

WOLF CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources &
Parks Committee

Jan 22, 2019



Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

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Wolf Plan Goals

- Recover self-sustaining wolf populations
- Manage wolf-livestock conflicts
- Maintain healthy prey base
- Develop public understanding and promote coexistence



Listing Status

Federal status

- Eastern 1/3 delisted
- Western 2/3 listed as Endangered

State status

- Listed statewide as Endangered

What that means – Neither WDFW or USFWS have authority to lethally remove wolves to address wolf-livestock conflict or impacts to at risk species

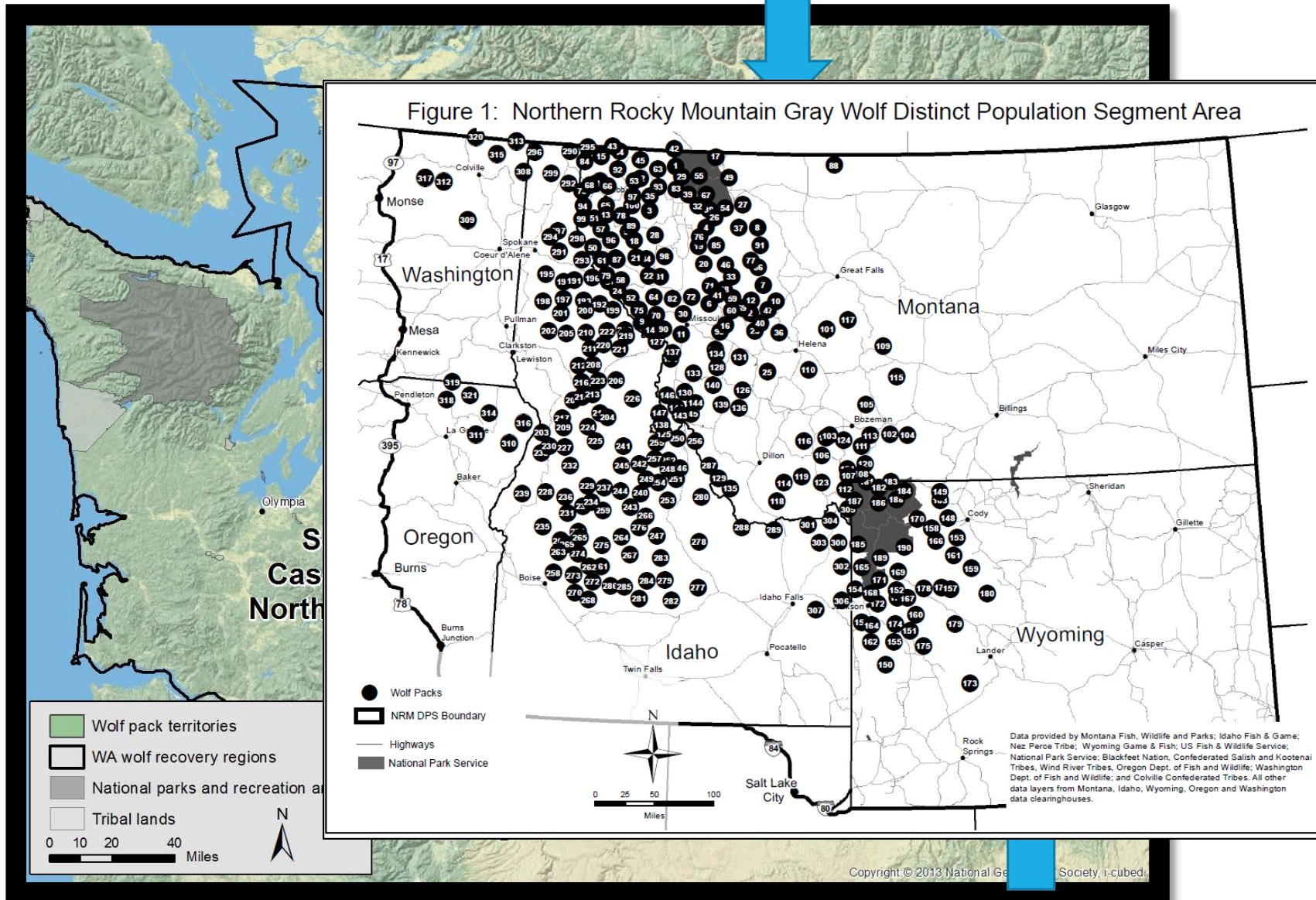


State Recovery Objectives

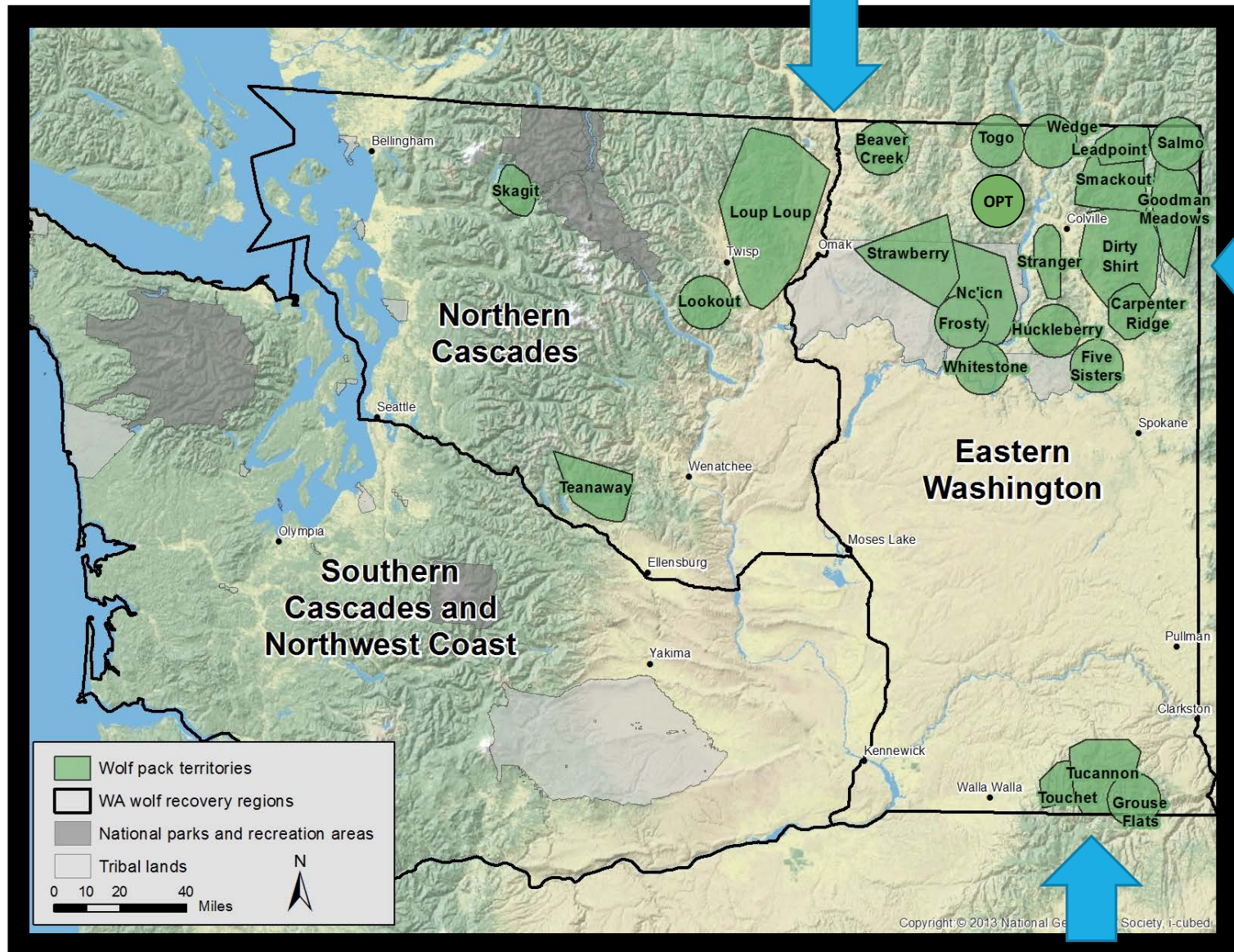
- Delist at 15 successful breeding pairs for three consecutive years
- Or 18 successful breeding pairs in one year
- Distributed among three recovery regions



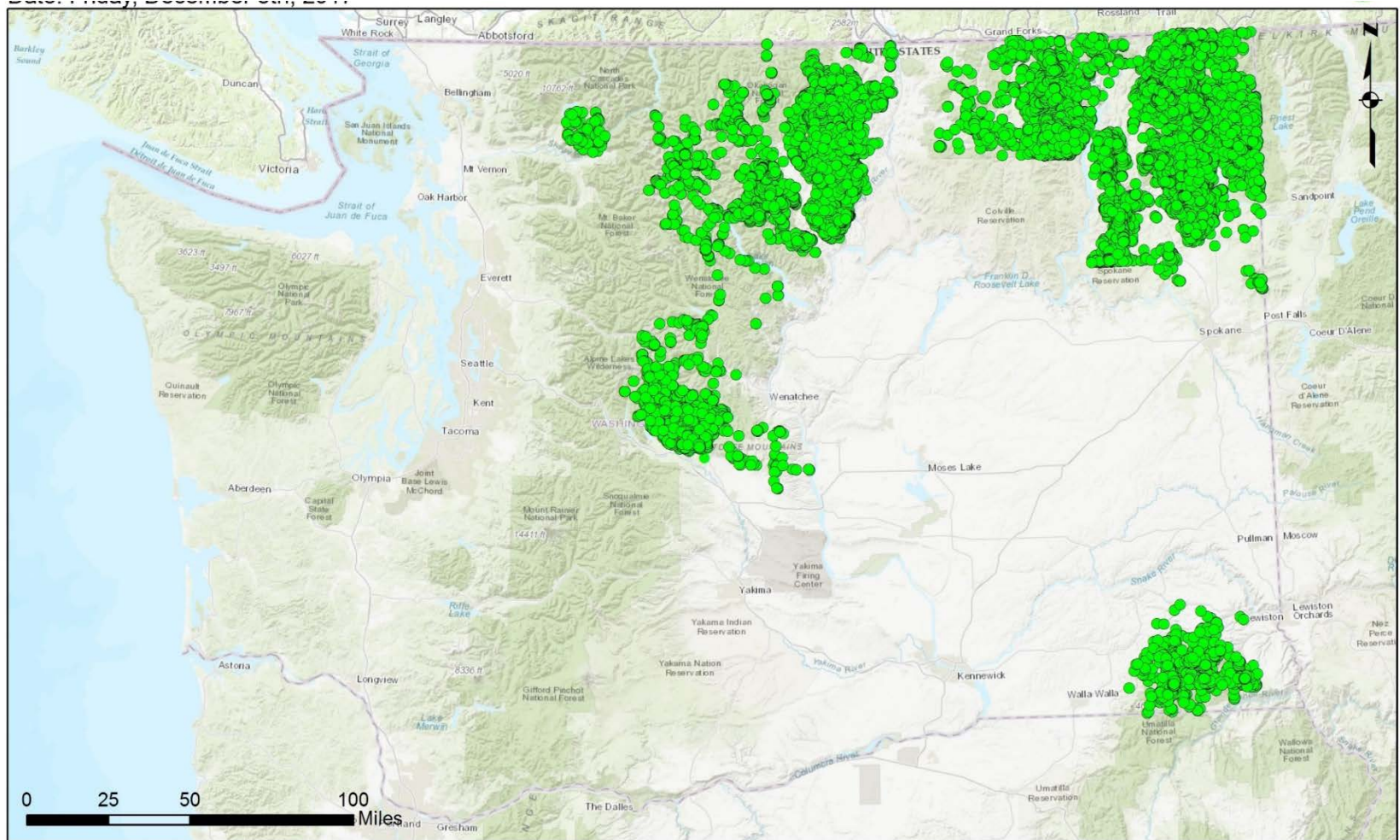
Washington's Known Wolf Packs



Washington's Known Wolf Packs



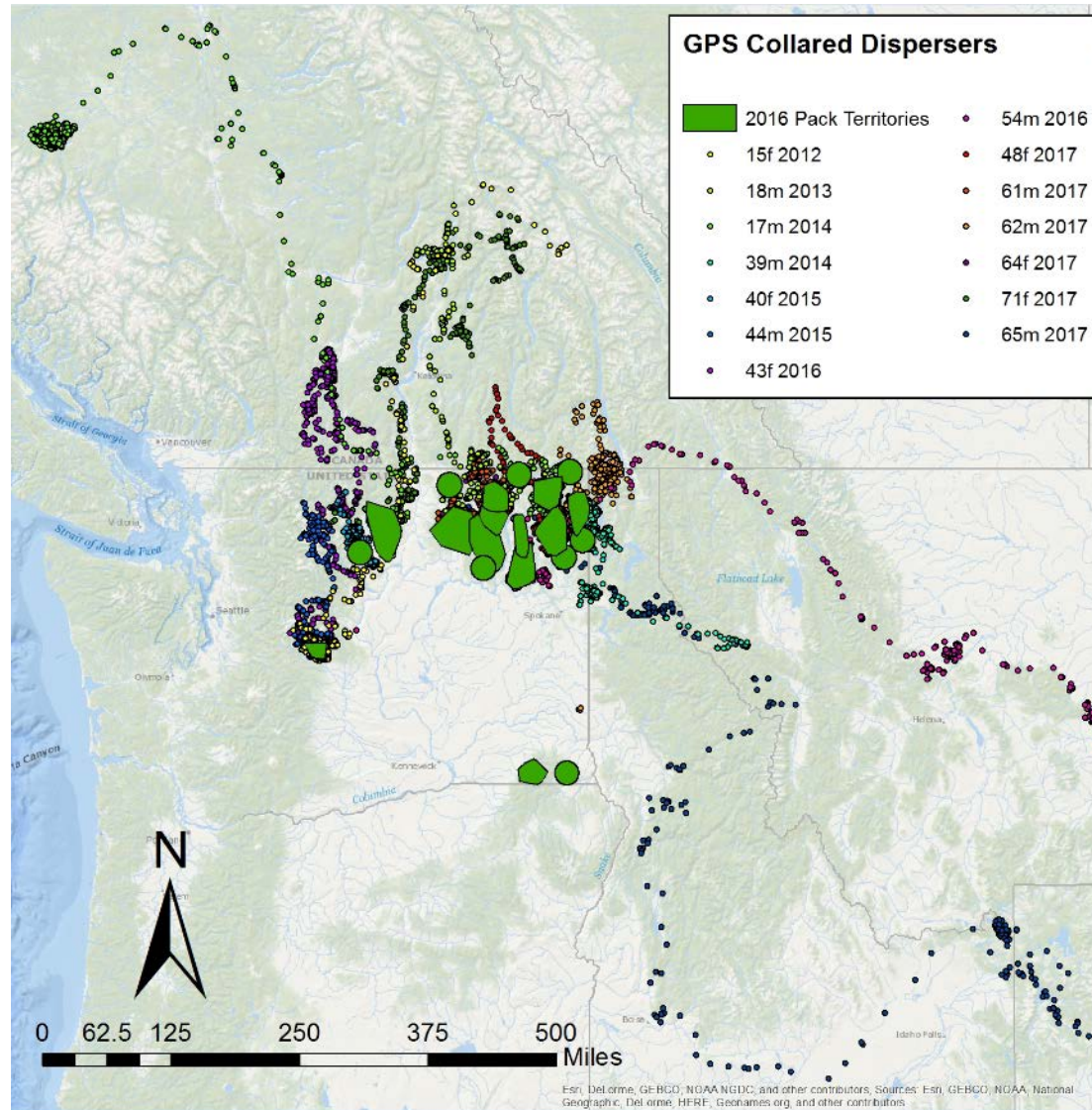
Locations of GPS collared wolves 2008-2017



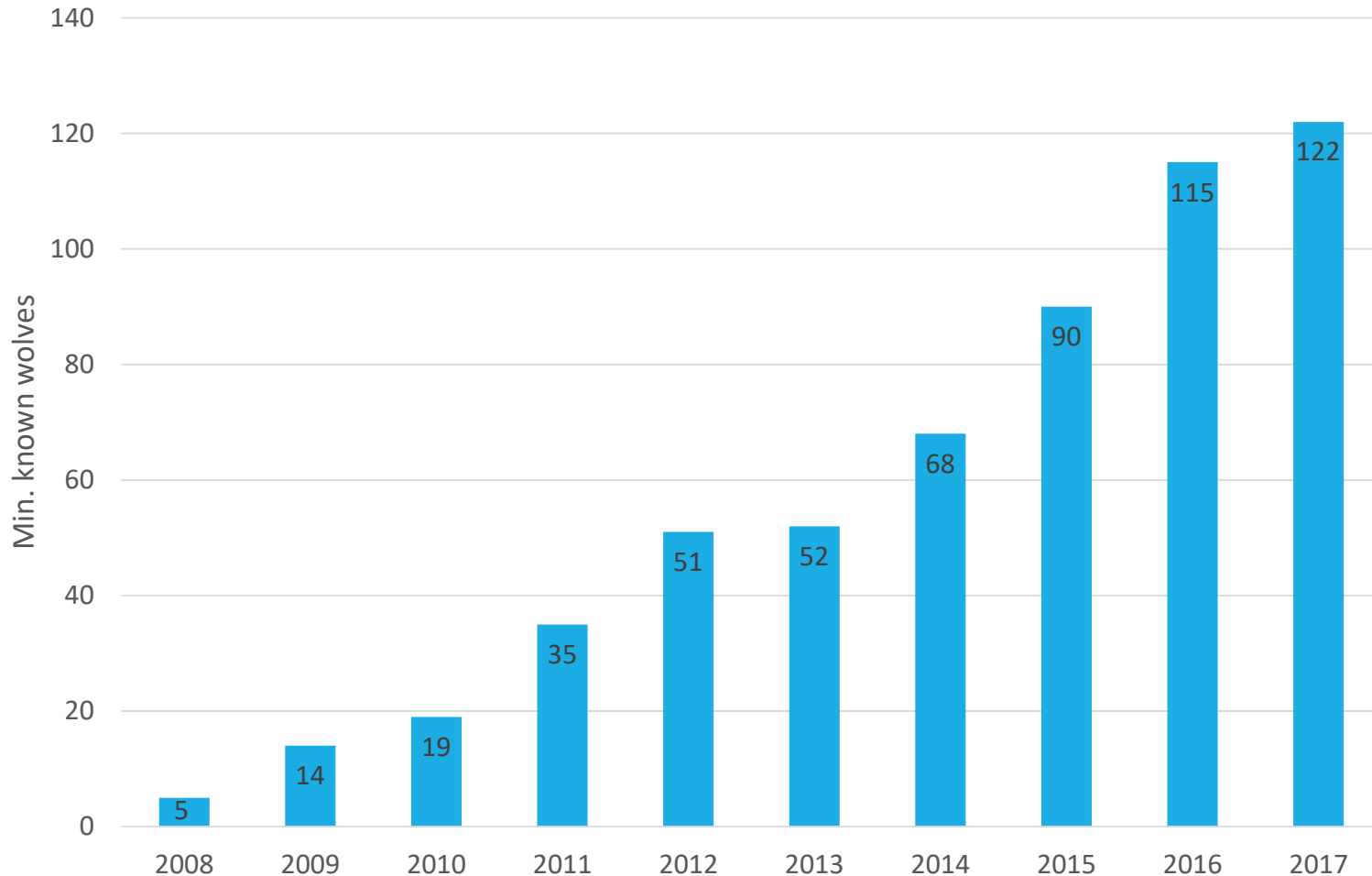
Disclaimer: This map represents the most complete dataset currently available of wolf telemetry locations in Washington State. Locations outside of Washington's jurisdiction (e.g., tribal lands) are not displayed. A coarse attempt was made to remove locations pre- and post-deployment that resulted in removing 1,051 locations (73,031 originally, 71,980 filtered).

Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

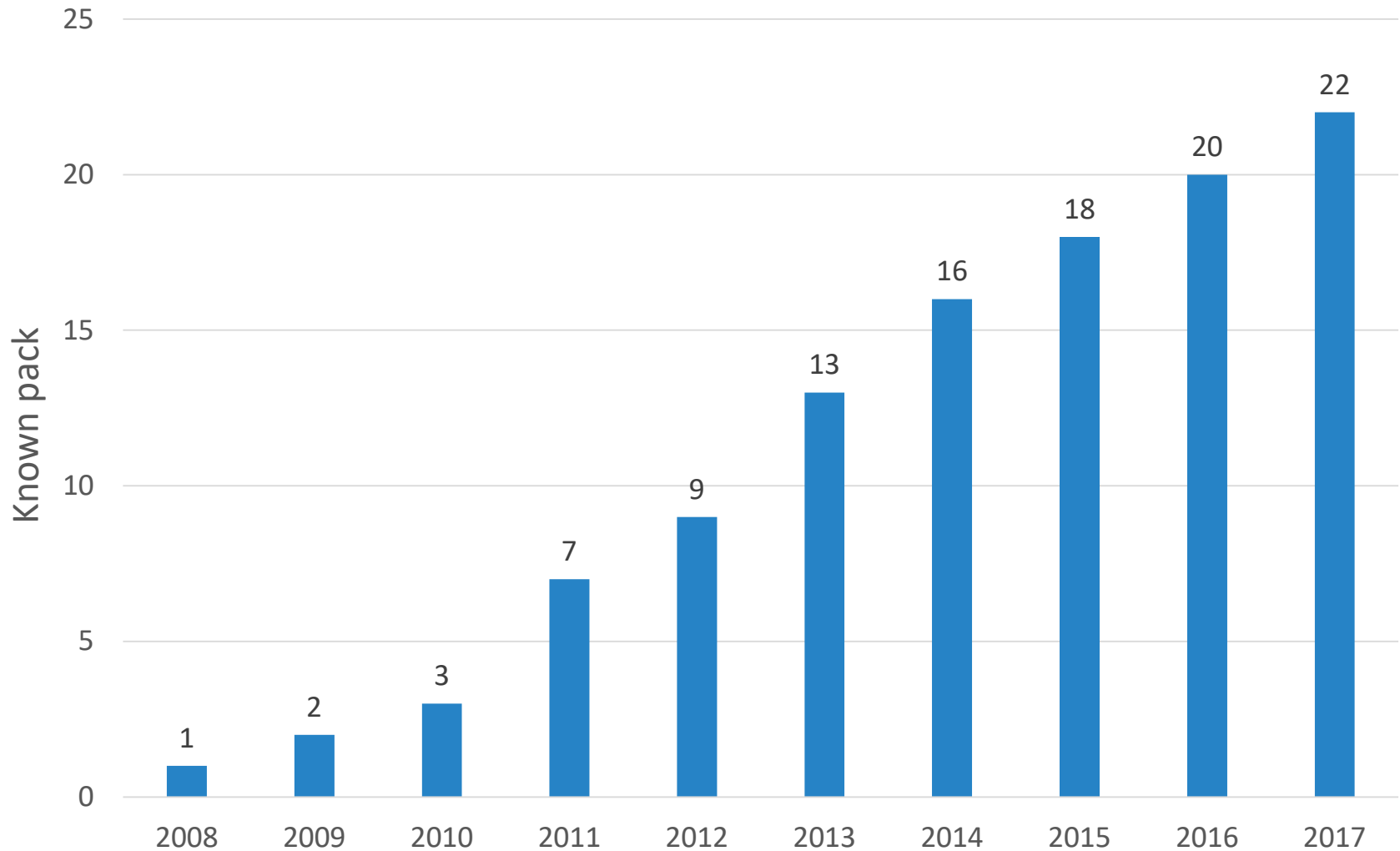
Washington's Known Dispersals



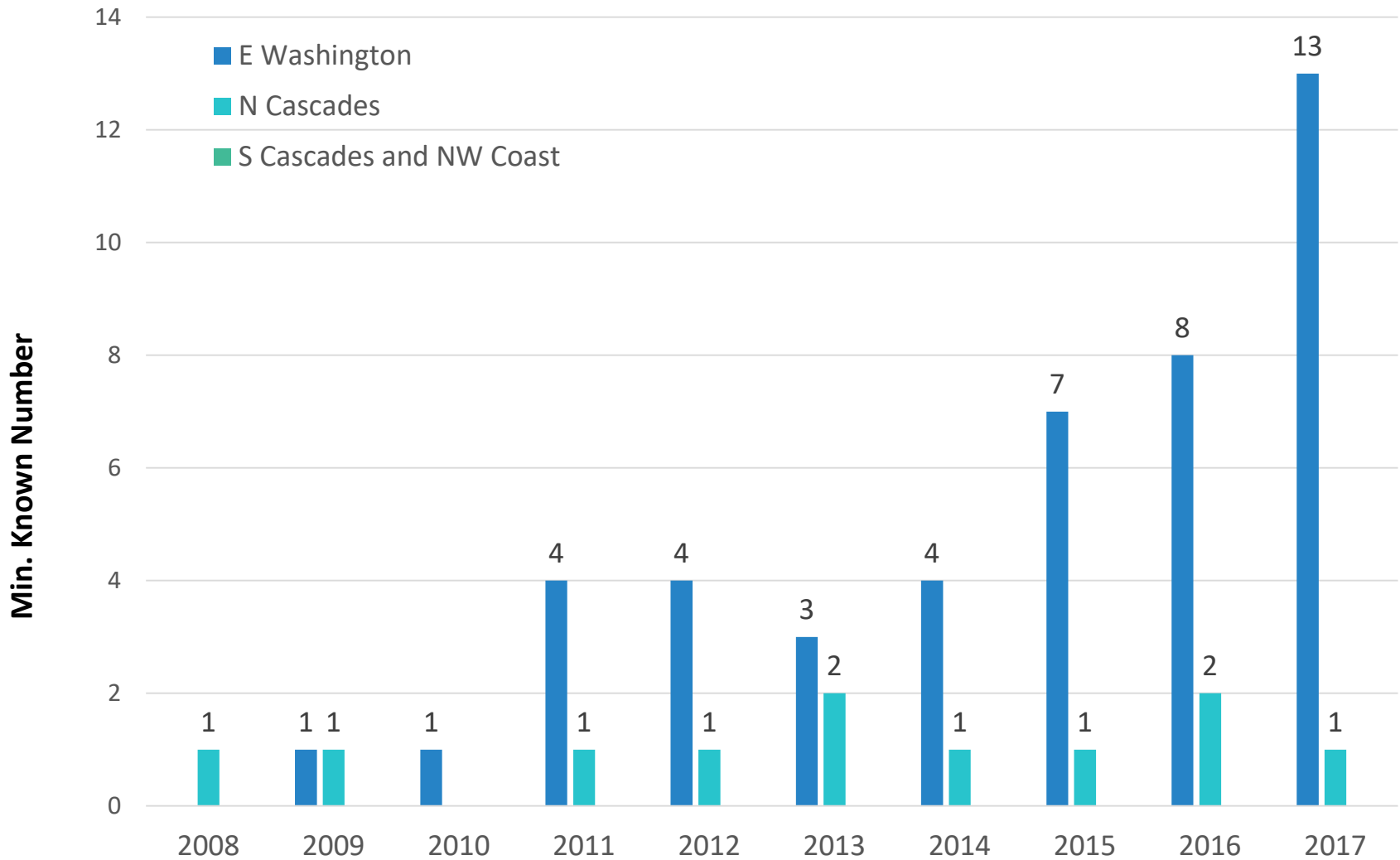
Trend in Minimum Number of Wolves (~30% average annual growth rate)



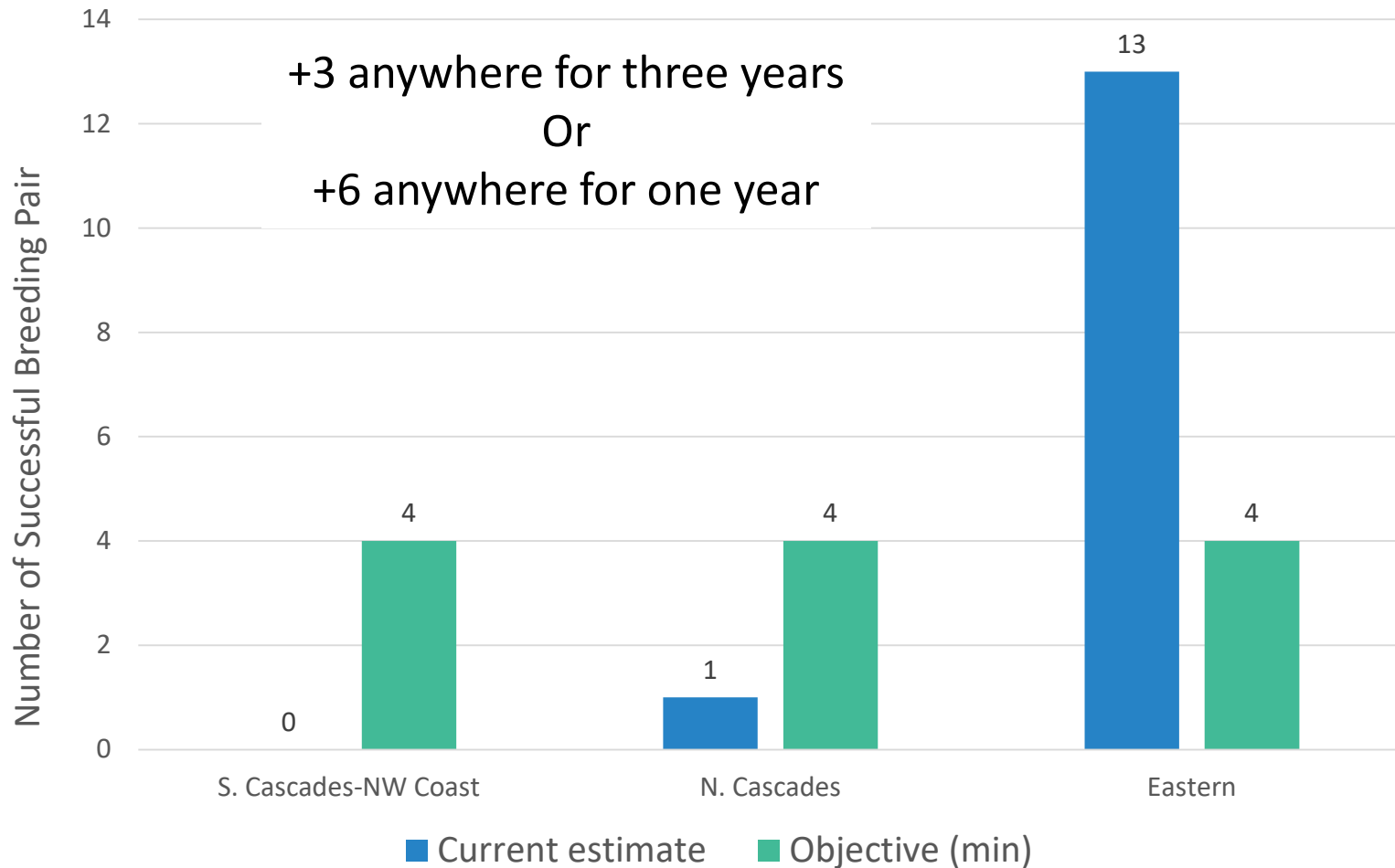
Trend in Number of Wolf Packs



Trend in Number of Successful Breeding Pairs

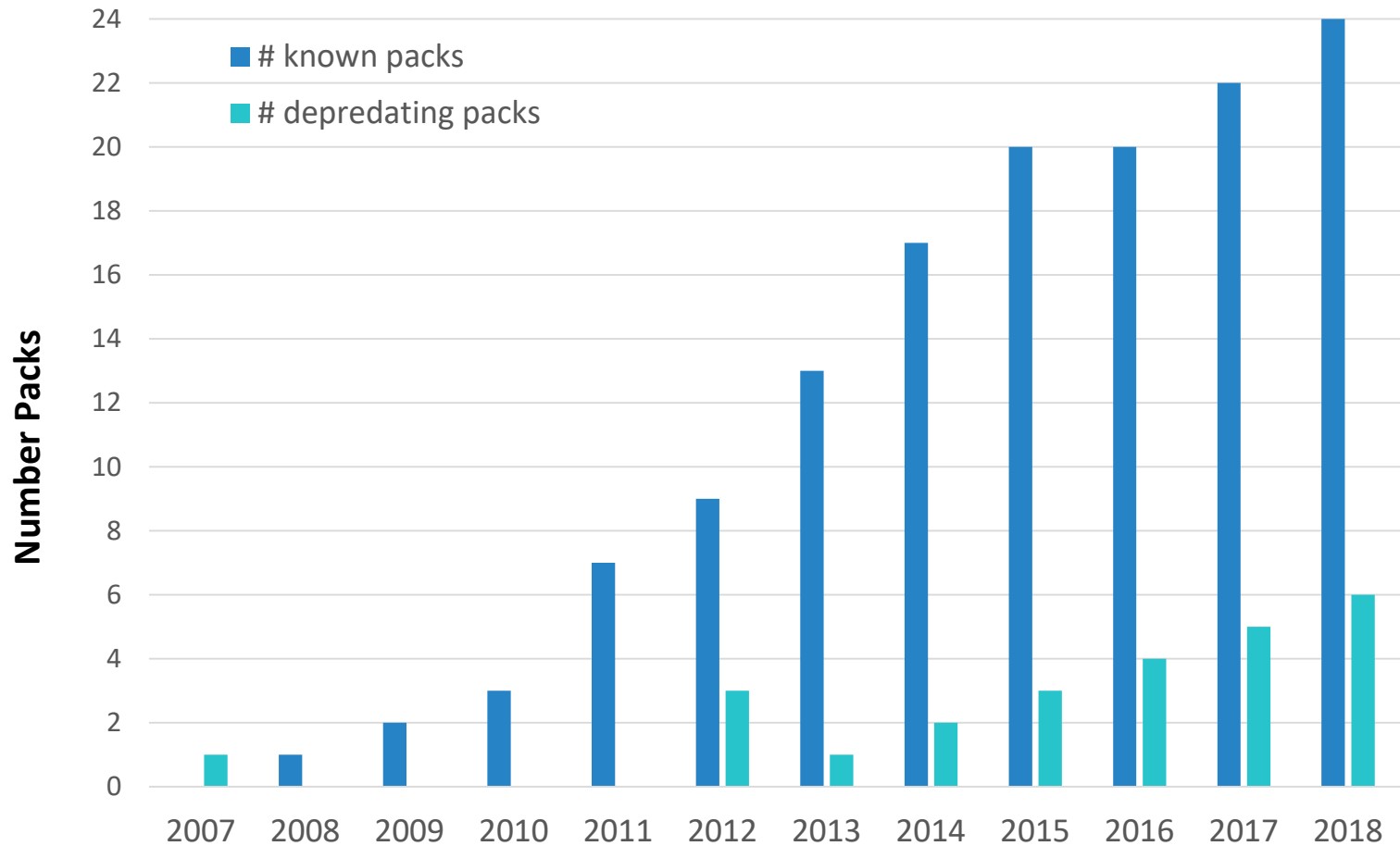


Successful Breeding Pairs

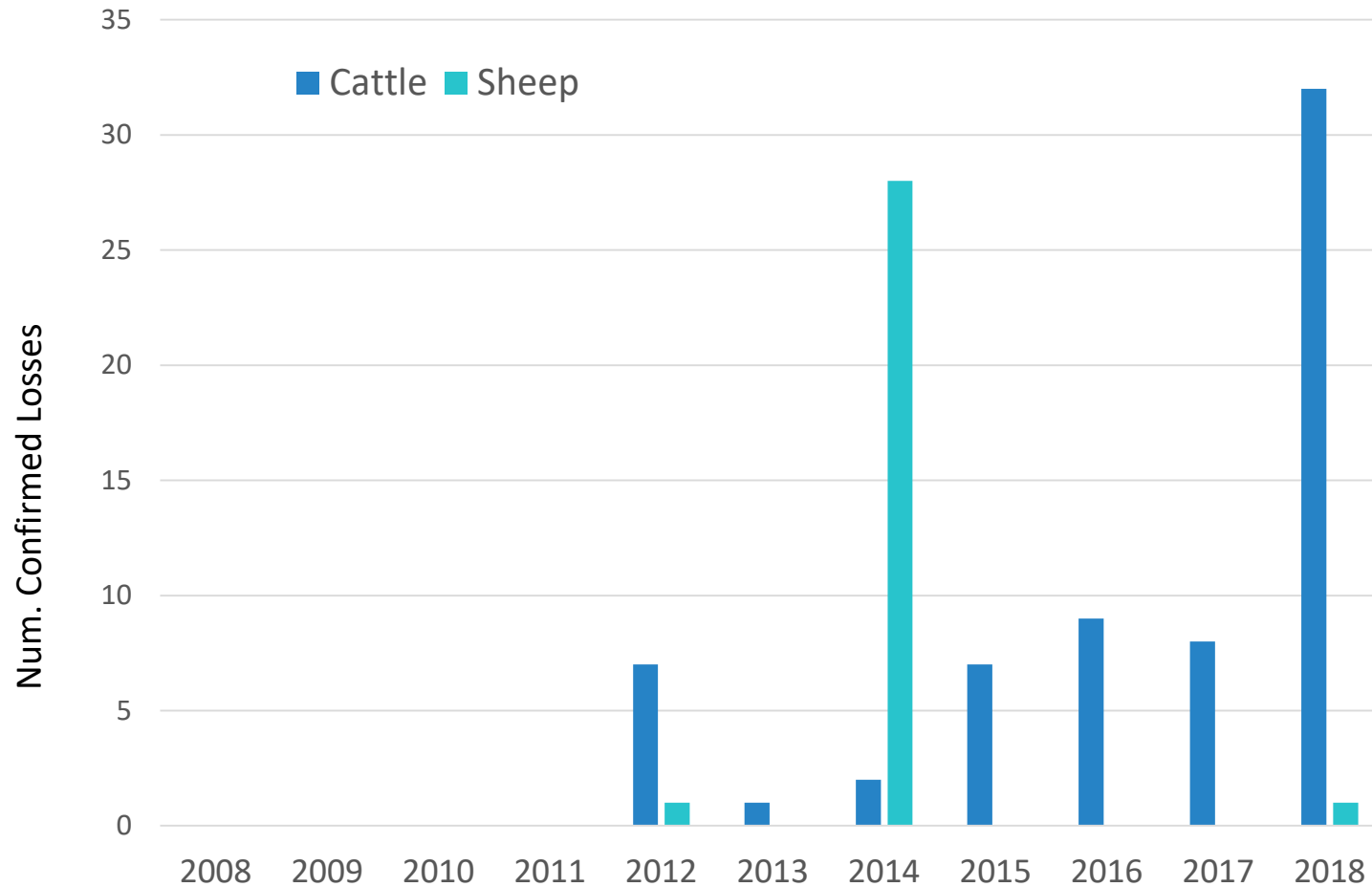


Manage Wolf-Livestock Conflict

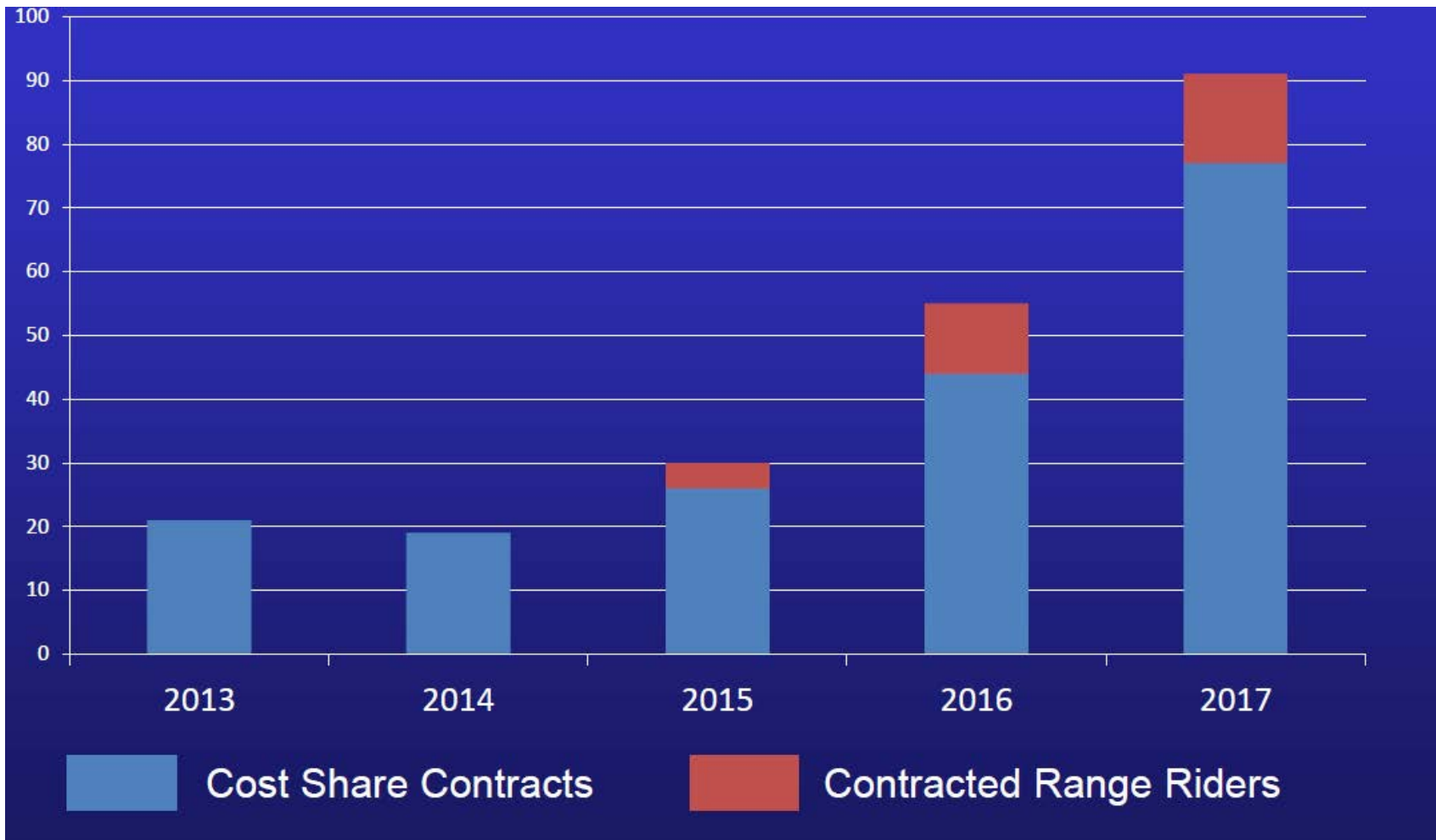
Packs Depredating on Livestock



Wolf Depredations in Washington



Uptake and Use of Proactive Deterrence



Cost – Share Contracts

Promoting Deterrence Measures

- Fladry
- Foxlights
- Fencing
- Remove livestock carcasses
- Range Riders and shepherders
- Sick and injured livestock
- Calving and lambing areas
- Delayed turnout
- Others...



Manage Wolf-Livestock Conflict

Compensation for livestock damages by wolves

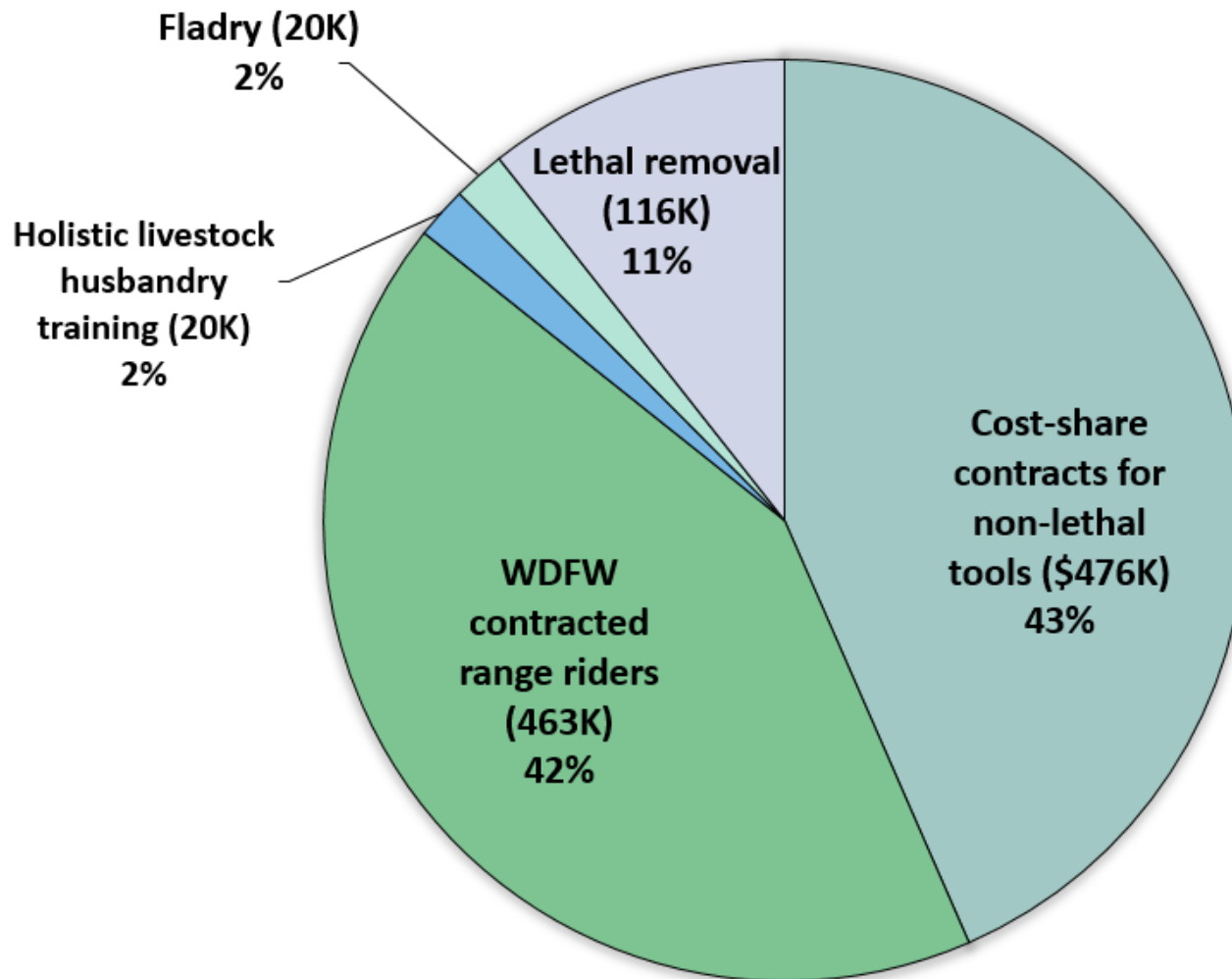
- Direct – injury or death
- Indirect
 - Greater than normal losses
 - Reduced pregnancy rates
 - Reduced weight gain
 - Livestock Review Board



\$101,291 paid in six years (does not represent all damages)

Costs of Non-lethal and Lethal Tools

2017-2019 Biennium



Develop Public Understanding and Promote Coexistence Wolf Advisory Group and Conflict Transformation

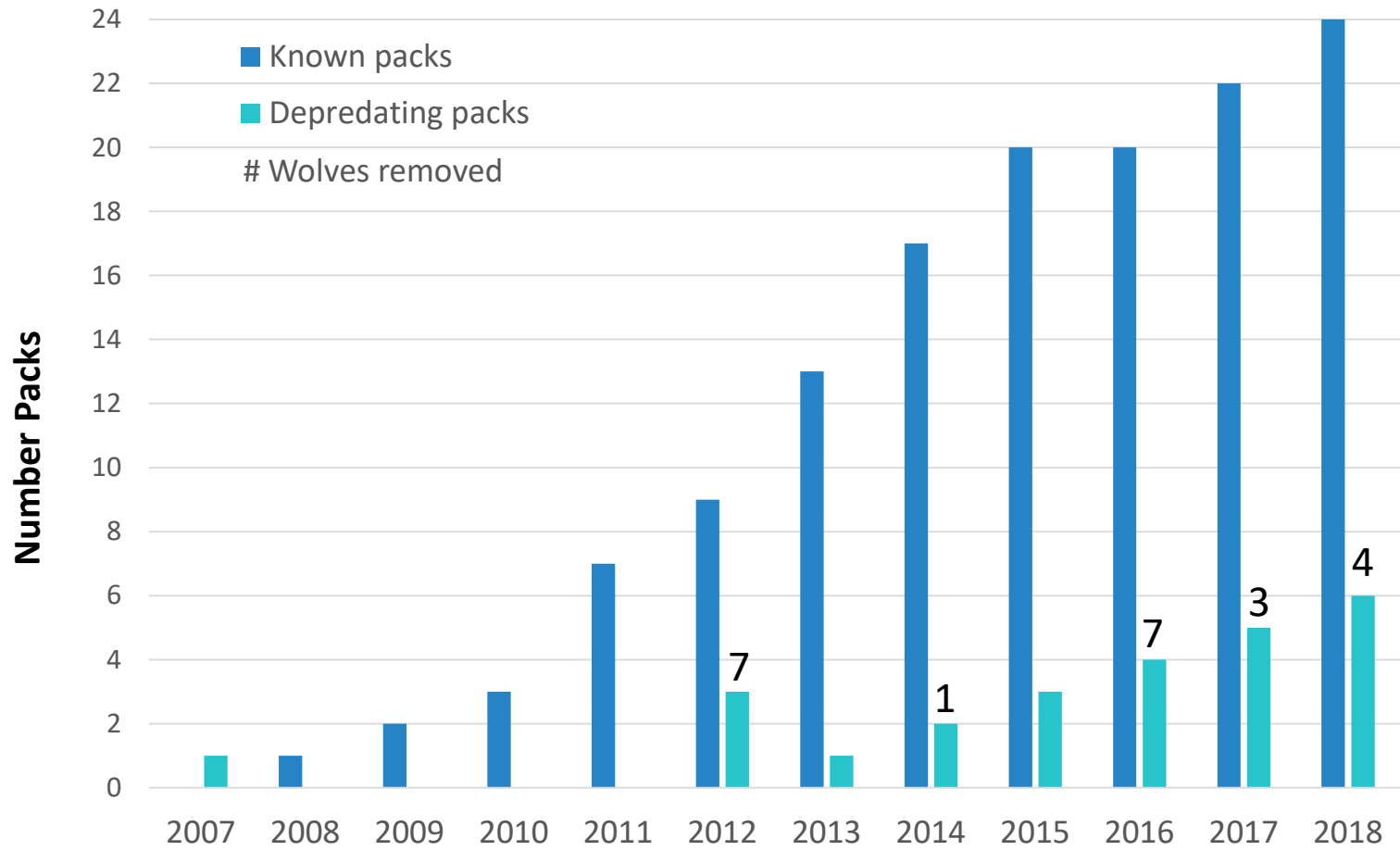


Wolf-Livestock Interaction Protocol

- Co-development with staff and citizen based Wolf Advisory Group
- Conflict transformation process
- Cohesion on issues
- Consistency and clarity for public



Trends in the Use of Lethal Removal



Maintain Healthy Prey Base

Maintain Healthy Prey Base

Population objectives, management priorities, and monitoring

- Game management plan
- Elk herd plans
- Mule and white-tailed deer plans
- Game status and trend reports
- Game harvest reports



Wolf-Ungulate Interactions

Wolf Plan allows for non-lethal and lethal action on wolves if WDFW determines wolves are a primary limiting factor for at-risk ungulate populations



Maintain Healthy Prey Base

Population assessments

- Annual surveys
- Ungulate status in Washington (2015)
- Ungulate assessment (2016)



Research studies

- Impacts of wolves on mule deer and white-tailed deer in northeastern WA (UW)
- Impacts of wolf recovery on the predator and prey community in NE Washington (UW)
- Cooperative predator-prey project (UW-WDFW)
- Wolf population dynamics and prey items (UW)

Looking Ahead

- Continue implementing wolf plan
- Continue collaborative stakeholder processes
- Wolf population growth is expected to continue
- Initiate EIS process for post-delisting wolf plan
- 2018 Proviso → develop EIS to consider wolf translocation
- Complete Periodic Status Review



Questions?

For more information:

Website

<http://wdfw.wa.gov>

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