

2015 Big Game Regulations

Oregon Fish & Wildlife Commission

October 10, 2014

Medford, Oregon

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Presentation Outline

Focus on Changes to June Recommendations

- **Review Regulation Development Process**

General Regulations

- **Changes Since June and October Packet**

Species Highlights

- **Changes to Hunting Seasons**

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Regulation Development Process

June 2014

- Adopted tag numbers for fall 2014 hunts
- Approved 2015 season concepts

October 2014

- Adopt 2015 Big Game Regulations
- Tag numbers for 2015 Spring Bear, Cougar quotas

February – April 2015

- Conducted population surveys
- Analyze mandatory reporting data

June 2015

- Adopted tag numbers for fall 2015 hunts
- Approved 2016 season concepts

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General Regulations

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End Saddle Mountain Deer Hunting Closure

- **Protect Endangered Columbian white-tailed deer**
- **14 Mi² area north of Burlington Northern Railroad tracks closed to deer hunting**
- **Estimated population of 830 CWTD**
- **Recent translocations of deer extended population**
- **Nov 2013 USFWS recommended down-listing to Threatened**

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Pronghorn LOP Bag Limit Rule

- **ORS 496.146 (4) Landowner preference tags for the hunting of pronghorn are not transferable and may not be used for the taking of buck pronghorn.**
- **Regulations specify “LOP tags are only available for hunts with “doe or fawn” or “either sex” bag limits.” If LOP tags are issued for an either-sex pronghorn hunt the bag limit is restricted to doe/fawn.**
- **Add ‘either-sex’ for pronghorn in OARs (635-075) consistent with regulations**

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HB 2027A LOP Rule

- **HB 2027A:** Grants the commission authority to specify a formula for determining the number of LOP tags available for controlled mule deer hunts in WMUs below the population management objective
- Department proposes that LOP tags be limited to 5 tags or 10% of tags authorized for each hunt, whichever is greater
- Formula used in hunts with limited LOP tags
- Initially propose applying to buck (100 series) tags

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HB 2027A LOP Rule Implementation

- If the proposed criteria to limit LOP tags to 5 tags or 10% of tags authorized had been used in 2013:
 - 591 fewer tags issued, reductions in 18 hunts
 - 19% fewer LOP buck tags issued (591 of 3,161)

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Archery Review Public Advisory Committee (ARPAC)

1. **Break link between archery deer hunting and controlled elk hunting in Mt. Emily, Walla Walla, Wenaha WMUs**
 - ARPAC recommendation, 9 day controlled archery hunts in each unit
 - Department proposal: Controlled archery deer hunts in the Mt Emily, Walla Walla, and Wenaha
 - Valid for the standard general archery season (Aug 29 – Sep 27, 2015)
 - Tags valid in other general archery season WMUs

ARPAC Recommendations (cont.)

2. a) Base decision for antlerless animals in general season bag limit on population parameters

- Antlerless elk in general season bag limit when:
 - 105% of population MO and rising if MO \geq 2,000
 - 110% of population MO and rising if MO $<$ 2,000
 - Calf ratio \geq 31:100 adults previous 3 years
- Antlerless mule deer in general season bag limit when:
 - 110% of population MO and rising
 - Fawn ratio \geq 45:100 adults previous 3 years

Department proposes to use 105% and increasing for all elk populations

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ARPAC Recommendations (cont.)

2. b) Criteria for bull or buck only general archery season bag limit:

- Bull only in general archery season bag limit when:
 - \leq 100% of population MO and declining
 - Calf ratio \leq 25:100 adults previous 3 years
- Buck mule deer only in general archery bag limit when:
 - \leq 100% of population MO and declining
 - Fawn ratio \leq 30:100 adults previous 3 years
- Provides objective guidelines

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ARPAC Survey Question 2

Most important factors when considering whether or not to propose tags for a hunt should be portable?

- 12 individuals responded, 9 answered Q2 ranking priority of factors as 1-4
 - Seven of nine respondents selected “c”: Focuses intended level of harvest where available and prescribed by the District Biologist” as a consideration (priority 2,1,1,3,1,2,1)
 - Six of nine selected “a”: Areas where animals have been displaced to private land (priority 3,4,2,2,3,3)
 - Six of nine respondents selected “k”: Hunt Quality
 - Two selected only hunt quality (priority 1, 1, 1, 3, 1, 2)

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Hunt Quality

- Subjective, range of opinions
 - Bull Elk & Buck Deer - Score, bull or buck ratio, timeframe and limited number of tags.
Cow Elk/ Doe Deer - access and population.
 - “I have said several times I would be glad to be restricted to have a tag every other year and pay twice the fee [to be revenue neutral], to have half the archers in the woods.”
 - “The factors that contribute to a quality hunt for me would be less hunter crowding....”
- Common Themes
 - Less hunter crowding significant factor in quality
 - Preference to retain portability

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ARPAC Recommended ODFW Consider:

- **Late controlled white-tailed deer opportunity**
 - Proposing new late white-tailed deer bow hunt 2015
 - Only opportunity hunt
- **Eliminate tied tags in Sled Spr., Chesnimnus, and Ochoco**
 - Propose to remove tie in Sled Spr. & Chesnimnus
 - Maintain link in Ochoco to limit hunter numbers
- **Remove MDI units from controlled hunts**
 - Deleting controlled Steens archery deer hunt
 - Remove deer & elk tag link in Maury & Warner
 - Retain controlled archery deer, add controlled archery elk in Maury & Warner

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Changes Since June 2014

- **Correct mandatory furbearer reporting dates (635-050-0045)**
- **Clarify preference point purchase information for spring bear (635-060-0023)**
 - Hunters purchasing a SW Oregon spring bear tag prior to the drawing will not be eligible to apply for other controlled spring bear tags or utilize the Point Saver option for spring bear hunts.
- **Propose allowing copper muzzleloader bullets**
- **Standardize season dates for bighorn sheep auction and raffle tags, standardize claim date for bighorn raffle tag (635-067-0032 and 0034)**
 - Season August 1-November 30
 - Raffle tag must be claimed by July 31

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Species Highlights

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2015 Bear

- **No general season changes**
 - Aug 1 – Nov 30 eastern Oregon
 - Aug 1 – Dec 31 western Oregon
- **9,134 proposed spring bear tags (+3%)**
 - 4,400 SW Limited
 - 4,734 controlled hunt tags in 20 hunts
 - Includes 250 tags in Siskiyou Plus

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Spring Bear Hunting

- Siskiyou Plus hunt designed to distribute hunters in SW Oregon away from more popular areas to the north
- Ending date of spring bear season designed to conserve sows, have been asked to run later in the spring, denied requests to maintain predominance of males in the bag
- Early spring bear seasons take advantage of differences in bear behavior between sexes, and between females w/cubs
- Male bears and females without cubs tend to range farther
- Data indicate that spring bear hunters are indeed selecting for males. Statewide, an average of only 27% of the spring bear harvest is female (all ages)

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2015 Cougar

- No general season changes, Jan 1 – Dec 31
– 2 tags available
- Propose increasing quotas

Zone	Quota	Mortality	
		2012	2013
A Coast/N Cascades	120	121	130
B SW Cascades	165	106	143
C SE Cascades	65	24	21
D Columbia Basin	62	38	50
E Blue Mountains	245	164	135
F SE Oregon	120	77	52
Total	777	530	531

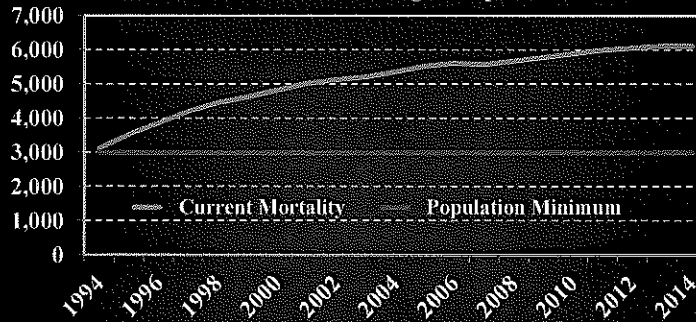
2014 Mortalities thru Sept. 25: total 208, hunting 90, conflict 100, Roadkill, etc. 18

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2015 Annual Cougar Quotas

(Cont.)

Modeled Cougar Population



- 9% population increase since 2006, 96% since 1994
- Non-hunting mortality exceeding objectives
- Many deer & elk herds below MO

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2015 Annual Cougar Quotas

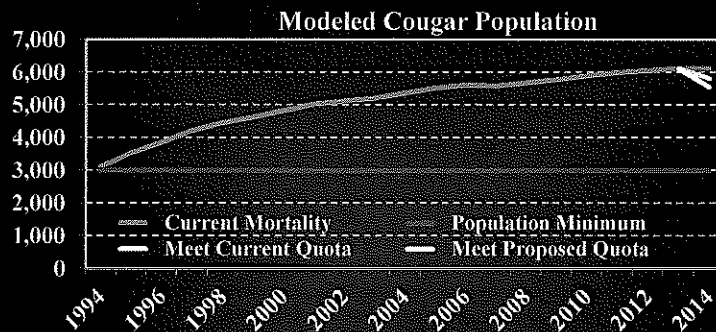
(Cont.)

Zone	Current Quota	Proposed Quota	% Change
A Coast/N Cascades	120	180	50%
B SW Cascades	165	200	21%
C SE Cascades	65	80	23%
D Columbia Basin	62	100	61%
E Blue Mountains	245	270	10%
F SE Oregon	120	140	17%
Total	777	970	25%

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2015 Annual Cougar Quotas

(Cont.)



- Proposed quota sufficient to allow administrative removals to address objectives
- Meet current quota of 777: population decline of 5%
- Meet proposed quota of 970: decline of 9%

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Proposed Hunt Changes for 2015

- Pronghorn
 - Delete E Interstate #2 (doe/fawn)
 - New Hart Mountain youth hunt
 - Shift season dates 1 day earlier
- Bighorn Sheep
 - Add third hunt period to Owyhee area
 - Shift season dates 1 day earlier
- Rocky Mountain Goat
 - No hunt changes
 - 2nd non-resident tag: Hat Point #1
 - Shift season dates 1 day earlier

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Proposed Deer Hunt Changes for 2015

- **Deer**
 - No general season changes
 - Remove Hood & White River from 100M as new hunts
 - New Chetco muzzleloader hunt
 - 3 controlled regular season bow hunts: Mt. Emily, Walla Walla, Wenaha (ARPAC)
 - New late whitetail bow hunt in Wenaha (ARPAC)
 - Delete Lostine-Allen Canyon doe hunt
 - Shift season dates 1 day earlier

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Proposed Elk Hunt Changes for 2015

- **Elk**
 - Delete 5 hunts
 - 4 New rifle hunts
 - 1 New muzzleloader hunt
 - 2 new bow hunts (ARPAC)
 - Shift season dates 1 day earlier

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2015 Auction Tags

<u>Tag (Statewide)</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Location</u>
Deer and Elk	Oregon Hunters Association, State	Lincoln City
Deer	Mule Deer Foundation, National	Salt Lake City
Deer	Mule Deer Foundation, Linn-Benton	Albany
Deer	Oregon Hunters Association, Capitol	Salem
Deer	Wild Turkey Federation, Central Oregon	Bend
Elk	Ducks Unlimited, Sunset Chapter	Forest Grove
Elk	Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation, Pendleton	Pendleton
Elk	Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation, Medford	Medford
Elk	Foundation for N.A. Wild Sheep, Oregon	Hillsboro
Bighorn Sheep	Wild Sheep Foundation, National	Reno
Pronghorn	Oregon Hunters Association, Redmond	Redmond

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2015 Raffle Tags

- All Raffle Tags proposed be drawn at the OHA State Convention in Lincoln City, May 16, 2015
 - Bighorn Sheep, Rocky Mtn. Goat, Pronghorn
 - A&H Deer and Elk tags
 - Statewide Deer and Elk combo
 - Statewide Deer
 - Regional Deer Tags: SE, NE, Central OR
 - Statewide Elk
 - Regional Elk Tags: NE, Central/SE, Western OR

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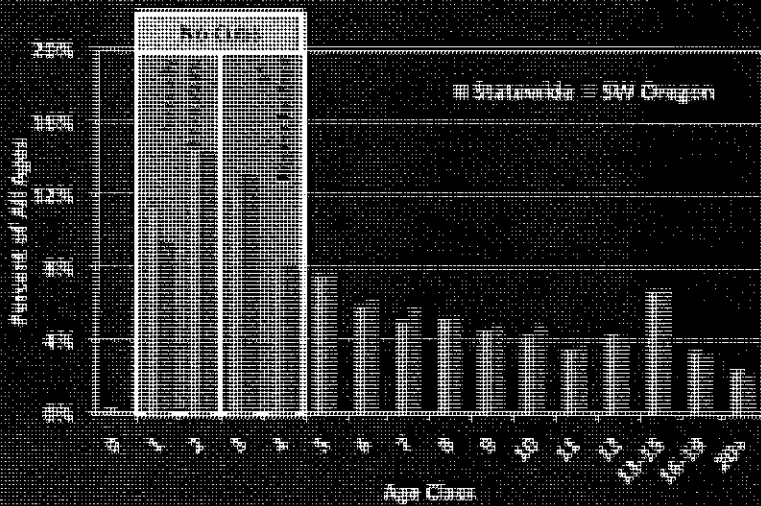
Questions ?



Average Age Distribution of Female Bears Harvested During Controlled Spring Bear Seasons, 2000 - 2013



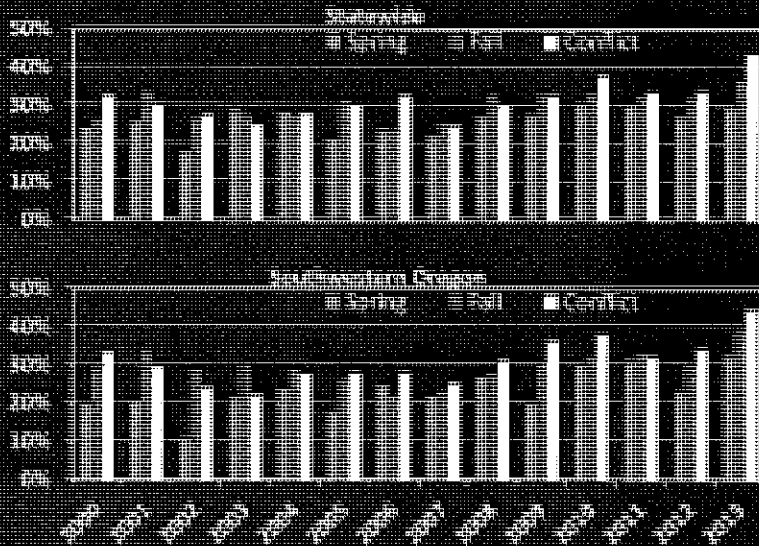
Average Age Distribution of Female Bears Harvested During General Fall Bear Seasons, 2000 - 2013



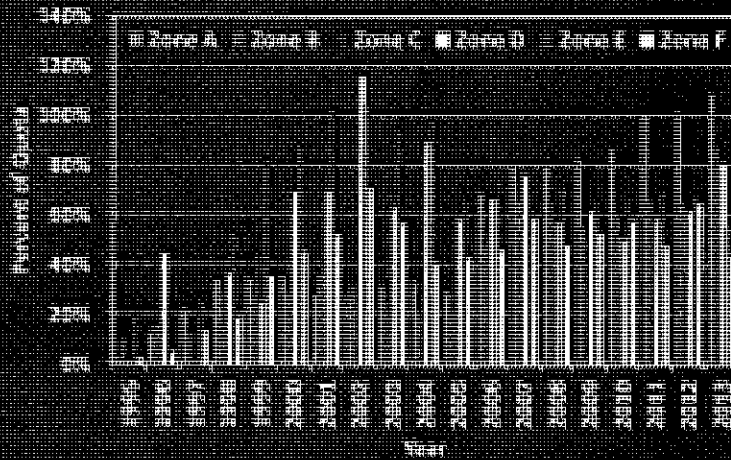
Average Age Distribution of Female Bears Killed Due to Conflict, 2000 - 2013



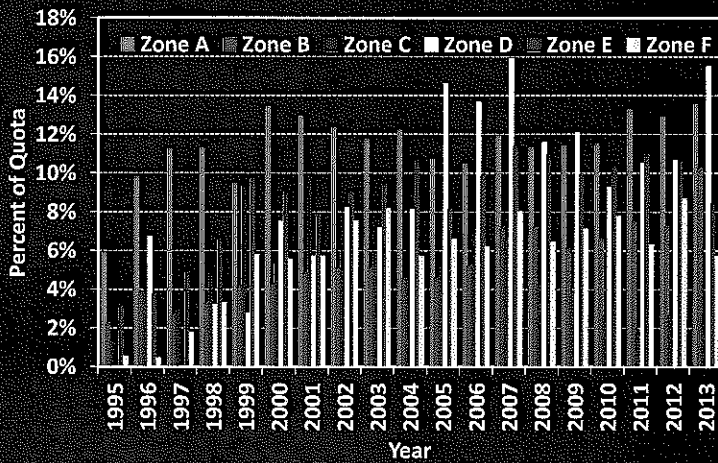
Percent females in known black bear mortality in Oregon, 2000 - 2013



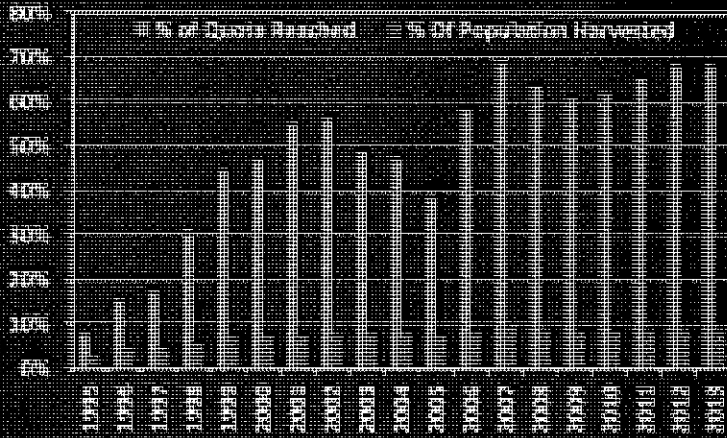
Percent Attainment of Cougar Quotas in Oregon,
1995 - 2013



Percent of Modelled Cougar Population Harvested in Oregon,
1995 - 2013



Trend in Quota Attainment and Percent of Population Harvested, 1995 - 2013



LOP Buck Tags Demand Exceeds Proposed Limitation

2013 Tags Authorized by the Commission and LOP Tags Drawn		Total	% of	LOP Tags Avail	Difference	
Hunt		Tags	Population	5 Tags or 10%	LOP Tags Avail	
Number	Hunt Name	Authorized	LOP Tags Drawn	MO	Whichver > and Tags Drawn	
138	GRIZZLY UNIT	1308	210	82%	131	-79
169A	STEENS MT	265	100	48%	27	-74
153	CATHERINE CR UNIT	424	109	40%	42	-67
172	SILVIES UNIT	848	139	79%	85	-54
167	OWYHEE UNIT	605	100	78%	61	-40
168A	TROUT CR MTS	51	38	41%	5	-33
173	WAGONTIRE UNIT	211	53	55%	21	-32
146	MURDERERS CR UNIT	990	126	63%	99	-27
163	KEATING UNIT	473	74	53%	47	-27
164	LOOKOUT MT UNIT	314	58	73%	31	-27
174A	N WARNER	35	30	36%	5	-25
132M	KLAMATH FALLS MUZ	27	27	22%	5	-22
139R1	METOLIUS NO.1 BOW	19	27	94%	5	-22
155A	WALLA WALLA UNIT	220	41	95%	22	-19
175T	INTERSTATE YOUTH	30	20	26%	5	-15
154A	E MT EMILY	212	32	84%	21	-11
147	NORTHSIDE UNIT	1409	151	45%	141	-10
170A	BEATYS BUTTE	212	30	68%	21	-9

Bag Limit During Archery Seasons and Hunters With Disability Permits

Factors considered to determine units with an expanded bag limit include:

- The deer or elk population characteristics in the unit particularly
 - Population level relative to the population MO
 - Recruitment as measured by fawn or calf ratios
- The number and distribution of antlerless firearms tags authorized in the unit

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ARPAC Survey Question 2

- a. 3,4,2,2,3,3, _ Areas where animals have been displaced to private land
- b. ____ Areas where crowding needs to be reduced
- c. 1, ____ Contributes to reduced crowding in general season areas
- d. 2,4, ___ Fire danger – Areas where access is not likely to be eliminated during fire season
- e. 2,1,1,3,1,2,1, _ Focuses intended level of harvest where available and prescribed by the District Biologist
- f. 3, 2, 4,2, _ Enforcement
- g. 4,3, 4, ____ Other __ tag portability applies only to antlerless aspect of tag,
- h. ____ Other __
- i. ____ Other __
- j. ____ Other __
- k. 1, 1, 1, 3, 1, 2 _ Hunt Quality

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Mandatory Harvest Reporting Rates

Tag Type	Year				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Controlled Pronghorn	57%	82%	76%	93%	92%
Controlled Elk	46%	69%	62%	91%	89%
General Elk Rifle	31%	53%	44%	82%	80%
General Elk Bow	35%	57%	49%	82%	80%
Controlled Deer Rifle	48%	69%	61%	91%	89%
General Deer Rifle	25%	45%	37%	79%	76%
General Deer Bow	33%	53%	47%	82%	79%
Controlled Bear	54%	74%	73%	89%	89%
General Bear	37%	55%	49%	78%	76%
General Cougar	34%	56%	49%	71%	73%
Controlled Turkey	67%	84%	84%	93%	91%
General Turkey	40%	57%	54%	79%	79%
Controlled Tags	54%	76%	60%	90%	89%
General Tags	35%	53%	38%	79%	77%

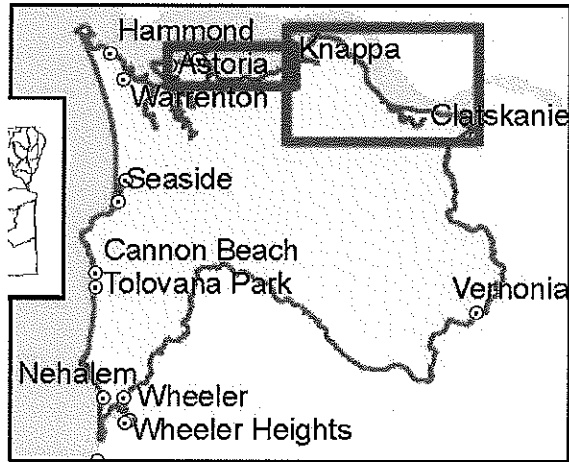
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Archery Review Public Advisory Committee (ARPAC)

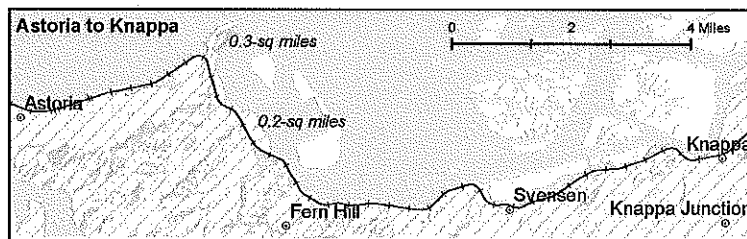
- **22 Committee members: ODFW, OSP, Bow Hunter Groups, OHA, at large bow hunters**
- **Two primary recommendations:**
 1. **Break link between archery deer hunting and controlled elk hunting in Mt. Emily, Walla Walla, and Wenaha WMUs**
 2. **Base decision for antlerless animals in general season bag limit on population parameters**

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Saddle Mtn. WMU



Saddle Mtn WMU & Burlington Northern Railroad



Saddle Mtn. Black-tailed Deer Hunting Closure Area

WMU Total = ~907-sq miles, 14.0-sq miles north of railroad
and east of Astoria

Knappa to Clatskanie

