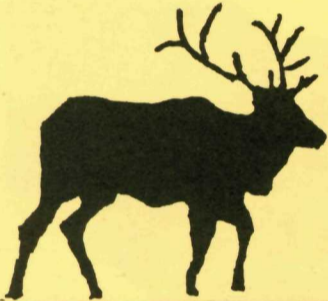


## OF GOATS AND PARKS

"A national park should be a vignette of primitive America."

A. Starker Leopold

### ELK TRADED FOR GOATS



Grizzly bears, bighorn sheep and wolverines could not cross huge continental glaciers that barred them from the Olympics. Neither could mountain goats. But in the 1920s, prior to the park's establishment, the local county game warden and some area residents thought goats would be a good addition to the Olympic Mountains. They traded Roosevelt elk for 12 or

13 mountain goats from Alaska and Canada. Today, 1,000 non-native mountain goats reside in the park, with another 200 outside the boundaries.



### DAMAGE TO NATIVE PLANTS

Park research confirms that mountain goats cause significant changes in high mountain plant communities. Goats erode the soil by digging wallows up to 30 feet in diameter to keep cool during summer. Their food

preferences are changing the composition of plant communities and may threaten several rare species and some plants that grow only in the Olympics.

Prompt action will arrest soil erosion and allow most native plant populations to recover.





## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

From June through mid-July, 1989, the park will be in the second year of its three-year, live-capture wildlife management program. The goal is to make the park interior goat free, and to control the goat population along the park's eastern boundary.

Helicopters will transport rangers to the backcountry where the crew will secure goats with capture nets and chemical immobilization. Goats will then be placed in specially designed carrying bags and flown by helicopter to the frontcountry. Here the animals will be transferred to crates for vehicle transportation to native ranges in several western states, in cooperation with the Washington State Department of Wildlife.

Live capture is the preferred method of removal, though a shooting program by park rangers may be initiated in 1991 in areas where live capture is not effective or safe.

**For Your Safety: Please avoid helicopter landing sites and be aware of spot closures in certain backcountry areas.**



photo by Rich Olson

## RESTORING NATURAL STATE

Olympic National Park was established in 1938 to preserve and protect the integrity of all its natural features, including native plants and wildlife. The park's basically unmanipulated ecosystems contributed to its recognition as a National

Biosphere Reserve and an International World Heritage site. Efforts to remove the non-native mountain goats will help return Olympic National Park to its natural state.

For more information, please write to:

Park Superintendent  
600 East Park Avenue  
Port Angeles, WA 98362

