be spent on lethal removal of wolves or compensation for livestock loss, not allowing funding for wolf conservation to come from hunter/angler license fees). Others requested full analysis of both positive and negative economic impacts of wolves.

Land management

- Comments in this category focused on protection of dispersal corridors and connecting suitable habitat, reevaluating grazing opportunities in areas occupied by wolves, the appropriateness of grazing on public land in general, and supporting active forest management to bolster ungulate populations.

Legal status, protections, and hunting

- Commenters suggested that wolves should be designated as a protected species/not be listed as a game species or that wolves be designated as game. WDFW received comments of those who did not want to see wolf hunting considered in the post-recovery plan and felt that there is no legitimate purpose for hunting wolves. Those in favor of hunting wolves wanted to do so for reasons including controlling populations, balancing wolves with ungulates, mitigating conflict with people and livestock, raising funds for conservation, and aligning wolf management with bear and cougar management.

Plan development process

- WDFW received many comments on the process for developing the post-recovery plan. Some stated that development of an updated wolf plan is premature at this stage. Others emphasized the need for peer-review of the plan and the importance of holding public meetings.

Predator-prey relations

- Interactions between wolves and their prey were a significant topic in scoping comments. There was