

Heritage Ranking Form - State Rank

Scientific Name: *Ovis canadensis canadensis*
Common Name: Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep
Classification: Vertebrate Animal

Heritage Rank: **S2**

Rank Date: 7/13/2016

Comments: Small range, limited habitat, few individuals. Significant risk of herd extirpation from disease.

Range Extent: E = 5,000-20,000 sq km (~2,000-8,000 sq mi)

Comments: Range extent of Rocky Mountain population in OR is 9594 sq km

Population Size: C = 250 - 1,000 individuals

Comments: Fewer than 800 individuals (ODFW 2003).

Number of Occurrences: B = 6 - 20

Comments: 9 managed populations (ODFW 2003).

Area of Occupancy: EF = 26-500 4-km² grid cells

Comments: Estimated area of occupancy based on coarse distribution maps. Limited to canyons associated with the Snake River and tributaries and alpine/sub-alpine habitats in the Willows.

Good Viability: B = Very few (1-3) occurrences with excellent or good viability or ecological integrity

Comments: Without intensive management few of the herds are viable.

Environmental Sensitivity: Not Evaluated

Comments: None

Short Term Trends: G = Relatively Stable (<=10% change)

Comments: Assuming continued intensive management.

Long Term Trends: D = Decline of 50 - 70%

Comments: Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep occupy less than 30% of their historic range. All herds in Oregon are the result of reintroductions.

Threat Impact: B = High

Comments:

Domestic sheep and goats compete with bighorns for food and spread disease. Management attempts to keep wild and domestic herds separate. Noxious weeds reduce habitat quality. Several herds are small and isolated, making them susceptible to extirpation in the event of disturbance (e.g. wildfire or disease).

Intrinsic Vulnerability: Not Evaluated

Comments: None

Rank Notes: None

References:

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2003. Oregon's bighorn sheep and Rocky Mountain goat management plan. Salem, Oregon, USA

Mark Penninger, pers comm. 4/25/2016 (notes in element file).

ODFW Bighorn Sheep Population Survey 2010-2015

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