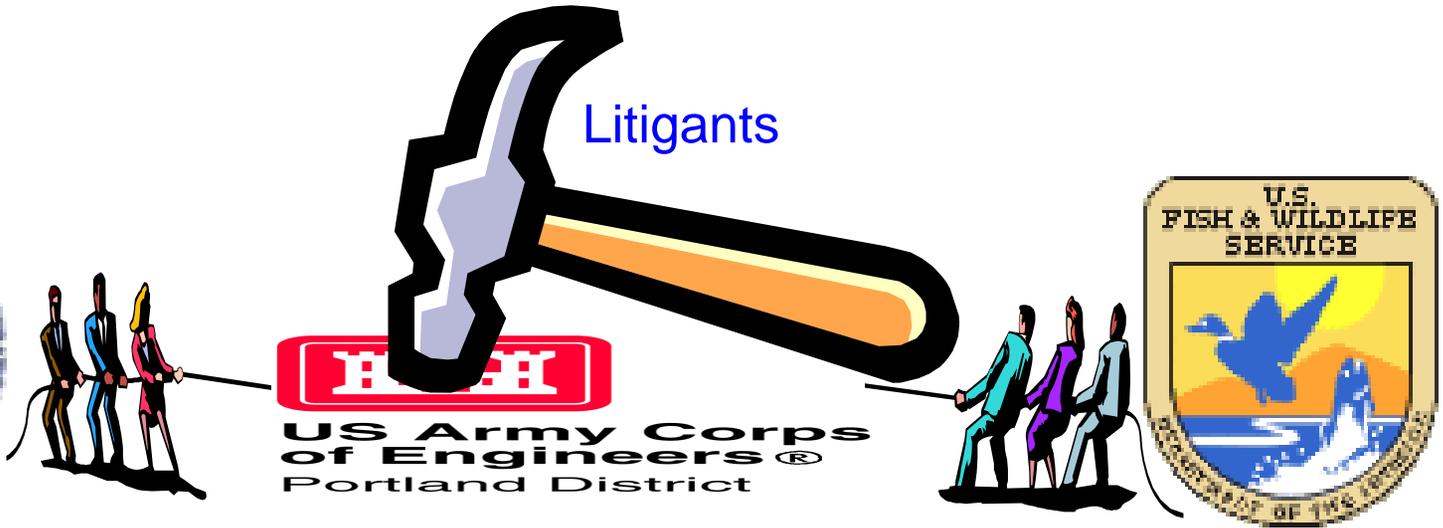


Caspian Tern Issue



Caspian Tern



Why the Corps?

- FCRPS 1995 BO – Incidental Take Provision #9 required the Corps of Engineers to “conduct studies to identify (a) Caspian Tern predation of juvenile salmonids, and (b) methods to discourage tern nesting.”



US Army Corps
of Engineers



Interagency Caspian Tern Working Group



1999 BO Columbia River Channel Operation and Maintenance Program

- 1a. The COE shall modify the habitat on Rice Island by April 1, 2000, so that it is no longer suitable as a nesting site for Caspian terns or provide for the hazing of terns off the island in a manner that will preclude their nesting. The COE shall ensure that any terns hazed off the island do not nest on any dredge spoil islands in the action area (other than East Sand Island). The COE shall continue to prevent nesting of Caspian terns on disposal islands within the action area for the life of the project.

1999 EA

- Test of Concept
- Push/ Pull Strategy
- Prey Fish Opportunity

Caspian Tern Management – Relocation



2000 Plan

- **Regionally agreed-upon plan**
 - 4 acres E. Sand Island
 - Harassment on Rice Island
 - Lawsuit by ABC, NA, SA
- **Restraining Order: No Rice Island Action**



Year 2001 Actions

- **Environmental Assessment Actions**
 - Remove vegetation on 4 or more acres on East Sand Island
 - Preliminary injunction prevents any action on Rice Island
 - Place additional cormorant excluders on piling
- **Department of Justice attempting to settle out of court.**

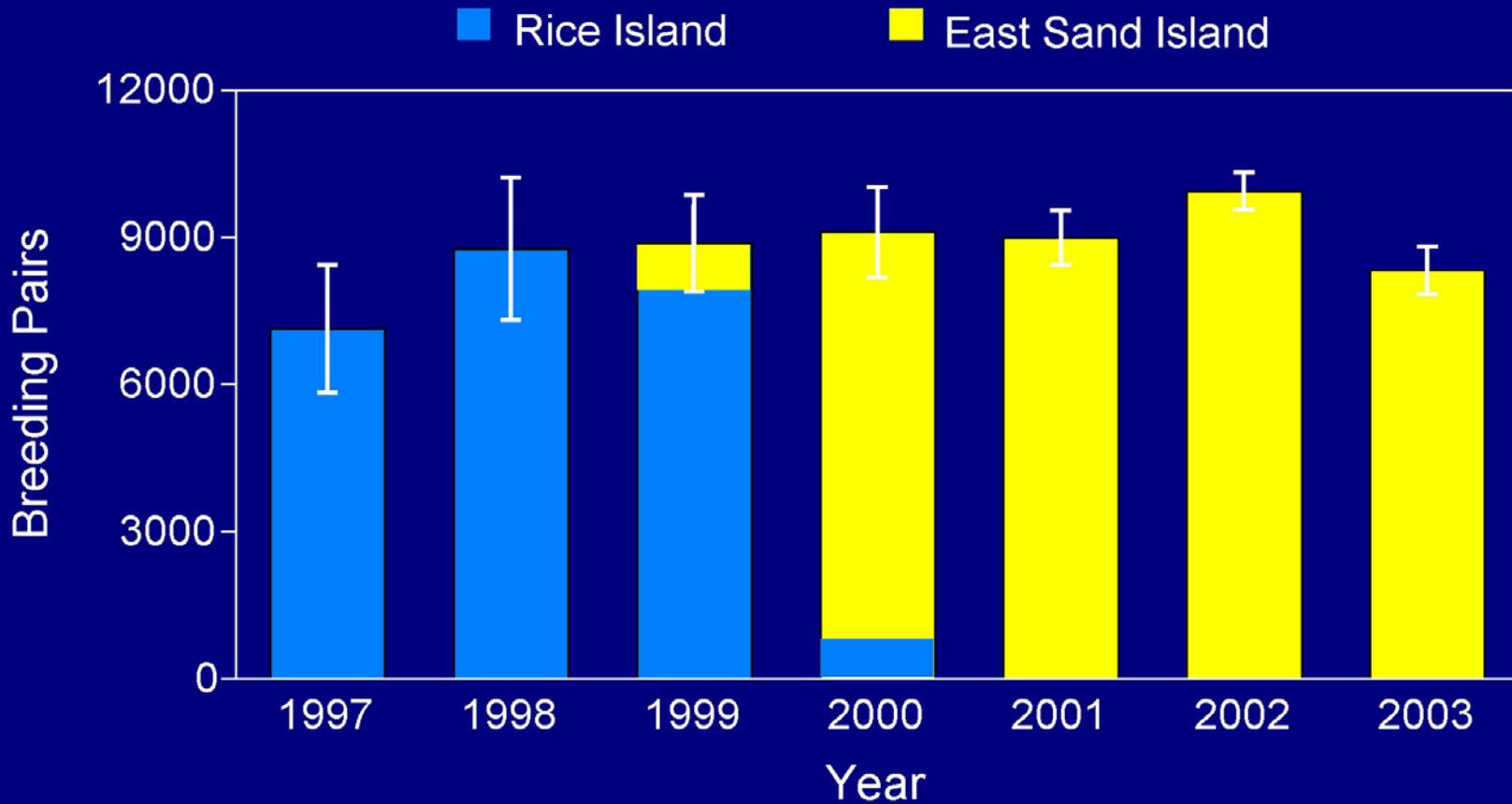
Western District Court Settlement (April 2002)

- ESI Tern Habitat – Develop & O&M 6 acres of tern nesting habitat
- Can preclude terns from 3 upriver islands
- Scientific Research can continue
- Dredged material can be placed on Rice, Miller Sands Spit and Pillar Rock Islands
- NEPA – Develop an EIS/Caspian tern management plan

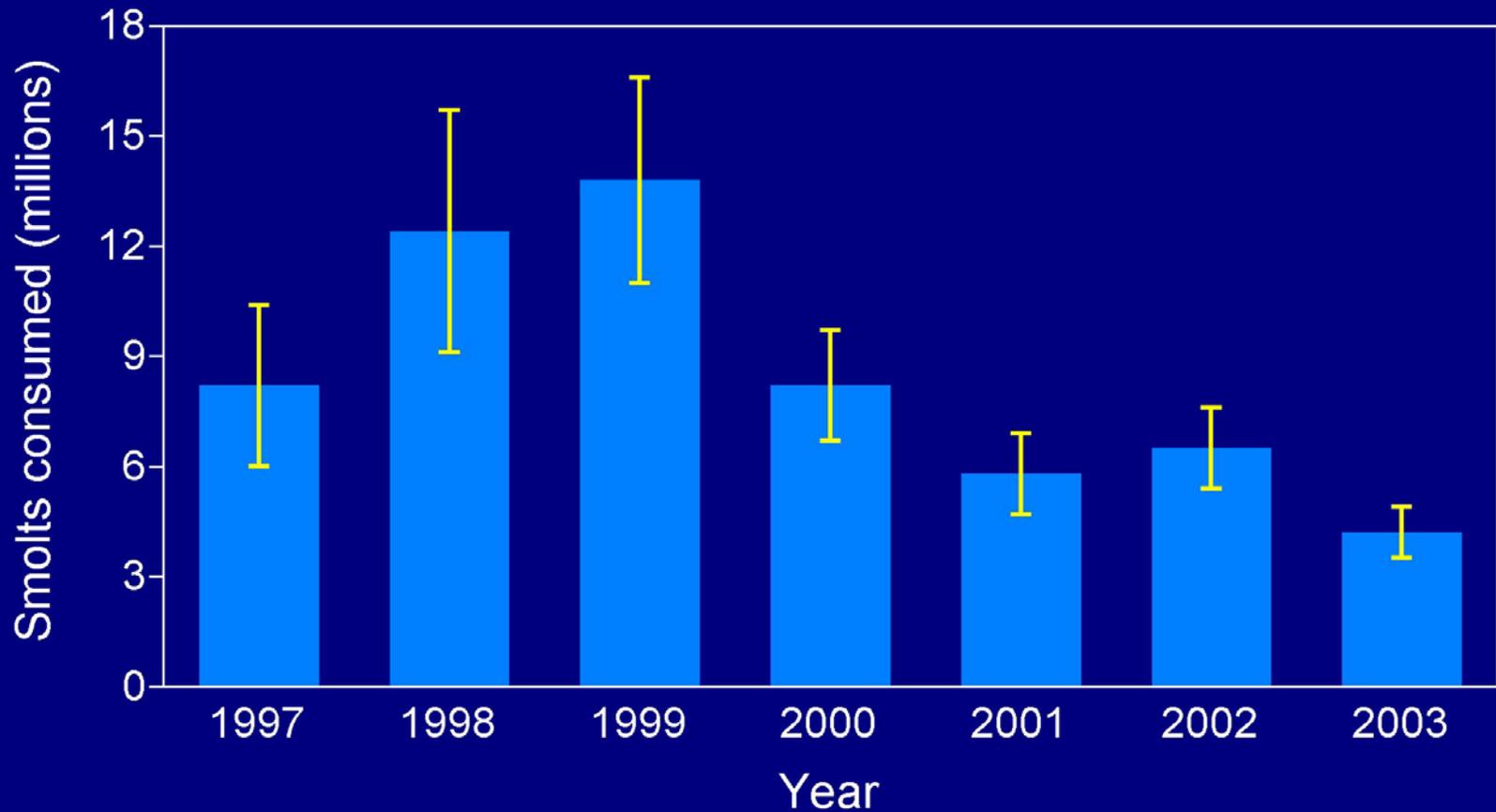
Western District Court Settlement (April 2002)

- Continued
- Cormorant Habitat – Preparation of an EIS required before management implemented
- ESI Ownership – Joint recommendation from COE and USFWS
- MBTA Depredation Permits – notify plaintiffs and allow 30 days for comments

Caspian Tern Colony Size in the Columbia River Estuary



Salmonid Consumption by Caspian Terns in the Columbia River Estuary



INTERAGENCY EIS – 2002

Settlement Agreement

- USFWS (lead), NOAA Fisheries, & Corps
- Caspian Tern Management to Reduce Predation of Juvenile Salmonids in the Columbia River Estuary
- July 23, 2004 – Released Draft EIS to Public; Comments due September 20, 2004
- January 2005 – Final EIS
- February 2005 - ROD

State/Federal Restrictions

- WDFW does not support active management of sites in WA that could serve as alternate habitat
- ODFW will not support managed relocation of Caspian terns to any sites in OR other than historic use sites.
- CDFG has expressed concerns about impact of terns on ESA-listed salmonids at Humboldt Bay and the Sacramento River Valley
- USFWS's CNO did not support tern nesting habitat development at Humboldt Bay

Caspian Tern Draft EIS

Provisions

Columbia River Estuary

- Corps will continue to prevent Caspian tern nesting in the upper estuary (Rice, Pillar Rock, Miller Sands Spit)
- USFWS will permit egg take if initial hazing activities fail
- Corps can resume dredged material disposal on d/s end (former colony location) of Rice Island.

Avian Predation – Columbia River Estuary

- 2003:
 - Caspian Terns – 8,325 pairs;
 - Double-crested Cormorants – ~10,650 pairs
- 2003 juvenile salmonid consumption
 - Caspian Terns – 4.2 million
 - Double-crested Cormorants – 4.8 million
 - Combined - 9 million

BENEFIT

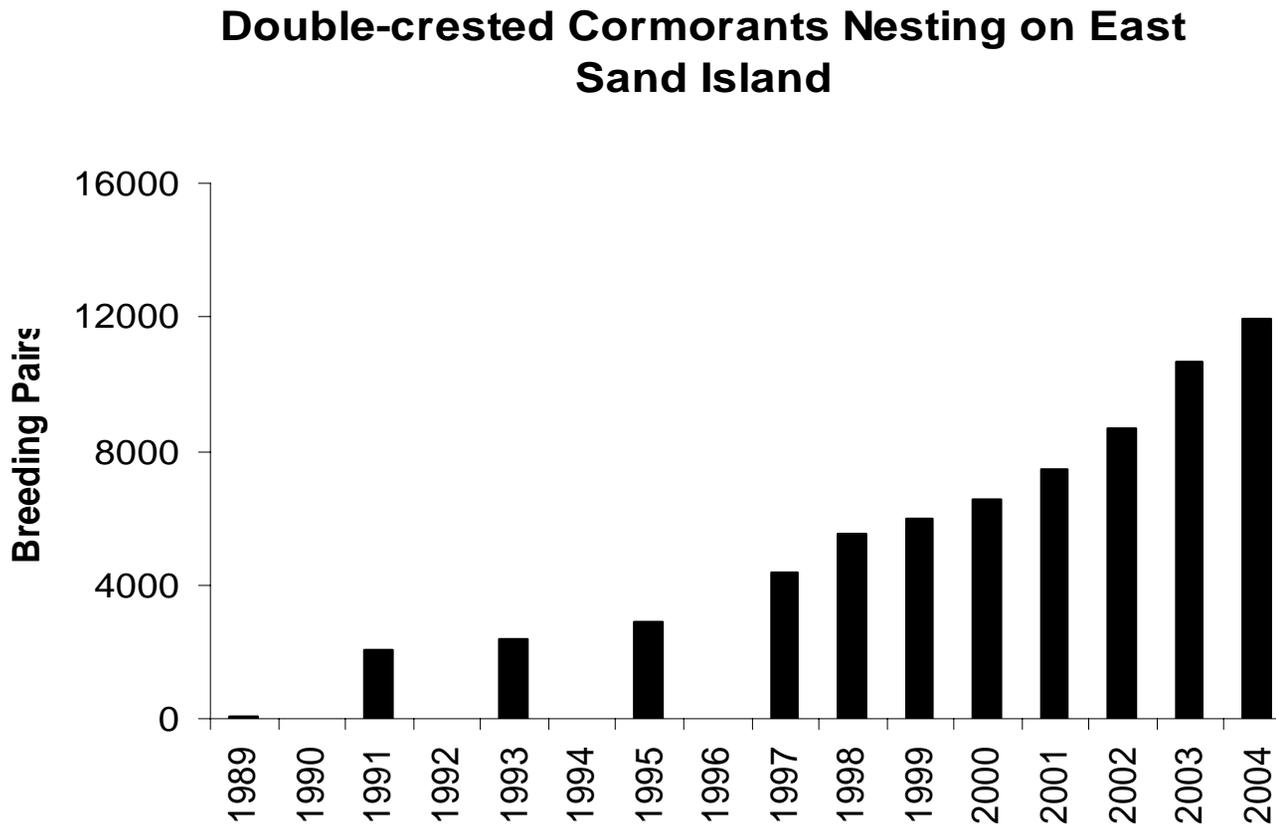
(Current Operations)

- EIS Implementation Cost: 5 sites @ \$3.25 million
- EIS Plan: Save 3.87 - 4.28 MILLION JUVENILES (All Juvenile Salmonids in Estuary)
- 67% Associated with FCRPS (2.59 – 2.89 Million Juveniles).
- BY Comparison:
 - FCRPS 2000 BiOp RPA (hydropower measures) = 2.15 million juveniles, cost is \$865 million
 - B2 Corner Collector = 300,000 juveniles, cost was \$48 million
 - Colony relocation from Rice to East Sand Island = 32.5 million juveniles from 2000-2003; cost was \$3.5 million for research (1997-2003) plus ~\$1,000,000 for NEPA/Implementation/O&M

Double-crested Cormorants



Background: Cormorants



Issues Pertaining to Double-crested Cormorant Management in Estuary

- Currently only research at ESI ongoing; no management plan or action in place in region
- No Interagency agreement on need or direction
- EIS required per Federal District Court Settlement to Implement Management of Population on LCR
- Baseline Research
- Implementation of Management Measures

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Columbia Bird Research

- CBR home
- New!** 2001 Draft Season Summary
- Past weekly reports
- Seasonal trends
- Field chronology
- Movies and photos
- Meet the crew
- Background
- Reports and proposals
- Links

Columbia Bird Research

Provided here are in-season weekly reports and background information on a study investigating the impacts of piscivorous waterbirds (i.e., terns, cormorants, and gulls) on the survival of juvenile salmonids in the lower Columbia River. These data were collected by researchers working with Oregon State University, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, and Real Time Research.



Weekly reports on managed Caspian terns are provided to monitor and evaluate the 2001 Caspian Tern Management Plan (Click [here](#) to see map of study area). Other data on unmanaged bird populations (i.e., double-crested cormorants and glaucous-winged/western gulls) are being collected by the researchers, but are not provided in detail here.



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