

facilities; as well as any other issues that need to be addressed. In addition to attending the scoping meetings, people wishing to provide input to this initial phase of developing the general management plan may address comments to the superintendent.

Dated: November 26, 2002.

**Michael Snyder,**

*Deputy Director, Intermountain Region.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### National Park Service

#### General Management Plans, and Final Environmental Impact Statements, Wupatki and Sunset Crater Volcano National Monuments, Arizona

**AGENCY:** National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement/General Management Plans for Wupatki and Sunset Crater Volcano National Monuments.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the National Park Service announces the availability of Final Environmental Impact Statement/General Management Plans (FEIS/GMP) for both Wupatki and Sunset Crater Volcano National Monuments, Arizona.

**DATES:** The FEIS/GMPs were on public review from November 6, 2001 through January 7, 2002. Responses to public comment are addressed in the documents. A 30-day no-action period will follow the Environmental Protection Agency's Notice of Availability of the FEIS/GMPs.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the FEIS/GMPs are available from Sam R. Henderson, Superintendent, Wupatki and Sunset Crater Volcano National Monuments, 6400 N. Highway 89, Flagstaff, Arizona, 86004. Public reading copies of the FEIS/GMPs will be available for review at the following locations:

Office of the Superintendent, 6400 N. Highway 89, Flagstaff, Arizona, 86004, Telephone: 928-526-1157.

Planning and Environmental Quality, Intermountain Support Office—Denver (room 20), National Park Service, 12795 W. Alameda Parkway, Lakewood, CO 80228, Telephone: (303) 969-2377.

Office of Public Affairs, National Park Service, Department of Interior, 18th and C Streets NW., Washington, DC 20240, Telephone: (202) 208-6843.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sam R. Henderson, Superintendent, Wupatki and Sunset Crater Volcano National Monuments, at the above address and telephone number.

Dated: December 12, 2002.

**Michael Snyder,**

*Deputy Director, Intermountain Region, National Park Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### National Park Service

#### Mountain Lake Fisheries Management Plan North Cascades National Park Service Complex Whatcom, Skagit and Chelan Counties, WA; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

**SUMMARY:** In accord with § 102© of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.4321, et seq.), the National Park Service is undertaking a conservation planning and environmental impact analysis process for mountain lake fisheries management in North Cascades National Park Service Complex, Washington. An Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared to provide a framework for a comprehensive Mountain Lake Fisheries Management Plan (MLFMP). The MLFMP will govern all future fisheries management actions, including stocking, for all natural lakes in North Cascades National Park, Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, and Ross Lake National Recreation Area.

**Background:** The National Park Service (NPS) manages North Cascades National Park, Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, and Ross Lake National Recreation Area collectively as the North Cascades National Park Service Complex (North Cascades). The rugged North Cascades landscape contains 240 natural mountain lakes, most of which were naturally fishless due to impassable topographic barriers. Far from barren, these lakes contained a rich array of native aquatic life including plankton, aquatic insects, frogs and salamanders.

Settlers began stocking Cascade lakes in the late 1800's with various species of exotic trout. By the 20th century, stocking was a routine management practice for the U.S. Forest Service and various counties. Upon its inception in 1933, the Washington Department of Game (WDG; now "WDFW") assumed responsibility for stocking mountain lakes throughout the state to create and maintain a recreational fishery. The

State's involvement grew largely out of the need to prevent haphazard stocking by individuals without biological expertise. With particular emphasis on systematic assessment of fish species and stocking rates, the WDG conducted the first high lakes fisheries research and developed many principles central to fisheries management today.

After North Cascades was established in 1968, a conflict over fish stocking gradually emerged between the NPS and WDFW. The conflict was driven by fundamental policy differences: NPS policies prohibited stocking to protect native ecosystems; WDFW policies encouraged stocking to enhance recreation. To reconcile the conflict and foster cooperative management, the NPS and WDFW entered into a Fisheries Management Agreement in 1988 with the purpose of Aestablishing a mutually agreed to list of lakes within the boundaries of North Cascades National Park which the department [would] stock with fish as part of its fish management program." The agreement defined 40 specific lakes for stocking and specified that Aresearch results [would] be considered in future decisions'.

Shortly thereafter, the NPS initiated a long-term research effort through Oregon State University to evaluate the effects of fish stocking on native biota in mountain lakes. An independent peer review panel of subject matter experts was established to evaluate research results and to ensure objectivity and scientific merit. The final phase of this research effort was completed in July, 2002. With respect to the subject proposal, key conclusions include: (1) Lakes with reproducing trout populations had significantly fewer salamanders and zooplankton than fishless lakes; (2) There was no significant difference in salamander or zooplankton abundance between fishless lakes and lakes with non reproducing (*i.e.* stocked) fish; (3) Native biota (*e.g.* salamanders, zooplankton) appeared to be at greatest risk in lakes with (a) relatively high nitrogen concentrations, (b) relatively warm water and 8 reproducing trout populations (indicative of relatively high fish densities). These criteria were found in six of the 83 lakes studied. A complete account of the research and results can be viewed on the EIS Web site [www.nps.gov/noca/highlakes.htm](http://www.nps.gov/noca/highlakes.htm).

**Preliminary Information:** As noted, the purpose of the EIS effort is to develop a new management plan for natural mountain lakes that conserves native biological integrity and provides a spectrum of recreational opportunities and visitor experiences, including sport