

O EAST OREGONIAN

PINION

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OUR VIEW

Delisting gray wolf long overdue

Let’s take stock of the progress of the gray wolf’s recovery in the Lower 48 states, shall we?

As it currently stands, upwards of 6,000 gray wolves have taken up residence in states ranging from California, Oregon and Washington state on the West Coast across the northern continental U.S. to Michigan. That’s in addition to about 55,000 wolves that live across the border in Canada.

In every state, the population estimates are just that: Wildlife managers offer only a minimum population estimate because they don’t really know where all of the wolves are. They are popping up all over the place.

In Oregon and Washington, they are now in the Cascade Range and heading further west and south.

OR-7, the wolf that took off from northeastern Oregon and headed down to California before returning to southern Oregon, found a mate that wildlife managers didn’t even know



Stock Photo/Capital Press

about and formed a new pack.

Many of those wolves are descendants of 66 from Canada that were reintroduced in Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho in the 1990s. Others followed their noses into the U.S. from Canada.

The wolves have caused problems for ranchers, who have lost sheep, cattle and working dogs to the predators while wildlife managers were forced to stand by. Because the wolves are protected, only after livestock were

COMMENT ON DELISTING GRAY WOLF

<https://tinyurl.com/y6yz3tf9>

repeatedly attacked were managers able to do anything other than tell ranchers about non-lethal tactics such as fencing with flags on it and hiring range riders.

One thing is clear: The wolf population is thriving in the U.S. — and it will continue to thrive.

For years these ranchers have urged Congress, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service — and anyone who would listen — to take the gray wolf off the list of endangered species. Under the federal Endangered Species Act, wolves are treated as though they are frail little creatures that cannot survive without protection.

In point of fact, the wolves are multiplying and spreading across the countryside in all directions. At this

point, they no longer need protection from anyone.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has now proposed taking the gray wolf off the endangered species list, and we believe the time is right. Wolves should be managed the way any other game animal is managed.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is soliciting your comments on taking wolves off the endangered species list. This is your opportunity to make sure your voice is heard. The deadline is Tuesday, May 14 and the website is <http://bit.ly/wolfdecision>.

The reintroduction of gray wolves can be described as many things, but it has accomplished its goals. Wolves are back. They are thriving. They need no special protections.

Those are the facts. It’s long past time to take them off the endangered species list.

OTHER VIEWS

Too much being asked of everyday heroes

Washington Post

When a gunman opened fire in a synagogue in California, 60-year-old Lori Gilbert Kaye jumped between the shooter and the rabbi. She was killed, but the rabbi credits her with saving his life.

When another man started shooting inside a classroom at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 21-year-old Riley Howell charged him. Shot three times, he died. Authorities said he stopped what would have been a far worse massacre.

And when gunfire broke out Tuesday at a science, technology, engineering and mathematics school in Colorado, 18-year-old Kendrick Castillo lunged at the shooter. He was fatally shot. Witnesses said his actions gave other students a chance to safely get away.

We mourn the loss of these people. They were heroes. Faced with the unimaginable, they were unshrinking. But the fact that people going about the business of everyday life — saying a prayer, giving a college presentation, sitting in English class — feel compelled to throw themselves into the line of fire puts to shame our so-called political leaders, who don’t even have the guts to pass sensible gun reform.

Rather than take proactive measures aimed at preventing shootings (such as New Zealand’s swift move to ban assault weapons), the United States operates on the seeming assumption that mass killing is inescapable, so citizens should learn how to best react. “Run, hide and fight” was the message blasted out to the UNC Charlotte campus when a gunman went on a rampage last month. “I heard a gunshot,” said Makai Dixon, a second-grader at STEM School Highlands Ranch who knew exactly what to listen for because of the drills and lockdowns that are now a core curriculum of U.S. schools. “I have to believe that the quick response of officers that got inside that school helped save lives,” said Douglas County Sheriff Tony Spurlock of Tuesday’s events, which occurred not far from the site of the Columbine school shooting of two decades ago.

It’s good that lessons have been learned in dealing with emergencies. Much credit and gratitude go to the first responders who don’t flinch in racing toward danger. But they — and people such as Lori Gilbert Kaye, Riley Howell, Kendrick Castillo and Makai Dixon — deserve better. They deserve lawmakers who put their safety ahead of gun lobby interests and are willing to enact common-sense gun-control measures — such as universal background checks, a ban on assault rifles and safe storage requirements. That will take courage, but not nearly so much as what we’ve seen from those unelected Americans.

OUR VIEW

An opportunity won’t be taken for granted

You don’t have to search very far across the wide media landscape to find evidence newspapers are in trouble. Declining circulation and vanishing advertising all paint a depressing picture for the future.

Across the nation, newspapers are cutting staff and slicing off important elements to their product. In the wake of these disastrous descriptions of newspaper woe the people who matter — readers — are left inside a news blackout. That means the average American in many places today is less informed, less equipped to participate in our democracy than at any other time in our history.

But before we all line up to pay our final respects to newspapers, before we don our mourning clothes and take refuge in the illustrious past of print, we must place things in perspective. Yes, the newspaper industry is in a spiral. But it isn’t dead. It isn’t, despite the hand-wringing of pundits and analysts, on life-support. In fact, there are many places — right here in Oregon — where the bright light of newspapers continues to shine.



ANDREW CUTLER
COMMENT

The *East Oregonian* is one such place. That is why I stepped back into this industry after a year-and-a-half working for an electric cooperative. The *East Oregonian* started in 1875 and there have been approximately 13 editors up until this week when I became No. 14 in the line. I came back because I believe in the power of local newspapers and the importance of local news. I also believe that the *East Oregonian* is bucking the trend in our industry and, rather than cutting back, we are pushing ahead, eager to embrace the future and

continue to provide you, the reader, with the best local news reporting we possibly can.

I don’t believe the end is near for our industry. In fact, I believe the opposite. I believe that good work can, and will, be done. Work that highlights our shared values, expectations and hopes. Work that keeps the public informed and updated on government actions, that showcases the great community we live in and celebrates the achievements of our neighbors.

There is no great secret to producing a great newspaper. It takes hard work. A laser-like focus and a determination to always keep the reader at the forefront of everything we do. The reader — the subscriber in Pendleton or Hermiston and all points in between — is part of a sacred covenant with the newspaper. That pact is reinforced every day with solid news coverage and a willingness to take on tough projects regarding accountability journalism.

I believe the *East Oregonian* is a good paper that is only going to get better. The staff is excellent, and I am honored that I will be working with such a great crew. I promised myself two years ago when I departed this industry that I would only go back if I found an organization that was already strong and gaining strength. I was lucky. I was granted a great opportunity to be part of this great newspaper. I won’t take that for granted.

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Send letters to the editor to editor@eastoregonian.com, or via mail to Andrew Cutler, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801