



# Olympic National Park Mountain Goat Management Plan and EIS



## You're Invited!

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The National Park Service (NPS) is requesting your input in developing a Mountain Goat Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (plan/EIS) for Olympic National Park (the park). Your participation is vital to our planning process. There are many ways to be involved, including attending one of the in-person public scoping meetings and submitting electronic or written comments.

## Public Scoping Open House Schedule

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### Monday, August 11:

Seattle Open House, 5-7 pm,  
Seattle Public Library,  
Wright/Ketcham Room, Level 4, Room 2,  
1000 4th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104;  
206-386-4636

### Tuesday, August 12:

Olympia Open House, 5-7 pm,  
Olympic National Forest Headquarters,  
Willaby-Klahowya-Coho Rooms,  
1835 Black Lake Blvd Southwest,  
Olympia, WA 98512; 360-956-2303

### Wednesday, August 13:

Port Angeles Open House, 5-7 pm,  
Port Angeles Public Library  
("North Olympic Library System (NOLS)"),  
2210 S. Peabody Street,  
Port Angeles, WA 98362;  
360-417-8500

## Background

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The mountain goat is not native to the Olympic Peninsula, having been introduced in the 1920s. By the early 1980s, the goat population in the park grew to over 1,000 individuals. Several hundred goats were removed during the 1980s, reducing the population to less than 400 by 1990. The population was stable at approximately 300 goats from 1994-2004, however it was observed to be increasing at a 5% annual rate in 2011.

The original need to manage the goat population was driven by ecological concerns related to the impact of goats on the park's natural resources, particularly sensitive vegetation communities. New concerns were raised in 2010 when a visitor was fatally gored by a mountain goat while hiking on a park trail.

The park updated its Mountain Goat Action Plan (part of the Olympic National Park Nuisance and Hazardous Animal Management Plan) in 2011. This plan addresses mountain goat behavior and seeks to minimize the potential for hazardous goat-human encounters. Planning and compliance is needed to address overall management of the mountain goat population within the park.

This effort will result in a plan that provides for overall management of mountain goats and considers the non-native goats' effects on natural processes and habitats, as well as visitor safety.

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) EIS process, the NPS will evaluate different approaches for managing mountain goats in Olympic National Park.





## **Purpose of and Need for Taking Action**

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The park's purpose in taking action is to develop a plan for managing the population of exotic mountain goats in Olympic National Park.

### **Need for Action**

Mountain goats were introduced to the Olympic Mountains prior to the formation of the park, and have since colonized the entire range with the majority of the population residing within the park.

Mountain goats have a high affinity for salts and natural salt licks within their native range. There are no natural salt licks in the Olympic Mountains and mountain goats have learned to seek salts from humans. In high use areas within the park, mountain goats have become habituated to the point that they are a nuisance and may be hazardous to park visitors.

Based on NPS policy, the park needs to manage exotic mountain goats to 1) reduce their interference with natural processes, native species and natural habitats and 2) reduce the potential hazards mountain goats pose to public safety.

## **Plan Objectives**

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- Develop a scientifically based method for the management of exotic mountain goat populations in an extensive alpine wilderness area.
- Protect the natural resources and environments that are unique to the park.
- Reduce the potential for visitor safety issues associated with mountain goats in the park.
- Further public understanding of Olympic's alpine ecosystems and native species and the ecology and conservation of mountain goats in their native range.
- Protect the biosphere reserve and natural heritage designations of Olympic National Park.
- Protect Olympic National Park's wilderness character.
- Work cooperatively with co-managers of mountain goats in Washington State (USFS, WDFW, and tribes).

## **Preliminary Alternative Concepts**

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NEPA requires federal agencies to:

- consider a range of alternatives and;
- fully evaluate all reasonable alternatives that address the purpose of and need for the action, including a No Action alternative.

The following is a list of preliminary concepts that have been developed so far by NPS staff. Please provide us with your thoughts about this initial list, and offer any ideas you might have for additional alternative concepts.

**No Action Alternative** – The continuation of current management consisting primarily of monitoring, control and aversive conditioning of nuisance animals as staffing and resources allow.

**Combination of Alternative Concepts** – Develop a hybrid alternative combining elements from two or more alternative concepts.

**Increased Nuisance Control** – Provide increased management/nuisance control (aversive conditioning or lethal removal) of habituated mountain goats and habituated bands of mountain goats in high visitor conflict areas.

**Capture and Translocation** – Capture and translocate mountain goats to the Washington Cascades and potentially to other appropriate receiving locations.

**Removal** – Remove all mountain goats through lethal means.



## NEPA and Where We Are in the Process

Summer 2014	Public Scoping	<b>WE ARE HERE</b>
Summer 2015	Draft Plan/EIS Release and Public Comment	
Winter 2015-2016	Final Plan/EIS Release	
Spring 2016	NPS Record of Decision	

### How to Comment

1. Submit comments electronically at:  
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/olyngoat> (preferred method).
2. Submit comments at an in-person public meeting.
3. Submit written comments at the park’s offices in Port Angeles or by mail to:

Superintendent Sarah Creachbaum  
 Olympic National Park  
 600 East Park Avenue  
 Port Angeles, WA 98362-6798

All written comments must be postmarked and all electronic comments must be submitted no later than 60 days from the date the Notice of Intent is published in the Federal Register. The deadline for submitting comments will be posted on the project website.

*You should be aware that your entire comment—including personal identifying information such as your address, phone number, and e-mail address—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Comments submitted by individuals or organizations on behalf of other individuals or organizations will not be accepted.*

### Mailing List

If you wish to receive future updates on this project, please send an email to [olyngoats@nps.gov](mailto:olyngoats@nps.gov) and include your email address. Public comments will not be accepted at this email address. The mailing list will be used solely to communicate information related to the park’s mountain goat planning effort. If you do not have an email address, please contact the park at (360) 565-3004 to have your name placed on the mailing list.