

BLM STUDY REVIEW of HELLS CANYON COMPLEX STUDIES

Literature and Status Review of Big Game Species in Hells Canyon

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Jack Melland
Wildlife Biologist
Baker Resource Area

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1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this report was to locate literature that provides relevant information on the biology, ecology and management of Mountain Goats, Big Horn Sheep, Black Bear, Mountain Lion, Mule Deer, and Rocky Mountain Elk in Hells Canyon.

2. CONCLUSION

No conclusions were drawn but this is a synopsis of literature relating to each of the six species listed. Information presented included reproduction, habitat requirements, food habits, accidents, predation, parasites, disease and hunting. Historical distribution, cultural significance and potential hydroelectric impacts to populations and habitat were discussed.

3. STUDY ADEQUACY

The study does provide good information but the potential hydroelectric impacts section on deer and elk is incomplete and misleading. No data may have been located that specifically addressed changes in riparian vegetation and the direct or indirect impacts on mule deer but numerous discussions were held between IPC and agency biologists on this subject. It is stated that: "*No publications from typical current range of Rocky Mountain Elk were located that indicated riparian habitat were important*". Thomas; Wildlife habitats in Managed Forests the Blue Mountains of Oregon and Washington, 1979 states that "*riparian zones are disproportionately important for some wide-ranging species such as Elk*".

4. BLM CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

This is a good status review for the six species listed. The time frame is rather short for the potentially longer life span of individual animals, especially elk. Habitat changes could take 5 to 10 years to impact an animals population. Usually negative impacts take less time. Potential hydroelectric impacts have been moderately addressed on all species but elk.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Dam and reservoir impacts should be addressed more thoroughly especially elk.