

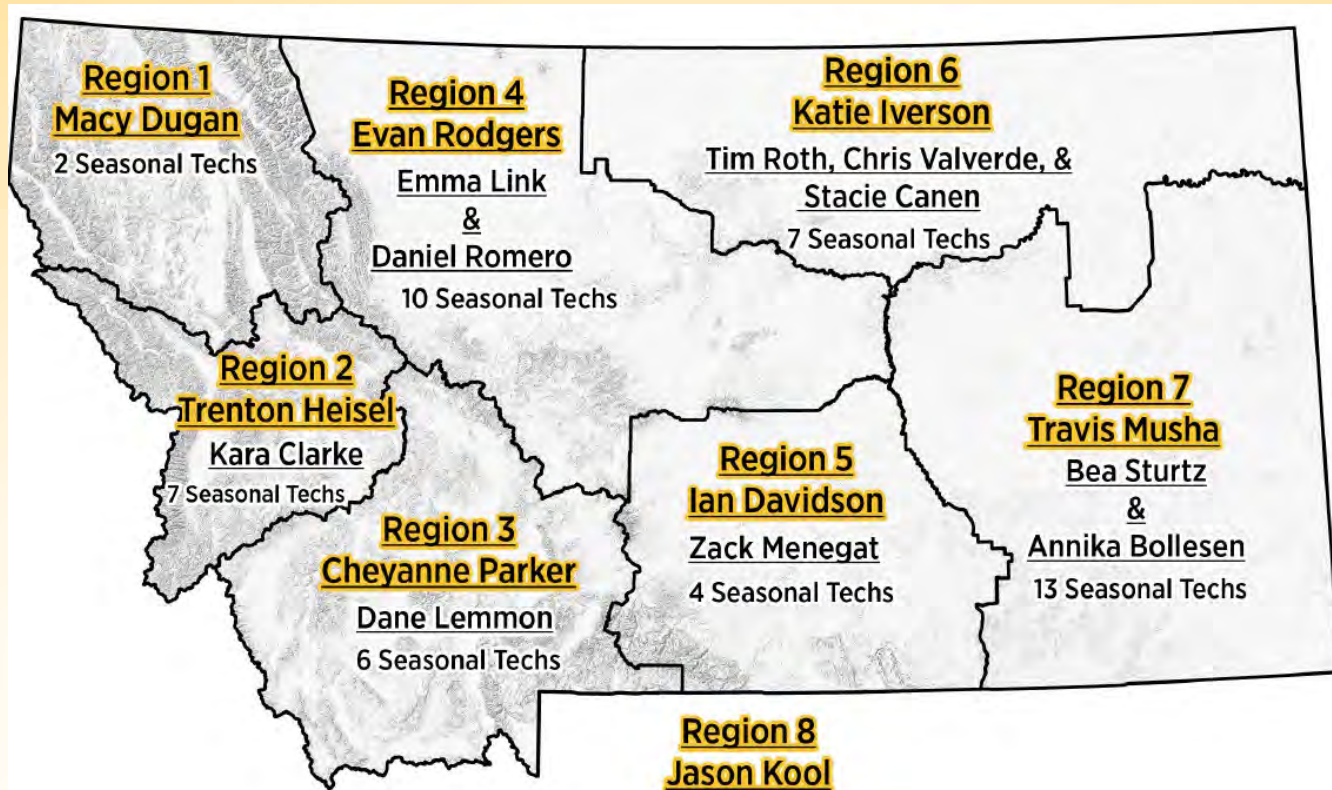
# Access Program Statistics

Summary of 2025 FWP Access Programs  
Private Land/Public Wildlife Advisory Committee

April 2026



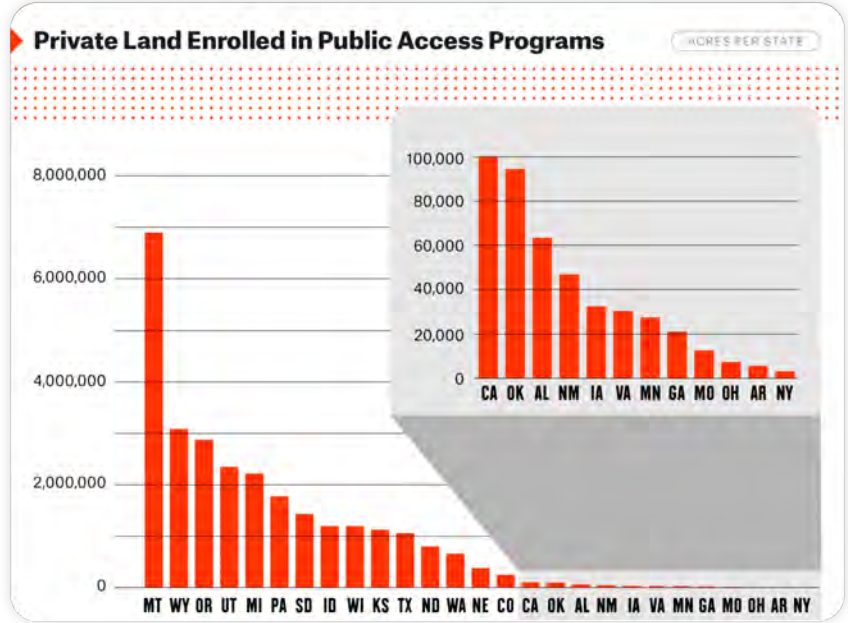
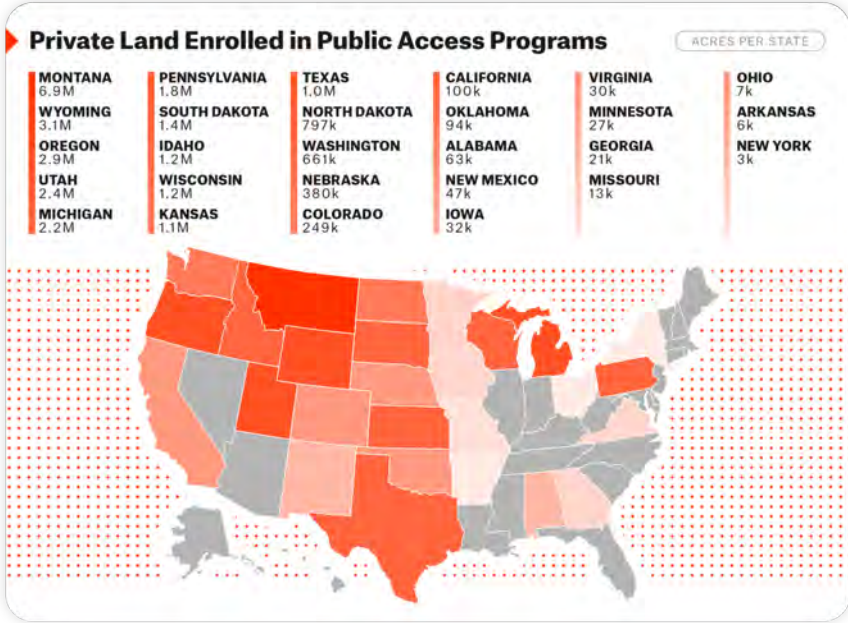
# The A-Team



35,000+ hunter/landowner contacts annually



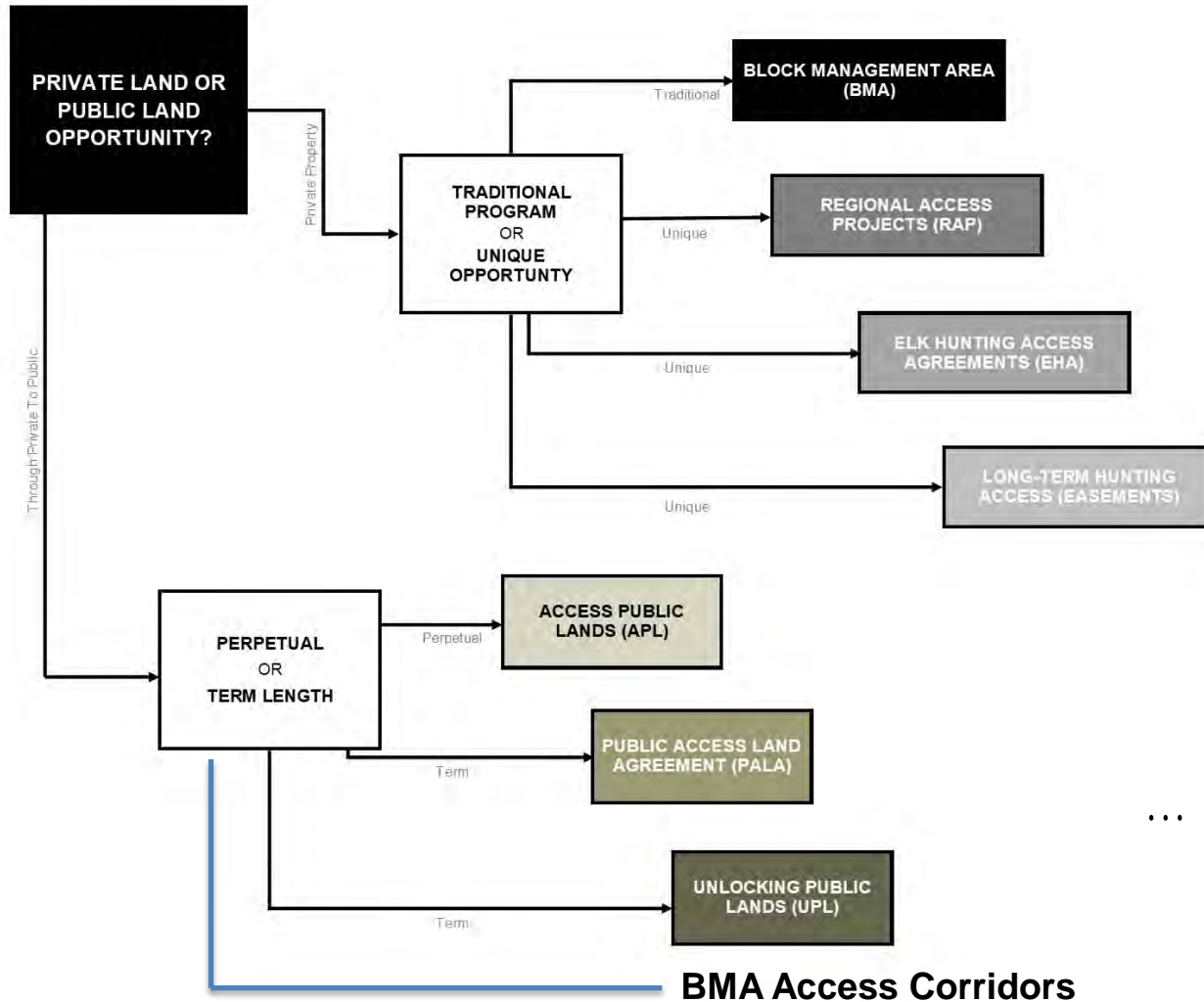
# Montana Leads Nationwide on Private Land Access



<https://www.onxmaps.com/onx-access-initiatives/private-land-public-access>



# Access Program Options



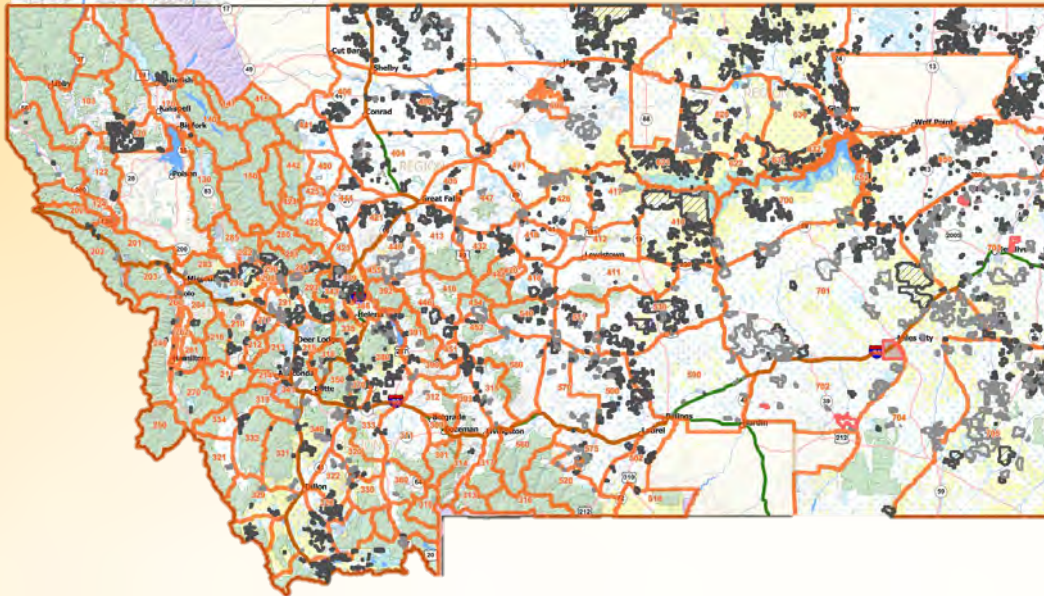
... AND MORE!





**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

# 2025 Block Management Summary



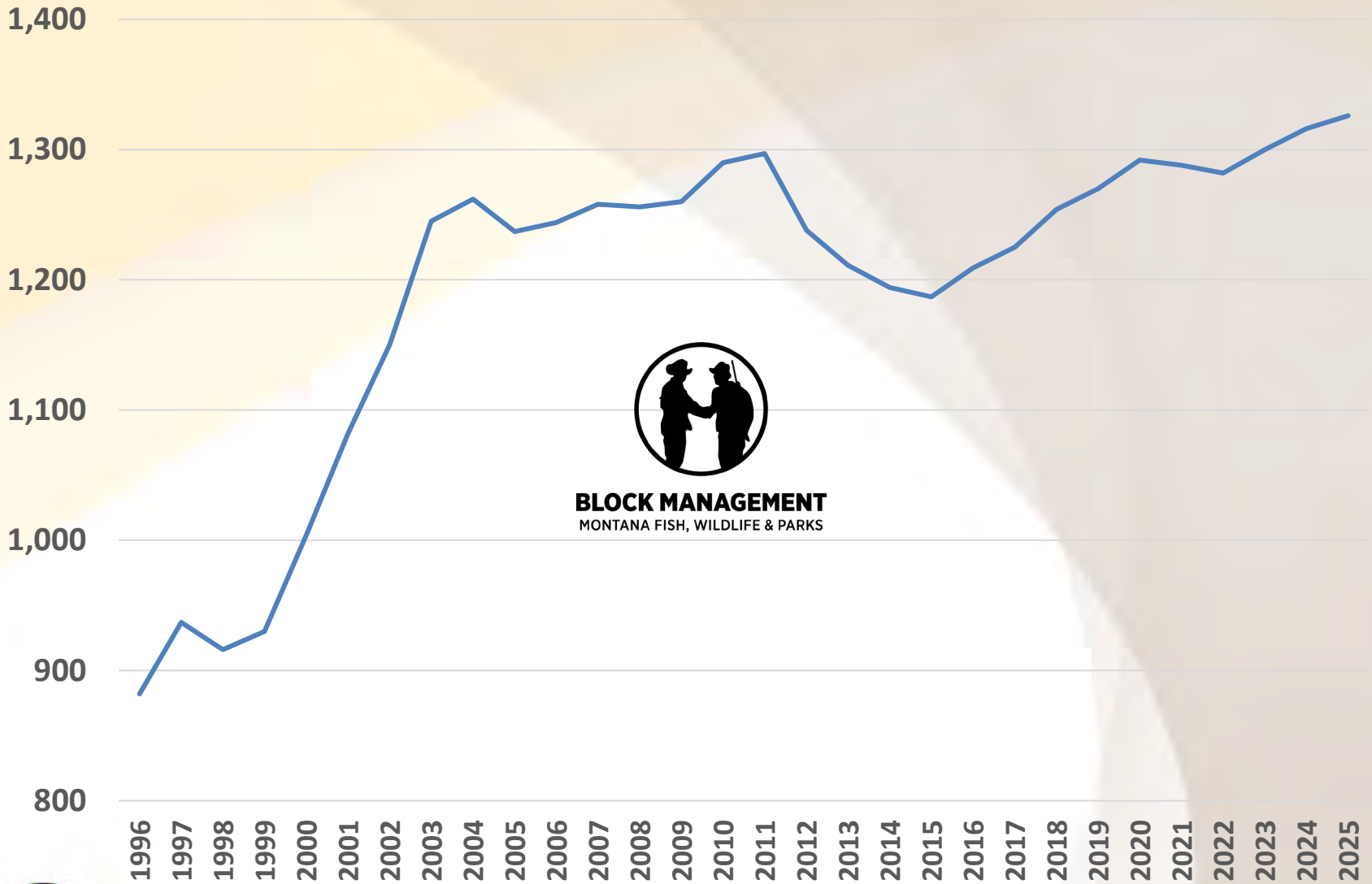
- 1,326 cooperators
- \$12.5 million paid to cooperators<sup>1</sup>
- 6.81 million acres enrolled
- 600,000+ inaccessible public acres opened<sup>2</sup>

1- based on BMA contract database reporting

2- estimate based on 2021 OnX report; reflects 20% of Montana's landlocked public land opened to public access



# Total Cooperators



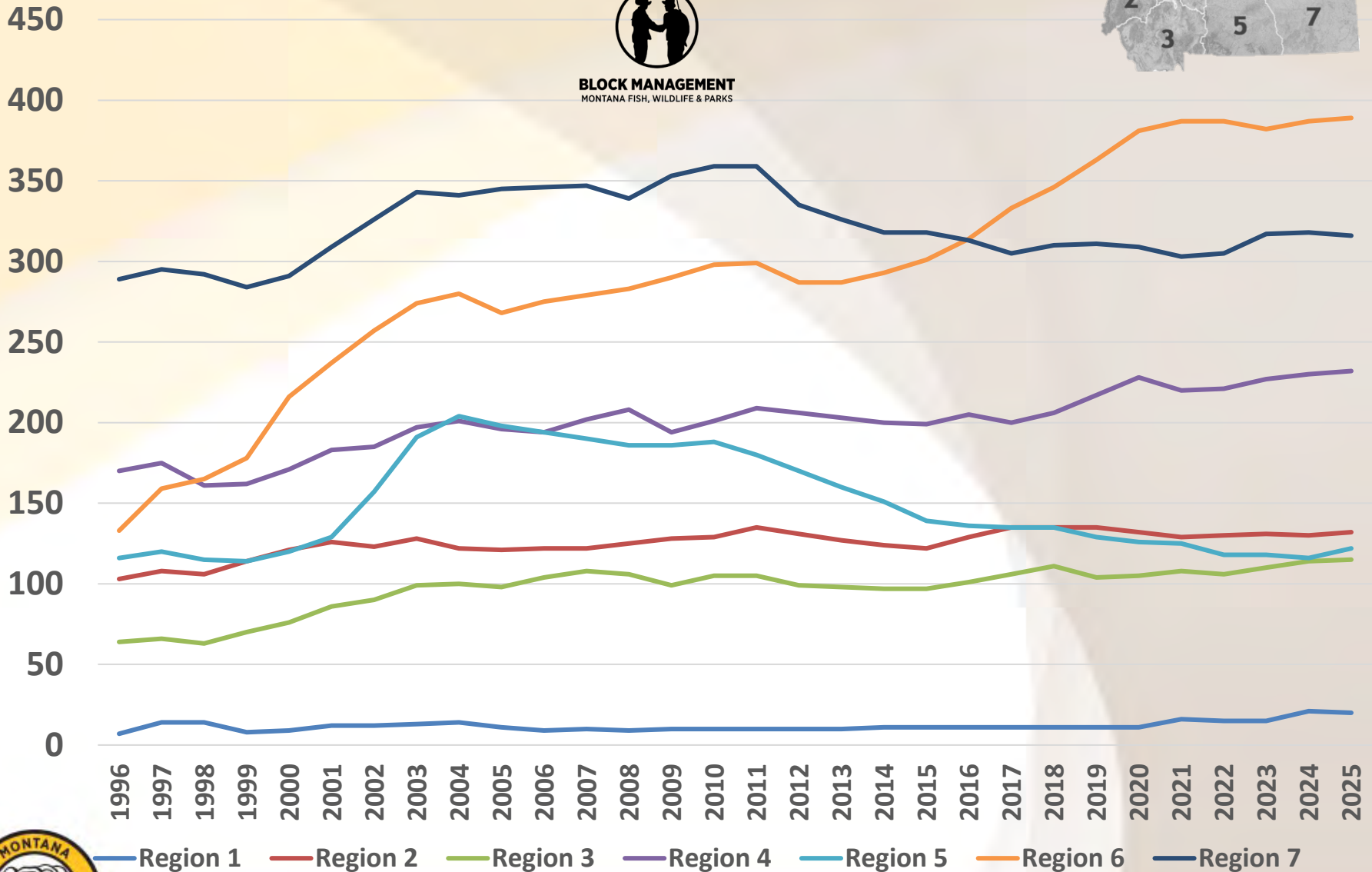
**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



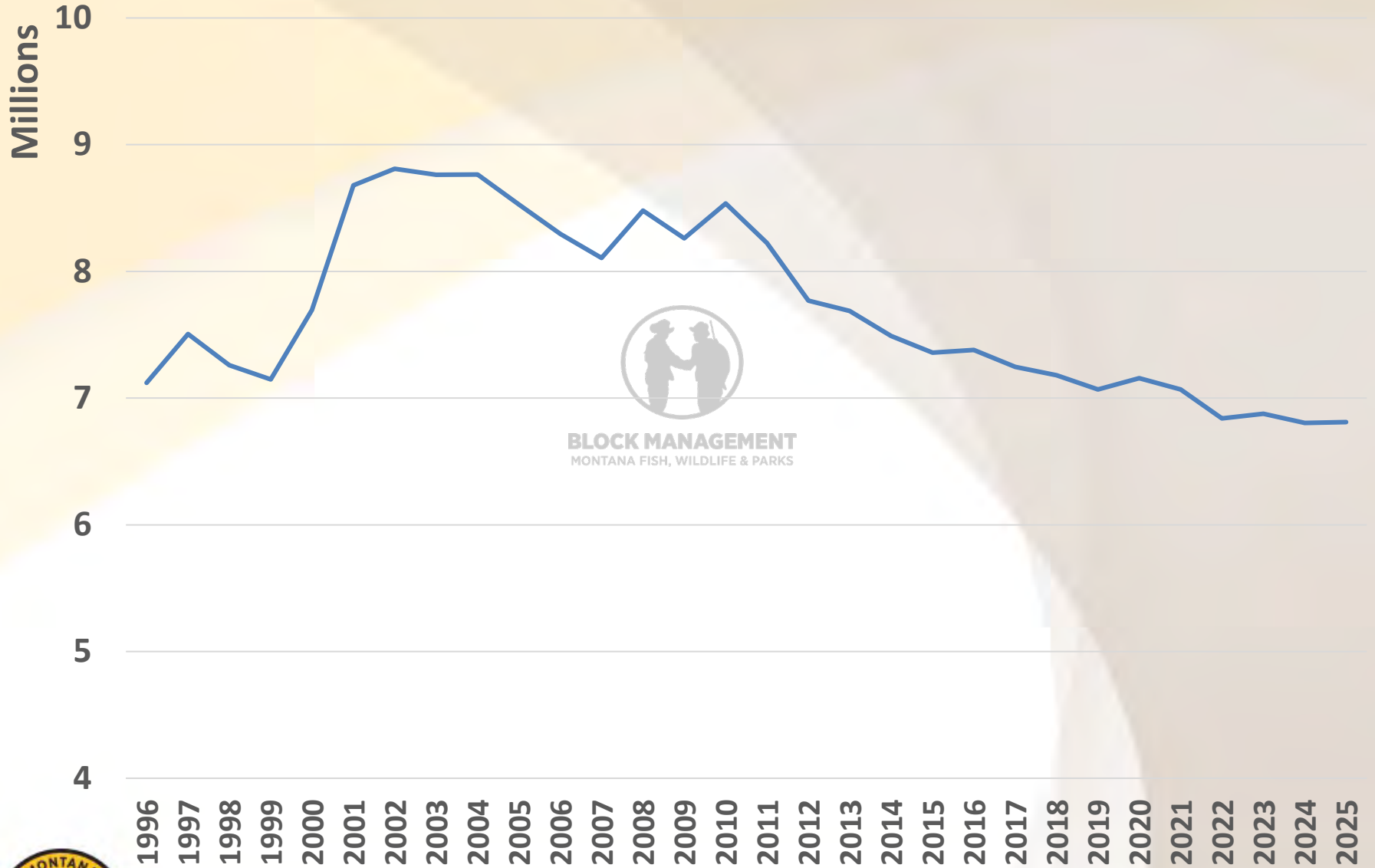
# Cooperators by Region



**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



# Total Acres



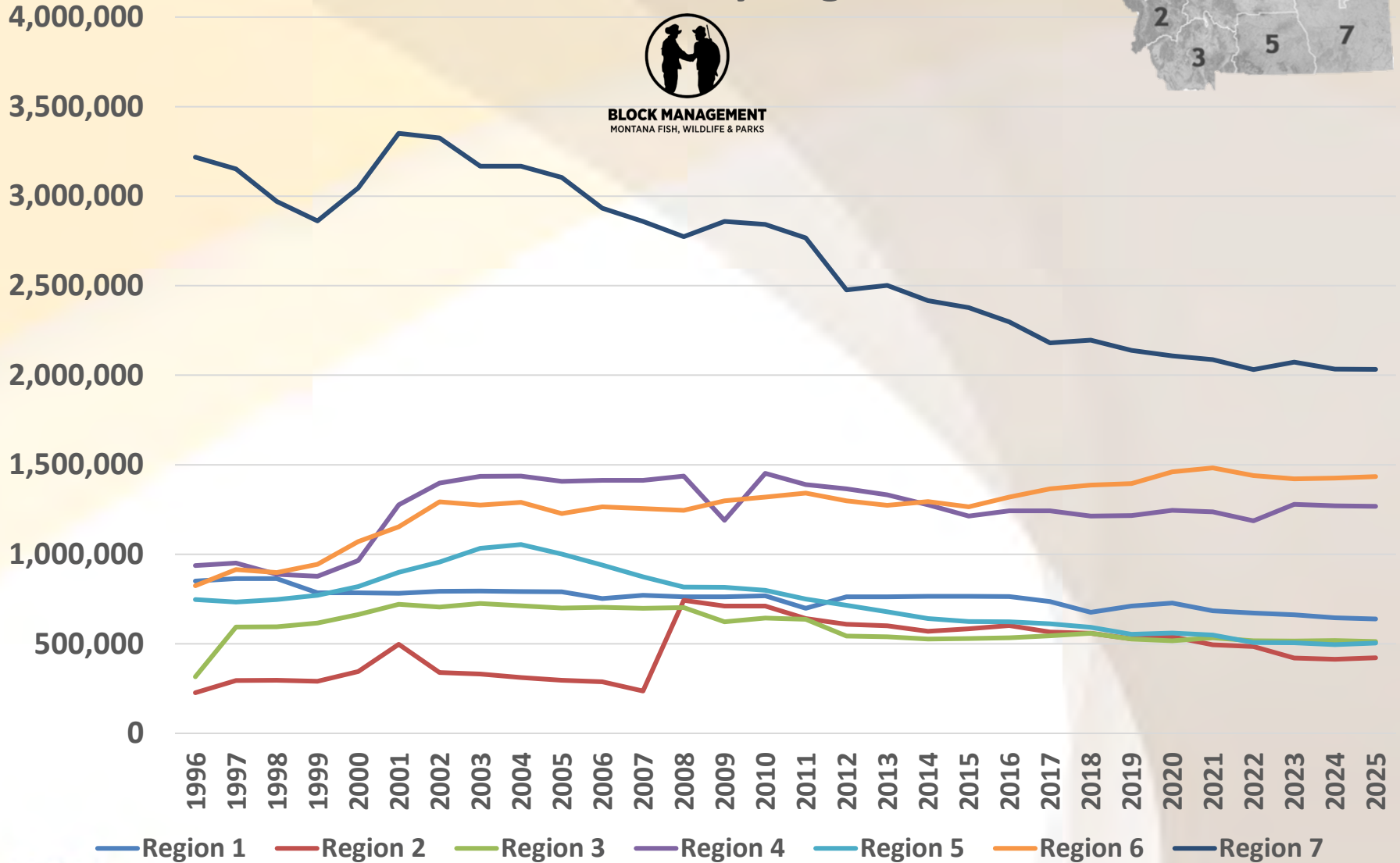
**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



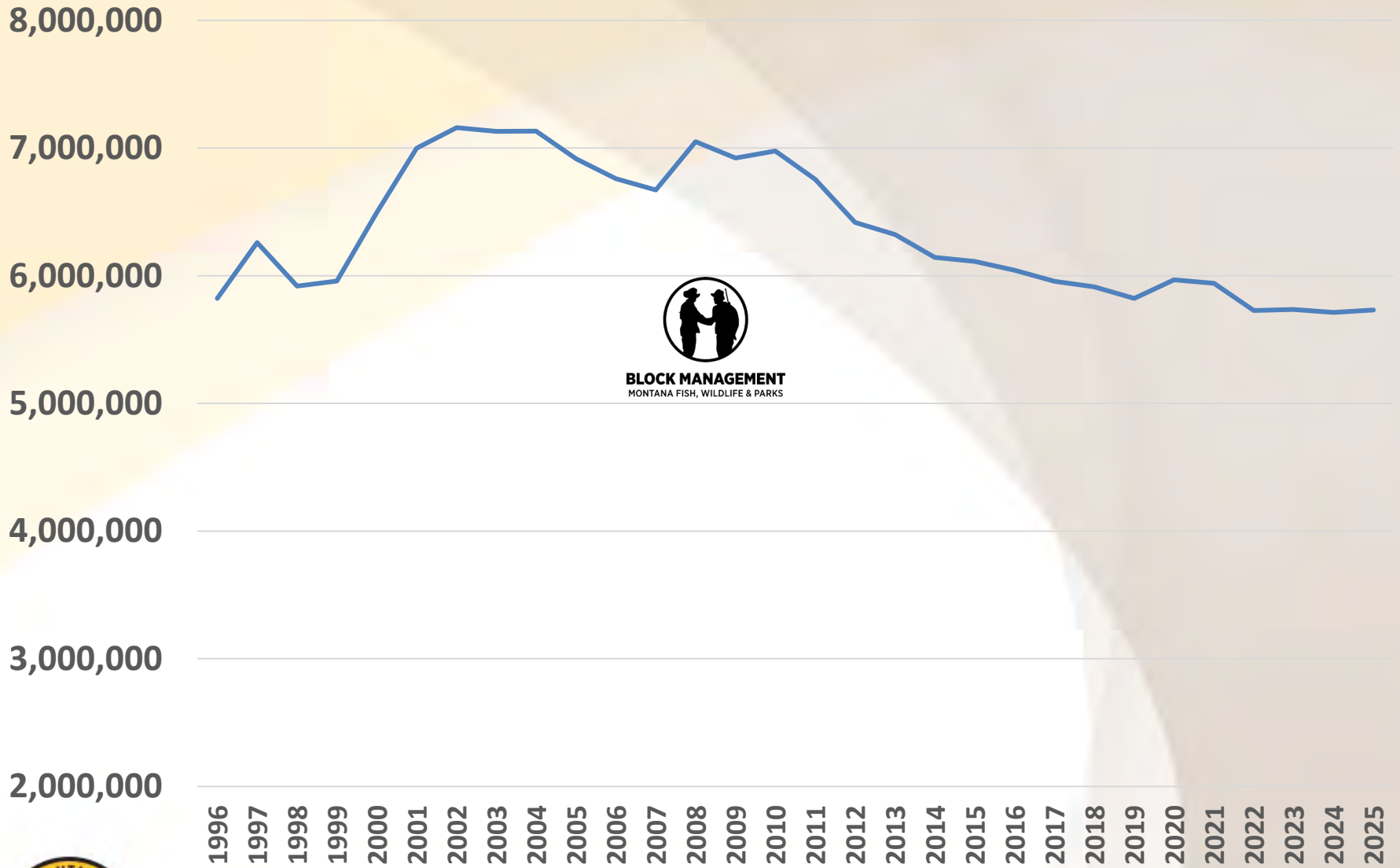
# Total Acres by Region



**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



# Total Private Land Acres Enrolled



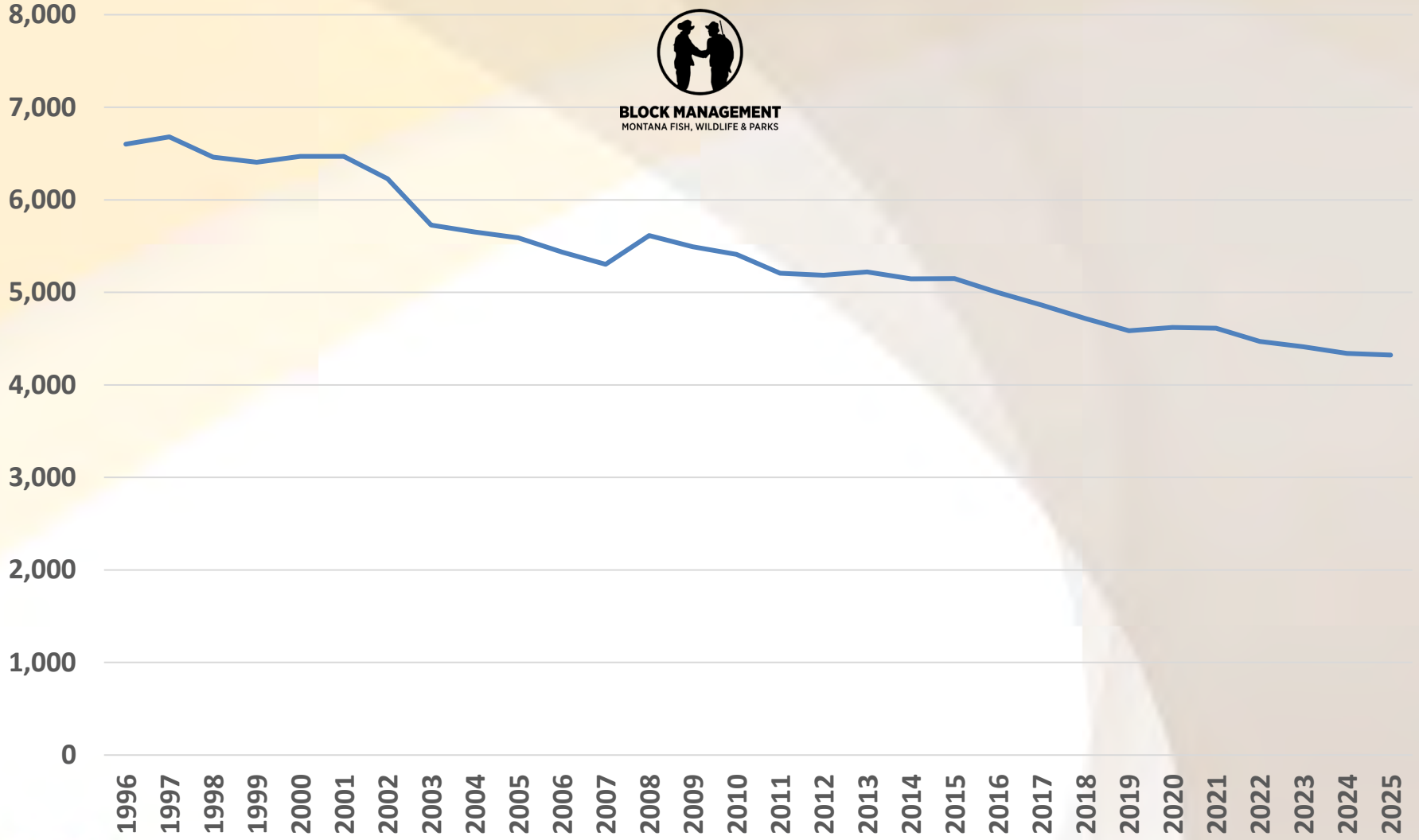
**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



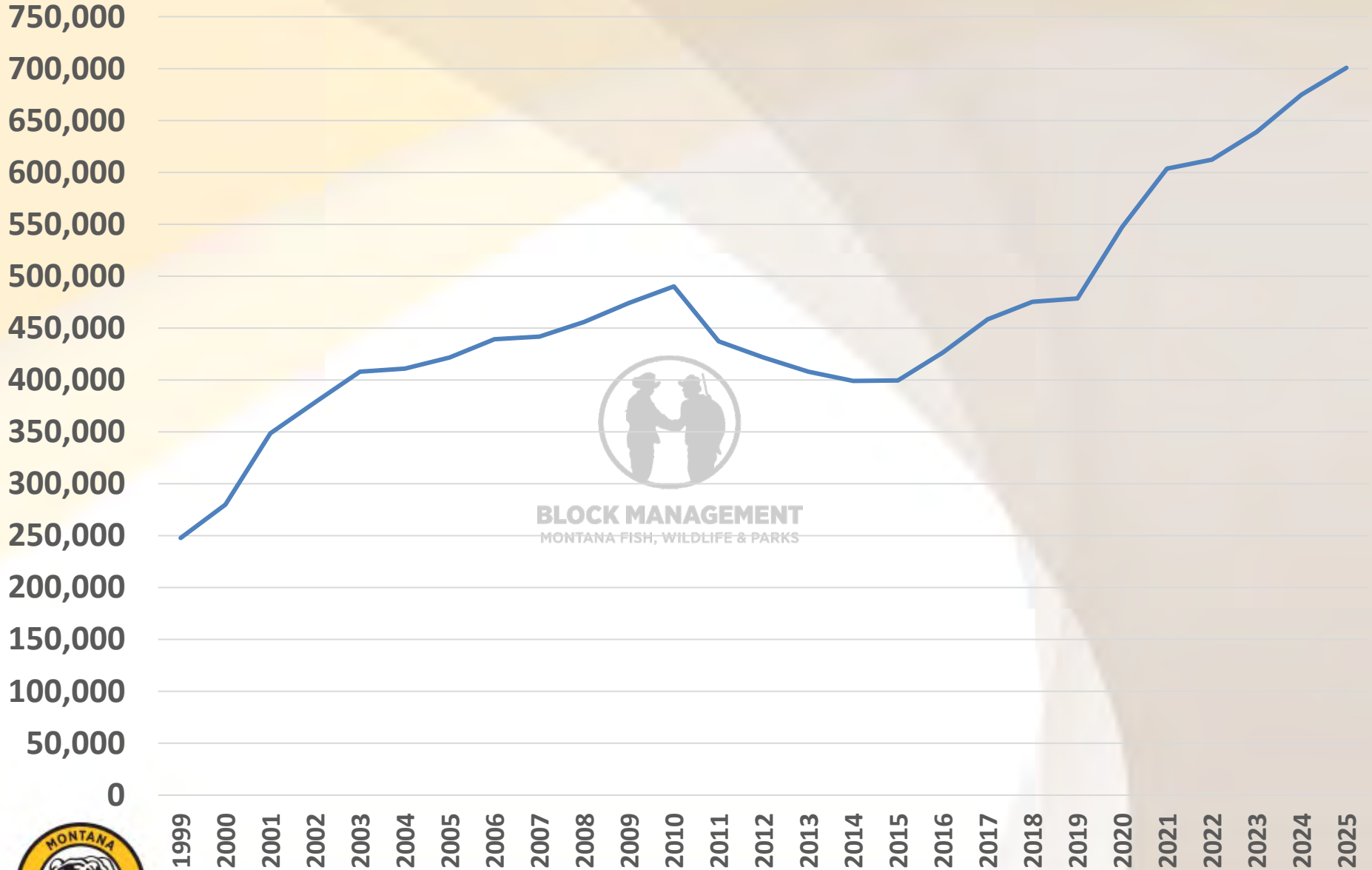
# Avg Private Acres Enrolled per Landowner



**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



# Total Contracted Hunter Days



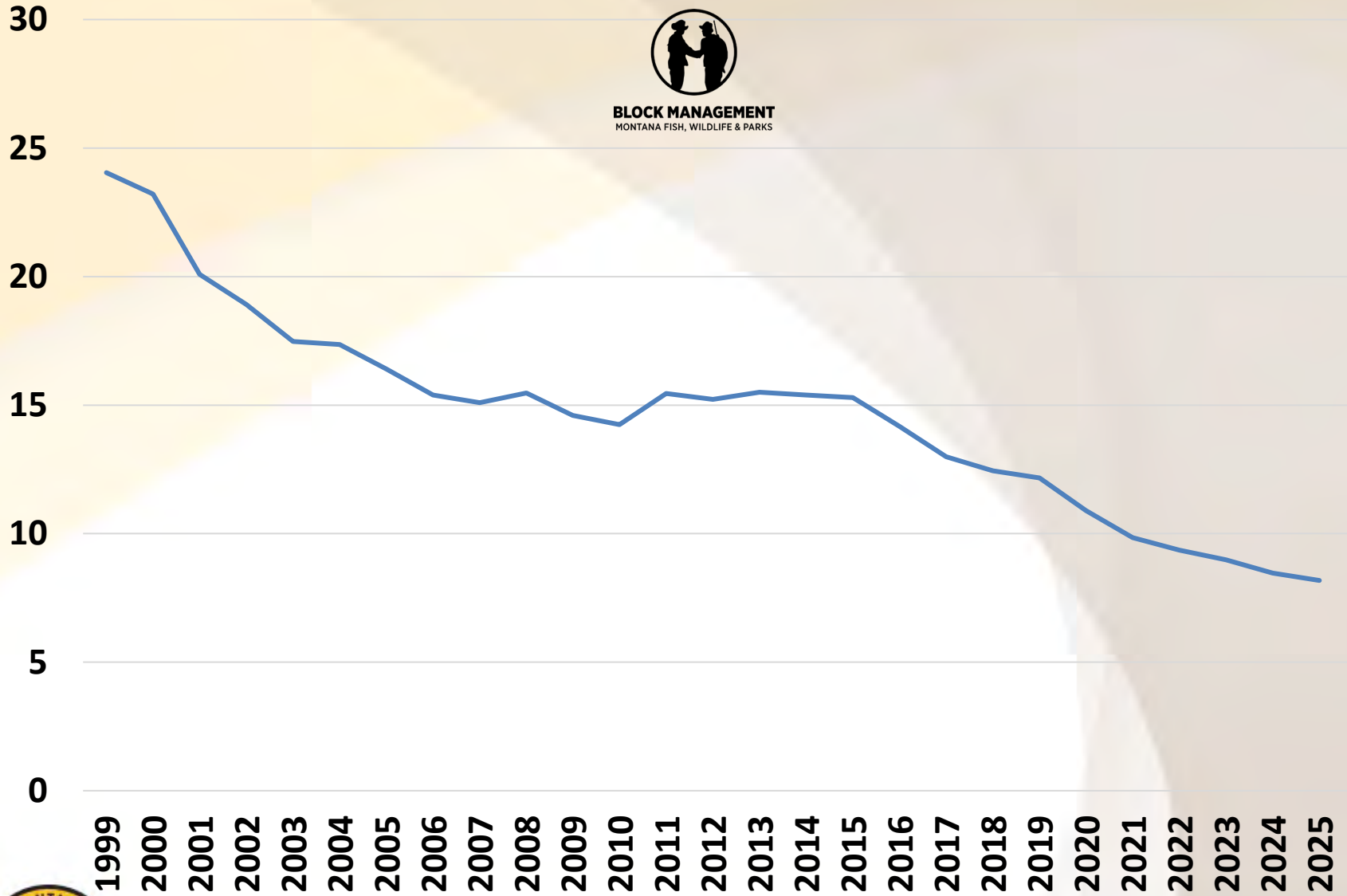
**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



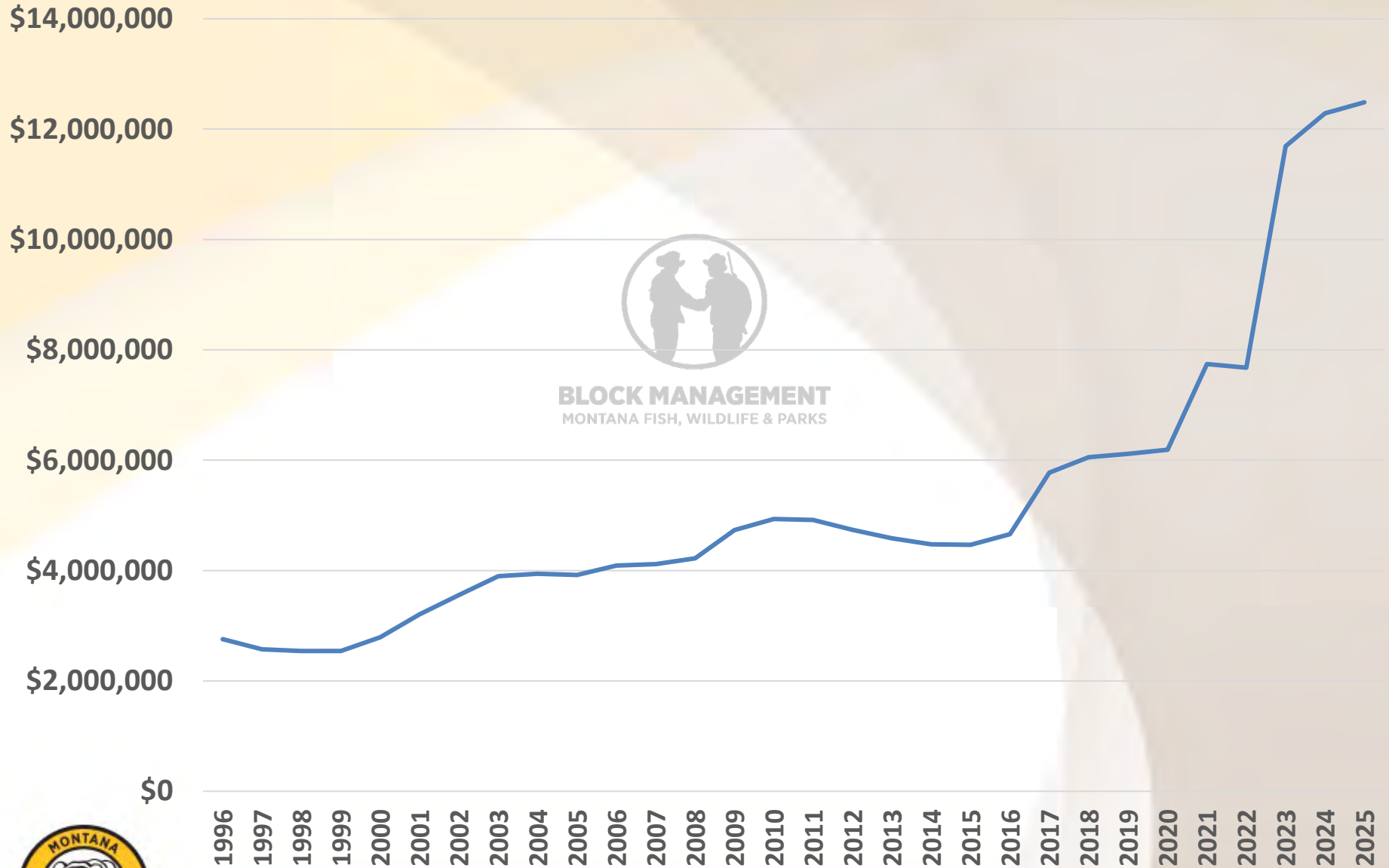
# Total Private Acres Per Contracted Hunter Day



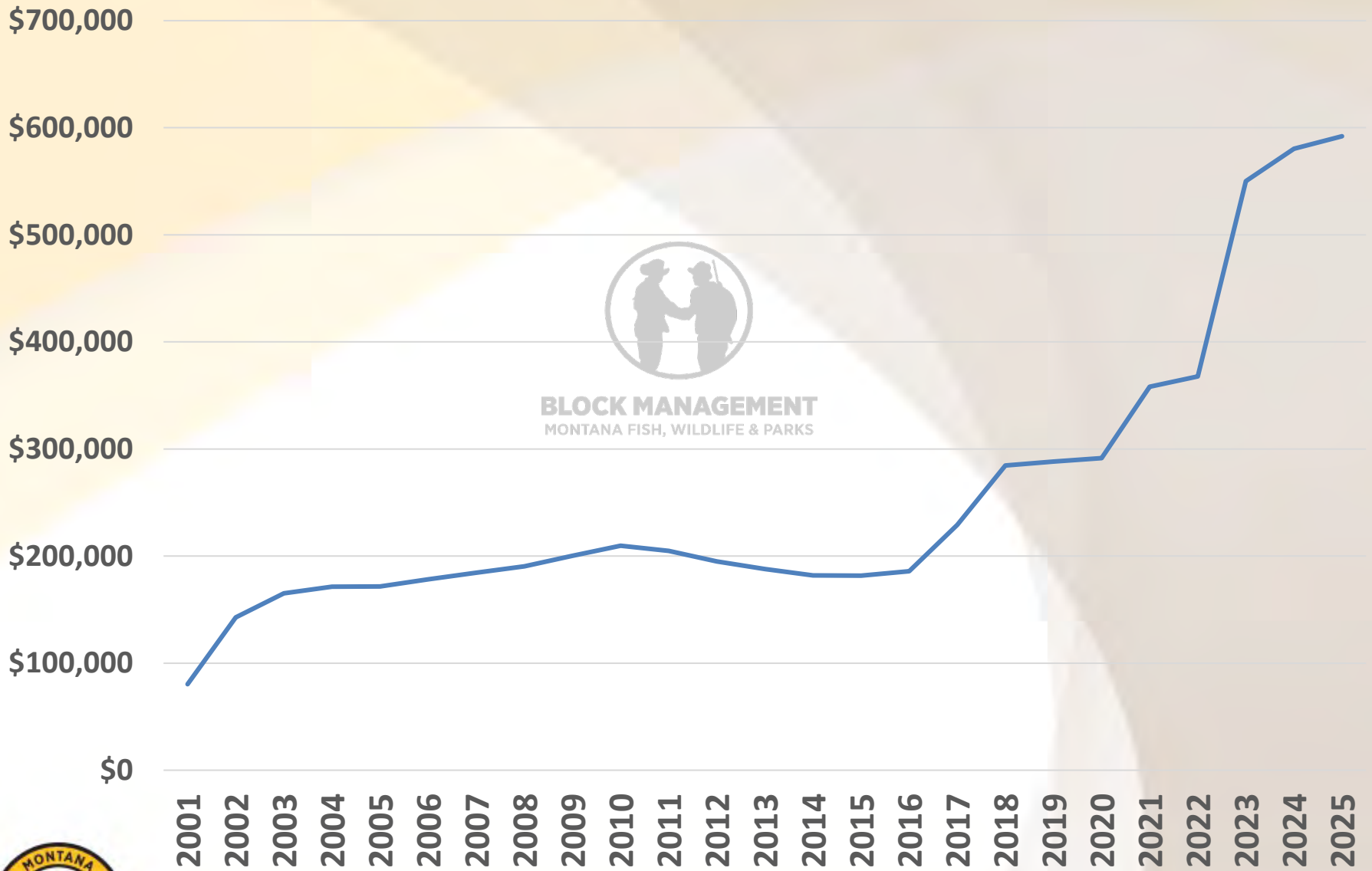
**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



# Total Block Management Landowner Payments



# Total Weed Management Incentive Payments



**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

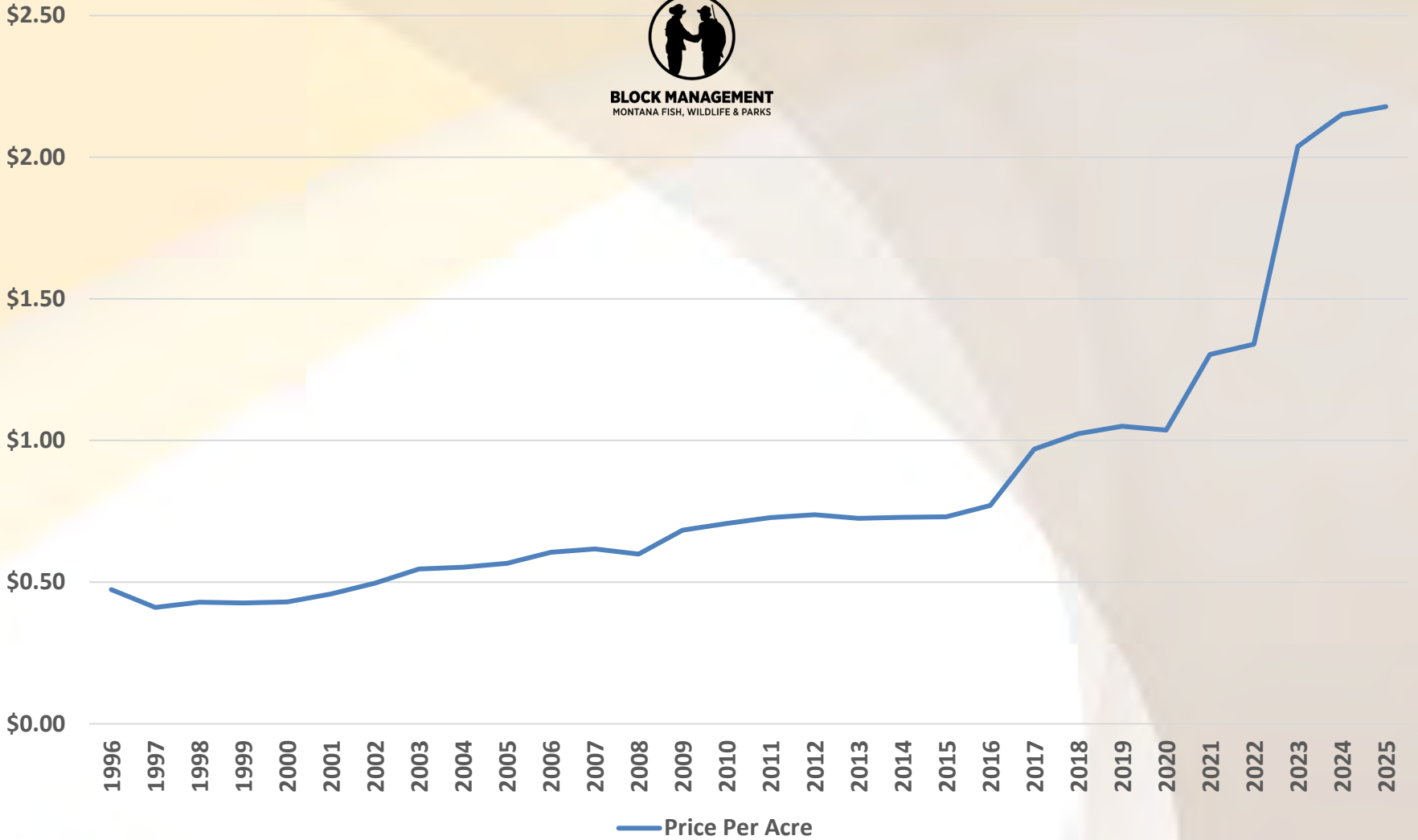




# Price Per Private Acre Enrolled 1996-2025



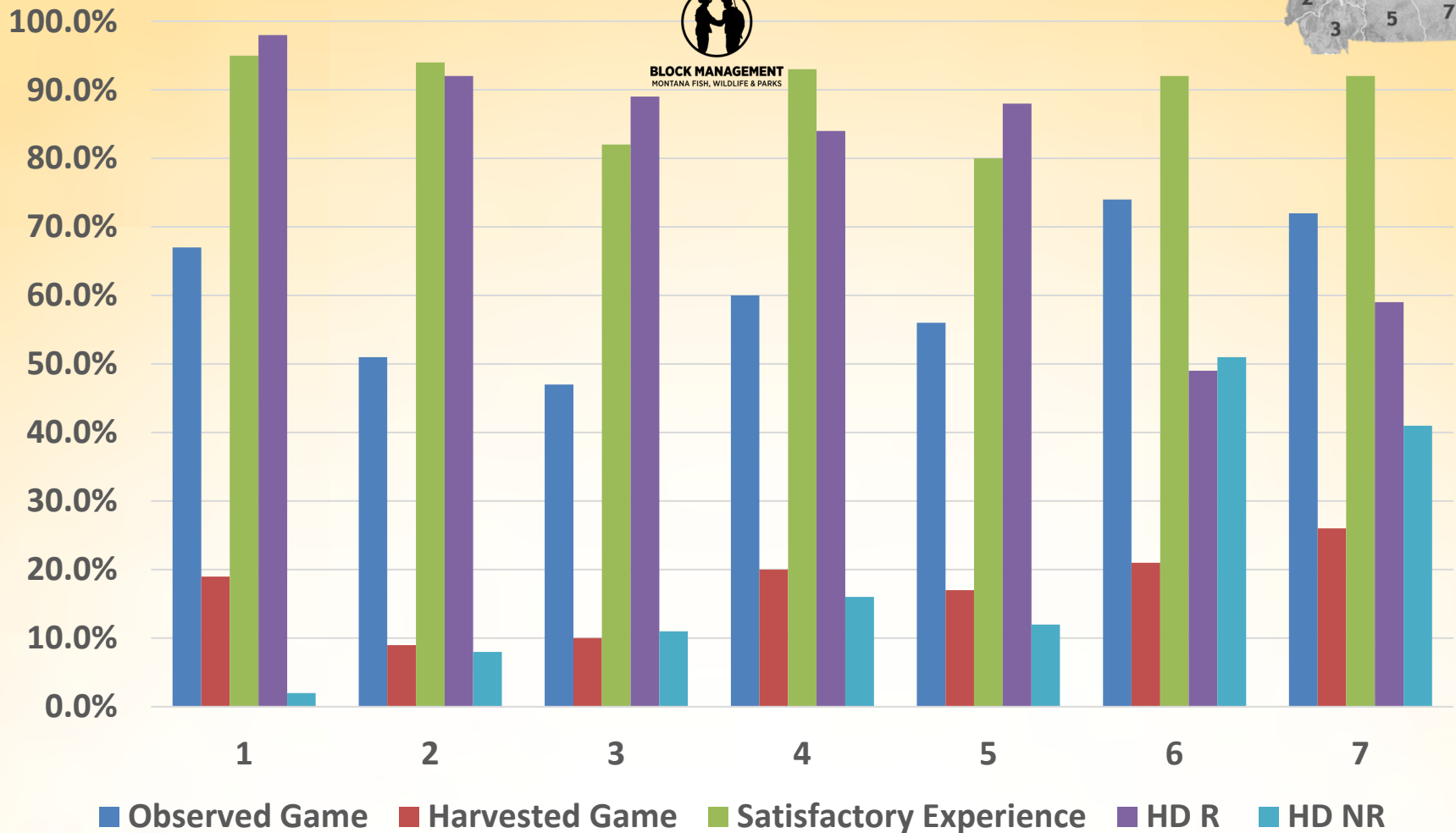
**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



# Game Observed, Game Harvested, Hunter Satisfaction<sup>1</sup> and Hunter Day Residency Data<sup>2</sup> by Region (2025)



**BLOCK MANAGEMENT**  
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



1- Based on coupon stub and comment cards returned (avg 7-13% response rate)

2- Excludes some hunter day residency data as some areas do not require hunter permission.



# Elk Hunting Access (454)

- 31 Agreements (2025)
  - 47 licenses/permits issued
  - 13 landowners also participating in Block Management
  - 423,901 acres (270,938 acres not enrolled in Block)
  - No post-FWC random draw
- Revised public hunter sign-up process (Type 1 BMA)
- Revised post-season survey methodology



# Elk Hunting Access (454)

- **Landowner satisfaction** (13 of 31 landowners; 42% response rate)
  - 93% satisfied or very satisfied with behavior or people who hunted enrolled lands
  - 93% satisfied or very satisfied with experience of being in EHA program
  - 73% would like to participate again
- **Landowner/designee harvest** (26 of 47 licensees; 55% response rate)
  - 52% harvested elk
    - 92% harvested a branch-antler bull
    - 83% harvested during general rifle
    - Hunted average of 9.3 days



# Elk Hunting Access (454)

- Landowner selected public hunters (13 of 32 hunters responded: 41% response rate)
  - 20 of 31 landowners opted to select up to one-third of the public hunters
  - 77% found it was easy or very easy to contact the ranch/landowner to plan a trip
  - 69% (9 hunters) reported they hunted enrolled lands
    - 66.7% saw elk
    - Hunted average of 6.1 days
    - 6 elk harvested- (1 antlerless; 5 branch-antler bulls)
    - 89% reported satisfied or very satisfied with their experience
    - 77% reported they'd like to participate in the future



# Elk Hunting Access (454)

- FWP selected public hunters (79 of 113 hunters responded: 70% response rate)
  - New sign-up and survey process for Type 1 BMAs
  - 84% found it was easy or very easy to contact the ranch/landowner to plan a trip
  - 73% (58 hunters) reported they hunted enrolled lands
    - 51.7% saw elk
    - Hunted average of 4.4 days
    - 13 elk harvested- (5 antlerless; 7 branch-antler bulls; 1 spike)
    - 69.6% reported satisfied or very satisfied with their experience
    - 68.4% reported they'd like to participate in the future



# Other Access Program Options

## Regional Access Projects (RAP)

- 42,963 acres- R2
  - 6 limited private access areas
  - MCE Ranch
- 19,210 acres- R4
  - Sheep hunting access
  - Waterfowl walk-in access
- 1,472 acres-R7
  - Late elk season opportunity

## Biennial Rule- RMA

- 3 sites (R1/R2)

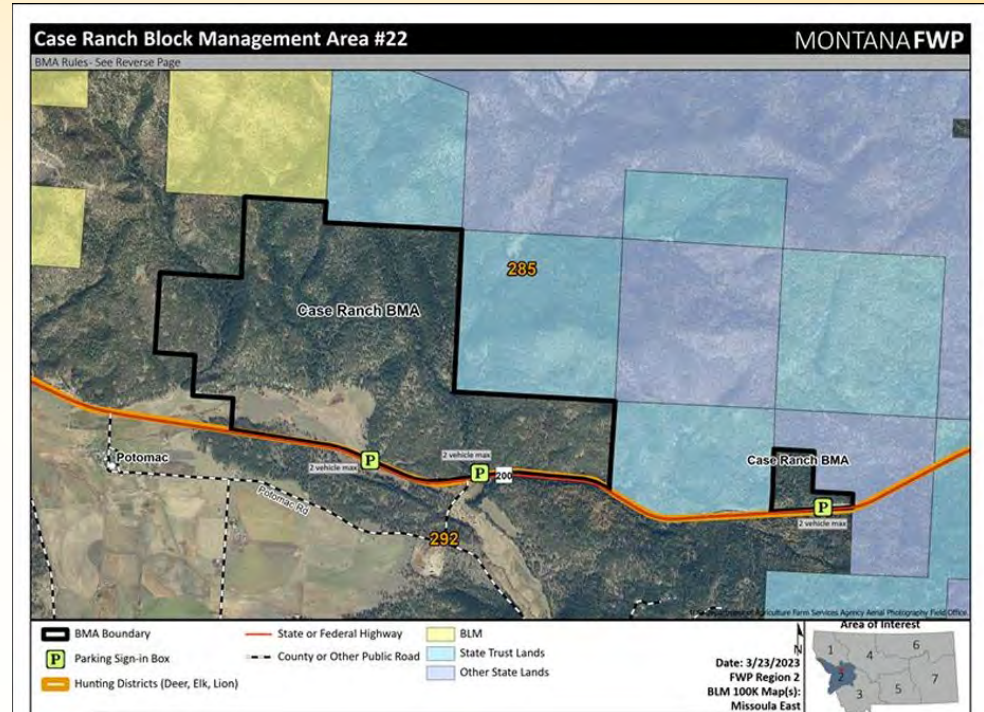
## Access to Public Lands Programs

- **Access Public Lands (APL)**-6 projects
- **Unlocking Public Lands (UPL)**- 3 landowners; 4 tax credits
- **PALA**
  - 38 new/renew/update (2026-FY27)
  - 44 active multi-year auto renew



# Long-Term Hunting Access

- Case Ranch Assignment of Public Hunting Access Rights
  - Five Valley's Land Trust conservation easement
  - Minimum of 200 hunter days annually
  - Enhances access to more than 65,000 acres of adjacent state and federal lands
- Approved by FWC April 2026



# 2026 Changes from 2025 Legislature

- HB145
  - NR base hunting license price increase (\$15 to \$50)
- SB514
  - Delay NR upland bird season start dates for private land enrolled in FWP access program
- SB148
  - Designate license benefit to person with physical or developmental disability
- SB441
  - Establish the Block Management Enforcement Network
- SB 83
  - Commission adoption of private landowner rules under active access agreements
- HB763
  - Establish Block Management Access Corridor access option



# Private Land Fishing Access Agreements

- 25 agreements (2025)
  - 20- multi-year
    - Monetary payment (avg annual \$5,100)
    - Non-monetary: stocking
- Fisheries ARM update
  - Provide program flexibility



Questions:

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FWP Hunting Access Program Manager

406-444-2505

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