



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bureau of Land Management  
National Park Service  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

## Federal Subsistence Board News Release



Forest Service

### For Immediate Release

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Under the Authority of:

**36 CFR Part 242.10 and .19**

**50 CFR Part 100.10 and .19**

### **BLUE LAKE, MEDVEJIE LAKE AND THE SOUTHERN HALF OF THE KATLIAN RIVER DRAINAGES ARE CLOSED TO THE HARVEST OF MOUNTAIN GOAT BY ALL USERS IN UNIT 4 (Baranof Island)**

The Sitka District Ranger, under authority delegated by the Federal Subsistence Board, is taking action to close the watersheds of Blue Lake, Medvejie Lake and the southern half of the Katlian River drainage to the harvest of mountain goats by all users. The closure will be effective at 12:01 a.m., Monday, August 1, 2011 and will remain in effect for the remainder of the season which runs through December 31, 2011. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) has issued a closure in the same watersheds, effective from August 1, 2011 to the close of the season on December 31, 2011.

An overall decline in the goat population has occurred since the extreme winter weather of 2006-07. Aerial survey data indicates a 21% decline in the multi-year average and a 42% decline since the high census in 2004. The number of kids per adult goats has declined 62%. From 1976-2000 the average age of nannies harvested was 3 years old. In 2001, it was 4.88 years old and in 2010 it was 6.10 years old. The trend indicates that too many nannies that comprise the reproductive component of the population are being harvested. Hunt effort and success has been concentrated in the principal watersheds of Blue Lake –Medvejie Lake, Katlian River, and Nakwasina River. Additionally, approximately 66% of Baranof Island's goat population occurs from the Green Lake watershed to the north, which concentrates hunters in a smaller geographical area. Even though ADF&G has made an effort to inform hunters about the effects of harvesting nannies that precedes 1992, and a concerted effort was undertaken in 2008 to persuade hunters to forego nanny harvest; the last five seasons have produced an average nanny harvest of 41% with a high of 61% in the 2009 season.

A public hearing was held on July 15, 2011 in Sitka, Alaska. The ability to teleconference was provided so residents of other affected communities in Unit 4 could participate in the hearing. During the public hearing, in addition to discussions about this special action, a management plan for the 2011 hunting season was also discussed. The management plan establishes smaller management units with distinct male and female goat harvest caps on Baranof Island. As harvest

caps in each of the sub-management areas are reached, those areas would be closed to mountain goat harvest. Members of the public who attended this public hearing expressed support for conservation of mountain goats in the Sitka area through the proposed closure and application of the smaller geographic harvest point caps. Managers stated that four years of increasing population trend data would likely be necessary for the proposed closed watersheds to be re-opened.

The majority of Baranof Island will remain open for goat hunting but will be managed, as in the past 5 years, with a maximum point total as a guideline harvest cap. As in prior seasons, nanny harvest will be more restrictive than billy harvest when applied to the point total. If and when point totals are met, additional special actions will be issued to close additional watershed and zones to prevent over harvest of goats. A map and description of the closed areas are available from the Sitka Ranger District Office and the Sitka area office of ADFG. Information on Federal subsistence management special actions for the Tongass National Forest can be found at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/subsistence/subsistence.shtml>. For additional information, contact Sitka Ranger District Subsistence Biologist Jack Lorrigan at 907-747-4299 or by email at [jlorrigan@fs.fed.us](mailto:jlorrigan@fs.fed.us)

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Information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program can be found at <http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/home.html>.

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