



Bear and Cougar Rule Development 19.31.11 NMAC

June 13, 2015
New Mexico State Game Commission Meeting
Taos, NM

Rule Development Timeline

- **April** – Initial NMDGF ideas posted on the website
- **May** – Public meetings in 5 cities
- **July** - Final NMDGF proposal on the website
- **August** – Present final proposal at Aug. 27 Commission Meeting



Public Comment

Meeting and Attendance Record

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u># of people</u>
Las Cruces	May 4	16
Albuquerque	May 5	48
Ruidoso	May 27	39
Silver City	May 28	49
Raton	June 1	18

Public Comment

- 267 comments received via email and mail
- Meetings and mail comments focused on:
 - Use of traps and snares for cougar harvest
 - Increasing bear harvest limits
 - Modifying season structure to keep bear zones open later
 - Spring bear hunts

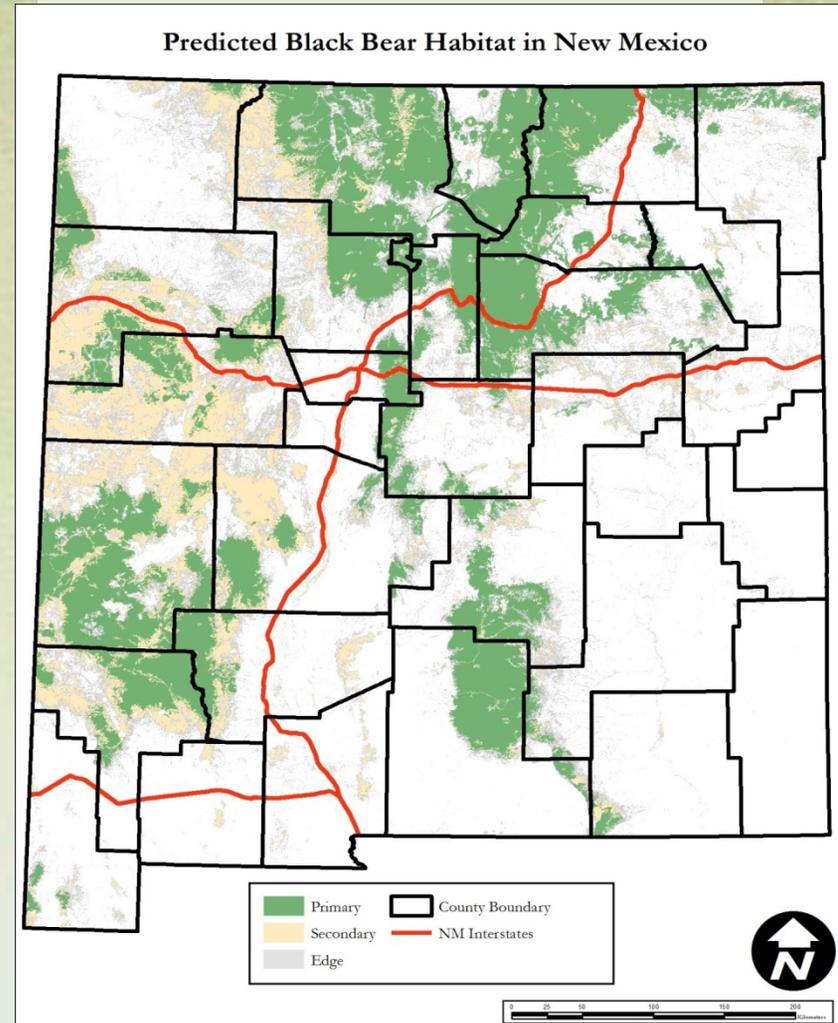
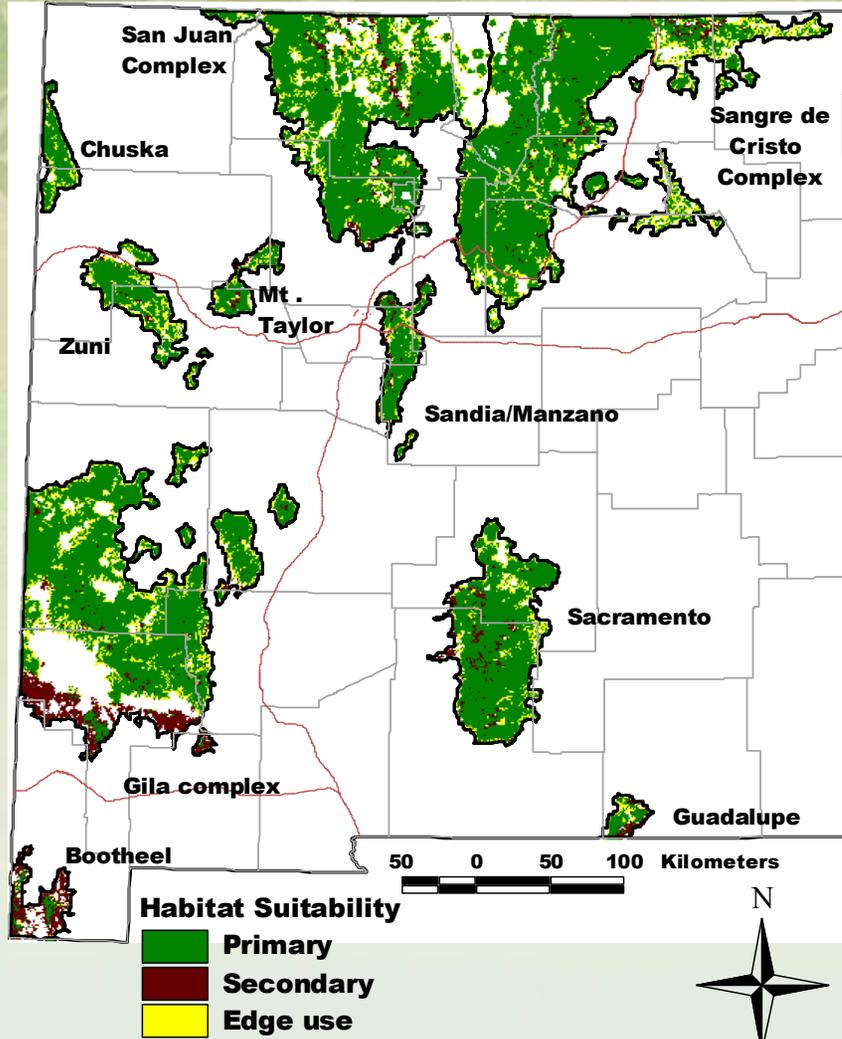
Bear Proposals



Habitat Model

Primary Habitat= 40,732 km²
(13% of NM)

Primary habitat = 54,793 km²
(18% of NM)

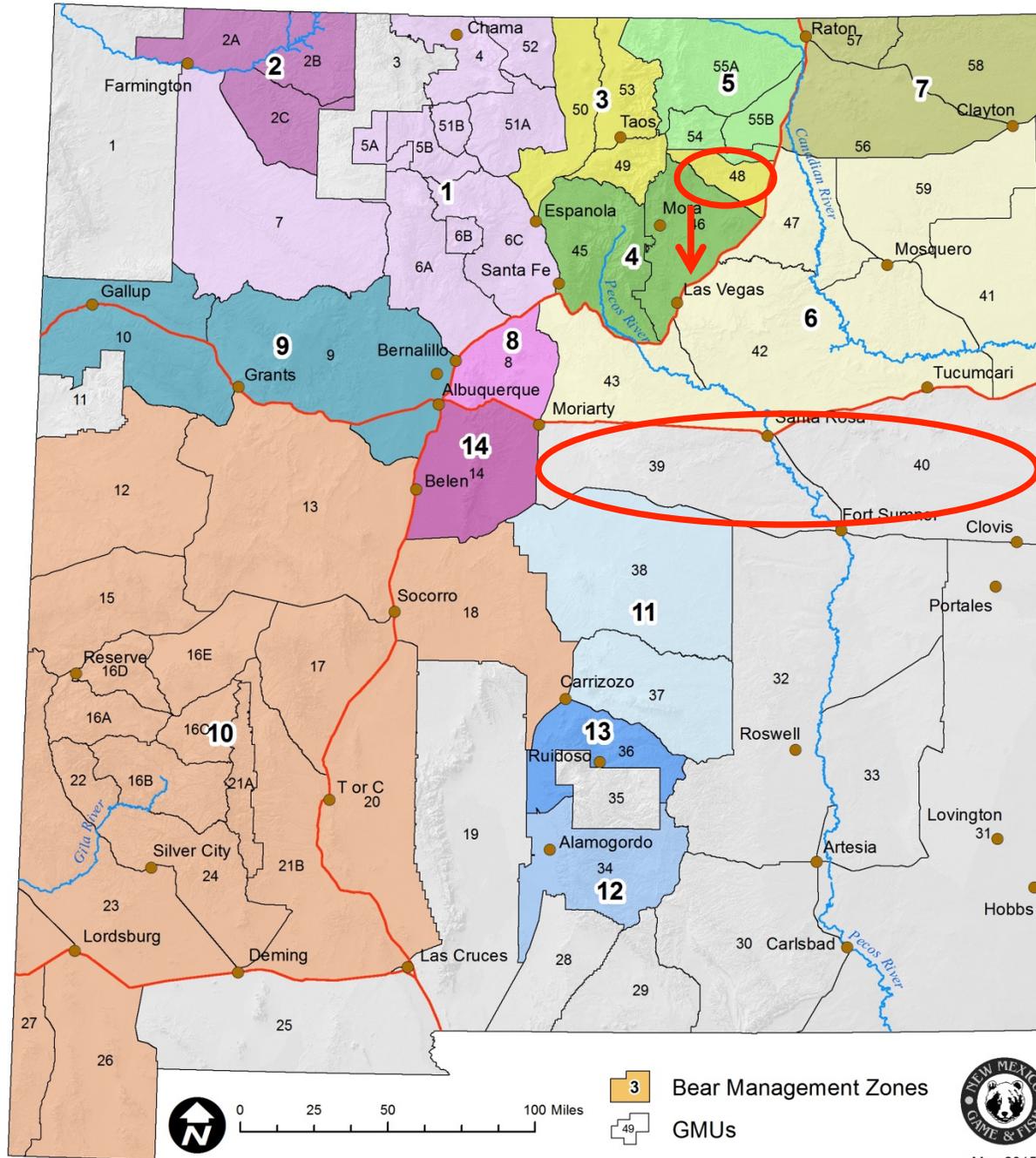


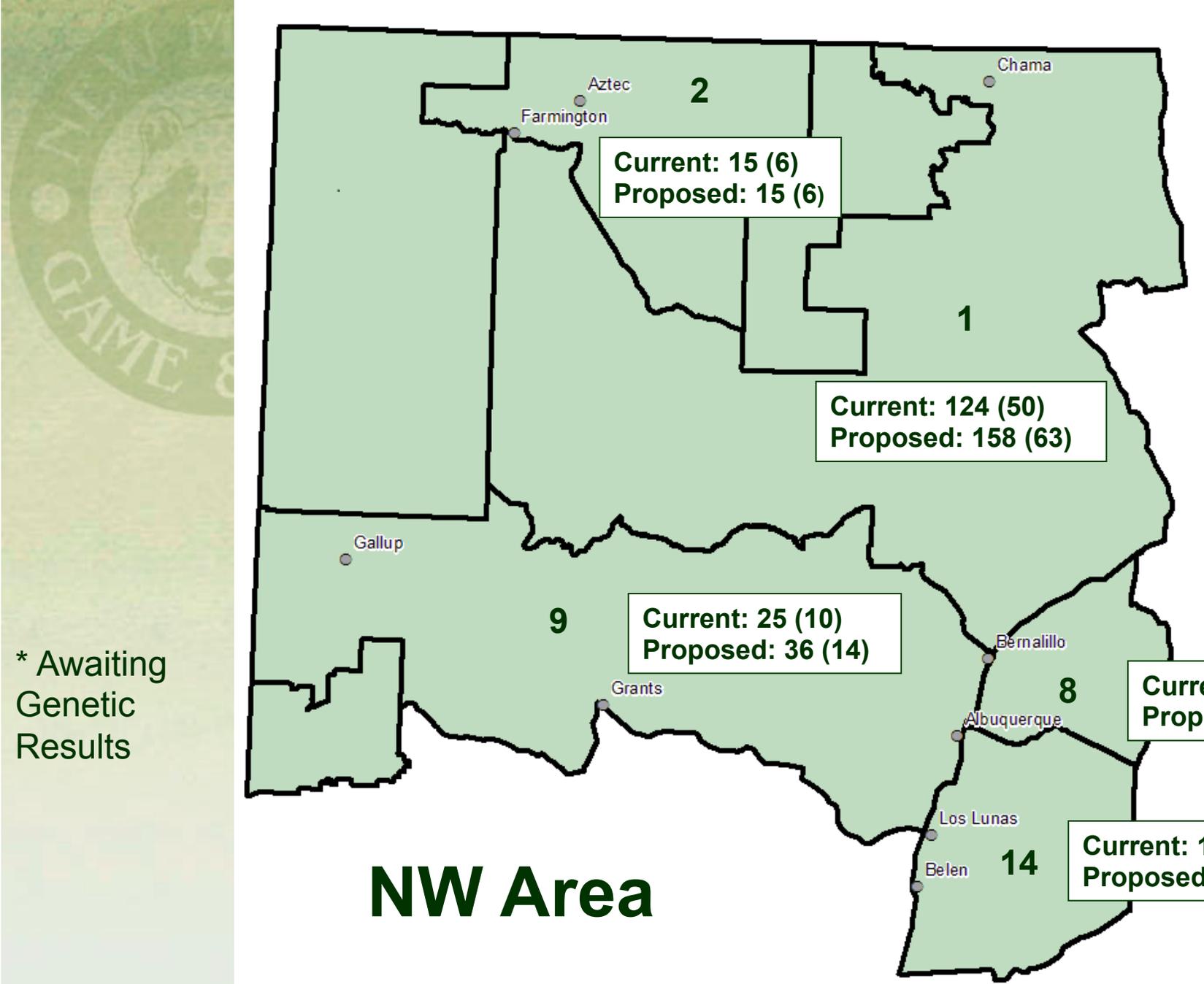
Population Information

New data suggest that bear densities are greater than previously thought:

- Bears expanding into new areas
- Recent research in Arizona and Colorado
- NMSU Coop Unit; Matt Gould, PhD Candidate
 - Population estimates in N and S Sangre de Cristos
 - Sacramentos, Sandias

Bear Management Zones



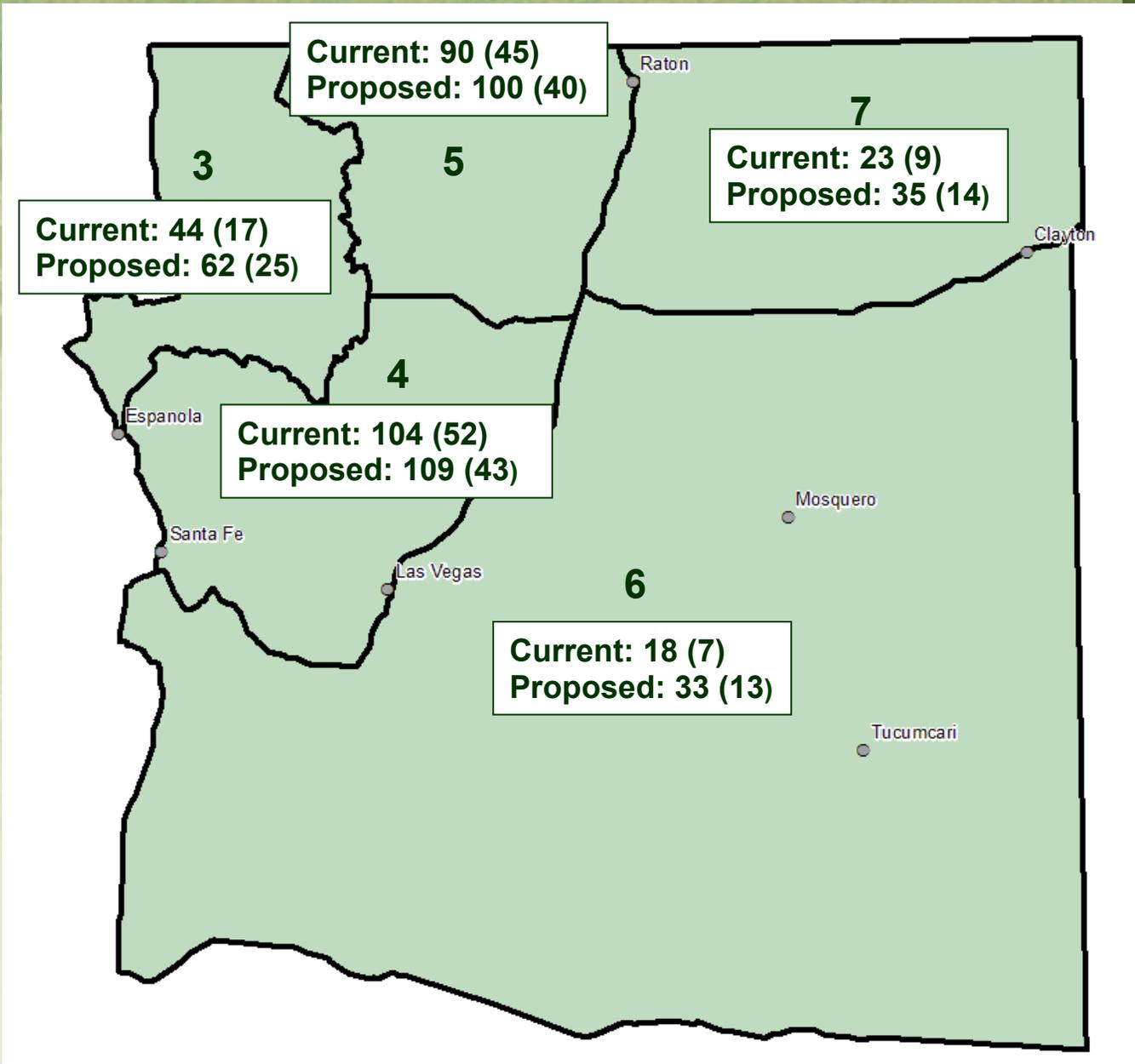


* Awaiting Genetic Results

NW Area

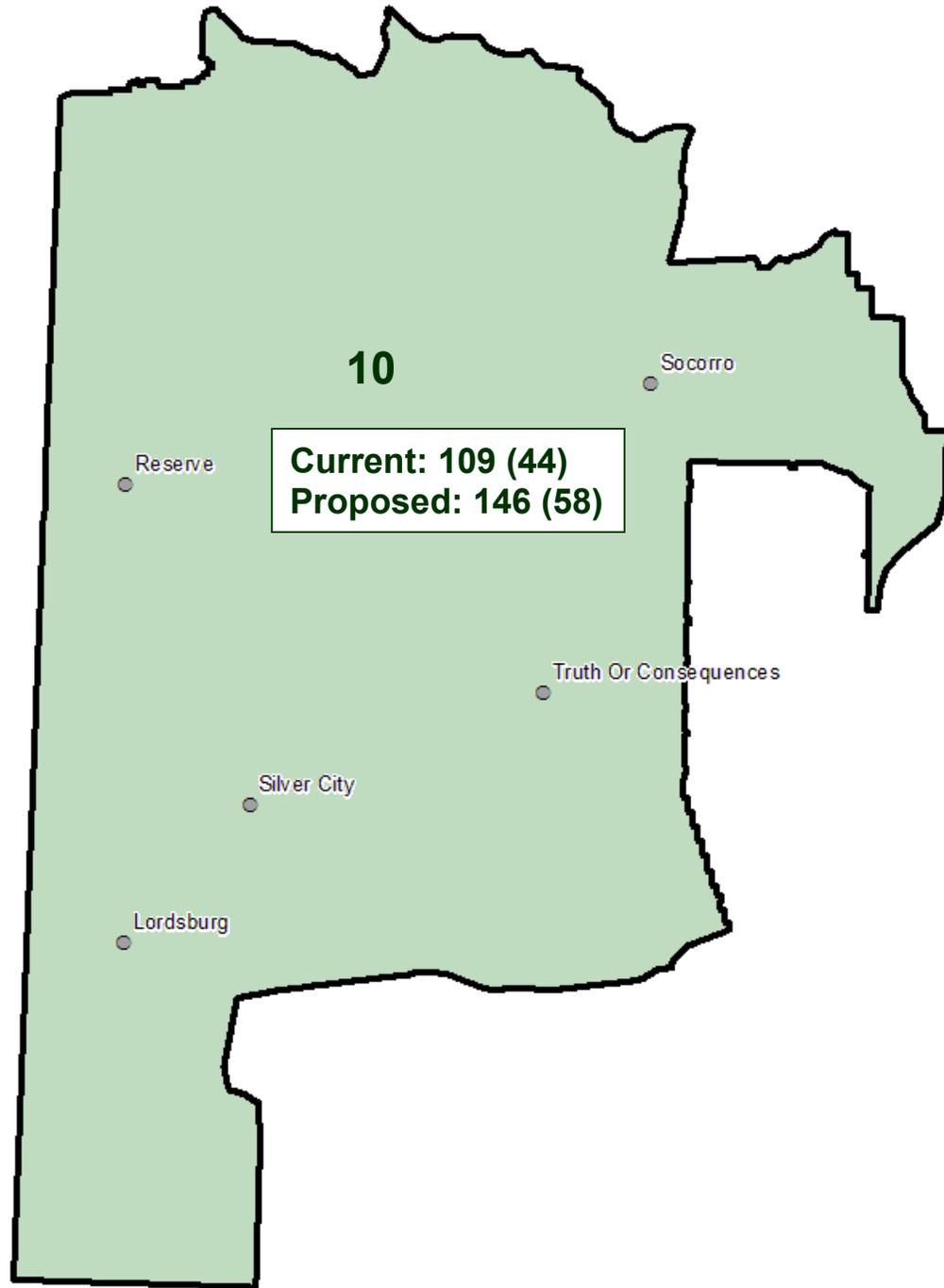


NE Area



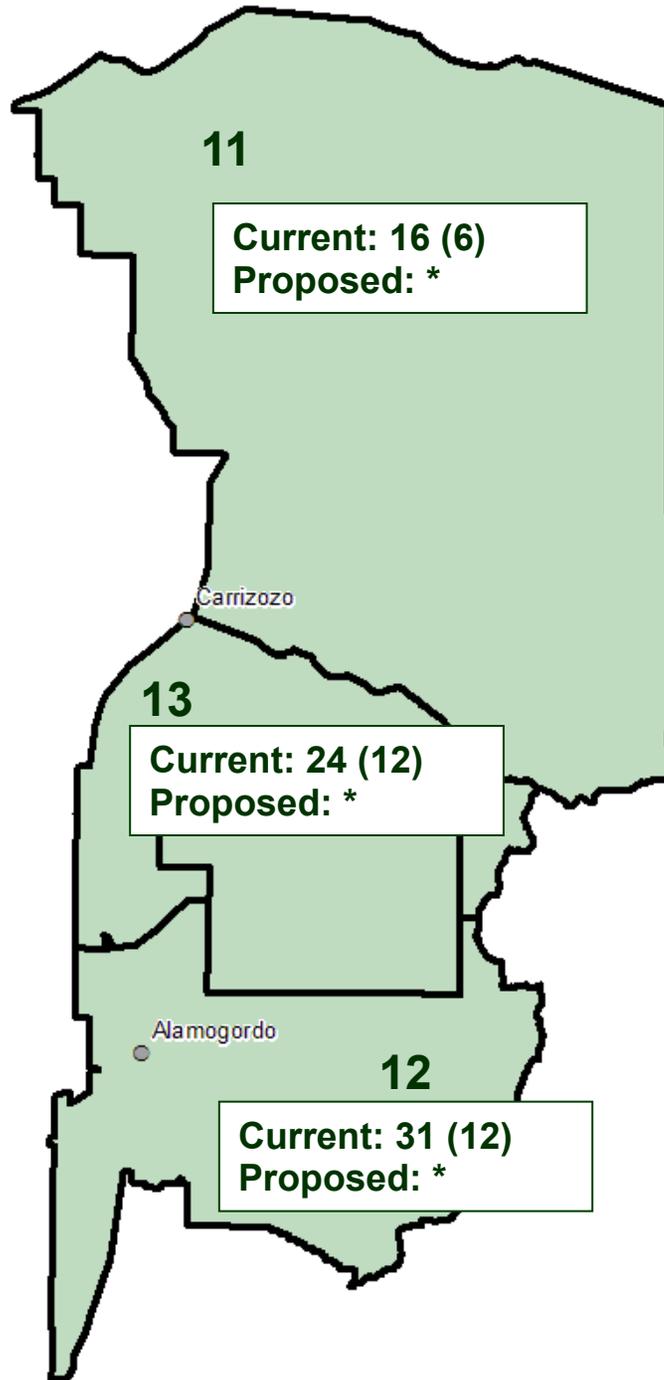


SW Area





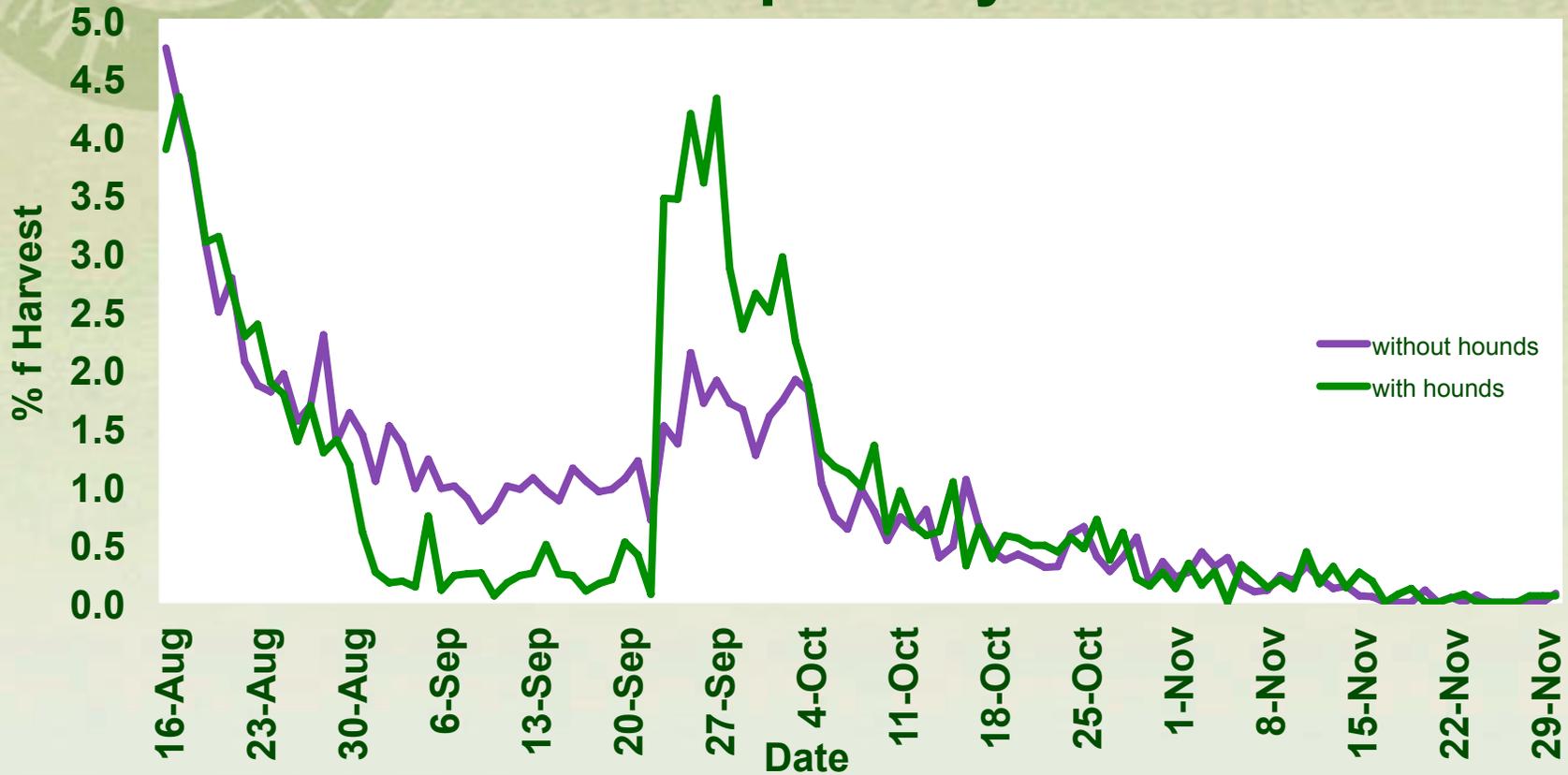
SE Area



* Awaiting Genetic Results

Potential Season Structure Modification

% of Harvest per Day 2004-14



Bear and Cougar: Potential Modifications to Pelt Tagging

CURRENT

- The hunter or a designee may present the pelt
- Any NMDGF employee may tag the pelt

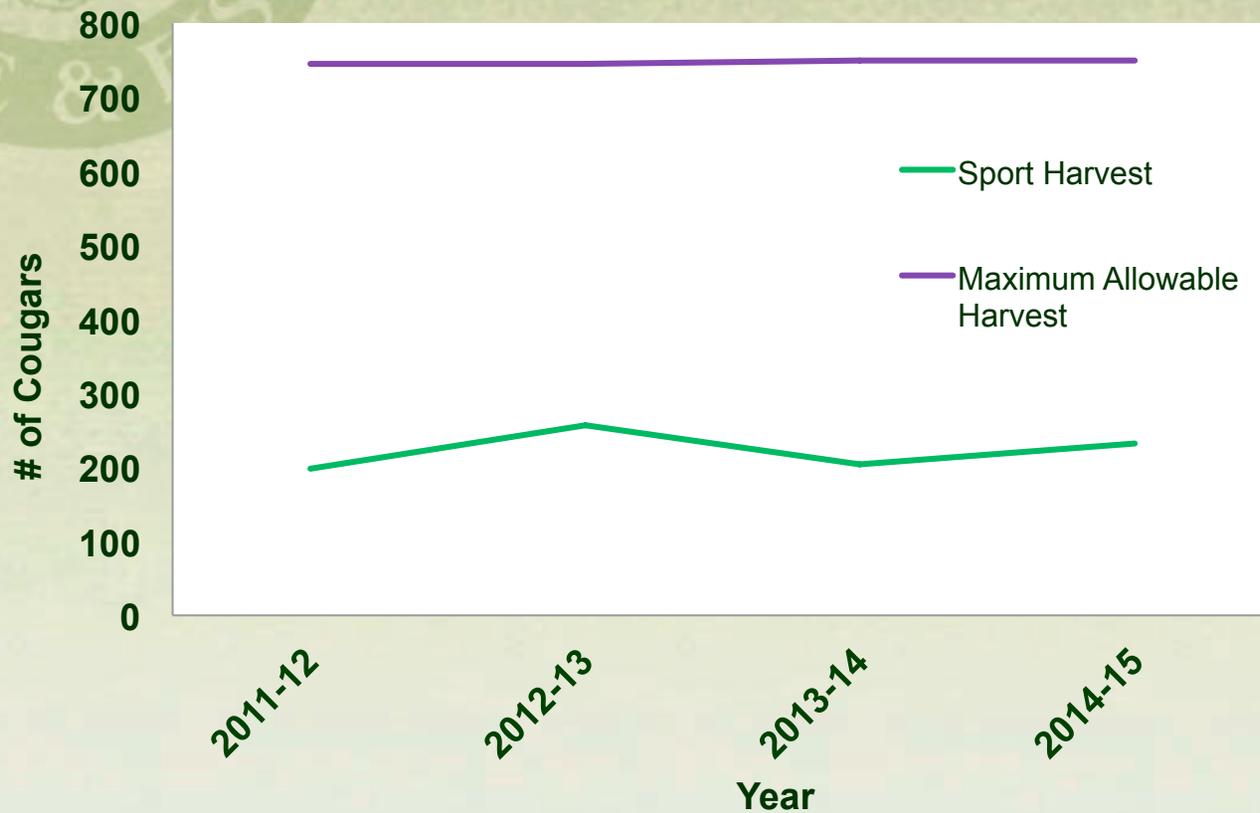
PROPOSED

- The hunter would be required to make contact (in person or via telephone call) before tagging the pelt

Cougar Proposals

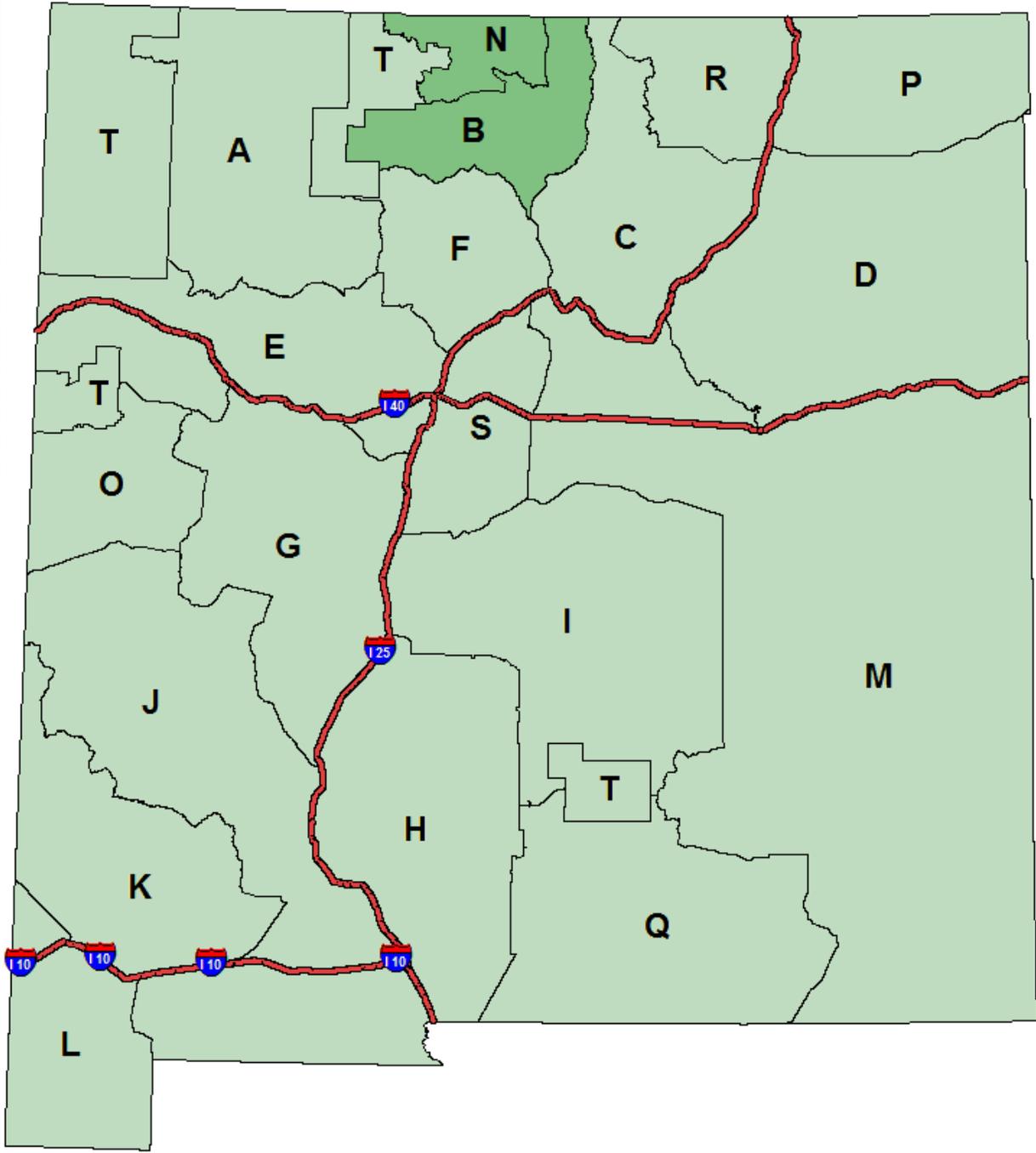


Maximum Allowable versus Actual Cougar Harvest 2011-2015



Cougars: Proposals for Consideration

- Eliminate the need for private landowners to obtain a permit prior to using traps or foot snares for sport harvest.
- Allow for increased bag limits in Cougar Management Zones where harvest limits are not being reached.

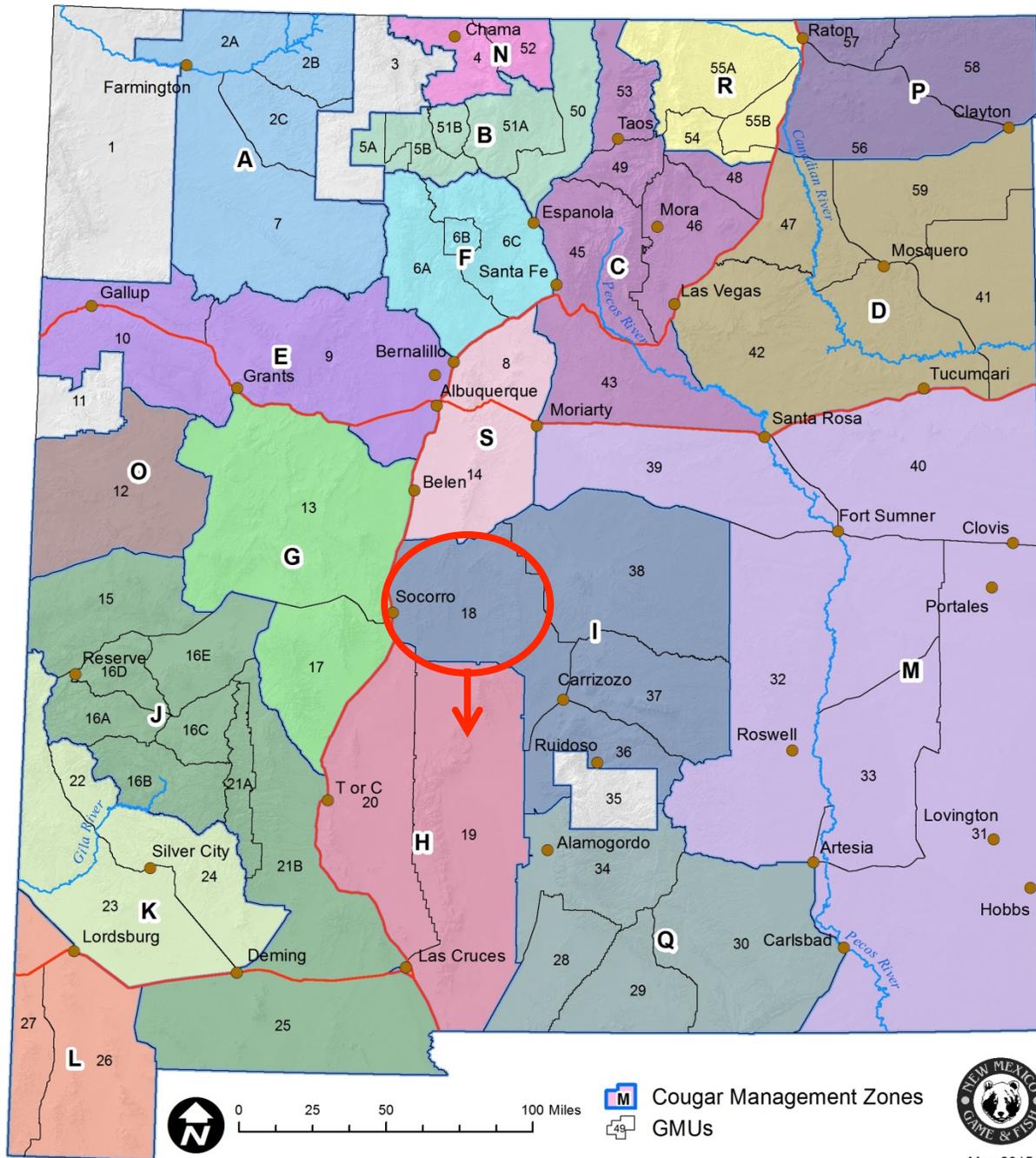


Wildlife Management Division

Cougars: Proposals for Consideration

- Prohibit use of hounds during September deer and elk archery seasons
- Allow licensed deer and elk hunters on certain Wildlife Management Areas to hunt cougars during their hunt

Cougar Management Zones



M Cougar Management Zones
 GMUs



May 2015

Wildlife Management Division

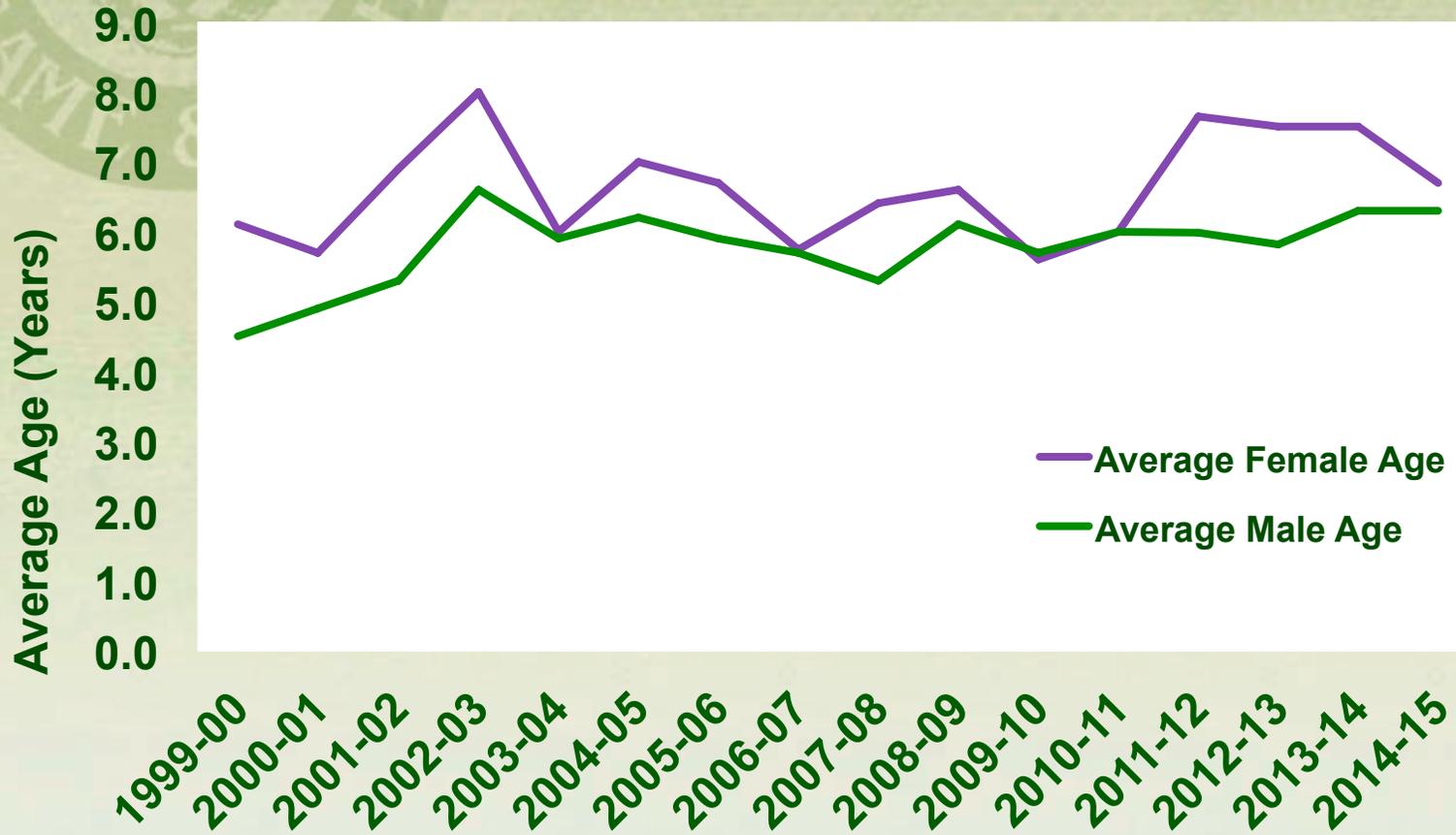
QUESTIONS??



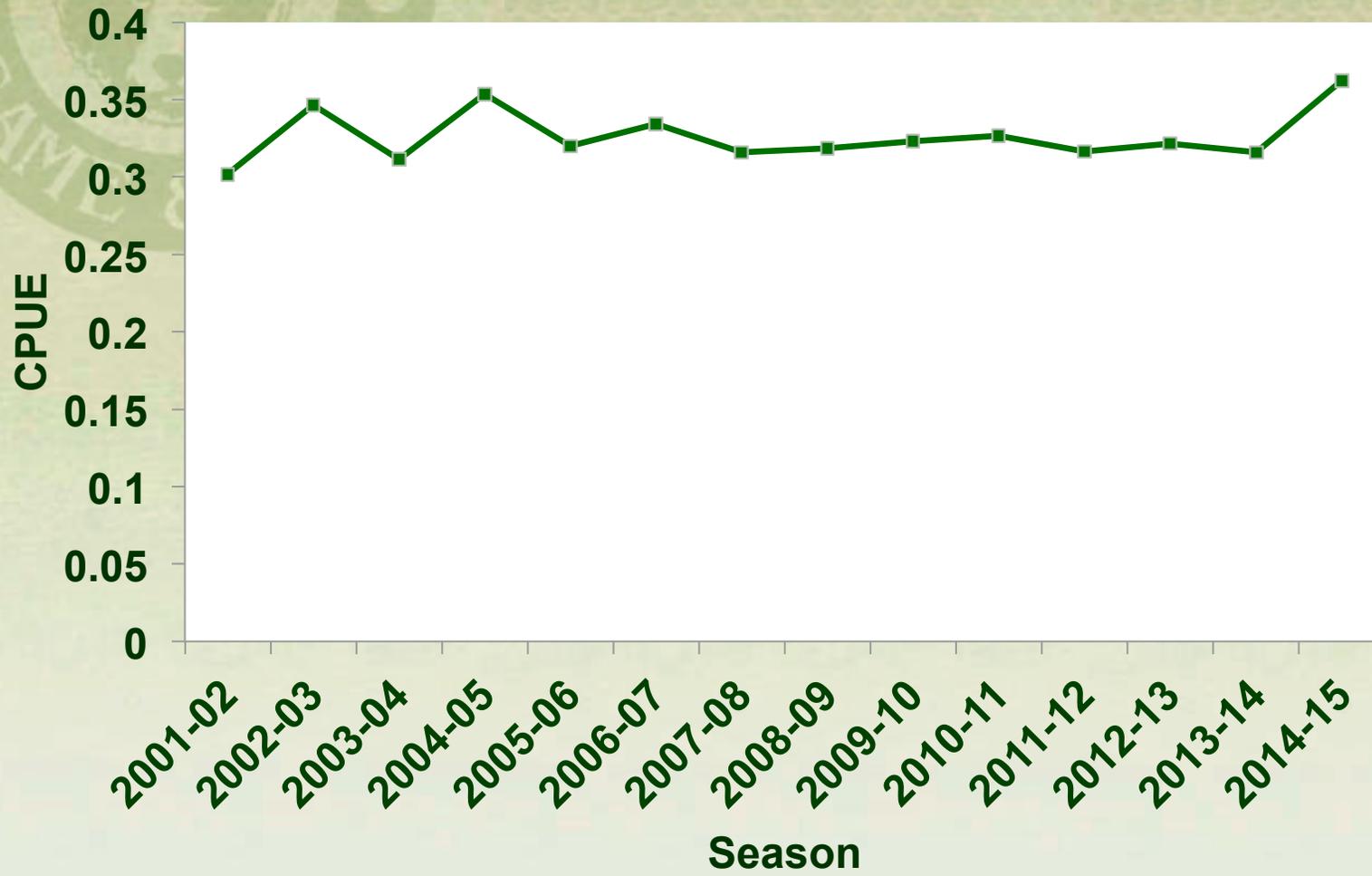
Photo: Jim Stuart

Population Information

Average Ages of Black Bear Mortalities from 1999-2014



Bear Catch Per Unit Effort



Bear Harvest

Year	Sport Harvest (females)	Maximum Harvest	# of Zones Closed
2014-15	475 (185)	668	9
2013-14	546 (224)	681	11
2012-13	568 (217)	664	9
AVG	522 (209)	663	9.7

Bear Harvest

Year	Sport Harvest (females)	Maximum Harvest	Depredation	Other	Total	# of Zones Closed
2014-15	475 (185)	668	48	33	556	9
2013-14	546 (224)	681	170	58	774	11
2012-13	568 (217)	664	90	56	714	9
AVG	522 (209)	663	103	49	681	9.7