

Status of Poaching in Oregon



**OREGON
STATE
POLICE**

Presented by: Lieutenant Steve Lane, Wildlife Section
Fish and Wildlife Division
April 2009

Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife Division

Purpose and Mission:

To assure compliance with laws and regulations, which protect and enhance the long-term health and equitable utilization of Oregon's fish and wildlife resources.

Equally important are services to the public, public safety, and enforcement of all criminal and traffic laws.

“We are the guardians of Oregon’s fish and wildlife”



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Oregon Facts to Consider

- 97,131 square miles
- 112,000 miles of streams
- 6,000 lakes
- 296 miles of coastline
- 72,400 square miles of Pacific Ocean
- Population exceeds 3.7 million and is increasing
- In 2008, ODFW sold 698,388 angling licenses and 261,420 hunting licenses.



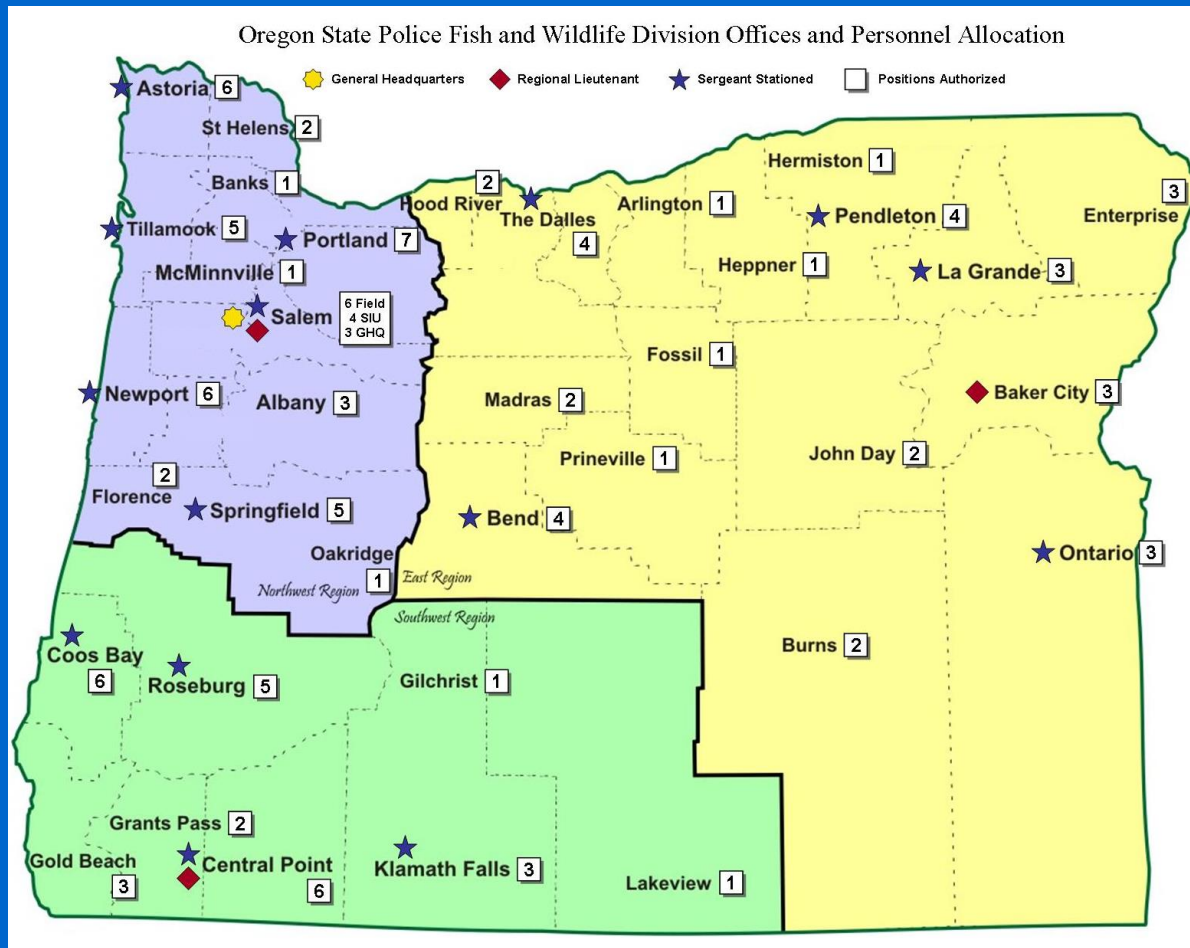
Division Information

- Division is the sole responsible source of fish and wildlife enforcement in Oregon
- Oregon is one of only two states, the other being Alaska, in which the responsibility for fish and wildlife law enforcement rests with the Department of State Police.
- Authorized strength of 119 members strategically located around the state:
 - 1 Captain
 - 5 Lieutenants (2 GHQ Wildlife and Fisheries Sections, 3 Regional)
 - 16 Sergeants (1 SIU, 15 Field)
 - 97 Troopers (1 DEQ, 2 SIU, 3 Pilots, 91 Field)



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Authorized Positions



What is Poaching?

- Illegal taking of wildlife
- Waste of wildlife
- Closed season
- Snagging
- No license/tag
- Borrowing a tag
- Hunting for another
- Exceeding the bag limit
- Taking with aid of artificial light
- “Total disregard for any rules and regulations”



What is Poaching?

Wildlife Thieves Do This



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What is Poaching?



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What is Poaching?

Not by the Legal Hunter or Fisherman

Poaching:

- “To encroach upon especially for the purpose of taking something;”
- “To trespass for the purpose of stealing game; *also*: to take game or fish illegally;”

Poacher:

- “One that trespasses or steals;” and
- “One who kills or takes wild animals (as game or fish) illegally” (www.m-w.com).



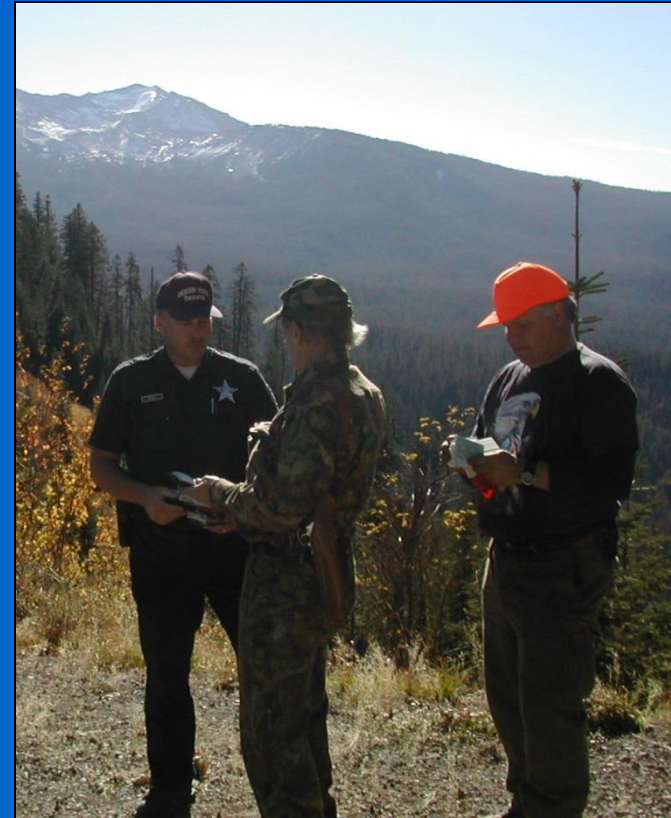
Compliance Report

- In 1988, the Fish and Wildlife Division commenced tracking hunting and angling compliance.
- Legislature directed the Division to record illegal kills
- Needed some record of what species and how many big game animals being killed illegally and where the kills occurred
- Current program developed 1995 and input commenced 1996
- Input furnished by the field trooper
- Defined by specific species (priority)
- Big game management unit
- Waterbody also collected
- Contacts (people involved with the species/priority)
- People not in compliance (NIC) with the laws/regulations
- Illegal kills (big game animals/dusky geese/specific fish species)

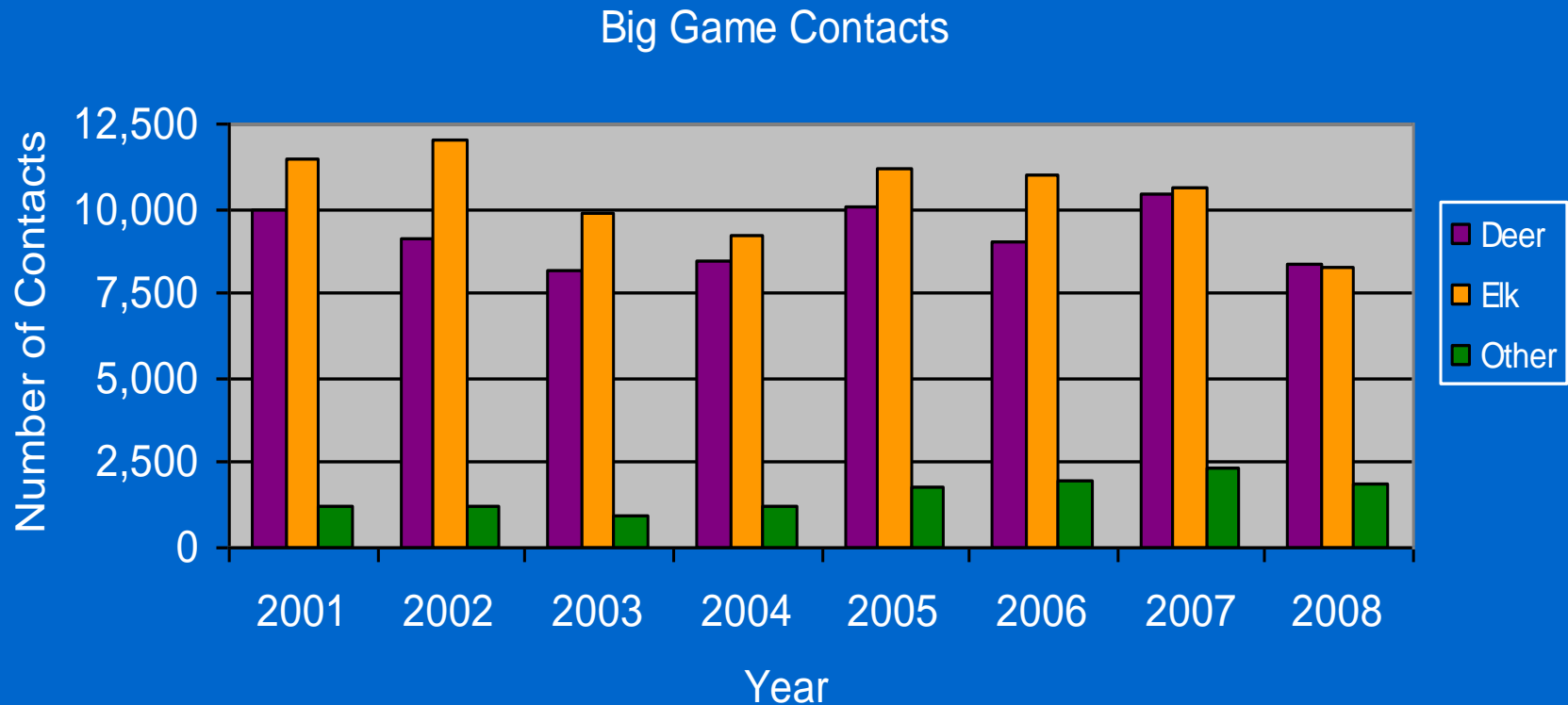


How is Compliance Determined?

- Number of people contacted
- Divided by people “NIC”
- Compliance rate developed
- Is the compliance rate accurate?
- Not scientific

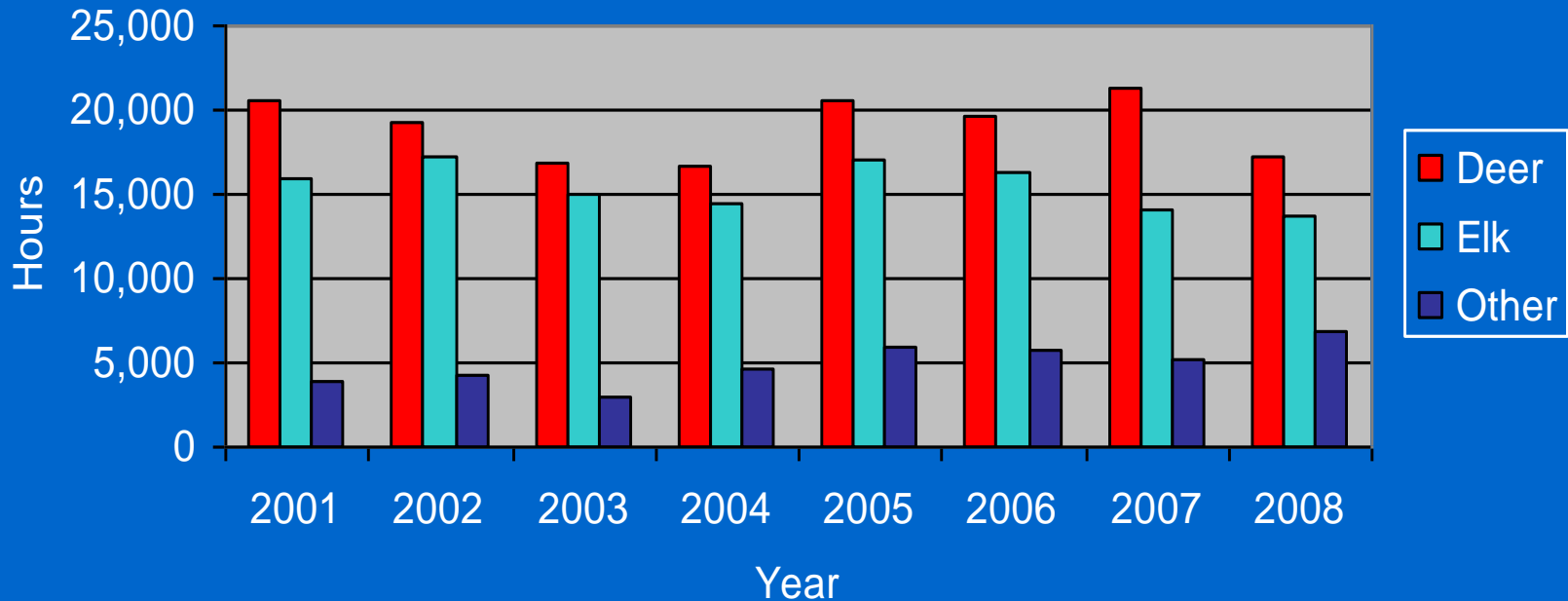


Big Game Contacts



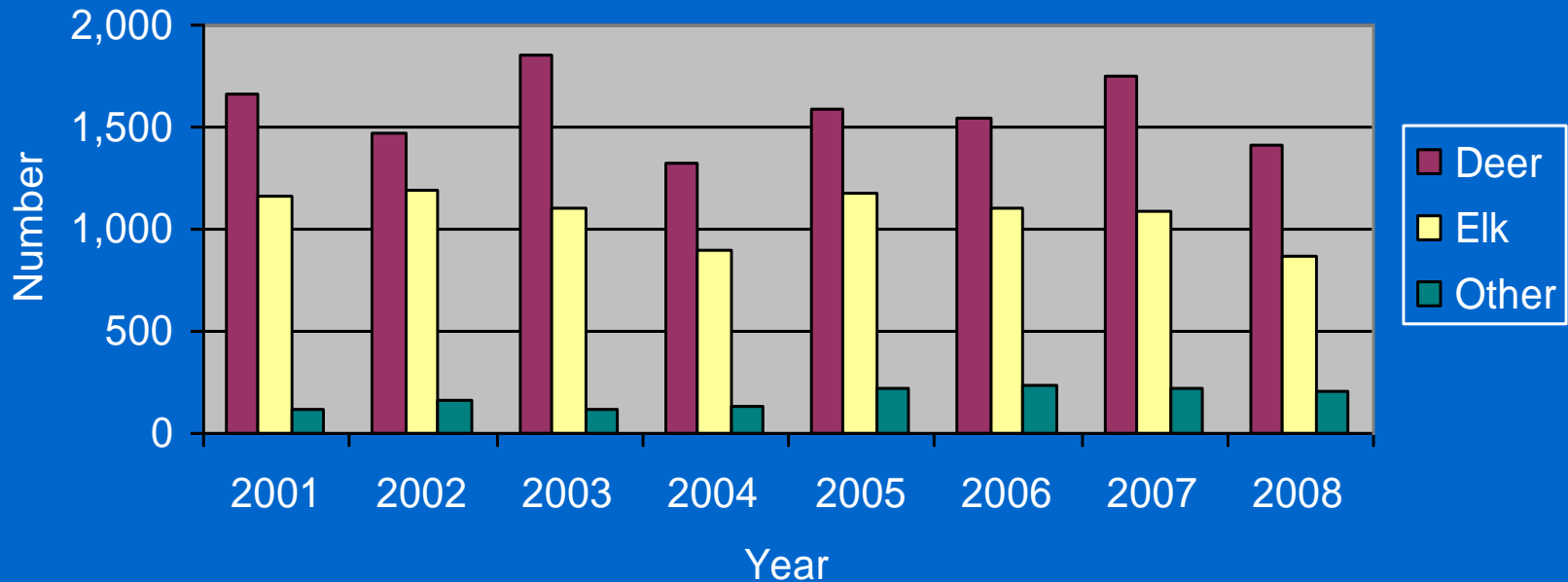
Big Game Hours

Big Game Hours Worked



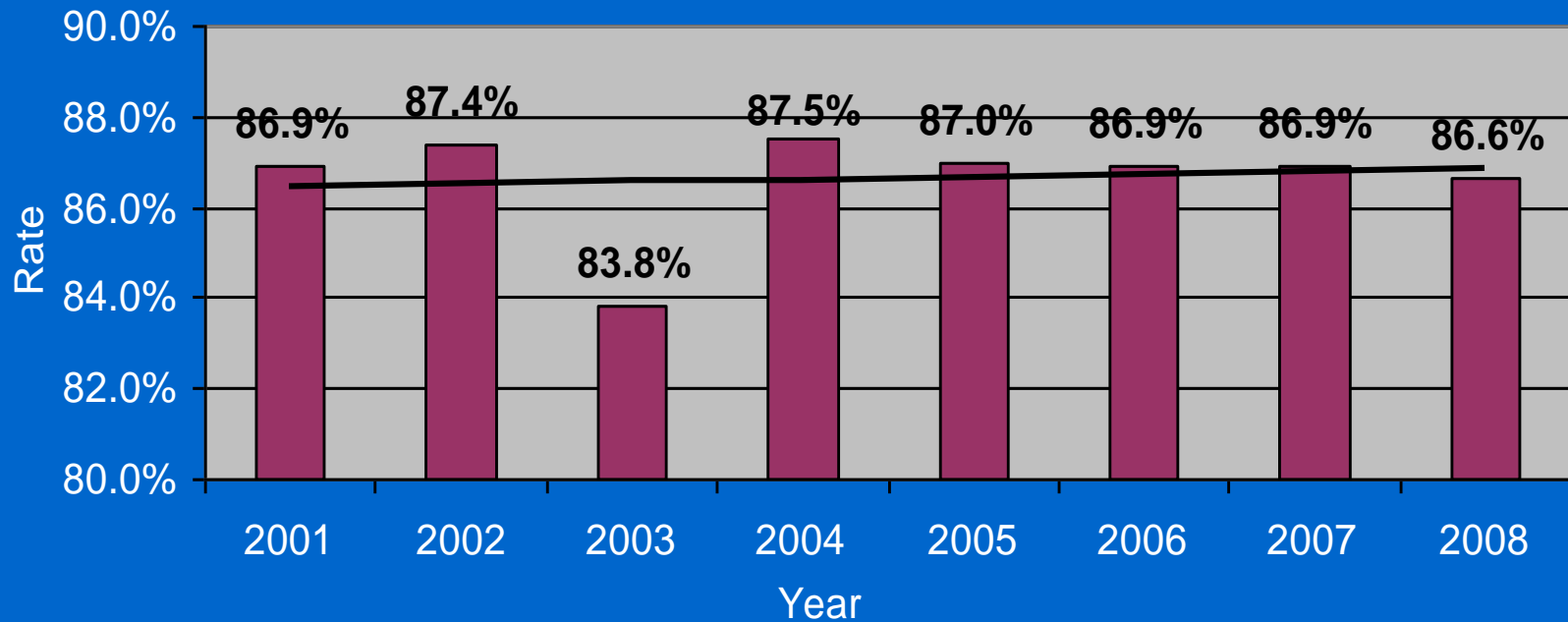
Big Game Not in Compliance

Big Game Not in Compliance



Big Game Compliance Rate

Big Game Compliance Rate



Illegal Kills

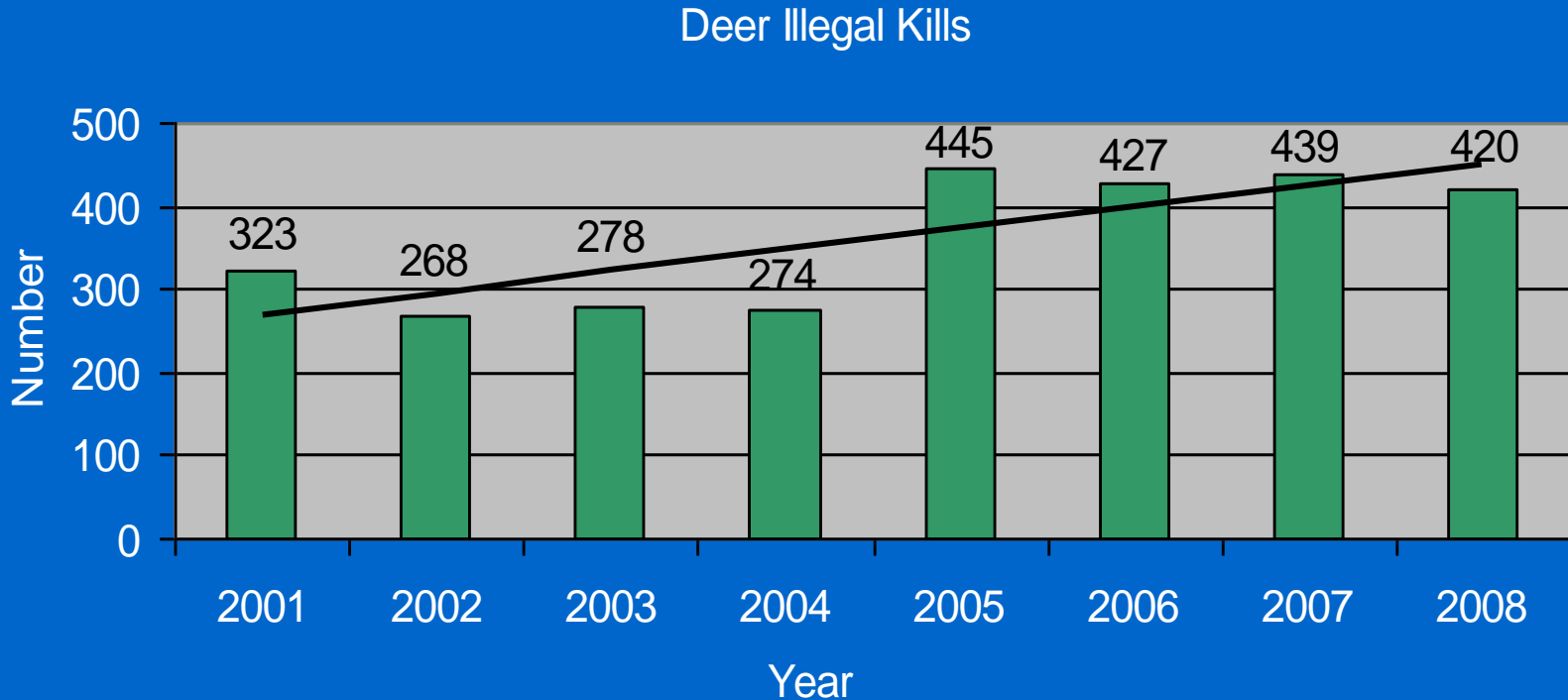


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Illegal Kills



Deer Illegal Kills 2001-2008



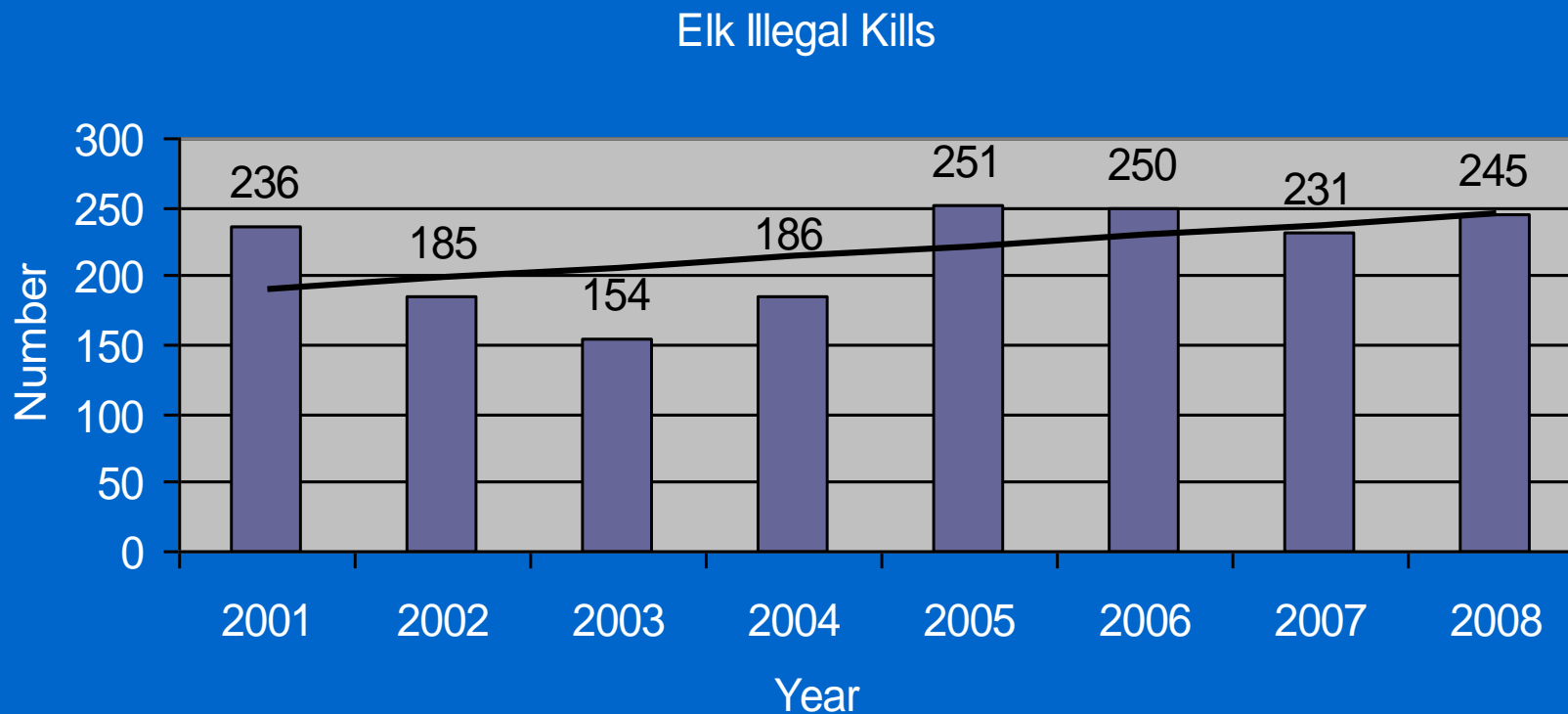
Total Kills During 2001-2008: 2,874

Value (@ \$800 each): **\$2,299,200**



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Elk Illegal Kills 2001-2008



Total Kills During 2001-2007: 1,738

Value (@ \$1,500 each): **\$2,607,000**



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Other Big Game Illegal Kills 2001-2008

	Quantity	Value	Total
Antelope	88	\$800	\$70,400
Other/Mountain Goat	9	\$6,800	\$61,200
Big Horn Sheep	17	\$6,800	\$115,600
Bear	137	\$800	\$109,600
Cougar	78	\$800	\$62,400
Wolf	1	\$1,000	\$1,000
Total Value			\$420,200

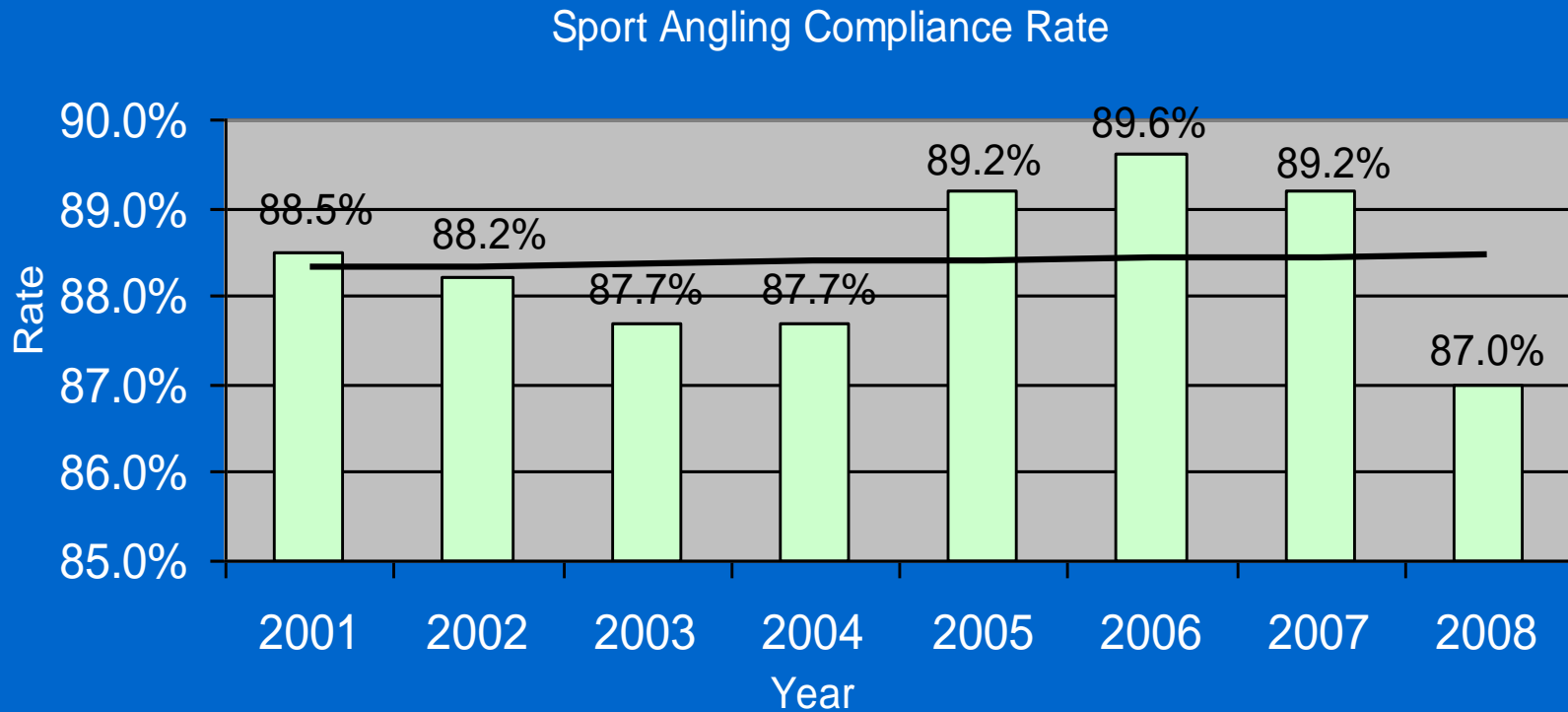


Sport Angling



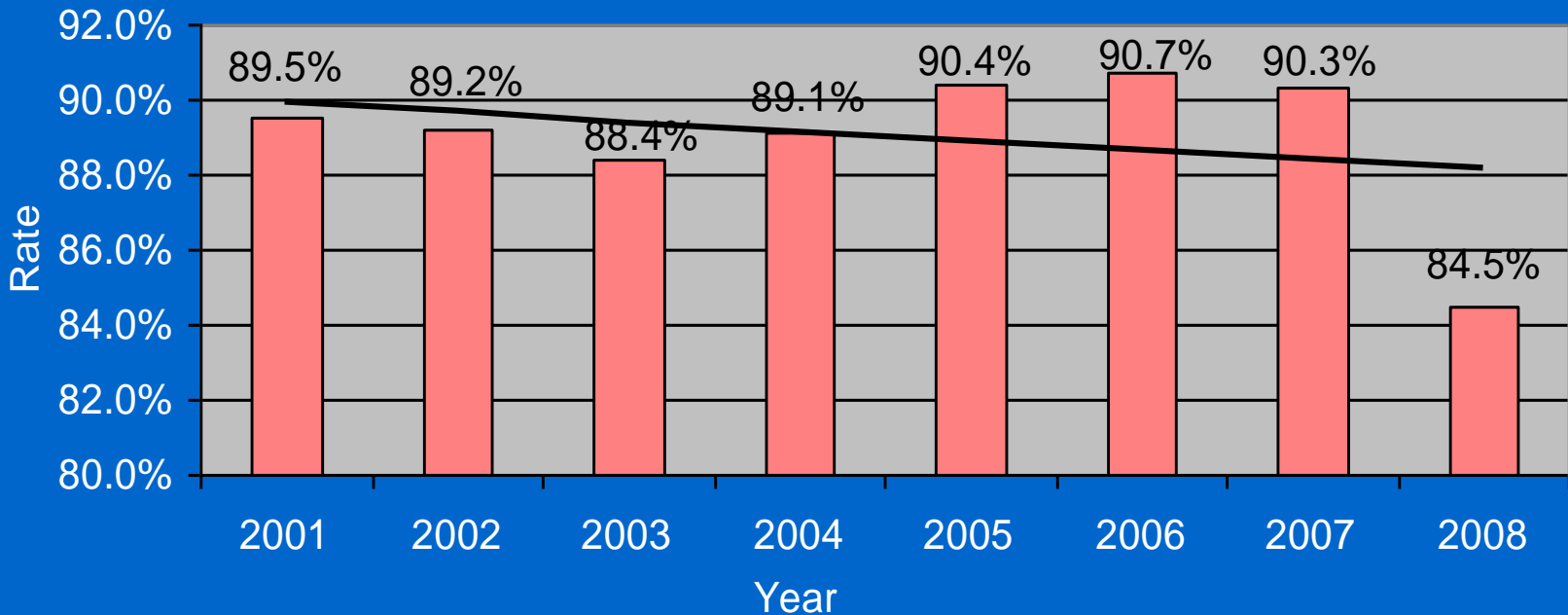
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Sport Angling Compliance Rate

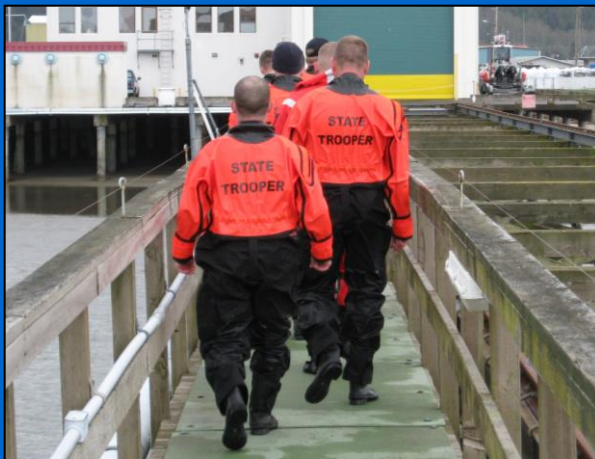


Salmon/Steelhead Compliance Rate

Salmon/Steelhead Compliance Rate

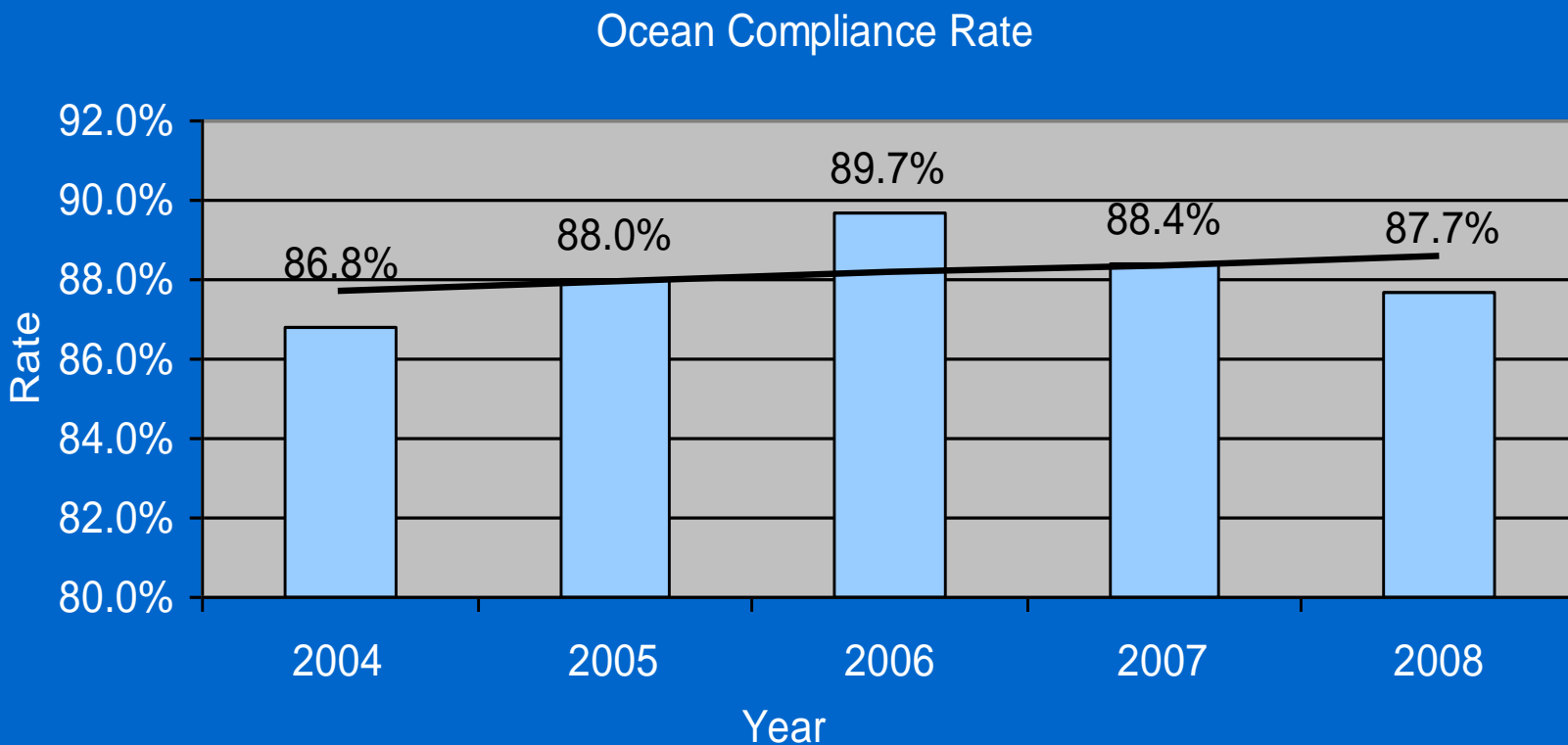


Ocean, Marine, and Commercial Fish

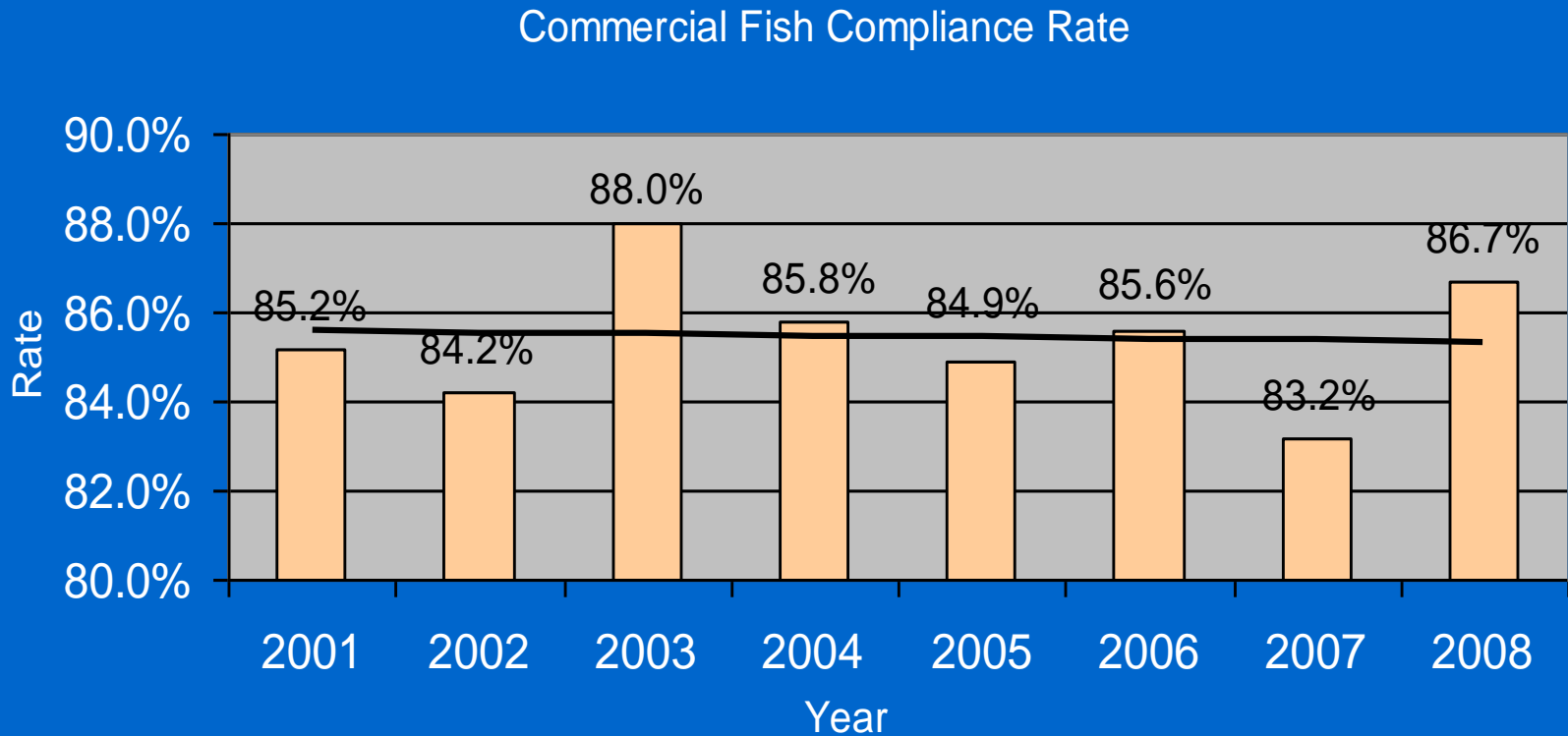


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Ocean Compliance Rate



Commercial Fish Compliance Rate



South Central Oregon Deer Mortality Study

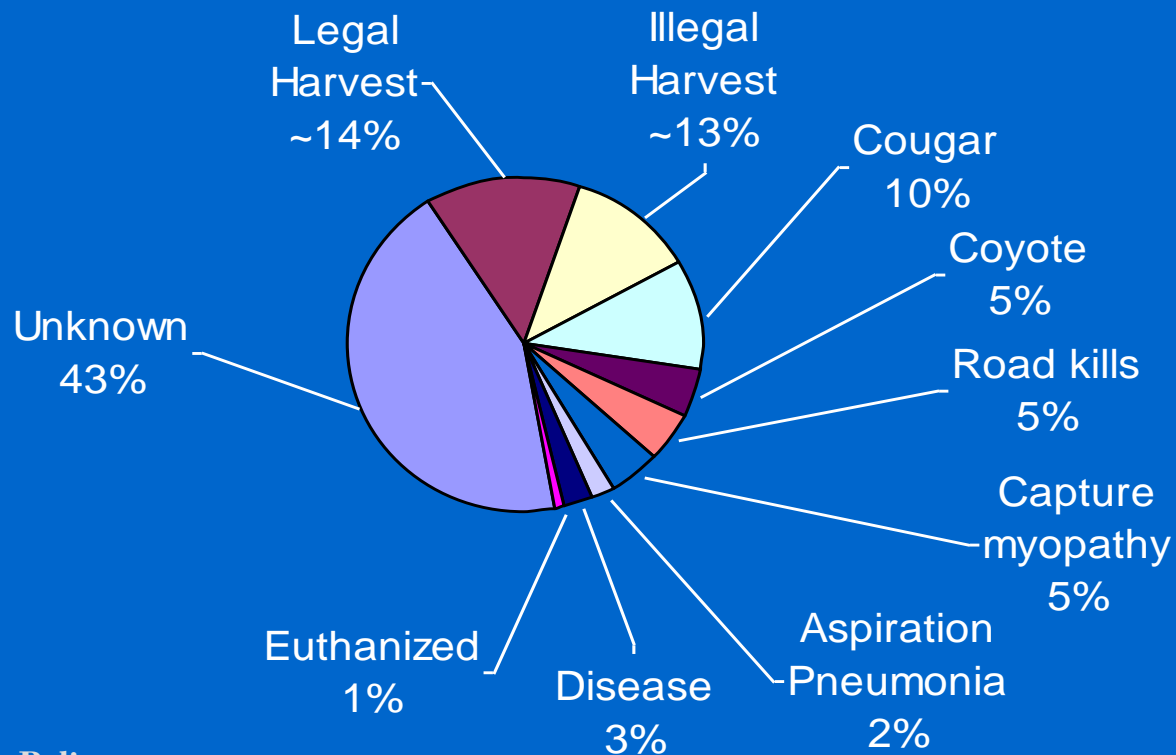
- Information provided by Autumn Larkins, Acting Assistant Project Leader, Wildlife Research, ODFW, Bend
- Mortalities must follow strict guidelines to be positively identified in each particular category
- Mortalities are not just guesses or even educated guesses
- Mortalities must be proven
- Information illustrates
 - Legal harvest percentage is most likely accurate
 - Illegal harvest may in fact be higher than the percentage shown on the graph due to any number of unknowns that the animals were poached or predated (but there was not enough evidence to be positively placed in those categories).



ODFW East Slope Cascades Mule Deer Project Causes of Mortality for Collared Deer 2005-2008

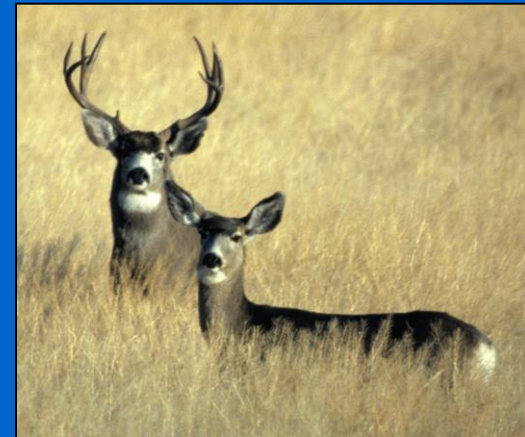
214 mule deer collared, 109 deer died

ODFW determined legal take 15, illegal take 14



Action Plan

- Interstate Big Game Management Unit Action Plan, author Sergeant Randy Hand, OSP Fish and Division, Klamath Falls
- Plan commenced 2004
- Contact made with hunters in the field or in a vehicle with firearm readily available to that person
- Information received on violations occurring
- First year: 16 hunters contacted, 4 with no tags
- Troopers came from other areas when possible
- Persons asked if they were hunting? Many claimed not hunting but had a deer rifle.
- “Hunt” defined is to take or attempt to take any wildlife by means involving the use of a weapon or with the assistance of any mammal or bird.
- WED operations validated concerns by number of people firing at the WED



Action Plan Statistics

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Totals
WED Operations	0	17	19	13	8	57
Hours of WED Operation	0	40.5	34	24	10.5	109
Officer Hours WED	0	86	81	62	21	250
Hunters contacted	16	100	40	43	78	277
Hunters w/o tags	4	22	13	7	7	53
Estimated NIC%	25%	22%	33%	16%	9%	19%



Action Plan

- Initial estimate of 25% non-compliance prior to action plan probably very close
- Action plan was discussed at meeting of sportsmen's groups and banquets.
- Two local newspaper articles written on plan and compliance issues.
- Note: Buck/100 does ratio

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
West (Increased enforcement)	11	12	18	23	23
East Unchanged enforcement)	18	28	24	14	16

- Did the action plan/increased enforcement result in change??



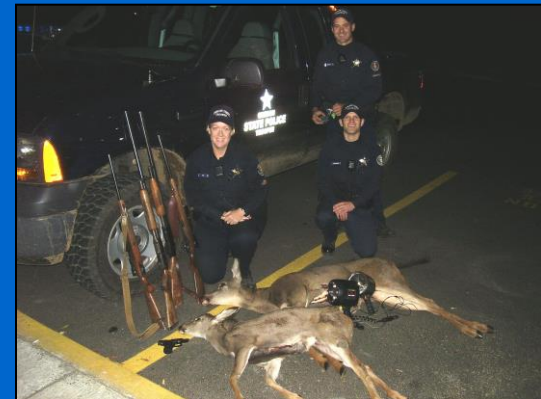
Wildlife Enforcement Decoy (WED)

- Established in 1991
- Decoys include deer, elk, bear, antelope, and turkey.
- Primary goal is for troopers and violators to be in the same place at the same time, thus giving the ability to catch a violator, without the loss of wildlife.
- 2007 Statistics:
 - 227 total WED operations statewide
 - 546 total operation hours (257 day, 269 night)
 - 1,321 total man hours
 - 46 operations during closed season
 - 579 people observed the decoy
 - 109 fired at decoy
 - 142 citations issued
- Examples of charges:
 - Taking Deer Closed Season
 - Exceeding Bag Limit
 - Hunting with Aid of Light
 - Shooting From Roadway
 - No License / Tag



Aircraft Program

- Provides aerial support to Fish and Wildlife troopers and ODFW for wildlife management
- Three fixed-wing aircraft (Salem, Bend, and Baker City)
- Support provided to other OSP divisions, as well as other public safety and natural resource agencies
- Program has been effective at:
 - Locating persons illegally hunting at night
 - Patrolling rivers, lakes, and ocean for illegal fishing
 - Identifying and patrolling high-activity and unlawful hunting/angling in remote areas
 - Rapid deployment of troopers to locations throughout Oregon
 - Assisting other state and federal agencies
 - Wildlife management
 - Natural resource/watershed protection
 - Locating lost/injured recreationalists



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Questions?



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