

Nevada Habitat Overview



Presented to CLARK COUNTY ADVISORY
BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE 11 August
2026

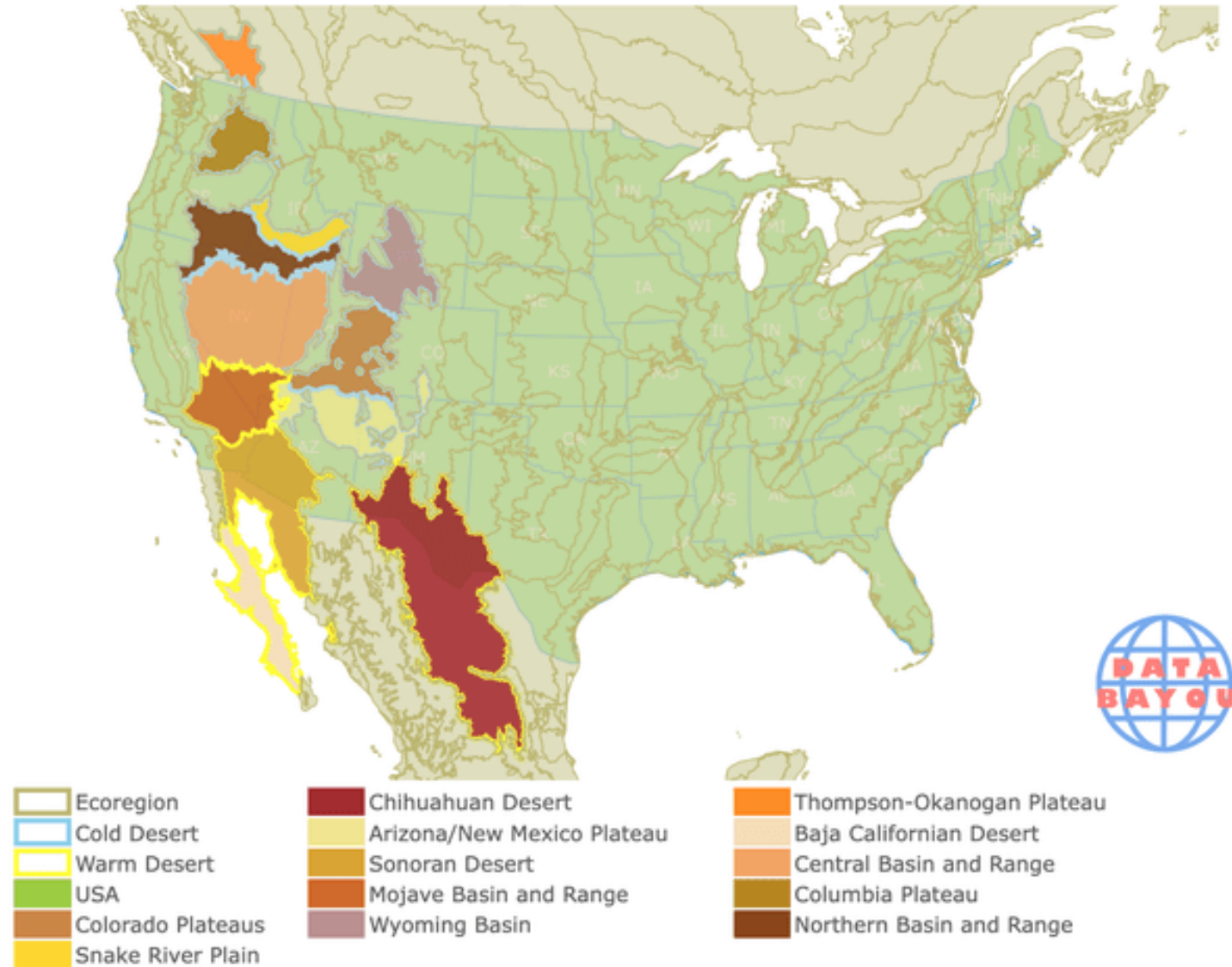
Bryan Hamilton
Habitat Supervisor
Nevada Department of Wildlife
bryan.hamilton@ndow.org







North American Deserts Map



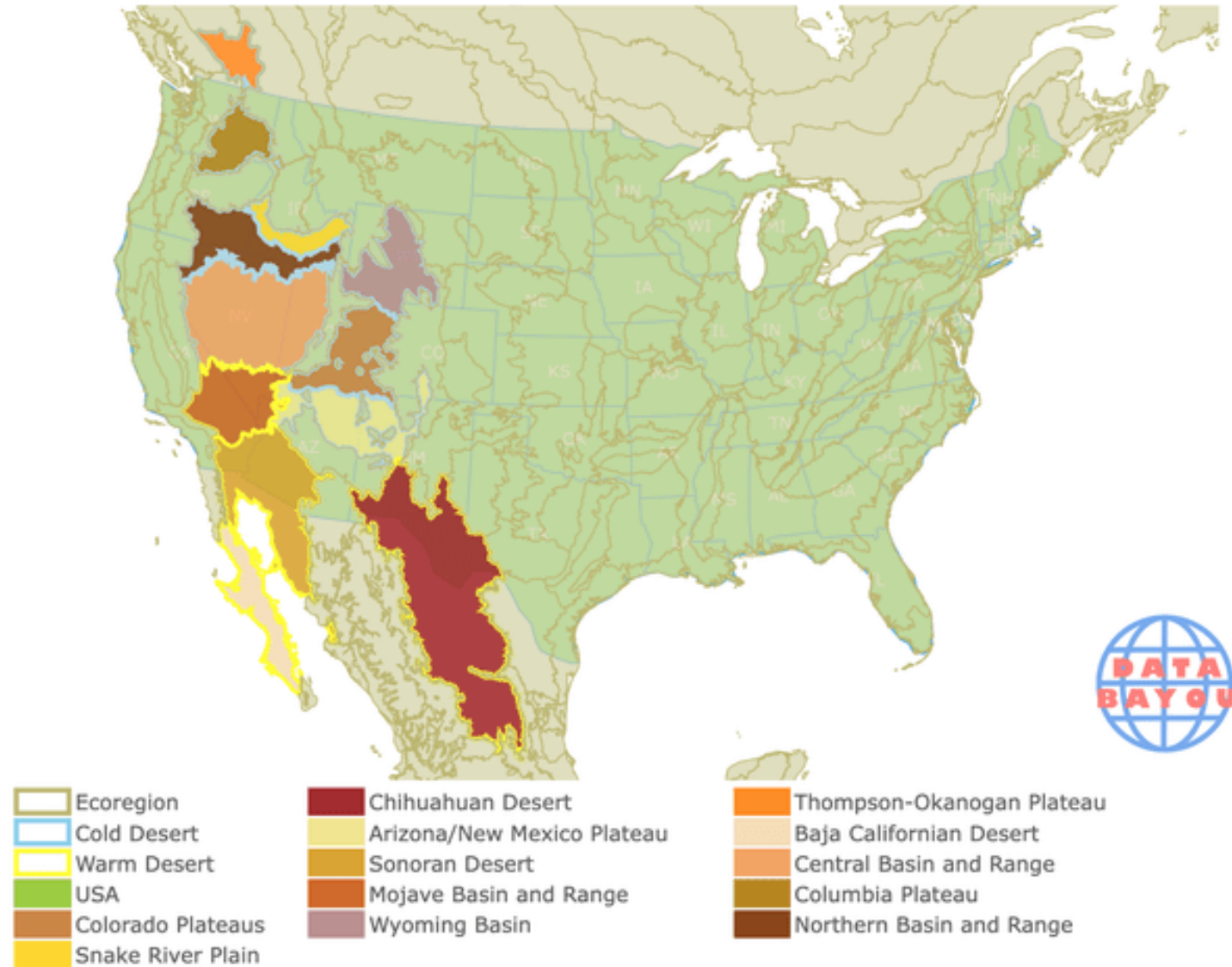
<https://databayou.com/usa/deserts.html>



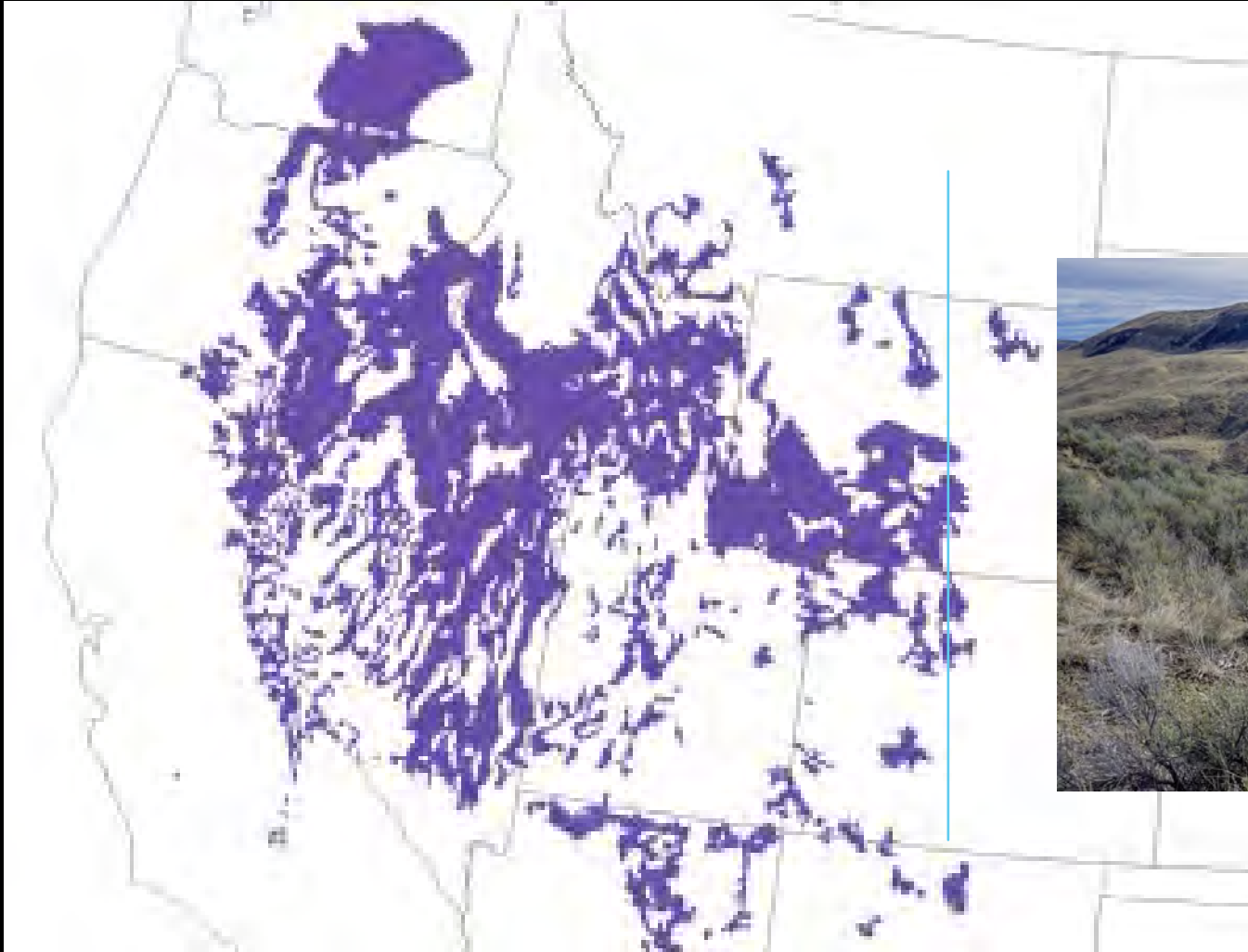




North American Deserts Map

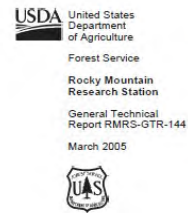


<https://databayou.com/usa/deserts.html>









Big Sagebrush: A Sea Fragmented into Lakes, Ponds, and Puddles

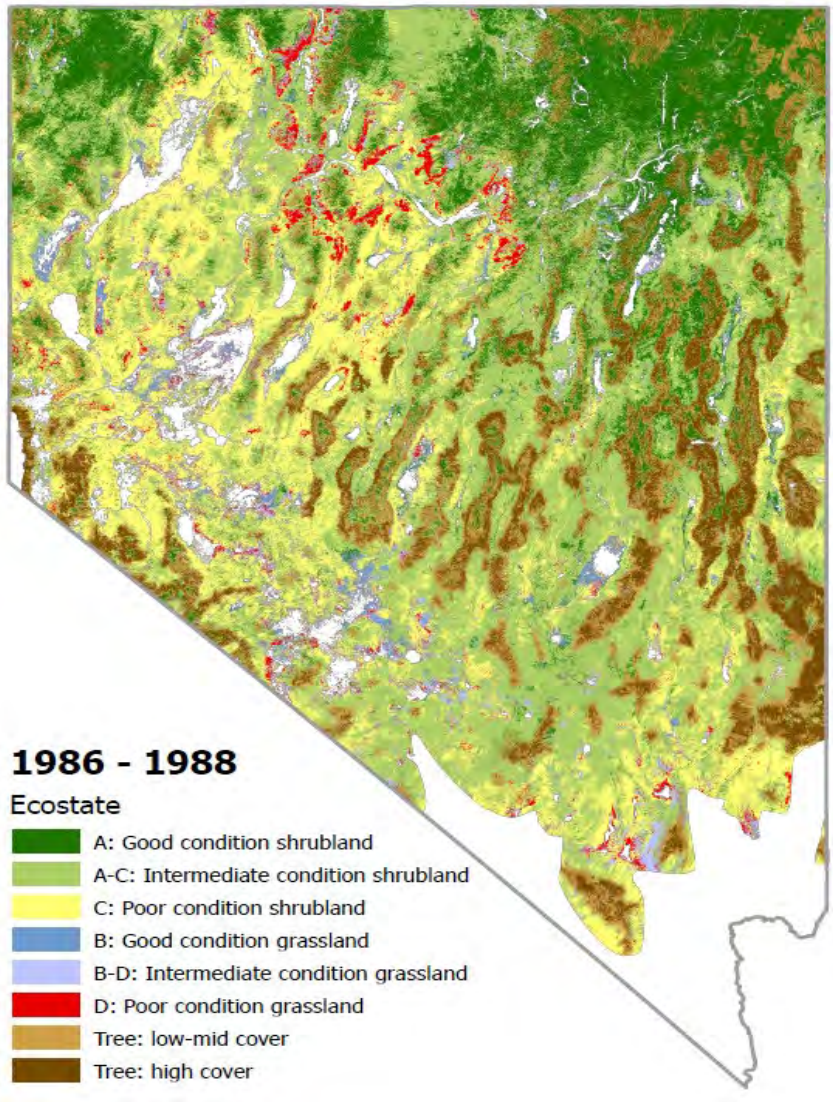
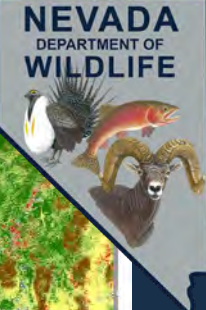
Bruce L. Welch



Distribution of big sagebrush in the State of Washington before settlement.



Distribution of big sagebrush in the State of Washington after settlement.



1986 - 1988

Ecostate

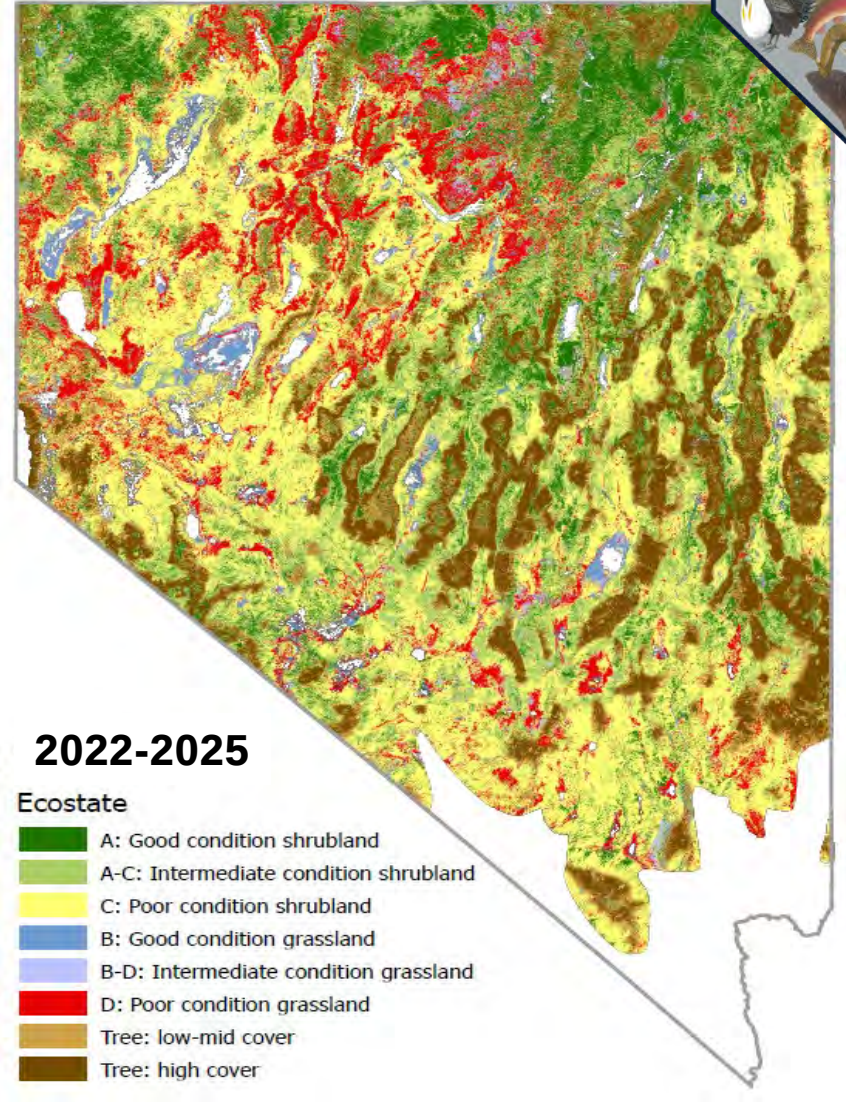
- A: Good condition shrubland
- A-C: Intermediate condition shrubland
- C: Poor condition shrubland
- B: Good condition grassland
- B-D: Intermediate condition grassland
- D: Poor condition grassland
- Tree: low-mid cover
- Tree: high cover

We have lost
71%
of our core sagebrush
habitat since the 1980s.

What remains provides diminishing
returns for wildlife and Nevadans.

The ecological integrity of the
sagebrush biome is experiencing a
severe contraction driven by
invasive species and compounding
environmental pressures.

**"The ecological integrity of the
sagebrush biome will continue to
decline despite significant and
sustained conservation
investments."**
— Mozeleski et al., 2024
(*Rangeland Ecology & Management*)



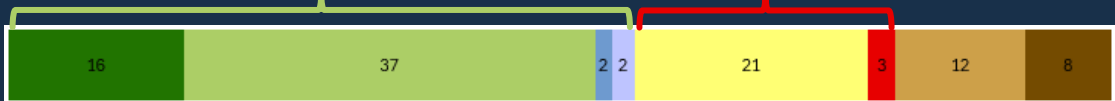
2022-2025

Ecostate

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57%

15%



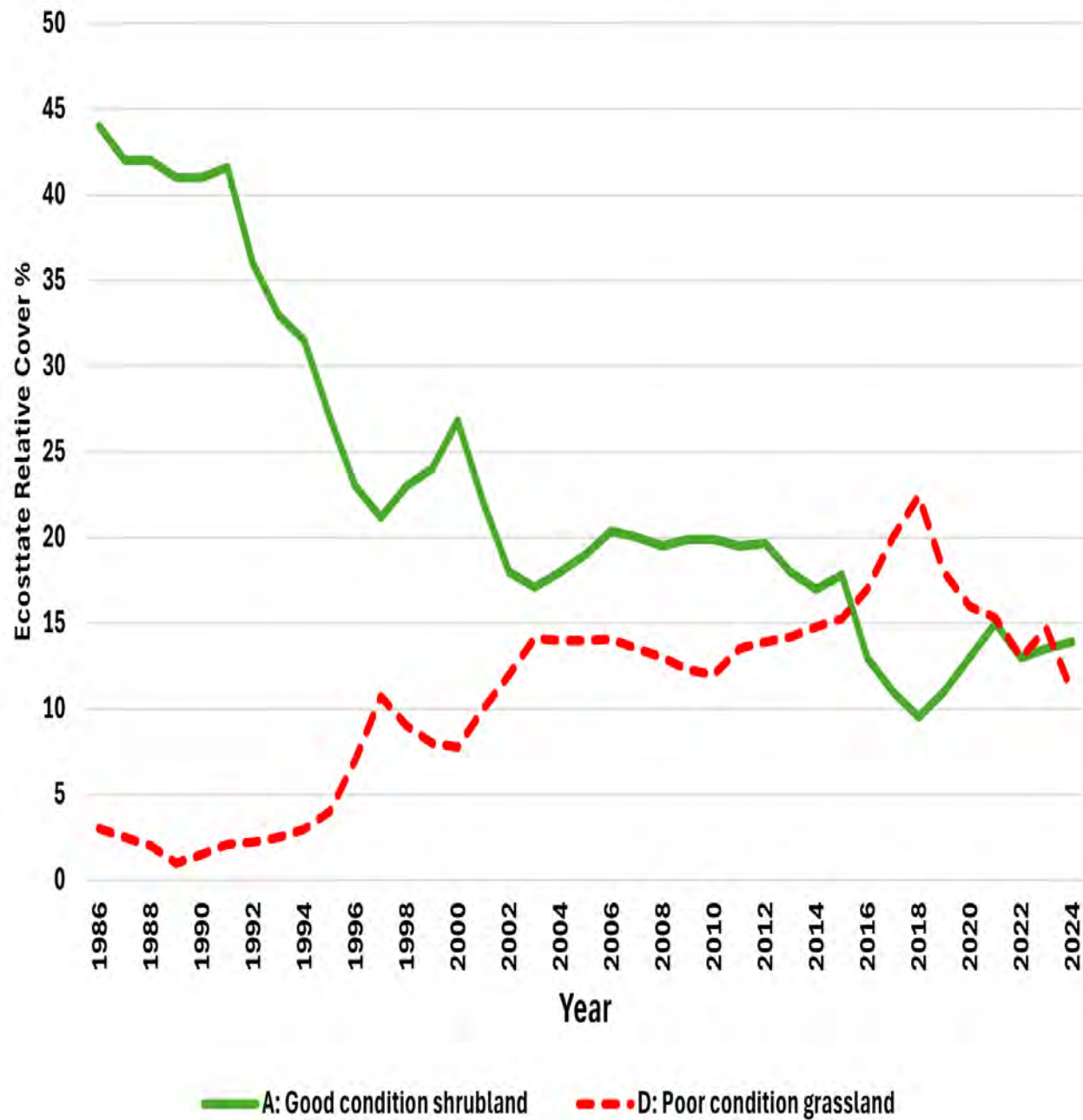
36%

43%

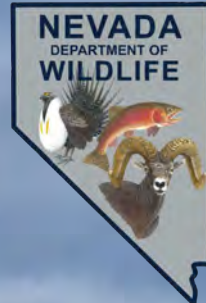
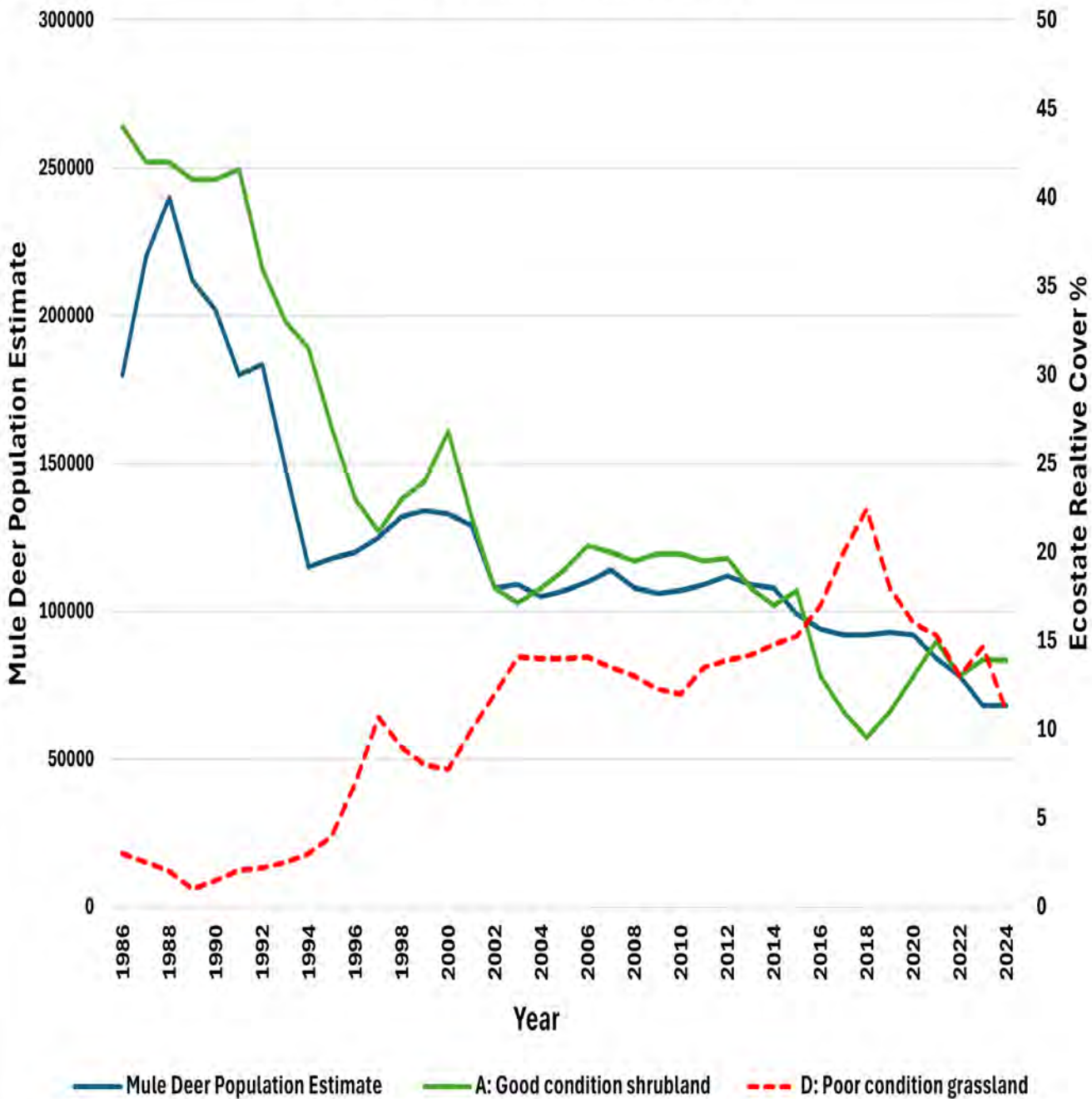




Winter Annual Invasion & Nevada's Sagebrush Sea



Mule Deer Population & Habitat Trend 1986-2024



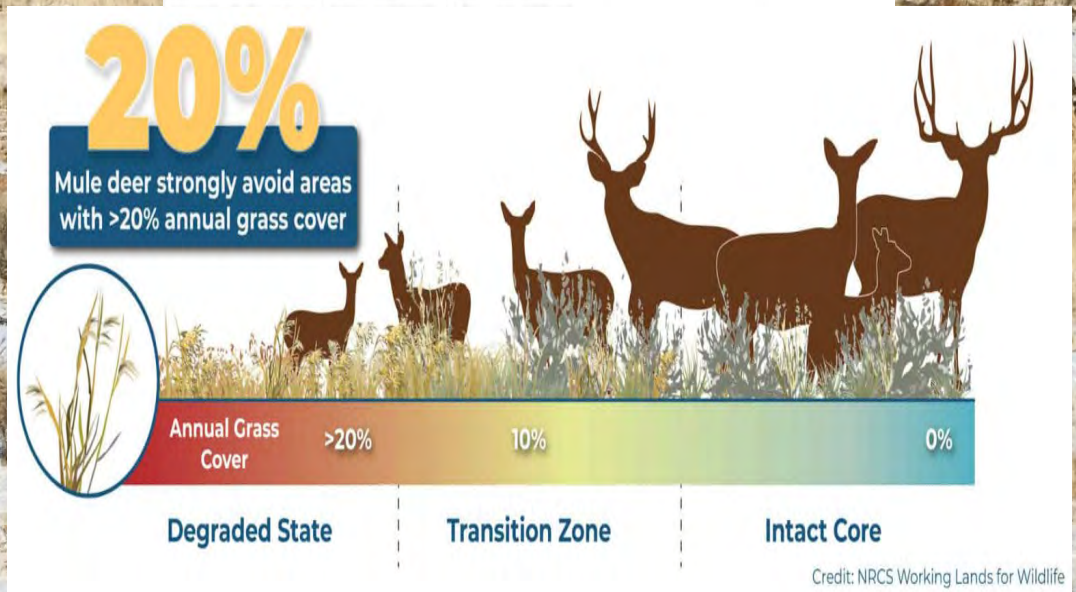
Rangeland Ecology & Management

Volume 103, November 2025, Pages 128-137

Original Research

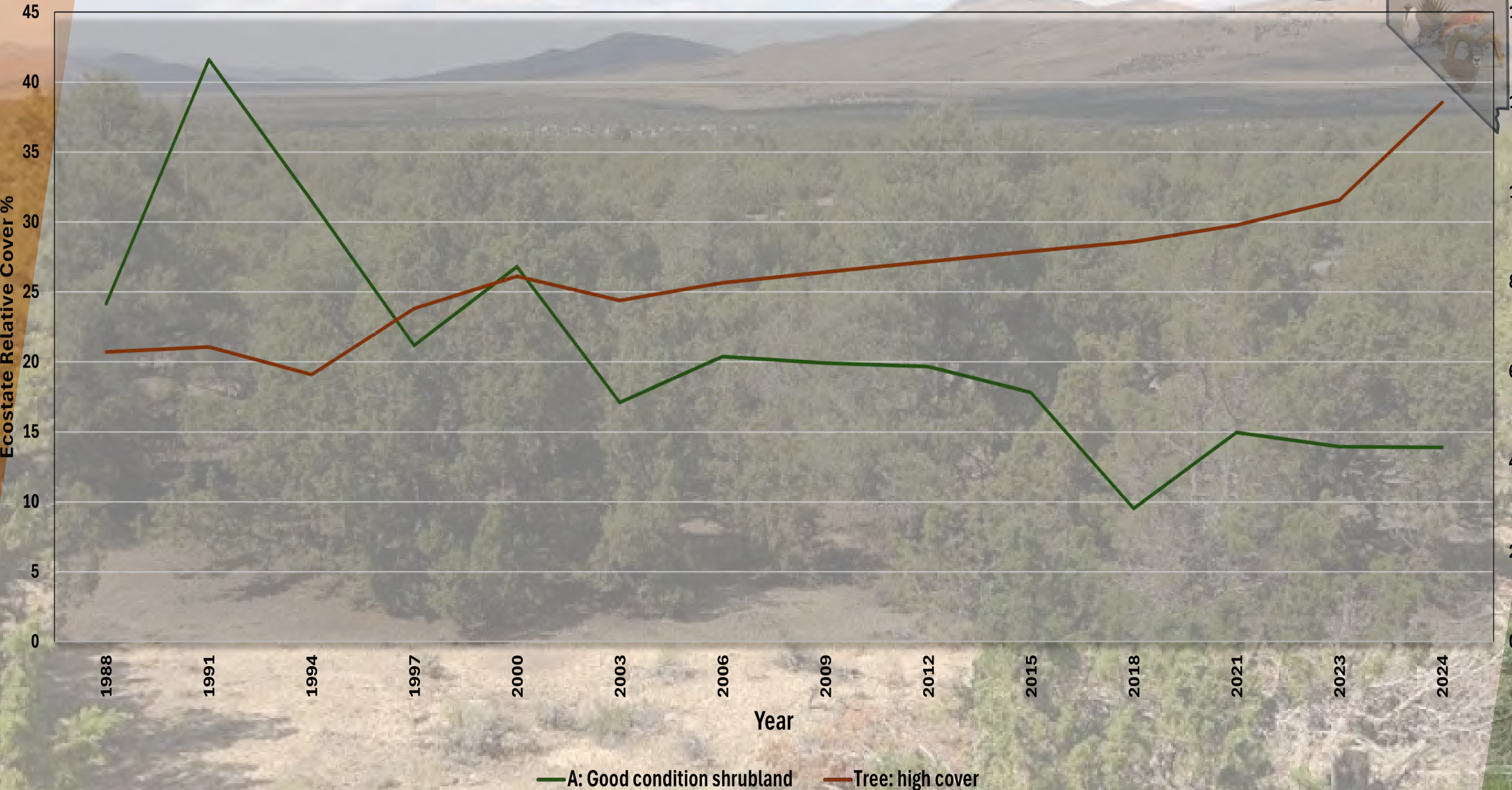
Mule Deer Response to Invasive Annual Grasses: Implications for Strategic Management in Sagebrush Priority Areas

Kurt T. Smith¹ ✉, Brian A. Meador², Jerod A. Merkle¹





Pinyon Juniper Encroachment 1986-2024

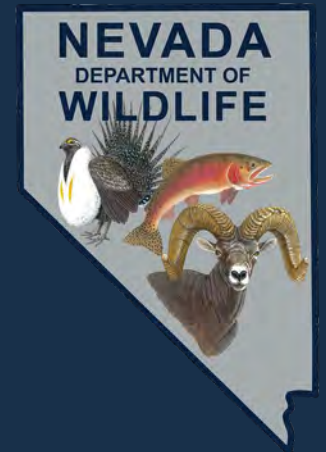




© The Nature Conservancy, Illustrator: Kelly Finan, Adapted From: Threat-based Land Management: A Field Guide (The SageShare Partnership)

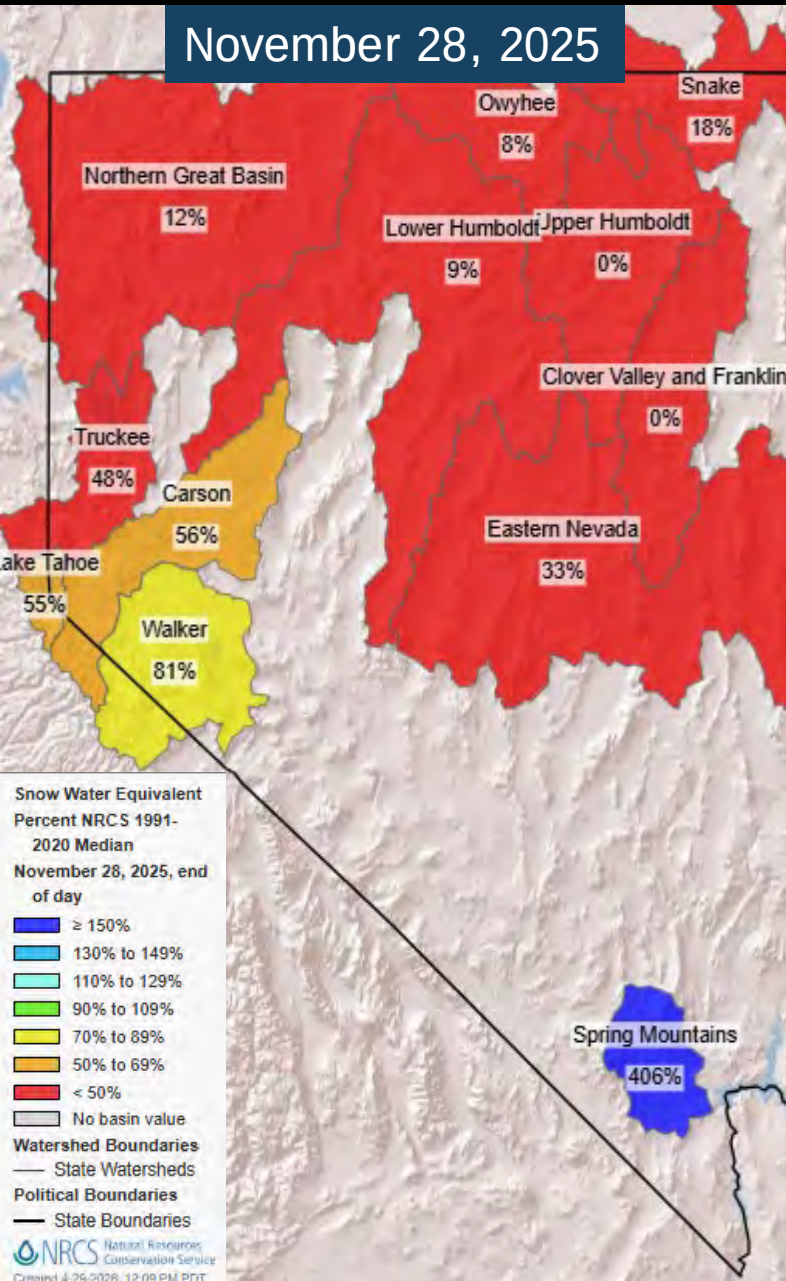
Nevada habitat Status
and Trend

► Weather and Climate

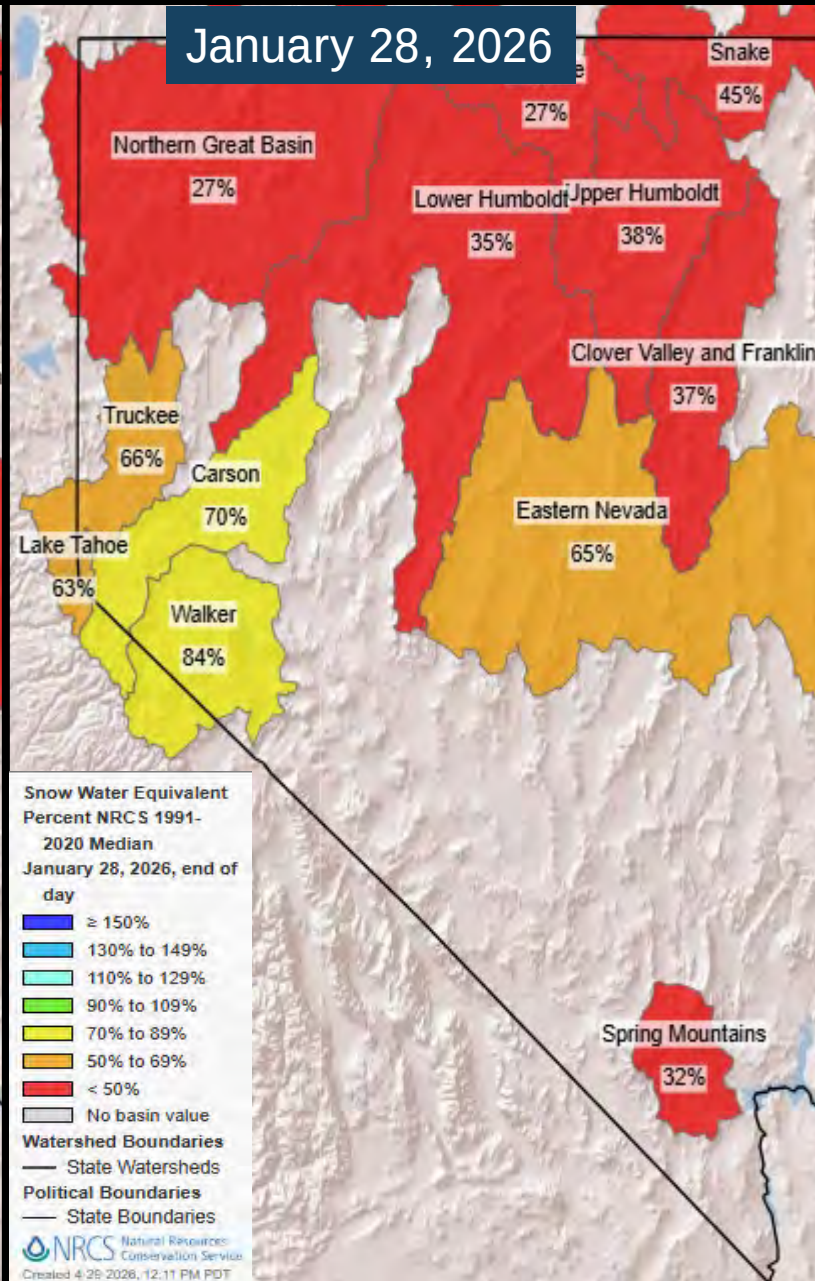


Nevada Snowpack 2025-2026

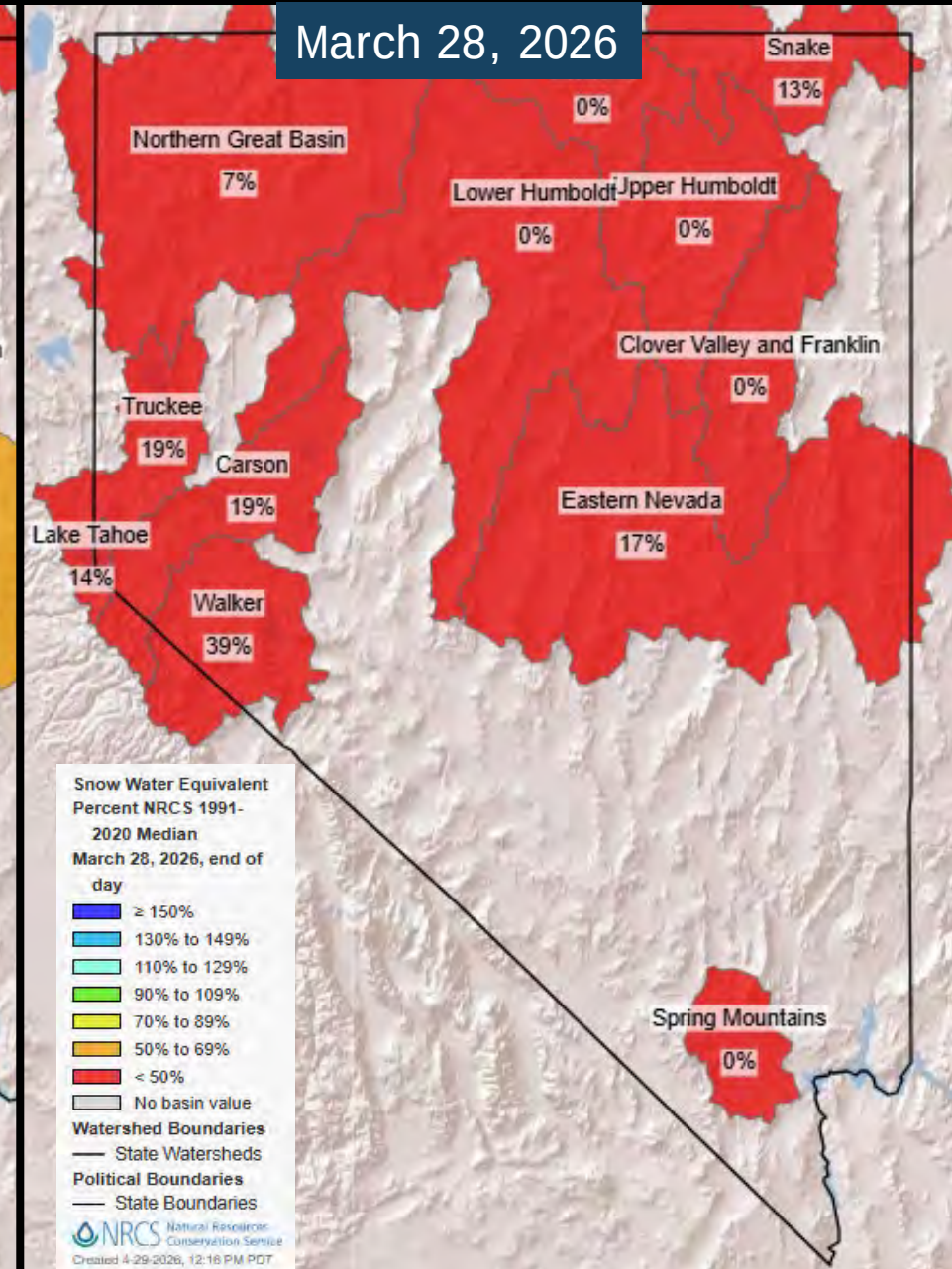
November 28, 2025



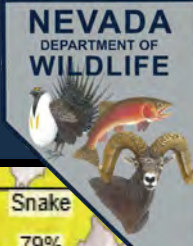
January 28, 2026



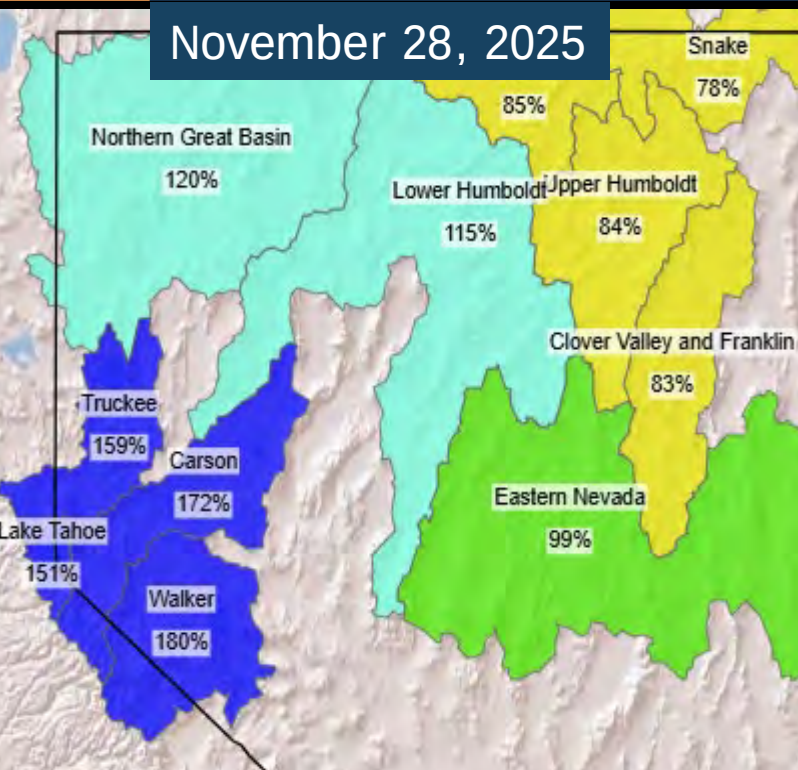
March 28, 2026



Nevada Precipitation 2025-2026



November 28, 2025



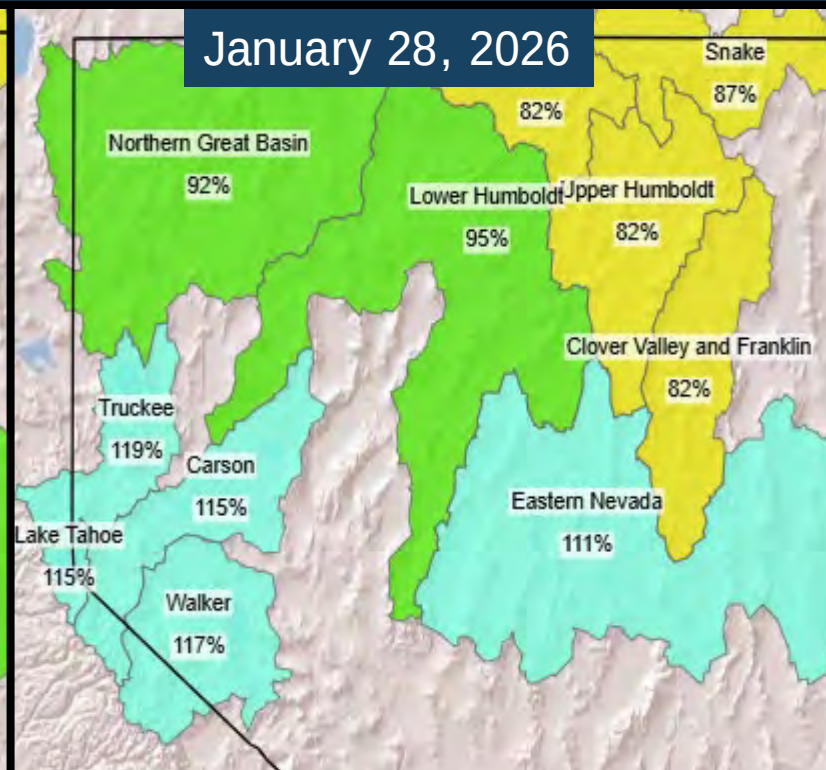
Water Year to Date
Precipitation
Percent NRCS 1991-
2020 Median
October 1, 2025 through
November 28, 2025

- ≥ 150%
- 130% to 149%
- 110% to 129%
- 90% to 109%
- 70% to 89%
- 50% to 69%
- < 50%
- No basin value

Watershed Boundaries
State Watersheds
Political Boundaries
State Boundaries

NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
Created 4-29-2026, 12:23 PM PDT

January 28, 2026



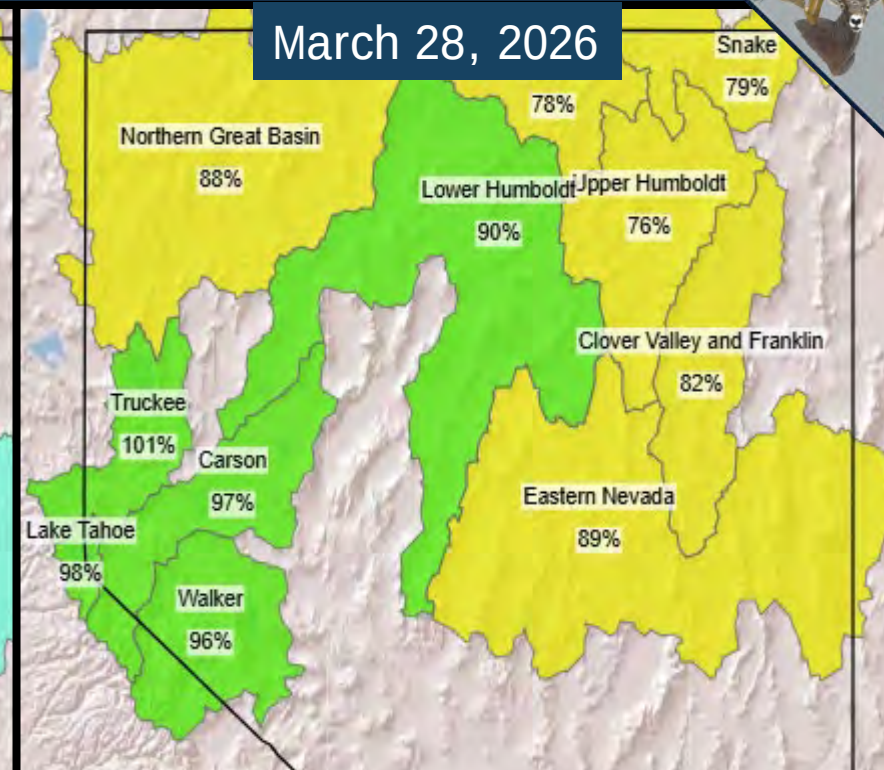
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NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
Created 4-29-2026, 12:25 PM PDT

March 28, 2026



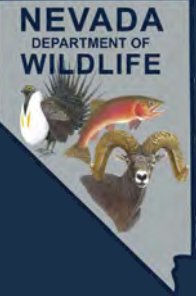
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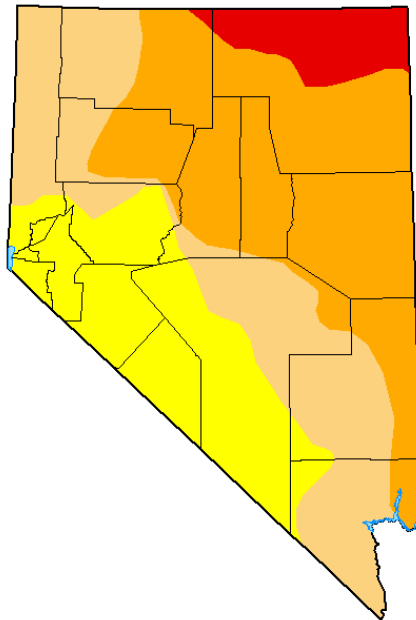
Watershed Boundaries
State Watersheds
Political Boundaries
State Boundaries

NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
Created 4-29-2026, 12:26 PM PDT

Drought Outlook



U.S. Drought Monitor Nevada



August 4, 2026

(Released Thursday, Aug. 6, 2026)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

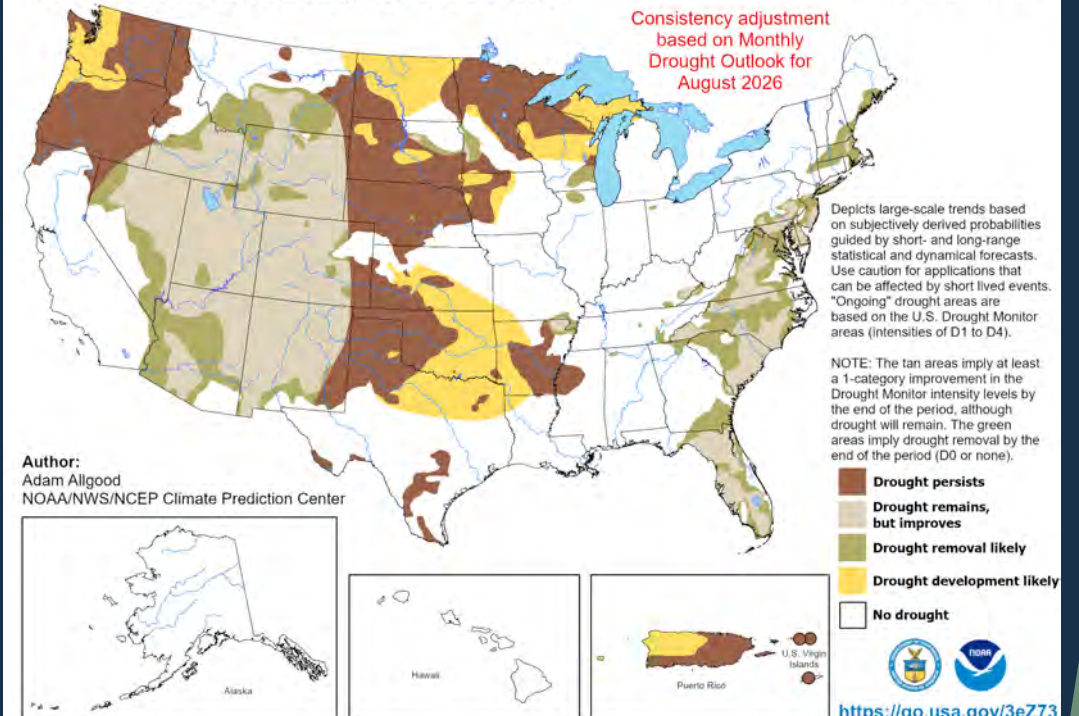
Richard Tinker
CPC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

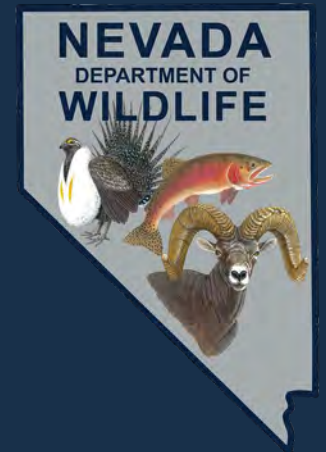
U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook Drought Tendency During the Valid Period

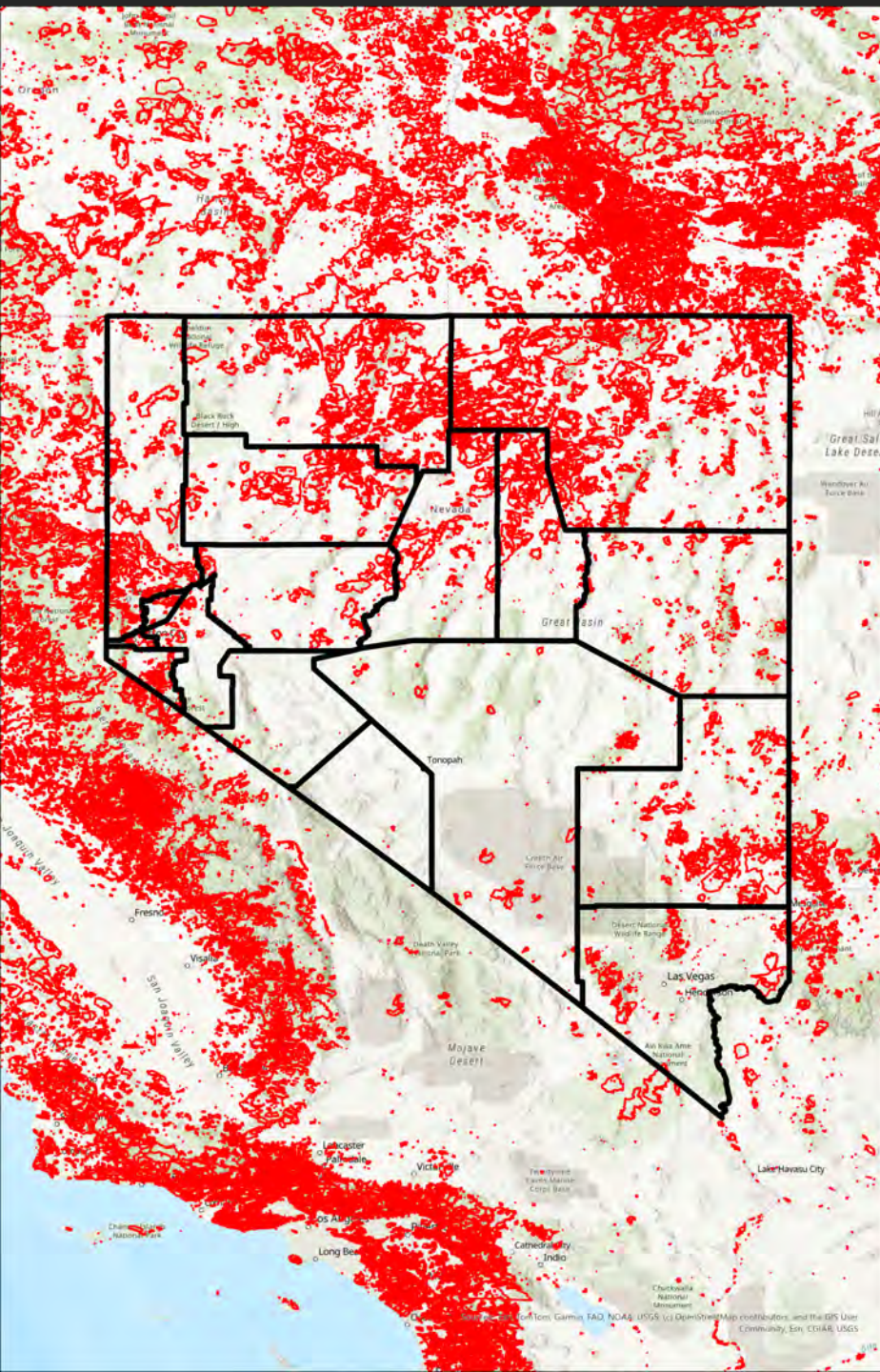
Valid for August 1 - October 31, 2026
Released July 31, 2026

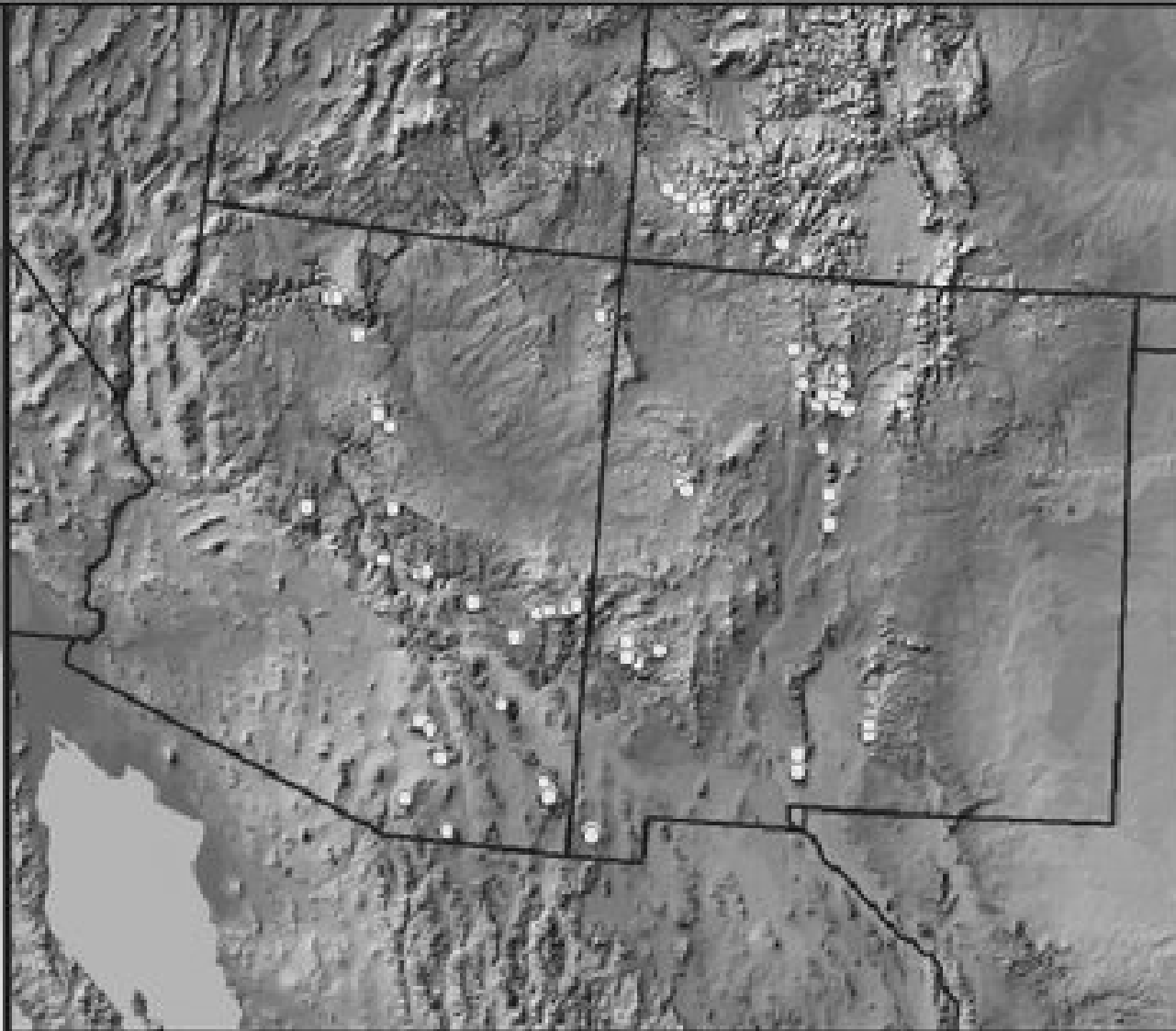
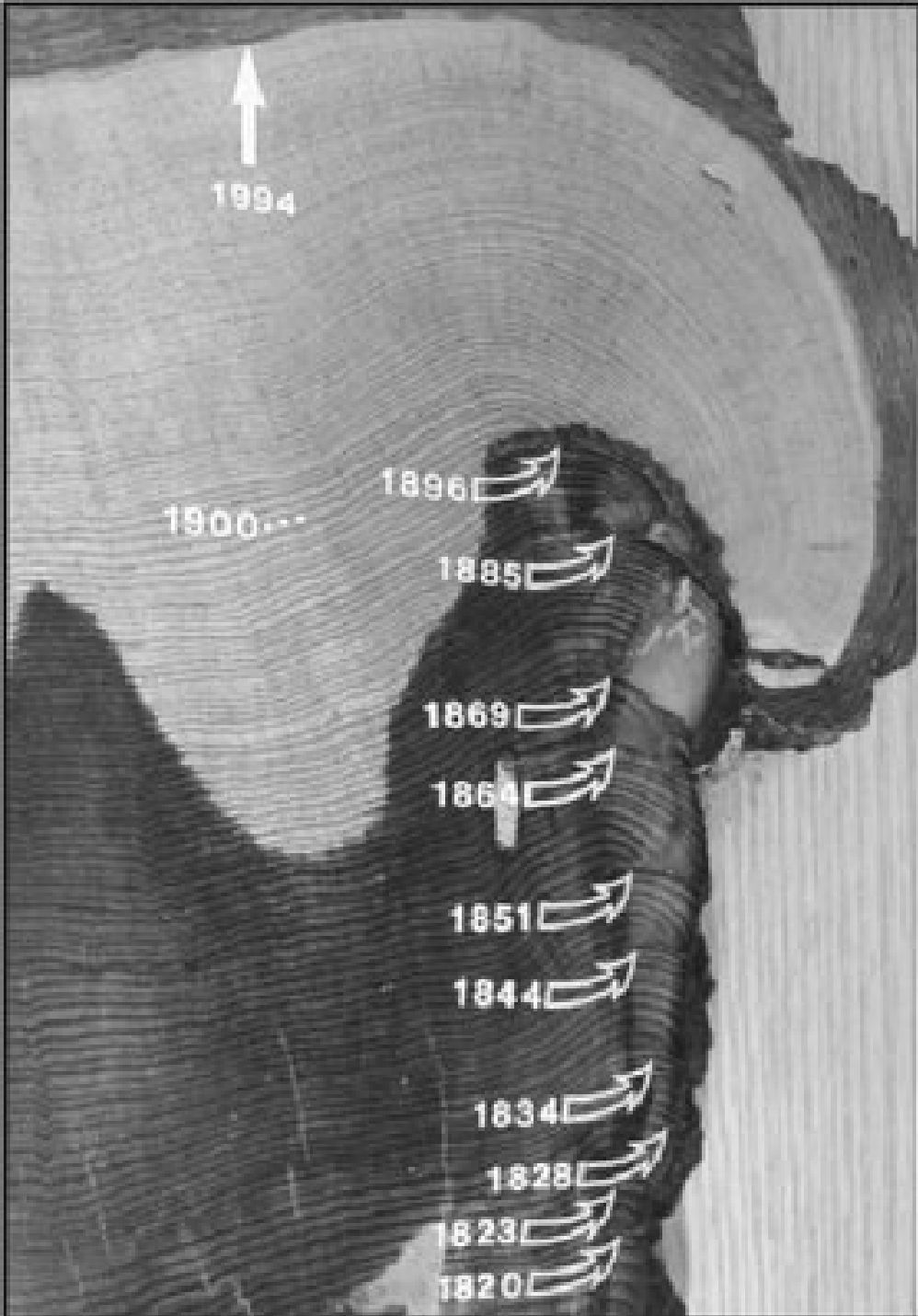


Nevada habitat Status
and Trend

▶ Great Basin Wildfire Season Outlook







Southwest Fire History Sites

○ Fire Scar Site

0 100 200 300 Kilometers

SWETNAM, T., AND P. BROWN.
2010. Climatic Inferences
from Dendroecological
Reconstructions, p. 263-
295.



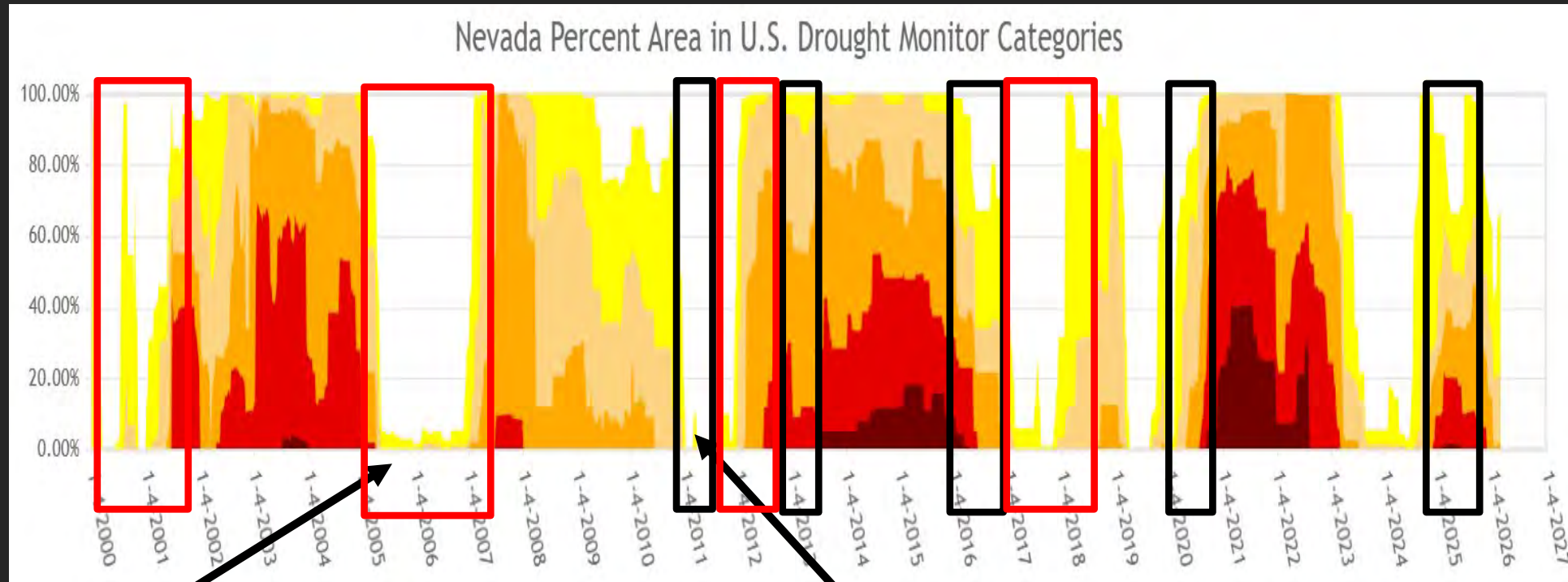


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Nevada – Updated 2026

Red Box – Well Above 'Average' Acres
Nevada 'Average' Acres – 420,385

Black Box – Well above 'Median' Acres Burned (but less than Average)
Nevada 'Median' Acres – 162,841



2005 was only well above normal for Srn NV and Srn Ely

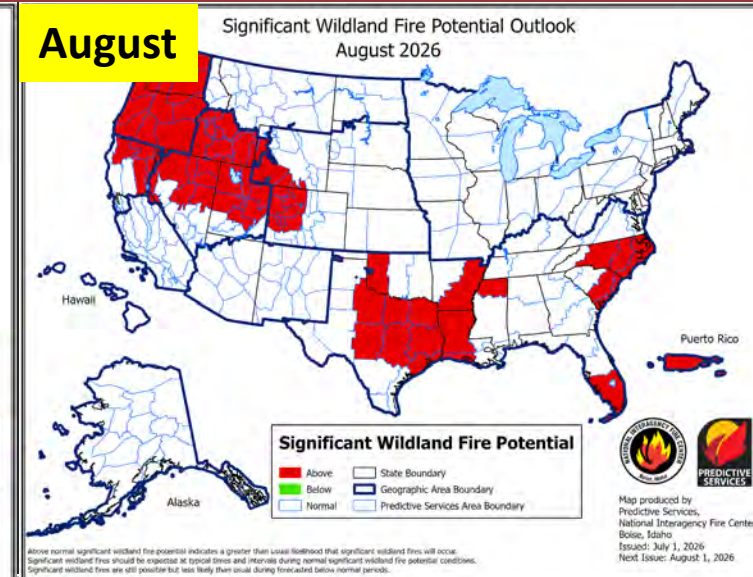
Season didn't start until lightning bust in late September 2011

National Predictive Services Outlook: May – August 2026

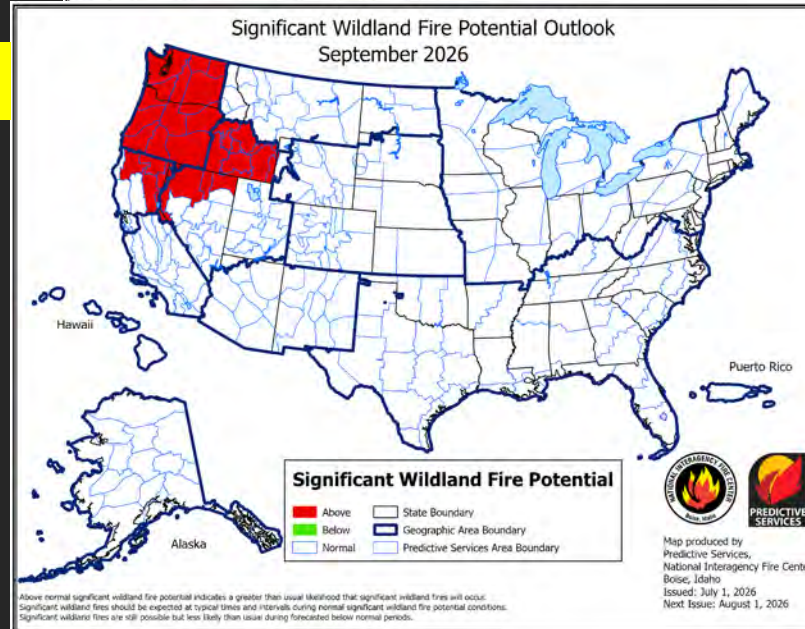
July



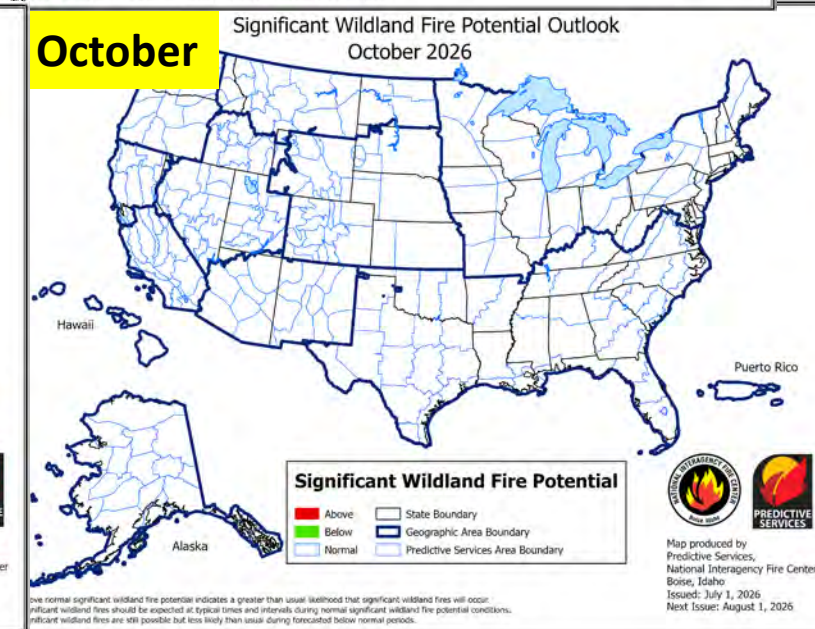
August

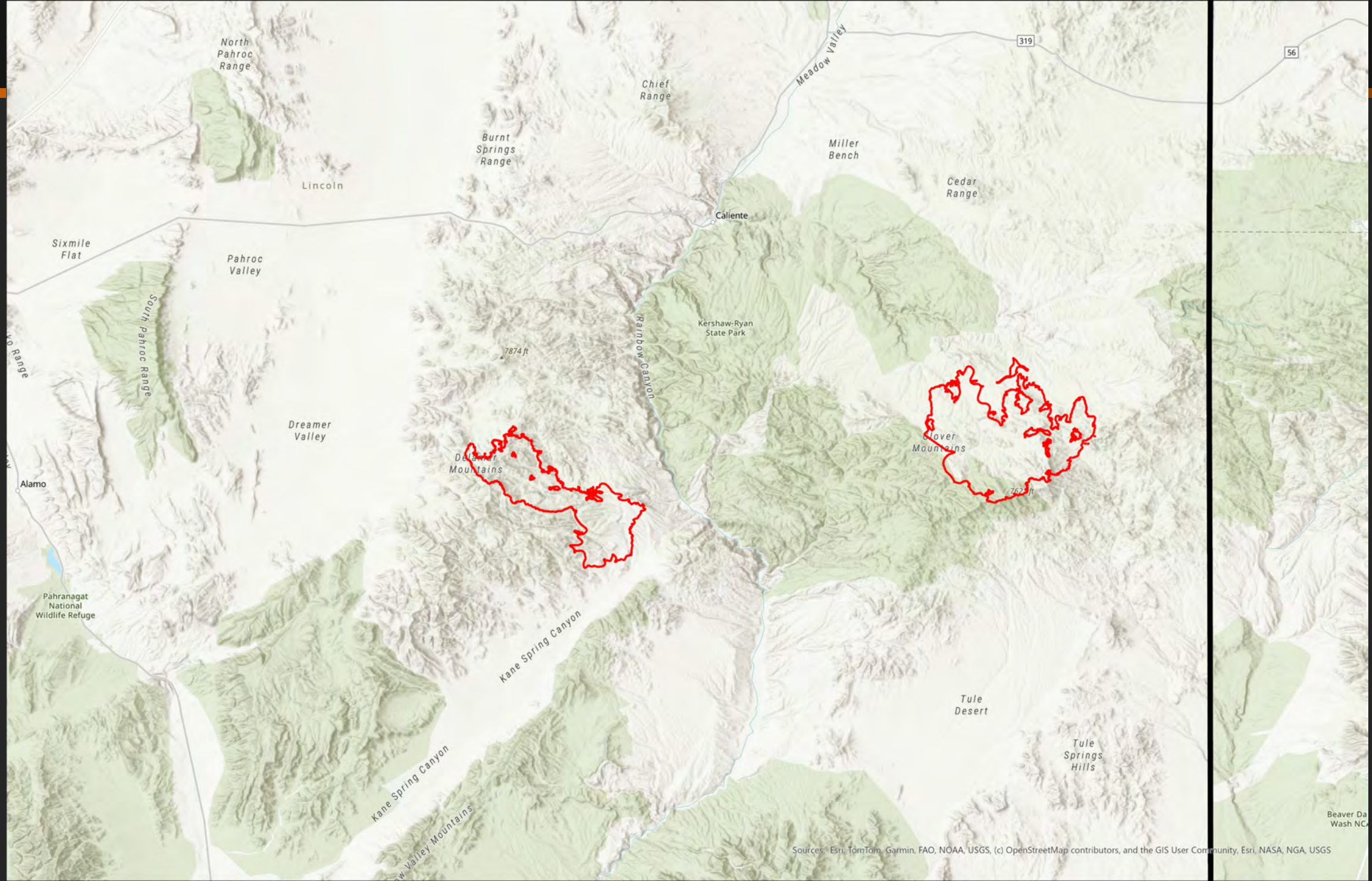


September



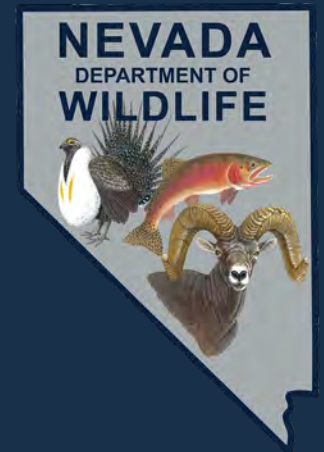
October



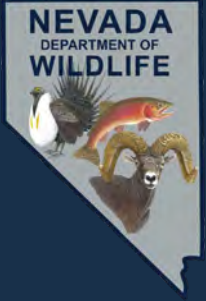


Nevada habitat Status
and Trend

▶ Restoration Accomplishments



2025 Statewide Wildfire Restoration Accomplishments



151,028 Total Acres Treated

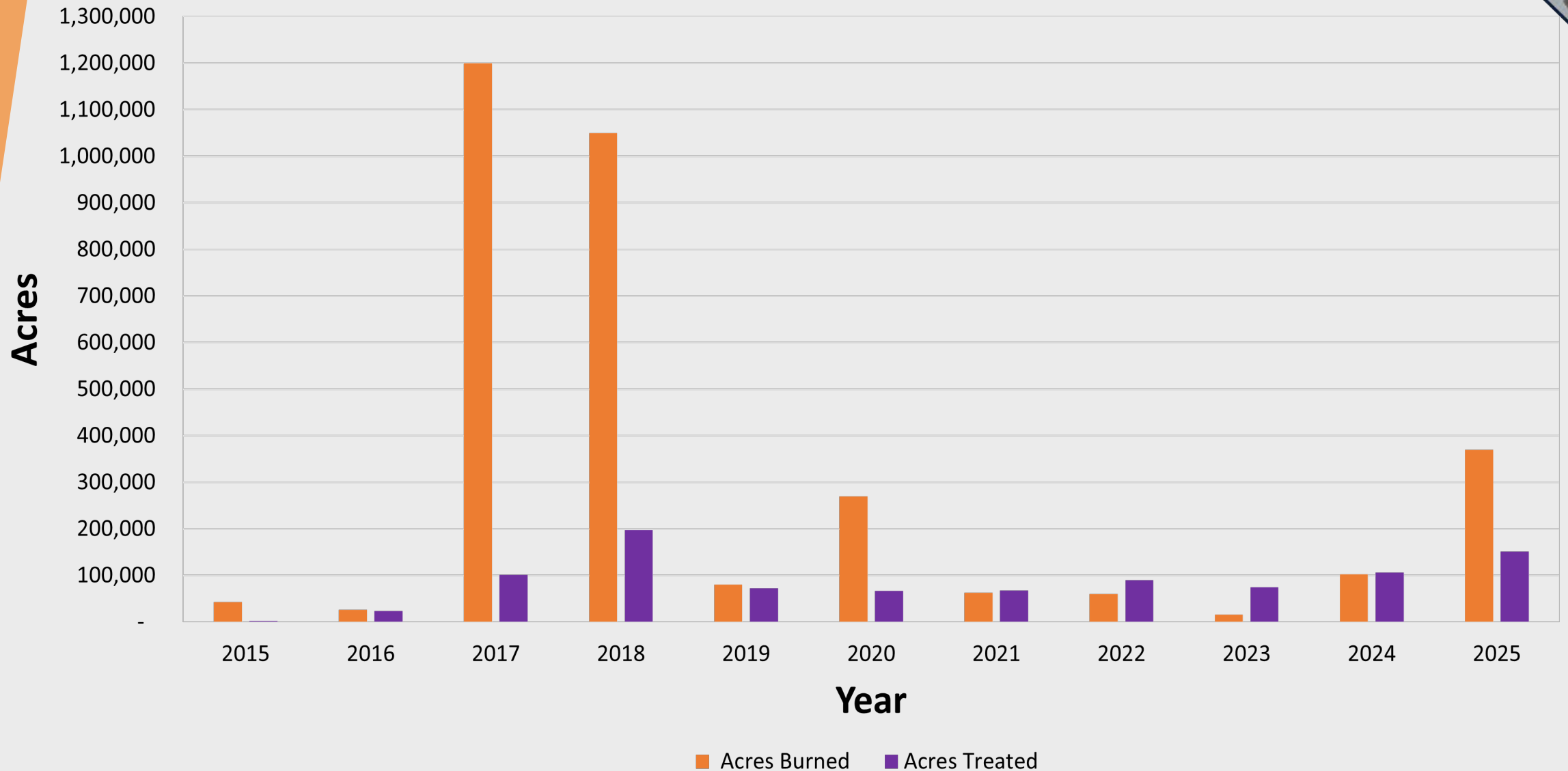
61,000 acres of invasive annual grass controlled

90,000 acres aerially seeded

1,000 acres of drill seeding

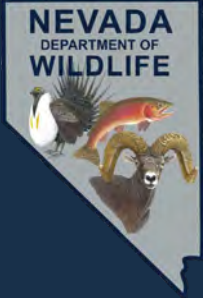


Acres Burned vs Acres Treated by NDOW





2025 Statewide Proactive Restoration Accomplishments



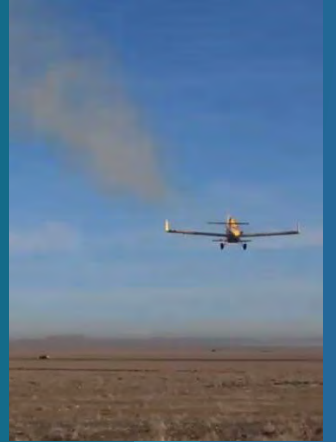
50,807 Total Acres Treated

27,656 acres of invasive annual grass controlled

23,151 acres aerially seeded

5,800 acres of Pinyon-Juniper
Treatment





2025 Statewide Riparian Restoration Accomplishments



~34,000 acres linear feet of fence constructed (or removed)

~123 acres protected

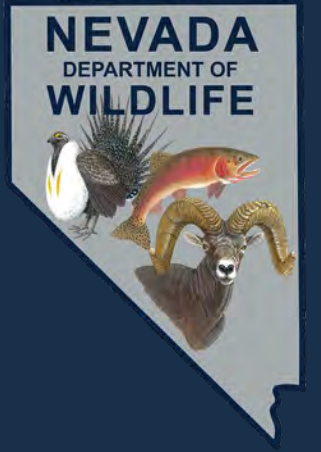






Volunteer Opportunities





Any
Questions?

Bryan Hamilton
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