

Natural Resources Commission Meeting

NRC Policy Committee on
Wildlife & Fisheries

March 10, 2016



Proposed Orders

- For Information- NRC
 - Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons; Managed Wetland Area Regulations (Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 2 of 2016)
 - Elk Regulations and License Quotas (Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 3 of 2016)
 - Coyote and Nighttime Predator Hunting Regulations (Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 4 of 2016)
 - Bear Harvest and Crossbows (Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 5 of 2016)
 - Fish Disease Control (Fisheries Order 245)



Proposed Orders Cont.

- For Information- Director
 - Order to Regulate State Wildlife and Game Areas (Land Use Order of the Director Amendment No. 2 of 2016)
 - Order to Regulate Certain State-owned Lands, Gladwin, Arenac, Bay, Midland, and Ogemaw Counties, Feral Swine Research Area, Defined, Prohibited Conduct (Land Use Order of the Director Amendment No. 4 of 2016)
- For Action- Director
 - Launch of Motorized Watercraft Prohibited from State Lands onto Ely Lake, Little Tom Lake, and Crooked Lake; Clyde Township, Allegan County (Land Use Order of the Director Amendment No. 1 of 2016)



NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

- Fisheries Chief Update
- Fish Disease Order
- Lake Michigan Fish Management Plan Process
- Wildlife Chief Update
- Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons; Managed Wetland Area Regulations/ Order to Regulate State Game and Wildlife Areas
- Elk Regulations and License Quotas
- Coyote Regulations
- Bear Allocation
- Bear Population Trend Update
- Feral Swine Research Area Proposal





Department of Natural Resources

Fisheries Division

Chief's Update

Jim Dexter

March 10, 2016

2016 Dam Management Grant Program Awards



City of Corunna

\$301,500

Corunna Dam removal project (Shiawassee R.)



DNR Fisheries Division

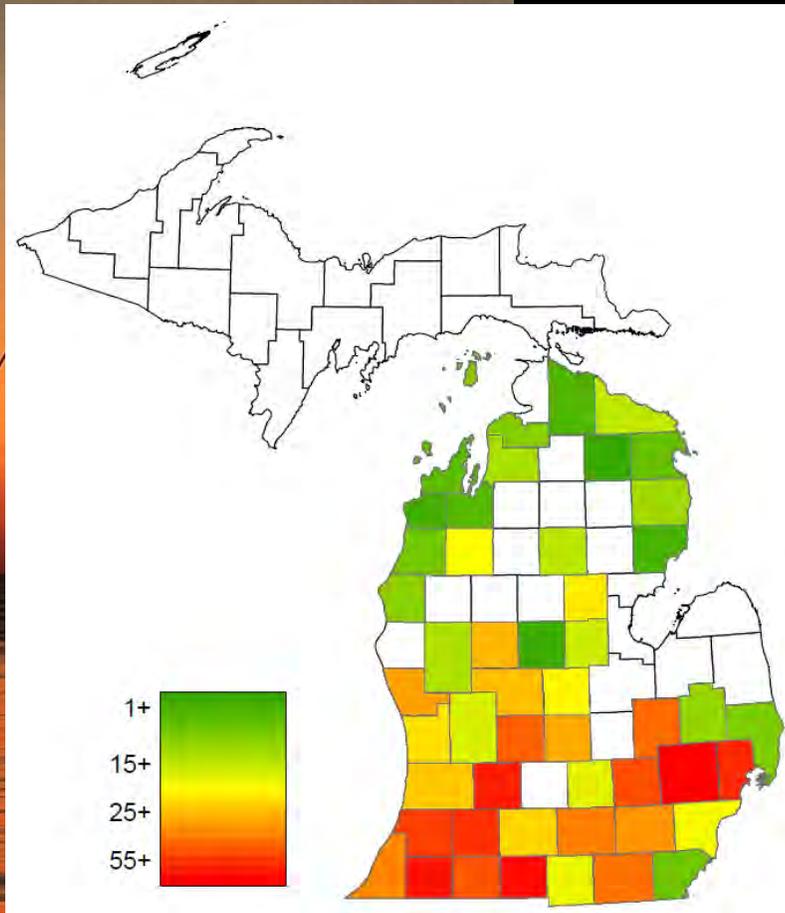
\$48,500

Big Creek impoundment repair

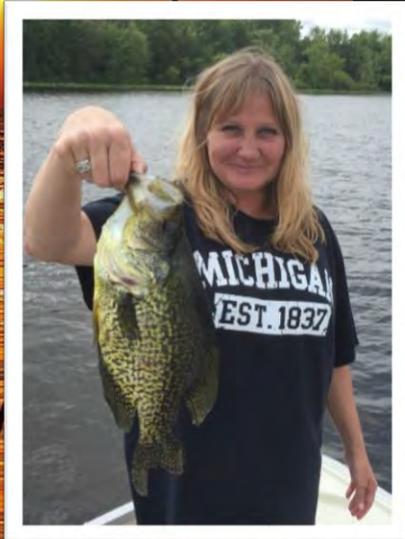
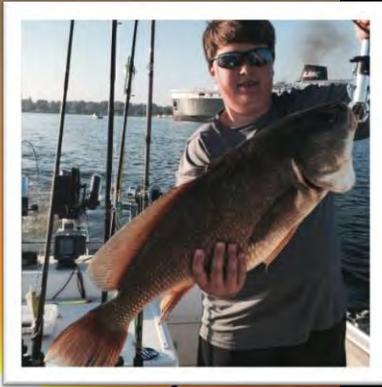


Michigan Fishing Tournament Information System

- 2016 Tournament heat map
- 284 tournaments voluntarily registered in 2015
- 1,056 tournaments registered in 2016 through March 7



Master Angler



- 1,542 anglers
 - 15 states / Canada
 - 56% increase from 2014
- 899 catch-and-keep / 643 catch-and-release
- Most popular species
 - Bluegill
 - Crappie
 - Walleye
 - Channel Catfish
 - Freshwater Drum
 - Smallmouth Bass
- Included 6 state records!



Master Angler





Questions?

Department of Natural Resources

Fishing Regulations For Information

Nick Popoff, Fisheries Division

Rick Weidenhamer, MI baitfish Assoc.

March 10, 2016



Fisheries Order 245: Fish Disease Control

- Comprehensive set of regulations enacted in 2007 after VHS was detected.
- Anglers, baitfish operators, retailers impacted.
- Three detections of VHS: two from wild and one from baitfish.



Fisheries Order 245: Fish Disease Control

- 2012 O.R.R. recommendation:
 - Remove receipt requirement
 - Require all bait be certified
- NRC action:
 - Receipt requirement removed in 2014
- Review Order in its entirety



Fisheries Order 245: Fish Disease Control

- Workgroup established (FD, LED, MDARD):
 - Simplify regulations and consider certification
 - Importation and messaging
- Industry involvement
 - Three workshops held - June, 2015 – Feb, 2016
 - Catchers, Wholesalers and retailers included

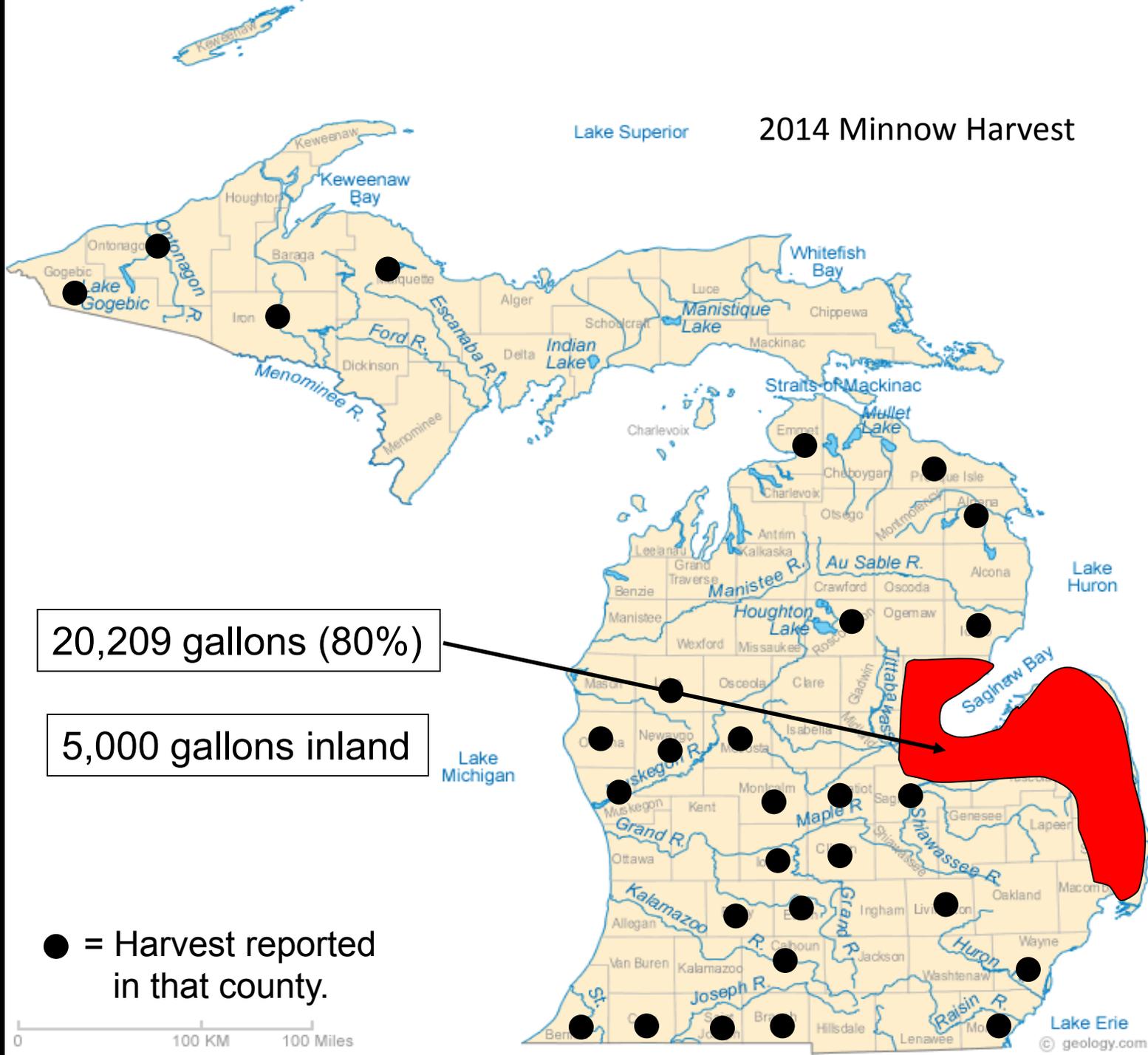


Fisheries Order 245: Fish Disease Control

- Workshop Outcomes:
 - Industry impacted by regulations;
 - Simplify regulations and consider certification;
 - Importation and messaging;
 - 80% of bait harvested from Lake Huron between November and December annually;
 - Requiring all bait to be certified would cripple the industry.



2014 Minnow Harvest

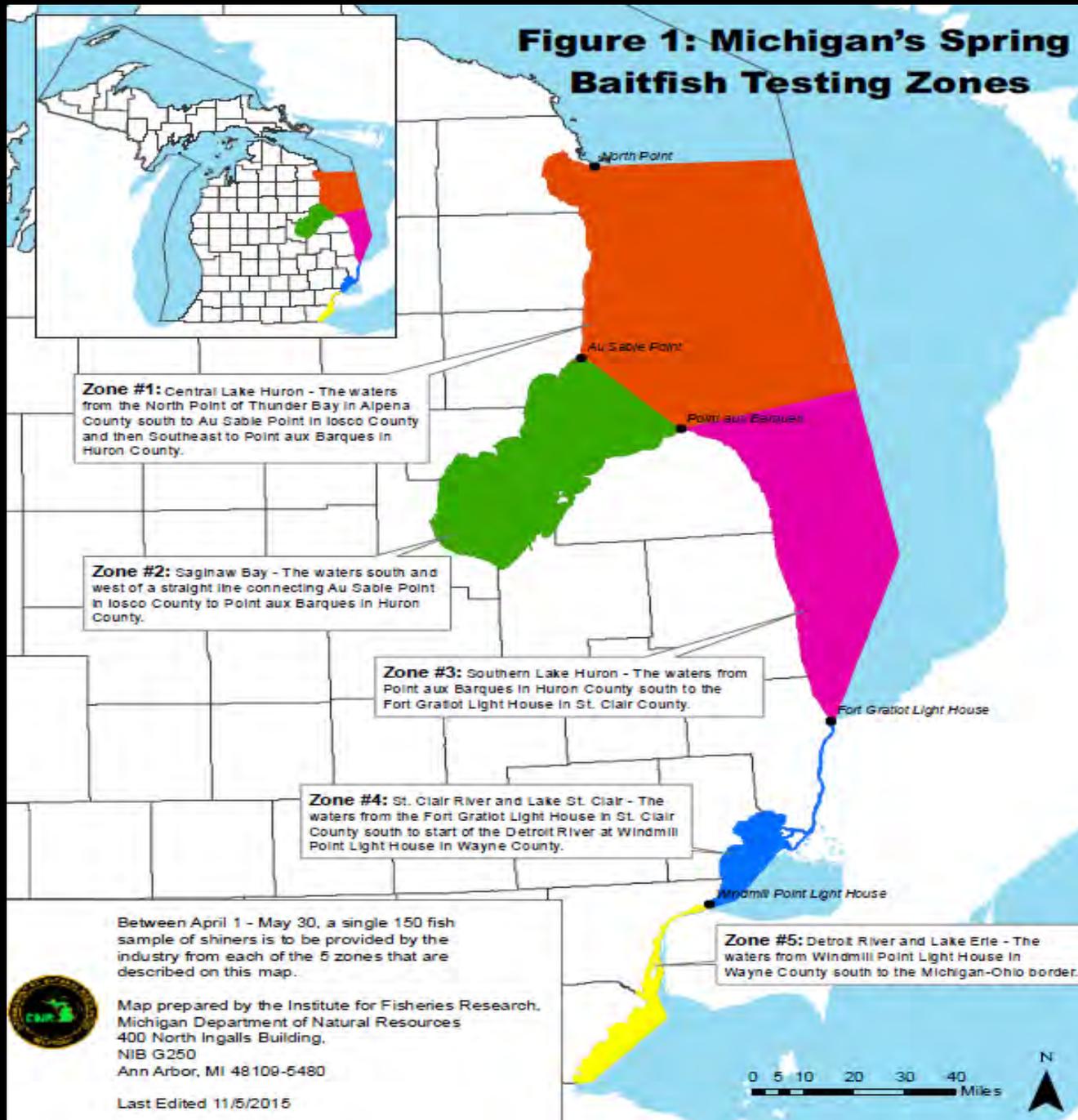


Fisheries Order 245: Fish Disease Control

- Proposed changes supported by industry:
 - Remove VHS management zones;
 - Update list of susceptible fish species;
 - Remove roe restriction;
 - Require certification for bait harvested in November and December;
 - Require 5 spring tests in Huron Erie Corridor;
 - Require all personally collected bait to be used where it is collected;
 - Emergency Order for a disease detection



Figure 1: Michigan's Spring Baitfish Testing Zones



Fisheries Order 245: Fish Disease Control

- Review in 2020
- Messaging
 - Website development – April launch
 - Showcasing story: Jeff's Bait
- Improved Relationships



Thanks!

Questions?

www.michigan.gov/fishing



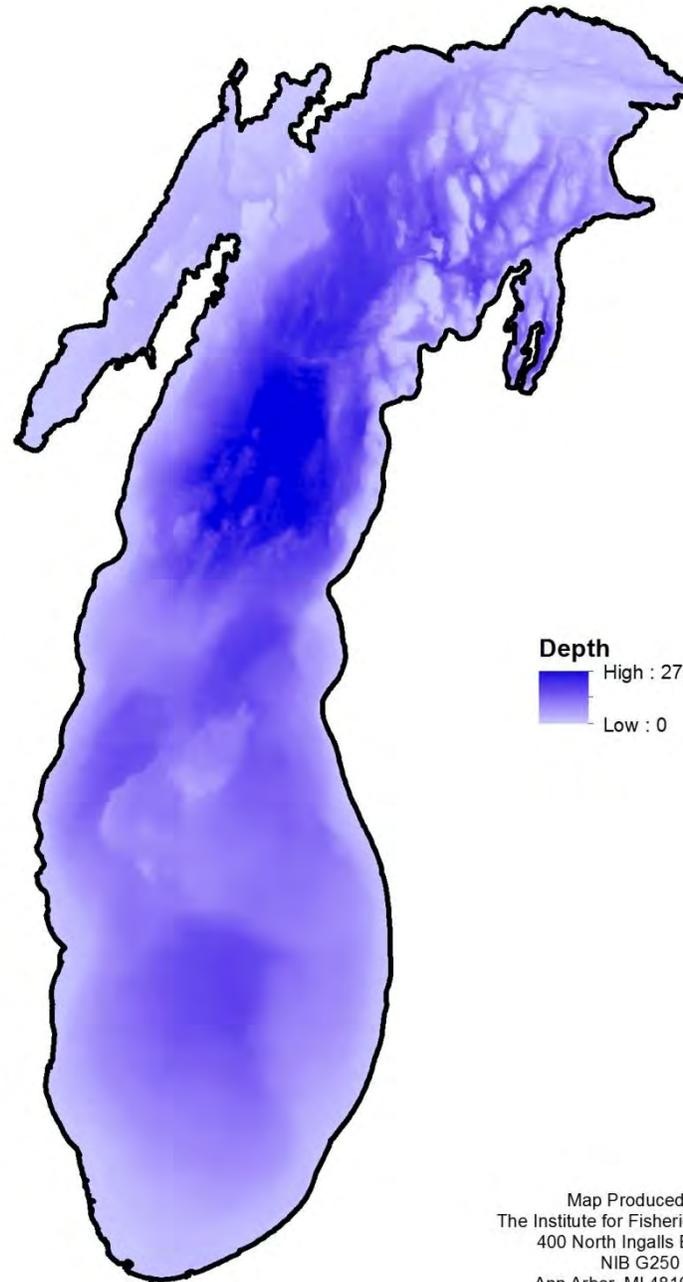
Lake Michigan Management Plan Process

Jay Wesley

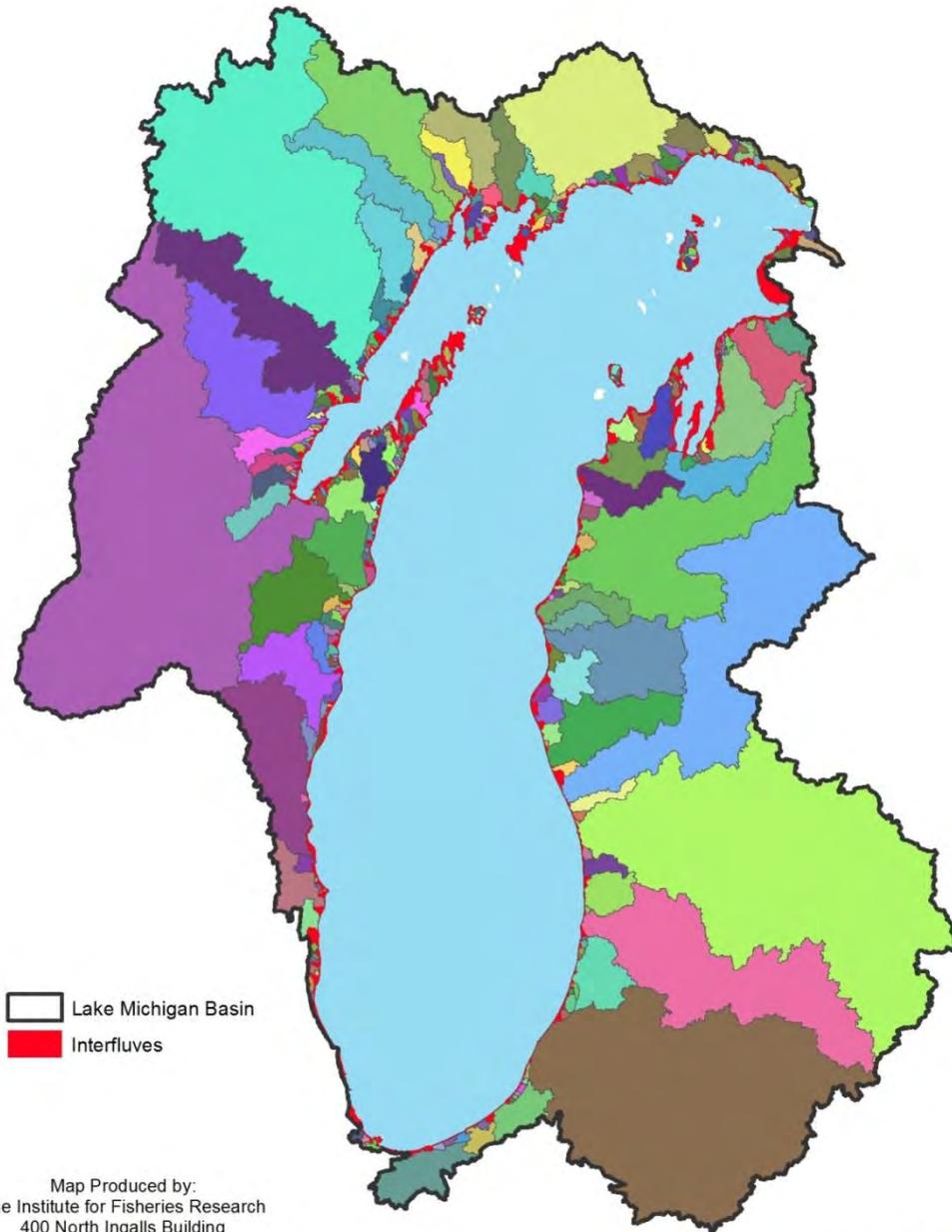
Fisheries Division

March 10, 2016





- 22,400 Square Miles
- 229 Feet Avg Depth
- 923 Max Depth
- Diverse Habitat
- Dunes



□ Lake Michigan Basin
■ Interfluves

Map Produced by:
The Institute for Fisheries Research
400 North Ingalls Building
NIB G250
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-5480
Map last updated: 1/7/2016



World Class Fishery

- \$1.0 Billion Fishery
- 3.3 Million Fish stocked
- 30 Staff in Research and Field
- Dynamic Ecosystem



And no SOM Management Plan!!!



Management Plan Process

- Statewide Survey (Simoes and Lupi 2014)
- Fall 2015 – Review of Guiding Principles and Impediments.
- January 2016 Alignment with Goals
 - Sea Grant Regional Meeting in Ludington
 - Michigan Fish Producers Association



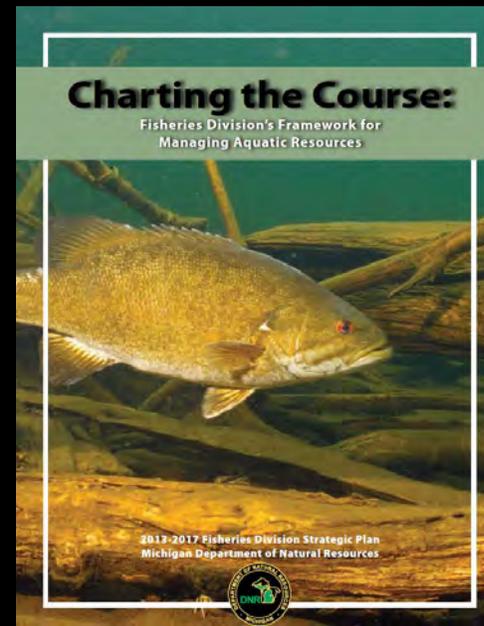
Management Plan Process

- Focus Groups (April 30th)
 - Upper Peninsula, Northern Lower, and Southern Lower.
 - Anglers, Sport Fishing Groups, Commercial Fishers, Tribes, Community Leaders, Prosperity Region Leaders, etc.
- Develop and Agreement on Vision and Goals (June 30th)
- Develop Objectives (July 31st)



Management Plan Process

- Public Input on Vision, Goals, and Objectives (August 15)
- Publish Plan (October 31st)
- Staff Develop Tactics/Management Actions (May 15th, 2017)





Thank You!



Wildlife Chief Update

Russ Mason,
Wildlife Chief



Wildlife Chief Update

- AFWA Blue Ribbon Panel Communications
- CWD Communications
- CWD Updates
- MIOFO Program



Thank You

www.michigan.gov/dnr



2016-17 Waterfowl Hunting & Managed Waterfowl Area Regulations



Barbara Avers, Waterfowl and Wetland Specialist
Joe Robison, Southeast Lower Peninsula Field Operations
Manager



New Schedule

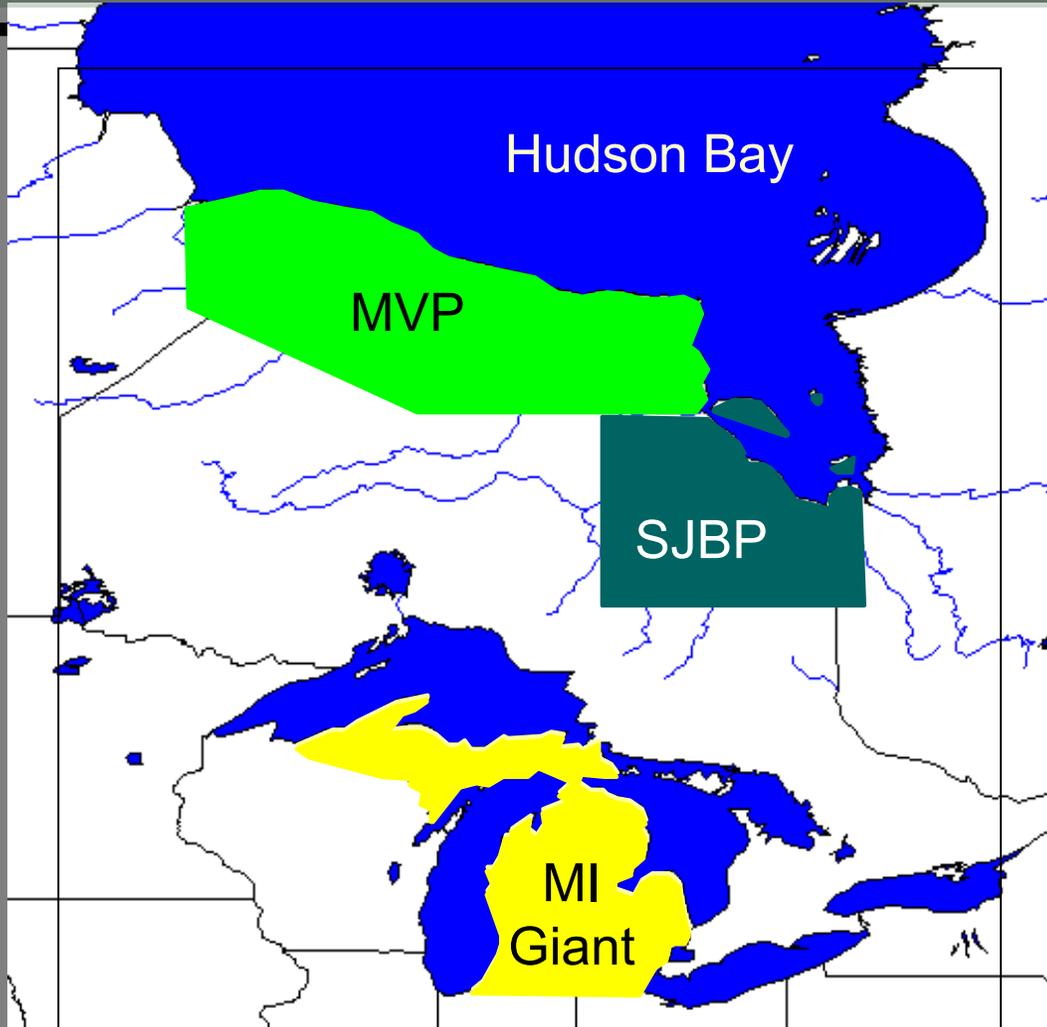
- Dec. 10, 2015 = Proposed Frameworks
- Dec. 15, 2015 = Waterfowl Workgroup
- Jan. 9, 2016 = CWAC
- Feb. 25, 2016 = Final Frameworks
- March 10, 2016 = NRC for Information
- April 14, 2016 = NRC for Action
- April 30, 2016 = Season Selections Due



Canada Goose Status and Regulation Considerations



Canada Goose Breeding Ranges

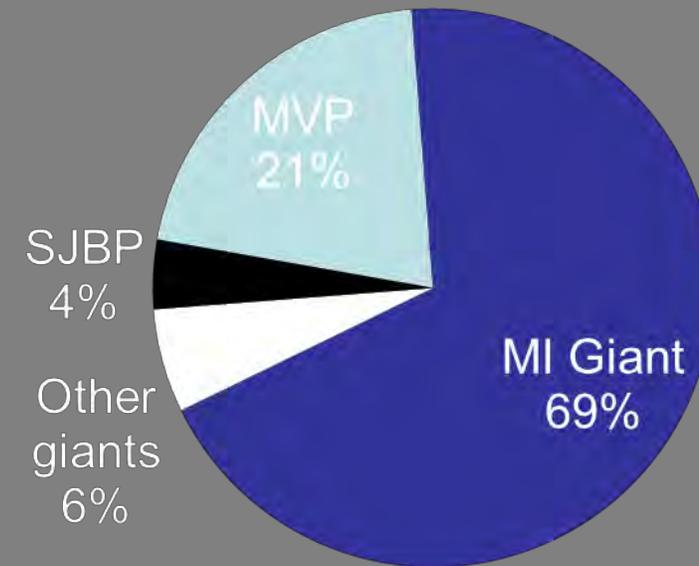
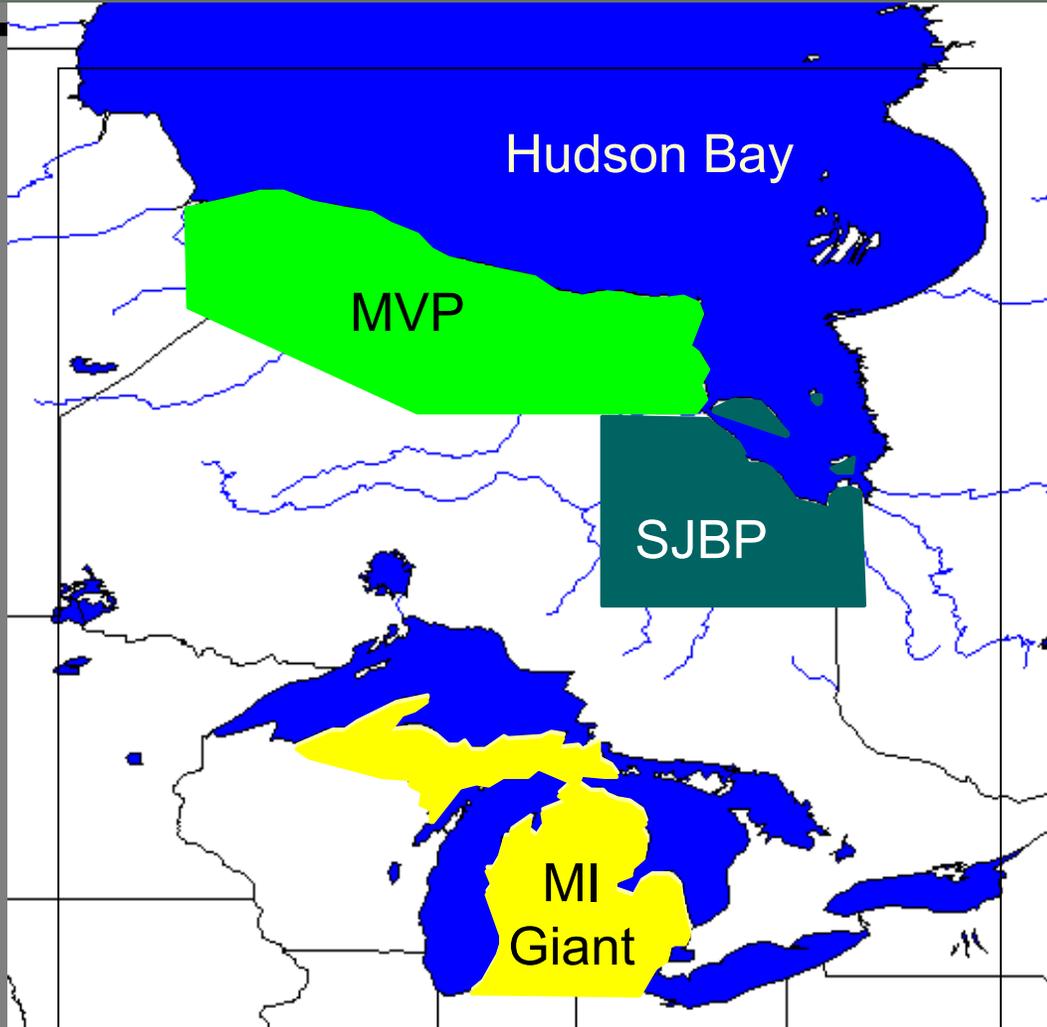


Mississippi Valley
Population (MVP)

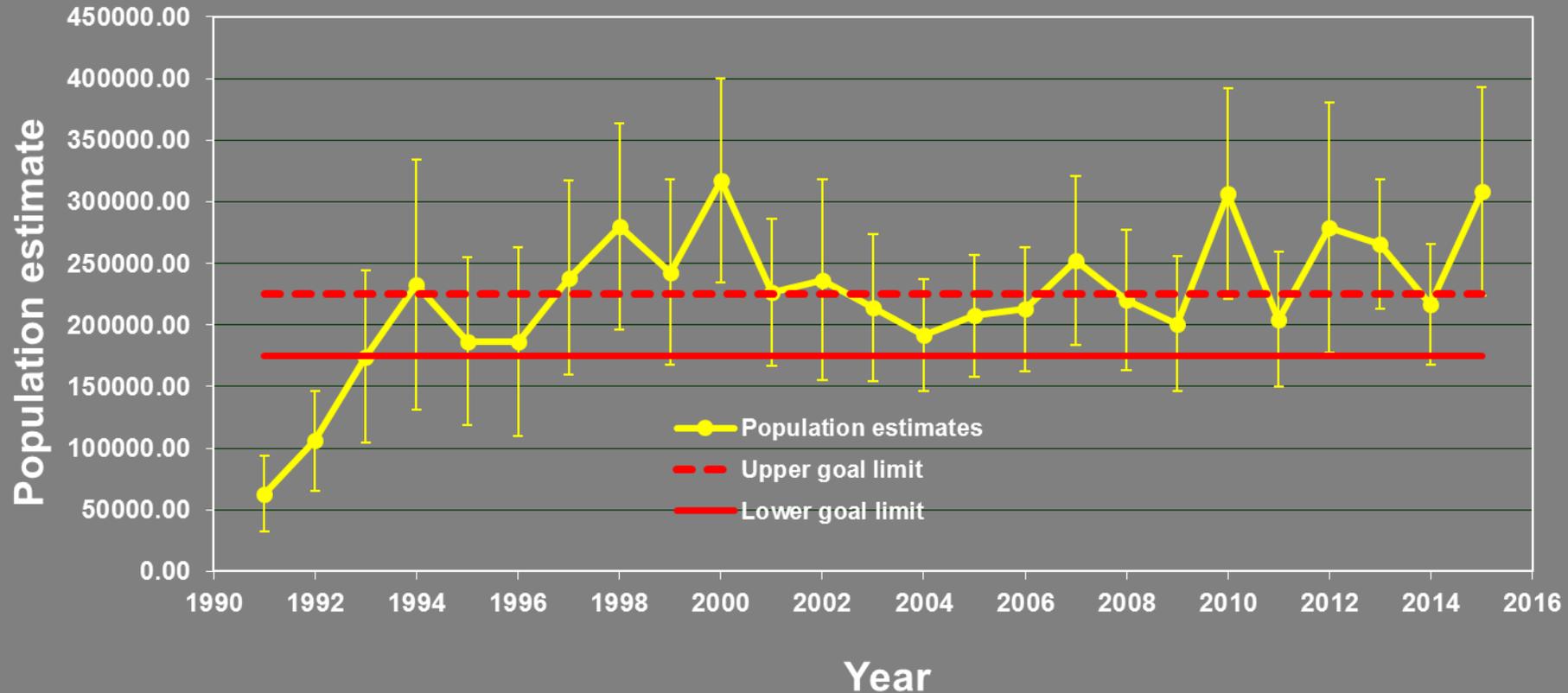
Southern James Bay
Population (SJB)

Michigan Giant
Population (MI Giant)

Michigan Canada Goose Harvest Composition



Michigan Canada Goose Population Estimates, 1991-2015



2016 Goose Season Federal Framework



2016 Canada Goose Season Federal Framework



- Season length and outside dates
 - Maximum 107 days
 - Between Sept. 1 - Feb. 15
- 4 segments allowed
- Daily limits
 - Maximum 5 birds Sept. 1-30
 - Maximum 3 birds remainder of season
- Possession limits 3X daily limit



2016-2017 Michigan Canada Goose Season Recommendations



2016-17 Goose Season Recommendations Season Dates and Bag Limits



- North Zone
 - Sept. 1-30 (5-birds)
 - Oct. 1 – Dec. 16 (3-birds)
- Middle Zone
 - Sept. 1-30 (5-birds)
 - Oct. 1 – Dec. 14 (3-birds)
 - Dec. 17-18 (3-birds)
- South Zone
 - Sept. 1-25 (5-birds)
 - Oct. 8 – Dec. 4 (3-birds)
 - Dec. 31 – Jan. 1 (3-birds)
 - Jan. 21 – Feb. 11 (3-birds)



2016-17 Goose Season Recommendations – GMUs



- Saginaw County and Tuscola/Huron GMUs
 - Recommended Elimination
 - Same dates as South Zone
- Allegan County GMU
 - Sept. 1-7 (5-birds)
 - Nov. 5 – Feb. 12 (3-birds)
- Muskegon County Wastewater GMU
 - Oct. 15 – Nov. 12 (3-birds)
 - Dec. 3-20 (3-birds)



Duck Status and Regulation Considerations



Duck Season Goals

- Maintain Michigan's waterfowl hunting heritage by increasing hunter recruitment and retention.
- Balance regulations simplicity with maximum hunting opportunity.
- Ensure season encompasses maximum duck numbers and abundant species.

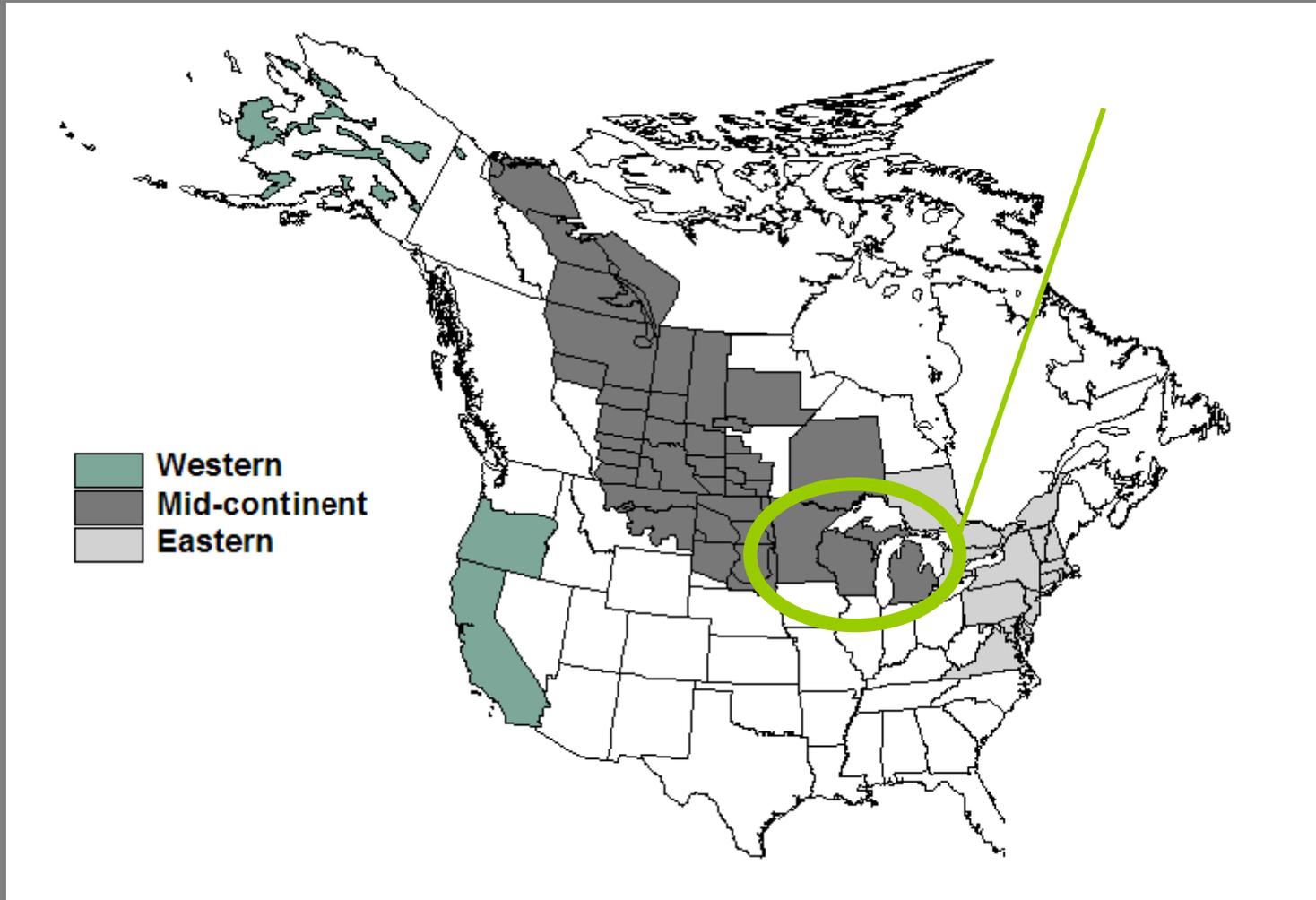


2015 Continental Duck Population Status

- Waterfowl breeding population and habitat survey
- Increased or similar population estimates for all species compared to 2014
 - Total ducks similar to 2014
 - Mallards similar
 - Canvasbacks similar
 - Scaup similar
 - Pintails similar

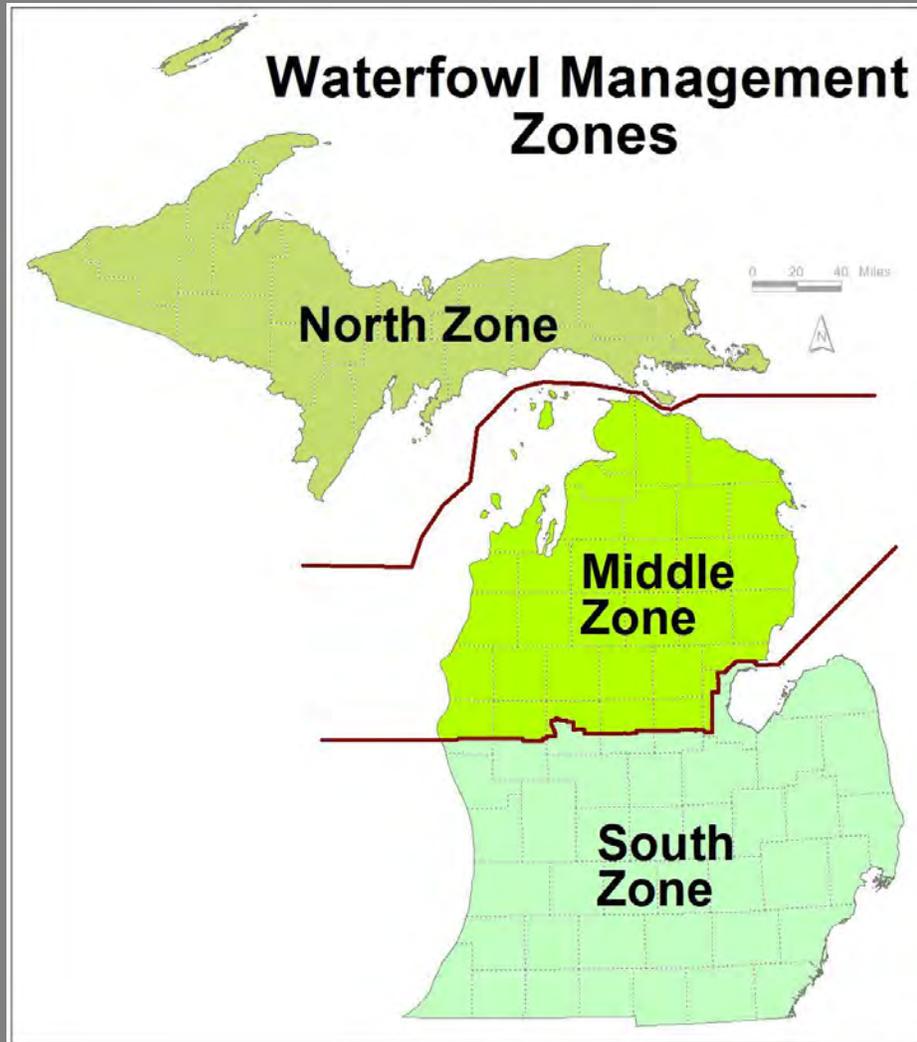


Michigan Mallard Harvest



About 75% of MI's mallard harvest comes from birds that originate in the Great Lakes Region

2016 Duck Season Federal Framework

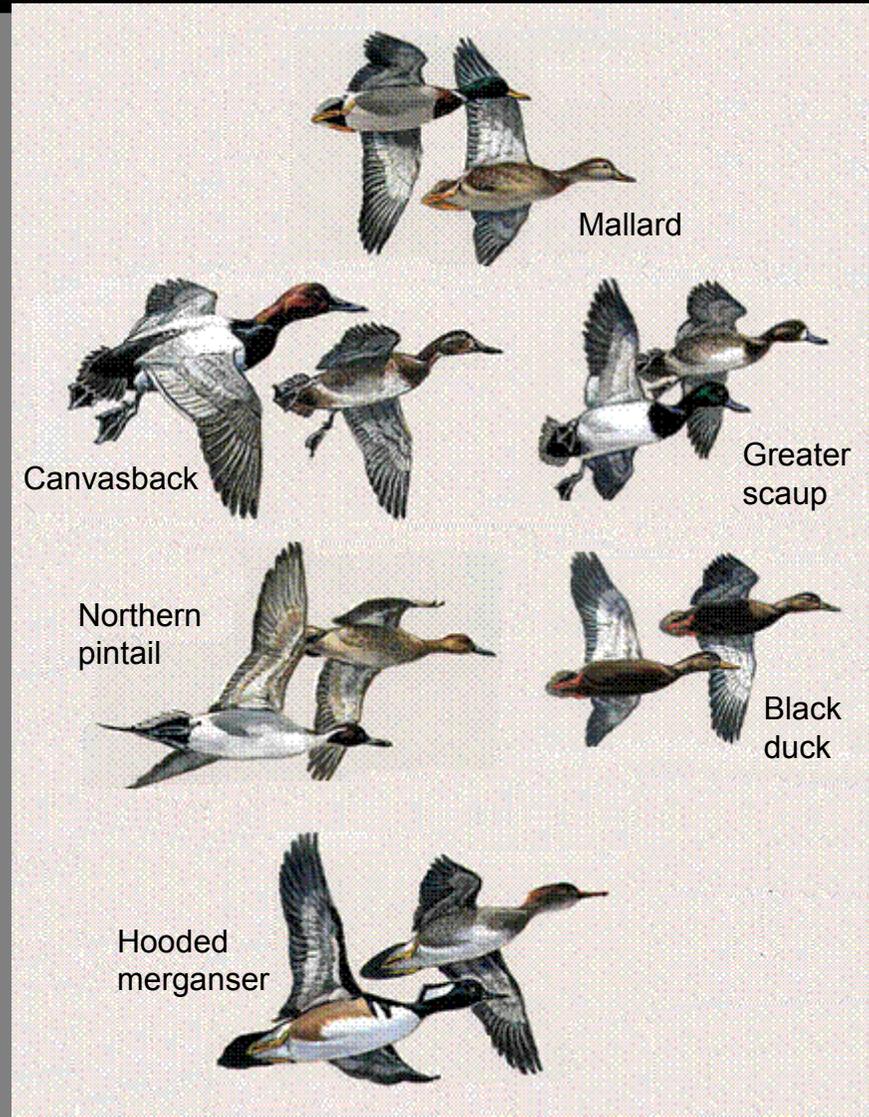


- Liberal season
 - Maximum 60 days
 - Between Saturday nearest Sept. 24 and last Sunday in January
 - Maximum 6 birds per day
- Possession limit 3X daily limit
- Seasons set by Zone
- One split per Zone



2016 Duck Season Federal Framework – Daily Limits

- 6 ducks combined
 - Mallard
 - Maximum 4 birds total
 - Maximum 2 hens
 - Wood duck and Scaup
 - Maximum 3 birds
 - Northern pintail, Redhead, and Canvasback
 - Maximum 2 birds each
 - American black duck
 - Maximum 1 bird
 - All other ducks
 - 6 birds
- 5 mergansers combined
 - Maximum 2 hooded mergansers



2016 Michigan Duck Season Recommendations



2016 Experimental Teal Season Recommendation

- Sept. 1 – 7
- Statewide
- Daily limit 6 teal
- Possession 3X
- Hunting hours begin at sunrise



2016 Youth Season Recommendations

- Sept. 10-11
- Daily and possession limits same as regular waterfowl seasons

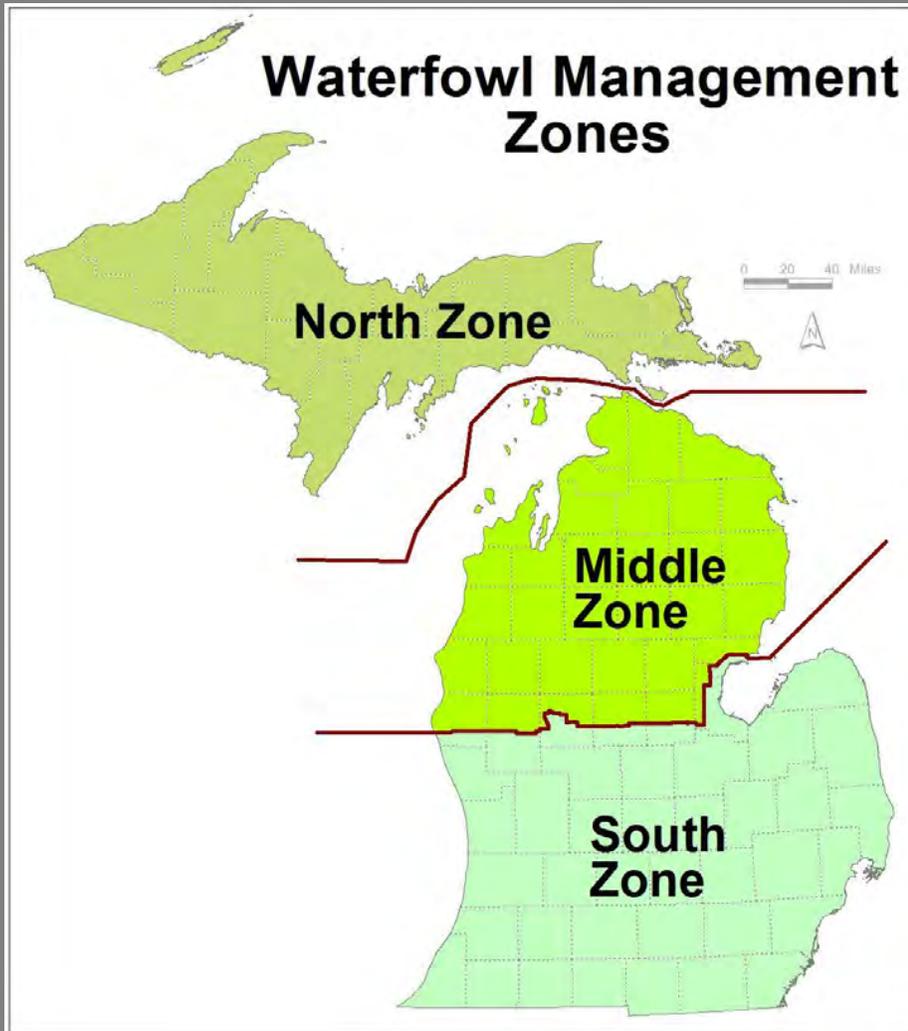


3-Year Stable Opening Dates

- North Zone – Last Saturday in Sept.
 - 2016 = Sept. 24
 - 2017 = Sept. 30
 - 2018 = Sept. 29
- Middle Zone - 1st Saturday in Oct.
 - 2016 = Oct. 1
 - 2017 = Oct. 7
 - 2018 = Oct. 6
- South Zone - 2nd Saturday in Oct.
 - 2016 = Oct. 8
 - 2017 = Oct. 14
 - 2018 = Oct. 13



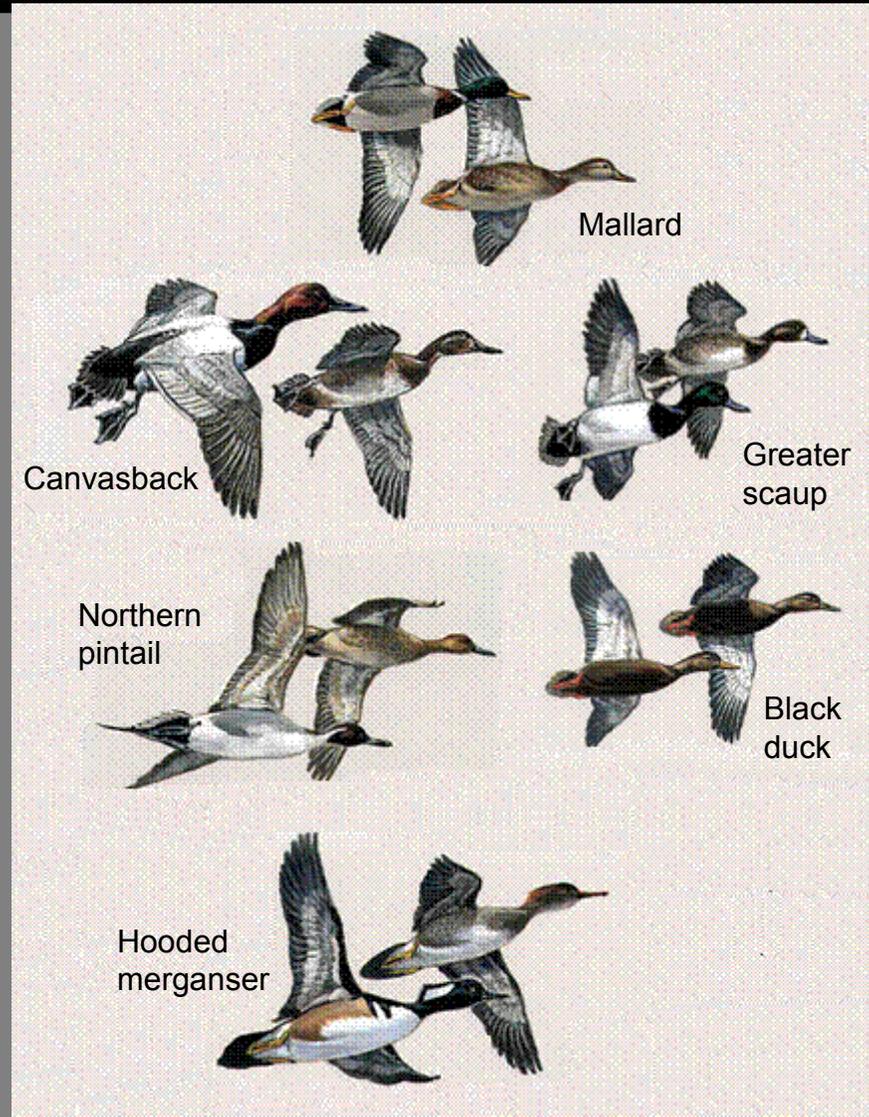
2016 Duck Season Recommendations – Dates



- North Zone
 - Sept. 24 – Nov. 20
 - Nov. 26 – Nov. 27
- Middle Zone
 - Oct. 1 – Nov. 27
 - Dec. 17 – 18
- South Zone
 - Oct. 8 – Dec. 4
 - Dec. 31 – Jan. 1

2016 Duck Season Recommendations – Daily Limits

- Maximum allowed under Federal Frameworks



2016-17 Falconry Season Recommendations

- Same dates as gun hunting
- Additional days for ducks, mergansers, coots, and moorhens:
 - Jan. 2 – Jan. 26, 2017
 - Mar. 1 – 10, 2017
- No change to daily bag limits
- Possession limits 3X daily limit



Managed Waterfowl Hunting Areas

- Technical change to allow mentored youth hunters to participate in reserved youth hunts at Allegan State Game Area's Fennville Farm Unit
- Consistent shot shell limit of 25 at all Managed Waterfowl Hunting Areas



Managed Waterfowl Hunting Areas

- Allow up to 2 absentee hunters not participating in a draw to join a party
 - Consistency in Southeast Region
 - Easier for youth hunters to participate
- Technical change to include bi-axial and wing-tipped motion-winged decoys in ban at Shiawassee River State Game Area and St. Clair Flats State Wildlife Area, Harsens Island Unit



Managed Waterfowl Hunting Areas

- Expand Firearm Antlerless Deer Hunting at Shiawassee River State Game Area and St. Clair Flats State Wildlife Area, Harsens Island Unit
 - To address increasing deer numbers and crop damage
- Canada Goose and Teal Season Date Exceptions at State Park and Recreation Areas



Land Use Order to Regulate Use of Managed State Wildlife and Game Areas

- From September 1 to January 1, restrict access to areas posted “state game area – hunting by permit only” to individuals who possess a valid permit
 - Nayanquing Point, Fish Point, Shiawassee River, and St. Clair Flats
- Post refuges “wildlife refuge – do not enter between September 1 and January 1”
 - Nayanquing Point, Fish Point, and St. Clair Flats, Harsens Island Unit



Thank You



www.michigan.gov



Elk Regulations



Chad Stewart, Deer and Elk Management Specialist
Wildlife Division
March 10, 2016



2015: Michigan Elk Season Review

- Quota: 100 elk
- Harvest (89 total elk):
 - 56 cows
 - 28 bulls
 - 5 calves
- Pure Michigan: 3 elk
- Tribal harvest: 11 elk



Elk Program Goals

- 500-900 Elk
- Elk survey
 - 1,372 estimated animals (95% CI: 1,063-1,680)
 - 668 estimated in 2014 (95% CI: 557-779)
- Elk outside core:
 - potential bTB crossover and agricultural damage

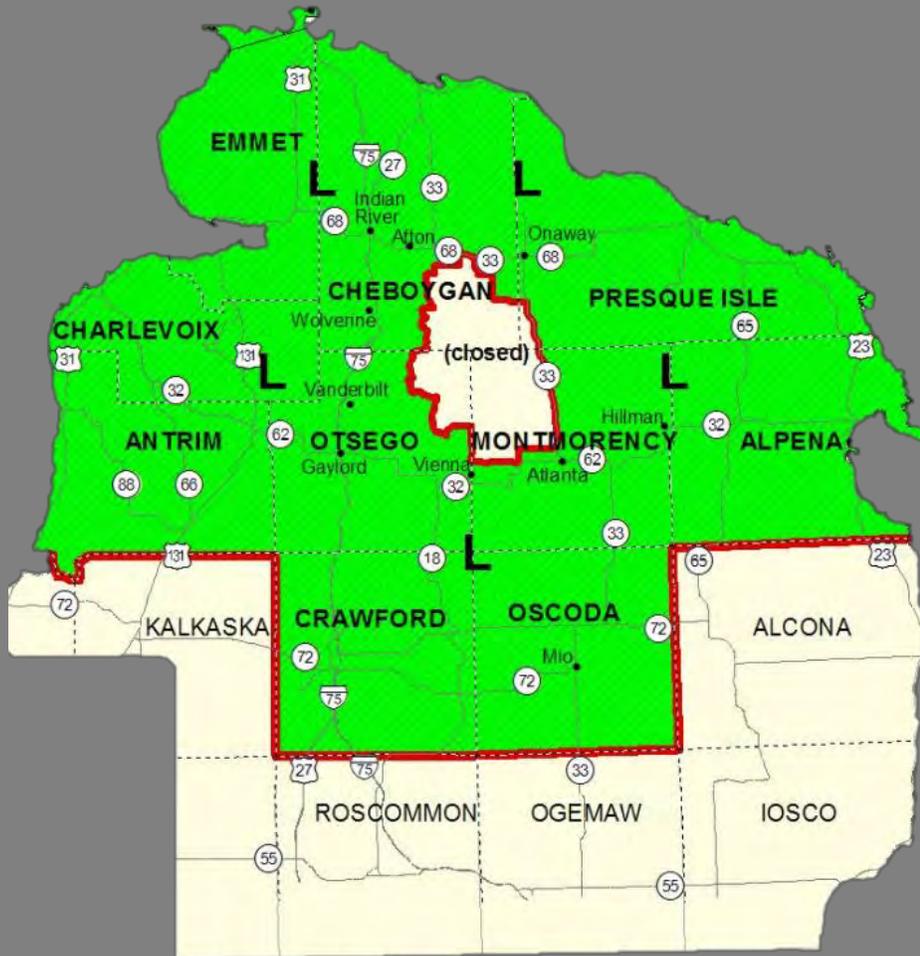


2016 & 2017 Proposed License Quotas

- 200 licenses
 - (100 more than 2014-2015)
- Expected harvest: 162 (plus tribal take and Pure Michigan Hunt)
- Expect gradual population reduction over 2016 and 2017 seasons



Season Dates and License Quotas



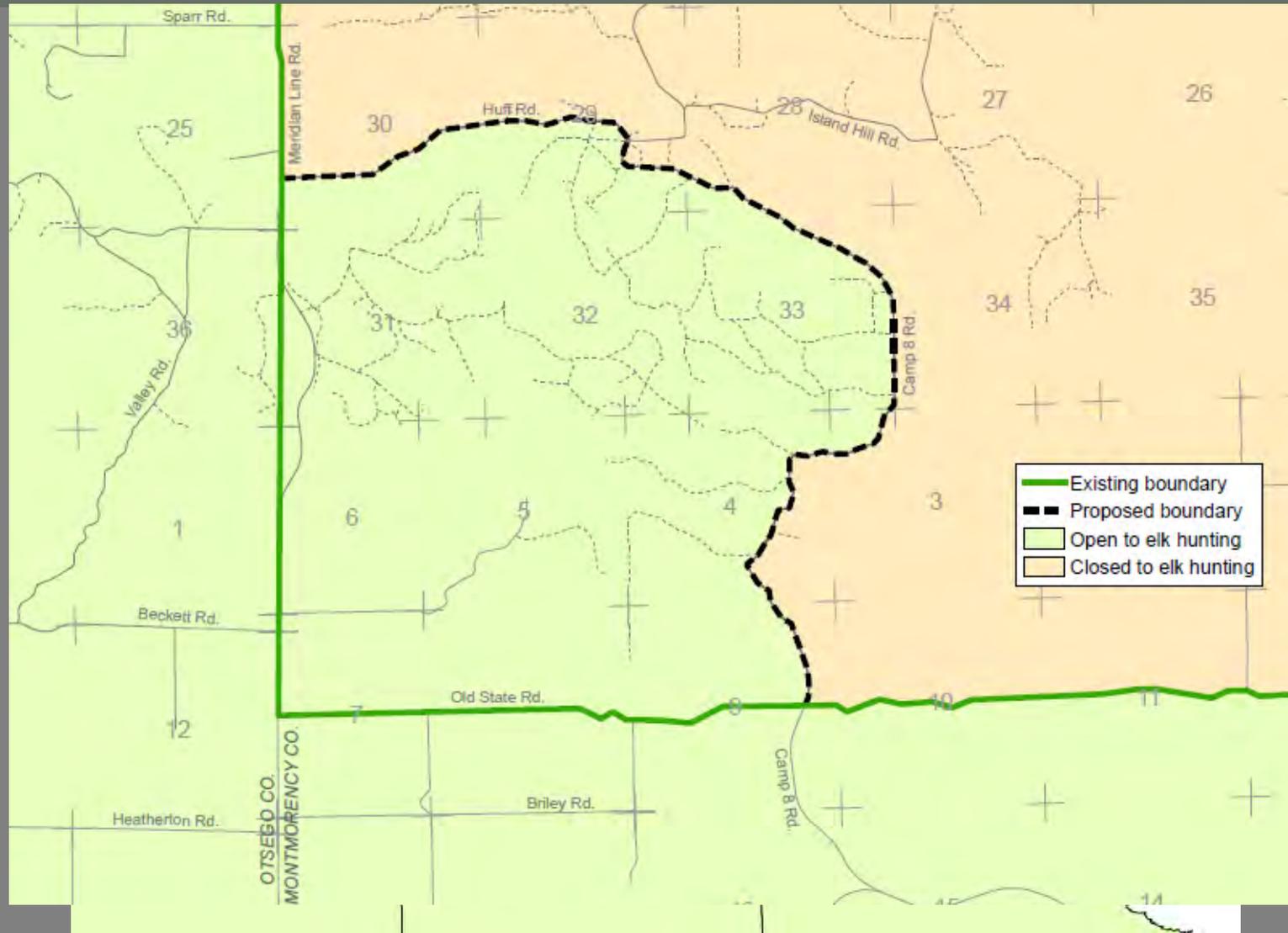
Hunt Period 1

Aug. 30 – Sept. 2, 2016	Aug. 29 – Sept. 1, 2017
Sept. 16 - 19, 2016	Sept. 15- 18, 2017
Sept. 30 – Oct. 3, 2016	Sept. 29 – Oct. 2, 2017

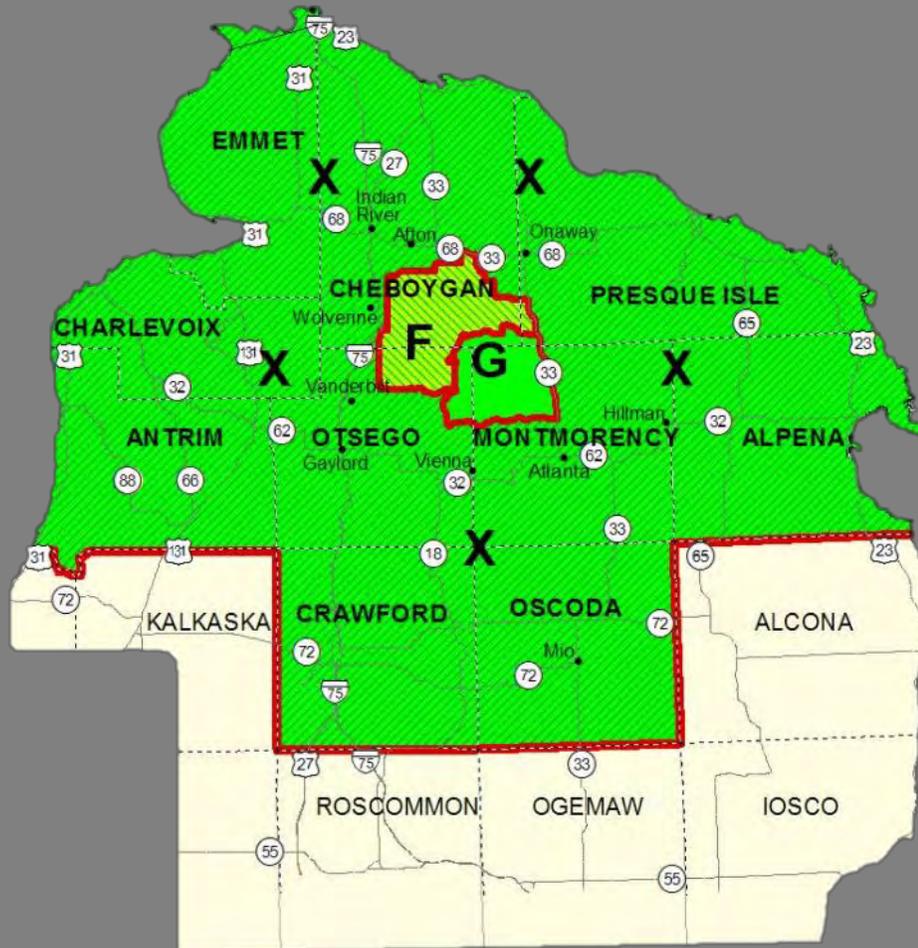
Unit	Any Elk	Antlerless
L	30	70



Proposed change to L



Season Dates and License Quotas



Hunt Period 2

Dec. 10- 18, 2016

Dec. 9 - 17, 2017

Unit	Any Elk	Antlerless
F	10	30
G	20	40
Total	30	70



Season Dates and License Quotas

- OPTIONAL Hunt Period 3
 - January 18 – 22, 2017
 - January 17 – 21, 2018
- Maximum licenses: 40



Tribal Licenses

- The 2007 Inland Consent Decree authorizes the five 1836 Treaty Tribes to issue licenses equal to 10% of state issued elk licenses, rounded up.



Thank You



www.michigan.gov/elk

Coyote And Nighttime Furbearer Regulations



Adam Bump, Furbearer Specialist
Wildlife Division
March 10, 2016



Coyotes

- Liberalizing coyote regulation options for possible changes presented in September
 - NRC requested recommendation for change for March/April
- Primary issue is increased concerns over impacts of coyotes



Coyote Recommendation

- Year round hunting season (Add April 15 - July 7)
 - No dogs for hunting/training April 15-July 7
 - Liberalize, simplify nighttime regulations
- Liberalization of coyote harvest unlikely to impact populations
- Allows additional tools, timeframe for individuals to address concerns regarding coyotes



Nighttime Furharvester Regulations

- Current regulations for hunting some furbearers at night confusing
- Topic of interest for regular 2016 furbearer regulations cycle
- Simplification possible, fits with coyote liberalization request
- Addressing all nighttime furbearer regulations at once most efficient



Nighttime Recommendations

- Species impacted
 - Coyote
 - Fox
 - Raccoon
 - Opossum
- Simplify, expand seasons, use of lights
- Require either aid of a call or aid of dogs
- Allow use of 3&4 buckshot



Nighttime Recommendations

Major Regulation Components	Current Regulations	Proposed Regulations
Artificial Lights	Only Sept 15- March 31	Yes, during open season of target species
Season dates: Nighttime = Daytime	Varies by species and method (calls or dogs)	YES
Require aid of dogs (device loaded at point of kill only) OR aid of call	YES	YES
Allow take by BOTH aid of dogs (device loaded at point of kill only) AND aid of call	Varies by species	YES
Raccoon/coyote all year private land, doing or about to do damage without a license	YES	YES
Allow use of only bow and arrow, crossbow, .22 or smaller rimfire, or shotgun with loads other than buckshot, slug or cut shell	YES	Also allow 3&4 buckshot
Restrictions in November (deer season)	YES	YES



Nighttime Recommendations

- Recommendations would increase harvest opportunities
- Much simpler regulation structure, reduce confusion
- Unlikely to have significant impact on harvest



Thank You

www.michigan.gov/dnr



Bear Harvest and Trend Update



KC Swanson, MDNR Wildlife Division

March 10, 2016



2016 Harvest Modification

- Required by 2007 Consent Decree
- Tribal harvest allocation increased from 10% to 12.5% in Newberry and Red Oak

	2015 State	2015 Tribal	2016 State	2016 Tribal	
Newberry	255	29	248	36	
Red Oak	192	22	187	27	



Change in State License Allocations

- Red Oak: 650 (2015) to 630 in 2016 (20 fewer)
- Newberry: 1,190 (2015) to 1,155 in 2016 (35 fewer)



Recommendations

- Allow the use of a crossbow during the Red Oak BMU bow and arrow season



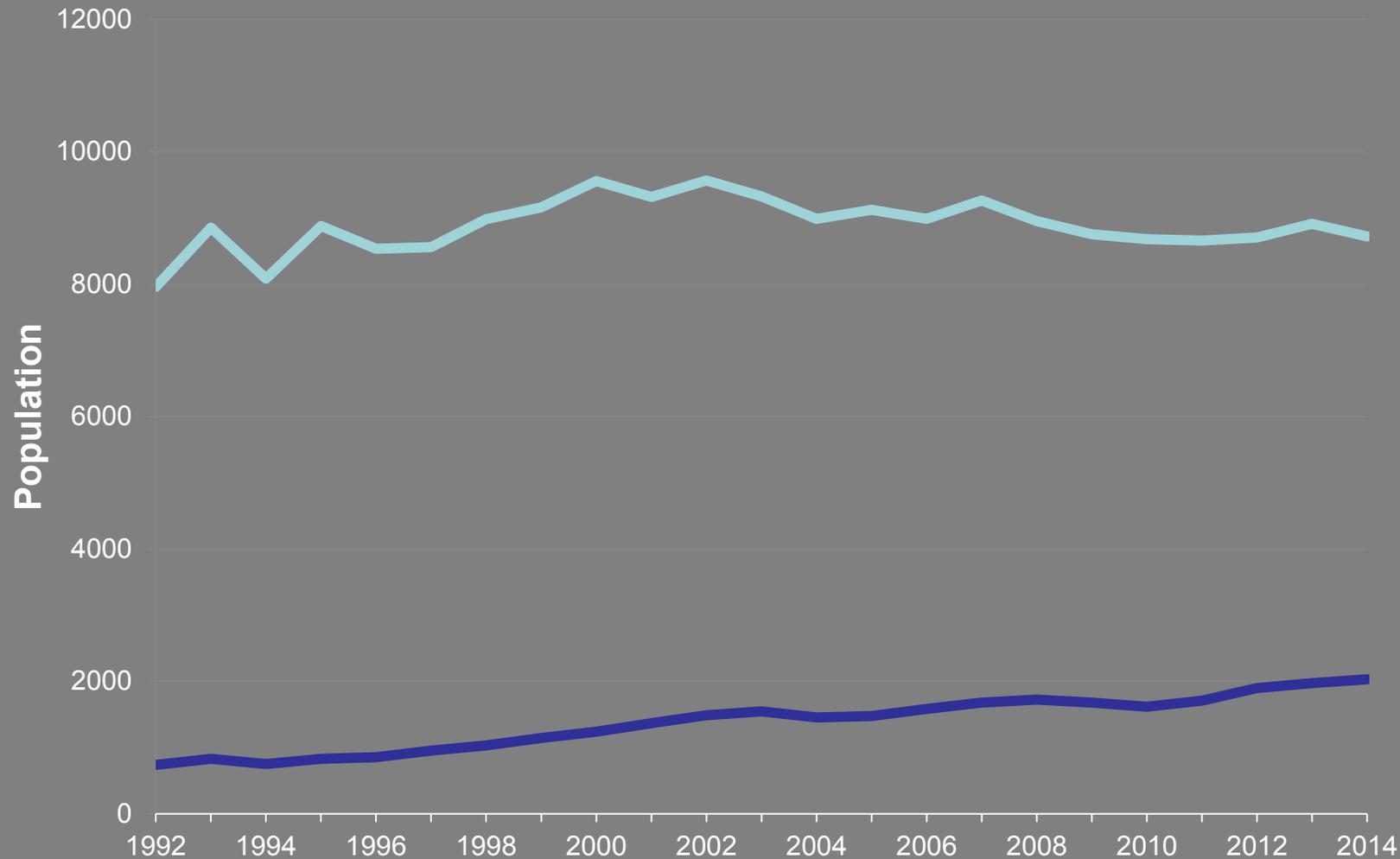
Baiting with Chocolate

- Department will evaluate available information and engage stakeholders during the scheduled 2017 bear regulations cycle
- Potential for proposed regulatory change will be presented to the NRC in March of 2017



2014 estimated pre-harvest abundance of bears 1 year old and older in Michigan.

Statistical Catch-At-Age (SCAA) analysis.



8,721 bears in 2014.
Down 9% since 2000

2,033 bears in 2014.
Up 64% since 2000

UP
NLP



2015 State Licensed Harvest

- 1,650 Bear harvested statewide
- Up 12% from 2014
- Remains approximately 15% below the 10-year average
- Success rates gradually improving in many BMU's



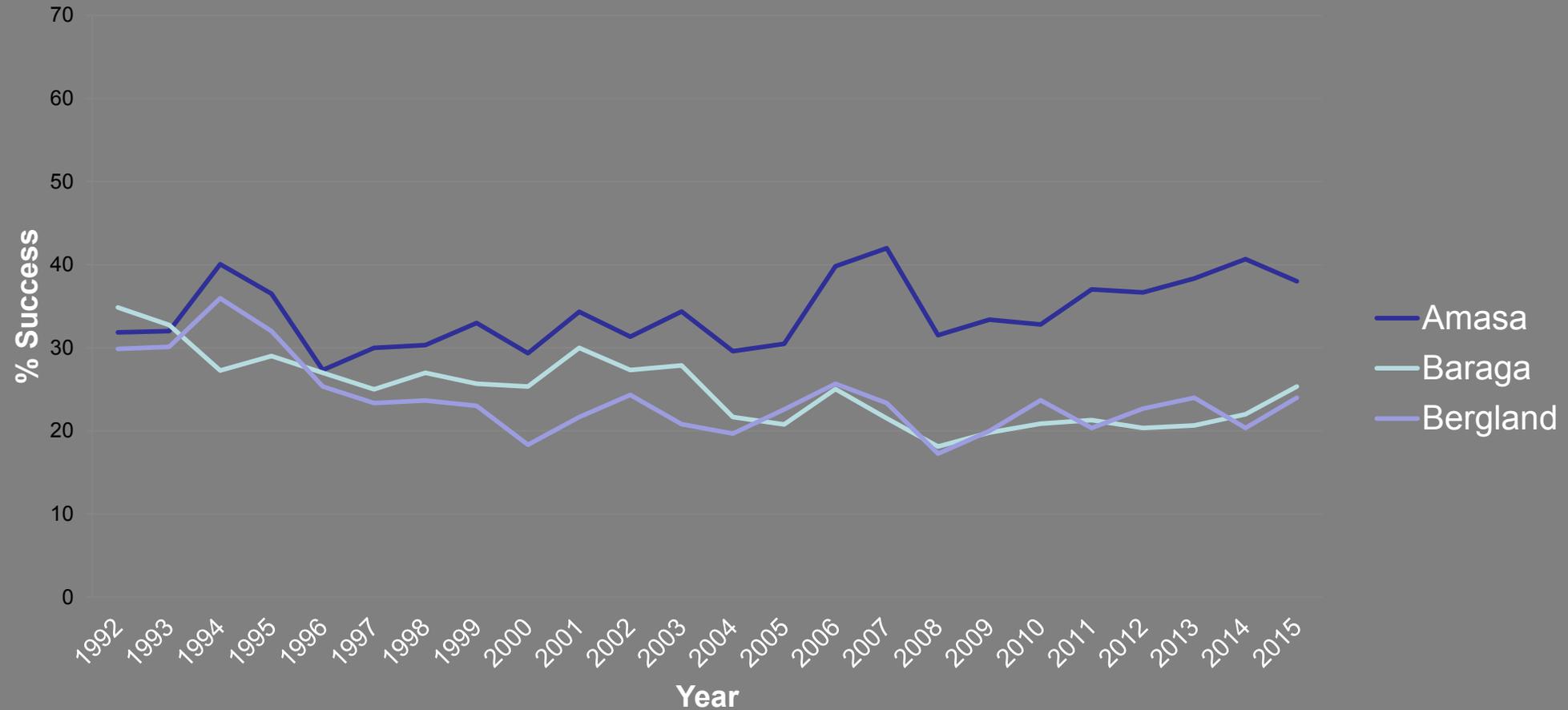
State License Holder Success Rates EUP

All-Hunt Average

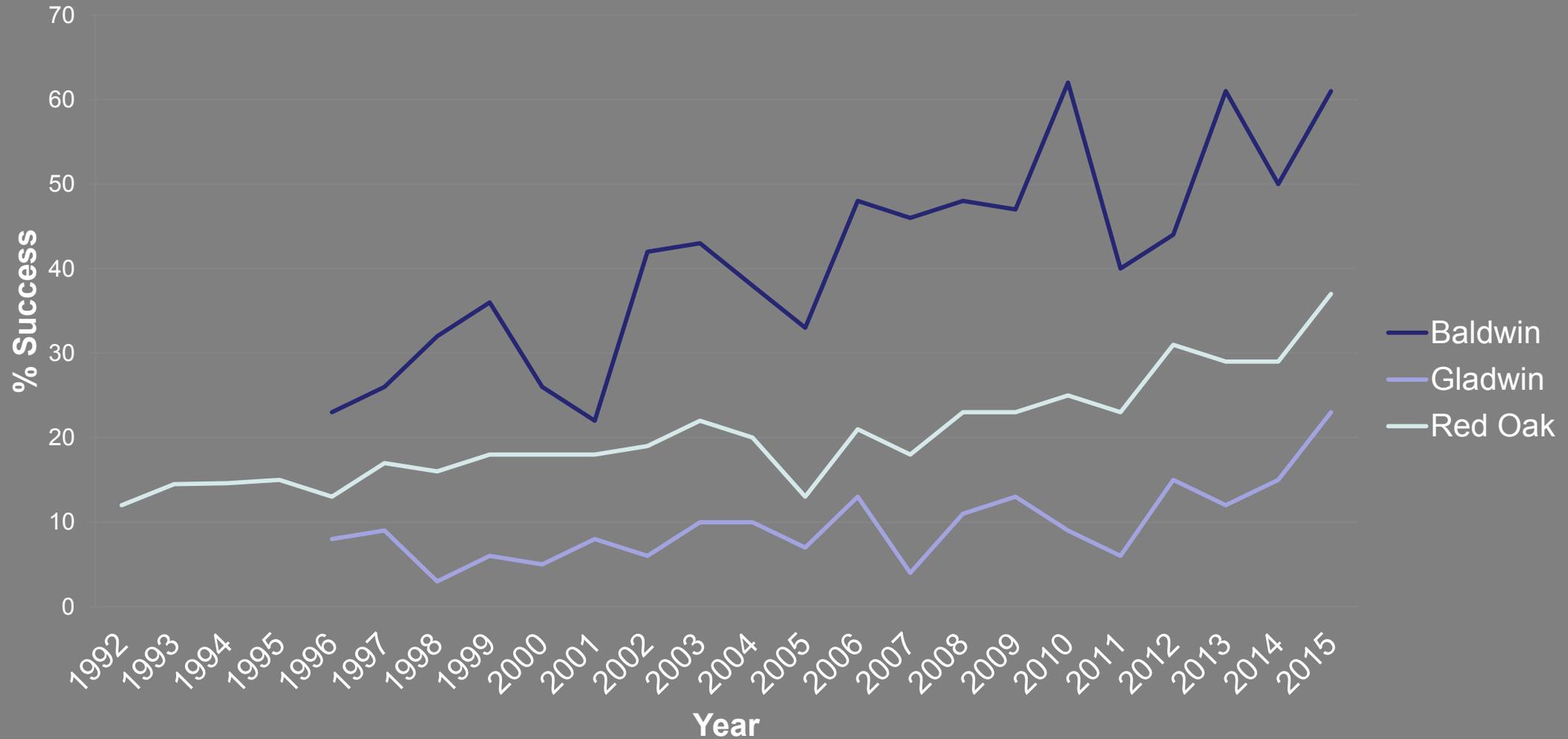


State License Holder Success Rates WUP

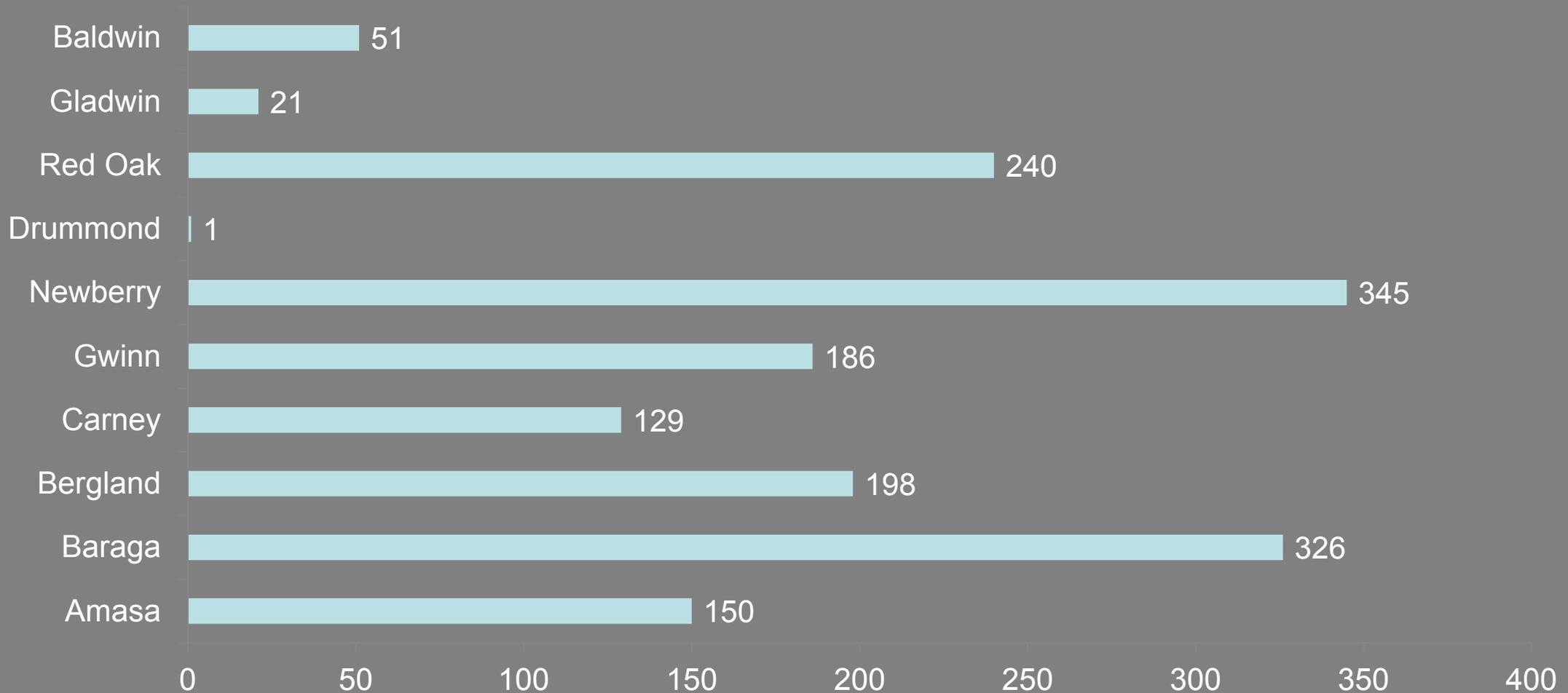
All-Hunt Average



State License Holder Success Rates NLP

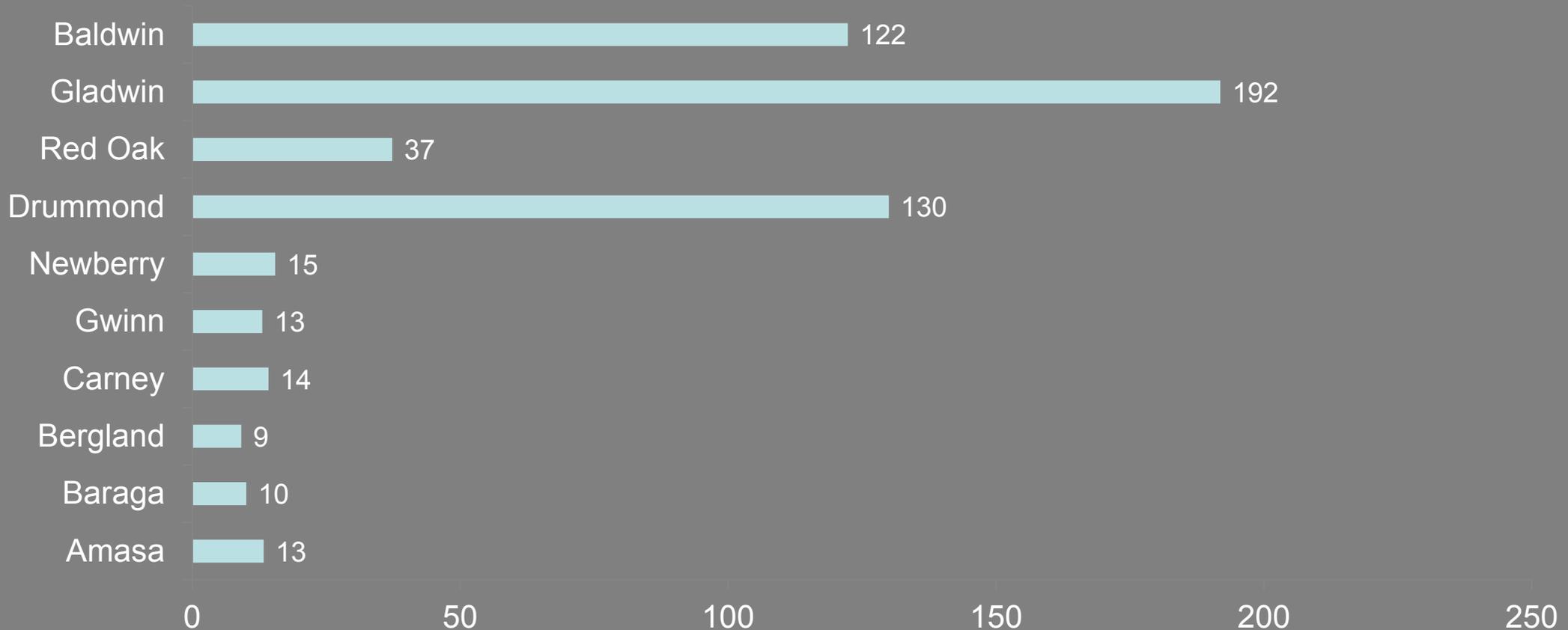


2015 State Licensed Registered Harvest

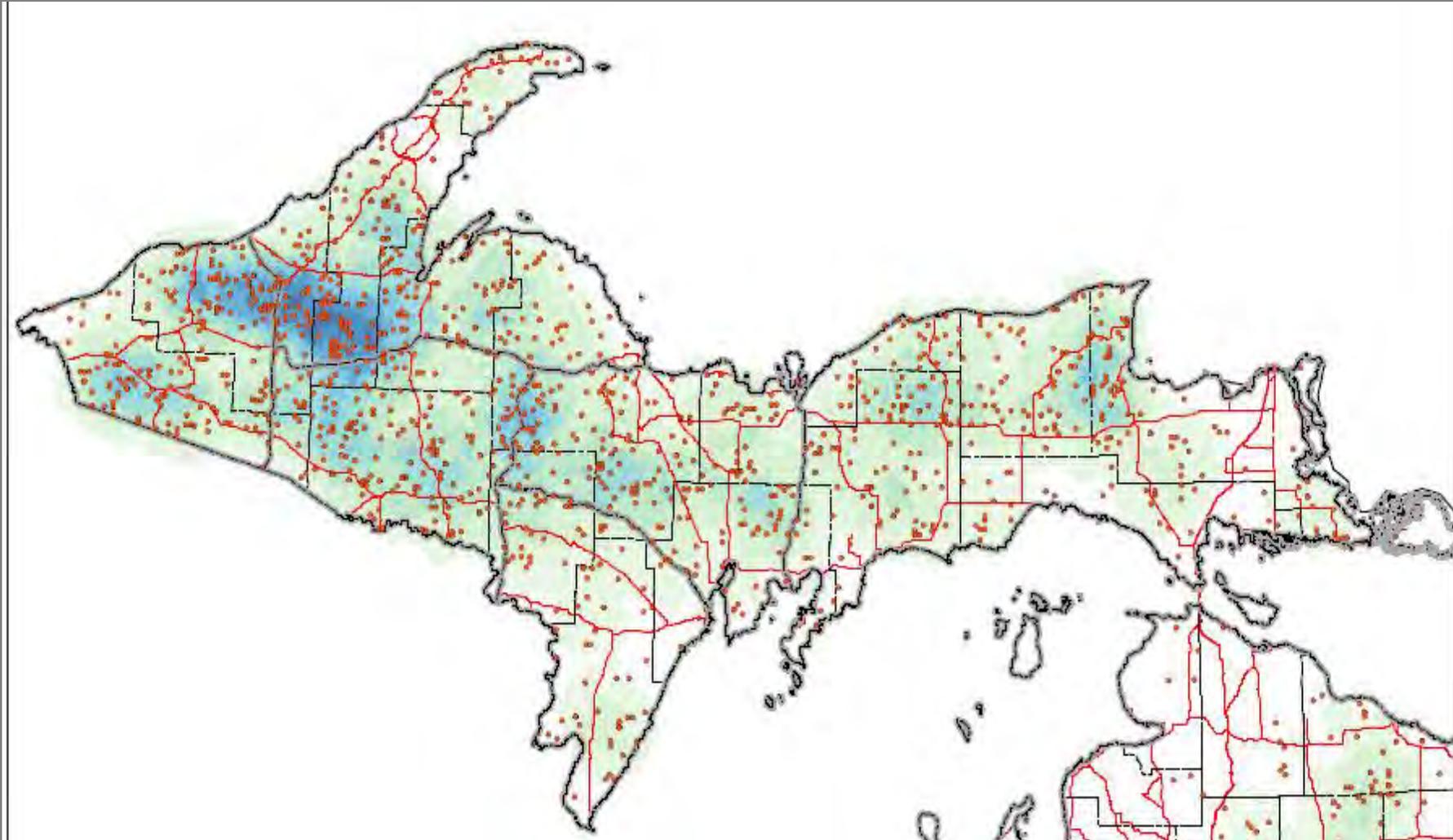


2015 Geographic Harvest by BMU

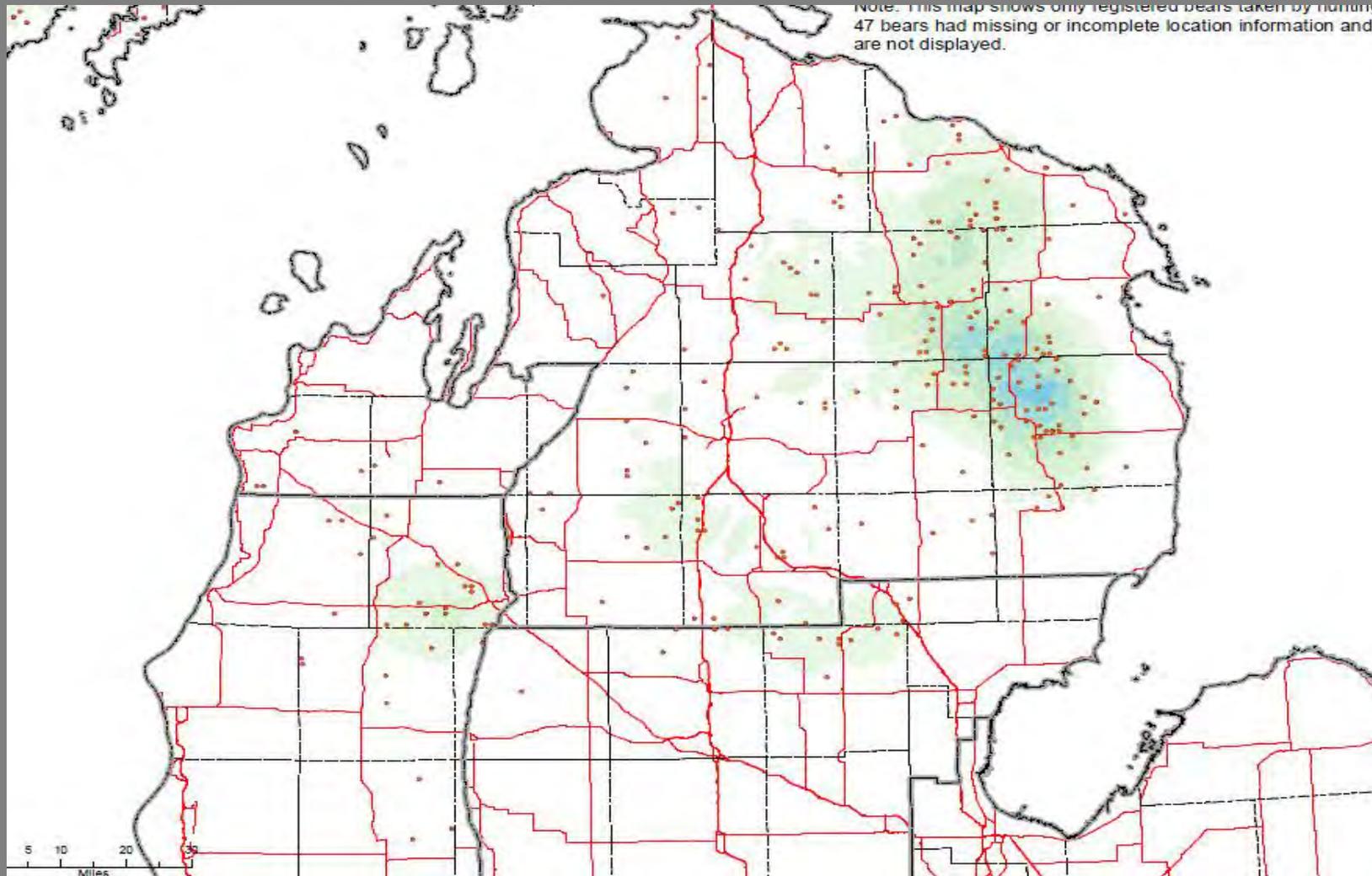
2015 Harvest
Square miles / harvested bear



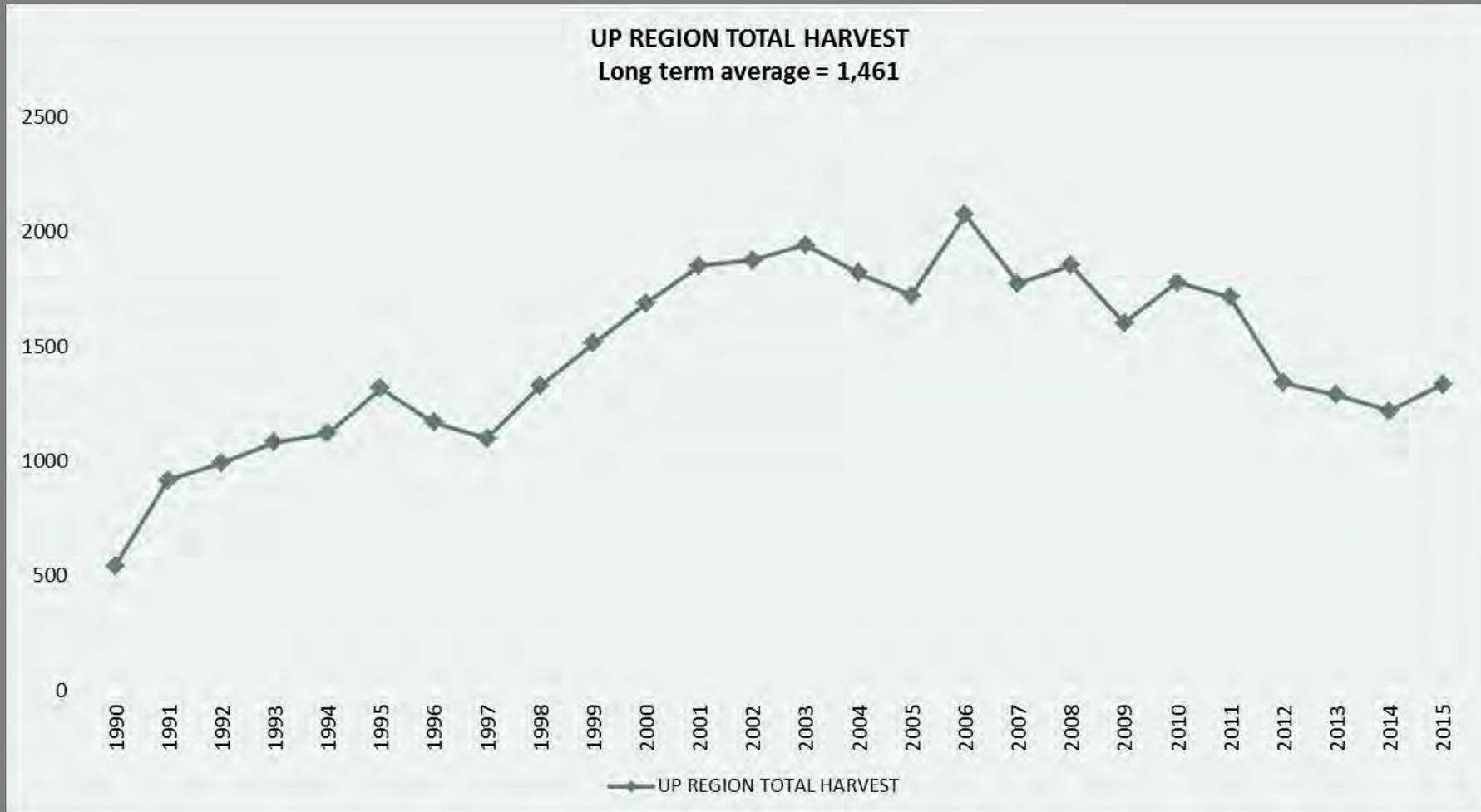
2014 State Licensed Harvest-UP Region



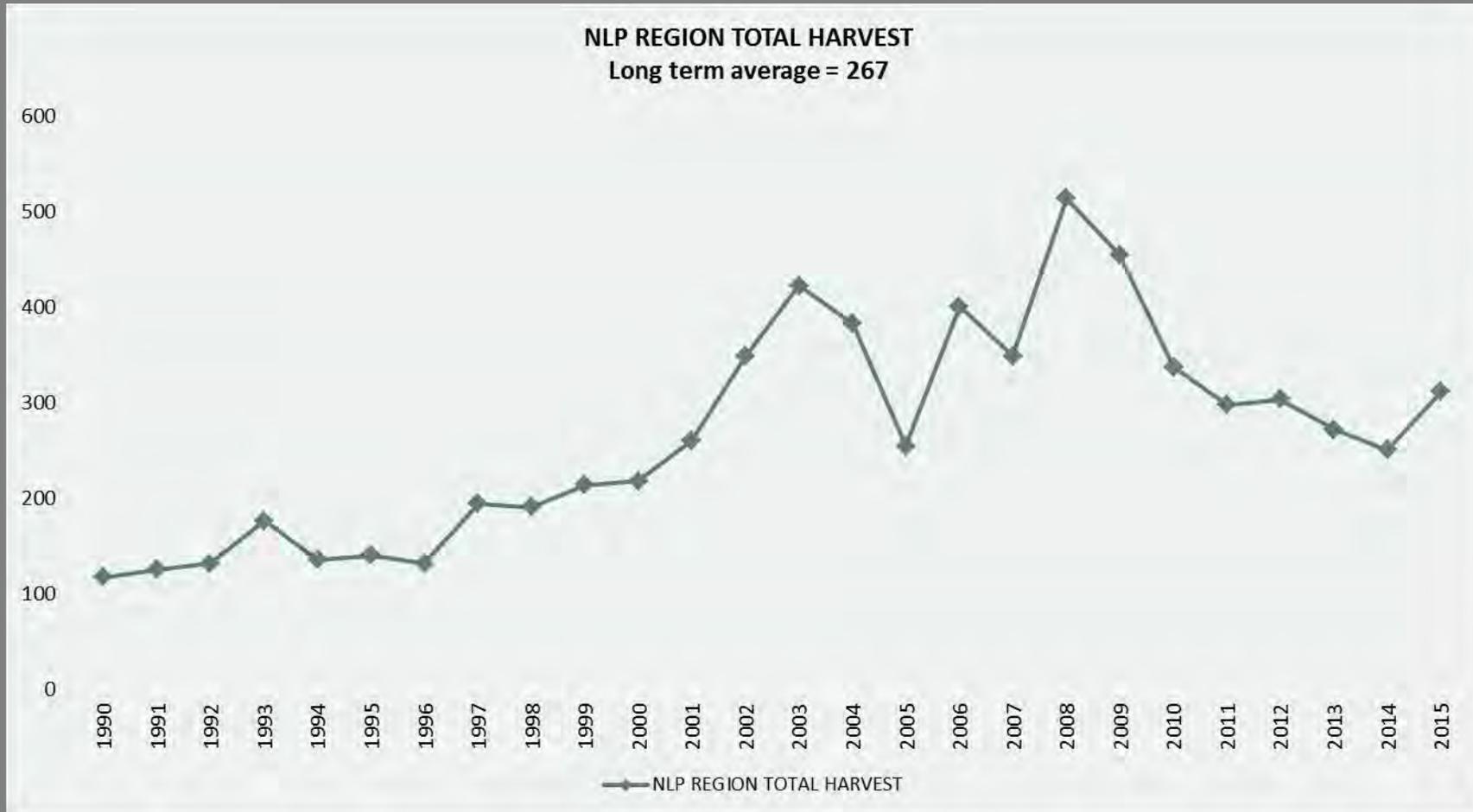
2014 State Licensed Harvest-NLP Region



1990-2015 Long-Term Harvest



1990-2015 Long-Term Harvest



Thank You

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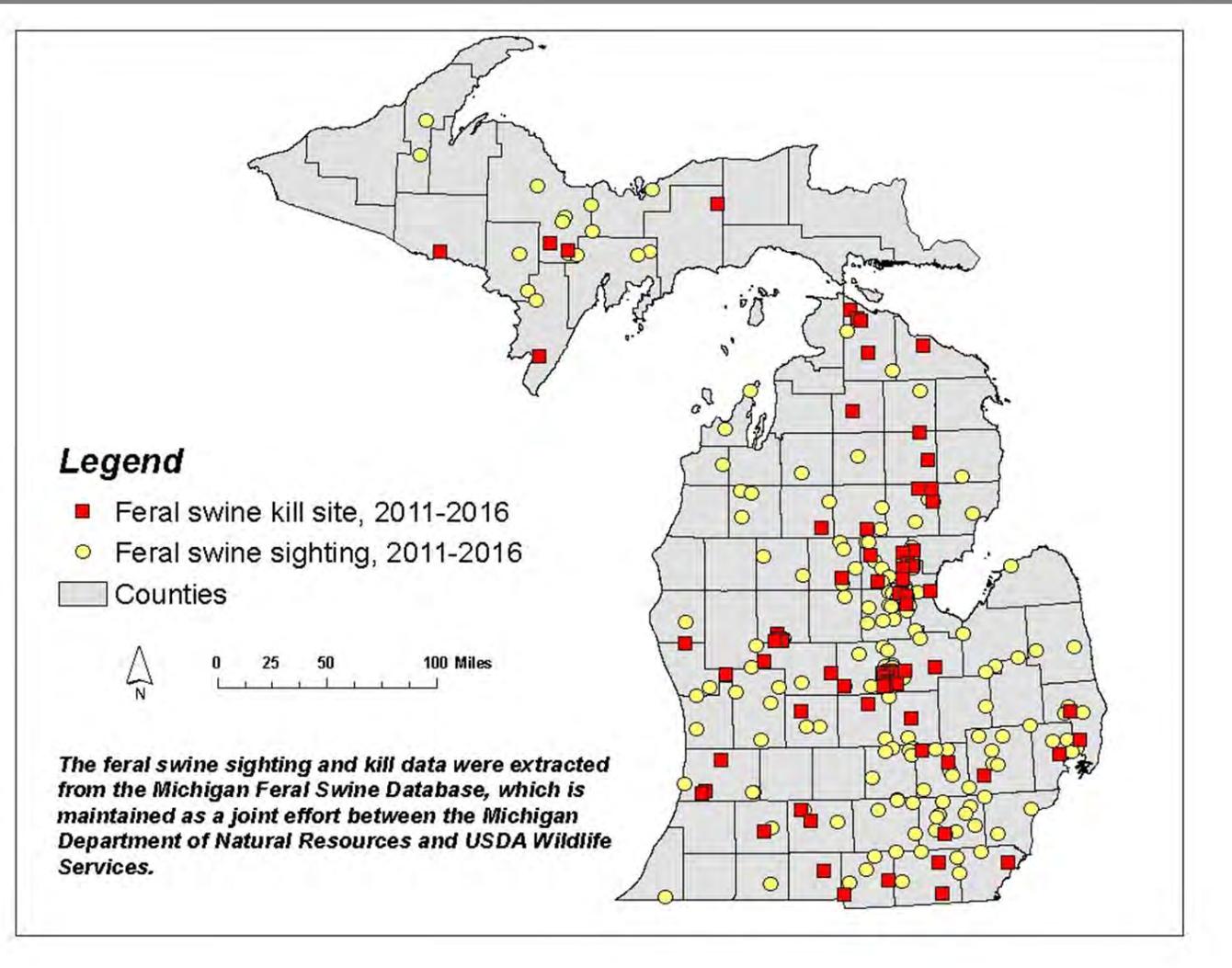
Feral Swine Research Area



Dr. Dwayne Etter, Research Biologist
Wildlife Division
March 10, 2016



Feral Swine



Challenge of Population Control

- Necessary to remove 70% annually just to stabilize population



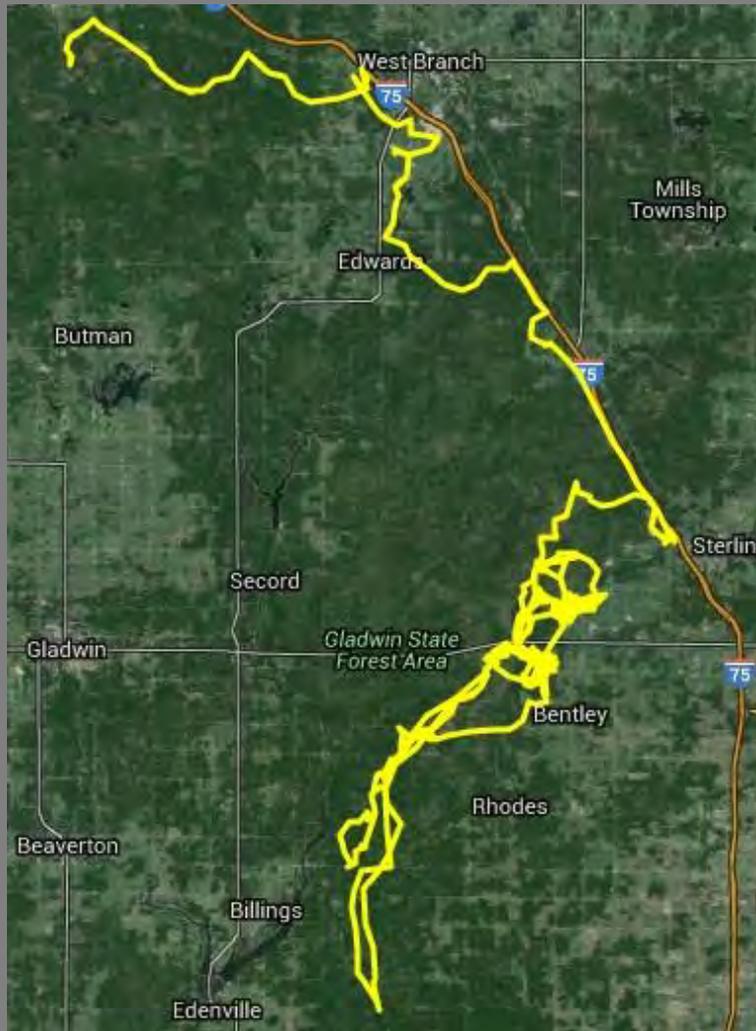
Feral Swine Research Project

- In 2014, the Department partnered with USDA-WS and two Michigan Universities to radio-collar, research , and lethally remove feral swine
- Funding through a Pittman Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act in partnership with two Michigan Universities through summer 2018
 - Michigan USDA-WS receives annual funding through the Federal Feral Swine Initiative and was recently awarded a Department Invasive Species Grant

Feral Swine Research Project

- Current research and removal efforts are focused in Arenac, Bay, Gladwin, Midland, and Ogemaw Counties
- Since July 2014, removed 19 feral swine and collared 8
- Groups (4-8) of feral swine are captured at baited sites
- Most of the group is humanely euthanized and collars are placed on one or two of the remaining feral swine which are released and tracked
- Collared swine join another group and the collars can be used to locate and lethally remove this group as well

Preliminary findings



Feral Swine Trapping



36°F 05/16/12 06:08 AM MYCAMERA



08.19.2015 21:14:43 013°C 055°F

Recommendation

- Designating a portion of state-owned lands within Arenac, Bay, Gladwin, Midland and Ogemaw counties as the “feral swine research area”
- Approximately 600 square miles



Recommendation

- Human and dog activity in close proximity to the bait sites has been found to displace feral swine
- Prohibiting an individual from being within or possessing a dog or allowing a dog to be within 200 yards of a feral swine research bait site, as posted, from January 2 through April 15
- Majority of research is conducted during this timeframe
- The prohibition would sunset in October of 2018

Report All Feral Swine Sightings



<http://www.michigan.gov/feralswine>