

# Reflections

Op-Eds • Letters to the Editor

**Q** *Battle Ground City Councilor Philip Johnson (in office since 2011) is facing two opponents in the coming election who disagree with Washington's new gun law, I-1639. The majority of Battle Ground voters voted against the initiative last year, but it was passed with a state-wide vote.*

*Johnson is standing by enforcing the law. He said that going against the initiative would equate to voter nullification given its state-wide approval.*

**Do you believe Johnson's commitment to upholding the law will hurt him in the election?**

Place your vote and view results at [www.TheReflector.com](http://www.TheReflector.com)

## Letters To The Editor

Readers are encouraged to express their views by writing to the editor of The Reflector. Letters are limited 500 words. Deadline is noon Thursday. Writers are limited to two letters per calendar quarter. All letters must be signed with name, address, plus phone number for verification. Items submitted are subject to editing and will become the property of this newspaper. Opinions expressed in the Letters to the Editor section of this newspaper do not necessarily reflect those of The Reflector or its staff.

Email: [letters@thereflector.com](mailto:letters@thereflector.com)

Mail: The Reflector, Attention: Letters to the Editor, 208 SE 1st Street, Battle Ground, WA 98604

## City of Battle Ground thanks community

We want to thank the Battle Ground community for participating in the recent fire/EMS annexation survey. The results showed that residents want to maintain quality emergency services as our community grows, and they consider Clark County Fire District 3 to be a trusted provider.

Battle Ground is the only city that contracts for emergency services in our area. This means the City funds the fire/EMS contract and other services (such as police, streets and parks maintenance) all through its property tax levy.

The current fire/EMS contract will exceed the City's property tax collection revenues by 2021. Emergency service levels would have to be reduced for the City to maintain a balanced budget. That's why the City will be asking voters to annex to the Fire District in 2020.

Under annexation, property owners would pay the Fire District directly. All property owners would pay the same rate for service. City residents would also be able to vote on fire commissioners, levies and bonds which they currently can't do.

It is a priority of the City to provide quality emergency services for our community as it grows. In the next several months, we will be working on the details with Fire District 3 and sharing more information regarding potential annexation. We welcome your questions.

**Erin Erdman**

*Battle Ground City Manager*

## Another salmon lesson ahead

Remember salmon recovery projections? They stalled and spawning fish declined but not excuses. This federal blanket policy worked in reverse.

Sharing wild salmon to feed Orcas may never increase, so any verbal promise means more money spent on proven no-gain projects, programs not sustaining enough to feed a fly after decades.

Hatch boxes and stream enhancement were omitted by ESA and hatchery reform. Then hatchery smolt reduction sent salmon into a tailspin. This hit like a wrecking ball to spawning fish. Wild fish, sensationalized and overworked, blocked or eliminated proven better solutions. Fish are in double trouble in nature and hatchery fish, our only successful venture, has been squandered. Management unfairly judges them unreasonable to spawn. Hatchery fish, shown every time a winner when utilized elsewhere, have been rejected here. Why does management not use this living and controllable selective choice on demand and give us a win? Replacement for river spawning fish will become a recovery lesson to learn. Culverts with simple adaptations could save millions. Hatch boxes connected to culverts are sensible but denied. Over-restrictive losses can end using simple adaptable choices. Jumpstart river spawning then be selective in several ways with abundance.

**Larry Carey**

*Vancouver*

# Washington's wolves deserve better than a bullet, Gov. Inslee



Sophia Ressler

Northeast Washington's wild public lands are full of rocky slopes and forested valleys. It's perfect habitat for our state's endangered wolves. But this rough, unpredictable terrain offers little if any prime grazing grounds for cattle.

Yet the for-profit livestock industry still insists on letting loose its cattle in public areas completely inappropriate for cows — knowing they'll lose some as a result. And state wildlife managers have gunned down nearly two dozen wolves to placate ranchers who don't want to share the landscape with these magnificent animals.

Washington residents have spoken loud and clear in support of wolves, with 71 percent of those polled saying they support recovery in the state. Now, we need Gov. Inslee to rein in his Fish and Wildlife Department and make sure no more wolves are killed here.

But the governor has failed to respond to urgent pleas from the public and conservation groups to stop the slaughter of Washington's wolves. As someone working to help restore wolves here, I'm hopeful he'll step up and end these killings.

Meanwhile, the deaths continue. Washington and its residents became a little poorer earlier this month after the Fish and Wildlife Department decided to shoot one more of the state's beloved wolves over a livestock conflict. For the second year in a row, the department decided to kill a member of the Old Profanity Territory pack, which ranges outside Colville.

Better solutions exist. State and federal officials could find an alternate grazing allotment that isn't such fantastic wolf habitat. Allowing livestock to feed on public lands comes at little cost to the livestock industry, but it exacts a heavy toll on wolves and the people that want to see them recovered here.

The state has killed 23 wolves, a staggering 20 percent of the currently known small population of only 126 animals. Nineteen were killed to pacify a single livestock owner, and 18 of the wolves killed for him were on lands belonging to the public. These killings

need to stop, and wildlife managers should meet to figure out where the best places are to graze cattle in this wild country or discuss other potential solutions to this grave problem.

We know the region is notoriously bad for livestock. Wildlife officials claim non-lethal deterrents are already being used, but the correct ones need to be used in that terrain. Just because one method is on the department's checklist does not mean it is effective for that particular location.

And deterrents need to be implemented properly. In this wolf-friendly terrain with dense forests, downed timber and otherwise sparse vegetation, cows can't find enough to eat without spreading out across the land. This makes it impossible to monitor all the cattle, stop them from getting trapped in bogs and fallen trees and prevent them from being preyed upon.

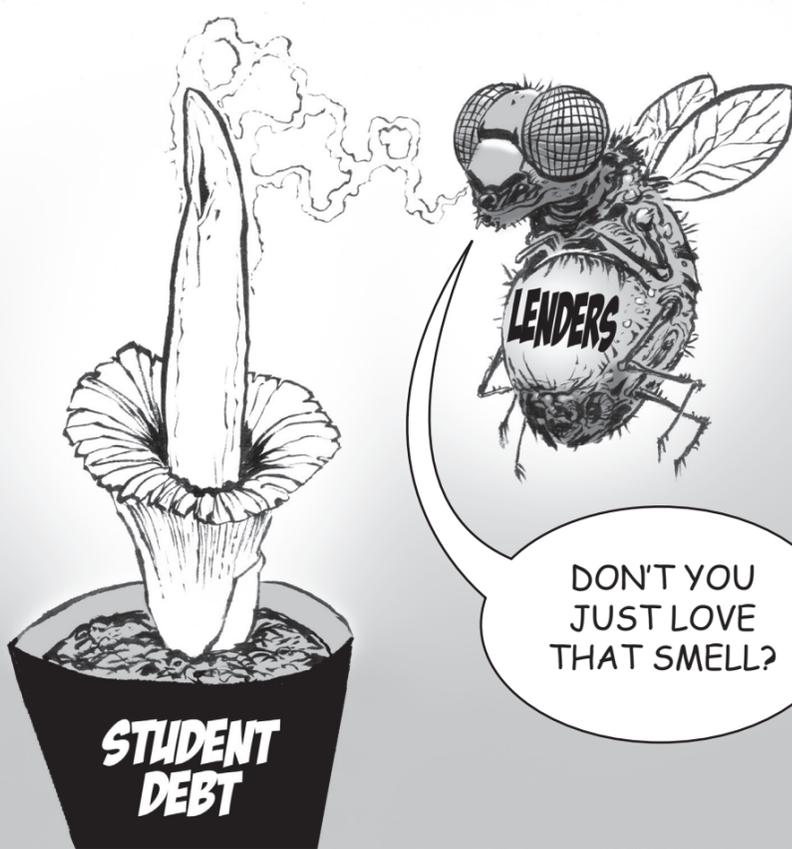
The refusal of Gov. Inslee's wildlife managers to rethink grazing allotments is part of a larger problem: managing wildlife for political and financial interests, instead of following the best available science.

Here in Washington, politicians and a deep-pocketed livestock industry are driving those decisions. This ugly dynamic, which has killed so many wolves recently, is what wiped out these animals a century ago.

By the 1930s, every known wolf in Washington was hunted down and destroyed as part of a national eradication program by the federal government. That was done on behalf of the same livestock industry now working to reverse our state's stutter steps toward wolf recovery.

Gov. Inslee must stand up for the wolves that call this wild state home — and for his constituents who overwhelmingly support wolf recovery, not killing these majestic animals.

Sophia Ressler is Washington wildlife advocate and a staff attorney with the Center for Biological Diversity. She is a Washington native with a J.D. from Pace Law School with a certificate in environmental law. She has spent her career working on a variety of issues in Washington state, from water pollution control to wildlife management and many things in between.



BOEHMKE 2019

# Investment in rural business vital to global economy

It's a story I've heard too many times in my own life and in the lives of the many small business owners I meet:

Person grows up in a small town. Person moves to a city or urban area for college or work. Person yearns to return to the small-town life they love or return to raise their children in the same environment they grew up. However, a lack of job opportunities makes this American Dream unattainable.

While it's heartening to see many of our region's major metropolitan areas flourish in this unprecedented booming economy, we need to include investment in rural

communities as well.

Forty-six million people live in rural America. And according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 54% of counties in Washington state are defined as rural — a substantial segment.

Rural small businesses make a huge and critical impact on our state's economy, the U.S. economy, and even the global economy. For

instance, of the top 10 exports from the state of Washington, six are agricultural products.

While traditional rural sectors such as agriculture, mining and manufacturing employ a smaller percentage of the population than before,

they continue to anchor the economies of more than half of the nation's counties, including right here in our own backyard.

Our strength depends on our rural communities' ability to thrive in the new global economy, build and attract an educated workforce, expand its population base, and use its diverse and abundant natural resources to provide food, fiber, forest products, energy and recreation.

Rural communities face economic challenges different from those in urban areas. Access to public transportation, housing, higher education and job training may limit rural areas' abilities to thrive economically.

Resourcefulness, innovation, common-sense problem-solving and a reverence for hard work are familiar attributes of people in rural areas. They're also

the attributes of successful entrepreneurs.

Jeremy Field is the Regional Administrator for the U.S. Small Business Administration Pacific Northwest Region.

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