

**Agency:** 477 Department of Fish and Wildlife  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** AI Mountain Goat & Bighorn Sheep Rcvry  
**Budget Period:** 2011-13  
**Budget Level:** PL - Performance Level

**Recommendation Summary Text:**

Recent research identified several areas where historic populations of mountain goats have experienced dramatic declines or local extirpations in the north Cascades. WDFW would like to develop and implement a plan to take mountain goats from areas where their populations are robust and release them into suitable habitats in the north Cascades that are vacant, or to boost populations that are currently at low levels.

At the same time, bighorn sheep population levels across the western states have been significantly constrained in recent years due to a disease that is primarily transmitted by the intermingling of domestic and wild sheep. In order to address the transmission of the disease, bighorn sheep would be instrumented with tracking devices to determine their movements and improve our understanding of home ranges. This information would be shared with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to inform domestic sheep grazing allotment plans and minimize the overlap with bighorns.

**Fiscal Detail**

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>	<b><u>FY 2012</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2013</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
104-1 State Wildlife Account-State		350,200	350,200
<b>Total Cost</b>		<b>350,200</b>	<b>350,200</b>
<b>Staffing</b>	<b><u>FY 2012</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2013</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Average</u></b>
FTEs	.0	2.0	1.0

**Package Description:**

**Mountain Goat Translocation:**

A major research effort was recently completed that addressed mountain goat declines in the north Cascades. A new population monitoring technique was developed as a result of the research, and harvest strategies have become much more restricted. The new population monitoring techniques are currently funded using this source of revenue.

The recently completed mountain goat research effort identified several areas of the state where historic populations of goats have experienced dramatic declines or local extirpations. The management strategy to address this decline involves translocation of mountain goats into suitable habitat to establish or boost populations. This strategy is supported by a host of affected management agencies, tribal governments, and conservation organizations.

WDFW would develop and implement a plan to take mountain goats from areas where their populations are robust or otherwise available and release them into suitable habitats that are vacant or to boost populations at low levels. The plan would be developed with multiple partners and co-managers including tribes, the National Park Service, and the United States Forrest Service (USFS).

**Bighorn Sheep Disease Management:**

Bighorn sheep population management across the western states has been significantly constrained in recent years due to a disease that is primarily transmitted by the intermingling of domestic and wild sheep. Washington bighorn range has also experienced outbreaks and population level reductions. The most recent event occurred in the Yakima Canyon of central Washington in 2009. Current funding provides limited support for disease prevention research at Washington State University (WSU), population surveys across the state, and one or two capture and relocation efforts each year.

Recent events in the bighorn sheep arena include a policy decision by the USFS to change their management of grazing allotments to avoid overlap between domestic sheep and bighorns, and WSU's promising results from research for developing a vaccine. In combination, these two events could help address the greatest impediment to stable bighorn sheep populations and allow for expansion into other suitable habitat.

Bighorn sheep would be instrumented with tracking devices to determine their movements and improve our understanding of home ranges. This information would allow the USFS to modify domestic sheep grazing allotment plans to minimize overlap with bighorns. In addition, we would expand our efforts with WSU to speed the development of a vaccine to reduce the potential exposure from domestic sheep that might be vectors for disease.

**Implementation schedule:**

**Mountain Goat Translocation:** WDFW would complete a plan with our co-managers in 2012 and begin captures and relocations during the summer of 2013.

**Bighorn Sheep Disease Management:** WDFW would begin capturing bighorns and fitting them with tracking devices in the summer of 2012 and plotting their range over the next several years. Additional capture efforts would be conducted in 2013 and 2014. We would begin coordination with WSU to fund expanded research and development of a vaccine to prevent disease transmission during the summer of 2012.

**Name and Phone Number of Subject Matter Expert:**

Dave Ware, Game Division Manager, Wildlife Program (360) 902-2509

**Narrative Justification and Impact Statement**

*What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?*

WDFW would restore mountain goat populations over a greater proportion of their historic range in Washington. We would also reduce the risk of transmitting disease from domestic sheep and goats to wild bighorn sheep which is considered the most significant limiting factor for bighorn sheep populations across their range in North America.

The major areas affected will be the central Cascades and the Blue Mountains of southeast Washington.

**Performance Measure Detail**

**Activity: A038**

**Provide Sustainable Hunting and Wildlife Viewing Opportunities**

**Incremental Changes**

No measures submitted for package

*Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?*

This decision package supports the following goal in the Department of Fish and Wildlife's 2011-17 Strategic Plan, goal 1: Conserve and protect native fish and wildlife. Objective A: Enhance conservation practices to improve protection and restoration of fish, wildlife and habitat. Strategy 5: Complete and implement the highest priority conservation actions.

***Does this decision package provide essential support to one of the Governor's priorities?***

The decision package contributes to two Priorities of Government (POG) result areas: Improving the quality of Washington's natural resources, and Improving cultural and recreational opportunities throughout the state.

The activities proposed as elements of this decision package appear as highest priority purchases (90% level) in the POG result area of improving the quality of Washington's natural resources, including conducting surveys of fish, wildlife and habitat; and managing fish and wildlife harvest.

***Does this decision package make key contributions to statewide results? Would it rate as a high priority in the Priorities of Government process?***

The Game Management Activity ranked 22 out of 148 Activities in the 2011-13 POG result area "Protect Natural Resources and Cultural and Recreational Opportunities".

***What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?***

Other impacts of this proposal would be to improve relationships between the state and treaty tribes. Our relationship with the sheep industry would also be improved through the development of a vaccine to reduce the likelihood of disease transmission from domestic sheep to bighorns.

***What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?***

We have initiated several of these strategies, but with limited funding it will take several years before they can be accomplished. Several of the conservation organizations that support these proposals have helped secure this funding by promoting and conducting the auctions or raffles of permits. They are strongly encouraging that these priority projects be completed.

***What are the consequences of not funding this package?***

Recovery and protection of mountain goat and big horn sheep populations would be delayed and the support (including outside funding) to accomplish the proposal would diminish.

***What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?***

None.

***What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?***

None.

***Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions***

**Revenue:**

The revenue balance in the auction and raffle sub-accounts for mountain goats, bighorn sheep, and multispecies permits is \$470,180. We expect the auctions and raffles for FY 2012 and 2013 in these sub-accounts to generate another \$433,000.

**Salaries and Benefits:**

1.00 FTE Natural Resource Scientist 4 to manage the expanded program and to develop an agreement with Washington State University to develop a vaccine to inhibit transmission of disease to bighorn sheep.

1.00 FTE Fish and Wildlife Biologist 4 to conduct capture, relocate, and monitor activities for mountain goats, and for data analysis and reporting. Salaries \$110,400 and benefits \$42,000.

**Goods and Services:**

Standard supply costs are included at \$5,500 for each FTE per year. DOP/HRMS costs are \$1,200 per year. Capture and handling supplies necessary for program operations are included at \$5,200 in FY13.

Infrastructure and support costs of 23.51% is included in goods and services totaling \$42,900. This increases to \$53,400 in FY14 and ongoing (an increase of \$10,500).

**Travel:**

Standard travel costs are included at \$2,500 for each FTE per year.

Motor pool vehicle costs are estimated at \$7,500 per year.

**Equipment:**

Capture equipment, radio telemetry equipment, transmitters and receivers necessary for program operations are estimated at \$69,700 per year, with an additional \$55,300 in FY13 for initial equipment costs.

***Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?***

All cost are ongoing. While we have some initial equipment and supply costs in FY13 for capture and handling activities (radio telemetry, transmitter and receiver equipment), that authority will transition to cover costs of wildlife capture in future years (contracts for helicopter services, utilizing our staff to conduct captures and placement of transmitters, and/or contracting with companies that conduct the entire capture, deliver the animals to us for placement of transmitters, then move the animals back to the place of capture).

<b><u>Object Detail</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2012</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2013</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
A Salaries And Wages		110,400	110,400
B Employee Benefits		42,000	42,000
E Goods And Services		60,300	60,300
G Travel		12,500	12,500
J Capital Outlays		125,000	125,000
<b>Total Objects</b>		<b>350,200</b>	<b>350,200</b>