



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE (DS) AND ADOPTION OF EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT)

Name of Proposal: DS/Adoption 18-045: OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK MOUNTAIN GOAT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Description of Proposal:

This Mountain Goat Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (plan/EIS) analyzes the impacts that could result from a continuation of current management of an exotic mountain goat population on the Olympic Peninsula (the no-action alternative) by the National Park Service (NPS) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, as well as the impacts that could result from three action alternatives. The plan/EIS describes the reasons the NPS is taking action at this time and evaluates a range of alternatives for the management of exotic mountain goats on the Olympic Peninsula, as well as the associated actions proposed by the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) to translocate mountain goats primarily to National Forest System (NFS) lands in the North Cascade Mountains should an alternative involving translocation be implemented. Two separate project areas are being evaluated in this plan/EIS: (1) areas of Olympic National Park and Olympic National Forest, where exotic mountain goats could be reduced, which comprise the area referred to as the Olympic Peninsula; and (2) areas in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest where mountain goats could be translocated, which comprise the area referred to as the North Cascades national forests.

The purpose in taking action is to allow the NPS to reduce or eliminate impacts on park resources from exotic mountain goats, while reducing potential public safety issues associated with the presence of mountain goats in the park.

Mountain goats are not native to the Olympic Peninsula. They were introduced to the Olympic Mountains prior to the establishment of the Olympic National Park, and have since colonized the entire range, with the majority of the population residing within the Park (Noss et al. 2000). The original need to manage this exotic species was an ecological concern related to the impacts that mountain goats impose on natural resources at the park, particularly sensitive vegetation communities (NPS 1995; Houston, Schreiner, and Moorhead 1994). Safety concerns were increased in 2010 when a visitor was fatally gored by a mountain goat while hiking on a park trail. Mountain goats have a high affinity for salts and natural sources of salt occur within their native range. There are no natural sources of salt in the Olympic Mountains, and mountain goats have learned to seek salts from humans. In areas with high levels of visitor use within the park and national forest, mountain goats have become conditioned to the extent that they are a nuisance and may be hazardous to visitors. The Olympic National Park Mountain Goat Action Plan addresses mountain goat behavior and seeks to minimize the potential for hazardous mountain goat-human encounters. This action plan focuses on the management of individual mountain goats that have been identified as potentially hazardous. Additional planning and compliance is needed to address overall management of the mountain goat population on the Olympic Peninsula.

There is also a need to remove mountain goats from adjacent lands in the Olympic National Forest because mountain goats in these areas are part of a population that moves between the Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park. As in the national park, mountain goats cause soil erosion, impact native plant communities, and occupy habitat for native species in the national forest. As a result of these concerns, a plan/EIS is needed to address the impacts of exotic mountain goats in the park and in the adjacent Olympic National Forest, which would include the interference with natural processes, native species, natural habitats, and impacts on visitor use and safety.

Under the preferred alternative, a combination of capture and translocation and lethal removal tools would be used to eliminate or greatly reduce mountain goats from the park and adjacent areas in Olympic National Forest. The intent of initial management would be to reduce the population of mountain goats to zero, acknowledging that this objective may be difficult to achieve. Once a point of diminishing returns for safe and efficient capture operations is reached, management would continue using lethal removal activities. The state of Washington, through the Department of Fish and Wildlife, has identified a number of sites in the North Cascades where mountain goats are native but have previously been reduced to very low numbers, or extirpated completely. Goats from the Olympic Mountains, provided by NPS, will be translocated to some or all of these sites, as detailed in the plan/EIS.

Proponent/Applicant: National Park Service, Olympic National Park
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Location of Proposal, including street, if any:

Olympic National Park and Olympic National Forest (Clallam, Jefferson, Grays Harbor, and Mason Counties)

Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest (Snohomish, Skagit, and King Counties)

Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest (Kittitas and Okanogan Counties)

Washington Department of Natural Resources land (Snohomish County)

Seattle Public Utilities land (King County)

Title of document being adopted: Final Mountain Goat Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

Agency that prepared document being adopted: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Date adopted document was prepared: April 2018

Description of document (or portion) being adopted: The entire contents of the Environmental Impact Statement.

If the document being adopted has been challenged, please describe: N/A

Name of agency adopting the document: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

The document is available to be read at:

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife - Natural Resources Building,
1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia, WA, Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm.

This document is also available for review online at: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/OLYMgoat>
and http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/sepa_final_docs_2018.html

Adoption of Existing Environmental Document: After independent review, we have identified and adopted the referenced document as being appropriate for this proposal. The document meets our environmental review needs for the current proposal and will accompany the proposal to the decision maker.

We issued this Determination of Significance/Adoption Notice under WAC 197-11-360(2), WAC 197-11-610, and WAC 197-11-630. We will not act on this proposal for 7 days from the date of issue below.

Responsible Official: Lisa Wood

Position/Title: SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Regulatory Services Section

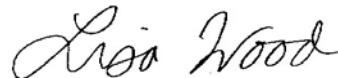
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DATE OF ISSUE: June 22, 2018

SIGNATURE:



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