

B.C. Mountain Goat Workshop, Prince George, BC 2005

Project Title: Identification of mountain goat mineral licks in the Williston Reservoir watershed, north-central B.C.

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4. Project location: Williston Reservoir watershed, north-central B.C.

Coastal: Transition: Interior:

5. Project timeframe: Start (month/year): Oct 1999 End (month/year, or ongoing): Aug 2000

6. Project status: Data collection Analysis Write-up Publication

7. Project objectives: (briefly describe the primary objectives of your project)

- To identify mineral licks used by mountain goats, and determine and rank their degree of use by goats, in the Williston Reservoir watershed
- To bring mountain goat mineral lick locations to the attention of resource managers, and recommend the establishment of WHA's, WHF's, or forest harvesting deferrals.

8. Project descriptors (select all that apply):

Research

Habitat Use:

Forestry Interactions:

Management

VHF collars:

Oil & Gas Interactions:

Inventory

GPS collars:

Mineral Exploration:

Predation:

Harvest:

Aerial Disturbance:

Habitat Modeling:

Population Dynamics:

Human Disturbance:

Other:

9. Project description (provide a brief description of your project including methods and main findings or results to date):

Mineral licks used seasonally by mountain goats are seldom close to secure escape terrain (often located along creek draws in valley bottoms). Goats are known to migrate up to several km through forested habitats to reach mineral licks, typically using one well-defined trail. Identification of low-elevation mineral licks and access trails used by mountain goats is the first step in ensuring protection of such licks/trails particularly during forest harvesting activities.

In 1999, potential low-elevation mineral licks in the Ospika River drainage were identified from sites noted on biophysical habitat maps, and from a detailed review of clay bank locations on forest cover maps. In October, after the peak mineral lick use season, potential lick sites were surveyed from a

Bell 206 helicopter; those with obvious goat use observed from the helicopter such as presence of tracks/trails or moulted hair in adjacent trees, were then subjected to detailed ground investigations. The degree of use and importance of each lick was then classified according to the presence and abundance of goat sign at the lick (tracks, hair, scat, licking sites). In 2000, these same methods were used to identify goat licks outside of the Ospika drainage within the remainder of the Williston Reservoir watershed. In addition, guide-outfitters, trappers, First Nations, and local community residents were contacted to obtain local knowledge of low-elevation goat lick locations, however, no additional licks beyond those identified using forest cover maps were found.

10. Project documentation (provide a list of citations for all progress, final, or published reports)

Data on file, PFWWCP, Prince George, BC.