

WAC 220-415-120
Bighorn Sheep Seasons 2019
WAC 220-412-070
Auction-Raffle Special Permits



Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

Rich Harris, Ph.D.
Bighorn Sheep, Moose, Mountain Goat, and Pronghorn
Antelope Section Manager, Game Division
Wildlife Program

Bighorn Sheep

- Minor revisions in ram permit levels
- Deliberate herd reduction in Yakima Canyon to assist program designed to remove pneumonia pathogen





GMU open in 2018

Wenaha
 Bighorn herd shared with Oregon; Umatilla Tribe also has hunting rights – will rotate access



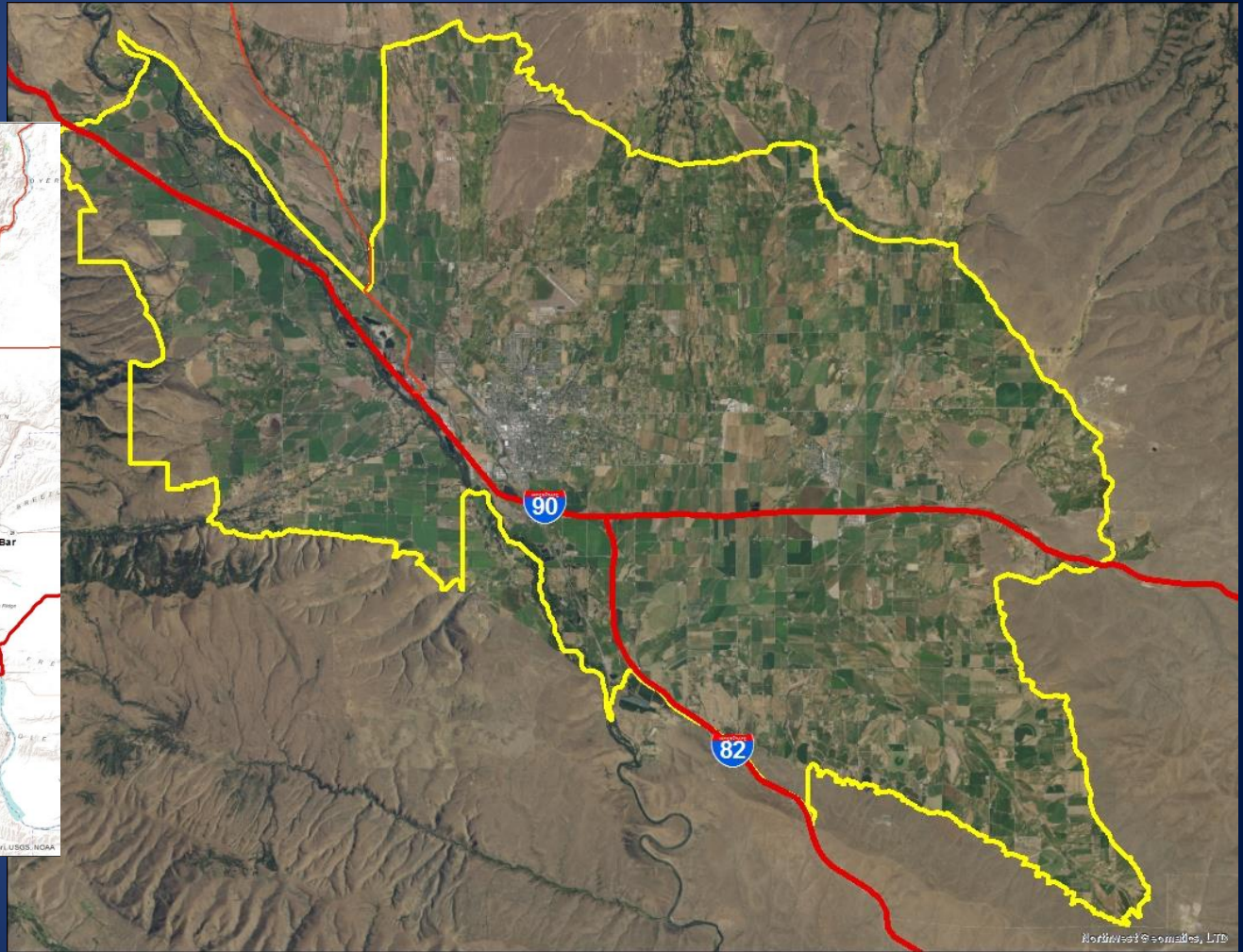
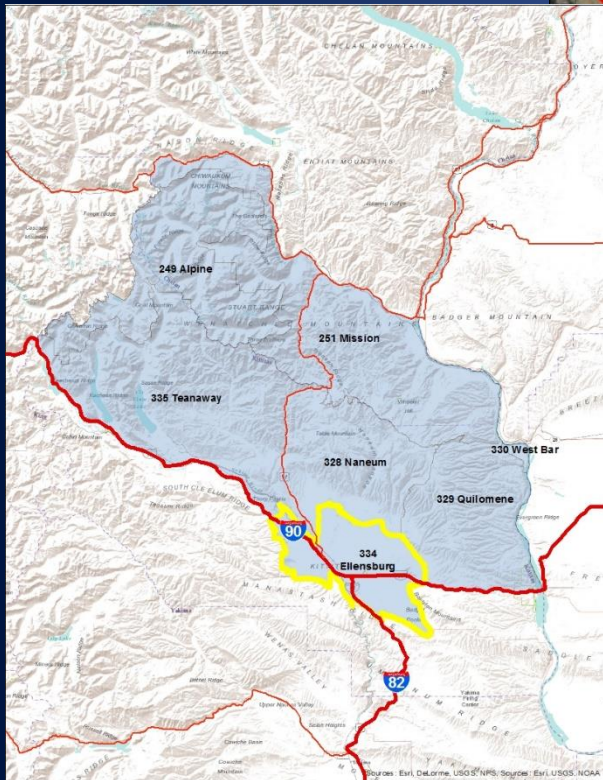
GMU proposed for 2019

Mountain view

Elk Auction, Raffle, and Special Incentive Permits

- Allow holders of the following auction, raffle, and special incentive permits to hunt elk in GMU 334 (Ellensburg)
 - Eastside Elk Auction Permit
 - Eastside Elk Raffle Permit
 - South-Central Washington Big Game Raffle Permit
 - Eastern Washington Elk Incentive Permit
- Located within the Colockum Elk Herd Area
- Currently excluded because most of the GMU consists of private residential and agricultural lands

GMU 334

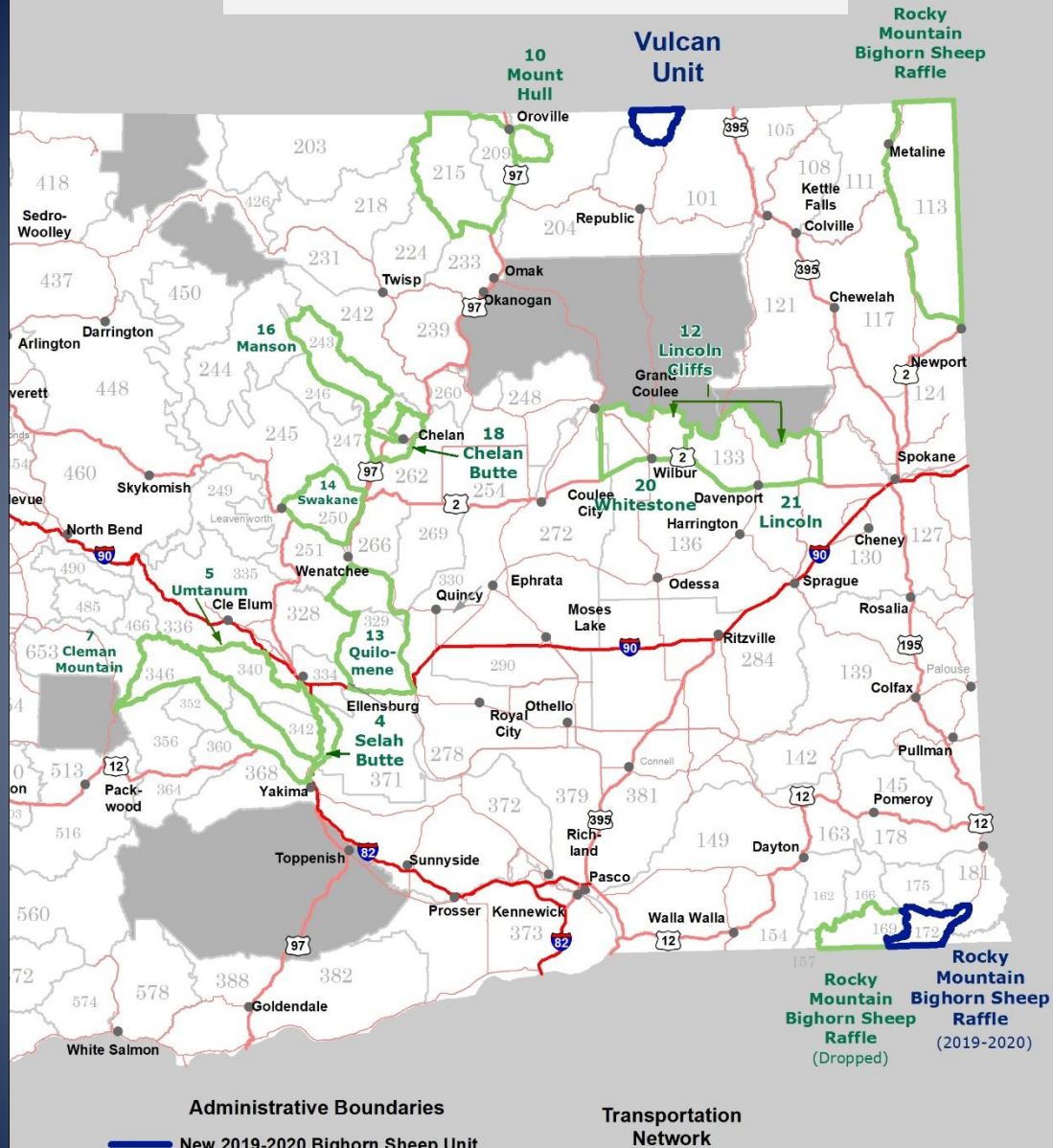


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Elk Permits Continued

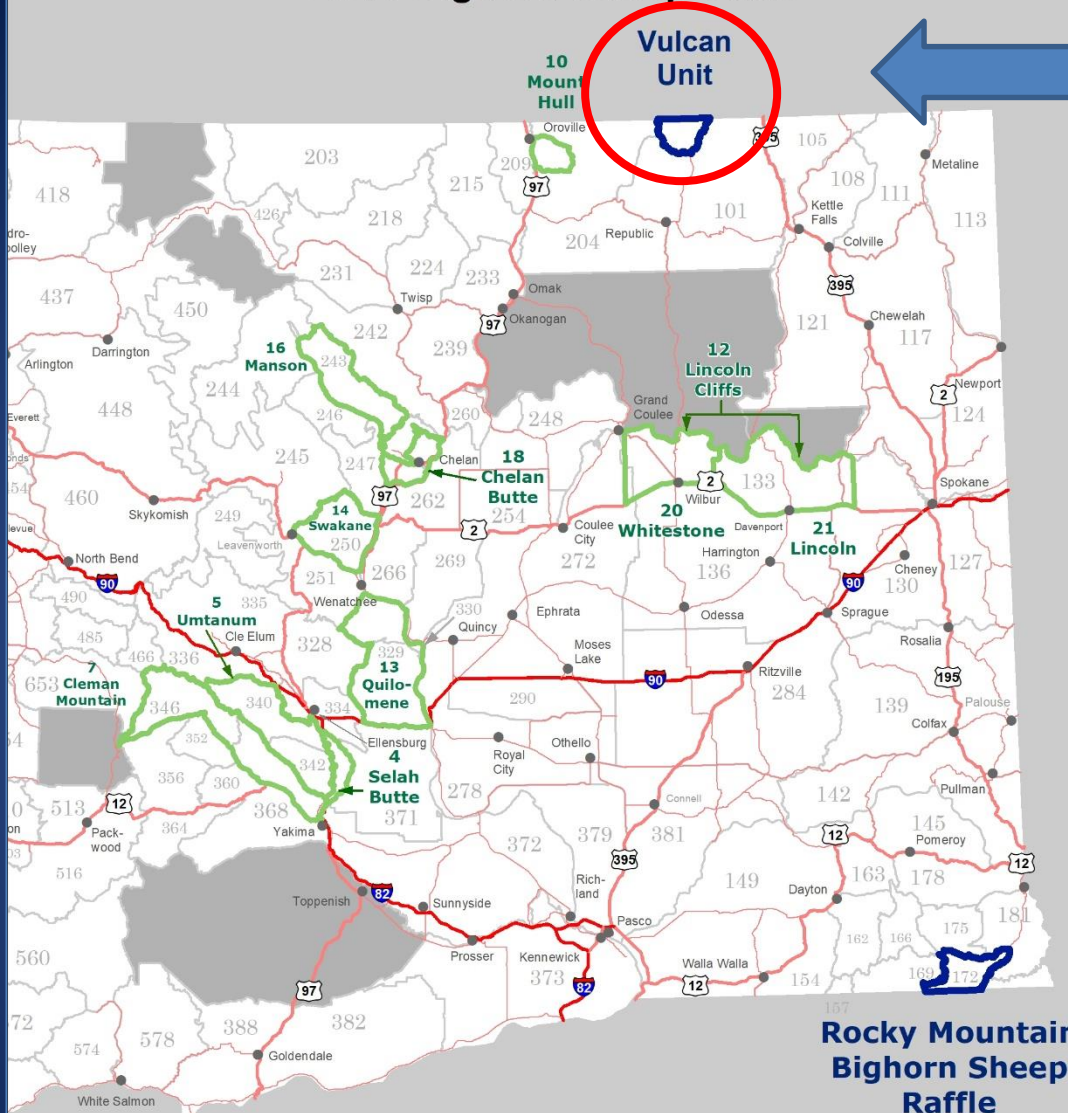
- The Department limits elk numbers within GMU 334 by offering opportunities to harvest spike (or true spike) bulls and antlerless elk during general seasons
- Currently no opportunities for recreational hunters to harvest branch-antlered bulls
- The number of branch-antlered bulls has steadily increased and are frequently the source of damage complaints
- The Department is also proposing to add opportunities in GMU 334 during Quality and Bull special permit hunts
- Opportunities to harvest branch-antlered bulls would:
 - Reduce the number of branch-antlered bulls
 - Reduce human-elk conflicts
 - Provide additional opportunities for hunters

Bighorn sheep hunt units 2019



2019 Bighorn Sheep Units

Vulcan Mtn herd



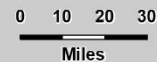
Population Growing slowly
 Good number of Rams:
 Add 1 ram permit (CCT will also)

Administrative Boundaries

- ▬ 2019 Bighorn Sheep Unit
- ▬ 2018 and 2019 Bighorn Sheep Unit
- City or Town
- ▭ Land Outside WDFW Jurisdiction

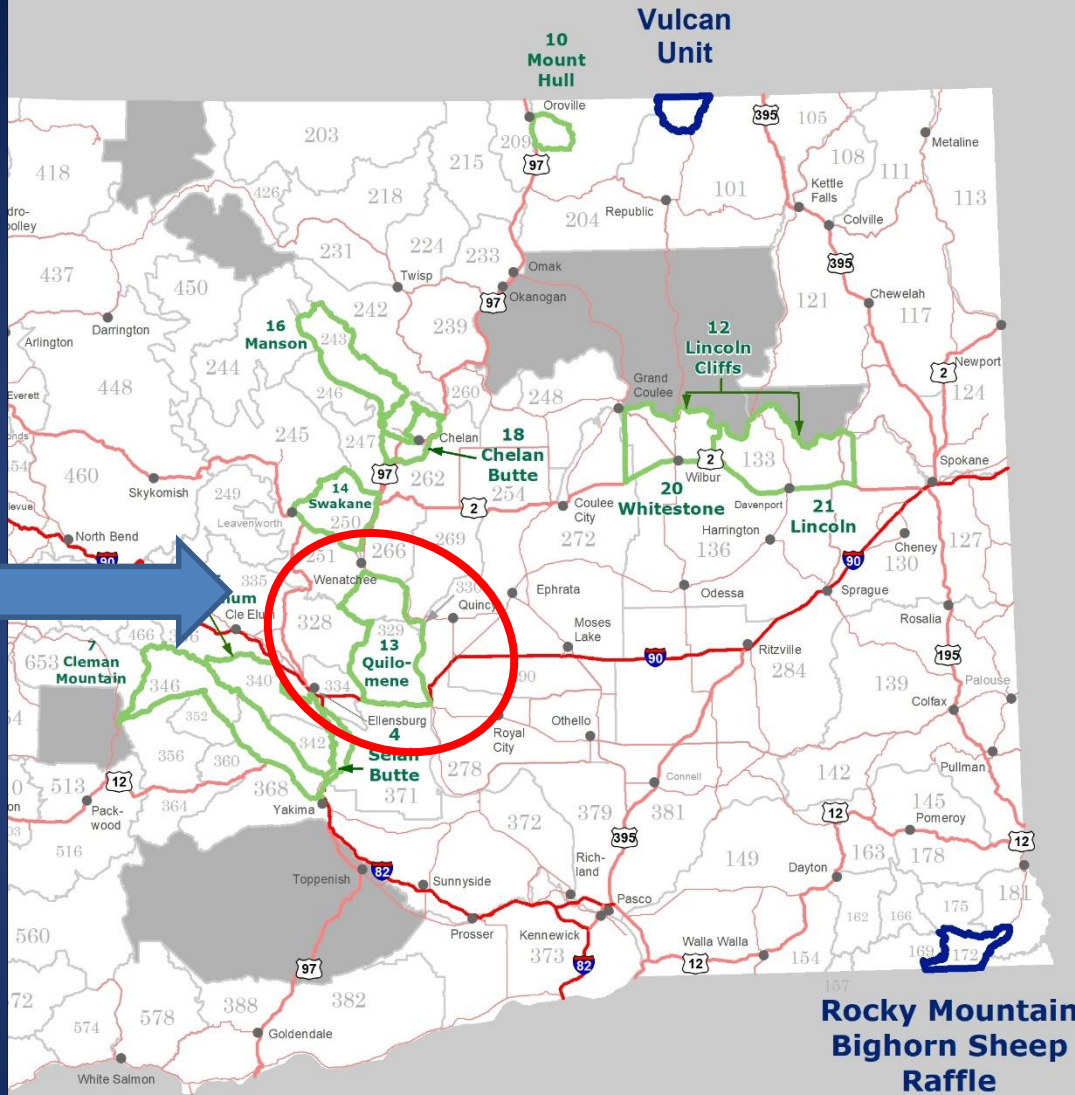
Transportation Network

- ▬ Interstate Highway
- ▬ US Highway
- ▬ State Route



Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Raffle

2019 Bighorn Sheep Units



Growing:
Increase ram
harvest
opportunity

Quilomene
herd

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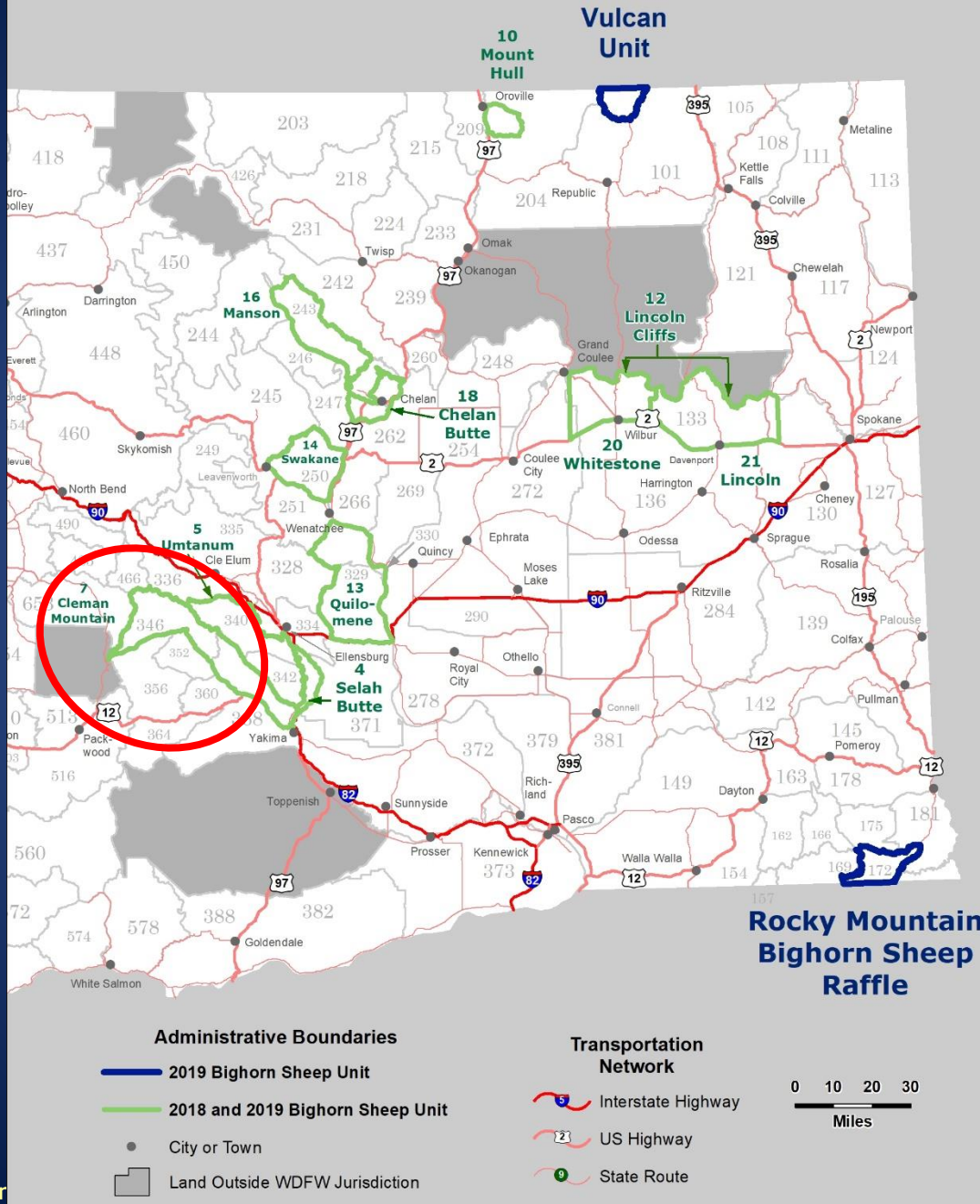
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**Rocky Mountain
Bighorn Sheep
Raffle**

2019 Bighorn Sheep Units



Still over-abundant
Increase ram harvest opportunity

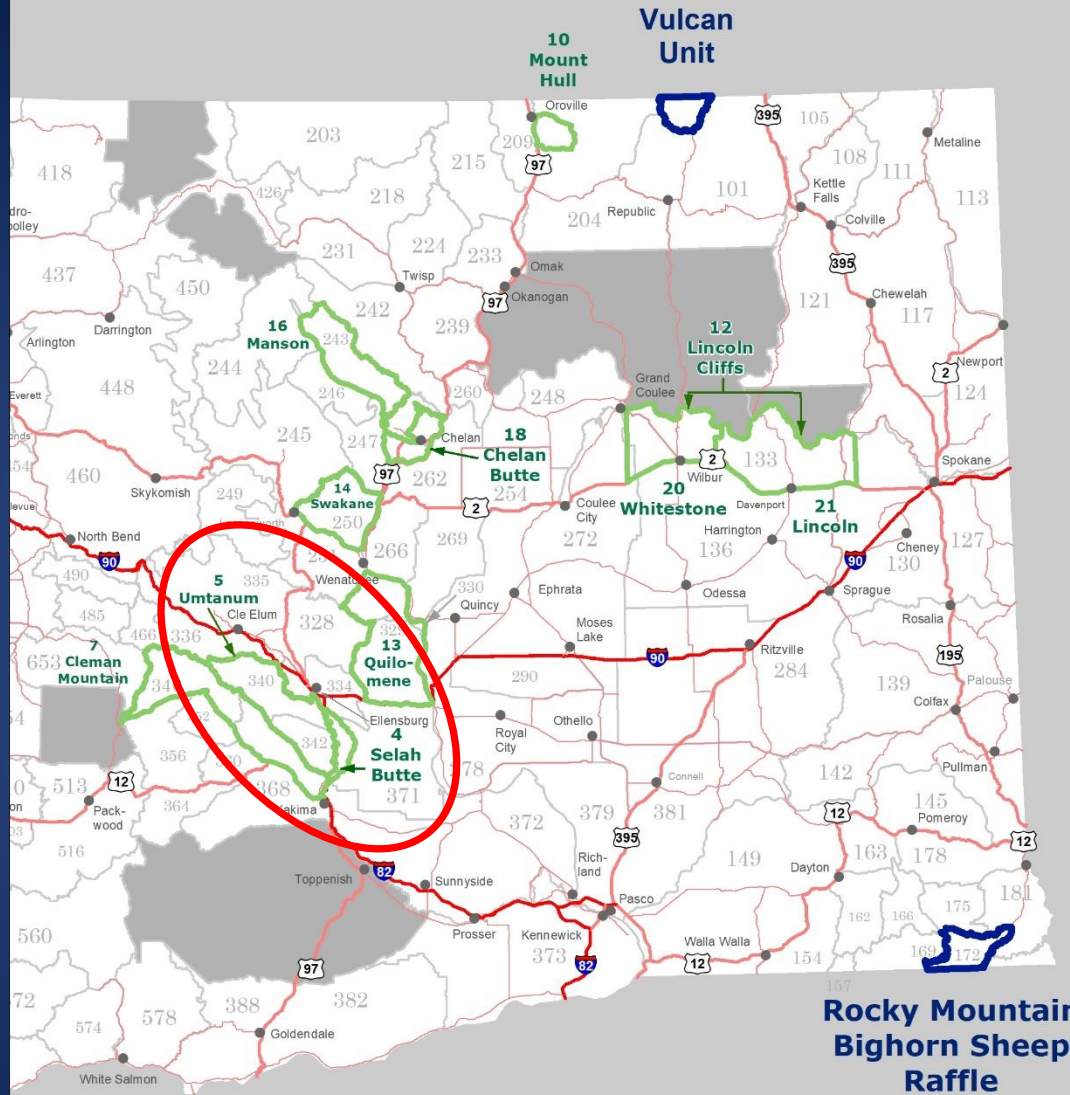


Ewe harvest reduction in your packet was premised on exporting sheep to Utah: weather didn't cooperate, so restore these ewe permits

Cleman Herd

Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Raffle

2019 Bighorn Sheep Units



Vulcan Unit

Rocky Mountain
Bighorn Sheep
Raffle

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Umtanum/
Selah Butte
(aka
“Yakima Canyon”)

Bighorn sheep pneumonia



- Mortality in all-age outbreaks is highly variable
- Disease can persist for decades in the form of low recruitment due to pneumonia in lambs: also highly variable
- The result is often small (<100 sheep), stable to declining, populations
- **Most animals (median 78%) in these populations test negative for respiratory disease pathogens,** but positive for exposure

Slide courtesy of F. Cassirer

Test and Cull



- Scenario 1: Capture and test 95% of the herd and remove any individual testing positive (infectious or carriers) for Movi
- Scenario 2: Repeat above for a total of two consecutive years

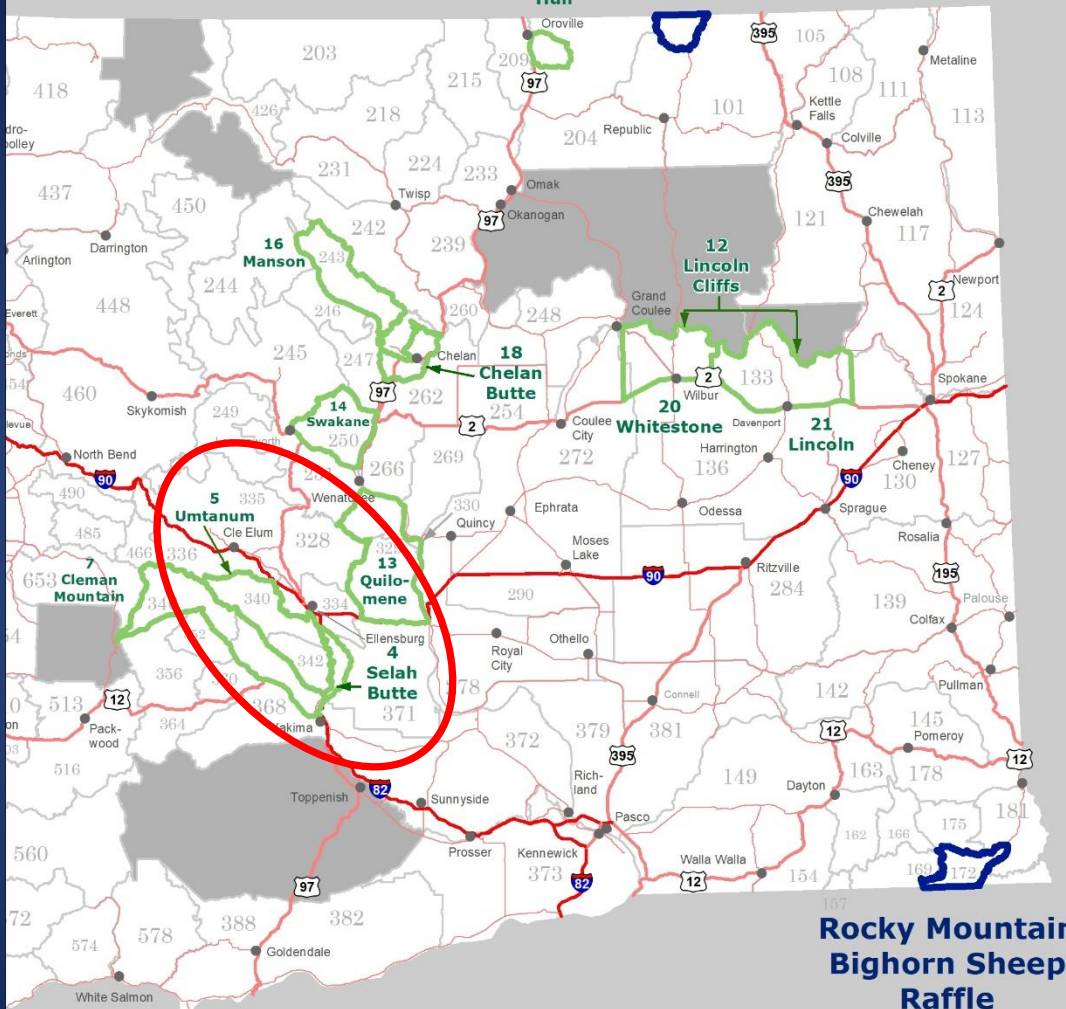
Test and Cull

- Evidently has been successful in:
 - Captive population at South Dakota State
 - Custer State Park, SD (compared with control population with pneumonia)
 - Asotin Herd

All much smaller than Yakima Canyon herd at time of testing/culling

2019 Bighorn Sheep Units

Vulcan Unit



Umtanum/
Selah Butte
(aka
"Yakima Canyon")

Increase
ram
permits
from 2 to
4, both
sides of
Yakima
River

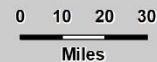
Rocky Mountain
Bighorn Sheep
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Lamb:ewe

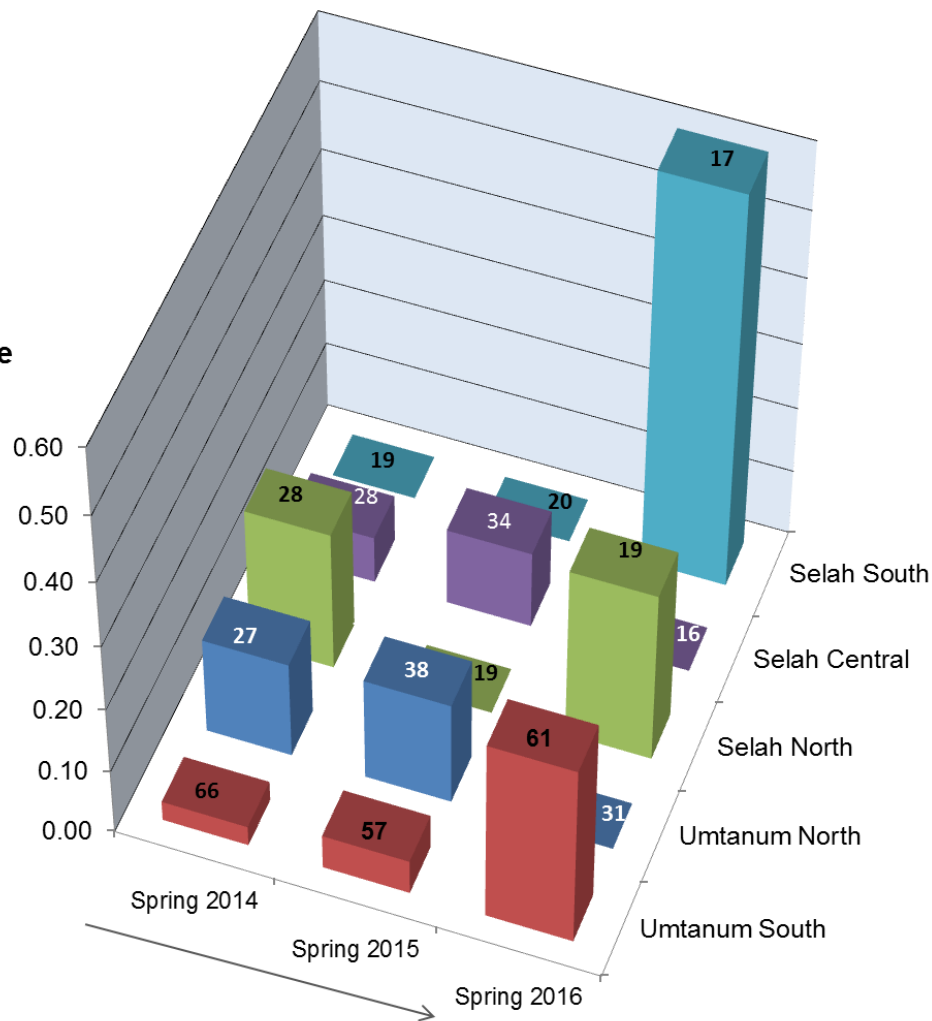
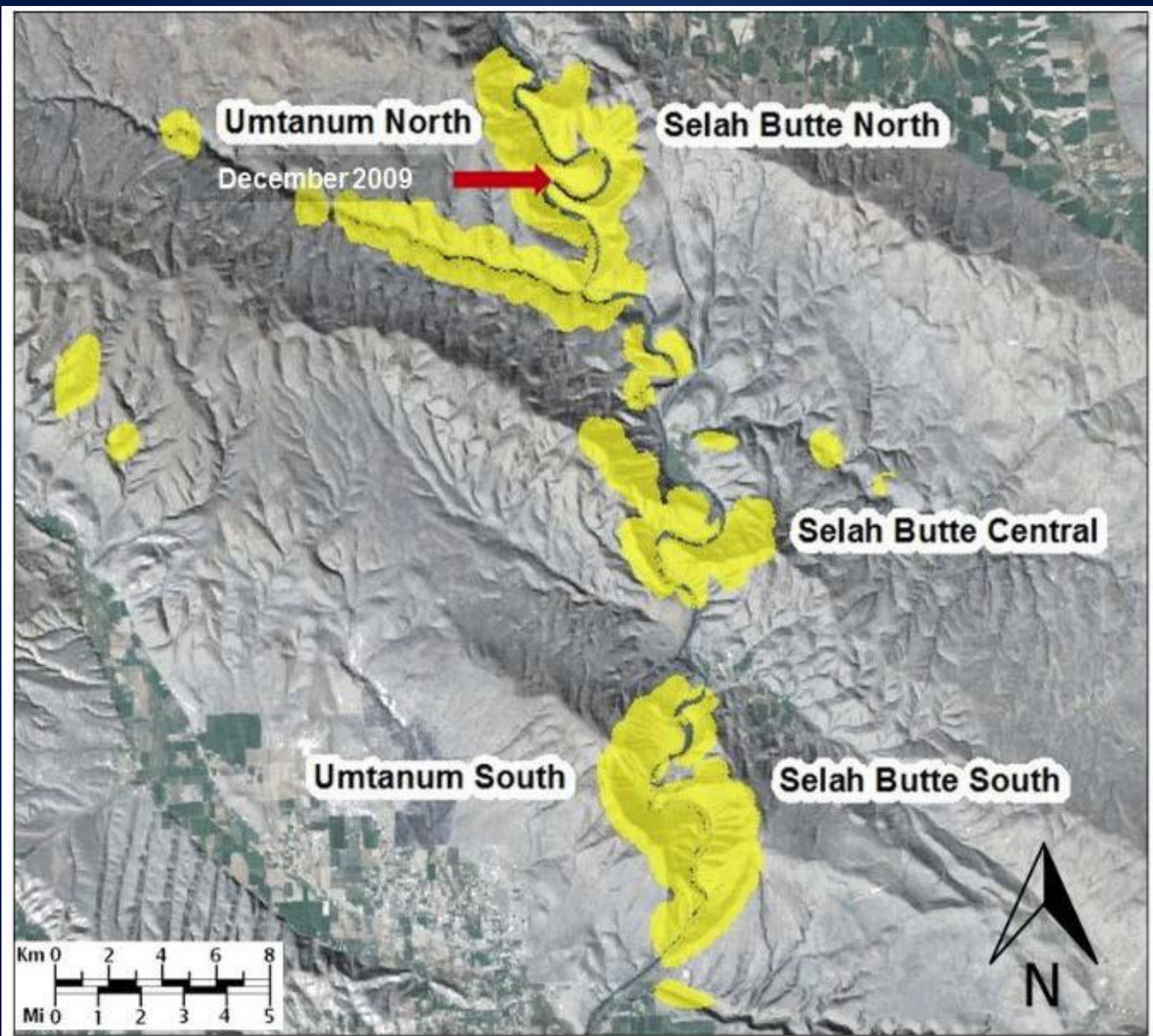
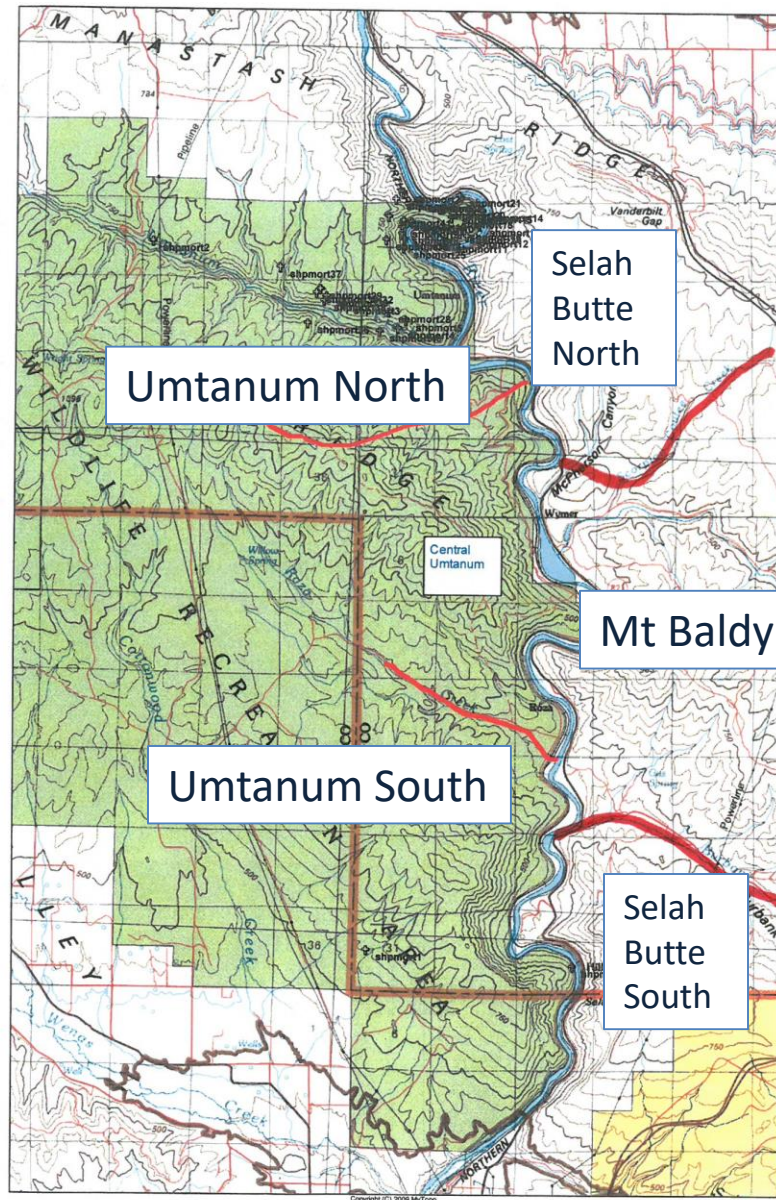


Figure 7. Ratios of lambs to ewes (females older than lamb) recruited to March 2014, 2015, and 2016, for each of the identified sub-herds of the Yakima Canyon bighorn sheep herd, Washington, USA. Numbers atop each bar are number of ewes counted in each sub-herd.

Bernatowicz, J., D. Bruning, E. F. Cassirer, R. B. Harris, K. Mansfield, and P. Wik. 2016. Management responses to pneumonia outbreaks in 3 Washington State bighorn herds: lessons learned and questions yet unanswered. Biennial Symposium Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council 20:38–61.



Proposed hunts to reduce sub-herd sizes in Yakima Canyon



Public Comments

Supporting Comments

- Three supported the proposed changes

Opposing, Neutral, and Other Comments

- One opposed any reduction in the number of permits in deference to predator populations
- Others were not clear about the rationale for increasing ewe harvest opportunity

Questions?

