

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Washington

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Influenza A - Basics

Waterfowl are considered natural reservoir of Influenza A Viruses (IAV)

Historically, IAV rarely caused issues for wild birds and were the result of spillback from domestic poultry

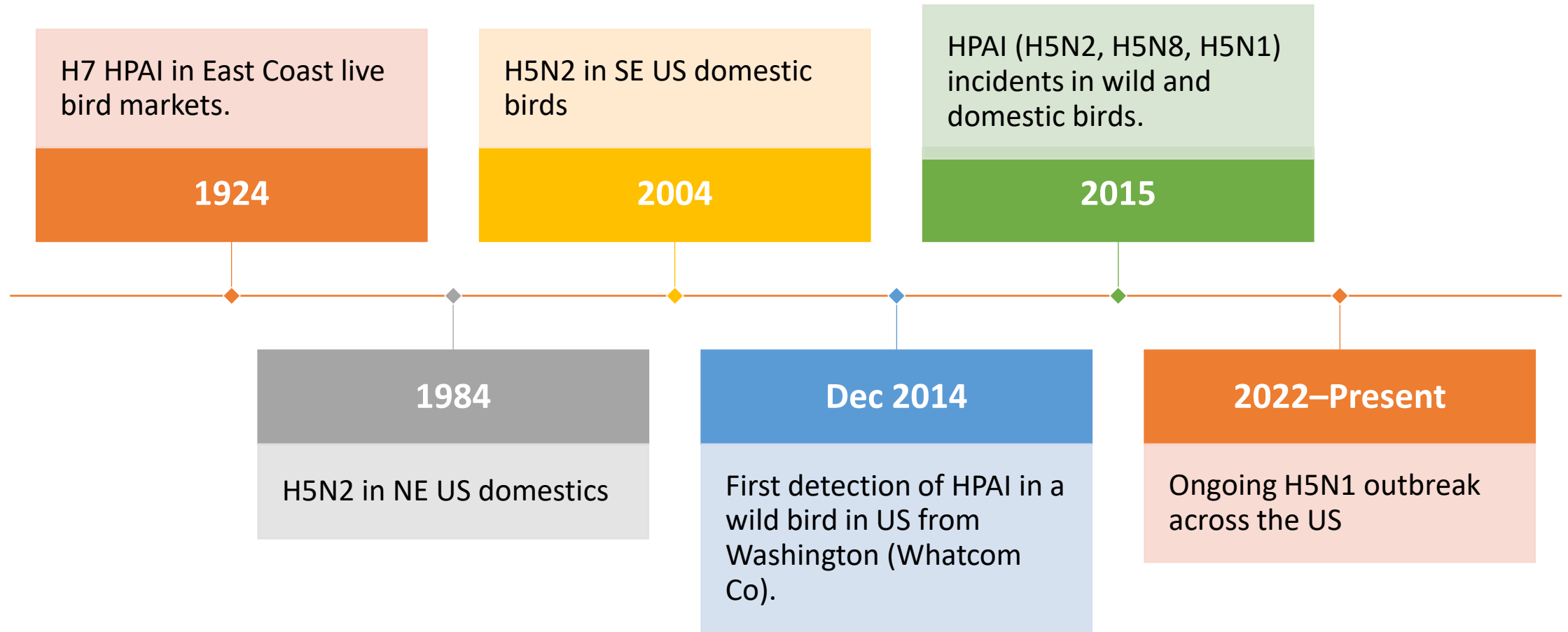


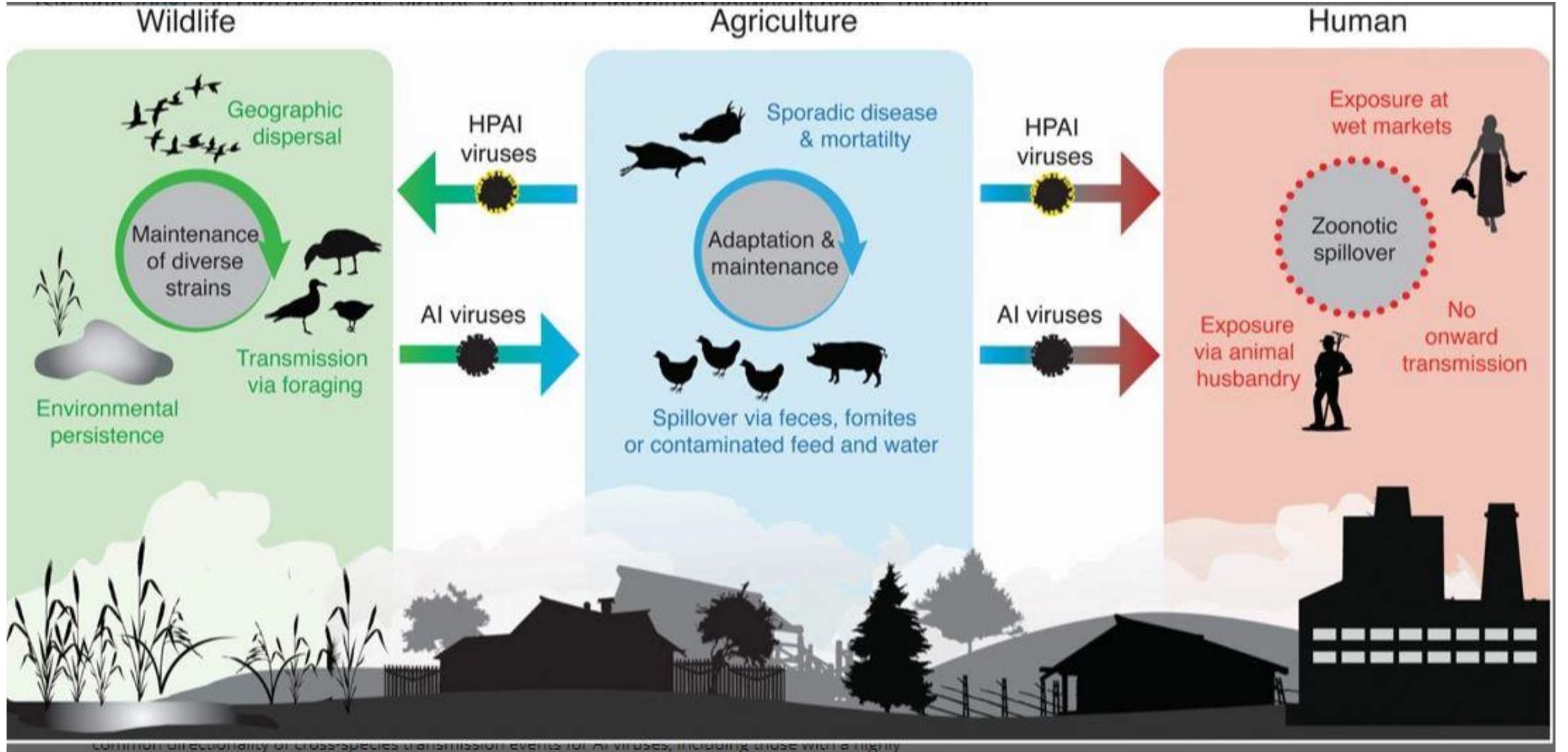
Exposure and Persistence

- Avian influenza is mostly spread between waterfowl through fecal material in water
- Infected fecal material can contaminate wetlands and roost sites if used by large numbers of birds
- Avian influenza can remain viable for several weeks (or longer)
- AIV are easily killed by heat, drying, and disinfectants. But NOT freezing.



History of HPAI in the US

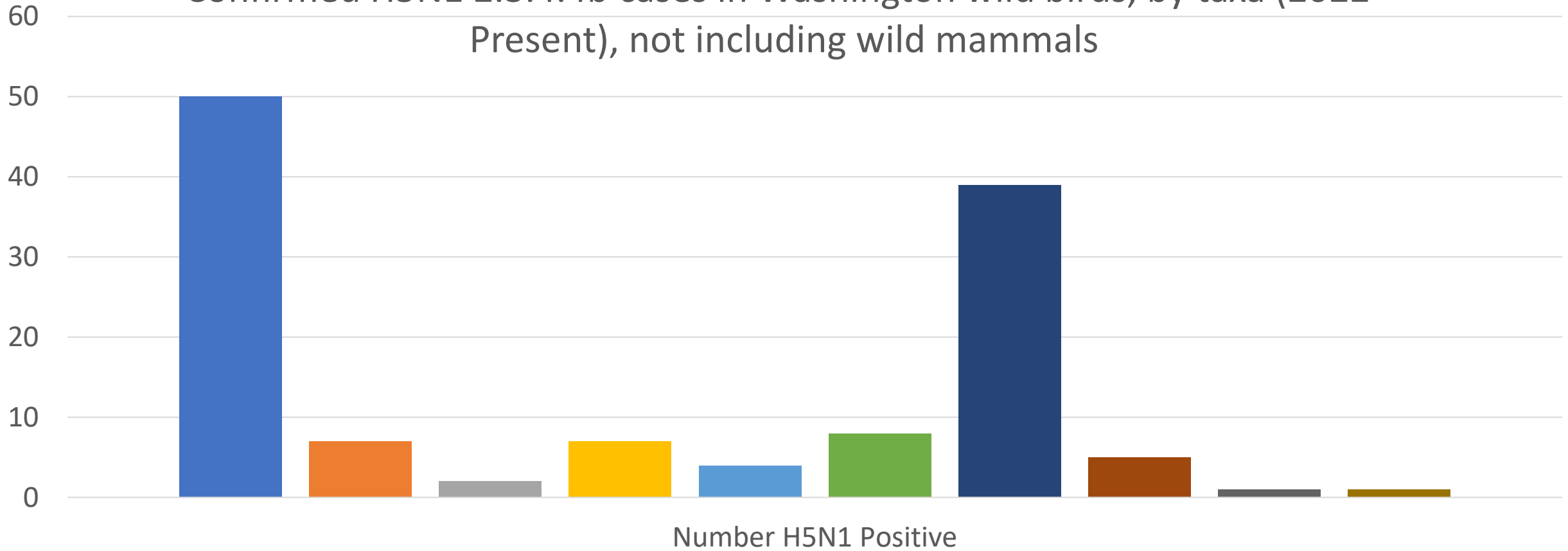






HPAI H5N1 2.3.4.4b is an emerging disease threat for wildlife

Confirmed H5N1 2.3.4.4b cases in Washington wild birds, by taxa (2022-Present), not including wild mammals



Waterfowl (geese, swans)

Dabbling ducks

Diving ducks

Shore birds

Wading birds (Herons, cranes)

Sea birds (terns, gulls, alcids, grebes)

Raptors

Corvids

Pelican

Rail (Coots)

H5N1 in wild mammals in Washington

- Raccoons (n=5)
- Bobcat (n=2)
- Cougar (n=2)
- Striped skunk (n=3)
- Harbor seals (n=5)



Key take home(s)

- H5N1 2.3.4.4b remains on our landscape in Washington
- H5N1 has potential to have large impacts on some species (e.g., Caspian terns)
- WDFW continues to implement ongoing surveillance for H5N1
- Need more serologic data to better understand and predict impacts of H5N1 in wild birds, especially seabirds
- Understanding the population impacts is difficult, especially without 'denominator'

The impact of HPAIV H5N1 2.3.4.4b in WA?

- Unfortunately, we don't really know
- Need ongoing funding for holistic surveillance effort(s)
- Biased monitoring approach
- Limited resources (\$, staff time)
- Where we do have reasonable mortality estimates, the impact to some species impact may be rather large – e.g., Caspian terns



Questions?

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Photo credit: Scott Pearson