



Fisheries Division Fiscal Status & Needs

Natural Resources Commission

Randy Claramunt, Fisheries Chief

February 13, 2025

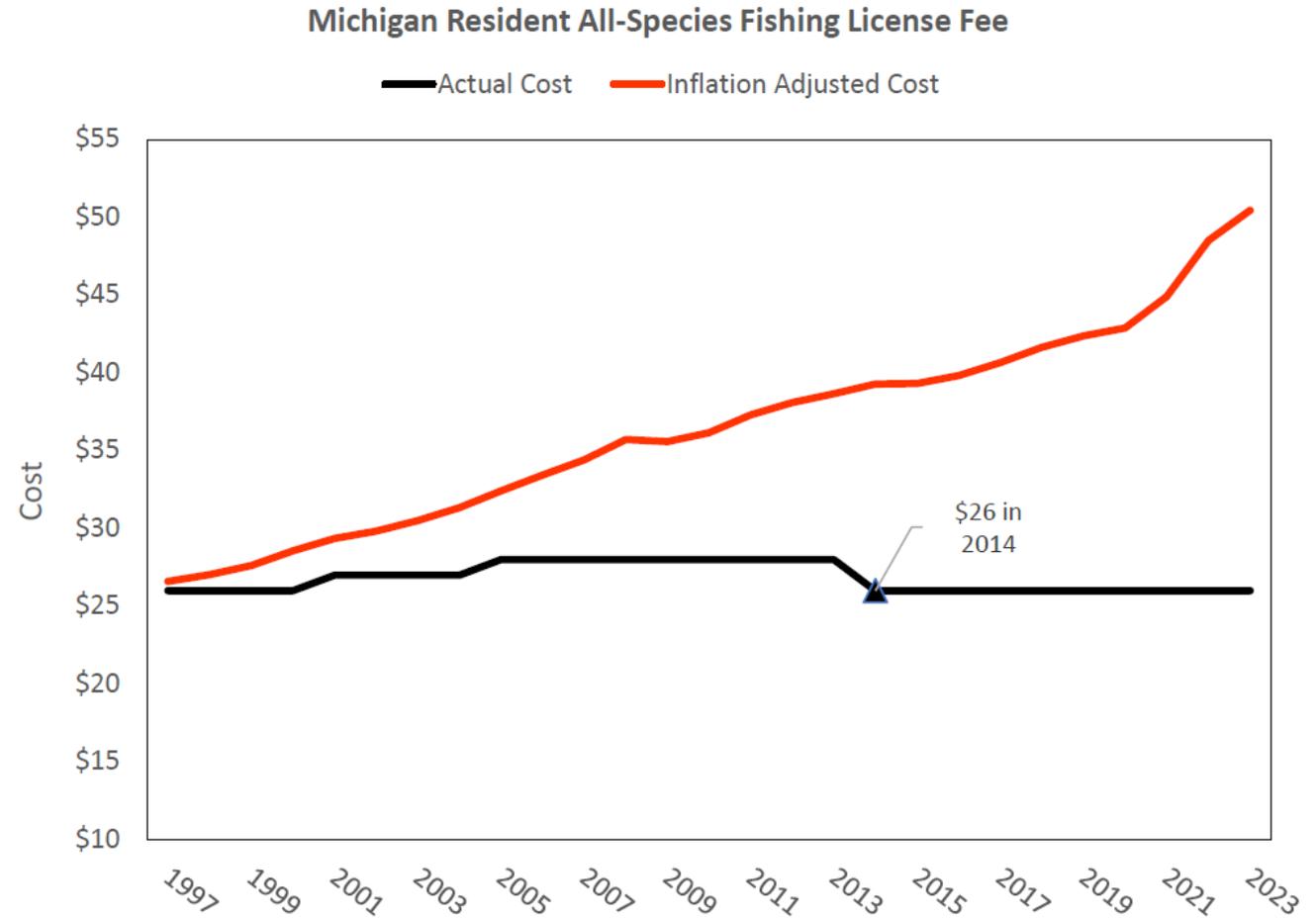


The Issue at Hand

Excerpts from DNR Report on “Hunting and Fishing Licenses: Why the System Needs to be Changed”

Fisheries Funding Needs

- Fishing supports \$3 billion annually in Michigan
- Inflation outpacing revenue, accelerated post-pandemic
- Obligated to operate a balanced budget
- The last fee change, in 2014, decreased the fee for all-species fisheries license and reallocated revenue
- With inflation, the result is reduced services and programs



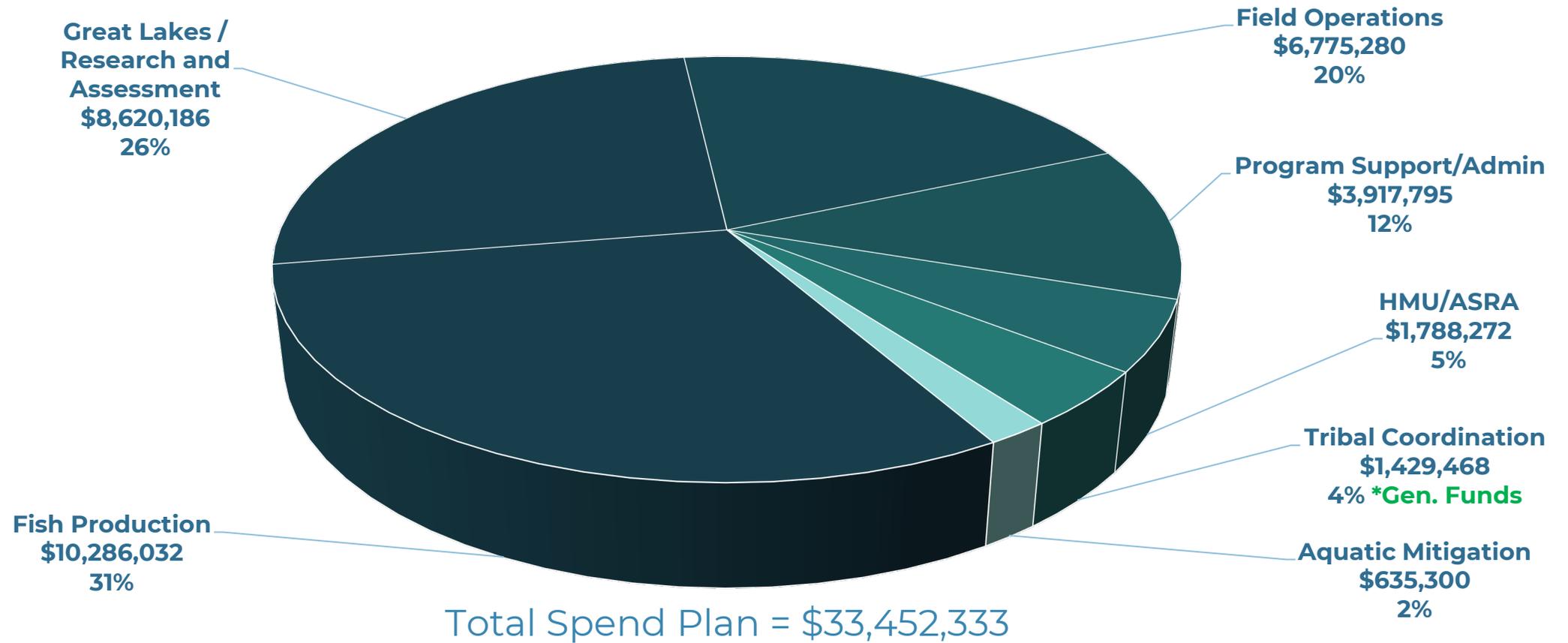


Michigan =
Water

Facts - By the Numbers

- Michigan is home to **3,300** miles of Great Lakes shoreline, **10,899** inland lakes and over **52,000** miles of rivers and streams.
- The average price of an annual resident fishing license in the U.S. is **\$31.33**. Michigan has the second lowest fee for resident annual and the lowest daily fishing licenses compared to mid-west states.
- From a staffing level, numbers in **2002** were **234** but we currently have over **50** unfilled critical positions.
- Fisheries programs in U.S. manage **15k** acres per staff member on average. Michigan fisheries professionals manage **½ million** acres per staff.
- **Dozens** of facilities closed, **2** additional facilities may be closed. Fisheries is limited to **\$300k** for maintenance per year.

Fisheries Division – Budget by Major Program



Fisheries Division – Budget Breakdown

- Field and inland fisheries programs have declined the most, but all areas impacted
- 95% of the funding direct from license sales or indirect from DJ
- Majority of funding directed to programs that are in support of recreational fisheries
- Declining resources because of a flat license fee and inflation

GENERAL INFORMATION

Thank you for purchasing a Michigan Fishing License

Each year an estimated two million Michigan residents and nonresidents fish Michigan waters. Recreational fishing is the largest and highest-valued use of the state's fishery resources. The economic impact of sport fishing is in excess of \$4 billion annually and provides more than 38,000 jobs. The mission of the DNR Fisheries Division is to protect and enhance Michigan's aquatic life and habitats for the benefit of current and future generations. Revenue from fishing and hunting license sales supports DNR activities to enhance Michigan's natural resources. The license sales also increase federal revenue to the State of Michigan for the management of these resources. Please help to support Michigan's abundant natural resources by purchasing a fishing and hunting license each year. Learn more at Michigan.gov/ItsYourNature or Michigan.gov/DNR/About/Funding.

Fisheries Division Appropriation Budget: Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (\$34,520,800)

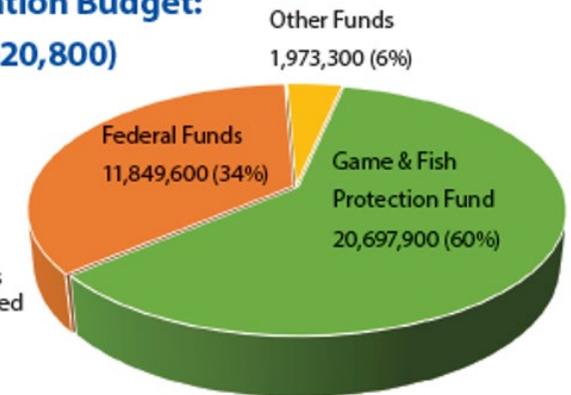
Funding Sources

Game and Fish Protection Fund:
\$20,697,900 (60%)

The funds are mainly derived from fishing and hunting license revenues and all monies are earmarked for fishing- and hunting-related operations.

Federal Funds: \$11,849,600 (34%)

Our primary federal funding source is the Sport Fish Restoration fund program, which comes from a federal excise tax on fishing equipment and a portion of the federal fuel tax revenue attributed to motorboats. Michigan received \$12.9 million in fiscal year 2023 (eighth highest in the nation) based on a distribution formula of land/water area and number of state fishing license holders. Of this amount, \$10.9 million was used for Fisheries Division programs. The remaining \$1.9 million was used by Parks and Recreation Division for projects in support of boating access.



Facts: By the Numbers Again

	Annual Fishing License Sales & National Rank		D-J Dollars
State <i>(Great Lakes)</i>	2023 Licenses sold (millions)	Nat'l Rank	
TX	2.1	1	
CA	1.8	2	
FL	1.7	3	
MN	1.5	4	
NC	1.5	5	
WI	1.4	6	
MI	1.2	7	
PA	1.1	8	

*from highest

Note: License requirement is age 17 for TX & MI and age 16 for all other states shown.

Investing in Michigan's Fisheries: Identifying Future Outcomes

GAIN <i>What Michigan Fisheries will gain from a license restructure</i>	MAINTAIN <i>What Michigan fisheries will maintain from a license restructure</i>	PREVENT <i>What will be prevented from happening with a license restructure</i>
<p>Increase information for anglers on fish populations and water bodies.</p> <p>Expand habitat protection and restoration.</p> <p>Reinstate the inland fisheries program, including lake and stream surveys.</p> <p>Extend the useful life of existing capital assets.</p> <p>Focus funding to protect Michigan's inland trout and cold-water fisheries.</p> <p>Focus funding for Great Lakes salmon and trout fisheries and new opportunities for more rods while trolling.</p> <p>Expand opportunities to fish using unique methods.</p>	<p>Michigan's world-class fishing waters.</p> <p>Current level of participation with partners and angler groups.</p> <p>Efficient use of division resources.</p> <p>Current fish tagging and marking program.</p> <p>Reintroduction efforts of Arctic grayling.</p> <p>Development and implementation of adaptive management strategies to respond to threats to our fisheries.</p> <p>Advancement of fish culture techniques and biosecurity to produce healthy fish needed for stocking goals.</p>	<p>Closures of hatcheries and/or research facilities.</p> <p>Future degradation of our capital assets.</p> <p>Reduction of future fish stocking.</p> <p>Elimination of muskie, walleye and sturgeon stocking initiatives.</p> <p>Degradation of our diverse fishing opportunities.</p> <p>Reduction in support for aquatic resource stewardship programs and watershed management.</p> <p>Loss of federal funding and ability to compete for grants for habitat work, fisheries restoration, fishing access, and invasive species.</p>

\$65 Million in Outstanding Facility Needs



\$110 Million in Outstanding Need for Dams

The Impacts to You- Our Angler

Collision course for programmatic cuts & long-term effects

Habitat grants

Creel surveys

Lake & stream surveys

Fish stocking

Degradation of capital assets

Reduced federal funding

Diverse fishing opportunities



Examples of Opportunities

- Maintain existing core programs
- Expand our inland fisheries programs
- Extend the life and utility of capital assets
- Focus funding for key species
- Expand habitat protection and restoration efforts
- Expand opportunities to engage stakeholders
- Youth fishing program support





Where do we go from here:

- 2024 legislative session failed to conclude
 - Funding bill was not passed
 - Strong stakeholder support – Thank You!
- 2025 legislative session
 - Requires new legislation
 - Your support is needed



Wildlife Division – Fiscal Status and Needs

Natural Resources Commission

Sara Thompson, Wildlife Chief

February 13, 2025

Importance of Wildlife Management

- Hunting contributes \$8.9B annually to Michigan's economy
- Wildlife Division (WLD) is required by state statute to manage for **all** wild birds and mammals found in Michigan
- WLD manages state lands to benefit wildlife conservation



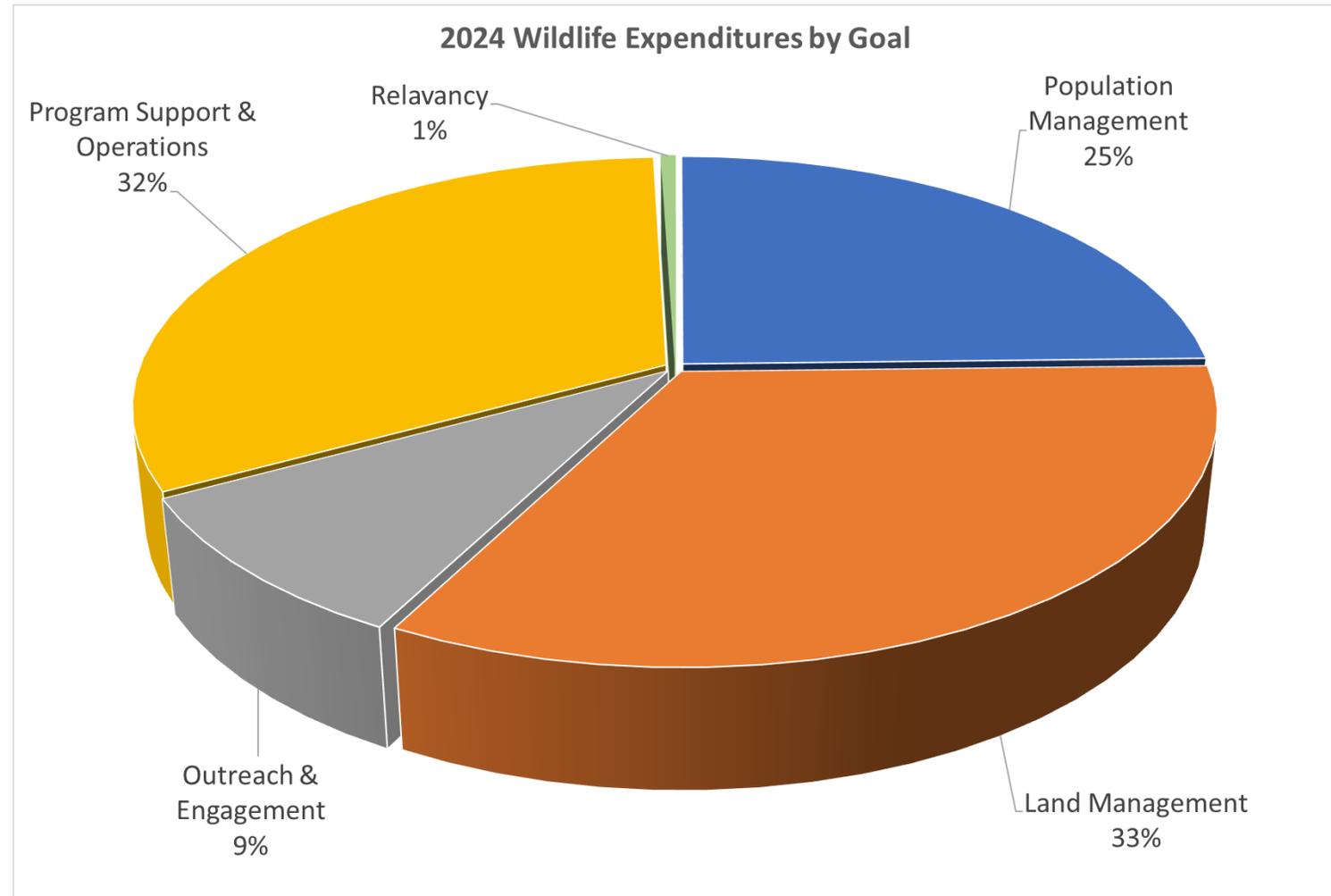
What we do:

- Population Management
- Land Management
 - 202 State Wildlife Areas - 450,000 acres
 - 3.9 million acres on state forests (including 600,000 acres purchased by hunters)
- Outreach and Engagement



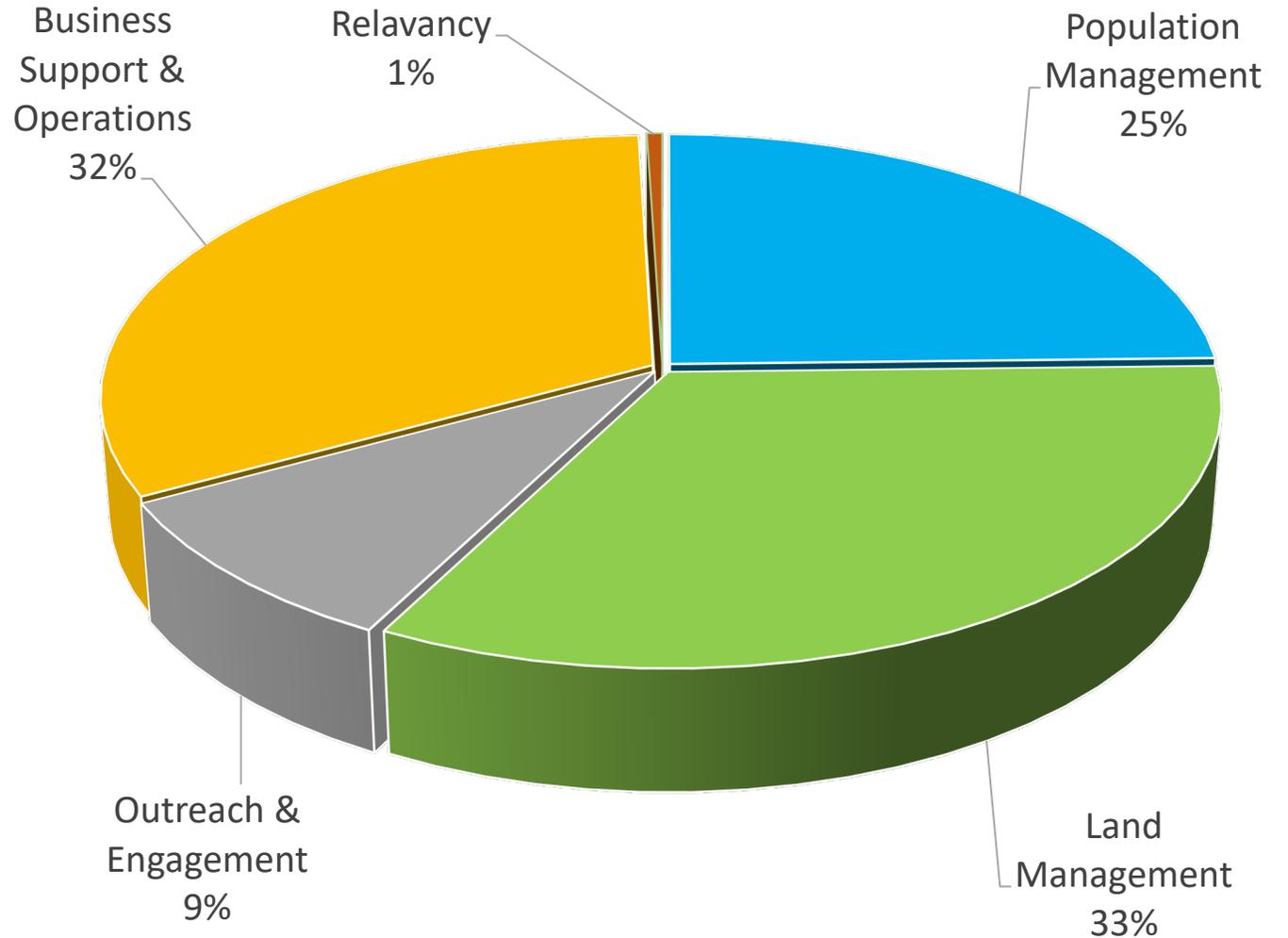
WLD Revenue Breakdown

- Federal Funding = 47%
- State Funding = 53%
 - 31% G&F (general purpose)
 - 8% G&F (sub-funds)
 - 12% General Fund
 - 2% nongame and other state funds



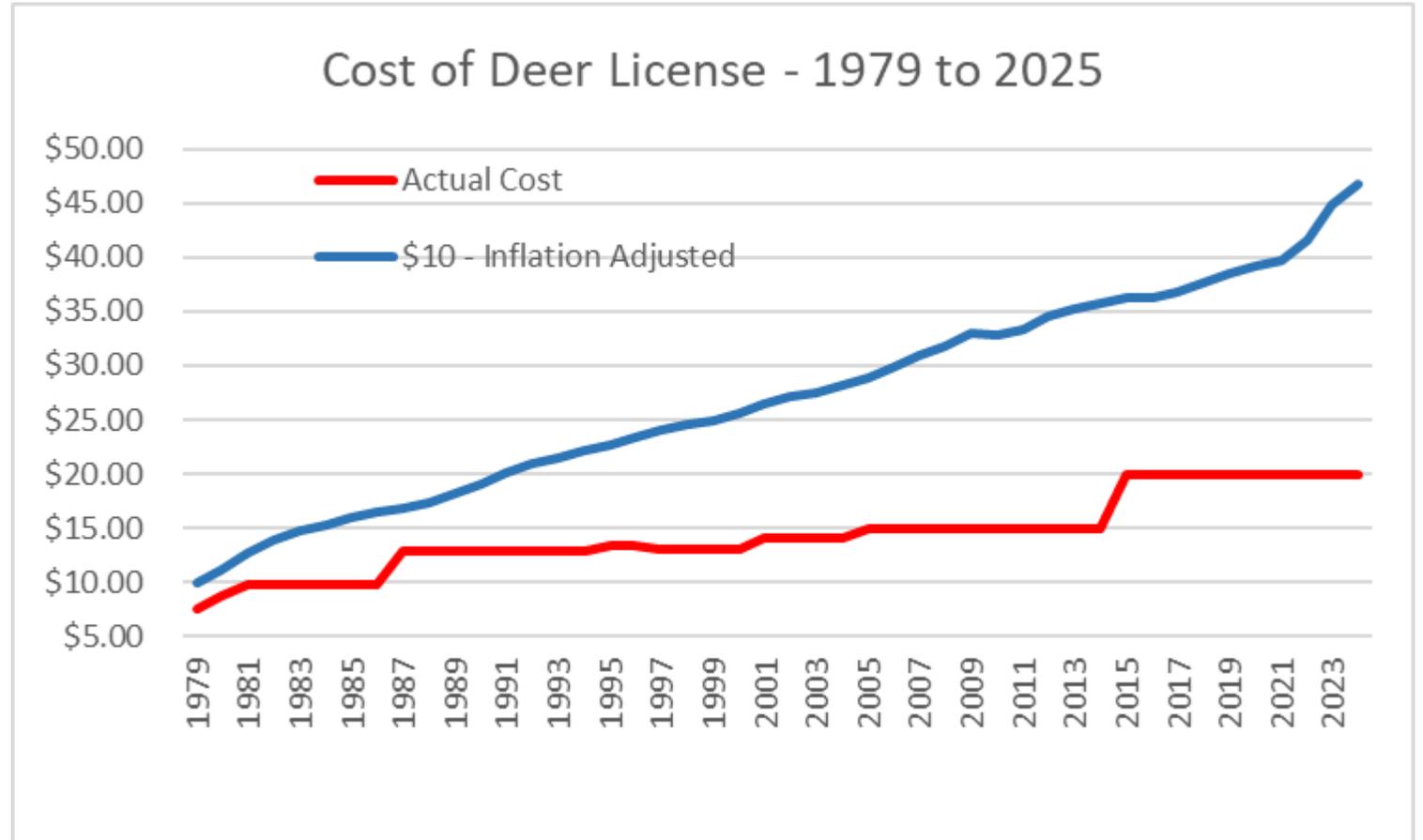
WLD Expenditures

- 2024 WLD Expenditures by Goal
- 160 full time employees
 - 110 field staff
- Down from 200 since 2000 (-30%)



Cost of Deer License

- 2025 deer = \$20
- 1979 deer = \$7.50
 - propose = \$10
- **Inflation adjusted**
\$46 today



WLD Expenditures

- Our cost of doing business has increased substantially:
 - Increased inputs for habitat projects
 - Land management contracts and material
 - Administrative costs
 - Response for wildlife conflict situations



Impacts of Reduced Budgets

- Delay of infrastructure repairs due to increased costs and reduced budgets



Houghton Lake Flats

Impacts of Reduced Budgets

Infrastructure failure



Rusted Drainage Pipe Houghton Lake Flats

Opportunities



Increasing Game and Fish revenue is an important **short-term solution**



Long-term solution is broad based conservation funding where all wildlife beneficiaries pay.



Plugged Ditch Houghton Lake Flats



Gain What will be gained from a license fee adjustment	Maintain What will be maintained from a license fee adjustment	Prevent What a license fee adjustment will prevent
Wildlife		
Enhance access for hunters, target shooters and wildlife enthusiasts	Michigan's diverse hunting, shooting and wildlife recreation opportunities	Loss of hunting and wildlife recreation opportunities
Improve public and private land habitat and conservation	Quality wildlife populations and habitat on public and private lands	Elimination of wildlife habitat grant program
Bolster resilience of habitat and populations	Resilient wildlife and habitat	Decline in public and private land wildlife populations and habitat
Improved response for human-wildlife interactions	Coordination on human-wildlife interactions	Loss of federal funding opportunities
Expand education, outreach and engagement	Wildlife conservation partnerships, and education and outreach efforts	Increased human-wildlife conflict

Questions?





Regulations Summaries: Process & Timelines

February 13, 2025

Sarah Cummins, Policy and Regulations Unit Manager, Wildlife Division, DNR



2024 After Action Review

- During three post 2024 AARs, we identified:
 - Significant content and design improvements based on feedback from users
 - Significant regulation changes
 - Multiple amendments
 - Late issuing dates
 - Printing timelines have increased
 - Vendor delays

Process Steps

Development

- Develop drafts
- Expert content review
- Layout & design
- Regulations changes at NRC meetings

Digital Production

- Develop pdf and html versions
- ADA Compliance

Print

- Send to printer, including review of proofs & timelines
- Review of agent and facility addresses
- Create quantity and distribution lists

Current Status and 2025 Timing

Spring Turkey

- ✓ **Available now:** Print application guide, HTML and PDF versions
- **Late February:** Print version expected in stores

Furbearer

- **Late February:** HTML and PDF versions
 - **Early April:** Print version expected in stores
 - **May 1:** Licenses available
 - **Any changes to furbearer regulations this year will not appear in the printed Regs Summary**
-

Current Status and 2025 Timing

Elk

- **Late February/Early March:** HTML and PDF versions
- **Mid-April:** Print version expected in stores
- **May 1 - June 1:** License application period

Bear

- **March NRC:** Regulations approved
- **Late March/Mid April:** HTML and PDF versions
- **May 1:** Print and PDF application guide
- **Early May:** Print version expected in stores
- **May 1 - June 1:** License application period

Current Status and 2025 Timing Cont.

Waterfowl

- **April NRC: Regulations approved**
Mid June: HTML version
- **Early July:** PDF version
- **Late July:** Print version expected in stores
- **August 1 - 28:** Reserved waterfowl hunt application period

Fall Turkey

- **May NRC: Regulations approved**
Late May: HTML
 - **Late June:** PDF version
 - **Early July:** Print version expected in stores
 - **July 1 - August 1:** License application period
-



Current Status and 2025 Timing Cont.

Deer

- **May NRC:** Regulations approved
- **Late May:** HTML version
- **Late June:** PDF version
- **Early July:** Print version expected in stores
- **July 15 - Aug 15:** Antlerless deer hunting access permit application period

Small Game

- **May NRC:** Regulations approved
 - **Mid July:** HTML version
 - **Early August:** PDF version
 - **Late August:** Print version expected in stores
-



Thank you!

**Parks and Recreation
Division
Wildlife Conservation
Order Amendment**



No. 1 of 2025

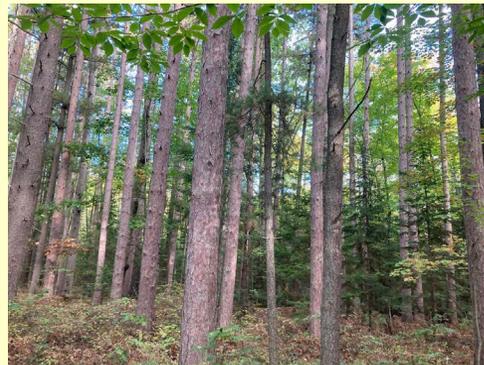
Aquisition

- The DNR acquired 147-acres of property on the southwest shore of Mullet Lake, Cheboygan County in 2013.
- Property acquired from the Little Traverse Conservancy with funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund State Trailways Initiative.



Gete Mino Mshkiigan

- The property name, Gete Mino Mshkiigan, was suggested by the current and former Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of the Little Traverse Bay Band of Ottawa Indians.
 - The name roughly translates as Ancient Good Wetlands.
- In January of 2023, a management plan was approved, which included the recommendation that the property be designated as state park land with associated land use rules and the requirement of the Recreation Passport while keeping the land open to hunting.



WCO #1 of 2025

- Currently managed by the Parks and Recreation Division as part of the North Central State Trail which runs through the property.
- This proposed order would allow for hunting activities to continue upon the property.



Questions?

Thank you!



Bear Population Trend Analysis and 2025-26 Recommendations

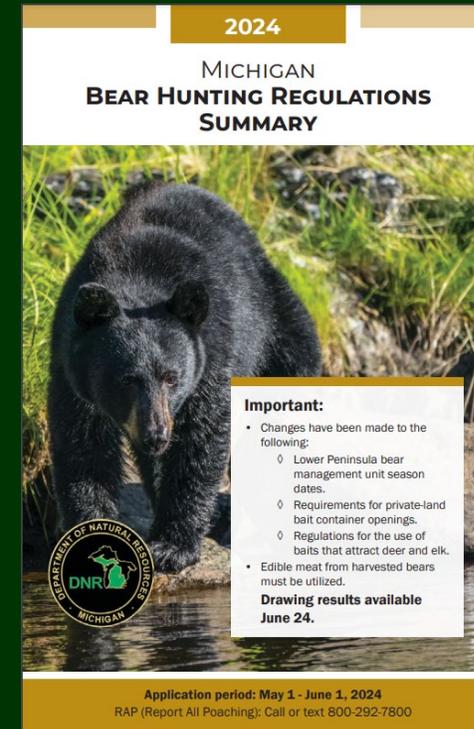


Cody Norton
Wildlife Division
February 13, 2025



Bear Regulations

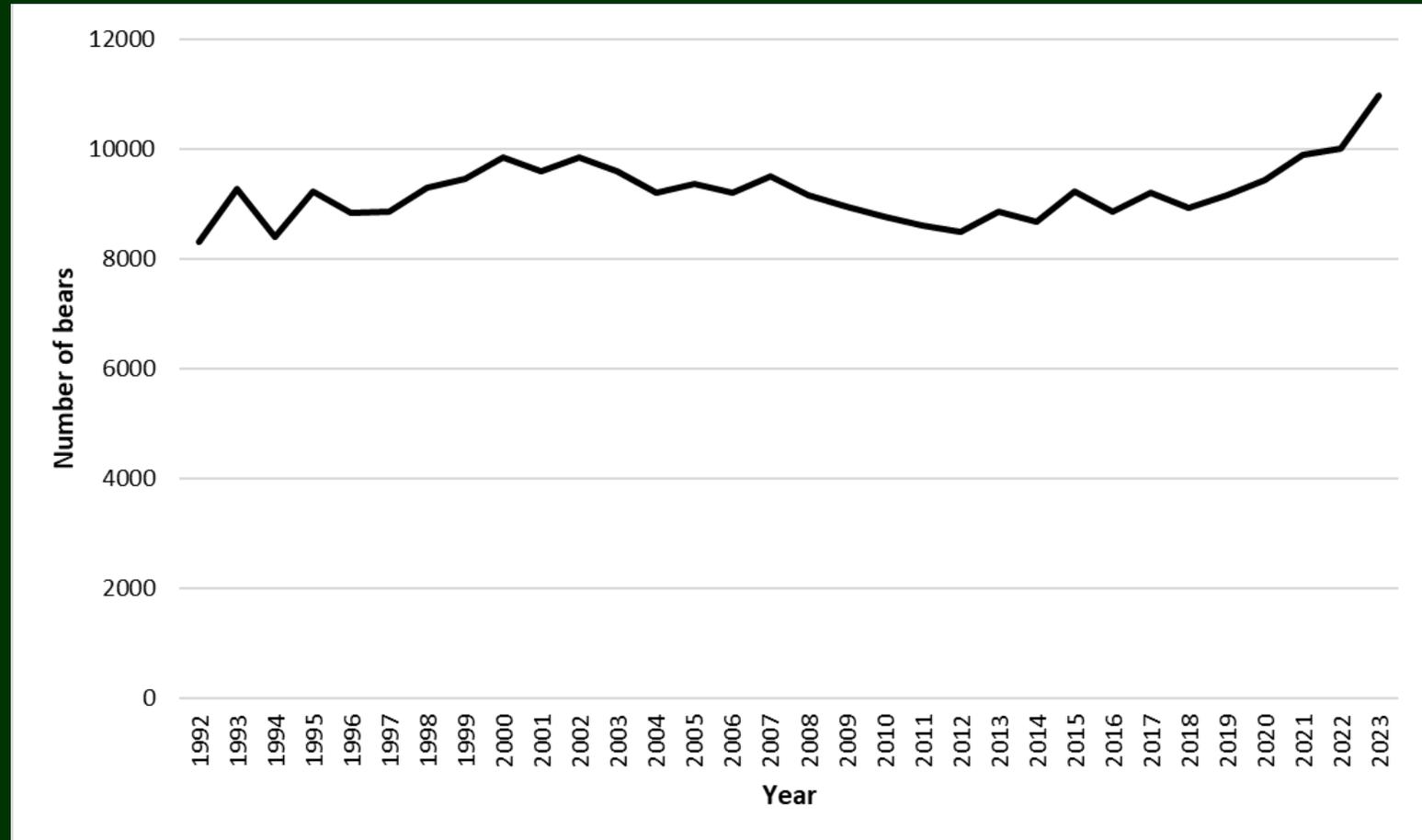
- Two-year cycle
 - 2025-26
- Bear Forum
 - August 2023 & 2024
- NRC & Director
 - For Information: February 2025
 - For Action: March 2025



Bear Management Units



Upper Peninsula

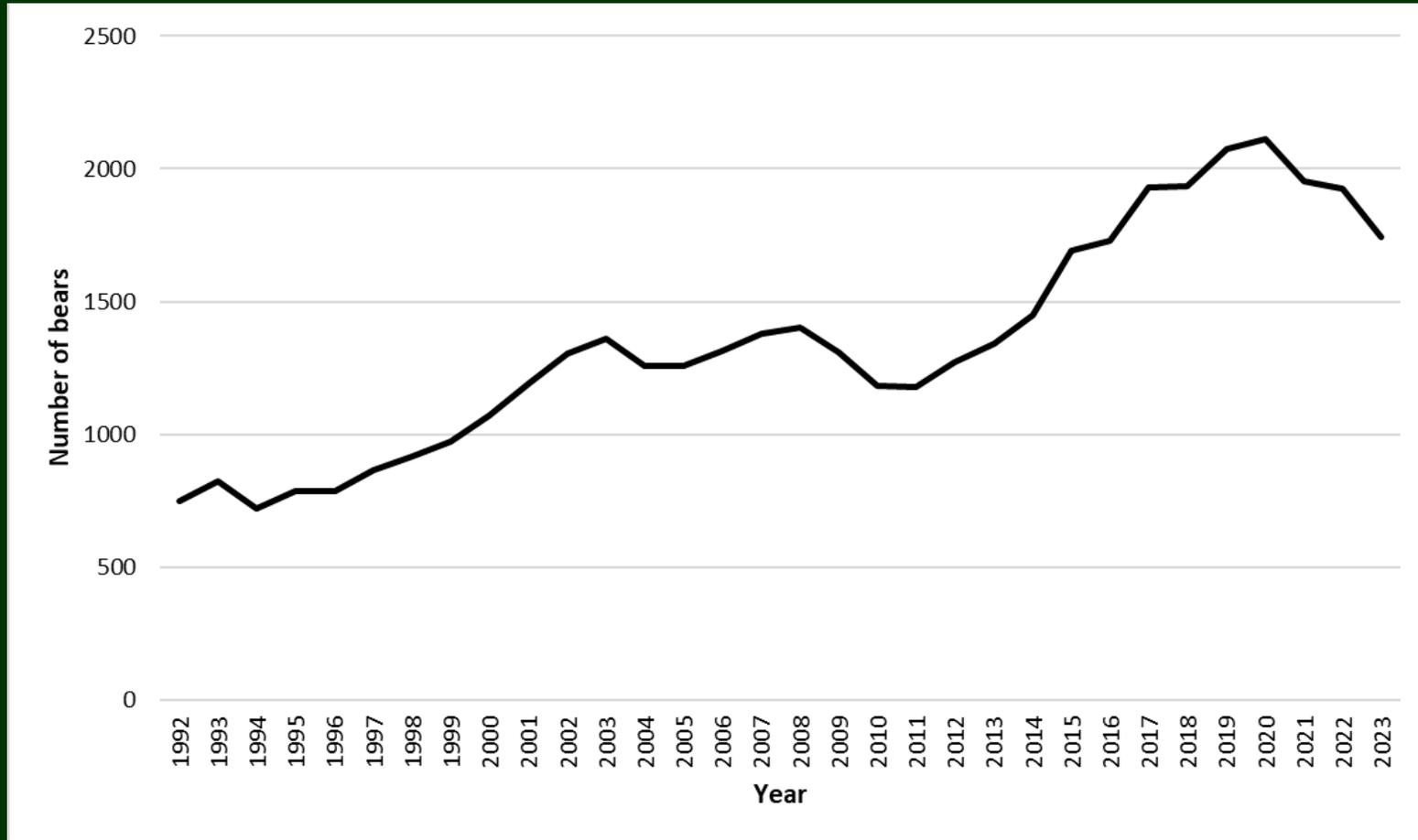


10,969 bears
in 2023. Up
29% since
2012

2025-28 Population Trajectory Goal: Stabilize the bear population.



Northern Lower Peninsula



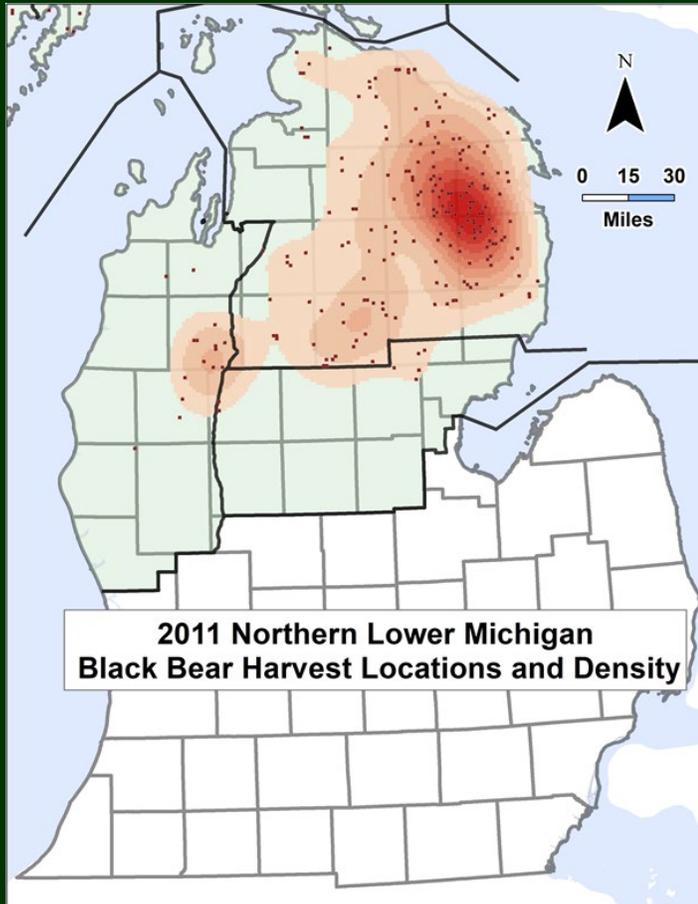
1,742 bears
in 2023. Up
37% since
2012

2025-28 Population Trajectory Goal: Maintain current harvest levels to sustain a stable population.



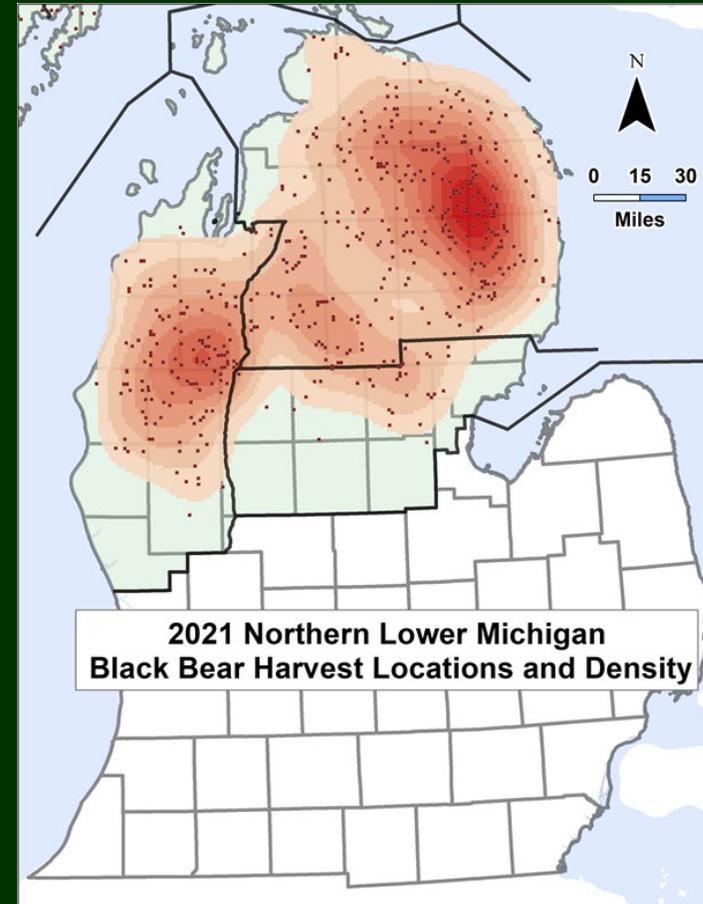
Expanding Distribution

7,800 mi²



74%

13,600 mi²



Other Indices and Information

- Hunter effort
- Hunter success rates
- Hunter opinion
- Square miles/bear harvested
- Nuisance bear complaints
- Habitat and mast



2024 Statewide Harvest

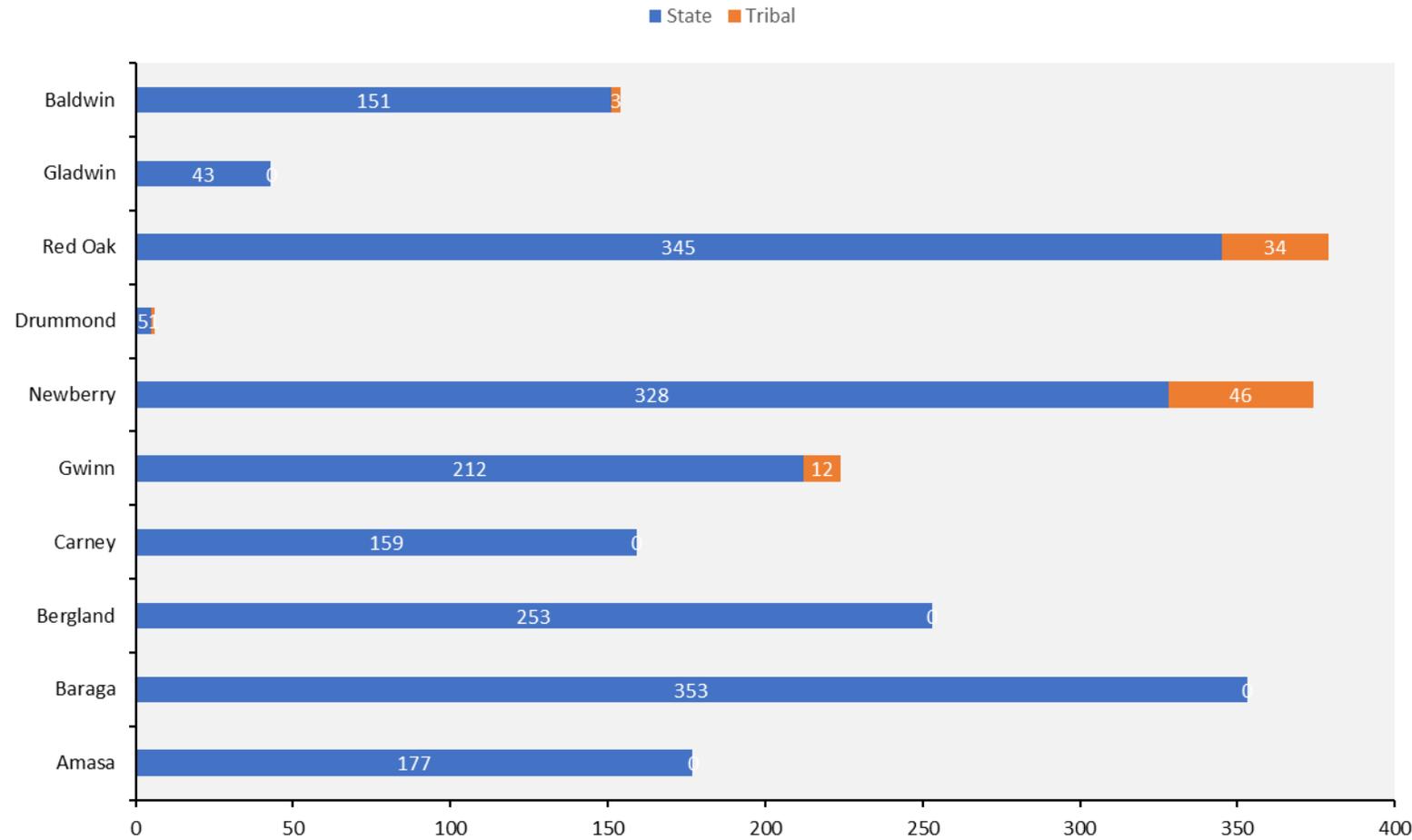
(State licensed hunters)

- 2,026 bears harvested statewide
- 9% above last year (1,855)
- 14% above 10-year average
- Very good success rates in the EUP



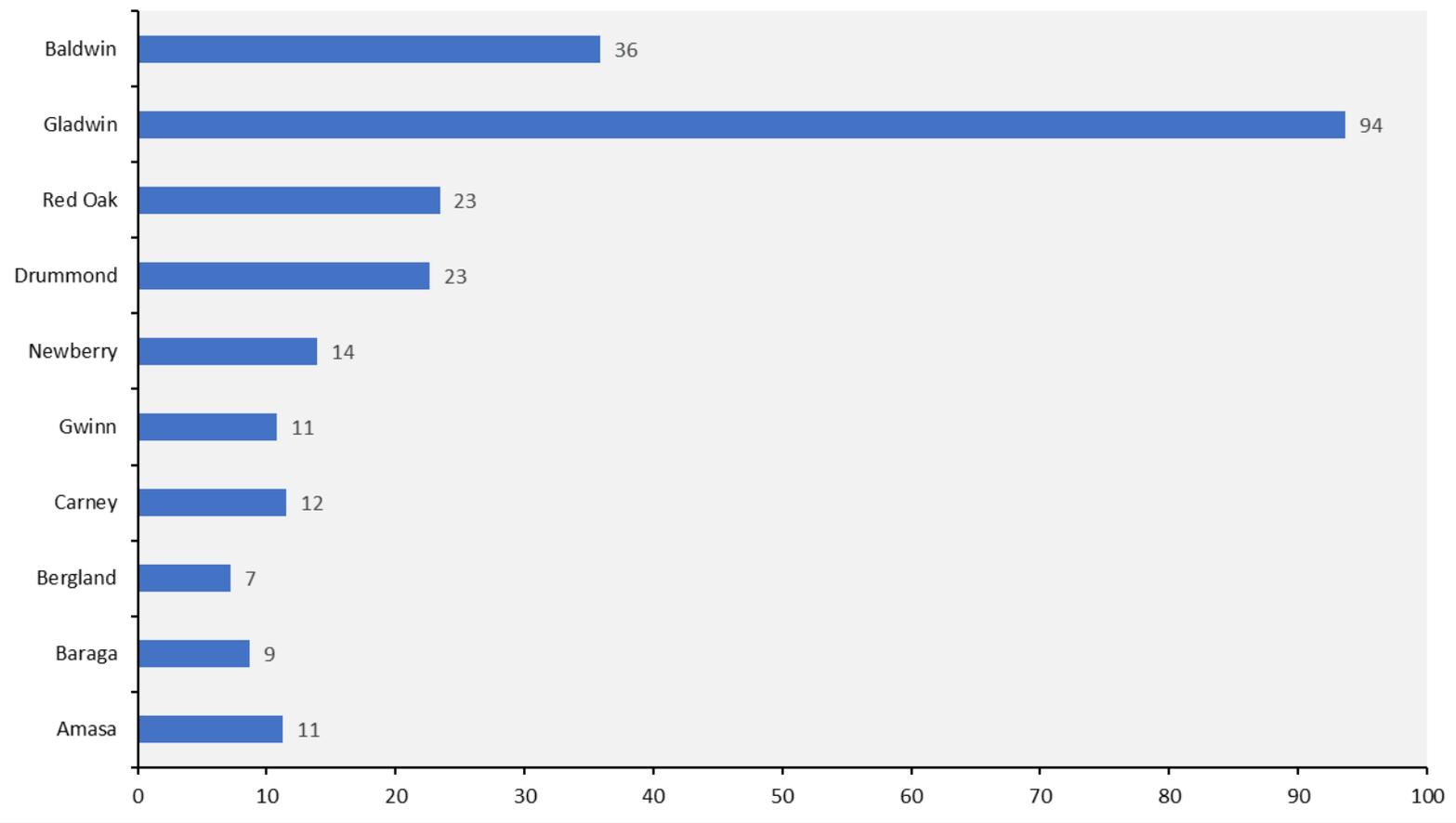


2024 Registered Harvest





2024 Square miles / harvested bear State and Tribal



2023 Bear Hunter Survey

- Most hunters (88%) relied primarily on bait-only
- 10% relied primarily on dogs alone or a combination of baiting (strike) and dogs
- 79% of harvested bears were taken over bait
- Bait-only hunters had a 33% success rate, dog hunters had a 68% success rate



2023 Bear Hunter Survey

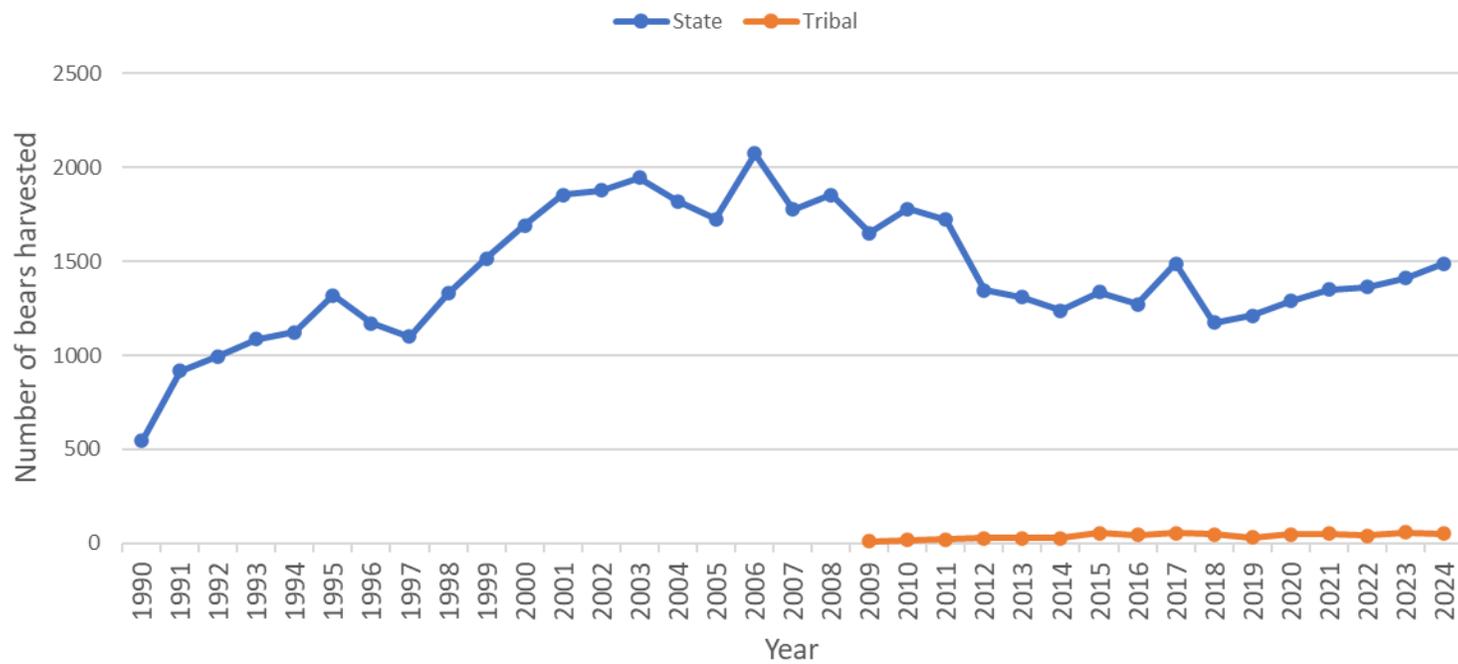
- The success rate of hunters that hired a guide was 54%
- Approximately 638 hunters (13%) hired a guide
- 5,457 people bought a bear license, which is a decrease of 32% since 2012 (7,994)
- 60,107 people applied, increase of 18% since 2012 (51,152)





UP Bear Harvest

State long-term average: 1,433



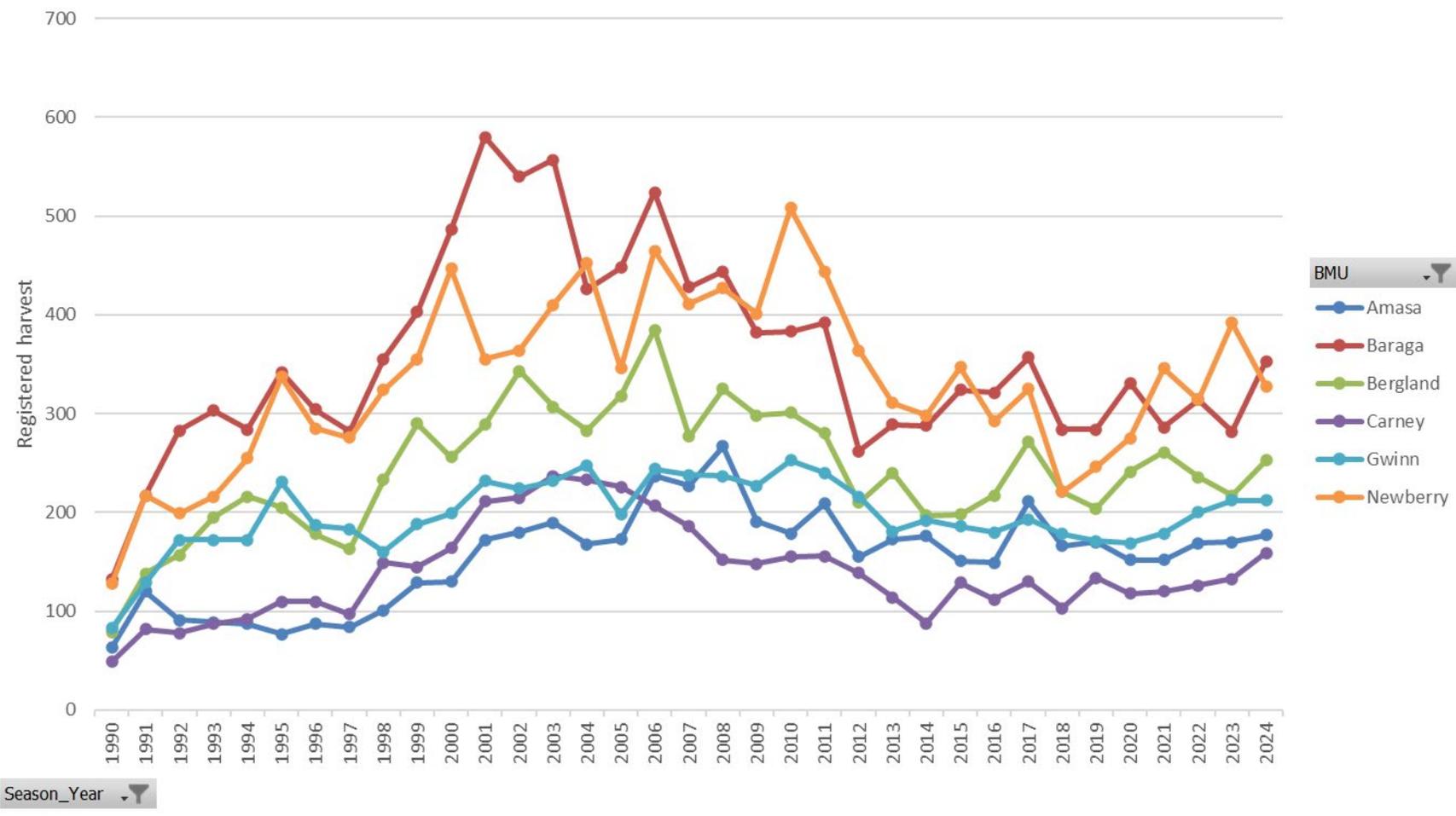
1,487

50





NLP: Number of bears registered by BMU
(State-licensed hunters)



N

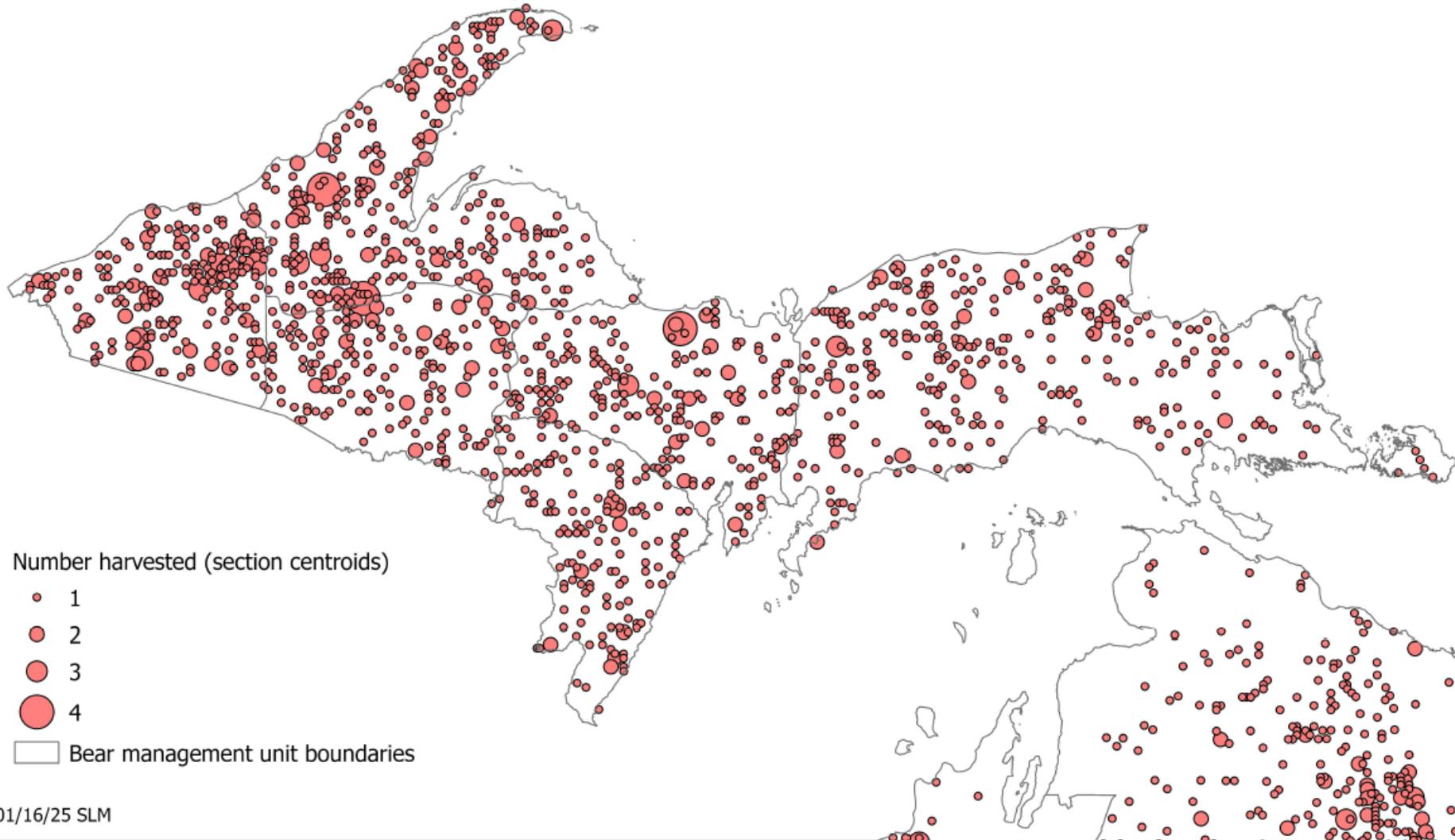


0 10 20 40 Miles



2024 Bear Harvest Locations - UP

Note: This map shows only registered bears taken by hunting with a state-issued license. Statewide, 33 bears had missing or incomplete location information and are not displayed.



Number harvested (section centroids)

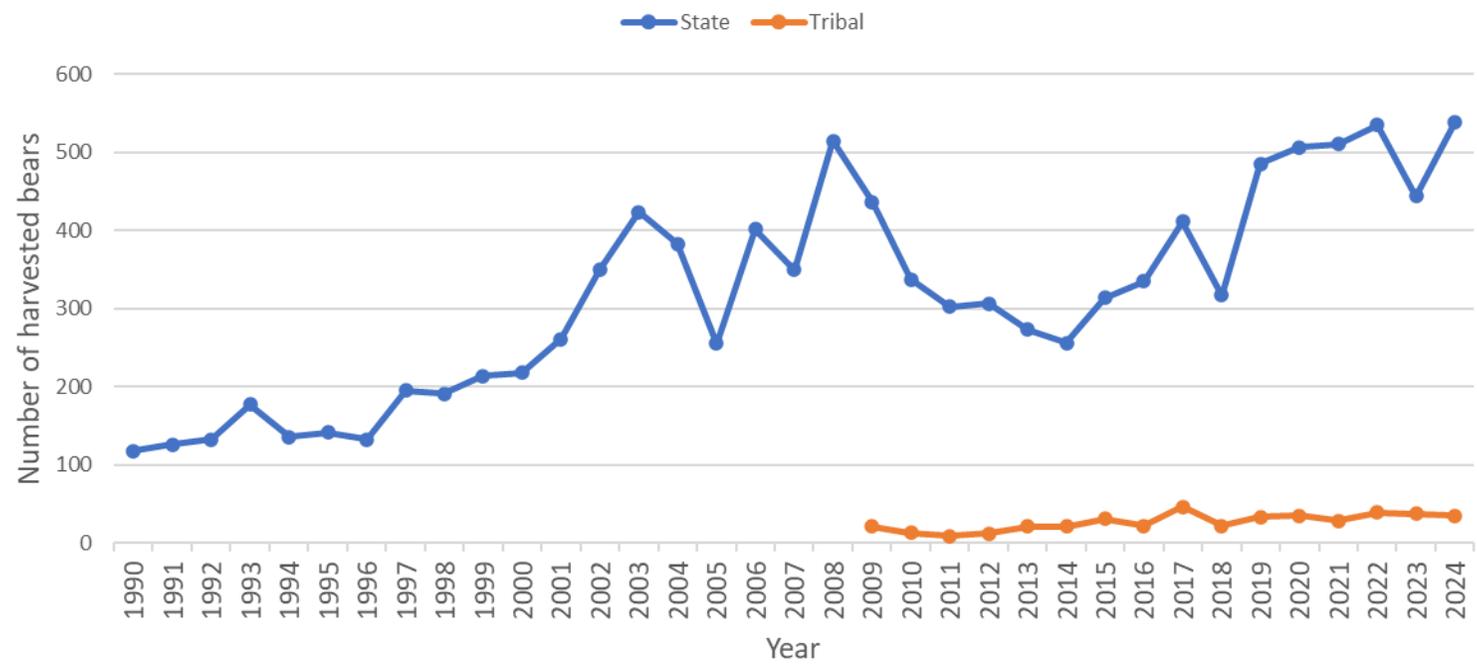
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

□ Bear management unit boundaries





NLP Bear Harvest State long-term average: 315



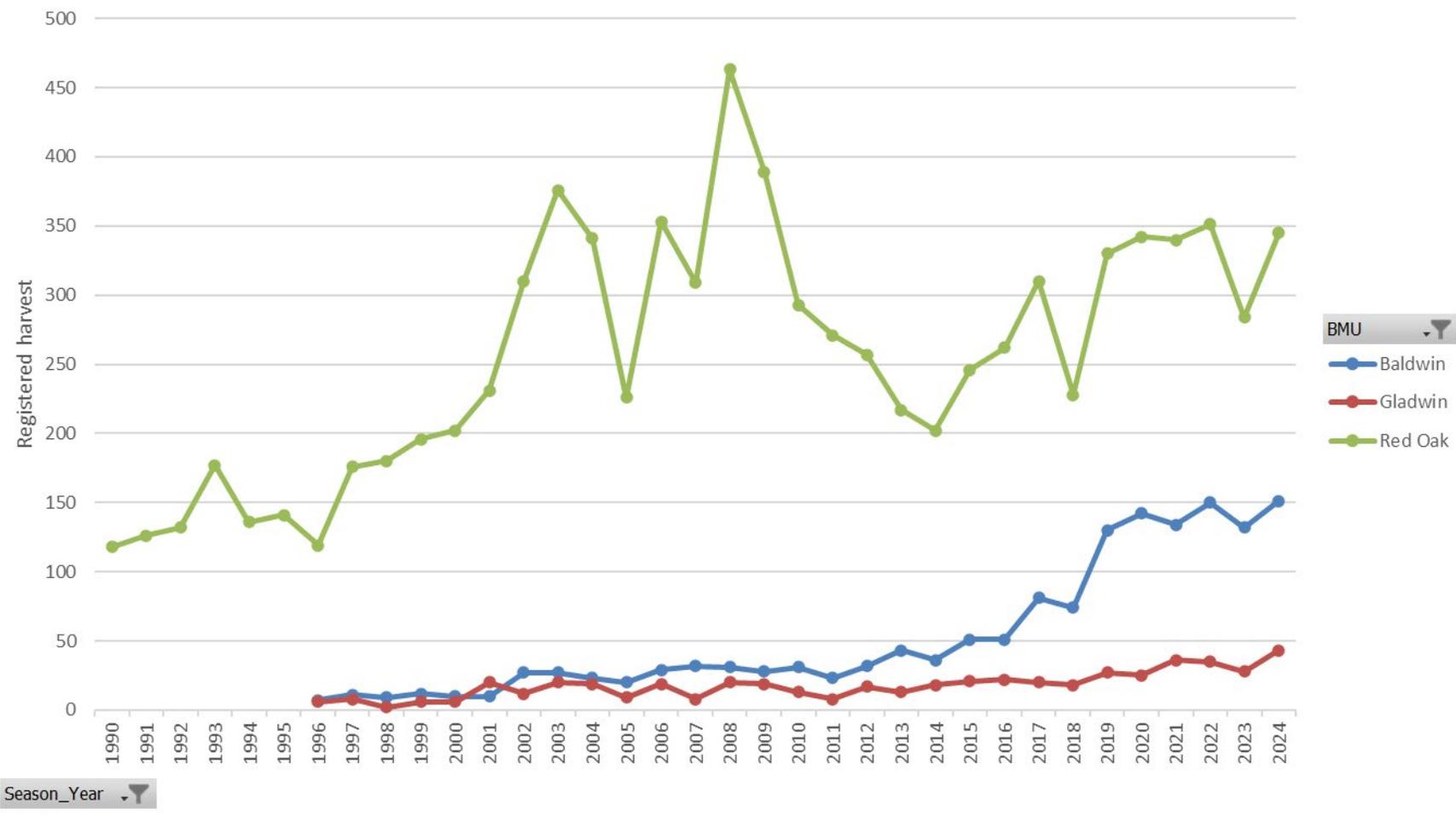
539

35



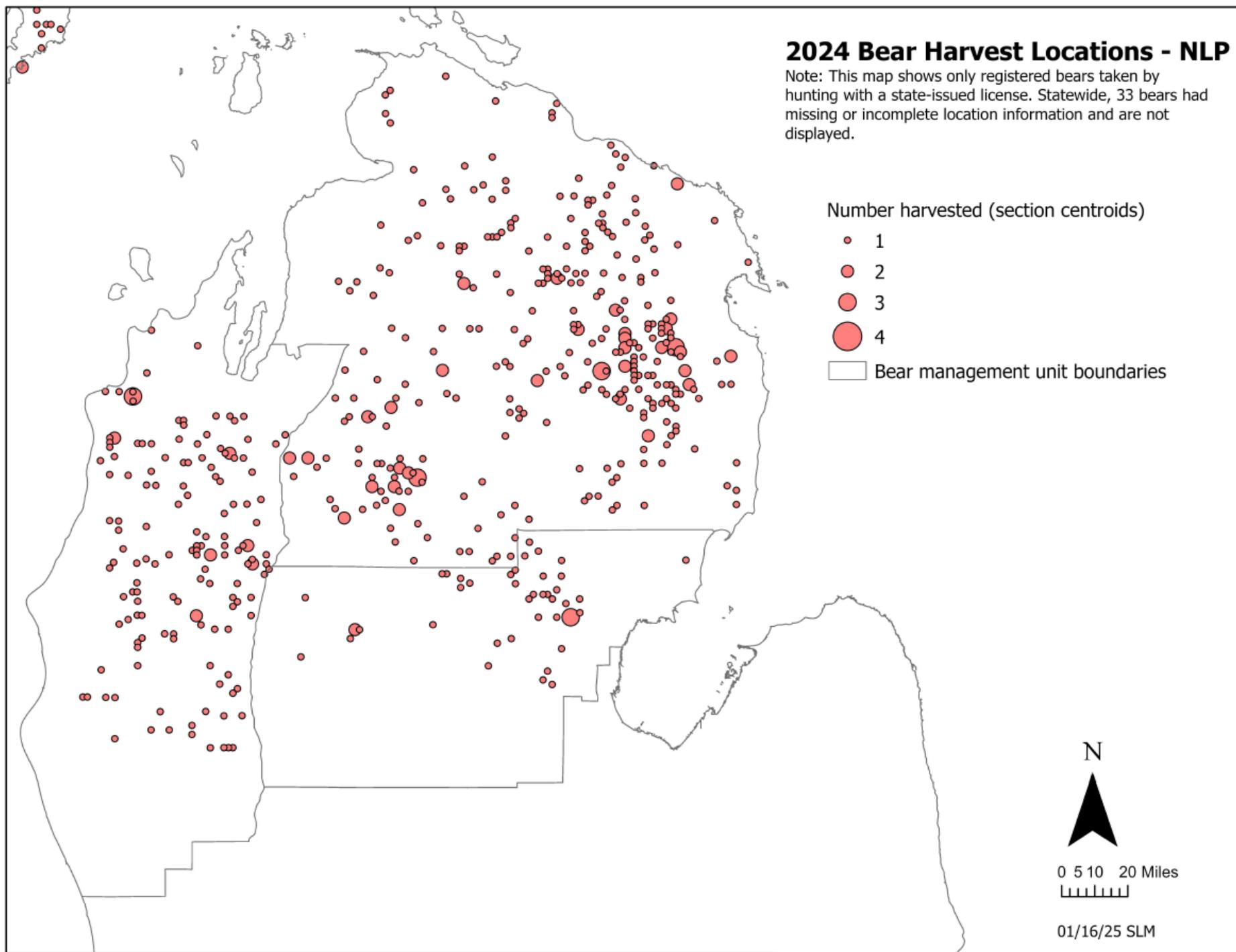


NLP: Number of bears registered by BMU
(State-licensed hunters)

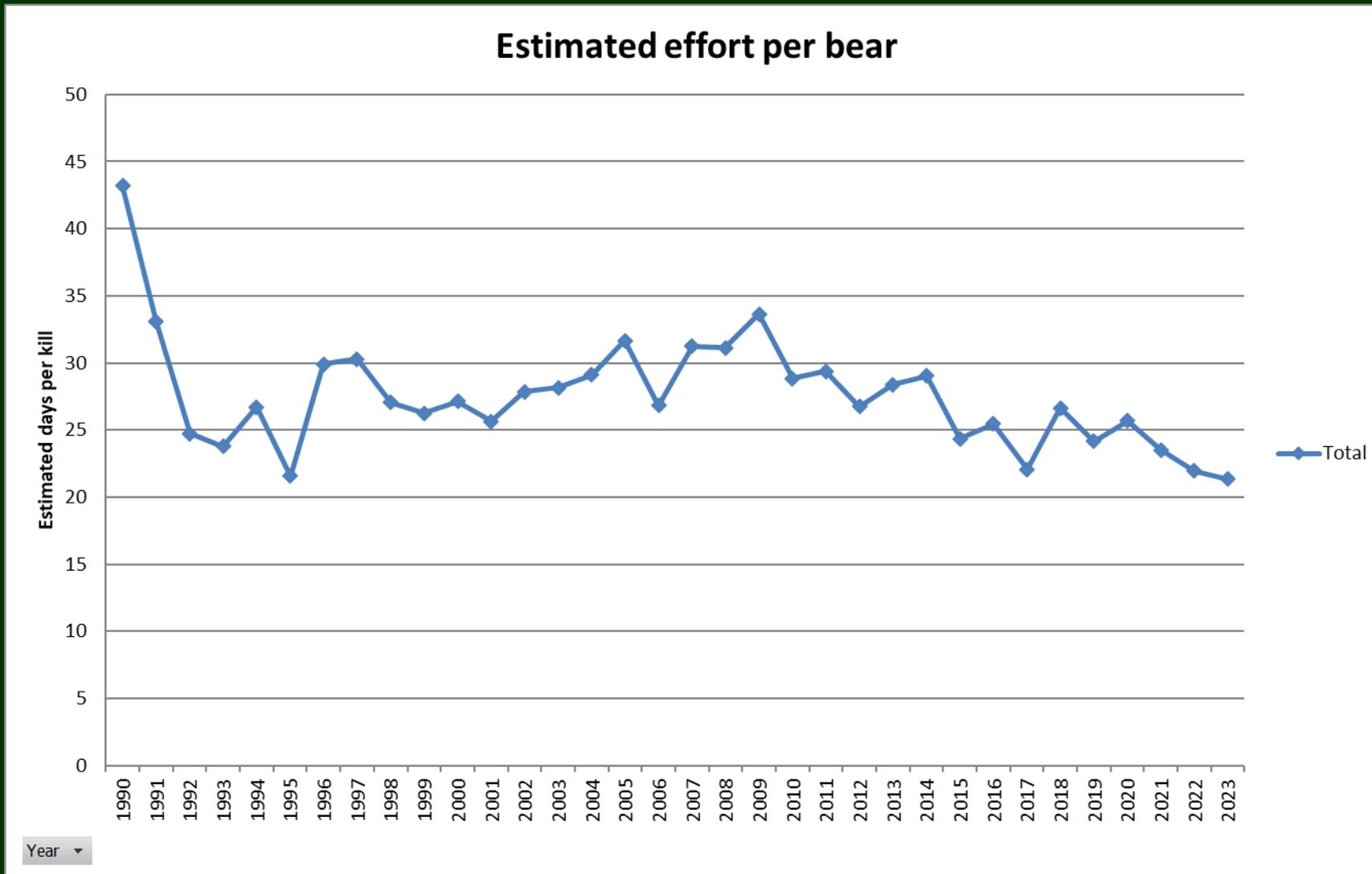


2024 Bear Harvest Locations - NLP

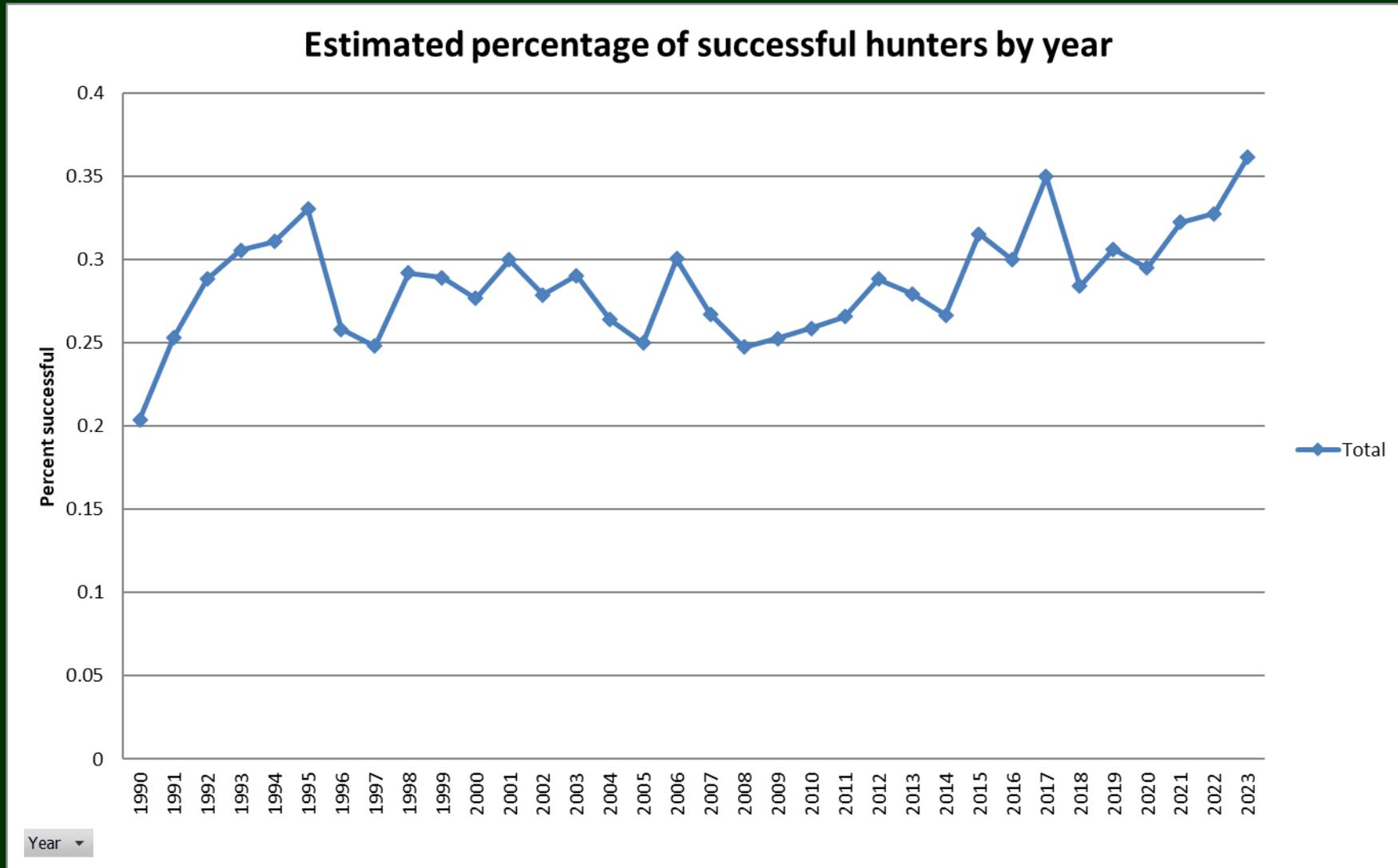
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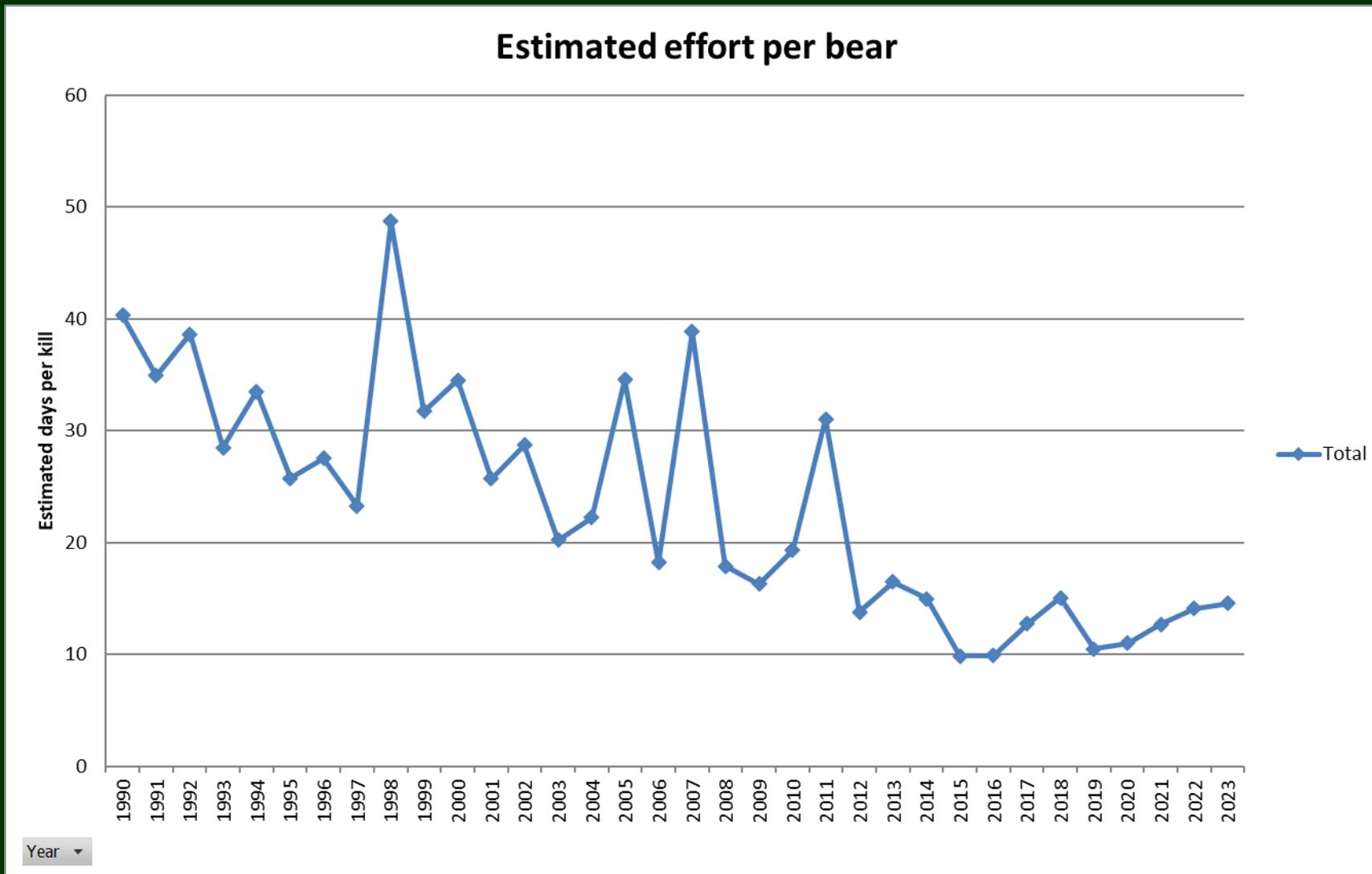
Upper Peninsula



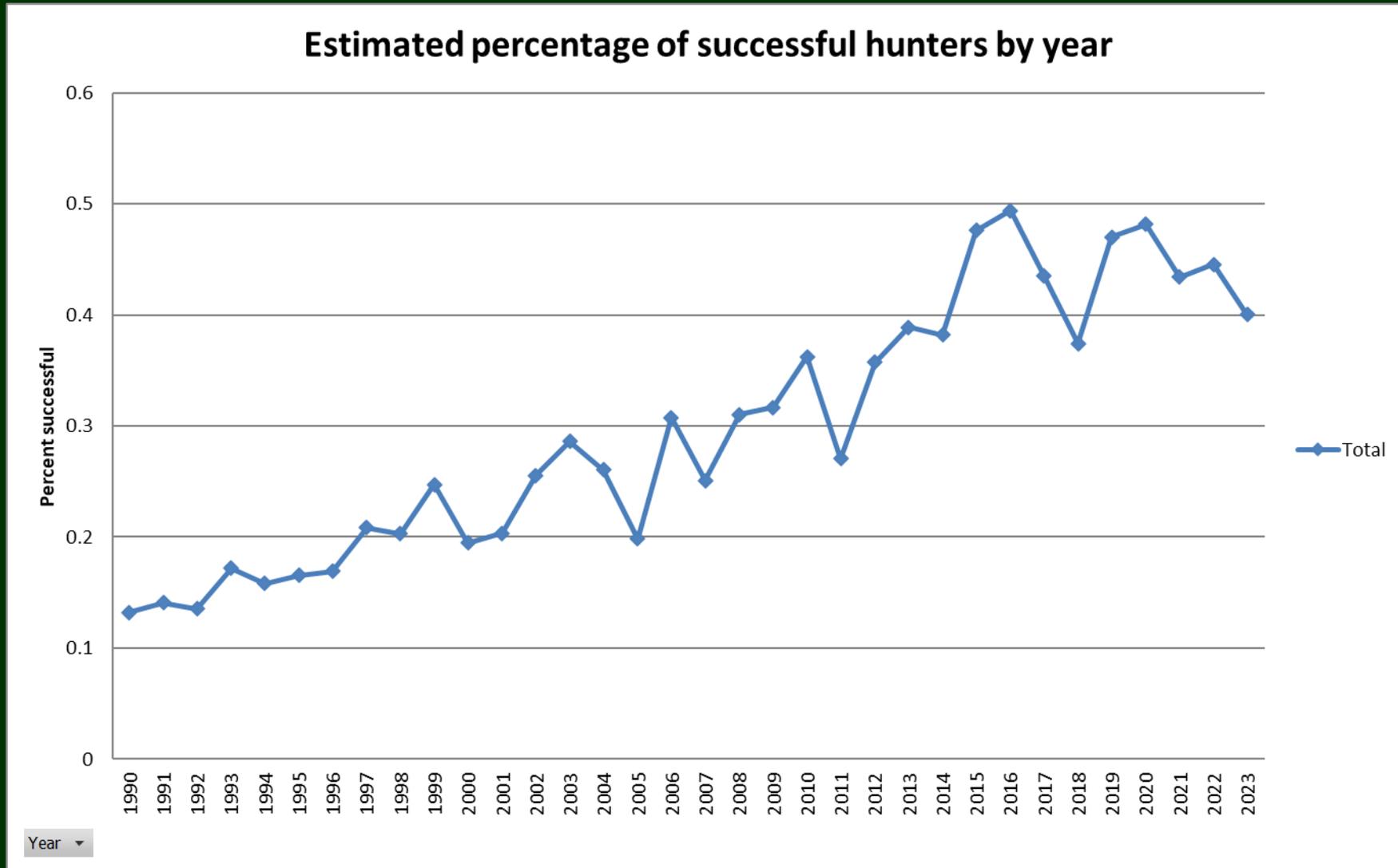
Upper Peninsula



Northern Lower Peninsula

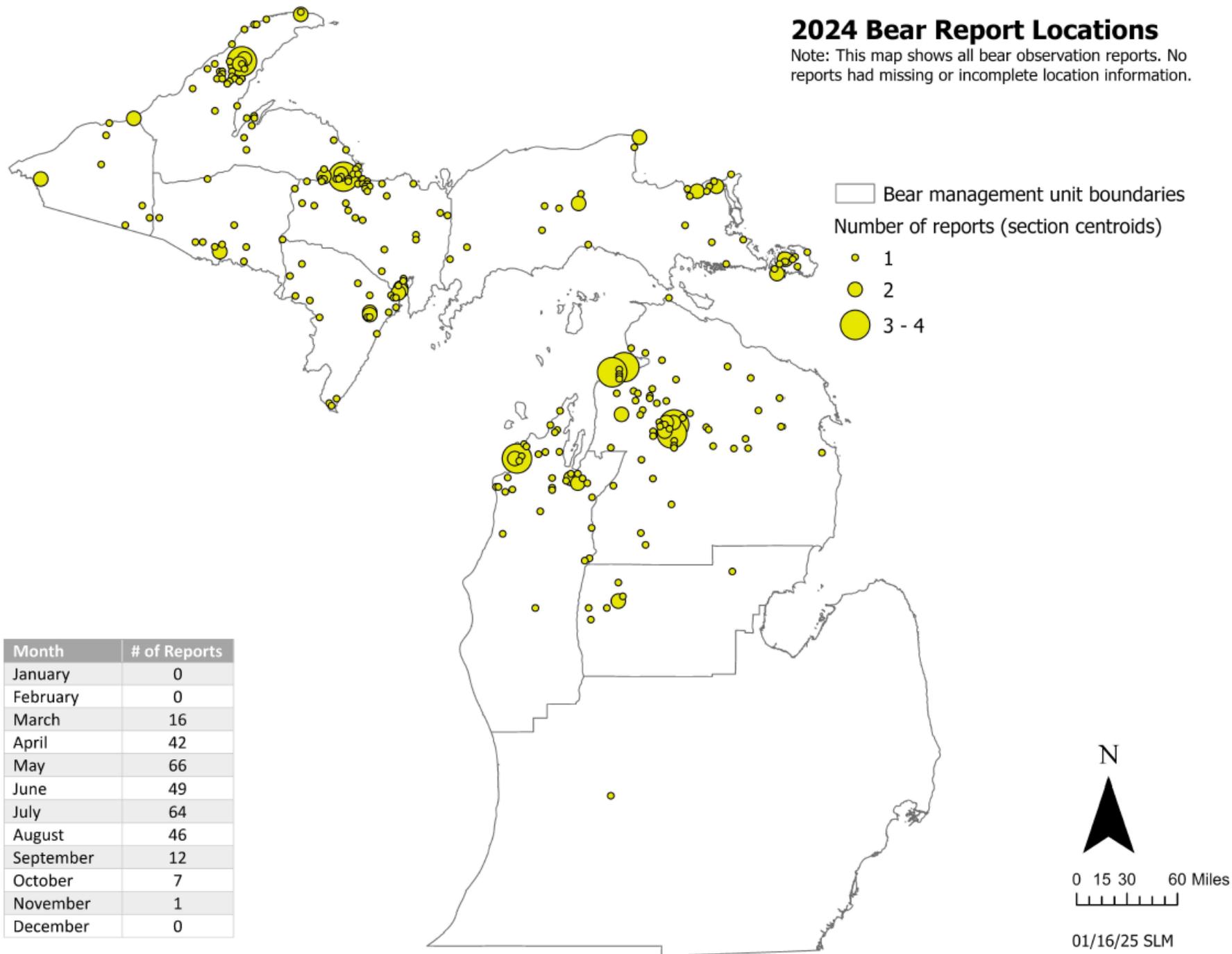


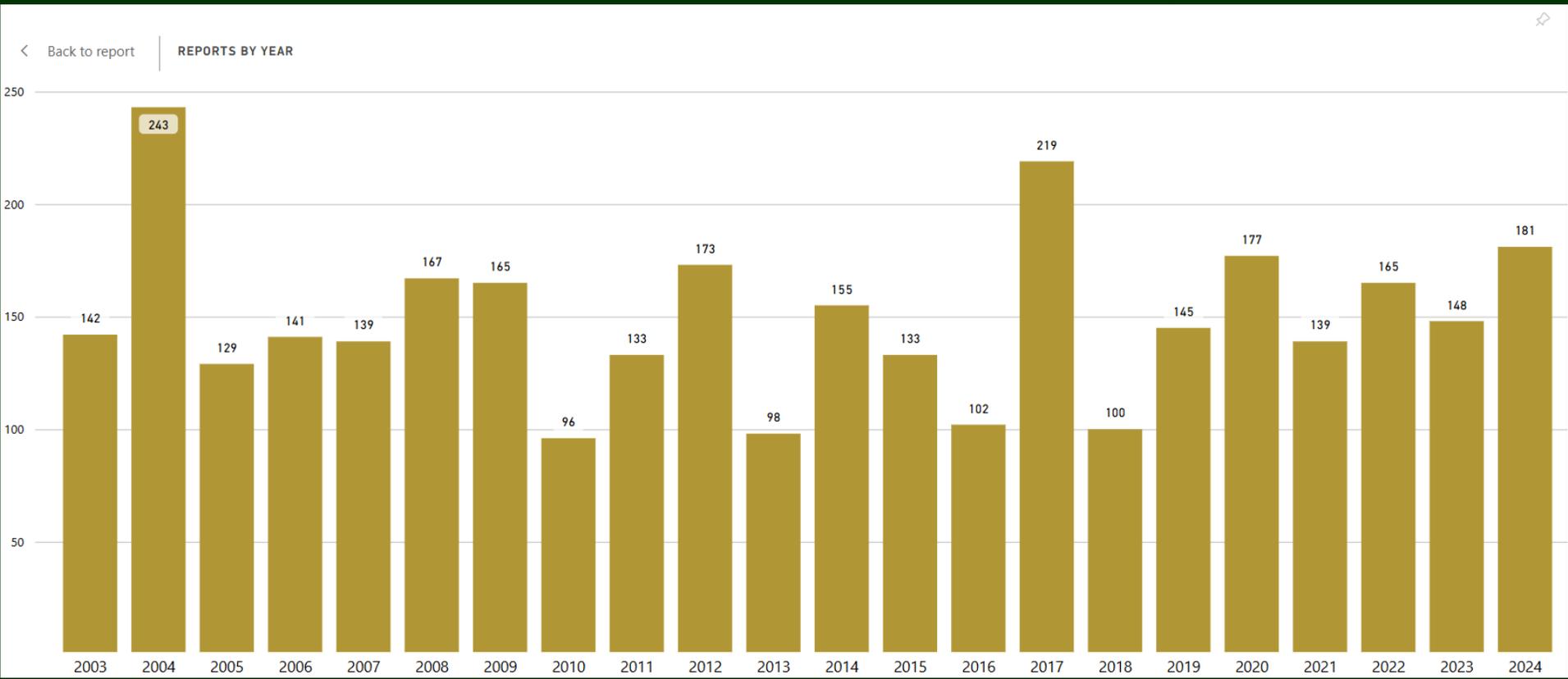
Northern Lower Peninsula

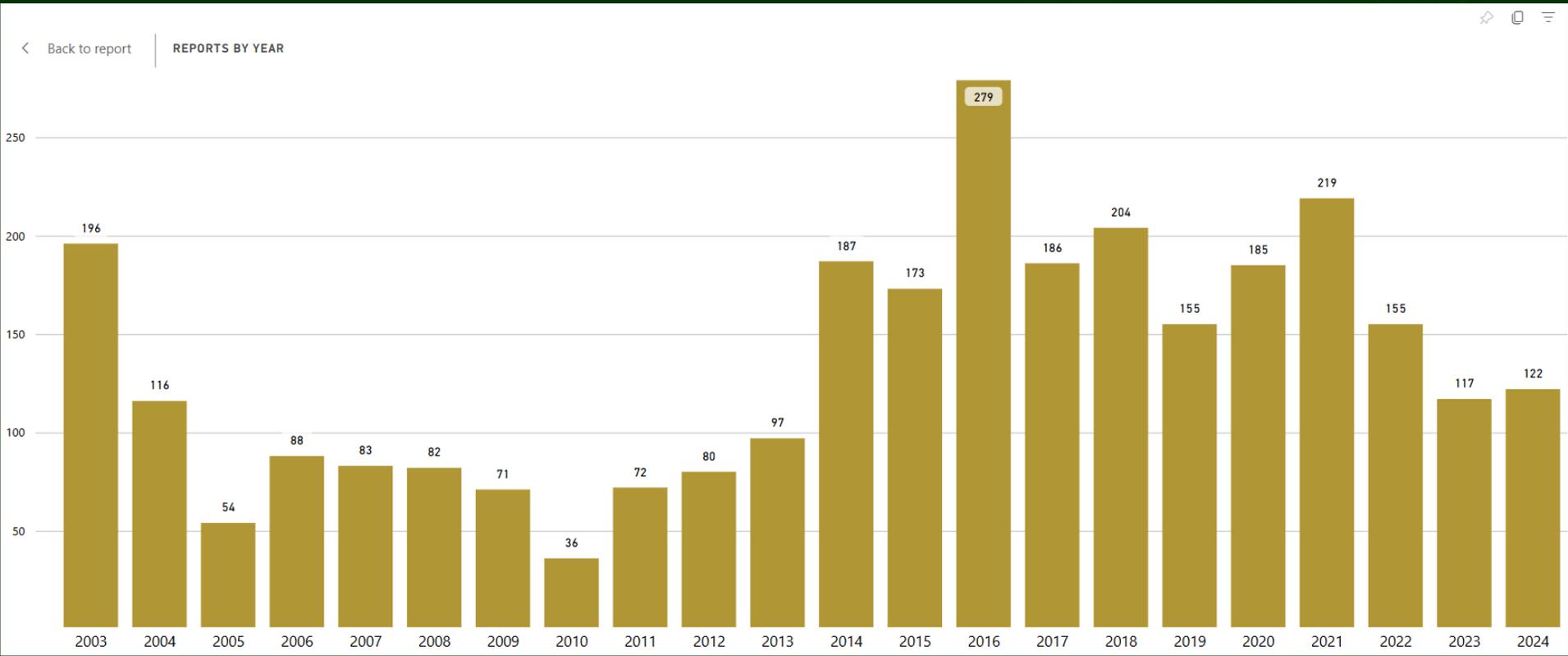


2024 Bear Report Locations

Note: This map shows all bear observation reports. No reports had missing or incomplete location information.







2025-26

Proposed License Quotas



Upper Peninsula

- Desired harvest: 1,244 bears
 - Tribal allocation: 60 bears
- License quota: 5,103 licenses

BMU	Desired harvest	Percent change	License quota	Percent change
Amasa	165	0%	510	2%
Baraga	300	0%	1570	2%
Bergland	200	0%	835	-9%
Carney	128	10%	565	3%
Drummond Island	7	40%	8	31%
Gwinn	158	5%	735	-17%
Newberry	286	10%	880	-12%
Total	1244	4%	5103	-6%



Northern Lower Peninsula

- Desired harvest: 528 bears
 - Tribal allocation: 74 bears
- License quota: 1,420 licenses

BMU	Desired harvest	Percent change	License quota	Percent change
Baldwin	185	0%	560	42%
Gladwin	26	0%	95	-5%
Red Oak	317	0%	765	12%
Total	528	0%	1420	4%

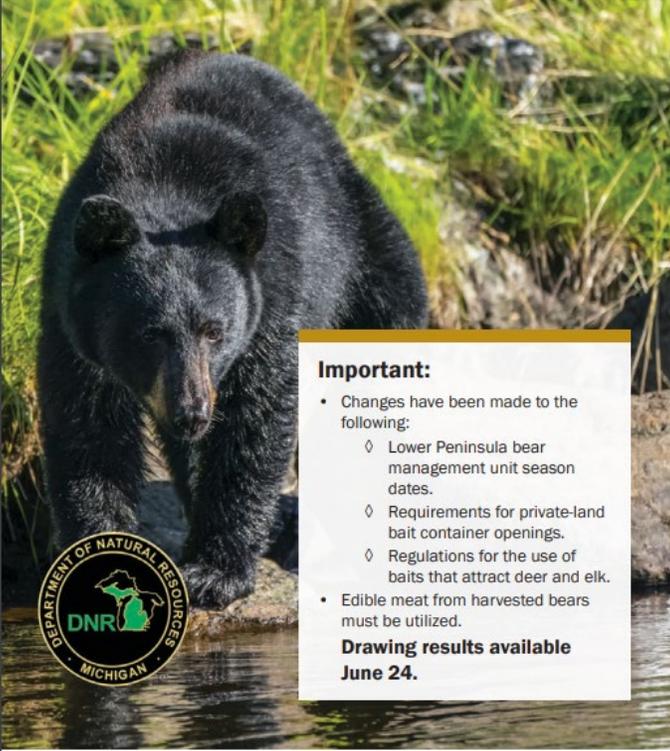




2025-26 Proposed Regulation Changes

2024

MICHIGAN
BEAR HUNTING REGULATIONS
SUMMARY



Important:

- Changes have been made to the following:
 - ◊ Lower Peninsula bear management unit season dates.
 - ◊ Requirements for private-land bait container openings.
 - ◊ Regulations for the use of baits that attract deer and elk.
- Edible meat from harvested bears must be utilized.

**Drawing results available
June 24.**

Application period: May 1 - June 1, 2024
RAP (Report All Poaching): Call or text 800-292-7800



Tree Stands on Public Lands

- Currently, tree stands allowed September 1 to March 1.
- Proposal: allow tree stands for bear hunting on public lands from 31 days prior to season to 5 days after season.
 - Baiting and ground blinds start in early August
 - Elk hunters have similar exception
- Department supports this proposal



Bear Registration Language

- Currently, require entire bear or head to be presented, and biological samples not required.
- Proposal: require the entire bear or undivided head and hide to be presented, and biological samples as required.
 - Need undivided head and hide to determine legality of harvest
 - Teeth needed to determine age
- Department supports this proposal



Bear Kill Tag Attachment

- Currently, kill tag must be attached to the lower jaw.
- Proposal: allow kill tag to be attached from the upper jaw to the eye socket or through the lower jaw.
 - Consistent with furbearer regulations
 - More flexibility for hunters
- Department supports this proposal



Second Hunt Period for NLP

- Currently, single Hunt Period in NLP that includes archery-only dates.
- Proposal: convert archery-only dates in NLP to 2nd Hunt Period and allocate 5-10% of desired harvest.
 - Reduce success rate in order to increase opportunity for hunters
 - Conservative estimate of 5-10% more licenses
- Department does not support this proposal



UP Season Dates

- Currently, 1st Hunt Period starts Wednesday before 2nd Saturday in September in UP.
- Proposal: Shift start of 1st Hunt Period to September 1st in the UP.
 - Will not have desired effect on harvest
 - Overlap between dogs and Liberty Hunt
 - Lose concurrent opener between peninsulas
 - Additional meat and hide spoilage
- Department does not support this proposal



NLP Quiet Period

- Currently, 5-day quiet period in NLP prior to start of hunting season.
- Proposal: Change to a 4-day quiet period in NLP.
 - Labor Day overlaps quiet period
 - Due to change to provide bait hunters additional day of hunting last cycle
- Department supports this proposal



2021-22 Cycle

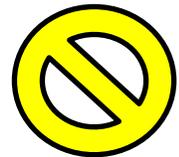
2026 SEPTEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Labor Day	8 	9 	10 	11 	12 
13 	14 	15 	16 	17 	18 	19 
20 	21 	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3



2023-24 Cycle

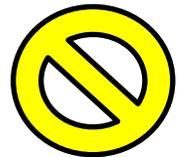
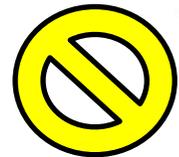
2026 SEPTEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7 	8 	9 	10 	11 	12 
13 	14  	15  	16  	17  	18  	19  
20 	21 	22 	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3



2025-26 Cycle

2026 SEPTEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7 	8 	9 	10 	11 	12 
13 	14  	15  	16  	17  	18  	19 
20 	21 	22 	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3



Dog Training Limit

- Currently, up to 8 dogs can be trained on a bear at any one time.
- Proposal: Increase the number of dogs that can be trained on a bear to 10.
 - Train dogs more efficiently
 - Trespass concerns
 - Wolf conflicts
 - Public perception of hunting with dogs
- Department does not support this proposal



Backup Shooter

- Currently, only a licensed hunter with a valid kill tag can kill a bear
- Proposal: Allow individuals to be a back-up shooter for a treed bear.
 - Safety of dogs
 - Potential for illegal activity
- Requires legislative action



2025-26

Non-Regulatory and Administrative Changes



Second Hunt Choice

- Currently, applicants can choose to select a second hunt choice.
- Change: remove second hunt choice option when applying for bear license.
 - Causes confusion and frustration
 - Few applicants benefit
- Department approves of this change



Marking Tree Stands and Ground Blinds

- Currently, different requirements for marking tree stands and ground blinds on public lands
 - Tree stands: user
 - Ground blinds: person placing the blind
- Change: require person placing the tree stand or ground blind to permanently affix information.
- Department approves of this change



Firearm Age Restrictions

- Currently, there is outdated language in WCO that conflicts with Public Act 399 of 2018 regarding youth hunting.
- Change: remove outdated language to ensure WCO is consistent with statute.
 - Addition of mentored youth and apprentice licenses through legislation changed requirements
- Department approves of this change



Thank You

