

# SIERRA

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News

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## Nanny State

As alpine habitats warm, creatures adapted to them have nowhere to go but up (even if it's just climbing on top of Mom). For mountain goats, which already inhabit the highest reaches of the Northern Rockies, that can translate to nowhere. In recent years these tough, resilient creatures have been losing ground in much of their traditional range, dwindling in many places to populations in the low double digits. Some biologists worry that the snowfields that irrigate their summer grazing areas are melting too quickly. Other possible culprits are the new, more powerful snowmobiles that can run high up mountain bowls, driving goats still higher and away from desperately needed browse.



Happily, while mountain goats are in trouble in their historic range, some populations continue to thrive, particularly in large, rich habitats where they've been transplanted, like Montana's Crazy Mountains or Yellowstone National Park. The image above is part of a new exhibit called *Irreplaceable: Wildlife in a Warming World*, which will be traveling to eight U.S. cities this spring. To find a showing near you, visit [irreplaceablewild.org](http://irreplaceablewild.org). —Paul Rauber