

Lower Deschutes River Fish Population Status Update



Jason Seals, Lindsay Powell
Mid-Columbia Fish District
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife



Updates

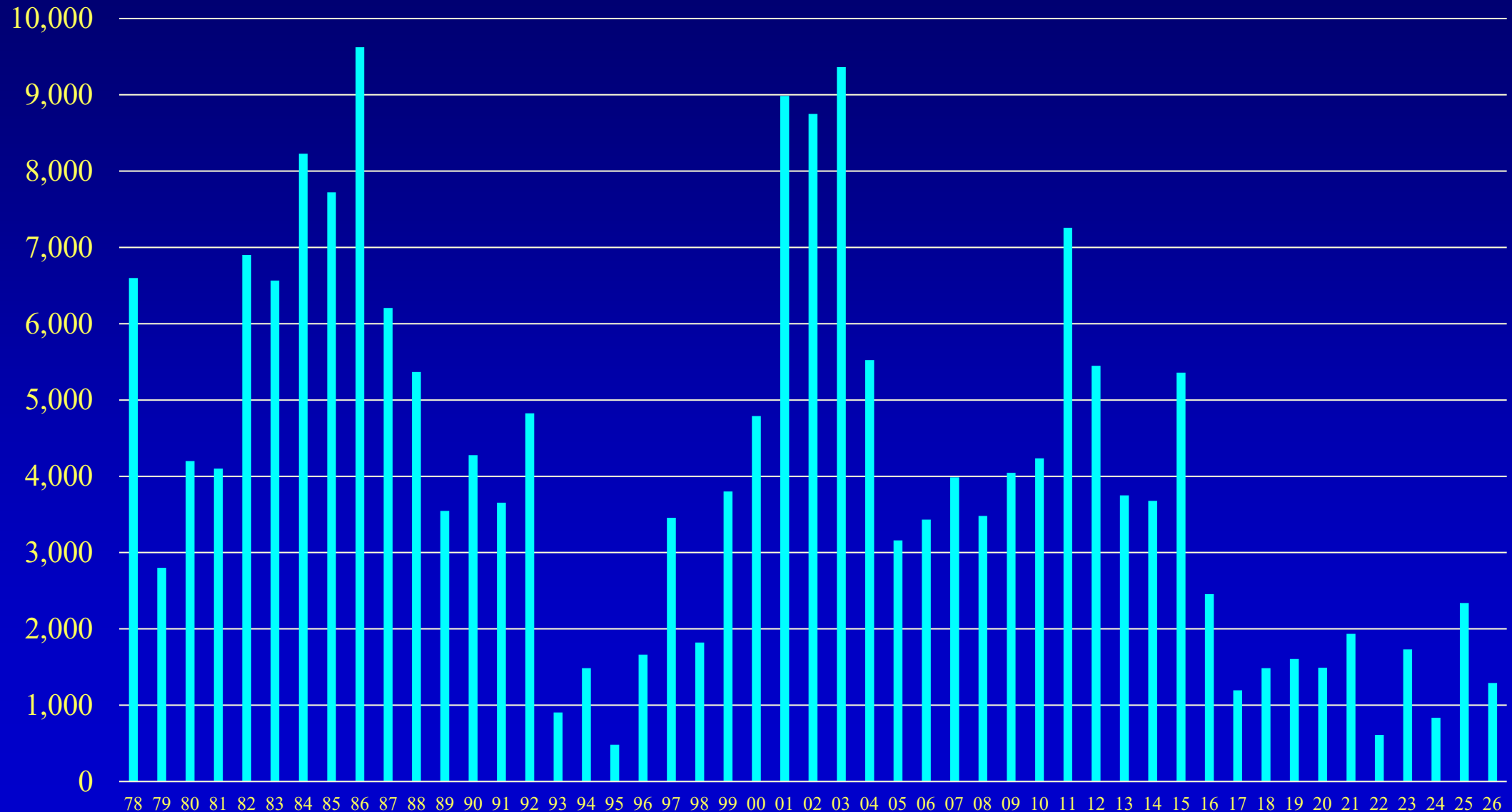
- Steelhead
- Fall Chinook
- Spring Chinook
- Redband Trout
- Smallmouth Bass

* Not presenting methods to estimates



WILD STEELHEAD

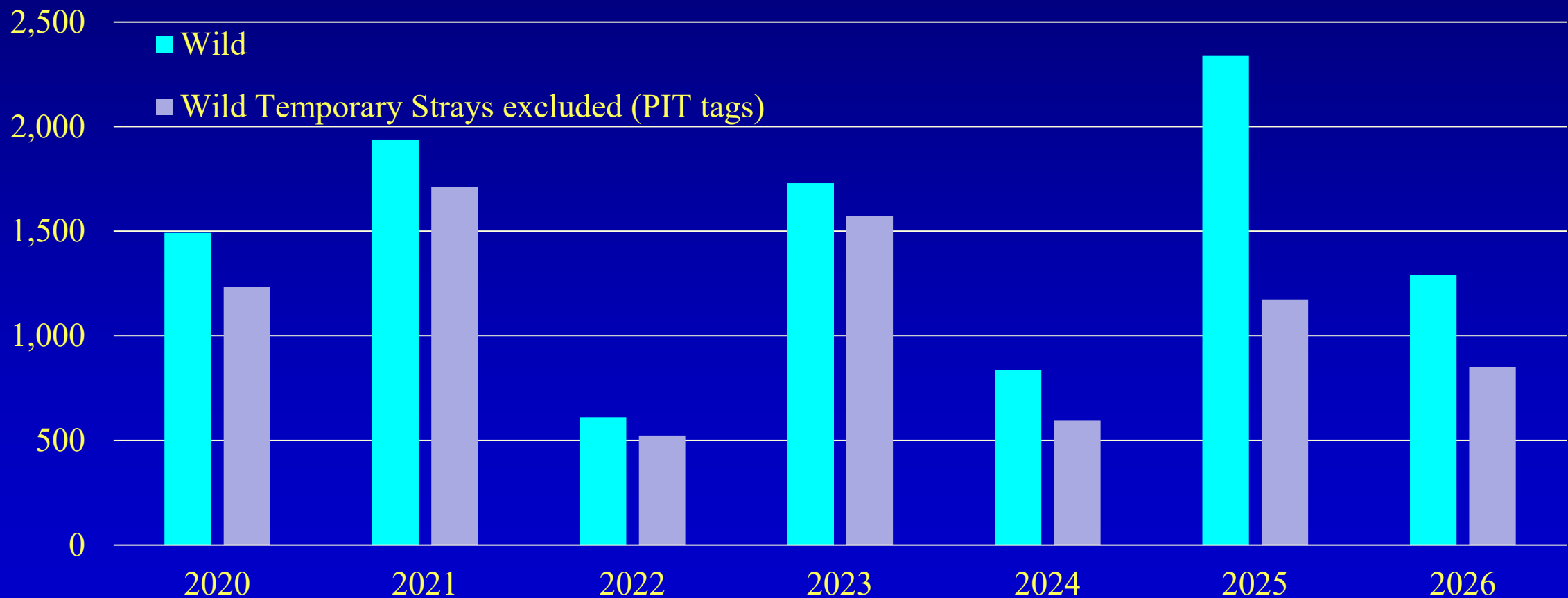
Wild Steelhead Above Sherars (Traditional M-R)



**No
WSNFH
Sample
in 2026

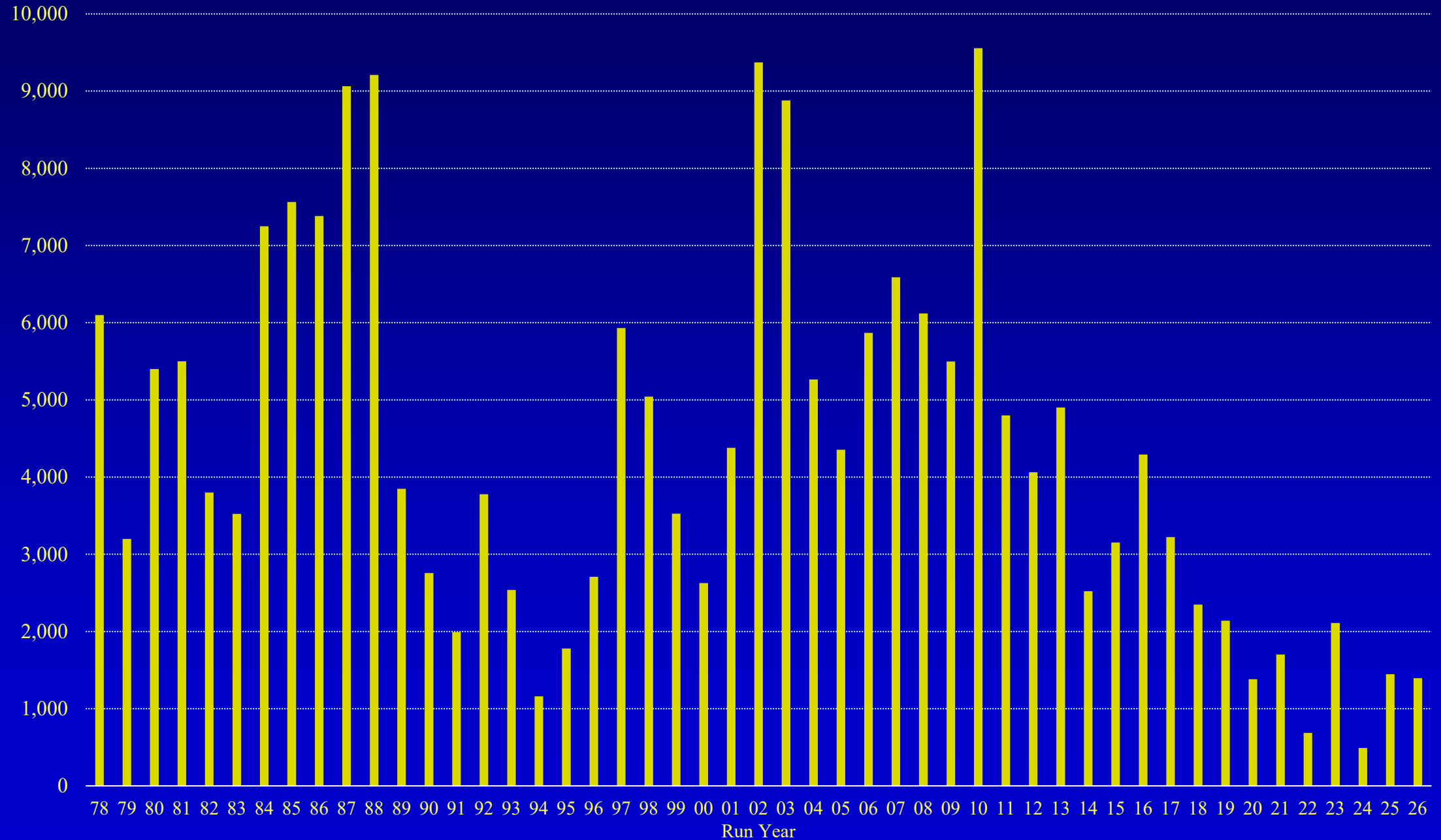


M-R (Traditional vs. Temp Strays)

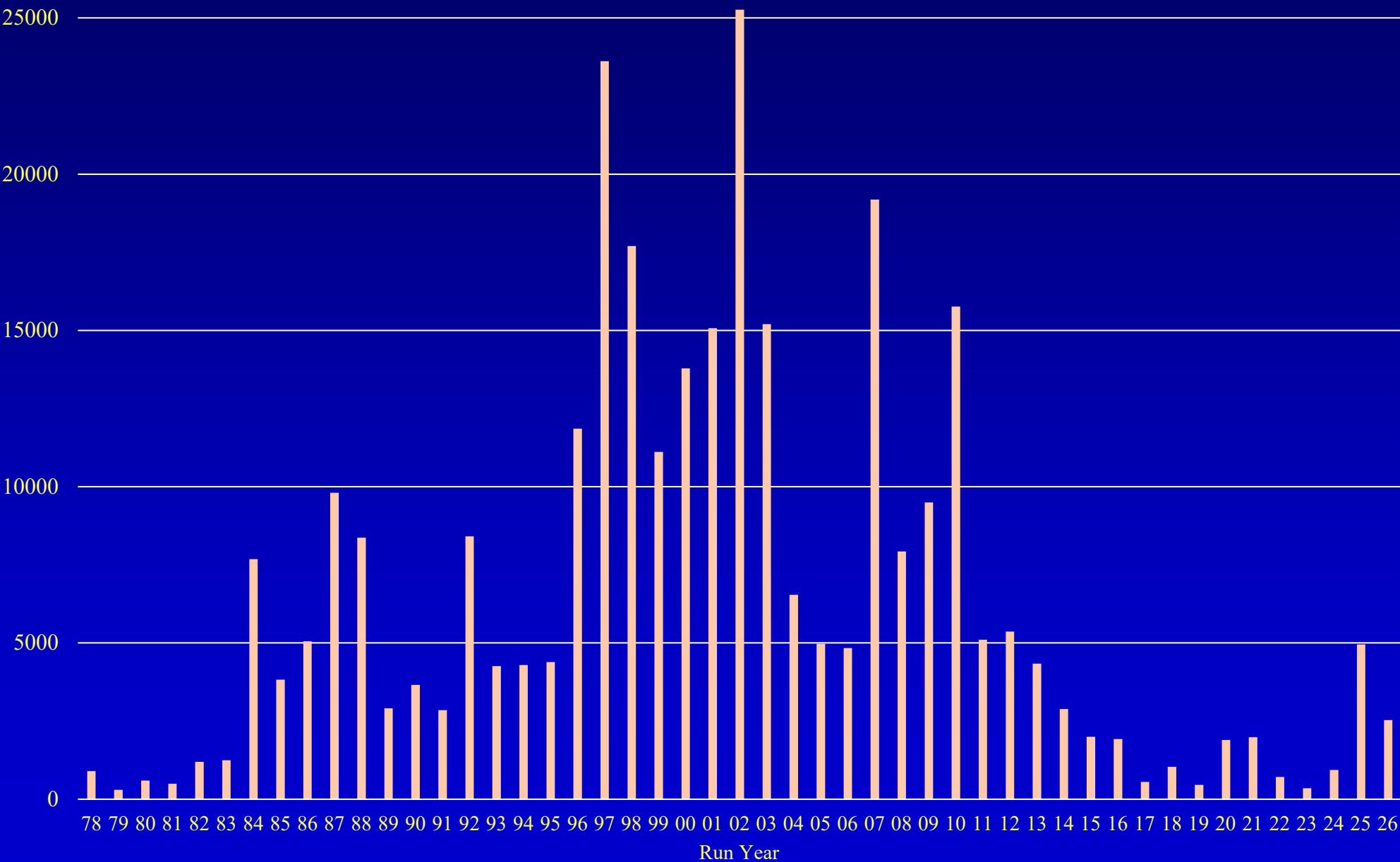


HATCHERY STEELHEAD

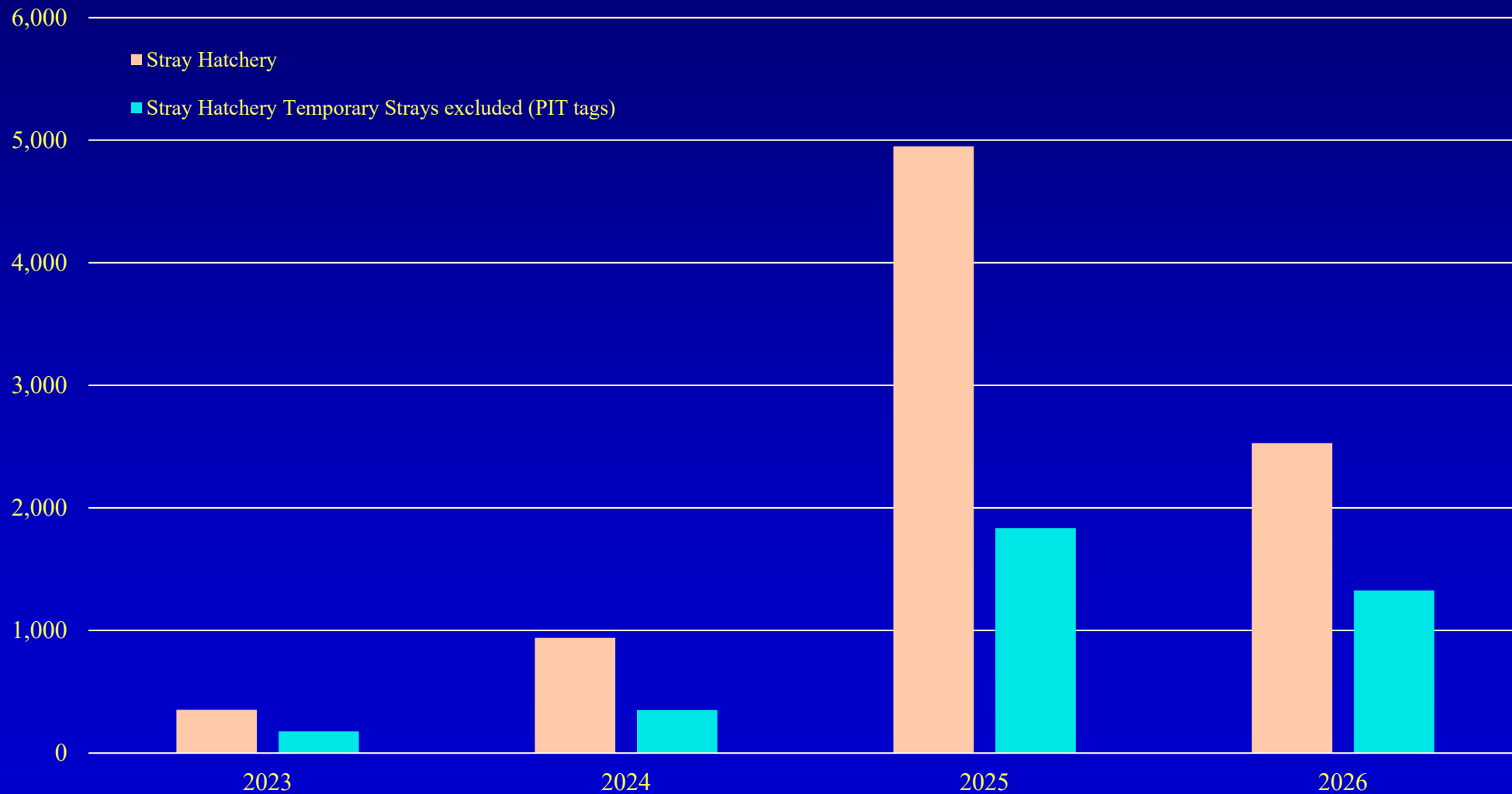
Round Butte Hatchery Steelhead Above Sherars Falls



Stray Hatchery Steelhead Above Sherars (Traditional M-R)



Traditional vs. Temp Strays



2026 Steelhead Fishery

Steelhead angling and retention currently open under permanent rule

- Per Deschutes Steelhead Fishery Framework:
 - 9,900 Wild Summer Steelhead Over Bonneville between July 1 – July 31
 - 23,100 Wild Summer Steelhead Over Bonneville between July 1 – August 31
- For July, as of July 20 at Bonneville:
 - 3,639 unmarked (wild)
 - 2025 = 14,277 = 25% (2026)
 - Ten Year Avg. = 8,275 = 44% (2026)
- For the remaining 11 days, need an average of 570 per day



FALL CHINOOK

Fall Chinook Run Estimates

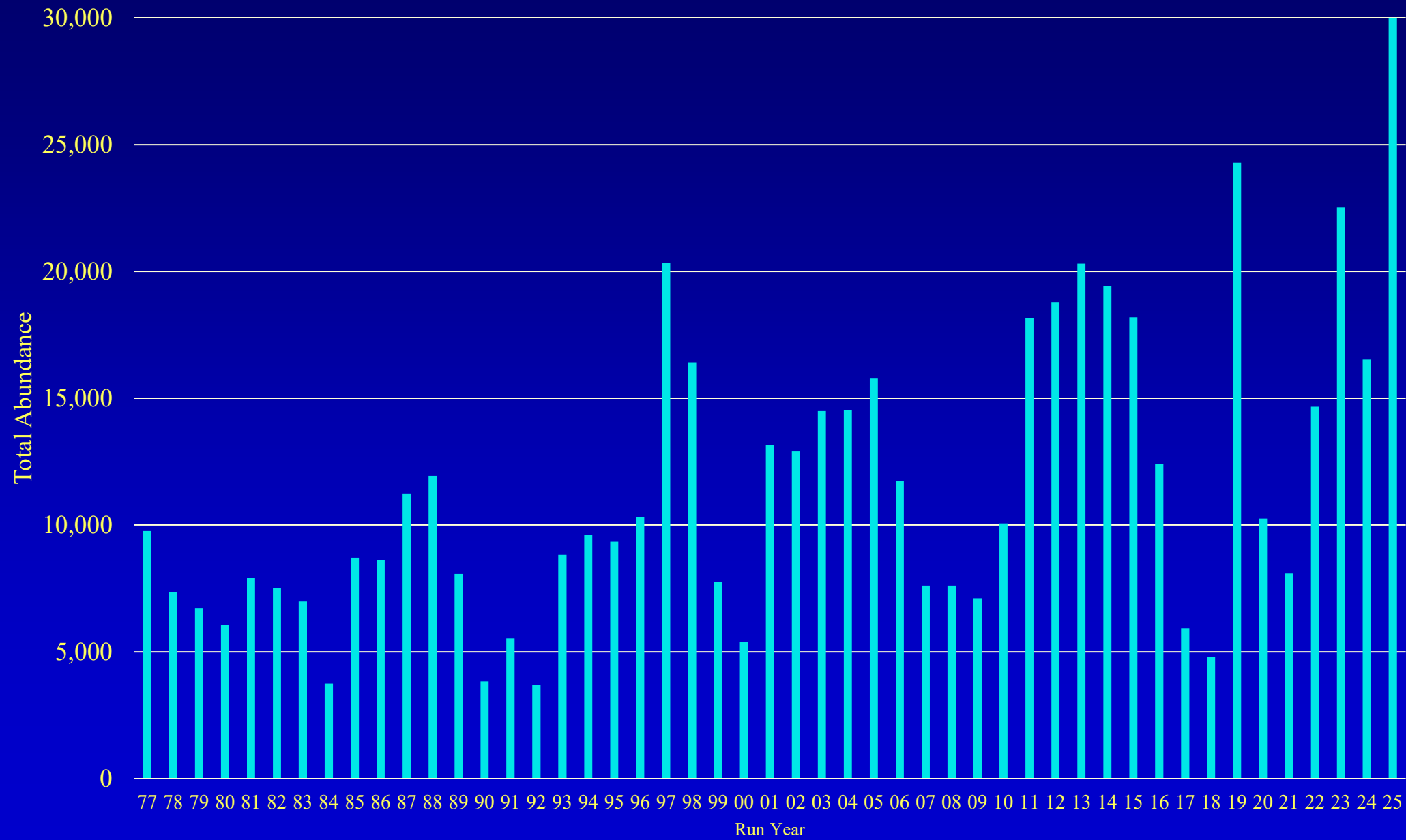
Mark-Recapture

- Sherars Trap
- Pelton Trap
- WSNFH
- Carcass surveys
- Creel surveys
- Redd Flights
- Scale Reads



All River Run Reconstruction

Adult Wild Fall Chinook Run Reconstruction



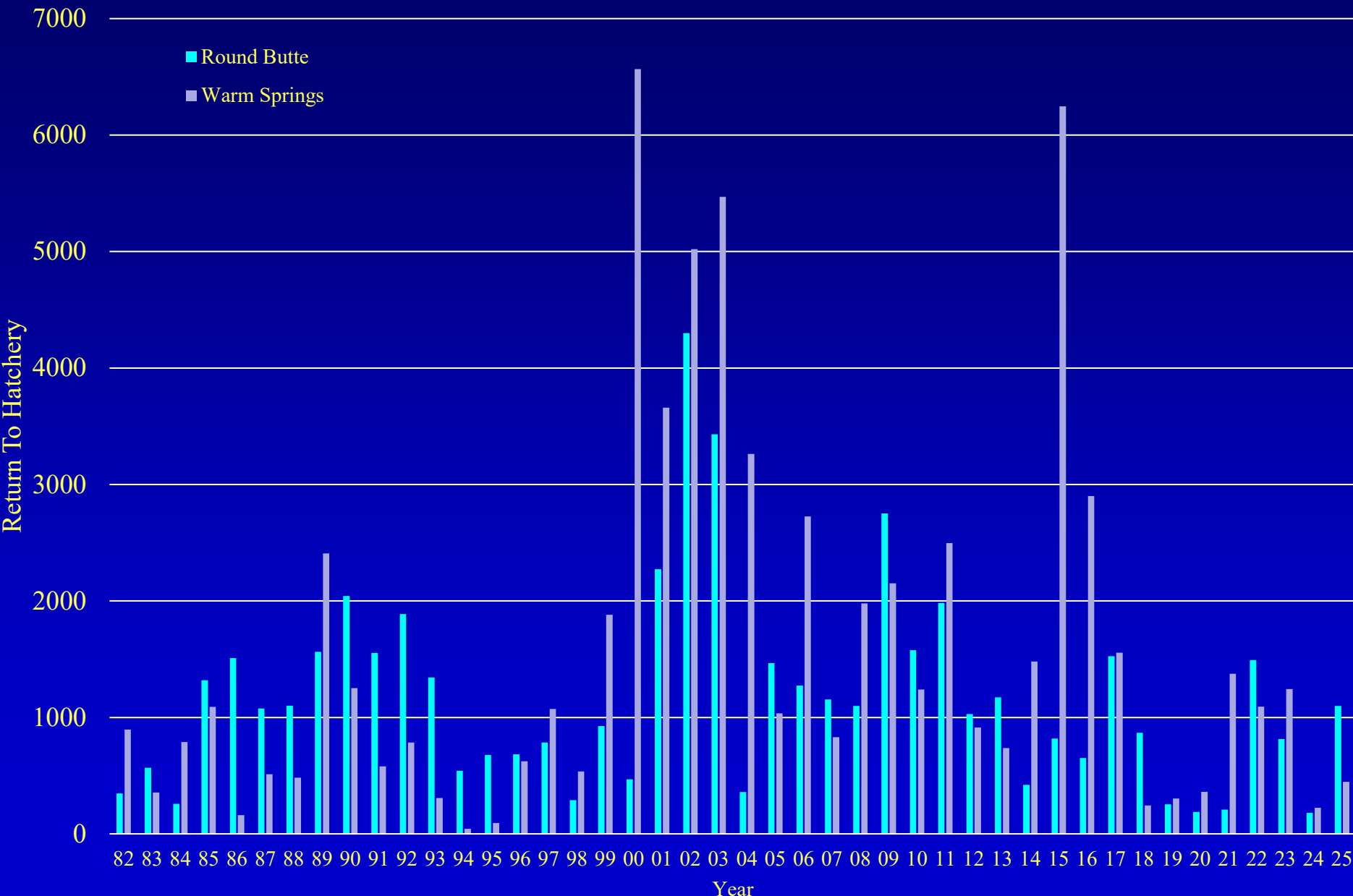
SPRING CHINOOK

Spring Chinook Run Estimates

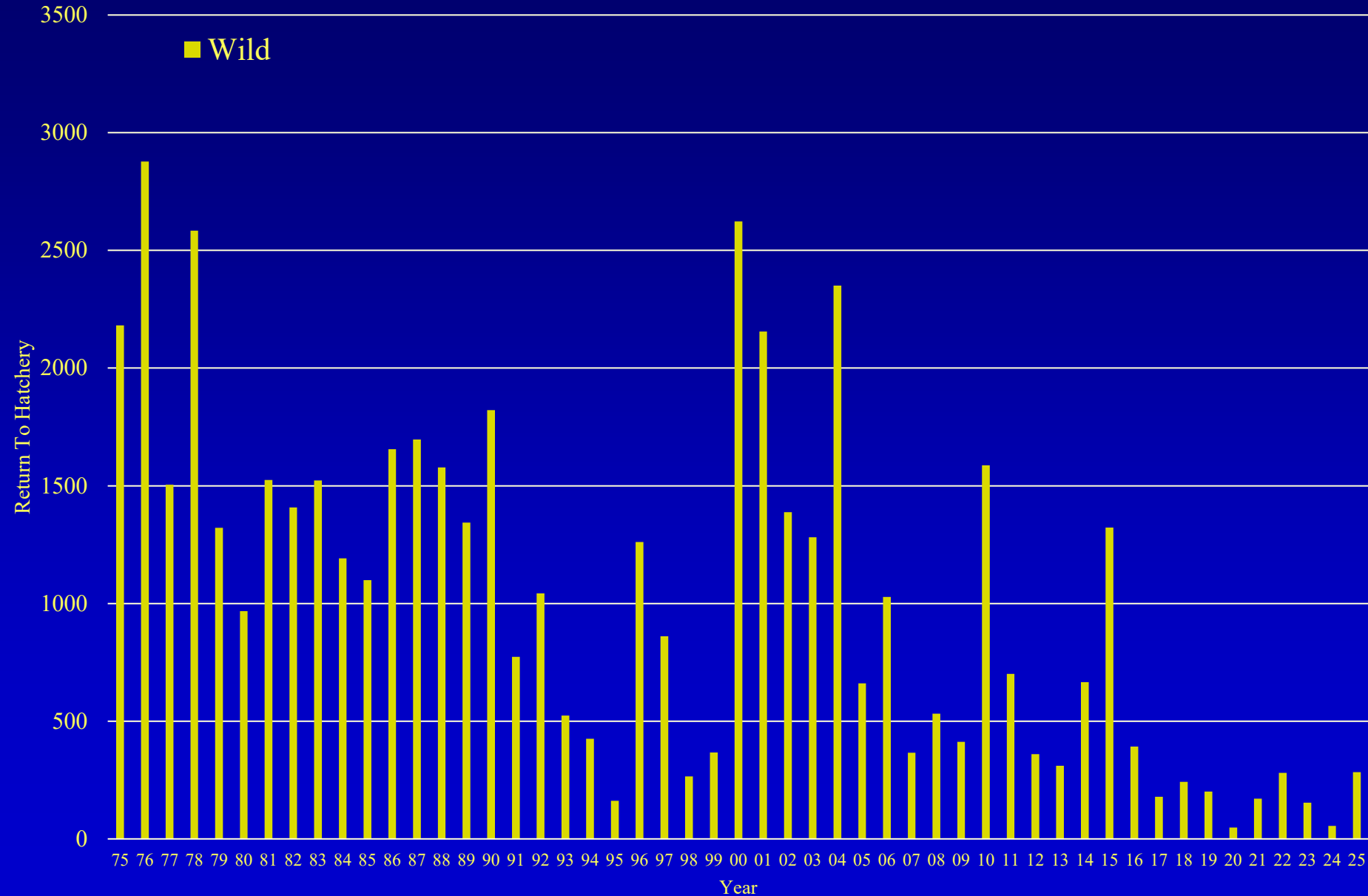
- Not associated with Sherars Trap
- Wild Run Size Enumerated at Warm Springs National
- Hatchery Production at Round Butte Hatchery (ODFW) and Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery (USFWS)



Adult Hatchery Spring Chinook Returns



Wild Spring Chinook Returns to WSNFH

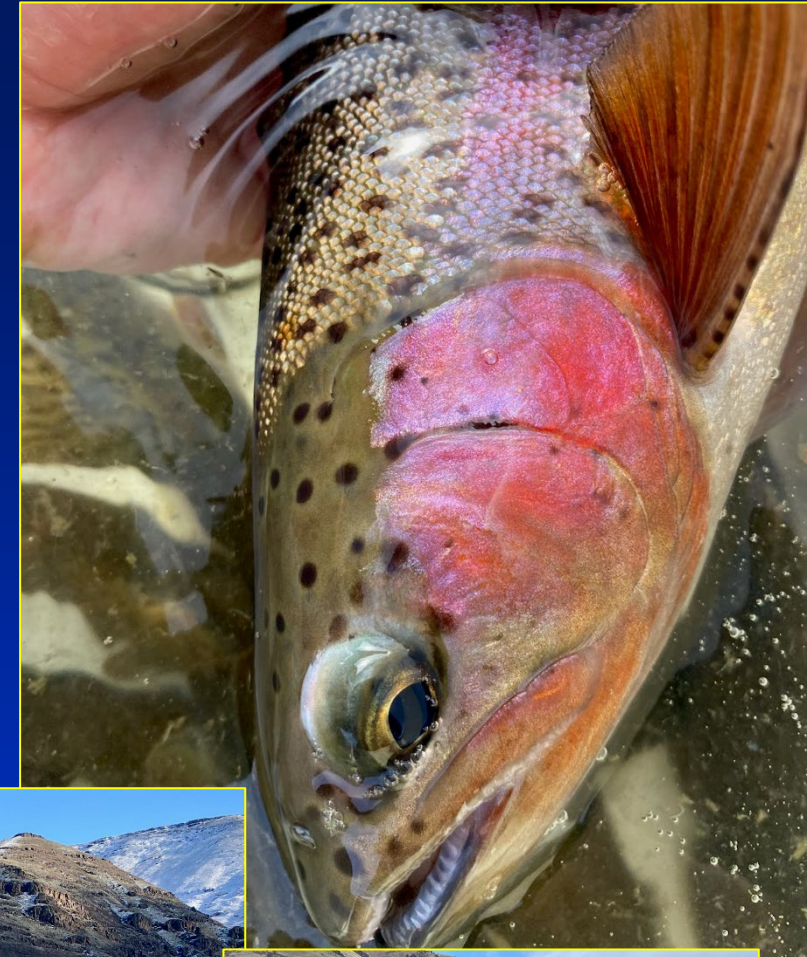


Deschutes Trout Monitoring

2019 to 2026 Density Estimates

Continued previous studies since 2014

- Estimates are not complete for 2026 North Junction
- No red flags from observations 2026



Smallmouth Bass



Monitoring Findings

- Distributed from RM 26 (Ferry Canyon) to mouth, heavily concentrated below RM 12 (Harris), some sign of low-density encroachment up the RM17
- PIT tagged individual displaying long migration patterns, McNary and Macdonald Ferry
- Leaving the Deschutes in September, Re-entering the Deschutes April-June
- No evidence of Natural Reproduction



Status Summary – All Species

- Steelhead Returns Low, likely Critical in 2026-27
- Wild spring Chinook Returns to WSR are Critical
- Fall Chinook Returns are Robust, record high level
- Redband Trout Densities are Good
- Smallmouth Bass continue to seasonally occupy lower 12 miles (summer months)





Thanks to

U.S.F.W.S. Sport Fish Restoration

Confederates Tribes of the Warm Springs Natural Resources

Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery

Round Butte Fish Hatchery

Portland General Electric

ODFW Trap Operators, Creelers

ODFW Michelle Jones, Biometrician

Questions?