# 2024 Annual Wolf Report – Briefing
# FWC April 5, 2025

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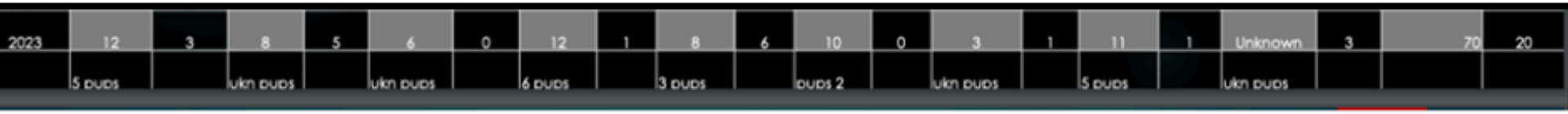
# Correction – 2023 Annual Wolf Report Error




A GRAPH FROM THE CCT'S PRESENTATION TO HOUSE COMMITTEE MEMBERS. (TVW)

**Presentation by Cody Desautel**

| | Nc'icn | Strawberry | Whitestone | Frosty | Nason | Keller Ridge | Wilmont | Dollar Mtn | Susp New Pack |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CTCR min observed | 12 | 8 | 6 | 12 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 11 | unk |
| CTCR harvested | 3 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| CTCR Year end count | 9 | 3 | 6 | 11 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 0 |
| Documented pups | 5 | unk | unk | 6 | 3 | 2 | unk | 5 | unk |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| WDFW annual report | 9 | 8 | 6 | 11 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 10 | not in report |
| Harvest in annual report | 3 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 1 | not in report |
| Successful breeding pair | y | y | y | y | n | y | n | y | not in report |

**-5 wolves, -1 lone / disperser = 254 minimum count,**

**-1 breeding pair = 24 Successful Breeding pairs**

# Listing Status

Federally Relisted Feb. 10, 2022

State Listed – Endangered where WDFW has jurisdiction

Wolf Conservation and Management Plan: 2011

- Three Recovery Regions
- Wolf Recovery and Delisting requirements

State and tribal management

# Recovery Objectives

**Pack:** Two or more wolves traveling together in the winter.

**Successful Breeding Pair (SBP):** An adult male and an adult female with at least two pups surviving to December 31st in any given year.

**Delisting Objectives in the Plan**

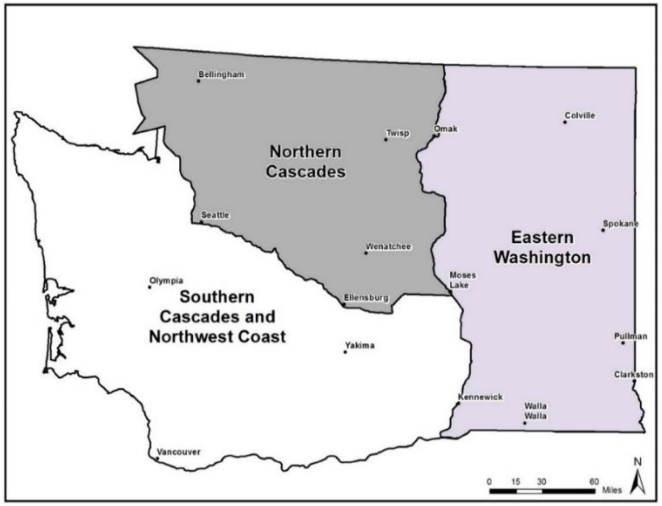
15 SBP's for 3 consecutive years with:

- 4 SBP's in Eastern WA Recovery Area
- 4 SBP's in North Cascades Recovery Area
- 4 SBP's in Southern Cascades and NW Coast
- 3 SBP's anywhere in the state

or

18 SBP's for 1 year with

- 4 SBP's in Eastern WA Recovery Area
- 4 SBP's in North Cascades Recovery Area
- 4 SBP's in Southern Cascades and NW Coast
- 6 SBP's anywhere in the state



# Capture and Monitoring - 2024 Calendar Year

- Captured 29 wolves - From 22 different packs
- Monitored 55 wolves from 25 packs in 2024
- Currently monitoring 33 collared wolves (14% of minimum number of known wolves) from 17 packs (40% of known packs) in Washington

Photo by Trent Roussin

Photo by Ben Maletzke

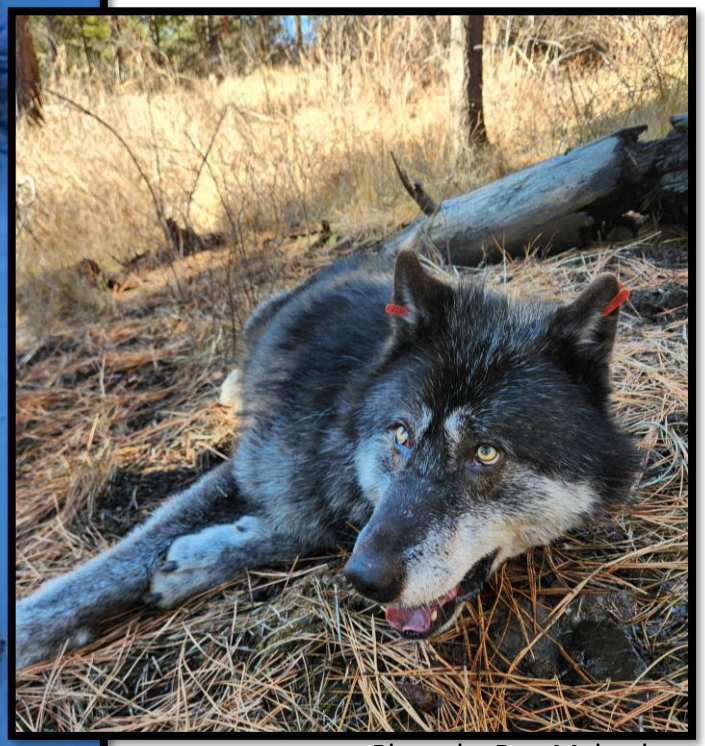


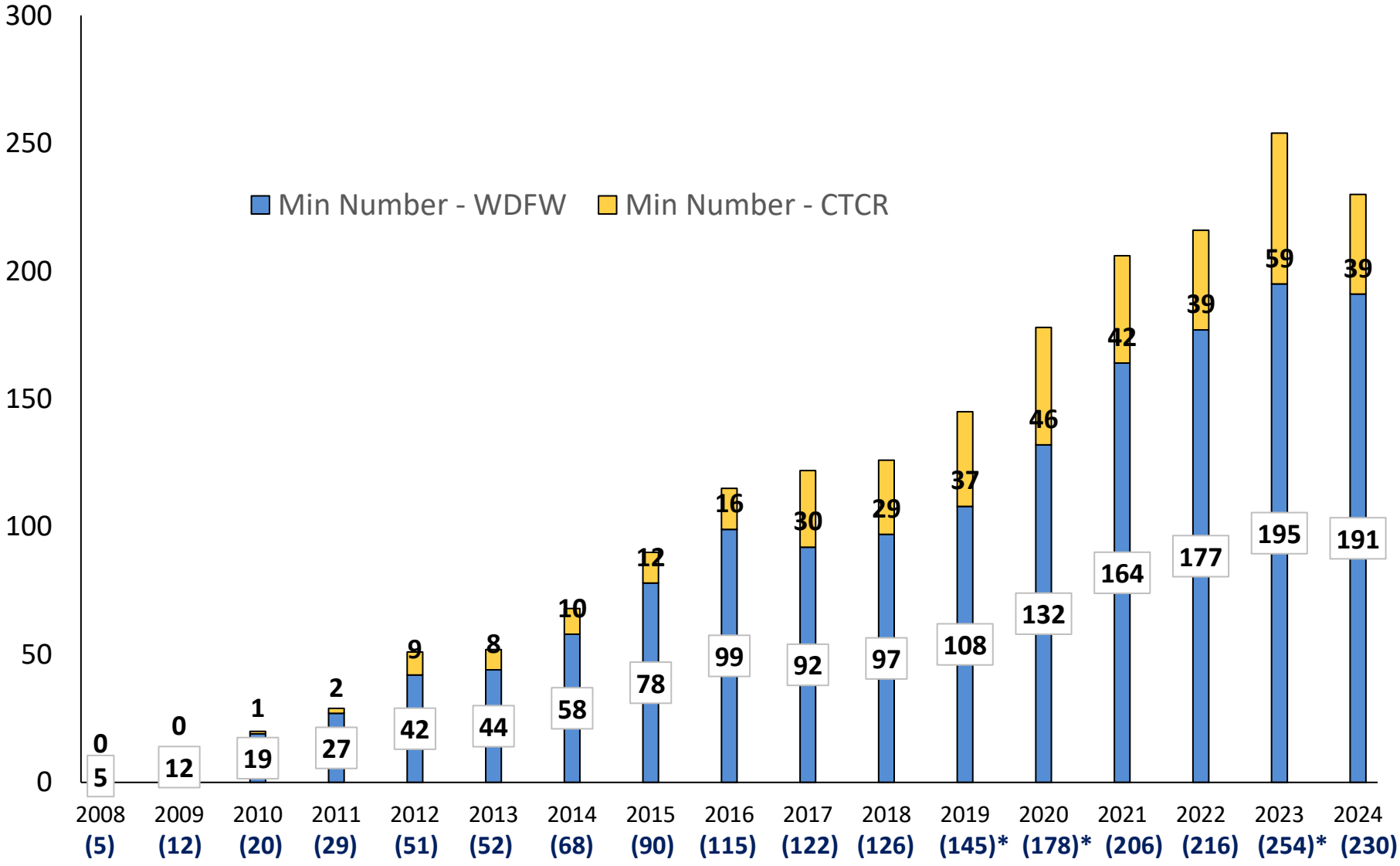
Photo by Ben Maletzke

# Wolf Population Status

| Recovery Region | Successful Breeding Pairs | Minimum Count | Number of Packs |
|---|---|---|---|
| Eastern – WDFW Co-managed | 13 | 164 | 31 |
| North Cascades | 5 | 66 | 12 |
| Southern Cascades / Northwest Coast | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 18 | 230 | 43 |

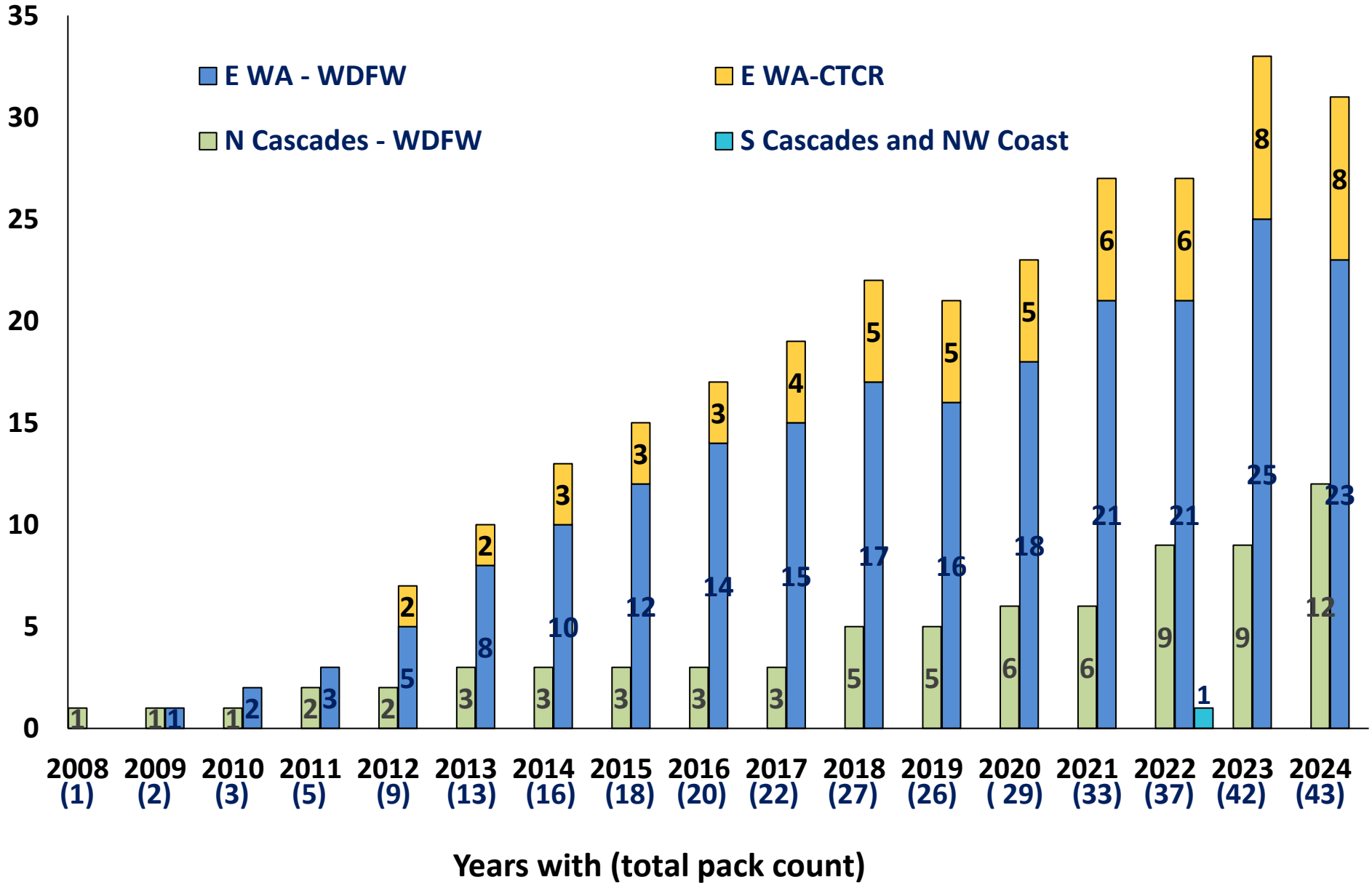
Photo by Gabe Spence

# Trend in Minimum Number of Wolves

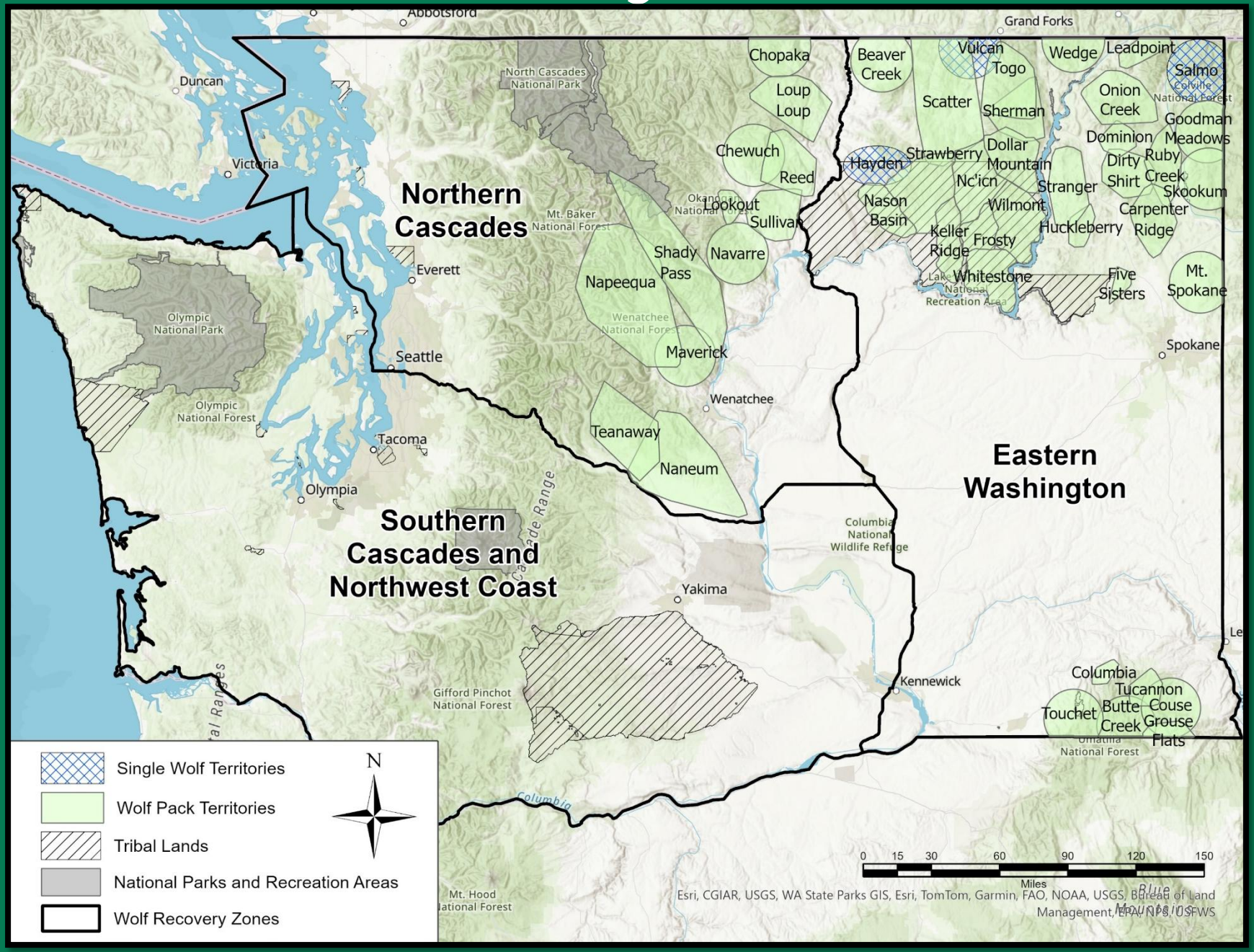



Department of Fish and Wildlife

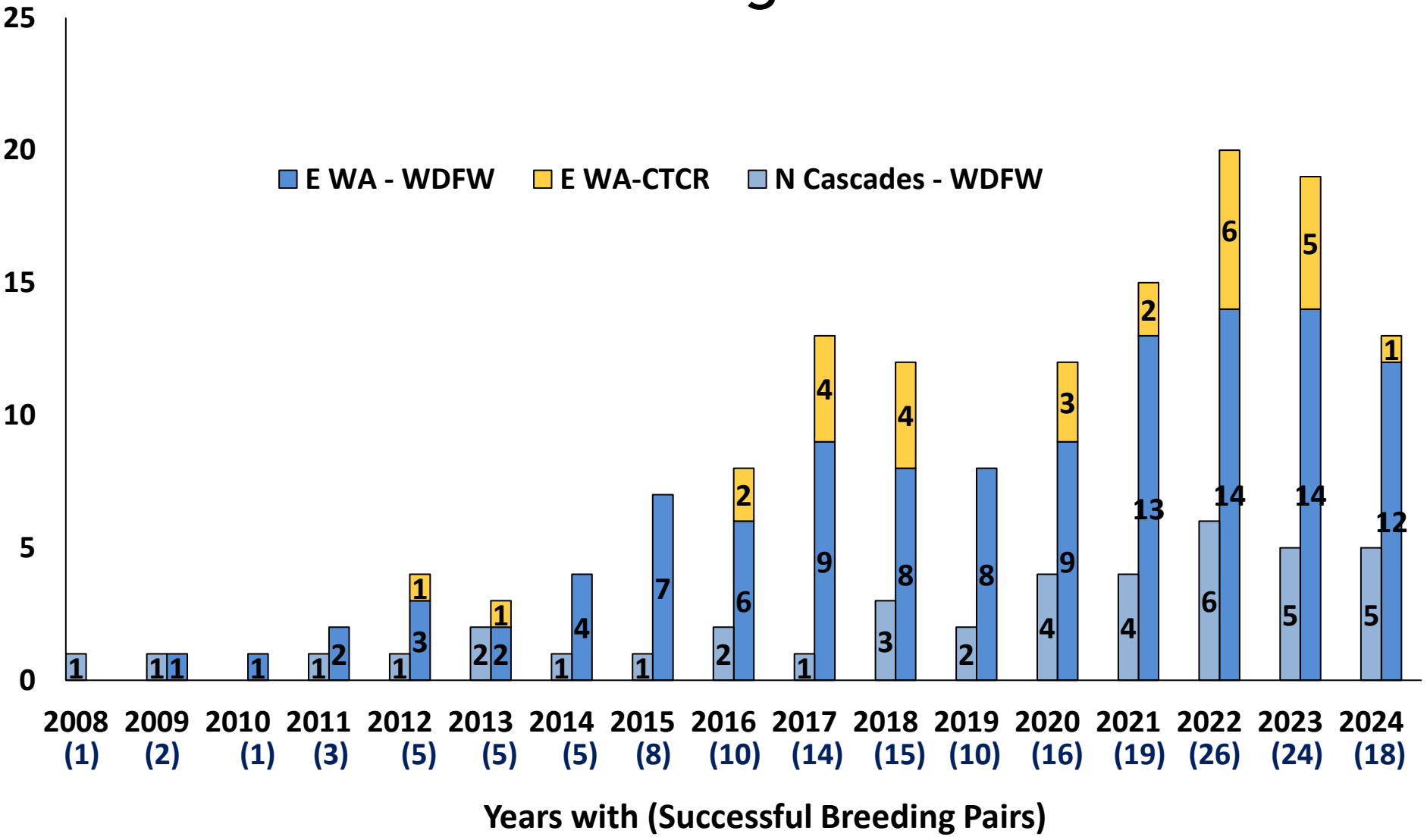
# Trend in Minimum Number of Packs



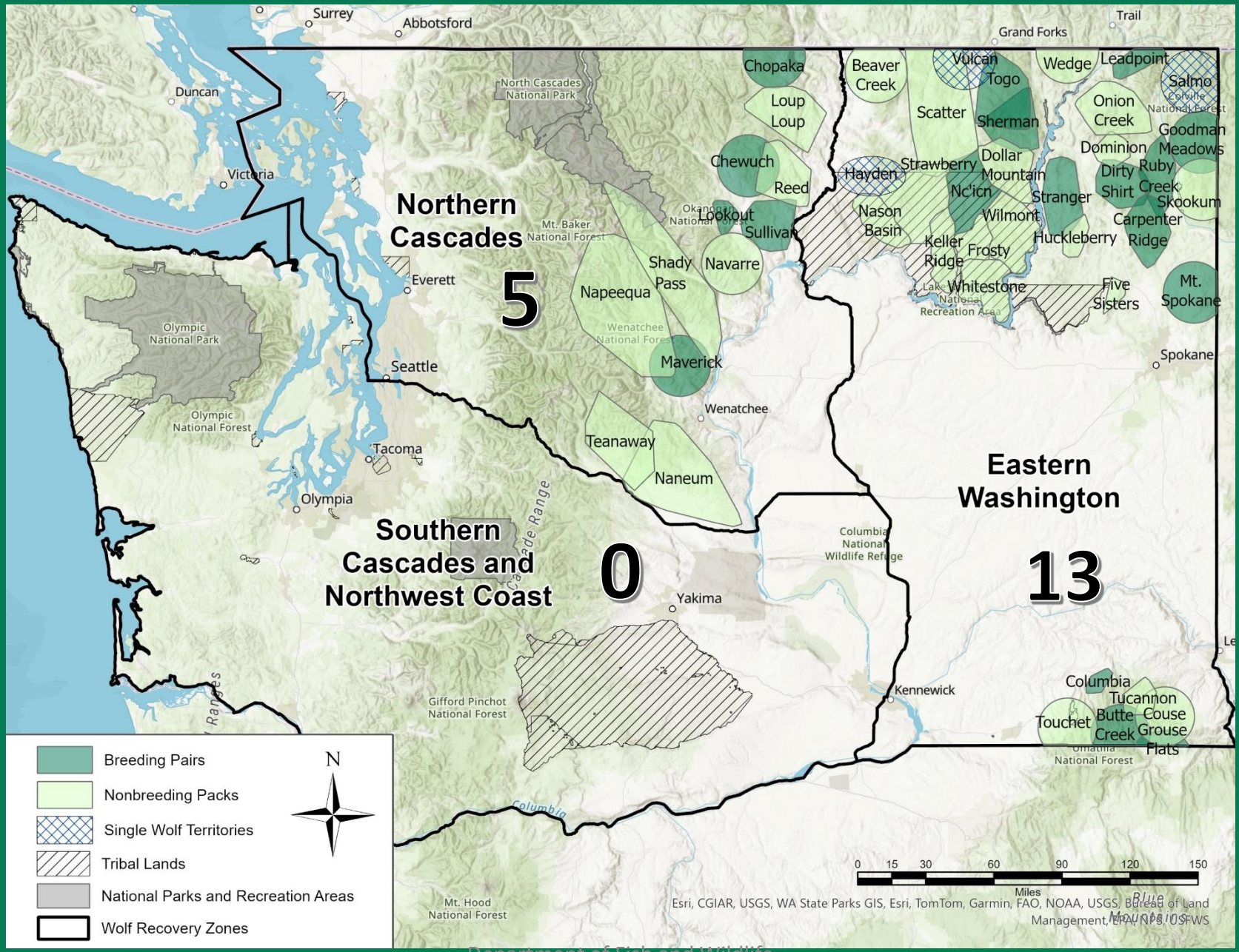
# 2024 Packs and Single Wolf Territories



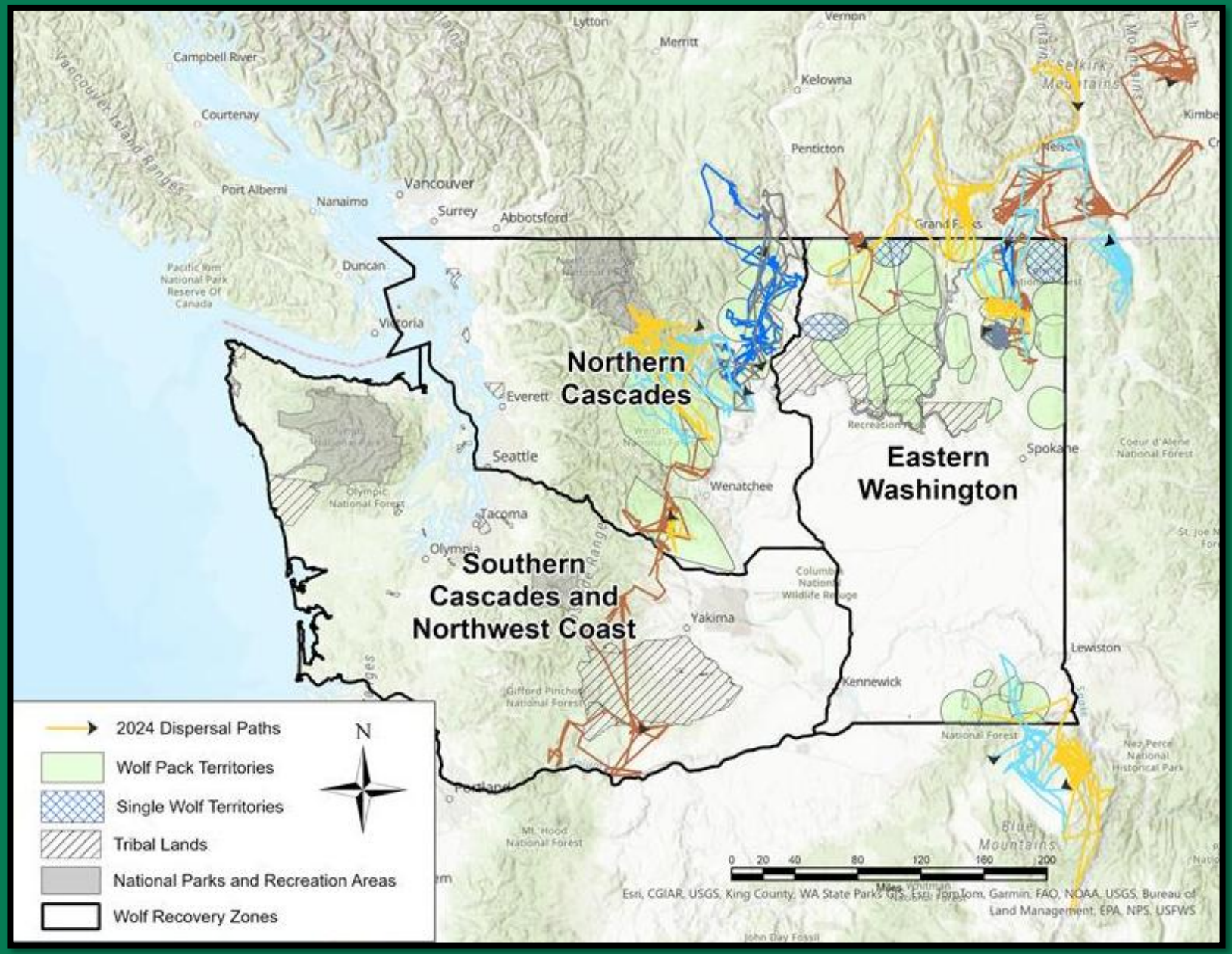
# Trend in Minimum Number of Successful Breeding Pairs



# 2024 Successful Breeding Pairs



# 2024 Known Wolf Dispersals



# 2024 Known Wolf Mortalities

| Cause | Legal Tribal Harvest | Unlawful Take (under investigation) | Agency Removal | Natural | Capture Related | Caught in the Act (WAC 220-440-080) | Ingesting plastic | Declared Self Defense |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 37 of Mortalities in 2024 | 19 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |



Gray wolves, like the one above, are a federally protected species. One was shot and killed near Goldendale in October.
Photo courtesy Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

## Wolf shot near Goldendale

### $10,000 reward for information

■ By Nathan Wilson
*Columbia Gorge News*

GOLDENDALE — On Oct. 6, Washington's Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) discovered that an adult male gray wolf was shot and killed near the intersection of Highway 142 and Glenwood Highway, just outside of Goldendale.

The wolf reportedly killed two calves on a ranch in the area, but the responsible party is still unknown. WDFW is offering a $10,000 reward for pertinent information. Call 1-844-397-8477 or fill out a form at www.fws.gov/wildlife-crime-tips if you have any details. Callers may remain anonymous.

Gray wolves are federally protected under the Endangered Species Act in about two-thirds of Washington, west of Highways 17 and 97. According to Andrew Lavelle, public affairs officer for WDFW, the maximum criminal penalty for individuals is a $100,000 fine and up to one year in prison, while the penalty for organizations is a $200,000 fine.

A native species, gray wolves were nearly eradicated from Washington in the early 1900s, but have since returned by dispersing from populations in nearby states and provinces. Wolves primarily prey on elk, deer, moose and other ungulates.

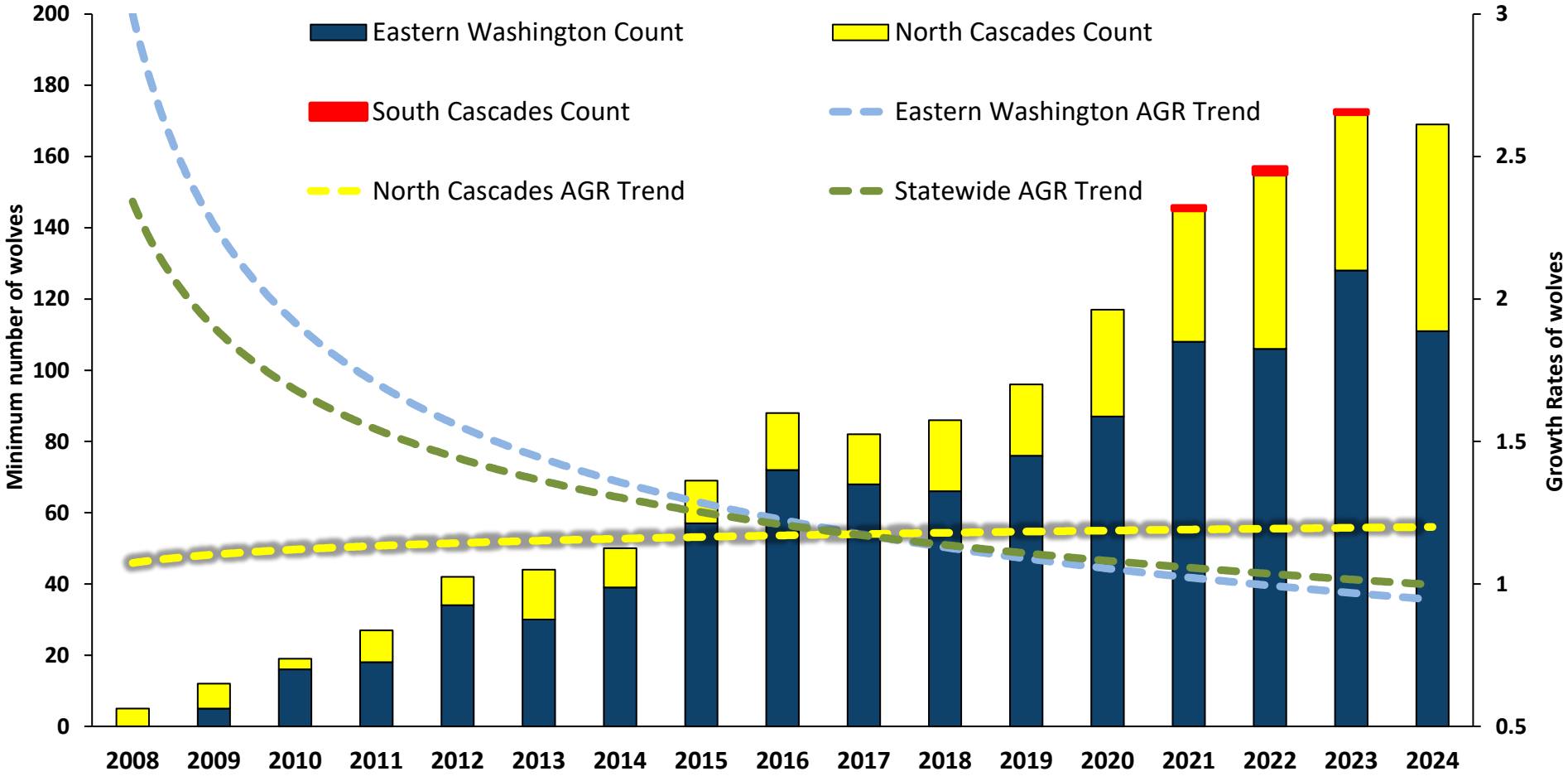
As shown by their reintroduction to Yellowstone National Park, the apex species can corral overgrazing and bolster biodiversity, but new research shows those effects are more complex — wolves aren't a so-called "magic bullet" for ecological restoration, according to *The New York Times*.

WDFW is also investigating a separate gray wolf killing that occurred southwest of Twisp in Okanogan County on Oct. 20.

| YEAR | Minimum Count | # of Packs | # of SBP | Annual Growth Rate | Known Wolf Mortality | Depredating Packs (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2008 | 5 | 1 | 1 | -- | 0 | 0% |
| 2009 | 12 | 2 | 2 | -- | 0 | 0% |
| 2010 | 20 | 3 | 1 | 67% | 2 (11%) | 0% |
| 2011 | 29 | 5 | 3 | 45% | 0 | 0% |
| 2012 | 51 | 9 | 5 | 76% | 9 (18%) | 33% |
| 2013 | 52 | 13 | 5 | 2% | 5 (10%) | 8% |
| 2014 | 68 | 16 | 5 | 31% | 10 (15%) | 13% |
| 2015 | 90 | 18 | 8 | 32% | 7 (8%) | 22% |
| 2016 | 115 | 20 | 10 | 28% | 14 (12%) | 20% |
| 2017 | 122 | 22 | 14 | 6% | 14 (12%) | 23% |
| 2018 | 126 | 27 | 15 | 3% | 12 (10%) | 19% |
| 2019 | 145* | 26 | 10* | 14% | 21 (15%) | 14% |
| 2020 | 178* | 29 | 16* | 24% | 16 (9%) | 24% |
| 2021 | 206 | 33 | 19 | 16% | 30 (15%) | 18% |
| 2022 | 216 | 37 | 26 | 5% | 37 (17%) | 19% |
| 2023 | 254* | 42 | 24 | 18% | 36 (14%) | 21% |
| 2024 | *230* | *43* | *18* | -9% | *37 (16%)* | *23%* |
| ***Average*** | | | | ***21%*** | ***(~11%)*** | ***20%*** |

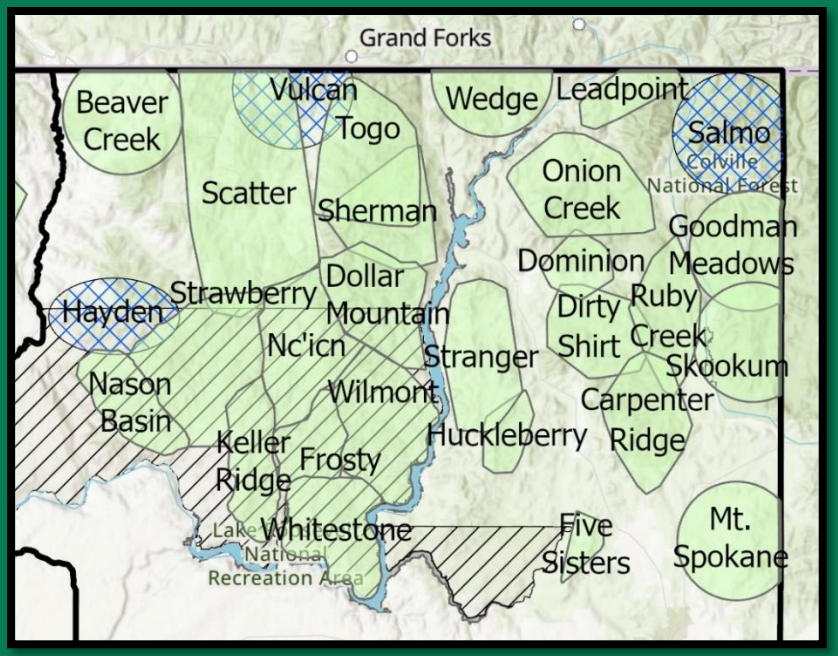
# Annual Growth Rates & # Wolves

## WDFW Managed Only



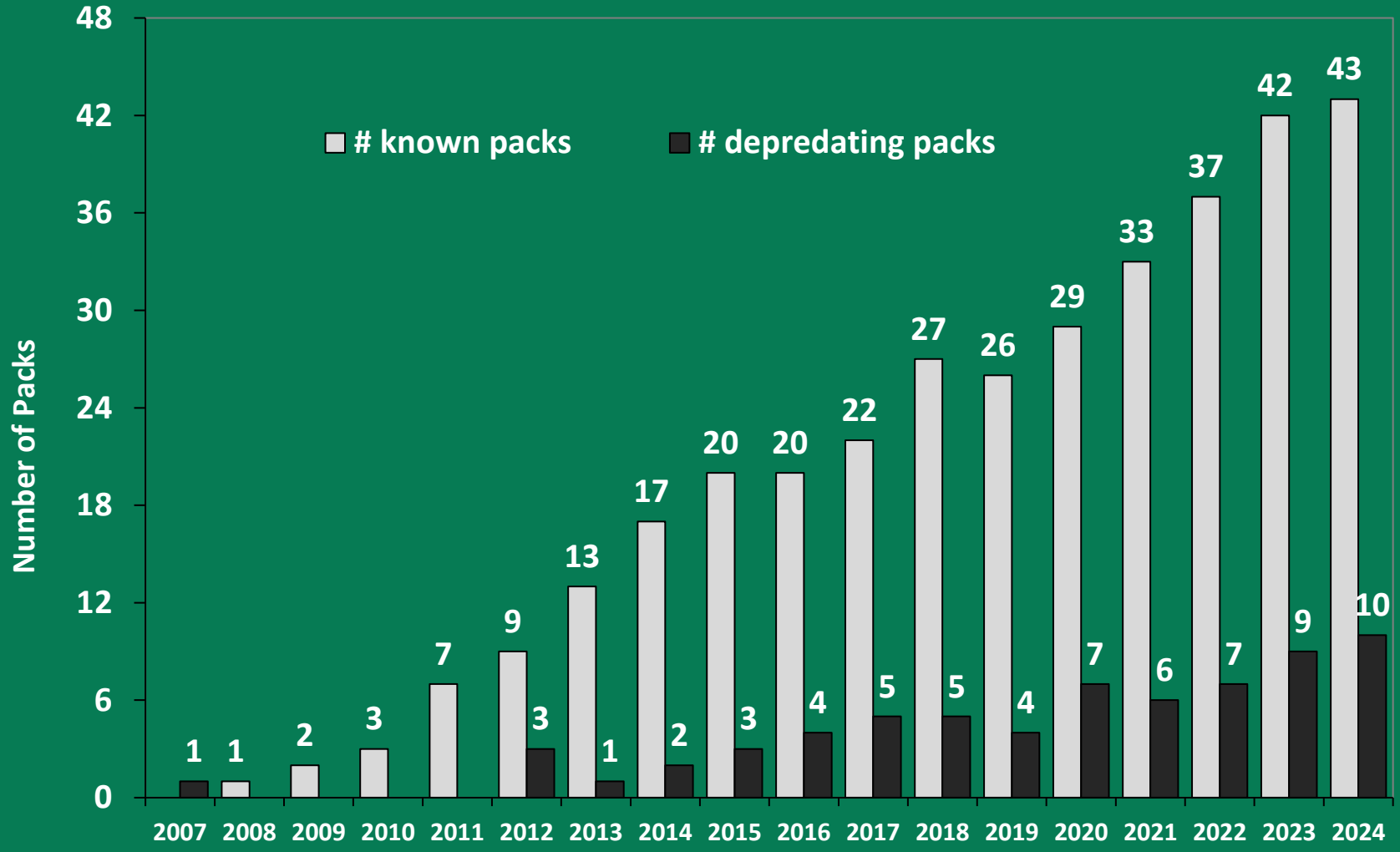
# Impacts to the Population in 2024

- **Saturation in Eastern Washington Recovery Region**
  **(Density Dependence)**
- **Dispersal out of WA**
  **(increased from ~10% to 13% based on radio-collared sample size)**
- **Unlawful Take**
  **(increased from ~5% to 11% based on radio-collared sample size)**
- **Other Mortality (consistent)**

# Wolf – Livestock Interactions

# Wolf Packs Associated with Livestock Depredations vs Total Number of Packs in 2024



# Reducing Livestock Depredations

**DPCAL's:** Cooperative agreements with 27 livestock producers – $80,195.

- Range Riders
- Improved Sanitation Practices
- Daily Livestock Checks
- Fencing

**WDFW Contracted Range Riders:** 7 range riders - $53,843.

**Direct Livestock Loss Claims:**

- **2024 –** received 10 direct claims
- **Paid** – $39,648 in compensation losses for 2023 and 2024 grazing seasons.

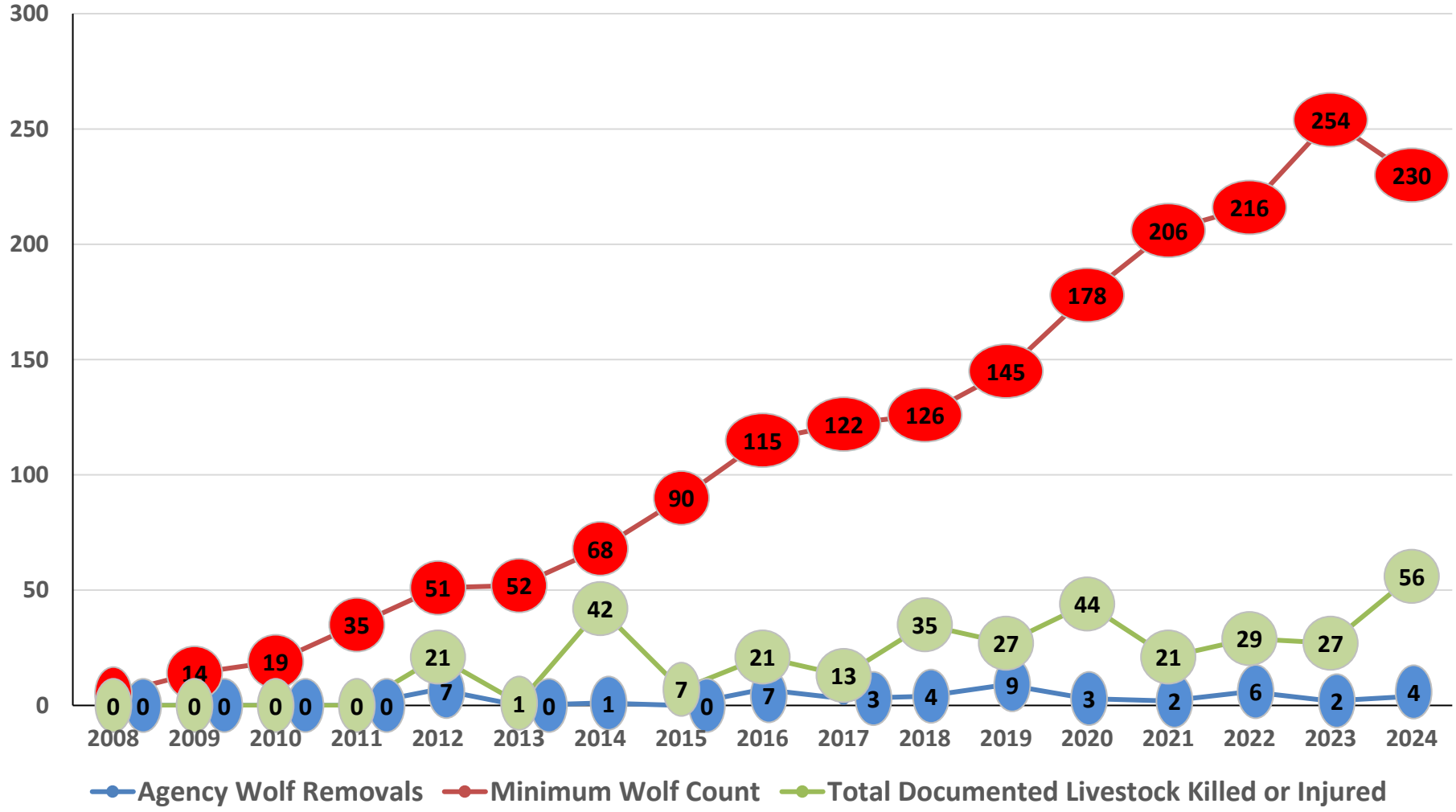
**Indirect Livestock Loss Claims:**

- **2024 –** received 5 indirect claims
- **Paid** - $99,894 for losses in 2023 and 2024 grazing seasons.

**Dept of Ag Grant (NE WA): $1,262,250 for 2023-2025 Biennium**

- CPOW - $506,000
- NEWWCC –$506,000
- NEWPROA - $125,250
- MVWC – $125,000
- Ferry & Stevens County - $184,000

# Depredations, Lethal Removal and Wolf Population, 2008 - 2024



# Wolf Management Expenditures by WDFW

## (Jan 1, 2024 – Dec 31, 2024)

| Allocation | Use | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements – Livestock (DPCAL's) | 27 Livestock Producers | $81,631 |
| Contracted Range Riders | 7 Range Riders | $49,019 |
| Livestock Losses (Indirect and Direct) | Livestock Producers | $139,543 |
| Lethal Removal Operations | Reducing Depredations on Livestock | $110,660 |
| Wolf Management | Management and Research Activities | $1,271,950 |
| Total | | $1,652,802 |

# Ongoing Research in Washington

**R. Nickerson (USU)** - Researching the effectiveness of Range Riding to Prevent Depredations on Livestock

**B. Nickerson (Swinomish Indian Tribal Community)** - Life on the Edge: Large Mammal Populations on a Wolf Recolonization Frontier

**S. Wasser (UW)** - Monitoring Impacts of Wolf Recovery on Medium to Large Carnivores and Their Prey in Washington State

**Lara Volski and Vivan Hawkinson (UW)** – The Social and Ecological Drivers of Human-Wolf Interactions

Recent Publications:


Anderson, R. M., Charnley, S., Martin, J. V., & Epstein, K. 2024. Large, rugged and remote: The challenge of wolf–livestock coexistence on federal lands in the American West. *People and Nature*, 00, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1002/pan3.10713

Malesis, A.N., R.M. Windell, C.M Vanbianchi, L.R. Prugh. 2024. Coyotes take advantage of ungulate carrion subsidies as wolves recolonize Washington. Canadian Journal of Zoology. Vol. 102, No. 10. https://doi.org/10.1139/cjz-2024-0019

Merz, L., N.T. Bergmann, C.L. Brown, J.V. Martin, C.B. Wardropper, J.T. Bruskotter, and N.H. Carter. 2025. State-level variation drives wolf management in the northwestern United States. Environmental Research Ecology, Vol. 4, No. 1.

Petracca, L.P., Gardner, B., Maletzke, B.T., and S.J. Converse. 2024. Merging integrated population models and individual-based models to project population dynamics of recolonizing species. *Biological Conservation.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2023.110340

Petracca, L.P., Gardner, B., Maletzke, B.T., and S.J. Converse. In review. Forecasting dynamics of a recolonizing wolf population under different management strategies. Animal Conservation.

# Questions?

Photo by Trent Roussin