Mountain Goat (*Oreamnos americanus*) m-oram

#	Topic	Description
1	**Ecosection**	CPK
2	**Biogeoclimatic subzone/variant**	ESSF mm1, ESSFmmp, ESSFwc2, ESSFvv, ESSFvvp, AT (Stevens 1993)
3	**Habitat requirements**	Mountain goats inhabit rugged terrain composed of cliffs, ledges, projecting pinnacles and talus slopes. Habitat selection by Mt. goats is often determined by needs for security from predation rather than for forage requirements. One study showed that the distance to cliffs was the most important factor determining goat distribution and that summering goats made little use of foraging areas over 400m from cliffs. (USDA Forest service 1997) Within this high elevation security area mountain goats make use of a number of different habitat types throughout the year. Winters are spent on snow free, well ledged or fractured, cliffs, and very steep terrain with interspersed vegetation. Relatively open, unforested, steep, south facing slopes, with slope greater than 40 ° (so snow is shed rapidly) are preferred. In extreme conditions upper elevation ESSF and ESSF parkland forests may be of benefit by intercepting and redistributing snow and providing forage. (USDA Forest service 1997) (Wright) During the summer months, goats often use areas of lush herbaceous forage in alpine grasslands, meadows, and grassy slide-rock slopes of the AT and ESSF parklands. Timbered areas and avalanche tracks in the ESSF subzones may also be used during migration or movement between cliff bands and feeding areas. When crossing areas that are without escape terrain goats repeatedly use the same trails (USDA Forest service 1997). Kids are born between May-June on the steepest most rugged areas of the goat's range. (Stevens and Lofts 1988) (Wright) (Banfield 1981)
4	**Assumptions**	Because of the mountain goats preference for high elevation habitat, with strong preference for habitat with escape and security cover, only the ESSF and AT zones will be rated for. In the AT zone both sedge meadow ecounits (SM, SP) rate 1 for feeding in the snow free part of the year. The heather dominated ecounit (HP) is rated 2 on warm aspects (w) and 3 on cool (k). The SP ecounit rates 3-4 for cover while cliffs and rock outcrops (CL, RO) rate 1 for feeding, cover, and breeding if on warm aspects and 2 if on cool. These units are used year round. Talus slopes (TA) and rubble (RU) are rated 2 and 3 for warm and cool aspects respectively. Exposed soil (ES) is rated the same as the TA ecounit for the spring summer and fall seasons. Steep slopes of the ESSFvvp can also be potential goat habitat. The steep sloping initiation zones of the avalanche chutes (BM, BR) rate 3-4 for summer-fall feeding, and 4-5 for cover, and rate 6 for winter. Ecounits with significant conifer cover (BH, MR) and aspect modifiers (w,k) rate 4-5 for feeding and thermal cover in all seasons. The HP ecounit will rate up to 3 for feeding in the summer while the SS, VP, SP, GS meadows may rate up to 2 for spring, summer and fall feeding. In the ESSFvv, steep sloping forests (FB, MR) of structural stage 5-7 rate 4-5 for feeding, and thermal cover in all seasons. The alpine meadows (HP, MS, VH) rate up to 4 for spring - summer feeding. In the ESSFwc2 the forested units are potential feeding and cover areas. Those areas with significant slopes and within relatively close proximity to escape cover (FB, FR, FF) can be rated 4-5 with warm aspects receiving a higher rating than cool. The initiation zone of steep, upper slope avalanche tracks (AF, BF, VH) are rated 3 for summer and fall feeding. The significant slope, high elevation forests of the ESSFmm1 (FB) rate up to 4 for feeding and cover year round. Avalanche tracks and meadows (HP, VP, VH) are potential feeding areas, rating 3-4 in most cases. The ESSFmmp1 rates slightly higher than the mm1. Most units rate 3-4 for feeding but the VG, VA, SP ecounits and the warm aspect HPw ecounit rate 2-3 for summer feeding. Avalanche track units (BM) rate 3-4, while lower and toe slope units are rated low (5-6).

		In all ESSF subzones warm aspect cliffs, rock outcrops and talus (CLw, ROw, TAw) rate 1-3 for all activities while cool aspects (CLk, ROk, TAk)rate slightly lower 2-4.
5	**Forage preferences**	Winter: needles of all conifer species except spruce; grasses, sedges, rushes and forbs exposed on windblown slopes; twigs of deciduous shrubs such as willows and huckleberries Summer: grasses and forbs such as pea family members, leaves of deciduous shrubs (Wright) (Banfield 1981) (USDA Forest service 1997)
6	**Seasonal requirements & patterns**	No marked seasonal migration pattern; More widespread in summer, with a preference for concentrating in subalpine forests and on south facing cliffs in extreme winter weather (Banfield 1981)
7	**Notes**	All forage and cover habitat is only used if it is in close proximity to steep sloping cliffs for escape Rut takes place on the steep slopes that these mammals inhabit in November Kidding occurs extremely rough, steep, rocky terrain (Wright 1981) Assessed on a 6-class / 4 season rating scheme

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