



2027 Oregon Big Game Regulations

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**Oregon Department
of Fish and Wildlife**



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Big Game Management & Regulation Process

General Regulations

2027 Hunt Proposals

Chronic Wasting Disease



ODFW manages populations for long-term health

Informed by data

Population surveys

Habitat surveys

Disease sampling

Harvest reporting

Research

Guided by plans

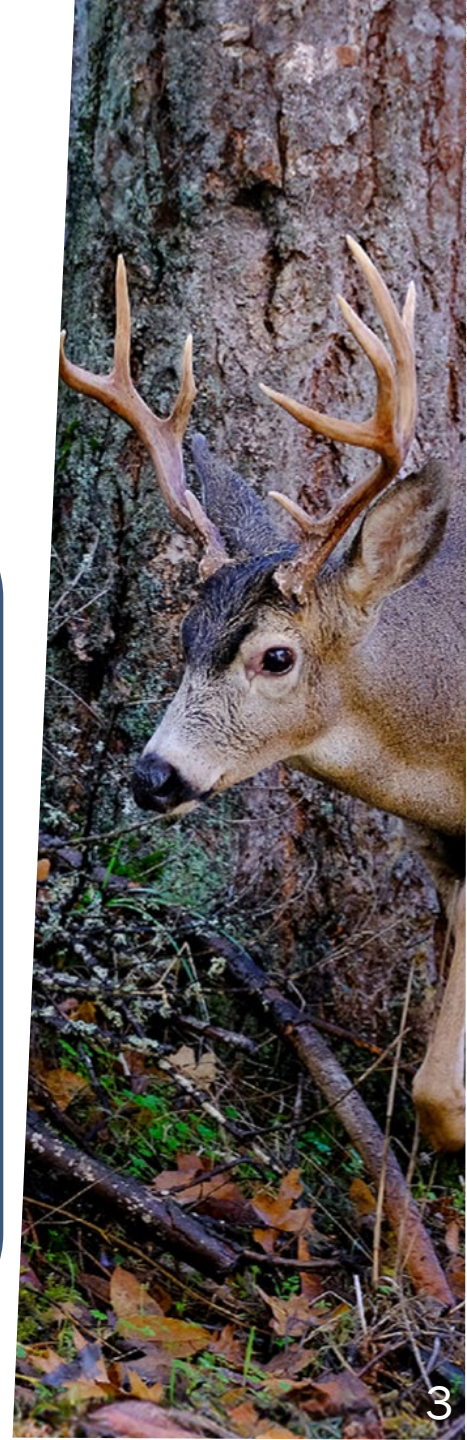
Strategies and actions to address limiting factors

Sustainable harvest frameworks

On-the-Ground-Action

Protect & Restore habitat
Manage conflict

Manage harvest



General Regulation Proposals



Terminally Ill Hunting Tag Program

Name Change



Oregon Landowner Damage Program Reporting

Reporting Consistency



Landowner Preference (LOP)

Registration Clarification

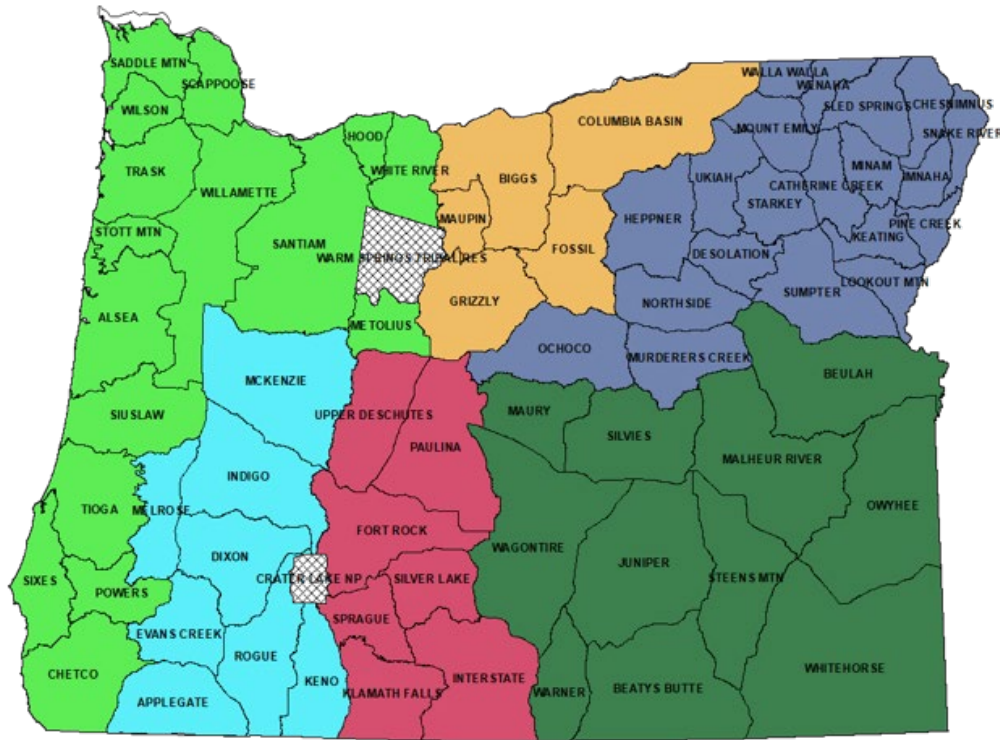




Cougar Population Management



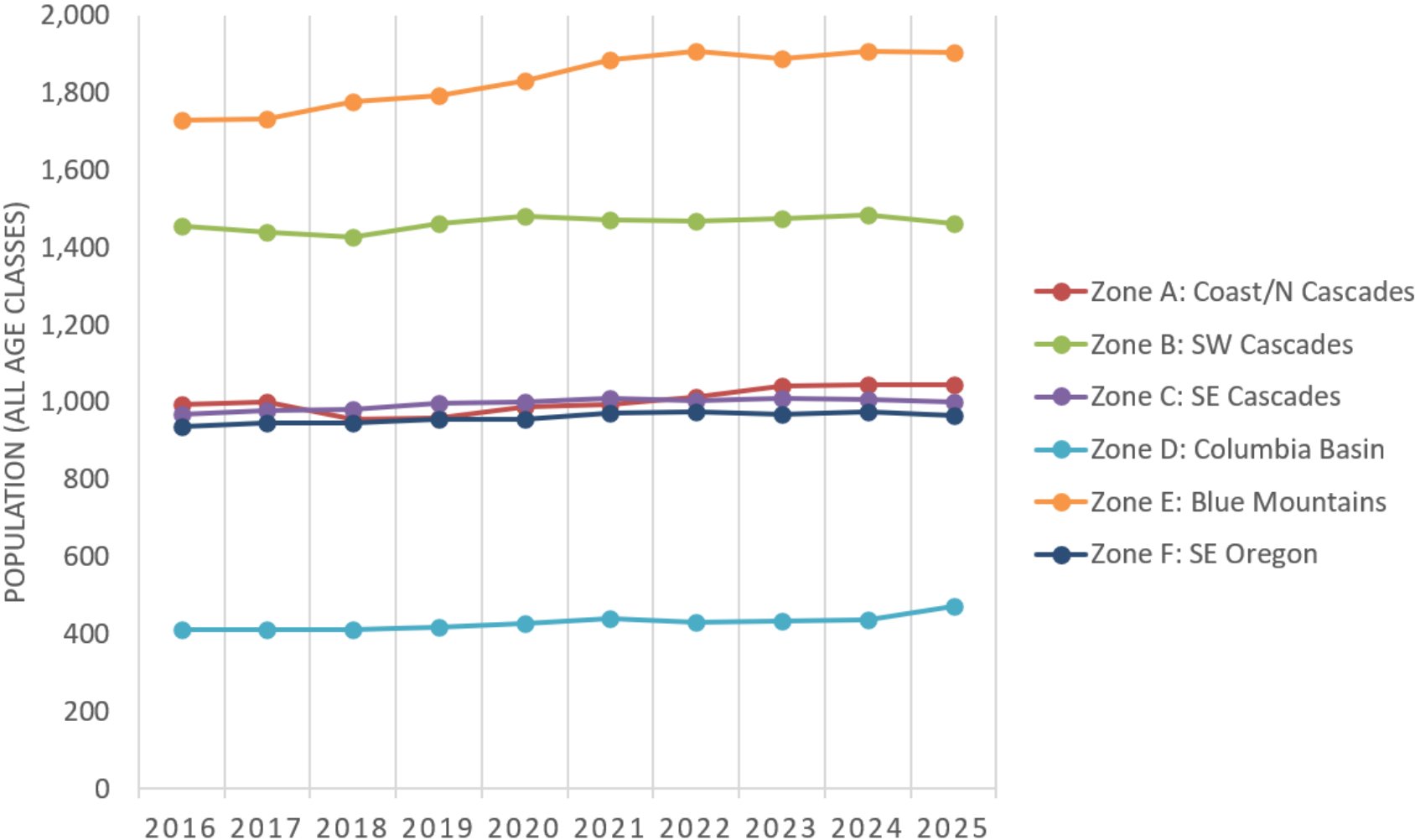
Cougar Population Management



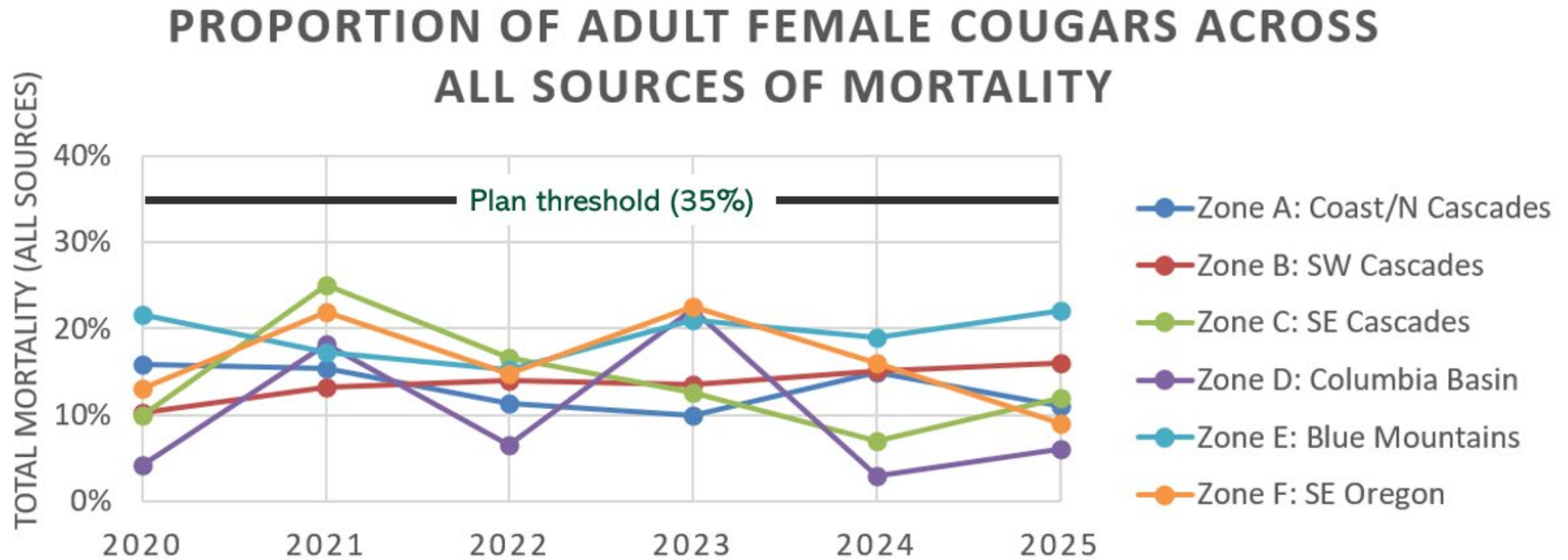
Oregon's cougar population is stable

Statewide
Population
Estimate
~7,000

COUGAR POPULATION ESTIMATE BY ZONE



Female mortality remains below plan threshold





2027 Cougar Proposals

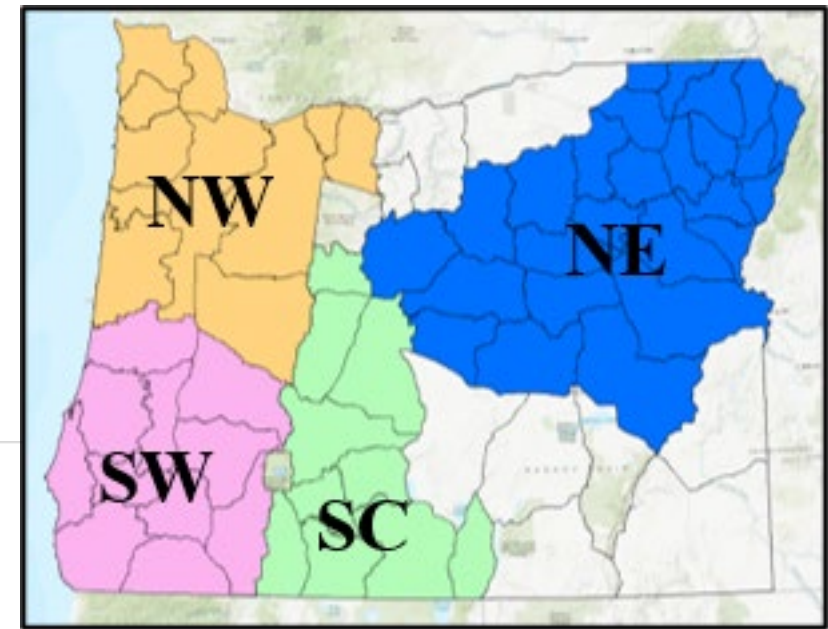
Harvest season

- Maintain season dates and structure
- Protect kittens and females with kittens
- Continue mandatory check-ins

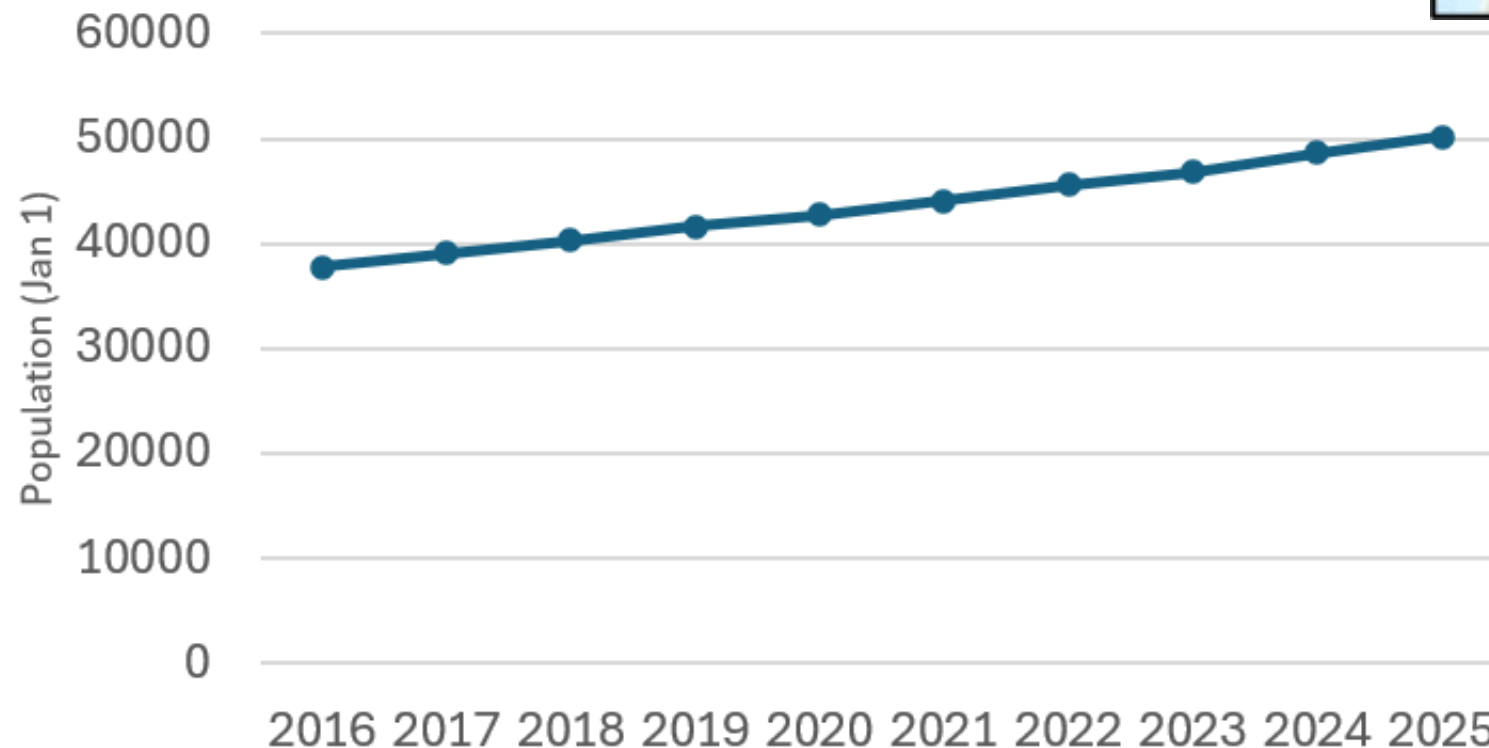
Black Bear Population Management



Oregon's Black Bear Population Is Increasing



Statewide Population Abundance





2027 Spring Bear Proposals

Maintain season dates and structure

- 11,080 controlled tags across 19 hunts
- April 1 – May 31
- Continue to protect cubs and sows with cubs
- Continue mandatory check-ins



2027 Fall Bear Proposals

Maintain season dates and structure

- Aug 1- Dec 31
- 2 bear opportunity
- Continue to protect cubs and sows with cubs
- Continue mandatory check-ins



Ungulates



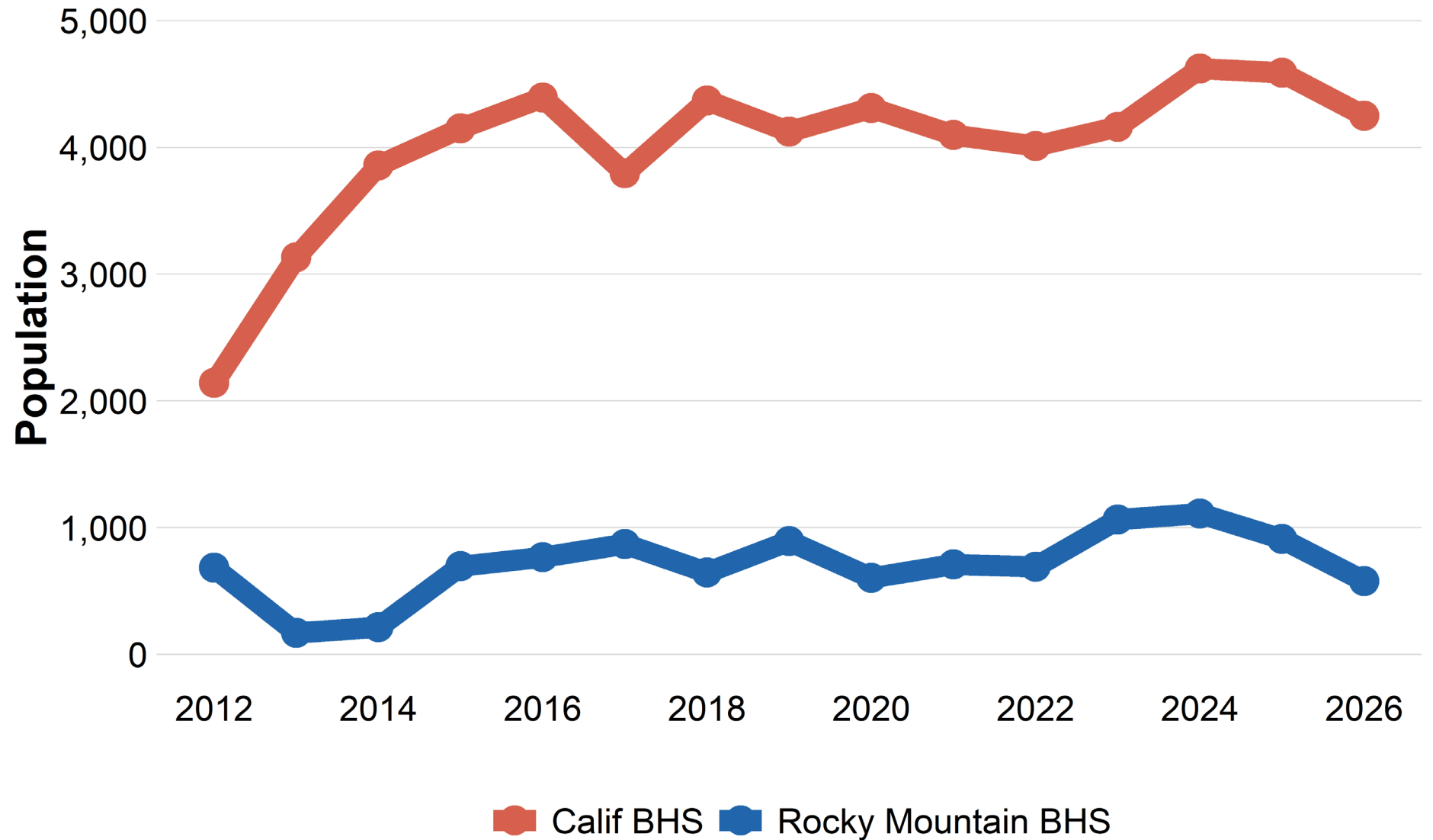
Bighorn Sheep Population Management

Management challenges

- Disease – *M. ovi*
 - Test and remove
 - Actively engaged in meta-analysis
- Aoudad – competition and disease transmission



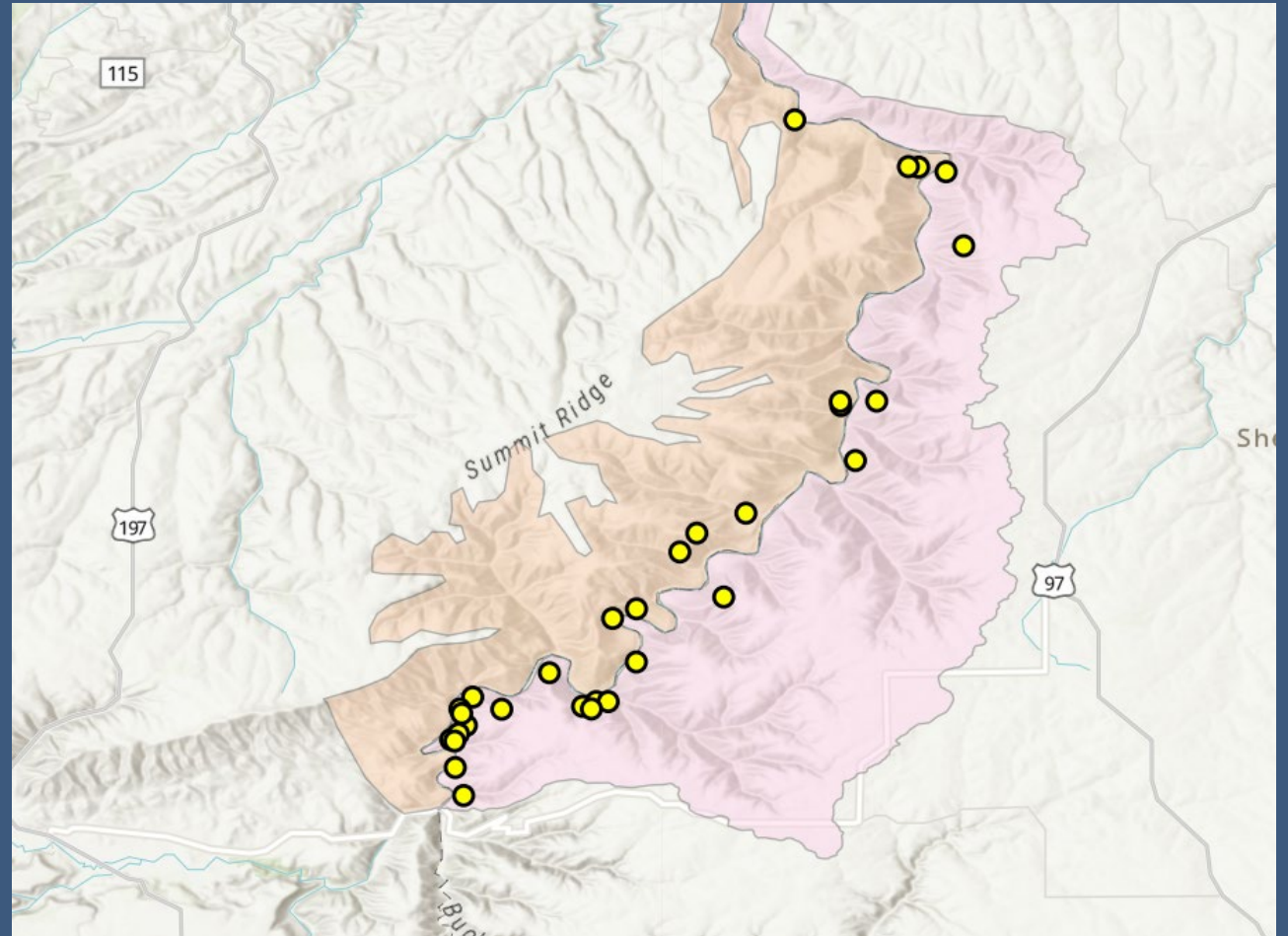
Bighorn Sheep Populations



2027 Bighorn Sheep Proposals

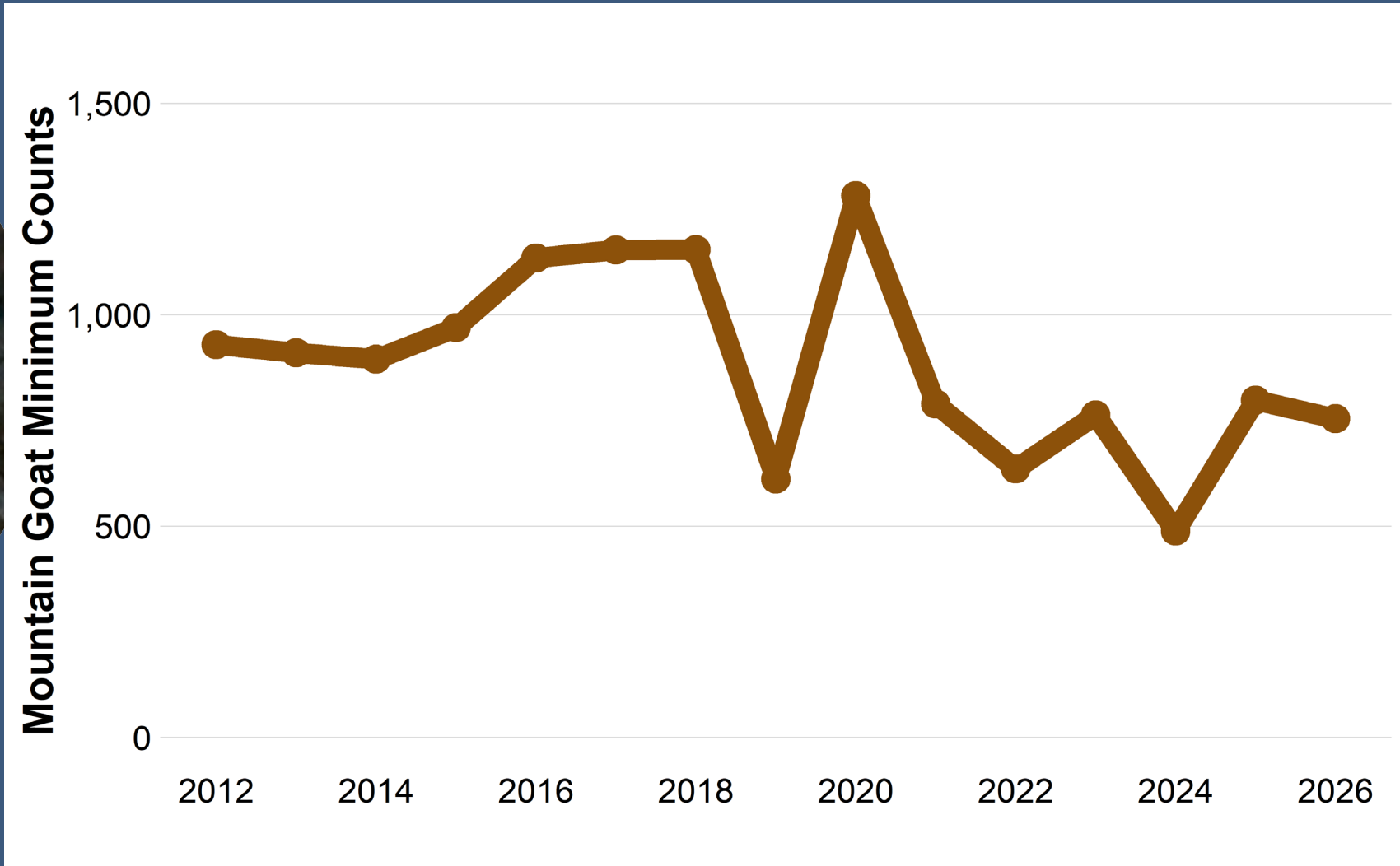
3 new hunts:

- 2 to distribute hunters (John Day and Deschutes)
- 1 new Lower Owyhee Unit





Rocky Mountain Goat Counts Variable



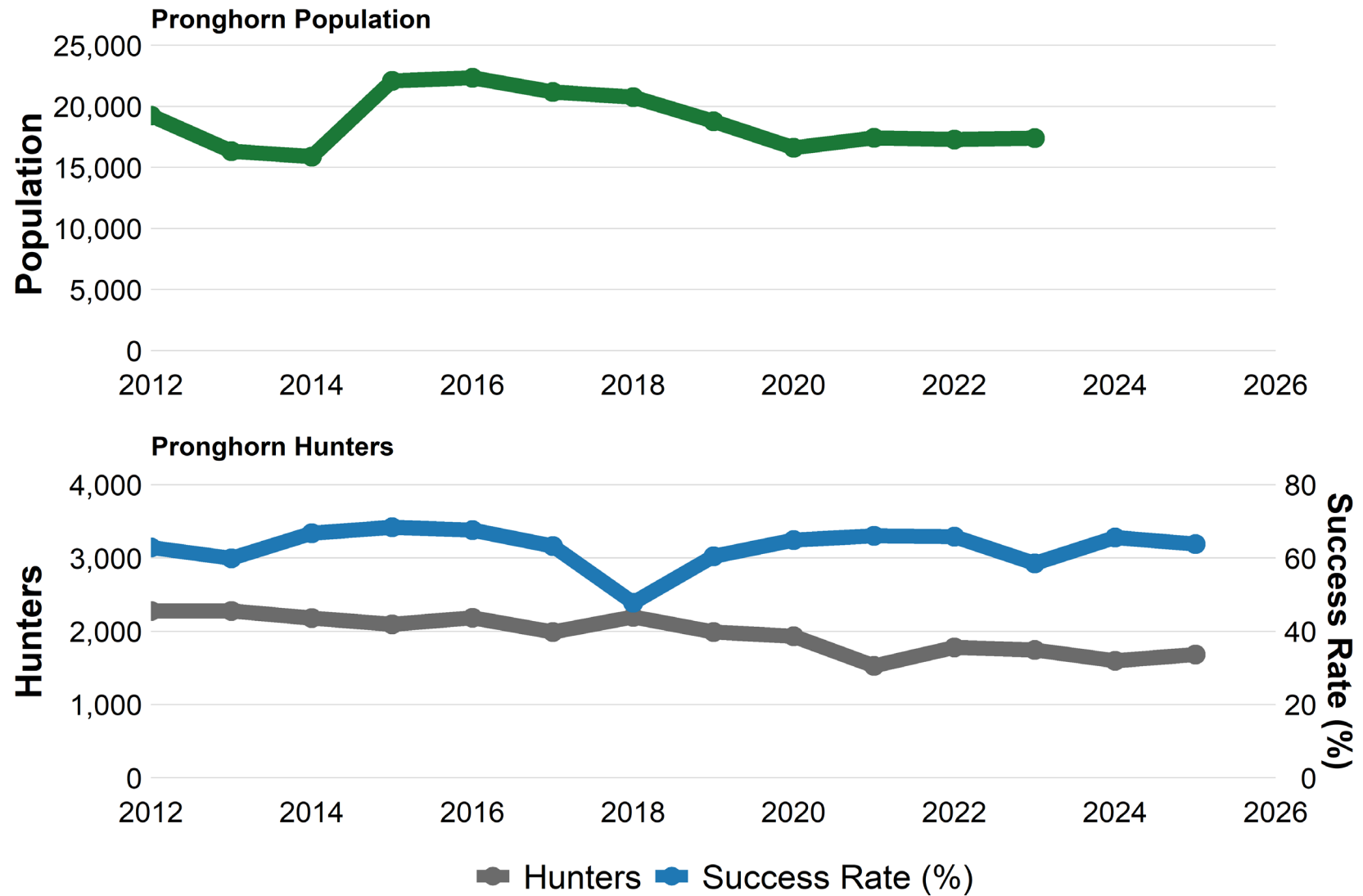
2027 Rocky Mountain Goat Proposals

Minor changes

- 18 Rocky Mtn. Goat tags in 13 hunts
- 1 tag increase – Oregon rotation in odd years
Central Cascades tag



Pronghorn Populations Stable



2027 Pronghorn Proposals

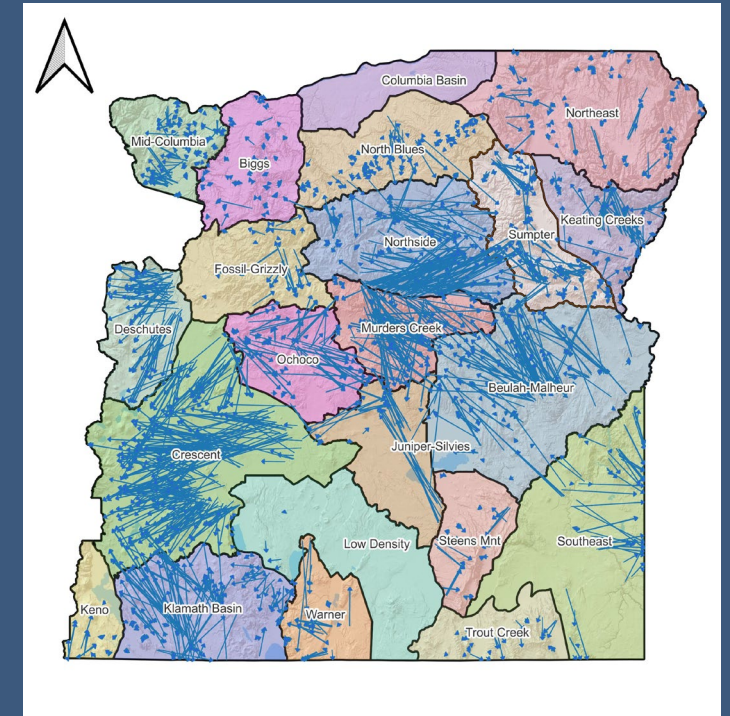
Minor changes

- 1,972 tags for 52 hunts
- 114 fewer than 2026

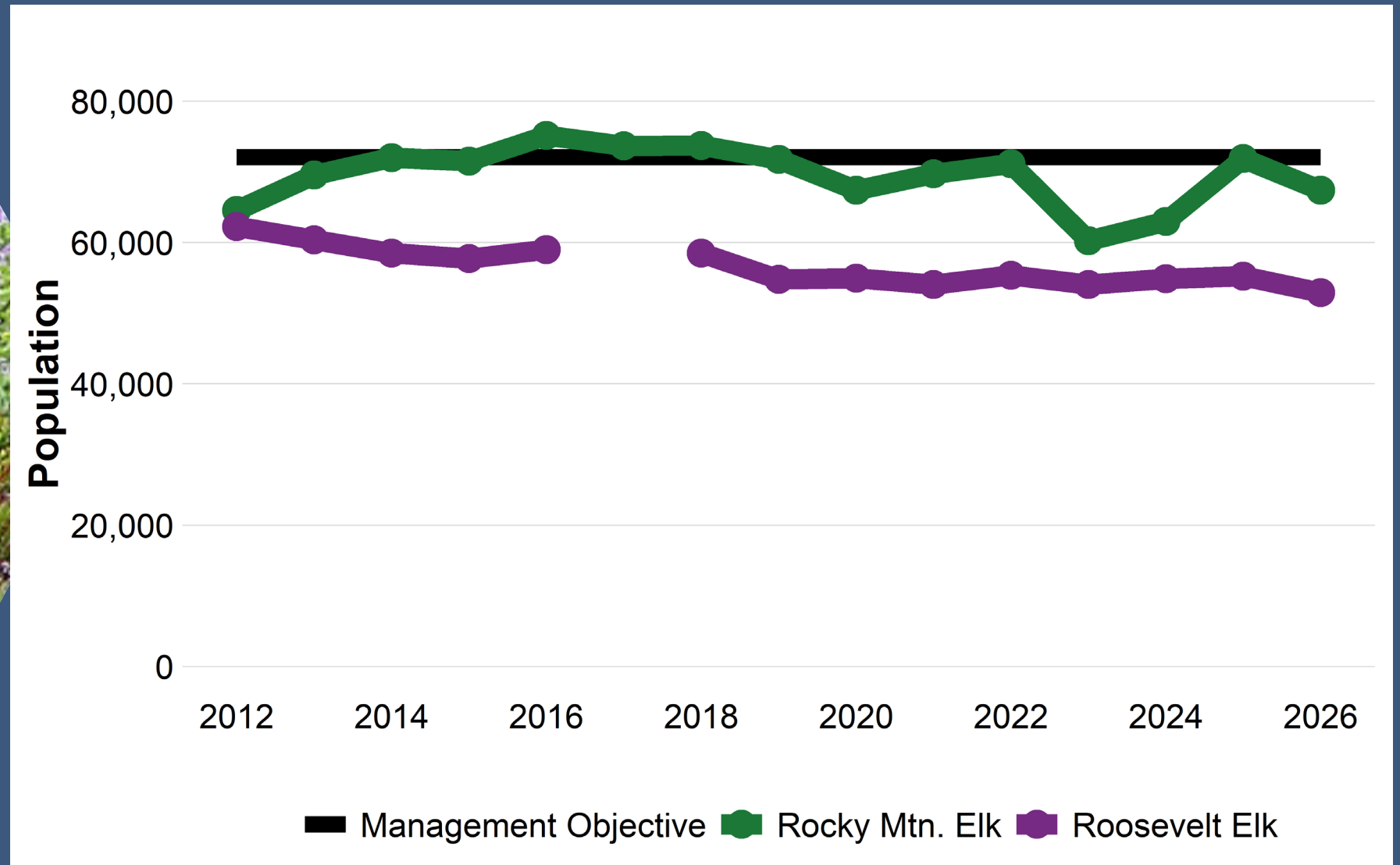


Elk Management

- Balancing population performance and social tolerance
 - Collaring to effectively align:
 - Harvest
 - Elk survey data
 - Landowner survey data



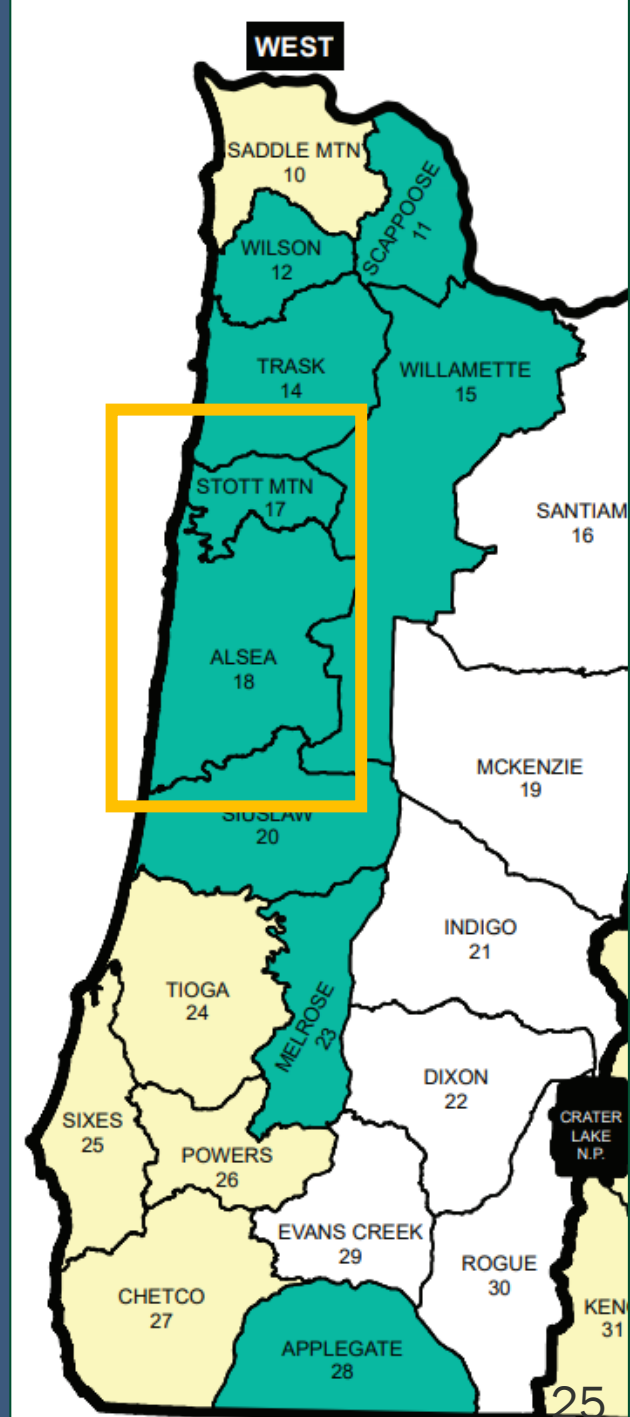
Elk Population Monitoring



2027 General Elk Proposals

General Western Coast ALW Seasons

- Stott Mtn & Alsea not meeting bull ratio MO
- Hunter distribution & crowding complaints
- WMUs with spike only hunt have achieved bull ratio MO
- Propose combination of spike bag limits, season timing, and hunt duration to achieve bull ratio MO and address hunter distribution



2027 General ALW Elk Proposals

	Open Season	Tag Required	Bag Limit	Open Area
Current	4 days	General Western Oregon Coast 1st Season	One bull elk	Units 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23, and 28
	7 days	General Western Oregon Coast 2nd Season	One bull elk	Units 11, 15, 17, 18, 23, and 28
			One spike elk	Units 12, 14, and 20

Proposed	5 days	General Western Oregon Coast 1st Season	One bull elk	Units 15, 23, and 28
			One spike elk	Units 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, and 20
	5 days	General Western Oregon Coast 2nd Season	One bull elk	Units 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23, and 28



2027 General Elk Proposals

West Cascades

- Delete Harness Mtn
- Remove antlerless harvest in:
 - Cascade Muzzleloader
 - General Archery
 - Disability Permit



2027 Controlled Elk Proposals

- No major changes
- 3% reduction in overall tags



Deer Management

Mule Deer

- 2026 New Deer Hunt Areas

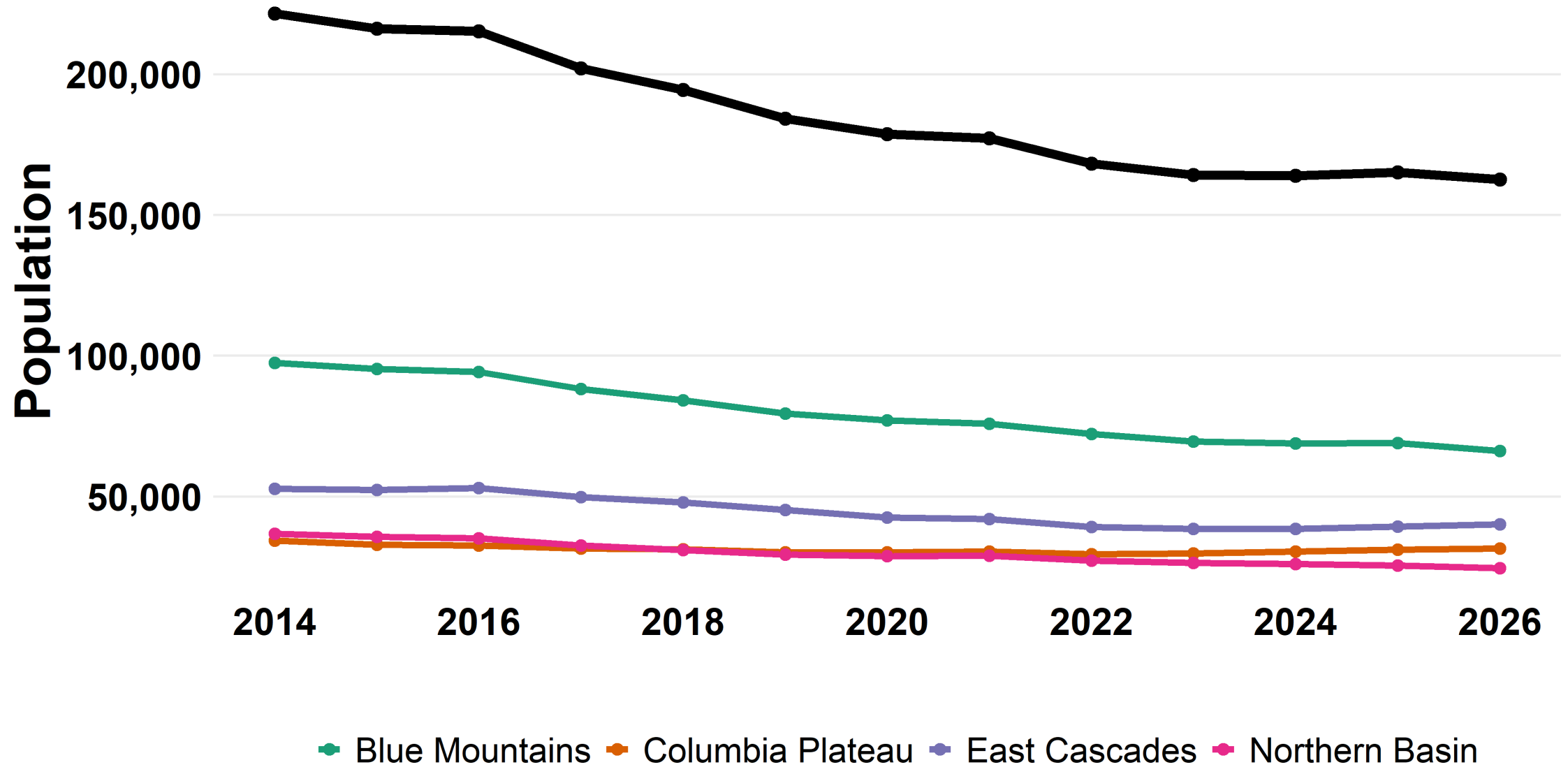
Black-tailed Deer

- 2026 - 2027 New BTM Monitoring Program



Mule Deer Populations by Ecoregion and Statewide Total

Bold black line = statewide total | Colored lines = ecoregions

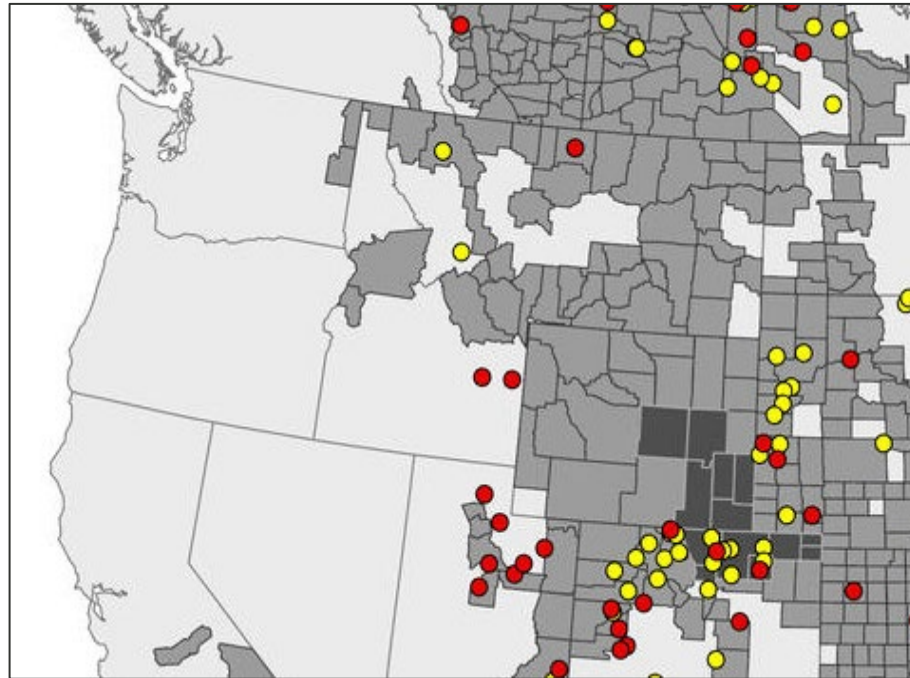


Deer Proposals

- Small reduction in buck deer tags– Southeast 102 Any Legal Weapon (ALW)
- Small increase in antlerless deer tags– Applegate WMU

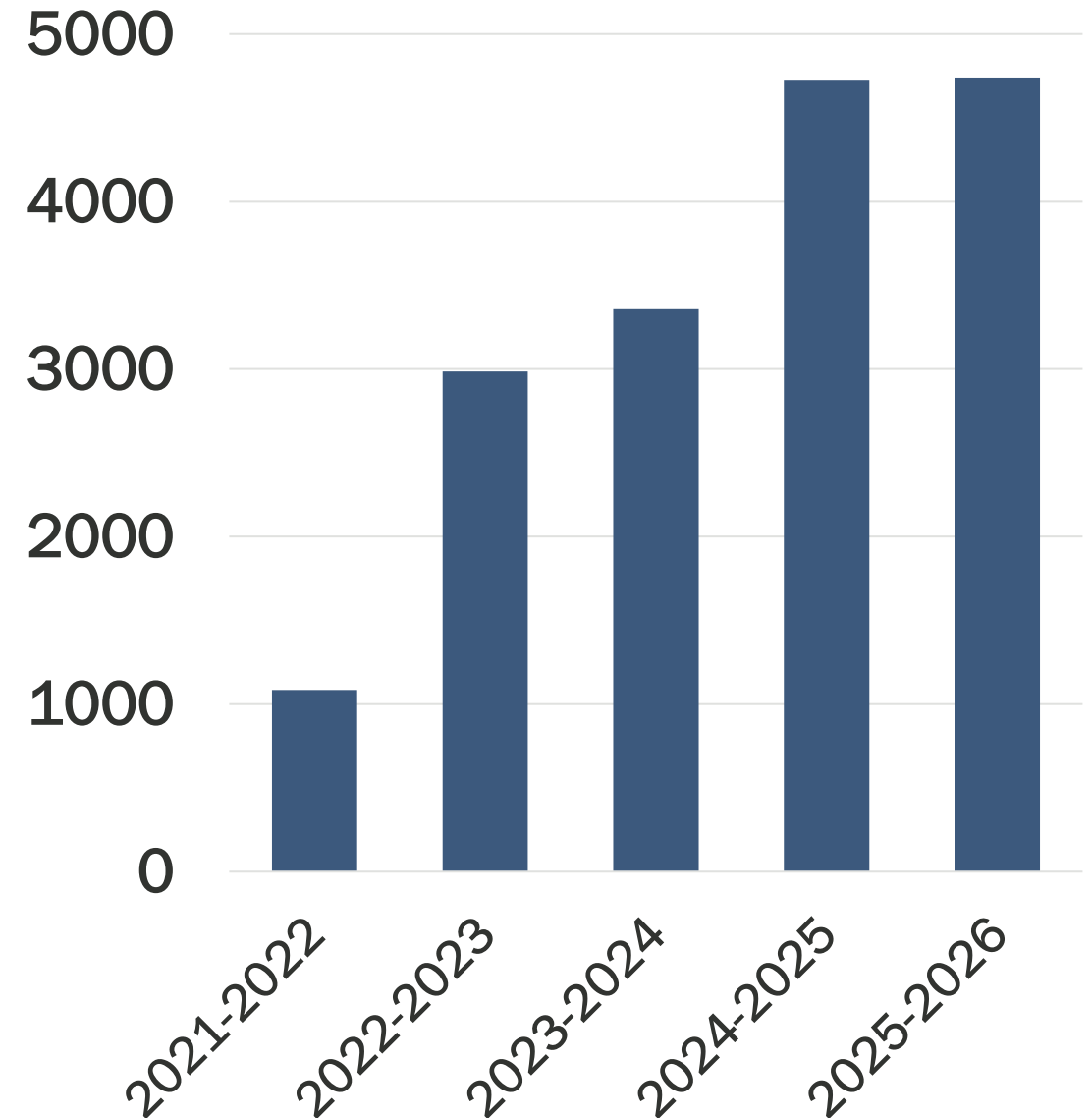


Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance Increasing



Distribution of Chronic Wasting Disease in North America

-  CWD in free-ranging populations
-  Known distribution prior to 2000 (free-ranging)
-  CWD in captive facilities (depopulated)
-  CWD in captive facilities (current)





2027 Cougar Proposals

Cougar Target Area

The department is proposing a limited administrative removal of cougars in the Trout Creek Mountains to support a bighorn sheep translocation effort intended to improve genetic diversity in that herd

Trout Creek Mountains Bighorn Sheep Herd

- ~140 individuals
- Not at carrying capacity
- No *M. ovi* detected
- Overlap Wilderness Study Area (BLM)
- Low harvest, rams only
- Poor genetic diversity (OSU Study)



Low genetic diversity is a significant limiting factor

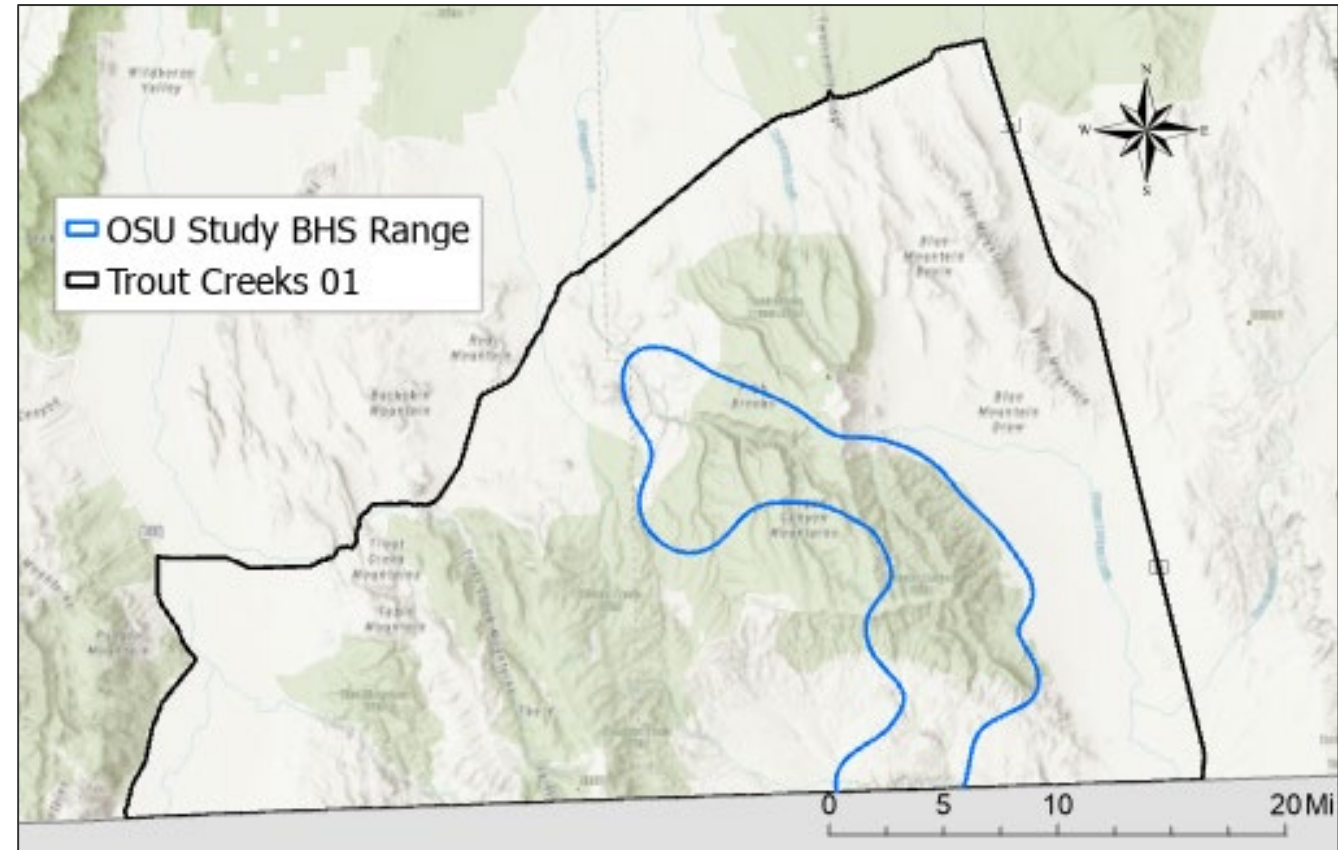
Trout Creek Mountains BHS Augmentation

- Attempted augmentation in 2024
 - ~50% mortality attributed to cougars
 - Augmentation failed
 - Propose associated cougar removal to reduce predation following translocation



Proposed Cougar Removal

- Up to 50% reduction in local cougar population
- ~10 removed months prior to translocation in BHS herd area and individual-removal post-release
- Will not impact long term cougar viability
- Success: 70% survival with <40% mortality caused by cougars



Staff Recommendation

Approve proposals in Amended Attachments 3 and 4 and approve initiation of a Cougar Target Area in the Trout Creek Mountains as proposed.

