

Record of Decision Mountain Goat Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement (plan/EIS) for Olympic National Park

**USDA Forest Service
Olympic, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, and Okanogan-Wenatchee National
Forests
Clallam, Jefferson, Mason, Grays Harbor, Whatcom, Skagit,
Snohomish, King, Pierce, Chelan, and Kittitas Counties, Washington**

Decision and Reason for the Decision

Background

The Olympic National Park Mountain Goat Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement (plan/EIS) evaluates the impacts of a range of alternatives for managing exotic mountain goats on the Olympic Peninsula in a manner that reduces impacts on park resources while reducing potential public safety issues associated with the presence of mountain goats. The plan/EIS documents the analysis of four alternatives to meet this need: the no-action alternative (Alternative A) and three action alternatives (Alternatives B, C, and D). Two separate project areas were evaluated in the plan/EIS: (1) areas of the 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 National Park Service (NPS) is the lead agency for the plan/EIS, and the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) are cooperating agencies. Management of mountain goats in Washington State is the primary responsibility of WDFW, and the Forest Service is responsible for managing the majority of mountain goat habitat outside of Olympic National Park on both the Olympic Peninsula and in the North Cascades mountains (see Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2600). NPS has jurisdiction over actions on NPS lands; however, the Forest Service has jurisdiction over the National Forest Systems (NFS) land and must provide NPS and WDFW authorization to engage in certain proposed mountain goat management activities on its lands.

The NPS published the final plan/EIS on May 4, 2018 and signed a record of decision (ROD) on June 18, 2018. The NPS ROD selected Alternative D, which includes translocating mountain goats from the Olympic Peninsula to North Cascades national forests as well as lethally removing goats from the Olympic Peninsula. The NPS ROD authorizes only those actions that will occur on NPS lands or that do not otherwise require Forest Service authorization, requiring that certain connected actions on NFS lands be authorized under a separate Forest Service decision. Utilizing the best available science, the NPS selected Alternative D because it represents a balanced approach to reducing or eliminating mountain goats within the park while protecting park resources, providing for the preservation of wilderness character, and augmenting the native mountain goat population in the North Cascades national forests. NPS determined the selected alternative will benefit most resources in the long-term while allowing for

removal of mountain goats in a faster and more efficient manner compared to the other alternatives considered, which will most effectively address the objectives of the plan/EIS.

Scope of This Decision

The Forest Supervisors for the three affected National Forests will authorize actions on their respective Forests that involve helicopter landings and use of temporary fencing and salt blocks in wilderness areas; staging area preparation, issuance of temporary forest closure orders around staging areas, capture sites, and lethal removal areas as needed, per 36 CFR 261 Subpart B; and authorizing use of closed areas as needed. Helicopter use outside of designated wilderness on NFS land does not require Forest Service authorization and is not included in this ROD.

This ROD was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), its implementing regulations (40 CFR 1500–1508) and project-level predecisional administrative review process regulations (36 CFR Part 218), the USDA Forest Service’s NEPA regulations (36 CFR Part 220), and the Forest Service NEPA Handbook. This ROD includes the purpose and need for action, a summary of the decision and supporting rationale, a description of public and agency involvement, a discussion of the selected alternative as well as additional alternatives considered and analyzed in detail in the Final Plan/EIS, findings required by other laws or Executive Orders, and information about the administrative review process. The NPS ROD, Final Plan/EIS, and project record are incorporated by reference.

Purpose and Need for Action

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 Olympic National Park. FEIS at 1. Mountain goats are not native to the Olympic Peninsula, but since being introduced prior to establishment of the Park, they have colonized the entire range. 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). New concerns were raised 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.

There is also a need to remove mountain goats from adjacent Olympic National Forest lands because mountain goats in these areas are part of a population that moves between the forest and park. FEIS at 1-2. 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, the plan/EIS was needed to address the impacts of exotic mountain goats in the park and in the adjacent Olympic National Forest, which will include the interference with natural processes, native species, natural habitats, and impacts on visitor use and safety.

Decision

Based upon review of all alternatives, we have decided to authorize actions necessary to implement Alternative D (preferred alternative). Alternative D uses a combination of capture and translocation and lethal removal to reduce or eliminate mountain goats from Olympic National Park and adjacent Olympic

National Forest lands and translocates captured goats to the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests.

Summary of Alternative D – NPS ROD Selected Alternative

On NFS lands, Alternative D involves removing mountain goats (either via live capture or lethal means) from Olympic National Forest (Figure 1) and translocating them to the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests for release into both wilderness and non-wilderness areas (Figure 2). Capture and translocation will take place wherever safe and once these actions become unfeasible, lethal removal of remaining mountain goats will be initiated. These management activities could last 3 to 5 years, with most of the activity in years 1 to 4. Alternative D is summarized below and more fully described and analyzed in the plan/EIS available at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/olyngoat>.

Areas in the Olympic National Forest where captures will likely be conducted and where high visitor use overlaps with mountain goat habitat, include the following areas: Mt. Ellinor, Mt. Washington, and Mt. Jupiter; in the Buckhorn Wilderness / Mt. Townsend area; in the Mount Skokomish Wilderness; in The Brothers Wilderness; and in the Lena Lakes area. NPS will coordinate closely with Forest Service staff during capture activities in Olympic National Forest.

Captured mountain goats will be transported by helicopter to one of five Olympic Peninsula staging areas (of which two are within the Olympic National Forest). At these staging areas, WDFW and NPS will coordinate processing captured mountain goats and WDFW will prepare them for transport and relocation. The action of translocating mountain goats captured on the Olympic Peninsula will be overseen by WDFW, including the ground transportation of mountain goats to North Cascades staging areas and their release to nearby alpine habitat. WDFW will translocate mountain goats in crates transported by vehicle to the North Cascades national forests, where mountain goats are native and the augmentation of existing populations will further mountain goat conservation efforts (e.g., improve genetic diversity and enhance demographic vigor to depleted populations). Seven staging areas and eleven release sites have been identified on NFS land in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests. The release sites include areas of suitable mountain goat habitat within and outside of designated wilderness on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests.

Capture and translocation operations will occur during no more than two 2-week management periods per year: once in mid- to late July, and once in late August to mid-September. Capture operations could take place up to 12 days per management period. Helicopter operations could last up to 8 flight hours per day, with a maximum possible total of 96 flight hours over each 2-week management period. This will be divided between flights to the staging areas on the northern side of the Olympic Mountains and staging areas in Olympic National Forest on the east/southeast side.

The number of mountain goats captured and translocated will depend on capture success and the ability of WDFW to receive and translocate mountain goats. It is estimated that approximately 50% of the mountain goat population could be captured (approximately 325-375 animals). The success rate for capturing mountain goats is expected to diminish over time and management will likely switch to almost exclusively lethal removal during year 3 or year 4, but could begin as early as year 2. By year 5, most mountain goats encountered will be lethally removed. An estimated 40% of the population (275-325 animals) is expected to be lethally removed. Combined, these management actions are expected to remove approximately 90% of the mountain goat population from the Olympic Peninsula.

Lethal removal of mountain goats will include helicopter- and ground-based use of firearms. Olympic National Park and WDFW staff and other approved personnel, including trained volunteers, will access areas on foot where possible, but in more remote areas, a helicopter will be used.

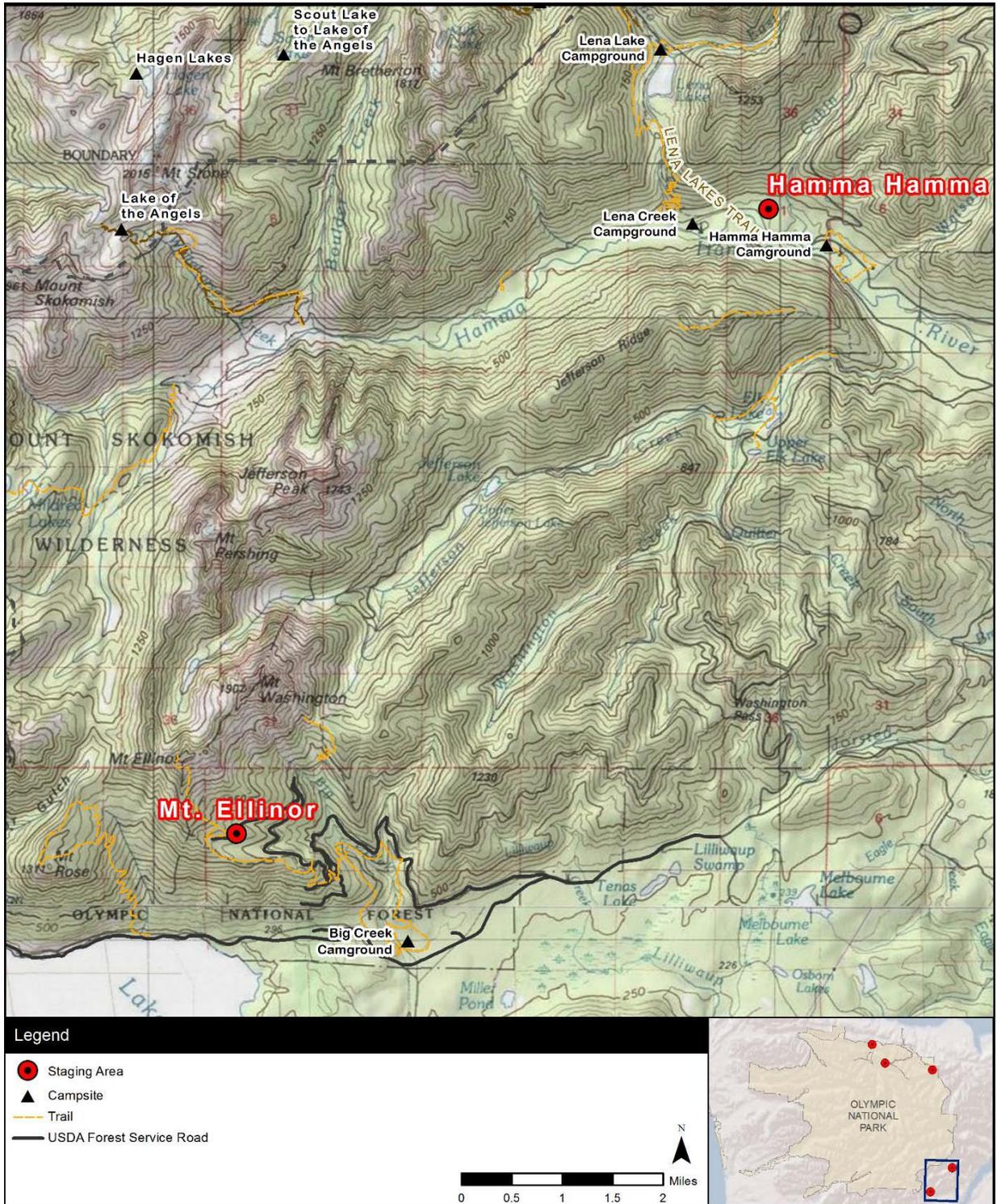


Figure 1. Staging areas in Olympic National Forest.

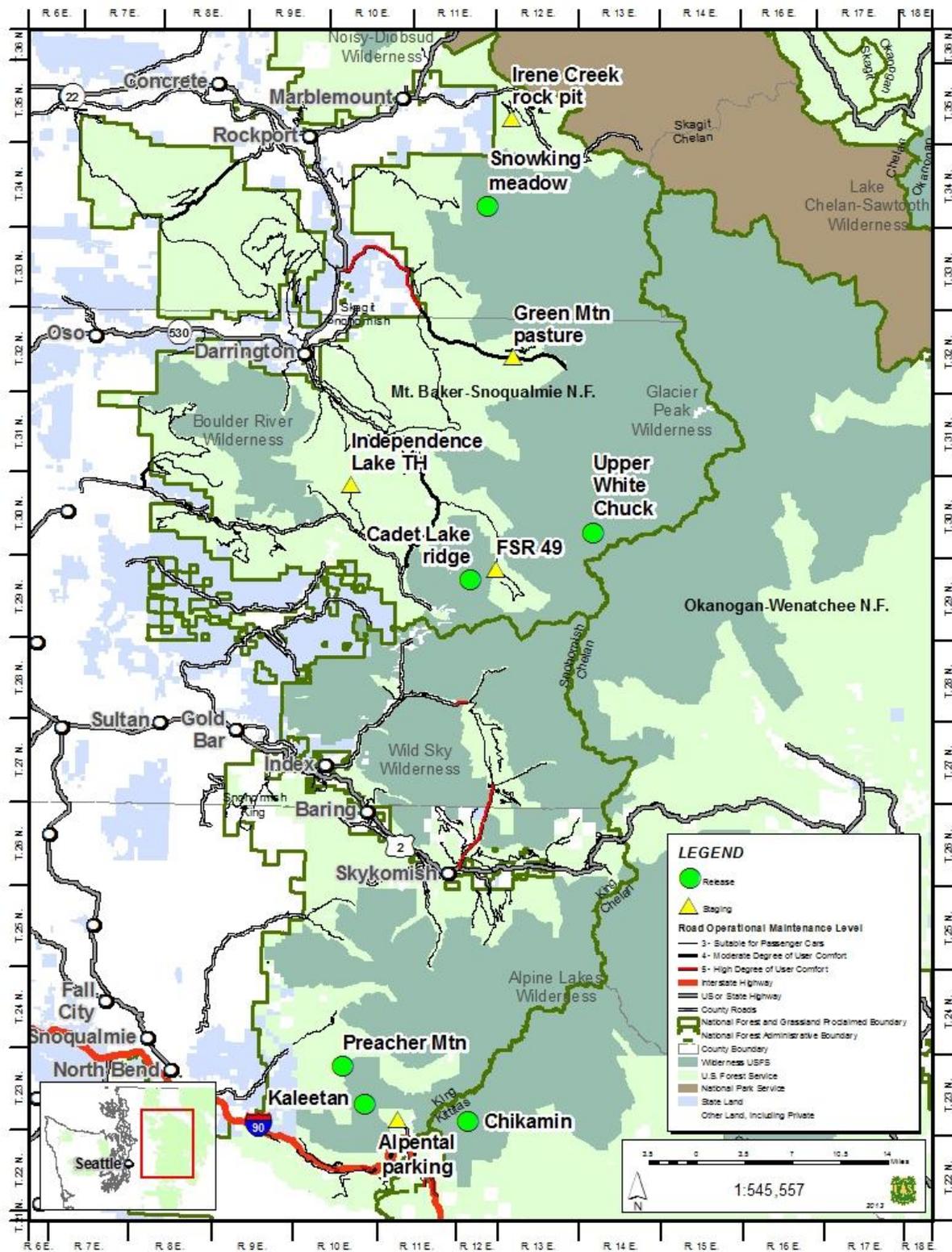


Figure 2. North Cascades staging and release sites covered by this decision.

Forest Service Authorization

This ROD authorizes NPS and WDFW to use helicopters to capture mountain goats from wilderness areas in the Olympic National Forest and transport them to staging areas on the Olympic Peninsula. This ROD also authorizes WDFW to use helicopters to transport captured goats from North Cascades staging areas to releases sites within the North Cascades national forests, including sites in wilderness. Also authorized at wilderness release sites are the temporary installation of fencing and salt blocks. Use of helicopters for lethal removal of mountain goats within the Olympic National Forest is also authorized. Additionally, this ROD authorizes vegetation management necessary for staging area preparation as well as temporary forest closures and use of these sites associated with the NPS capture operations, and at staging areas used by the WDFW.

Specific Activities Authorized by this ROD

- **Olympic National Forest:**
 - Use of helicopters for removing mountain goats from wilderness areas in the Olympic National Forest and transporting them to staging areas. Up to 144 helicopter landings in wilderness are authorized over two, two-week management periods each year in July and August-September over the course of up to five years.
 - Temporary closures associated with the NPS capture operations, and at staging areas used by the WDFW. Authorized closure areas are Hamma Hamma and Mt. Ellinor. FEIS at 41-42.
 - Mt. Ellinor—The Mt. Ellinor staging area is located on NFS land at the Upper Ellinor Trailhead parking lot, in the southeastern portion of the Olympic Mountains (figure 1) at approximately 3,500 feet above sea level. The site is accessed via a maintained, gravel NFS Road 2419-014. NPS will use the 0.25-acre trailhead parking lot as a landing zone, and could use a 0.3-acre gravel area north of the trailhead for additional parking if necessary. A small number of small diameter (less than 8 inches in diameter at breast height) conifer trees will need to be removed to create a clear helicopter flight path. The trailhead area will need to be closed during operations, since much of the parking area will be taken up with operational needs. This staging area will not be used during July in order to reduce disturbance to park and national forest visitors. Additional areas to close would include the entire length of NFS Road 2419 starting at the junction with NFS Road 24 to the Mt. Ellinor Trailhead; at the junction of the NFS Road 2419 and NFS Road 2464; and the Mt. Ellinor trail (#812) from the junction of the Upper Big Creek Loop trail (#827.1) to Mt. Ellinor. The closures would include temporary barriers, including a gate and water-filled jersey barriers to limit access to the site during operations for agency and contract staff involved in the operations. Big Creek Campground, located less than two miles from the staging area, will remain open and visitors will likely hear helicopter noise.
 - Hamma Hamma—The Hamma Hamma staging area is located on NFS land and is the southeastern-most of the five staging areas (figure 1), at approximately 700 feet above sea level. The site is an irregularly- shaped, 3.3-acre area that formerly hosted a gravel pit on NFS Road 2500-011. The ground surface is composed of areas of gravel and low vegetation. It is in a flat area, accessed by paved roads,

located off of a spur that is gated; therefore, public access could be easily controlled with a temporary closure when in use. Some tree clearing (< 0.25 acre) will be necessary in areas along the perimeter of the site to create a clear 300-foot helicopter flight path. Trees will all be less than 20 inches in diameter at breast height and will consist of a mix of alders and conifers. The Lena Lakes and Hamma Hamma campgrounds are both located approximately 0.75 mile away and helicopters will be audible to campers, but a flight path will be designated in order to minimize impacts. This site is currently an administrative site and is closed by a year-round gate.

- Temporary installation of salt blocks in wilderness is authorized. Salt blocks will be placed outside of wilderness to the extent possible.

- **Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest:**

- **Wilderness Release Areas:**

- Use of helicopters authorized for moving mountain goats from staging areas to release areas in designated wilderness within the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Authorized release sites in designated wilderness include Kaleetan and Preacher Mountain in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness; Cadet Lake Ridge in the Henry M. Jackson Wilderness; and Upper White Chuck Basin, Buckindy, and Snowking Meadow in the Glacier Peak Wilderness. See Table 1. Up to 238 helicopter landings in wilderness are authorized over a maximum of two two-week management periods each year in July and August-September over the course of up to five years.
- Temporary installation of salt blocks in wilderness is authorized. Salt blocks will be removed after approximately one year.
- Temporary installation of plastic fencing in wilderness is authorized. At each site, fencing will be removed immediately following completion of release activities.

Table 1. Mt. Baker Snoqualmie N.F. wilderness release sites.

Name	Wilderness	Number of Helicopter Trips	Approximate Total Flight Time (minutes)
Kaleetan	Alpine Lakes	36	288
Preacher Mountain	Alpine Lakes	36	504
Upper White Chuck Basin	Glacier Peak	46	736
Cadet Lake Ridge	Henry M. Jackson	40	200
Buckindy	Glacier Peak	40	480
Snowking meadow	Glacier Peak	40	636
	<i>Total</i>	<i>238</i>	<i>2,844</i>

- **Staging Areas:** Temporary closures, authorization to be within closed areas, and staging area preparation associated with the movement of goats between Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest staging areas and release areas, as summarized below.
 - **NFS Road 49 staging area** (Darrington R.D.) – Temporary road closure (may be implemented as intermittent road/trailhead closure with flagger) and staging area preparation including some tree and vegetation removal (<1/4 acre) to accommodate helicopter landing. WDFW authorization to be within closed area.
 - **Independence Lake Trailhead staging area** (Darrington R.D.) – Temporary trailhead closure and WDFW authorization to be within closed area.
 - **Irene Creek Rock Pit** (Mt. Baker R.D.) – Temporary road closure and staging area preparation including vegetation removal (<1/4 ac. as necessary to accommodate helicopter landing). WDFW authorization to be within closed area.
 - **Alpental parking** (Snoqualmie R.D.) – WDFW authorization to be within gated area.
 - **Green Mountain Pasture** (Darrington R.D.) – WDFW authorization to be within gated area.
- **Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest**
 - **Wilderness Release Area:**
 - Use of helicopters authorized for moving mountain goats from staging areas to release areas in designated wilderness within the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest. Authorized release sites include Chikamin in the Alpine Lake Wilderness. Up to 36 helicopter landings in wilderness are authorized over a maximum of two two-week management periods each year in July and August-September over the course of up to five years (approximately 468 minutes flight time).
 - Temporary installation of salt blocks in wilderness is authorized. Salt blocks will be removed after approximately one year.
 - Temporary installation of plastic fencing. At each site, fencing will be removed immediately following completion of release activities.

Mitigation Measures

General

- Helicopter staging area preparation, if necessary, will be scheduled prior to the proposed action, preferably during the early to late fall, unless otherwise agreed.
- Project staff will coordinate flight schedules and paths with Naval Air Station Whidbey Island to ensure that operations on the Olympic Peninsula or in the North Cascades national forests do not interfere with active military training routes.
- Helicopter flight paths will avoid highly developed areas and residences.

- During management activities at staging areas, staging areas that are not already behind gates will be otherwise secured.

Mountain Goats

- Capture and translocation efforts will strive to minimize stress and to protect the welfare of individual animals, including attempts to keep nannies and kids together.

Wilderness

- Public notification of activities affecting wilderness will be provided, and appropriate information will be distributed at visitor centers.
- Project staff will access wilderness areas via foot or by riding stock where possible, without risking life or limb. This will be considered for travel to sites accessible by trail or non-technical cross-country travel (e.g., without the use of crampons, ice axes, rope, or other specialized equipment). “Leave no Trace” principles will be applied during all management activities.
- Foot travel will be considered for both baiting mountain goats ahead of time and during the capturing operational period, to limit impacts on wilderness character from the use of motorized equipment and mechanized transport and impeding solitude or primitive recreation from helicopter operations. Capture sites to be considered for primitive travel of personnel include, but are not limited to, Marmot Pass in the Buckhorn Wilderness and Mt. Ellinor in the Mount Skokomish Wilderness.
- Duration and geographic scope of actions and disturbances will be minimized in wilderness areas.

Acoustic Environment

- Helicopter flight paths will be a minimum of 500 feet above marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl habitat.
- Helicopter flight paths to and from staging areas will be designed to minimize noise impacts on wildlife and visitors to the greatest practicable extent.
- Temporary area closures in the immediate vicinity of mountain goat capture, lethal removal, and release operations will minimize noise impacts on backcountry and wilderness visitors.

Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

- Once established based on conditions, previously agreed upon travel corridors and flight altitudes for helicopters will be used during operations.
- Contractors and other project workers will properly store and dispose of food and garbage while working on site.
- Staging areas will be located in areas that are previously disturbed, and will necessitate the least impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat.
- Lead-free ammunition will be used for lethal removal activities to prevent environmental contamination.

Vegetation

- Inspections for invasive plants will take place prior to any activities at staging areas.
- If existing invasive plant infestations are documented, or if management activities introduce any invasive plants into the project area, they will be treated with appropriate herbicide, mechanical, or manual methods when practical.
- Vegetation removal will be minimized near staging areas as necessary to facilitate helicopter flight paths and safe operating procedures.
- All equipment and tools shall be cleaned completely and free of weeds, seed, debris, and mud to prevent the introduction or spread of exotic, invasive plants.
- Prior to entering the backcountry and wilderness, all workers shall check boots, backpacks, and tools for weed seeds, mud that could harbor weed seeds, and plant parts to prevent the spread and introduction of invasive plants.
- Actions conducted or authorized by written permit by the USDA Forest Service that operate outside the limits of the road prism, will require the cleaning of all heavy equipment prior to entering NFS Lands.
- If weeds are present in the project area, all equipment and gear must be cleaned before leaving the project area to avoid spreading the infestation further.
- If weeds are present in the project area, work from relatively weed-free areas into the infested area.

Threatened or Endangered Species

- At staging areas, if any individual northern spotted owl or marbled murrelet is observed during project operations, a wildlife biologist will be notified and measures to minimize or eliminate take will be applied.
- Once established based on conditions, previously agreed upon travel corridors and flight altitudes for helicopters will be used during operations.

Soils

- At staging areas, restoration activities will be conducted, such as soil aeration and restoration and erosion control structures (if needed) to reverse the effects of compaction.
- At staging areas, removal of loose rock in pits will be minimized as necessary, but will be required for safe helicopter operation.

Archeological Resources

- If subsurface archeological evidence or previously unidentified cultural resources are located during implementation of the project, activities will cease pending an evaluation of cultural eligibility by a qualified USDA Forest Service archeologist, who will determine appropriate mitigation measures. The USDA Forest Service will fulfill its consultation requirements in accordance with 36 CFR 800.11.

- Baiting locations will be reviewed by cultural resource staff prior to their use to ensure that baits are not placed within or near archeological sites.

Visitor Use and Experience

- Project vehicles will maintain a speed at or below 15 mph along unpaved roads leading to and from staging areas.
- A traffic control plan will be developed for NFS Road 2419 and NFS Road 2500 prior to implementation, and will be coordinated with wilderness and law enforcement rangers, volunteer staff, and all other agency staff that could potentially be working in closed areas.
- Mountain goat capture or lethal removal efforts will strive to minimize disturbance to areas of high public visitation and pursuit of mountain goats via helicopter will be aborted if humans are observed in the immediate area.

Visitor and Employee Safety

- A communication plan will be developed by the NPS, USDA Forest Service, and WDFW that will include information on the purpose and need of management activities and any associated temporary area closures to visitors. News releases, signage, website, and other forms of communication will be prepared well in advance of proposed mountain goat management activities.
- Project staff will be properly trained regarding adherence to safety protocols identified in the Olympic National Park Mountain Goat Action Plan (FEIS appendix A).
- Equipment will be well-maintained and helicopter flights will only take place during favorable weather conditions. In addition, an aviation safety plan will be developed and a safety briefing will be performed for each day of aerial operations.

Site-Specific Project Design Criteria

The USDA Forest Service developed the following site-specific project design criteria to address overall project objectives, to minimize resource impacts, and ensure Forest Plan or legal compliance. They are based on law, policy, and the professional judgment of the USDA Forest Service resource specialists.

Where there are site-specific uncertainties about the applicability of a restriction, an appropriate USDA Forest Service specialist will be consulted. Any request for modification to a project design criterion is subject to approval by the Forest Responsible Official, in consultation with appropriate resource specialists.

Table 2. Site-specific Olympic National Forest project design criteria.

Feature	Definition / Description	Management Requirement Description	Applicable Area
Staging Areas			
Helicopter landing (staging area) reconstruction	Helicopter landing sites, including grading surface and clearing of vegetation	<p>All helicopter landing sites will be reconstructed for staging areas prior to the proposed action, preferably during the early-late fall, unless otherwise agreed. Some vegetation may need to be removed to facilitate helicopter flight paths and safe operating procedures. Any clearing or removal of merchantable timber shall be treated in accordance with Forest Service policy and decked in a location designated by the Forest Service.</p> <p>Disposal of all clearing, slash, debris and other unsuitable material generated shall only be placed within an area designated by the Forest Service and approved for that purpose.</p> <p>Any proposed changes to the physical character, slopes, access roads, etc., within the pit boundary shall be approved in advance by the Forest Service prior to conducting the work.</p>	Hamma Hamma gravel pit (NFS Road 2500-011), Mt. Ellinor Trailhead, and NFS Road 2419-014
Treat existing infestations of invasive plants	Invasive plant infested areas	Invasive plant inspections must take place prior to any operations within or adjacent to the existing pit or quarry limits. Existing invasive plant infestations will be treated with appropriate herbicide, mechanical, or manual methods before ground disturbing activities begin when practical. If timing or resources prevent treatment before the project begins, then infestations will be treated in the project area upon completion of the project in order to prevent invasive plants from colonizing the disturbed ground.	Hamma Hamma gravel pit (NFS Road 2500-011), Mt. Ellinor Trailhead, and NFS Road 2419-014
Invasive plant infestations	Cleaning of vehicles	All equipment to be used shall be cleaned and inspected in order to prevent the infestation or spread of invasive plants.	Hamma Hamma gravel pit (NFS Road 2500-011), Mt. Ellinor Trailhead, and NFS Road 2419-014
Recreation			
NFS Road 2419 and 2500	Area restrictions	A traffic control plan will be developed for NFS Road 2419 and NFS Road 2500 prior to implementation. A temporary and limited closure of NFS Road 2419 will be required during goat translocation. Involvement with federal law enforcement officials will be needed.	NFS Road 2419 and 2500
Mt. Ellinor Trailhead and adjacent trail system	Area restrictions	<p>During translocation of goats to the Mt. Ellinor staging area, limited areas may be temporarily closed for a 2-week period (late August to mid- September).</p> <p>Project vehicles must maintain a speed at or below 15 mph along this section of road.</p>	Mt. Ellinor Trailhead and adjacent trails
Wilderness			

Designated wilderness	Area restrictions	Temporary and limited area closures during capture, translocation, and lethal removal will take place in two periods in 2-week intervals (mid- to late July and late August to mid-September).	Mount Skokomish, The Brothers, Buckhorn, Wonder Mountain, and Colonel Bob Wilderness areas
Designated wilderness	Area restrictions	Staff will access wilderness areas via foot or riding stock where possible, without risking life or limb. This should be considered for travel to sites accessible by trail or non-technical cross-country travel (e.g., without the use of crampons, ice axes, rope or other specialized equipment). Foot travel should be considered for both baiting mountain goats ahead of time and during the capturing operational period, to limit trammeling and impeding solitude/primitive recreation from helicopter operations. Capture sites to be considered for primitive travel of personnel include, but are not limited to, Marmot Pass in the Buckhorn Wilderness and Wilderness portions of Mt. Ellinor, Mount Skokomish Wilderness.	Mount Skokomish, The Brothers, Buckhorn, Wonder Mountain, and Colonel Bob Wilderness areas

Table 3. Site-specific Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Project design criteria.

Feature	Definition / Description	Management Requirement Description	Applicable Area
Staging Areas			
Helicopter landing (staging area) reconstruction	Helicopter landing sites, including grading surface and clearing of vegetation	As needed, helicopter staging sites will be reconstructed prior to the proposed action, preferably during the early-late fall, unless otherwise agreed. Some vegetation may need to be removed or mowed to facilitate helicopter flight paths and safe operating procedures. Loose rock in pits may need to be removed for safe helicopter operation.	Irene Creek rock pit, Curry Gap TH - Road 49, Green Mountain Pasture - Road 26, Road 62
Recreation			
Gated staging areas	No restrictions	These areas are all located behind gates.	Green Mountain Pasture, Monte Cristo CERCLA site, Alpentel Parking Lot, Road 62
Ungated staging areas	Area restrictions	Temporary and limited road closures during translocation of goats to release sites will be required for Road 1550 and Road 49. This will result in closure of the La Rush/Bear Lake and Curry Gap Trails while translocation staging is taking place. This may be scheduled during two periods in 2-week intervals (mid- to late July and late August to mid-September).	Road 1550, Road 49, Road 62

Helicopter flight path	Areas of awareness	Some release sites are in areas with active military training routes. Project should check flight schedule with Naval Air Station Whidbey Island.	Applies to all areas, but in particular the White Chuck Basin and Chikamin Ridge (Alta Mountain) release sites
Wilderness			
Designated wilderness	Area restrictions	A news release will be prepared well in advance. Follow mitigation for release sites documented in the Minimum Requirements Analysis (appendices E and F).	Glacier Peak, Henry M. Jackson, and Alpine Lakes Wilderness areas

Rationale

We have decided to authorize the above actions because they will help achieve a balanced approach to reducing or eliminating mountain goats within the park while minimizing effects to National Forest resources, providing for the preservation of wilderness character, and augmenting the native mountain goat population in the North Cascades national forests.

We considered several factors prior to making the decision to authorize implementation of Alternative D on National Forest System lands. We have reviewed the existing environmental conditions and the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects for all of the alternatives analyzed in detail. We also considered comments received during scoping and the draft EIS comment period, how well the alternatives met the purpose and need for the project and how well each addressed public comments and the issues they raised. We carefully reviewed consistency of the selected alternative with the land and resource management plan for each Forest and other applicable laws, regulations, and policies. We also reviewed responsibilities and jurisdiction of both the Forest Service and WDFW, including the points summarized below:

Forest Service jurisdiction and responsibility:

- 1982 Memorandum of Understanding: USDA Forest Service Region 6 and Washington Department of Fisheries and Washington Department of Game: FS agrees to recognize the Department as responsible for the protection, perpetuation, and management of wildlife in the State of Washington and to assist, when requested, insofar as it is consistent with the regularly assigned duties of personnel, with the management goals and law enforcement activities of the WDFW. R6 Supplement 2600-90-2; 12-06-63-03.
- “Recognize that States have jurisdiction and responsibilities for the protection and management of wildlife and fish populations in wilderness. Cooperate and work closely with State wildlife and fish authorities in all aspects of wildlife and fish management. Base any Forest Service recommendation to State wildlife and fish agencies on the need for protection and maintenance of the wilderness resource. Recognize wilderness protection needs and identify any needed requirements in coordination efforts and in cooperative agreements with State agencies.” FSM 2323.32.
- “Reintroduce wildlife species only if the species was once indigenous to an area and was extirpated by human induced events. Favor federally listed threatened or endangered species in

reintroduction efforts. Reintroductions shall be made in a manner compatible with the wilderness environment. Motorized or mechanical transport may be permitted if it is impossible to do the approved reintroduction by nonmotorized methods (sec. 2326).” FSM 2323.33(a).

- “Transplants (removal, reintroduction, or supplemental introduction) of terrestrial wildlife species in wilderness may be permitted if necessary. . . to restore the population of an indigenous species. . .” Policies and Guidelines for Fish and Wildlife management in national Forest and Bureau of Land Management Wilderness, 2006 *as amended*.
- “Guidelines for Transplanting Wildlife - Proposals for motorized methods and temporary holding and handling facilities that involve uses generally prohibited under Sec. 4 (c) of the Wilderness Act will be considered and may be authorized by the Federal administering agency through application of the [Minimum Requirements Decision Process] MRDP.” Policies and Guidelines for Fish and Wildlife management in national Forest and Bureau of Land Management Wilderness, 2006 *as amended*.

WDFW jurisdiction and responsibility for managing wildlife in the State of Washington:

- RCW 77.04.012: “Wildlife, fish, and shellfish are the property of the state. The commission, director, and the [D]epartment [of Fish and Wildlife] shall preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage the wildlife and food fish, game fish, and shellfish in state waters and offshore waters.”
- 1982 Memorandum of Understanding: USDA Forest Service Region 6 and Washington Department of Fisheries and Washington Department of Game¹: WDF and WDG “agree to recognize the Forest Service as the agency responsible for the occupancy, use, and management of the national Forests and the management of fish and wildlife habitat present or potentially available thereon.” R6 Supplement 2600-90-2; 12-06-63-03.

Although nothing in the Wilderness Act or other legislation designating wilderness in Washington State should be construed as affecting WDFW jurisdiction or responsibilities related to wildlife,² the Forest Service must ensure that any state wildlife management activities in wilderness are conducted in a manner that preserves wilderness character. Certain uses and activities may be authorized by the USFS only as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purpose of the Wilderness Act.

Forest Service policy and the requirements of the Wilderness Act of 1964 direct that use of motorized equipment in wilderness is permissible only when it is necessary to meet minimum requirements for administration of the wilderness area. *See* FEIS at 226; Policies and Guidelines for Fish and Wildlife management in national Forest and Bureau of Land Management Wilderness, 2006 *as amended*. A Minimum Requirements Analysis (MRA) was completed for both the Olympic National Forest and the

¹ The MOU refers to two separate Departments (Washington Department of Fish and Washington Department of Game) that have since been combined to form the current Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

² As stated in the “Policies and Guidelines for Fish and Wildlife Management in National Forest and Bureau of Land Management Wilderness” (as amended June 2006): “The 1964 Wilderness Act directs that the determination to employ a generally prohibited use can only be made by the federal agency administering the affected wilderness area. The Act in Section 4(d)(7) also states that ‘Nothing in this Act shall be construed as affecting the jurisdiction or responsibilities of the several States with respect to wildlife and fish...’ within wilderness areas.” Similarly, Section 7(a) of the Alpine Lakes Area Management Act of 1976 provides that “nothing in this Act shall be construed as affecting the jurisdiction or responsibilities of [the fish and game departments of the State of Washington].” Section 7(a).

North Cascades forests (Appendix F) to determine if administrative action is necessary within designated Wilderness, and if so, determine the minimum necessary action. Both MRAs determined the actions included in Alternative D will be the minimum necessary action to preserve wilderness character while minimizing negative effects. The Olympic MRA approved mechanical transport and aircraft landing as well as temporary salt block installation as the minimum requirement for administration of the Olympic National Forest wilderness areas for the purpose of the Wilderness Act. FEIS Appendix F-5. The North Cascades forests MRA also found these actions, along with temporary installation of fencing, necessary for the administration of the relevant wilderness areas area for the purposes of the Wilderness Act, concluding there is not a reasonable or safe non-motorized method by which WDFW could successfully augment mountain goat populations in the Glacier Peak, Henry M. Jackson, and Alpine Lakes Wilderness areas. FEIS Appendix F-67.

Public Involvement

Scoping

To determine the scope of issues to be analyzed in depth in the plan/EIS, public scoping was conducted in the summer of 2014. FEIS at 249. Public scoping began on July 21, 2014, with the publication of a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register. *See* Fed. Reg. Vol. 79, No. 139. Preliminary information regarding the plan/EIS was also provided to the public and other interested parties through a press release sent to 53 media outlets and approximately 100 interest groups, partners, or individuals and a public scoping letter that was sent to 101 interested individuals and organizations. FEIS at 249-250. In August 2014, three public scoping open houses were held in Seattle, Olympia, and Port Angeles, Washington. Fifty-five people attended the three meetings (10 people attended the meeting in Seattle, 5 people attended the meeting in Olympia, and 40 people attended the meeting in Port Angeles). Approximately 2 weeks prior to the end of the comment period, on September 18, 2014, the NPS issued a second press release to 169 media outlets, interested groups, and interested individuals reminding the public of the opportunity to review the preliminary draft documents and to provide comments and suggestions. FEIS at 250. Nearly 100 pieces of correspondence were received during the public scoping comment period. Comments were reviewed and considered during issue identification, development of alternatives, and throughout the plan/EIS development process. FEIS at v, 23, 63, 64, 250.

Draft Plan/EIS

A notice of availability for the draft plan/EIS was published in the Federal Register and online at the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/olyngoat> on July 24, 2017. FEIS at 250. The NPS issued a press release to 165 media outlets, interested groups, and interested individuals on July 21, 2014, announcing the dates, times, and places of the public scoping meetings. On July 22, 2014, the NPS sent a scoping letter to 101 interested individuals and organizations notifying them of the opportunity to comment, and the NPS PEPC website was activated for the public to submit comments. Three open house meetings were held in August 2014. A total of 55 people attended the three meetings and 100 pieces of correspondence were received. FEIS at 250. Based on input received during scoping, the interdisciplinary team identified several issues regarding the effects of the proposed action. Main issues of concern relevant to the actions authorized under this ROD included visitor use experience and wilderness character. *See* FEIS at 11-20. The alternatives considered in the plan/EIS were created to address these and other concerns.

The public comment period for the draft plan/EIS was open from July 24, 2017, to October 10, 2017. FEIS at 251. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published a Notice of Availability for the Draft

EIS in the Federal Register on July 28, 2017 and legal notices were published in the Newspaper of Record for the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, Olympic, and Okanogan-Wenatchee Forest Supervisor's offices: the Olympian (July 29, 2017), the Everett Herald (July 31, 2017), and the Yakima Herald-Republic (August 1, 2017). The 60-day comment period was extended to October 10, as specified in an amended NOA published in the September 29, 2017 Federal Register (subsequent notices were also published in the Everett Herald, Olympian, and Wenatchee World). Four public meetings were held in August 2017, and 121 individuals attended. FEIS at 251. A total of 2,311 pieces of correspondence were received during the public comment period. FEIS at 251. A summary of and responses to public and agency comments received on the draft plan/EIS are provided on the PEPC website. Where needed, text was changed in the plan/EIS to address comments.

The publication of the EPA notice of availability of the final plan/EIS was published in the Federal Register on May 4, 2018. On May 11, the EPA published a notice that the Forest Service has adopted the NPS Final EIS No. 20180077, Olympic National Park Mountain Goat Management Plan, filed 04/27/2018 with EPA. On June 18, 2018, the NPS signed a ROD documenting their decision to proceed with implementing Alternative D.

Other Alternatives Considered

Alternatives analyzed in plan/EIS were developed by the interagency planning team, which included wildlife biologists from the NPS, WDFW, and Forest Service, and through feedback received during the public scoping and plan/EIS public review processes. The plan/EIS analyzes the impacts that could result from a continuation of current management of the exotic mountain goat population on the Olympic Peninsula (the no-action alternative), as well as the impacts that could result from three action alternatives that involve lethal removal and/or translocation of exotic mountain goats from the Olympic Peninsula. The three action alternatives analyzed in the plan/EIS meet, to a large degree, the management objectives and address the purpose of and need for action.

Alternative A – No Action

Under the no-action alternative, current management plans will continue to guide management of the project area. FEIS at 34. Alternative A would involve full implementation of the 2011 Mountain Goat Action Plan including management of individual mountain goats in visitor use areas according to a continuum of mountain goat-human interactions. Specific management could range from hazing to lethal removal of hazardous mountain goats. FEIS at 35.

Alternative B

Alternative B would focus exclusively on the capture of mountain goats within the park and on adjacent Olympic National Forest lands followed by transfer of ownership to the WDFW and release on National Forest System (NFS) lands at Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests (North Cascades national forests). Translocation would be conducted at the discretion of WDFW to NFS lands in the North Cascades where mountain goats are native and supplementation of the existing population would further mountain goat conservation efforts (e.g., improve genetic diversity and enhance demographic vigor to depleted populations).

Alternative C

Alternative C would use lethal removal to significantly reduce or eliminate mountain goats from the park and adjacent Olympic National Forest lands.

Findings Required by Other Laws

This decision to authorize actions necessary for implementation of Alternative D (preferred alternative) is consistent with the Olympic, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans. *See* plan/EIS Appendix D. The project was designed in conformance with Forest Plan standards and guidelines for wilderness, recreation, wildlife, and other applicable resources and land management allocations.

Wilderness Act

The need for use of helicopters and temporary installations to implement this decision was considered in the Olympic National Park Minimum Requirements Analysis (Appendix E) and Olympic, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie, and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest Minimum Requirements Analysis (Appendix F). Potential impacts on designated wilderness areas were evaluated based on the qualities of wilderness character. FEIS at 221.

Within Olympic National Forest, the capture, translocation, and lethal reduction of mountain goats, the use of motorized equipment, noise production, temporary area closures, and temporary placement of drop nets and salt blocks will have short-term, adverse impacts on the untrammelled, natural, undeveloped, solitude or primitive and unconfined recreational qualities of wilderness character. These management tools will, however, indirectly benefit recovery of natural conditions in wilderness by eliminating the mountain goat population. Alternative D will trammel wilderness by reducing the mountain goat population, affect the undeveloped quality of wilderness character by the use of motorized equipment, affect solitude by utilizing noise-producing tools such as aircraft and firearms, and affect primitive and unconfined recreation by temporarily closing certain areas of the park or national forest.

In the North Cascades national forests, implementation of Alternative D will result in short-term, adverse impacts on the untrammelled and undeveloped characters of wilderness as well as opportunities for solitude. There will also be a long-term, beneficial impact on the natural quality of wilderness character. Short-term impacts on the untrammelled quality will result from human interference with natural processes inside the Alpine Lakes, Glacier Peak and Henry M. Jackson wilderness areas as a result of the mountain goat relocation. The reintroduction of mountain goats will also have a short-term, adverse impact on the undeveloped qualities of wilderness and opportunities for solitude as a result of helicopter flights and crews supporting the relocation/reintroduction efforts in wilderness. The natural quality of wilderness will be improved over the long term as a result of the mountain goat relocation as this will move these ecosystems towards their historical ecological condition. Overall, there are both beneficial and adverse cumulative impacts on the various wilderness qualities of the project area, and Alternative D will add a small adverse increment due to the temporary disturbance during translocation operations taking place for a few weeks at a time over a few years, but a substantial, long-term benefit to the natural quality of wilderness from the reintroduction and augmentation of a native species that had historically been present.

Endangered Species Act

This decision is compliant with the legal requirements set forth under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1536 (c)). As described in the FEIS section "Threatened or Endangered Species" in chapter 3, there are federally listed species and designated critical habitat in the vicinity of the project area. FEIS at 251. As a result, in accordance with section 7 of the ESA, the NPS sought US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) concurrence with the determinations presented in chapter 4 regarding potential effects on federally listed species. FEIS at 251. The USFWS concurred with the NPS determinations as discussed in the April 23, 2018 Biological Opinion OIEWFW00-2018-F-0473.

The NPS and cooperating agencies committed to implementing the following conservation measures:

1. Staging areas will be located in areas that are previously disturbed, and will necessitate the least impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat.
2. During flights from staging areas to work areas, helicopters will generally fly in a direct path.
3. Once established based on weather conditions, previously agreed upon travel corridors, flight paths, and flight altitudes for helicopters will be used during operations.
4. Helicopter flight paths will be a minimum of 500 feet above ground level above marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl habitat.
5. Helicopter staging area preparation or maintenance following the first year of operations, if necessary, will be scheduled prior to the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet nesting seasons, preferably during the early to late fall, unless otherwise agreed.
6. Ground-based shooting of mountain goats below 4,000 feet in elevation will not occur until after October 1 and will cease by March 1 of each year.
7. Lead-free ammunition will be used for lethal removal activities (aerial and ground-based) to prevent environmental contamination.
8. Contractors and other project workers will properly store and dispose of food and garbage while working on site.
9. If any individual northern spotted owl or marbled murrelet is observed during project operations, a wildlife biologist will be notified and measures to minimize or eliminate disturbance will be applied.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status	Effects Determination
Northern spotted owl	<i>Strix occidentalis caurina</i>	Threatened	<i>no effect</i>
Northern spotted owl critical habitat	NA		<i>no effect</i>
Marbled murrelet	<i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i>	Threatened	<i>no effect</i>
Marbled Murrelet critical habitat	NA		<i>no effect</i>

Table 4. ESA effects determinations for listed species (ONF). FEIS at 177, Appendix G.³

³ Note: An error in the FEIS at 177 incorrectly states the ESA effects determination for northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet. The correct determinations are provided here in Table 5, as well as in FEIS Appendix G.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status	Effects Determination
Northern spotted owl	<i>Strix occidentalis caurina</i>	Threatened	may affect, but not likely to adversely affect
Northern spotted owl critical habitat	NA		no effect
Marbled murrelet	<i>Brachyramphus marmoratus</i>	Threatened	may affect, likely to adversely affect
Marbled Murrelet critical habitat	NA		no effect
Grizzly bear	<i>Ursus arctos</i>	Threatened	may affect, but not likely to adversely affect
Gray wolf	<i>Canis lupus irremotus</i>	Endangered	may affect, but not likely to adversely affect
Canada lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Threatened	may affect, but not likely to adversely affect
Wolverine	<i>Gulo gulo luscus</i>	Candidate (Proposed Threatened)	may affect, but not likely to adversely affect

Table 5. ESA effects determinations for listed species (MBS). FEIS at 237, Appendix H-2.

Forest Service Sensitive Species

Impacts to sensitive species from the December 2011 (plants) and January 2011 (wildlife) Regional Forester's sensitive species lists were analyzed in the FEIS. See FEIS Appendix G and Appendix F. Other than for the species described below (see Tables 7 and 8), the project will have no effect on Regional Forester Sensitive Species. For those species that will be affected, although individuals will be impacted, the actions analyzed in the FEIS and authorized under this ROD will not likely cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability of any species.

Table 6. Regional Forester Sensitive Species that will be affected by activities within the Olympic National Forest. FEIS Appendix G.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Effects Determination
Northern goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
Peregrine falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
Western bumble bee	<i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
Olympic artic	<i>Oeneis chryxus valerata</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
Puget blue	<i>Icaricia icarioides blackmore</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
Lupine blue	<i>Plebejus lupine texanus</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
Valley silverspot	<i>Speyeria zerene bremnerii</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
Olympic marmot	<i>Marmota olympus</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability

Olympic pocket gopher	<i>Thomomys mazama melanops</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
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Table 7. Regional Forester Sensitive Species that will be affected by activities within the Mt. Baker-

Common Name	Scientific Name	Effects Determination
Harlequin duck	<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
Mountain goat	<i>Oreamnos americanus</i>	Beneficial impact
Gray wolf	<i>Canis lupus irremotus</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability
Wolverine	<i>Gulo gulo luscus</i>	May impact individuals, not likely to cause a trend toward Federal listing or a loss of population viability

Snoqualmie and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests. FEIS Appendix H.

National Historic Preservation Act

There are no known cultural, historic, or archaeological resources within the project area that will be disturbed as a result of actions authorized in this decision. FEIS at 19, 20.

Clean Water Act

This decision will not be expected to involve the direct use of any water resources. Given the anticipated nature, scope, and scale of authorized activities, any potential impacts could be avoided through mitigation measures such as keeping equipment and personnel out of riparian areas and wetlands. FEIS at 17, 20.

Clean Air Act

Proposed activities are consistent with the Clean Air Act because project activities are not expected to have impacts on air quality. FEIS at 17, 20. Some of the activities authorized in this decision may result in fossil fuel consumption, such as the use of vehicles and helicopters to carry out prescribed management activities. However, the increase in emissions from these activities will be minimal and short term, resulting in only negligible impacts on regional air quality relative to existing conditions. FEIS at 17, 21.

Executive Orders 11990 and 11988 - Wetlands and Floodplain Management

The selected alternative will have no adverse impact on floodplains or wetlands and is therefore consistent with Executive Orders 11988 and 11990. FEIS at 17, 20.

Executive Order 12898 - Environmental Justice

Published on February 11, 1994, this executive order requires all federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice into their mission by “identifying and addressing ... disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of [their] programs, policies and activities on minority and low-income populations in the United States” (Executive Order 12898, 59 Fed. Reg. 7629 [1994]).

Census data for communities adjacent to the Olympic National Forest and North Cascades forests were analyzed to determine whether these communities may qualify as environmental justice populations (minority and/or low-income populations), and whether they will be disproportionately affected by mountain goat restoration. While a small number of communities in the vicinity of the release areas may

qualify as minority and/or low-income populations, these communities will not be disproportionately affected by this decision. FEIS at 18, 21.

Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. Rivers are classified as wild, scenic, or recreational. This ROD is consistent with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as described in the FEIS at 21-22.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Executive Order 13186 (Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds)

This decision, with the project design features, mitigation measures, and best management practices described above, provides for adequate conservation measures for migratory birds. In the short-term, there may be some disturbance due to noise, however this is not expected to significantly reduce Neotropical migratory bird species richness or abundance. Due to the lack of the project's impacts on trees or other landscape vegetation, there is no change expected in the habitat components from the action alternatives and impacts on bird species that are not included as management indicator species, Regional Forester sensitive species, or ESA-listed would therefore be nominal. FEIS at 118.

Prime Farmlands, Rangelands, and Forestlands

The project area is not located in or adjacent to prime farmlands; therefore, there will be no impacts to prime farmlands or rangelands. FEIS at 22. The project will not convert forestlands to other uses. All lands designated as forested will be retained and managed as forested; therefore, there will be no negative impacts on prime forestland.

Human Health and Safety

None of the proposed actions will substantially affect human health or safety. FEIS at 111, 126.

Environmentally Preferable Alternative

Alternative D, the selected alternative, is the environmentally preferable alternative, because it will result in the least harm to the biological and physical environment, and best protects and preserves historic, cultural, and natural resources. FEIS at 73-74. This alternative provides the most long-term benefits for multiple resources. 36 CFR 220.3

Administrative Review or Objection Opportunities

This project is subject to pre-decisional administrative review pursuant to 36 CFR 218, Subpart B. Only individuals or organizations that submitted specific written or oral comments during a designated opportunity for public participation (scoping or the comment period on the draft EIS) may object (36 CFR 218.5).

Objections should be submitted to Objection Review Officer, Region 6 Regional Forester, Pacific Northwest Region, USDA Forest Service, 1220 SW 3rd Avenue, Portland, OR 97204. Electronic submissions are preferred and may be submitted by completing the form available online at: <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public//CommentInput?Project=49816>. The objection filing form

can also be accessed by going to the project's website (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=49816>) and clicking on "Comment/Object on Project" tab on the right sidebar.

Objections may also be mailed or hand delivered to Region 6 Regional Forester, Pacific Northwest Region, USDA Forest Service, 1220 SW 3rd Avenue, Portland, OR 97204. Please provide the project name in the subject line: Olympic Mountain Goat Management Plan. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered objections are: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Objections, including attachments, must be filed within 45 days from the publication date of this notice in the newspaper of record for each Forest: the Olympian, the Everett Herald, and the Wenatchee World. Attachments received after the 45-day objection period will not be considered. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object this project should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the opportunities for comment. The burden is on the objector to demonstrate compliance with this requirement for objection issues. Minimum requirements of an objection are described at 218.8(d). An objection must include a description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the proposed project; if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates the law, regulation or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and a statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunities for comment

Implementation

If no objection is filed, implementation may begin on, but no sooner than the fifth business day following the end of the 45-day objection filing period (36 CFR 218.11). If an objection is filed, implementation may begin immediately following the date of the final decision.

Contact Person

For additional information concerning the Forest Service administrative review process, contact Heidi Hopkins, Program Specialist, heidihopkins@fs.fed.us, 503-808-2281. For information regarding the actions proposed for authorization in this decision, please contact Jesse Plumage (North Cascades forests), jplumage@fs.fed.us, 425-783-6031, or Susan Piper (Olympic National Forest), spiper@fs.fed.us, 360-956-2435.

Responsible Officials

DRAFT

RETA LAFORD
Forest Supervisor
Olympic National Forest

Date

DRAFT

JAMIE KINGSBURY
Forest Supervisor
Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

Date

DRAFT

MICHAEL R. WILLIAMS
Forest Supervisor
Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest

Date

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