

HISTORY OF TRANSPLANTING MOUNTAIN GOATS AND SHEEP – WASHINGTON

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MOUNTAIN GOATS

Mountain goats are native to the Cascade Mountains, from the Canadian border south to Mount Adams. Mountain goats were introduced in the Olympic Mountains in 1925 and 1927 or 1929. From the introduction of about 12 mountain goats, the population grew to about 1,200 by 1983. Since that time, the goat population has plummeted to 300 or less.

In the 1960s, a few mountain goats were transplanted to the Selkirk Mountains from Nason Ridge in the Cascades. One transplant was successful and another unsuccessful. The Flume Creek transplant increased to over 30 mountain goats and has stabilized at that level.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Olympic National Park (ONP) and the WDFW worked together to transplant over 130 mountain goats in-state and 119 mountain goats to other states. The total of over 250 mountain goats taken from ONP has been used to start several new populations and augment other herds. Nearly all transplants have been successful. Some transplants have been to a zoological park (Northwest Trek) for public education and display. Other goats were sent to Washington State University for research.

One of our biggest intrastate transplant efforts was to Lake Chelan. In 1983 and 1984, a total of 29 mountain goats were relocated to five different sites along Lake Chelan. The Chelan County Public Utility District was instrumental in the transplant and has monitored the releases each year. A couple of goats have been seen swimming across Lake Chelan. Other goats were seen up to 58 km. from their release site. The mountain goat population along Lake Chelan has increased over the years, but has not yet reached huntable numbers.

Other goats released in the Cascades have survived, but have not thrived. Many of these goat transplants tend to scatter and not show substantial increases in the release area. One exception is the Smith Creek release in 1985 where goat numbers now number over 100 animals from a start of 12 individuals.

The interstate transplants have been very successful, to the best of my knowledge. Transplants have been made to Utah, Nevada, Idaho, and Montana.

WASHINGTON MOUNTAIN GOAT TRANSPLANTS
Release Sites In State

Year	Release Site	Source	No.	Reference
1925	Lake Crescent, Olympic Peninsula	Selkirk Mountains, BC	4	Houston, Schreiner Moorhead 1984
1927&29	Lake Crescent, Olympic Peninsula	Chugach Range Alaska-2; Juneau, AK-6	8	Johnson, 1983
1964	Le Clerc Creek, Selkirk Mountains	Nason Ridge, Cen. Cascades	8	WDFW, 1964
1965	Flume Creek, Selkirk Mountains	Nason Ridge, Cen. Cascades	7	WDFW, 1965
1972-73	Mt. Margaret, Southern Cascades	Olympic National Park	8	Johnson, 1983
1975-78	Mt. Pichuck State Park, Northern Cascades	Olympic National Park	7	WDFW, 1976
1981	Hooknose Mountain, Selkirk Mtns.	Olympic National Park	11	Johnson, 1983
1981	Lime Mountain, Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie Ntn. For.	Olympic National Park	10	Johnson, 1983
1981	Higgins Mtn., Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie Natl. For.	Olympic National Park	10	Johnson, 1983
1981	Pullman, WSU Research, Dr. Charlie Robbins	Olympic National Park	5	WDFW, 1981
1981	Northwest Trek, Eatorville, WA	Olympic National Park	6	WDFW, 1981
1982	Pullman, WSU Research, Dr. Charlie Robbins	Olympic National Park	6	WDFW, 1982
1982	Northwest Trek, Eatorville, WA	Olympic National Park	6	WDFW, 1982
1983	Pullman, WSU Research, Dr. Charlie Robbins	Olympic National Park	4	WDFW, 1983
1983-84	Lake Chelan; 5 sites, Wenatchee Natl. For.	Olympic National Park	29	Fielder & McKay '84
1983	Rooster Comb Mtn., Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie Natl.	Olympic National Park	17	FOR. WDFW, 1983
1983	Kelly Butte, Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie Natl. For.	Olympic National Park	10	WDFW, 1983
1985	Smith Creek, Gifford Pinchot Natl. For.	Olympic National Park	12	WDFW, 1985

WASHINGTON MOUNTAIN GOAT TRANSPLANTS
Release Sites Out of State

Year	Release Site	Source	No.	Reference
1950	Joseph Mountain, NE Oregon	Chopaka Mountain	5	ODFW, 1950
1964	Ruby Mountains, Nevada F/G, 1964	Nason Ridge, Cen. Cascades	6	Nevada F/G 1967
	Ruby Mountains, Nevada	Nason Ridge, Cen. Cascades	6	Nevada F/G, 1967
1967	Little Cottonwood, Canyon, Utah	Nason Ridge, Cen. Cascades	6	Utah F/G, 1967
1969	Tanner Butte, Columbia Gorge, OR	Olympic National Park	8	ODFW, 1969
1975	Tanner Butte, Columbia Gorge, OR	Olympic National Park	6	ODFW, 1975
1976	Tanner Butte, Columbia Gorge, OR	Olympic National Park	1	ODFW, 1976
1981	Mt. Timpanogos, Utah	Olympic National Park	10	Utah F/G, 1981
1981	Wasatch Mountains, Utah	Olympic National Park	10	Utah F/G, 1981
1981	East Humbolt, Nevada	Olympic National Park	11	Nevada F/G, 1981
1982	Wasatch Mountains, Utah	Olympic National Park	10	Utah F/G, 1982
1982	Troy, Montana	Olympic National Park	7	Montana F/W/P, 1982
1982	Pahsimeroi, Idaho	Olympic National Park	20	Idaho F/G, 1982
	Selkirks, Idaho	Olympic National Park	9	Idaho F/G, 1982
1985	Hurricane Divide, NE Oregon	Olympic National Park	8	ODFW, 1985
1985	Pine Creek, NE Oregon	Olympic National Park	8	ODFW, 1985
1988	Bald Mountain, Utah	Olympic National Park	16	Utah F/G, 1988
1989	Wallowa Mountains, Oregon	Olympic National Park	17	ODFW, 1989
1989	White Rocks, Ashley Natl. For., Utah	Olympic National Park	9	Utah F/G, 1989
1989	Provo Peak, Unita Natl. For., Utah	Olympic National Park	7	Utah F/G, 1989
1989	Helena National Forest, Montana	Olympic National Park	13	Montana F/W/P, 1989
1989	Hells Canyon NRA, Idaho	Olympic National Park	8	Idaho F/G, 1989

MOUNTAIN SHEEP

Both California and Rocky Mountain bighorns are native to the state, but both subspecies died out about 1925 to 1930.

The California Bighorn reintroduction was initiated in 1957. We obtained 18 bighorns from Williams Lake, British Columbia and released them on the Sinlahekin Wildlife Area in north central Washington. After three years, six bighorns from the Sinlahekin were transplanted to Wooten Wildlife Area in southeast Washington to start the Wooten herd. Two years later in 1962, eight more bighorns from Sinlahekin were transplanted to the Colockum to start the Colockum herd. In these first three releases, bighorns were put in 500 acre enclosures. In subsequent years, releases were made directly to the wild.

All of our bighorn transplants have been successful except for the Klickitat transplant in 1970. The transplant consisted of only eight bighorns. The two rams both died shortly after release. One ram was killed by a poacher and the other was killed by a vehicle. We plan to follow up with a transplant to Klickitat County this fall.

One of the concerns with our California Bighorn reintroduction has been the limited gene pool. In 1987, we got three sheep from the Northwest Trek and in 1990, we got nine bighorns from John Day, Oregon. The Oregon sheep also came from Williams Lake initially, but the origin of the Northwest Trek sheep is unknown. This past March, we obtained 31 bighorns from Kamloops, British Columbia and put a few animals in the Lincoln Cliffs, Mount Hull, Clemons, and Quilomene herds. These sheep offer some genetic diversity and hopefully will rejuvenate stagnant herds. We now have California Bighorns in 11 areas of the state.

The Rocky Mountain Bighorn reintroduction was initiated in 1972 with a transplant of 18 animals from Waterton Lakes, Alberta to Hall Mountain in northeast Washington. This herd has been used as a nursery to stock Joseph Creek, Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness and Asotin Creek areas. In addition, we have been fortunate to get Rocky Mountain Bighorns from Thompson Falls, Montana; Sun River, Montana; and Lostine River, Oregon to supplement these releases. The transplants have been very successful.

The bighorn population status is quite good on a statewide basis. We have about 700 California Bighorns and 230 Rocky Mountain Bighorns.

CALIFORNIA BIGHORN SHEEP TRANSPLANTS

Herd	Year	Source	No.	Reference
Sinlahekin	1957	Chilcotin, BC	18	Johnson, 1983
	1962	Sinlahekin	12	Johnson, 1983
	1963	Sinlahekin	15	Johnson, 1983
	1964	Sinlahekin	9	Johnson, 1983
	1996	Kamloops, BC	4	WDFW, 1996
Wooten	1960	Sinlahekin	6	Johnson, 1983
	1964	Wooten	21	Johnson, 1983
Colockum	1962	Sinlahekin	8	Johnson, 1983
	1964	Colockum	23	Johnson, 1983
	1987	Northwest Trek	2	WDFW, 1987
Clemons	1967	Sinlahekin	8	Johnson, 1983
	1990	John Day, Oregon	5	WDFW, 1990
	1996	Umtanum	10	WDFW, 1996
	1996	Kamloops, BC	9	WDFW, 1996
Swakane	1969	Sinlahekin	9	Johnson, 1983
	1987	Northwest Trek	1	WDFW, 1987
Umtanum	1970	Colockum	8	Johnson, 1983
Klickitat	1970	Colockum	8	Johnson, 1983
Mt. Hull	1970	Colockum	7	Johnson, 1983
	1996	Kamloops, BC	3	WDFW, 1996
Vulcan Mtn.	1971	Colockum	8	Johnson, 1983
	1990	John Day, Oregon	4	WDFW, 1990
Cottonwood Cr.	1973	Wooten	4	Johnson, 1983
Lincoln Cliffs	1990	Northwest Trek	11	WDFW, 1990
	1991	Vulcan Mtn.	3	WDFW, 1990
	1996	Kamloops, BC	5	WDFW, 1996
Quilomene	1993	Vulcan Mtn.	12	WDFW, 1993
	1994	Umtanum	20	WDFW, 1994
	1996	Kamloops, BC	10	WDFW, 1996
Rosa Dam	1996	Umtanum	14	WDFW, 1996

ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIGHORN SHEEP TRANSPLANTS

Herd	Year	Source	No.	Reference
Hall Mountain	1972	Waterton Lakes, Alberta	18	Johnson, 1983
	1982	Thompson Falls, Montana	2	Johnson, 1983
Joseph Creek	1977	Hall Mountain	10	Johnson, 1983
	1981	Lostine River, Oregon	10	Johnson, 1983
	1982	Thompson Falls, Montana	10	Johnson, 1983
	1989	Sun River, Montana	9	WDFW, 1989
	1995	72 bighorns transplanted to lab in Caldwell, Idaho because of pneumonia die-off, 75% of herd died.		WDFW, 1995
Wenaha Tucannon Wilderness	1983	Hall Mountain	15	WDFW, 1983
	1986	Lostine River, Oregon	14	WDFW, 1986
Asotin Creek	1991	Hall Mountain	9	WDFW, 1991
	1994	Hall Mountain	9	WDFW, 1994
Dr. Bill Foreyt Washington State Univ.	1979	Wildhorse Isl., Montana	8	WDFW, 1983
Bear Creek NE Oregon	1984	Hall Mountain	11	WDFW, 1984
Dr. Bill Foreyt Washington State Univ.	1993	Wildhorse Isl., Montana	8	WDFW, 1993

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