

Mount Rainier National Park and North Cascades National Park Complex

Fisher Reintroduction Plan/Environmental Assessment
Public Scoping, August-September 2013



J. Jacobson | WDFW Photo

The National Park Service is seeking public comments on a proposed **Fisher Reintroduction Plan/Environmental Assessment for Mount Rainier and North Cascades National Parks**

Fisher Reintroduction Plan

The Pacific fisher (*Pekania pennanti*) has been considered extirpated (absent) from the North and South Cascades of Washington State since the mid-1990s.

To restore this species to its historical range in Washington State, Mount Rainier and North Cascades national parks are proposing to team up with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to reintroduce this species to the North and South Cascades.

The National Park Service (NPS) is preparing a *Fisher Reintroduction Plan/Environmental Assessment* (EA) that will analyze the potential effects of restoring the fisher to Mount Rainier and North Cascades national parks. To inform this analysis, the NPS is seeking public comments between August 15 and September 30, 2013. Comments received during this public scoping period will help refine the proposed action and identify the issues and concerns to be addressed in the EA.

Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the *Fisher Reintroduction Plan/Environmental Assessment* is to contribute to the statewide restoration of the fisher by establishing self-sustaining fisher populations in the North and South Cascades of Washington State.

The proposed action is needed for the following reasons:

1. The fisher is believed to be extirpated from the North and South Cascades in Washington State, which has resulted in the loss of a key component of Northwest ecosystems.
2. Restoring extirpated native species is key to the mission and goals of the National Park Service (and specifically, Mount Rainier and North Cascades national parks) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

3. Washington State has identified the North and South Cascades as the last two of the three major ecosystems statewide where successful fisher reintroduction is needed in order to meet the State's recovery goals for this state-listed endangered species.
4. Technical expertise and key international relationships were developed during the 2008-2010 fisher reintroduction at Olympic National Park which may soon be lost due to staff retirement, changes in the trapping industry, and possible protections placed on the species in British Columbia.
5. Due to the complexity of this proposed action, partnerships between agencies are necessary to ensure successful reintroduction.

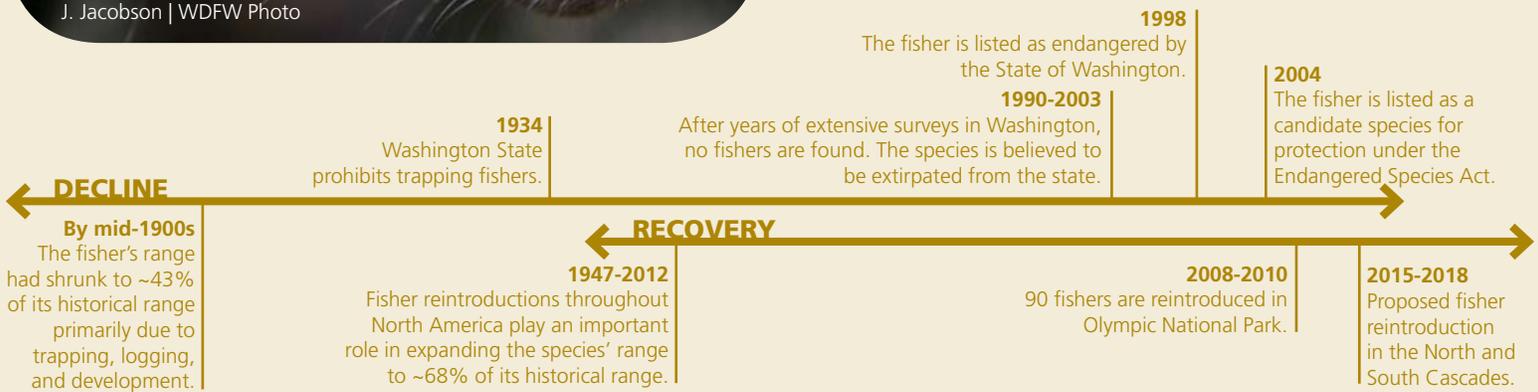
The Pacific Fisher



J. Jacobson | WDFW Photo

FACTS ABOUT THE FISHER

- The fisher is the fifth largest member of the weasel family in North America.
- At 8-12 pounds, males weigh twice as much as females.
- Fishers occur only in North America, in low- to mid-elevation closed canopy forests with large woody structures.
- The fisher needs large live trees, snags, and downed logs for denning and rearing kits.
- The fisher's diet consists of a variety of prey including snowshoe hares, mountain beavers, voles, and porcupines!
- Fishers are the only native carnivore considered extirpated from the Cascade Range in Washington State.



Proposed Action

The proposed action is based on an implementation plan developed by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife. The plan would include two phases *in each ecosystem* that would be staggered over the course of at least five years:

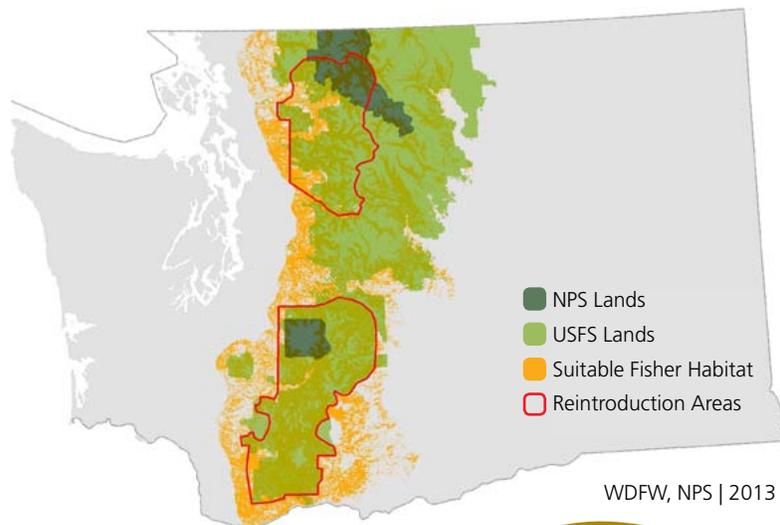
PHASE I: REINTRODUCTION (2 YEARS)

- Capture, transport, and release 80 fishers from a source population in Central British Columbia (40 per year).
- Release sites will be based on large areas of suitable habitat.

PHASE 2: MONITORING (3 YEARS +)

- Monitor fishers during and following reintroduction via radio/satellite collars to understand their movements, survival, reproduction, and establishment of home ranges.

SUITABLE HABITAT FOR THE PACIFIC FISHER



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Share Your Feedback

Submit comments on the proposed plan via the NPS planning website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/RestoreFisher>, or write to: Superintendent's Office, North Cascades National Park Complex, 810 State Route 20, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284. The public scoping period extends from **August 15 - September 30, 2013**.

Please note that your entire comment, including your personal information, may be made publically available at any time. Although you can request that we withhold your personal identifying information from public view, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

