



Wild Sheep Foundation Policy on Large Carnivores

Conservation of wild sheep and the ecosystems they occupy comprise the primary mission of the Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF). The WSF supports scientific solutions to resource management challenges, and to this end, WSF has invested heavily in research, disease investigations and mitigation, population management, wild sheep translocations, habitat enhancement, control of non-native wildlife, predator management, and conservation education in cooperative efforts with universities, governmental agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

Large carnivores, including wolves, coyotes, mountain lions, black bears, and grizzly bears are important components of the ecosystems occupied by wild sheep in North America. And while these apex predators play pivotal roles in ecosystem function, in some situations predation by large carnivores has not only been a factor in limiting healthy wild sheep populations, but has also resulted in wild sheep population declines. Additionally, large carnivores also have the potential to cause extirpation of wild sheep from specific geographic areas.

Because of this extremely significant biological impact on wild sheep and other ungulate populations, and because of the tremendous success in restoration of gray wolf and grizzly bear populations in the northern Rocky Mountains, WSF supports proactive management of large carnivores, including regulated hunting and trapping in addition to delisting both the recovered gray wolf and grizzly bear.

It is the position of the Wild Sheep Foundation that recovered populations of once-threatened or once-endangered large carnivores, and the management of other non-listed large carnivores, is best carried out by the state, provincial, or territorial agencies charged with conservation of wildlife within their respective jurisdictions. WSF believes those agencies are best equipped to evaluate relationships between large carnivores and their prey, and are best positioned to implement management actions necessary to achieve management objectives for wild sheep, other ungulates, and large carnivores.