

Bear and Cougar Rule 2015



Public Meetings

COMPLETED

- Las Cruces May 4: 15 people
- Albuquerque May 5: 48 people

UPCOMING

- Ruidoso: 6 p.m. May 27, U.S. Forest Service Fire Control Bldg.,
- Silver City: 6.p.m. May 28, Grant County Administration Center,
- Raton: 6 p.m. June 1, NMDGF Office

Rule Development Timeline

- **May** – Public Meetings
- **June** – Game Commission Meeting, Taos
 - Initial NMDGF proposal posted on the website
- **July** - Final NMDGF Proposal on the website
- **August** – Game Commission Meeting in Santa Fe to vote on the proposed rule

Public Comment

- Received 103 Electronic Comments
 - Use of traps and snares for cougar harvest
 - Increasing bear harvest limits
 - Modifying season structure to keep bear zones open later
 - Spring bear hunts
 - Population reduction hunts to target “town” bears

Bears



Population Information

Habitat Model (Costello et al. 2001):

- Used GIS
- Primary habitat = 40,732 km² (13% of NM)
- Improved habitat classifications allow for improved model results
- Preliminary results suggest an increase in primary habitat



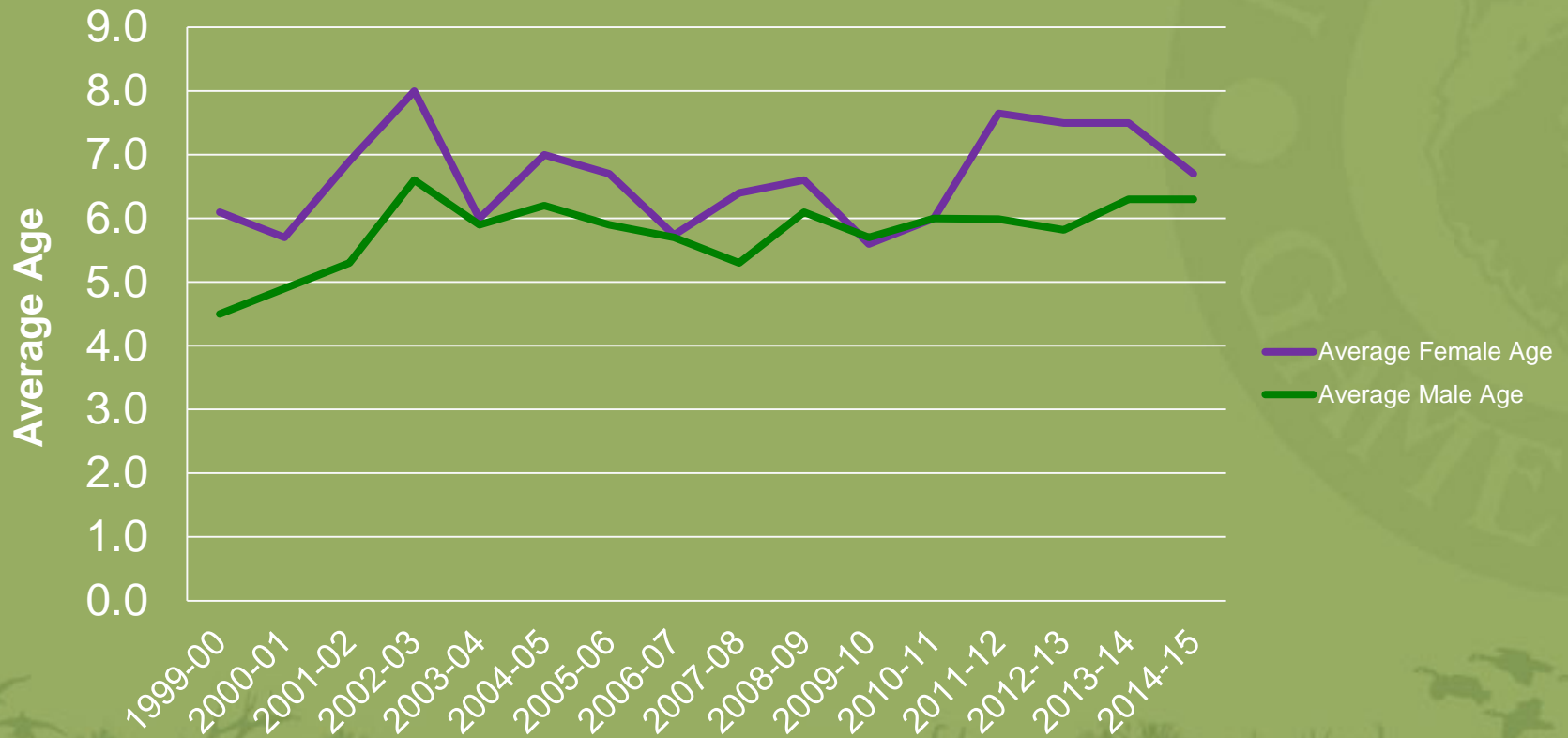
Population Information

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

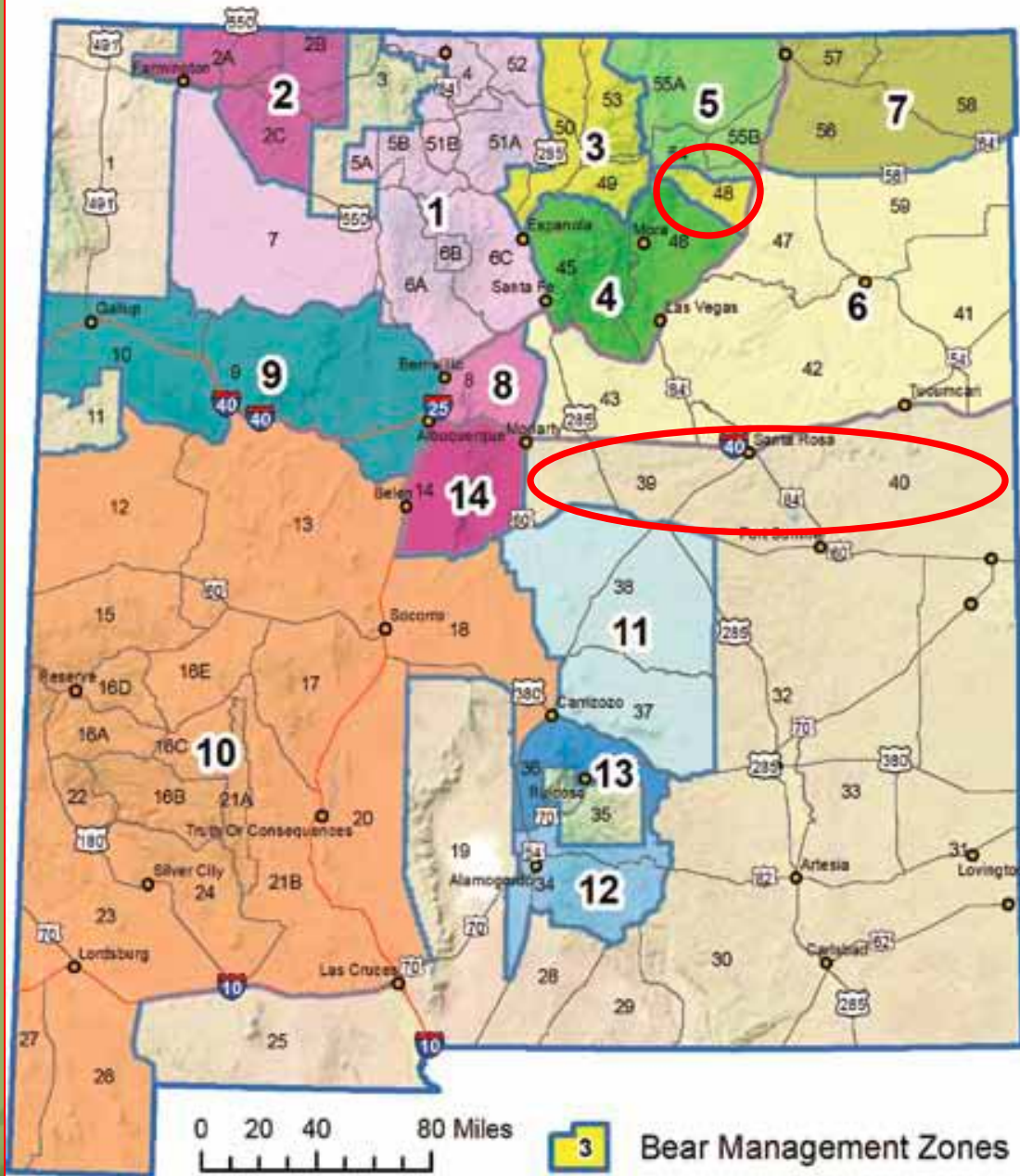
Population Information

Average Ages of Black Bear Mortalities from 1999-2014



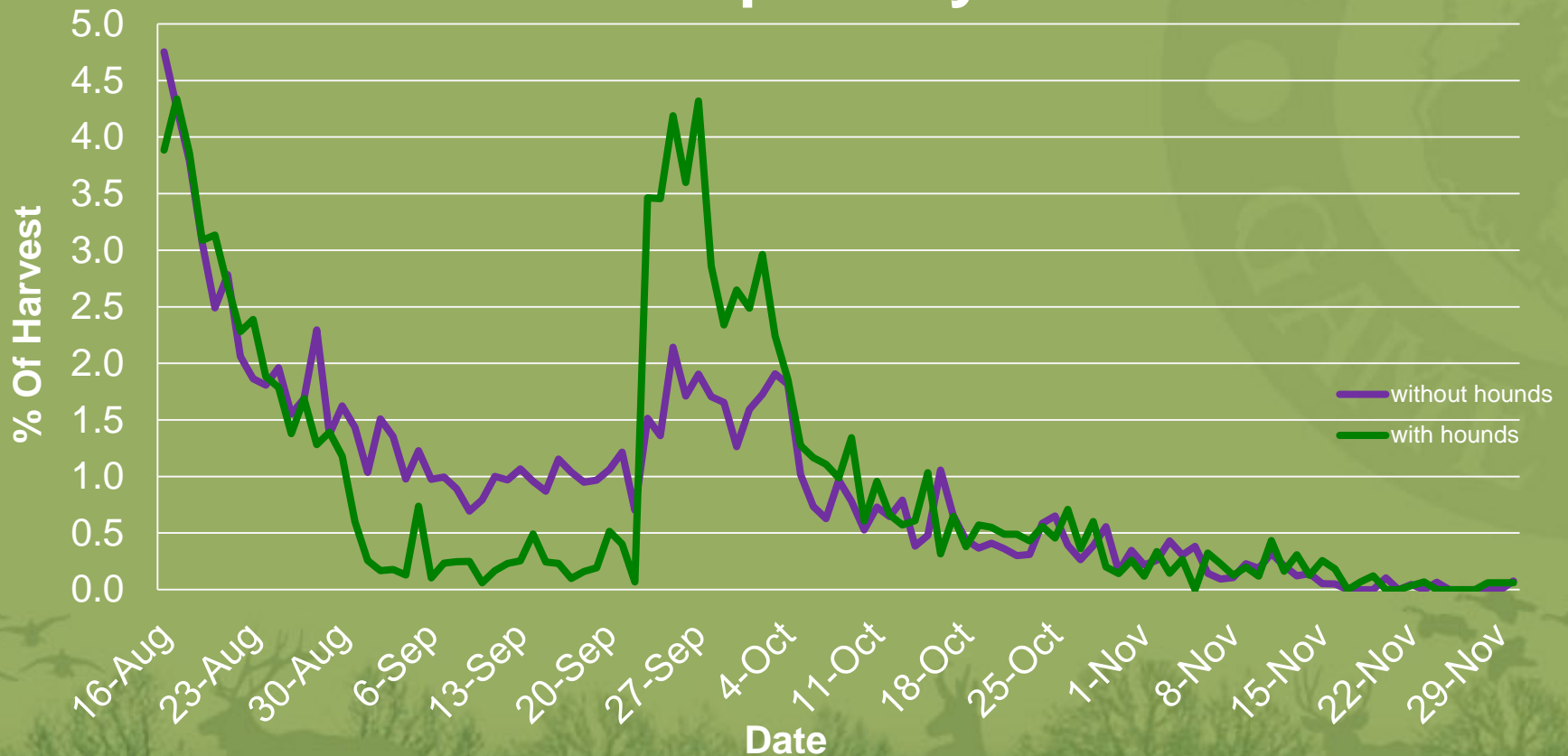
Bears: Proposals for Consideration

- Harvest limit increase in specific Bear Management Zones (BMZs)
- Move Game Management Unit (GMU) 48 from BMZ 3 to BMZ 4
- Add GMUs 39 and 40 to BMZ 6
- Potential modifications to season structure
- Potential modifications pelt tag reporting



Potential Season Structure Modification

% of Harvest per Day 2004-14



Potential Season Structure Modification

Bear Management Zone	Season Closure Date 2011-12	Season Closure Date 2012-13	Season Closure Date 2013-14	Season Closure Date 2014-15
1	Oct. 11	Oct. 10	Oct. 10	Oct. 7
9	Sept. 7		Oct. 15	Sept. 29
10	Oct. 8	Sept. 17	Sept. 25	Nov. 5
12**	Sept. 29	Sept. 13	Aug. 23	Sept. 2
13**	Oct. 21		Oct. 7	

Bear and Cougar: Potential Modifications to Pelt Tagging

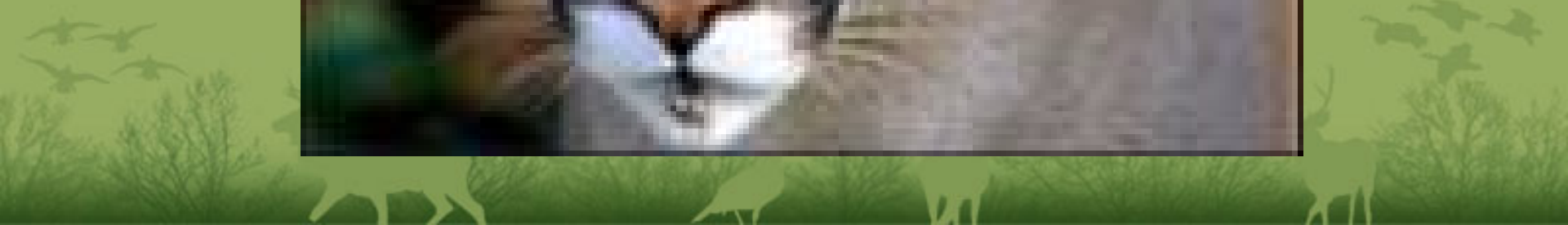
CURRENT

- 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) with a game warden

Cougars

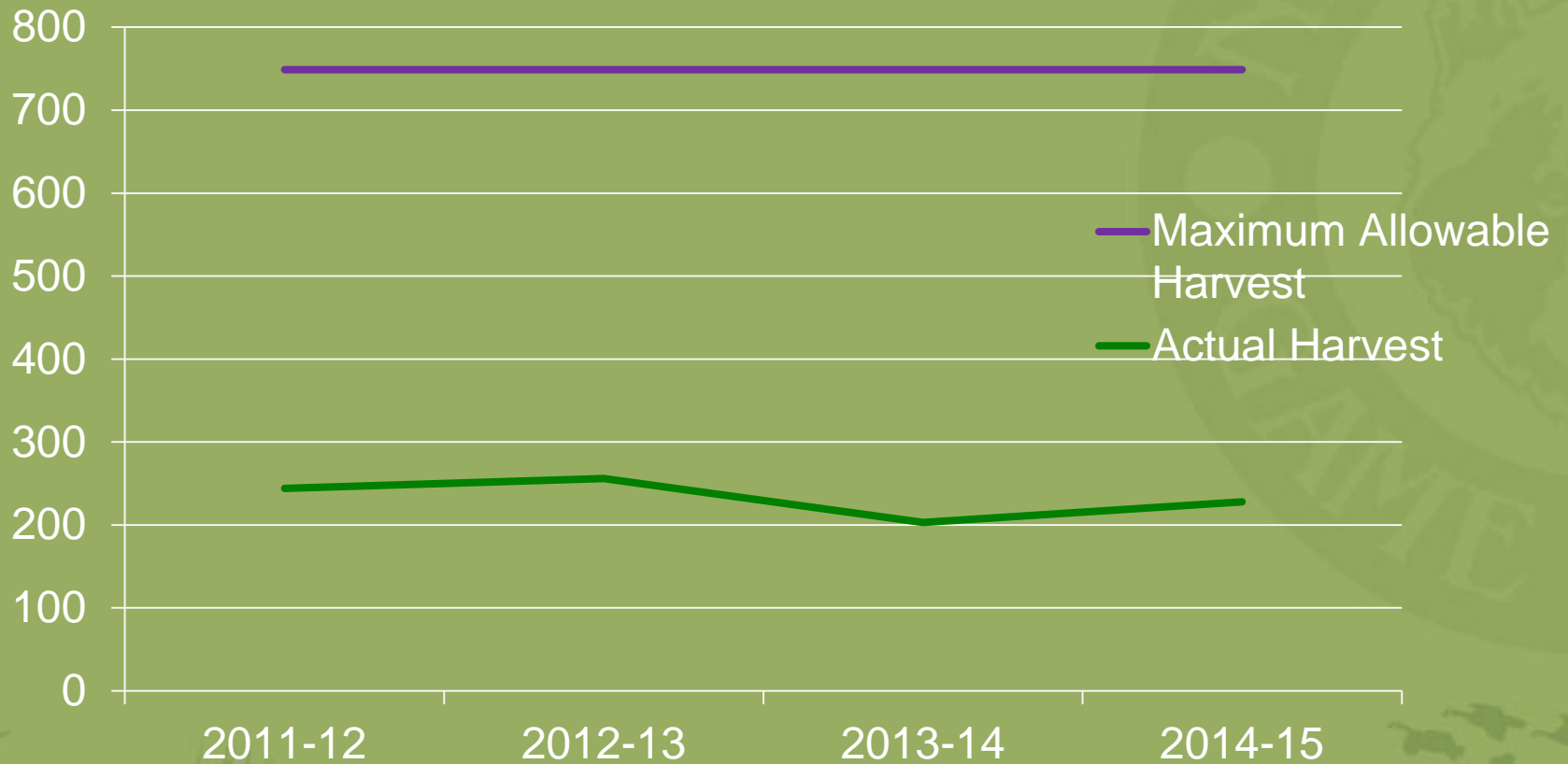


Cougar Harvest Data

Year	Sport Harvest	Maximum Harvest	Depredation	Road Kill	Bighorn Sheep Management
2014-15	228	749	20	9	17
2013-14	203	749	24	9	20
2012-13	256	749	23	10	31
AVG	229	749	22	9	23

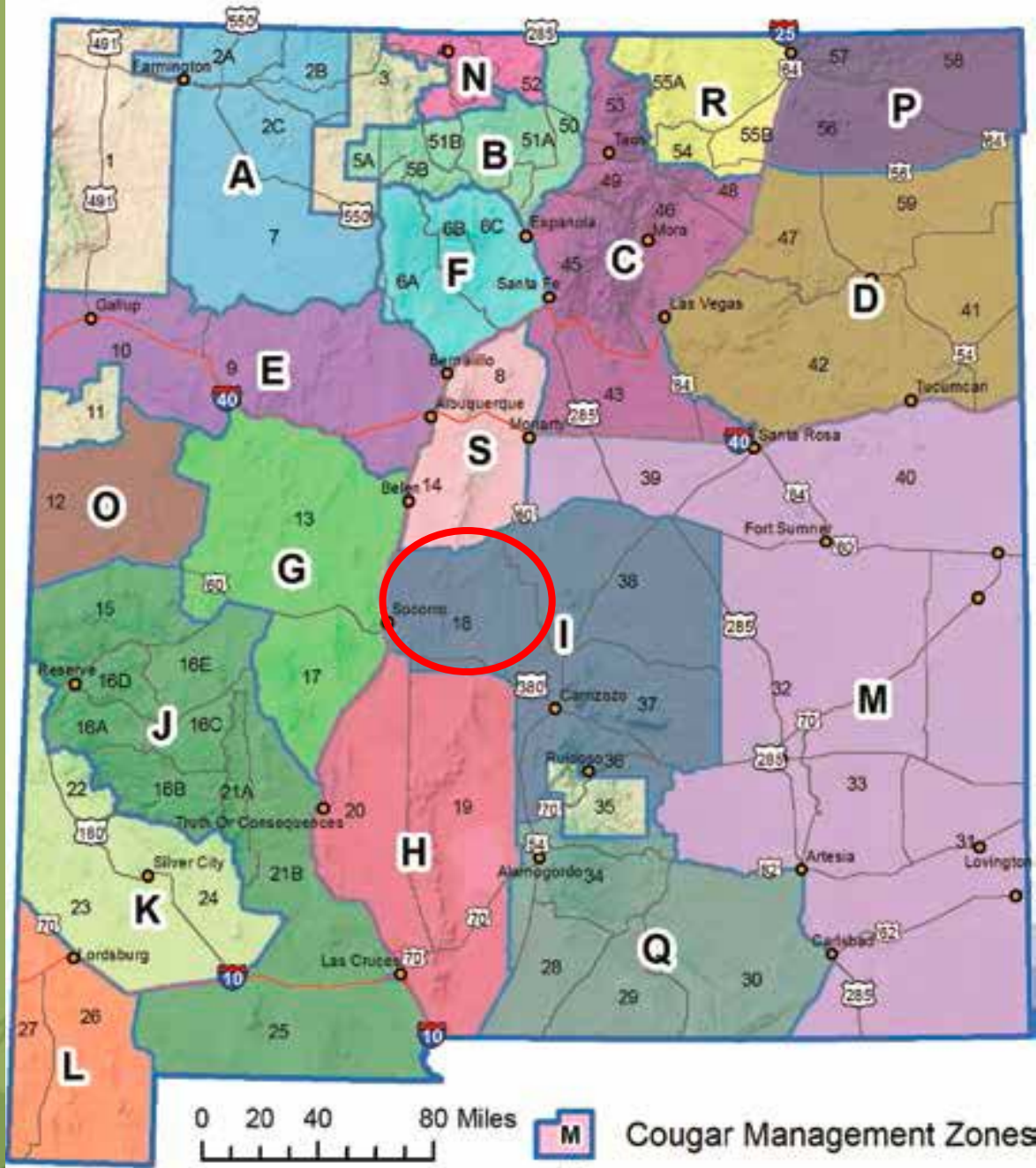
- 229 sport harvest (of 749 allowable; 31%)
- 2 zones closed (of 19 zones; 12%)

Maximum Allowable versus Actual Cougar Harvest 2011-2015



Cougars: Proposals for Consideration

- Allow use of traps and snares to harvest cougars to reach harvest limits. CMZ L would be excluded
- 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
- Move Game Management Unit (GMU) 18 from CMZ I to CMZ H



QUESTIONS??



Photo: Jim Stuart

Bear Management Zone	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
1	Oct. 11	Oct. 10	Oct. 10	Oct. 7
2		Sept. 25		
3	Aug. 29	Sept. 4	Sept. 3	Aug 26
4	Oct. 11			
5				
6	Aug. 29		Oct. 3	
7	Aug. 29	Aug. 24	Aug. 23	Aug 25
8		Sept. 7	Oct. 9	
9	Sept. 7		Oct. 15	Sept 29
10	Oct. 8	Sept. 17	Sept. 25	Nov. 5
11	Oct. 11	Aug. 21	Aug. 23	Aug. 26
12	Sept. 29	Sept. 13	Aug. 23	Sept 2
13	Oct. 21		Oct. 7	
14	Sept. 2	Oct. 19	Oct. 28	Oct. 29