

A blue-tinted photograph of a forest with a person in the background. The text is overlaid on the image.

Colorado's Smoke Management
Program
and HB09-1199

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Overview of Presentation

- **Background on Colorado Smoke Management Program**
- **HB09-1199: Colorado Healthy Forests and Vibrant Communities**
- **View Forward**

What is...

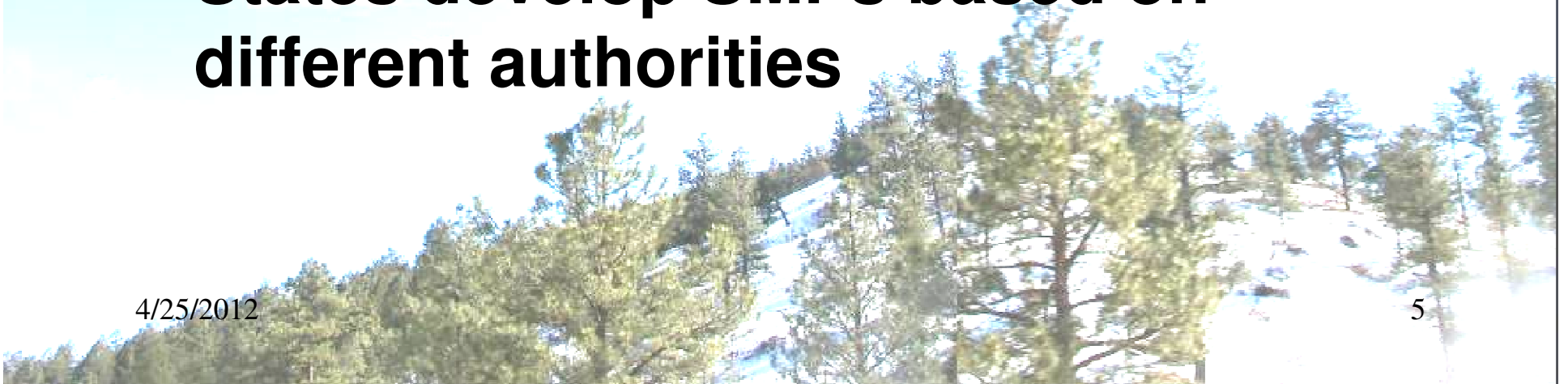
- **A Smoke Management Program (SMP)?**
 - Requirements & procedures for regulating & managing smoke from prescribed fires.
- **Prescribed Fire (Rx fire)?**
 - “Fire that is intentionally used for grassland or forest management, including vegetative, habitat or fuel management, regardless of whether the fire is ignited by natural or human means.” (Reg. 9)

What is...

- **Smoke Management?**
 - **Defined in AQCC Regulation No. 9 as:**
 - **“Use of techniques to**
 - **reduce smoke emissions,**
 - **dilute smoke,**
 - **identification and reduction of the impact of smoke on smoke sensitive areas,**
 - **monitoring and evaluation of smoke impacts from individual and collective burns and**
 - **coordination among land managers for these purposes.”**

Federal CAA and SMPs

- **What requirements are in the federal Clean Air Act regarding SMPs?**
 - Law predated the current understanding of the ecological role of fire.
 - As such, EPA does not have prescribed fire or SMP regulations.
- **States develop SMPs based on different authorities**



Variability between State's SMPs

- **Structure of state SMPs and amounts of prescribed fire vary considerably**
 - **For example:**
 - **No SMPs in NE US and limited burning**
 - **Large amounts of burning in SE US**
 - **Most differences can be explained by:**
 - **population density**
 - **meteorology/climate**
 - **topography/fuel types**
 - **special attention on burners**
 - **public acceptance of fire & smoke**
 - **land use where burning occurs**

Colorado Smoke Management Program (SMP)

- **Began in 1990; largely voluntary**
- **Use of prescribed fire, especially broadcast burns, grew during 1990s**
 - **In response, Colorado legislature passed laws (1999 & 2001) requiring more formal development of the SMP (CRS 25-7-106(7) & (8))**
 - **Colorado Air Quality Control Commission adopted Regulation 9 (“Open Burning, Prescribed Fire, and Permitting”) in January 2002**

Regulation No. 9, Example Components

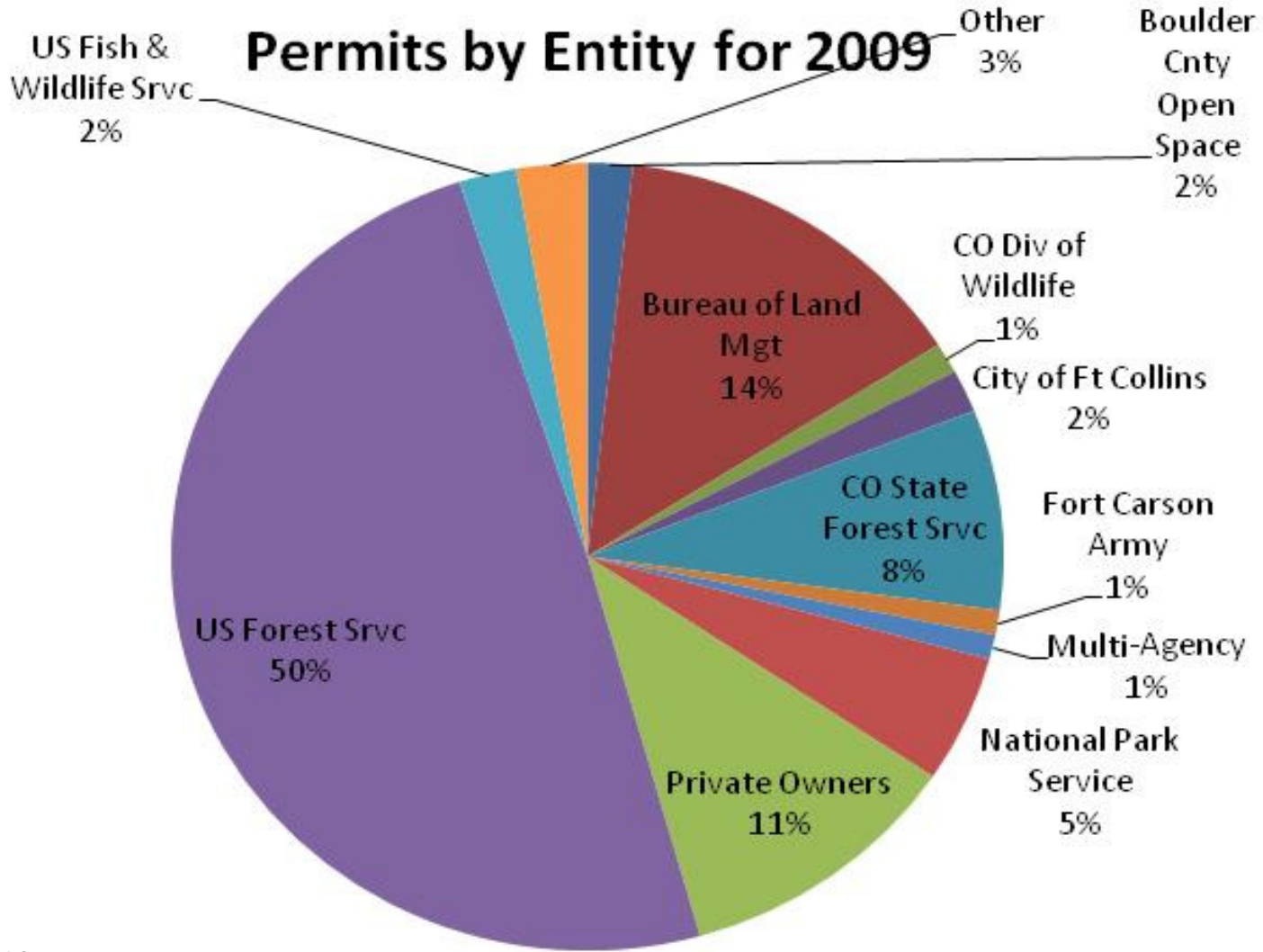
- Permittees shall use “best smoke management” practices
- In granting permits and designing permit conditions, the Air Division must consider 10 factors “necessary to protect public health and welfare.”
- The permit must show it will:
 - “protect scenic and/or important vistas and visibility in Class I areas,
 - “minimize the impacts of emissions and smoke and
 - “not cause a violation of any ambient air quality standards.”

Reg. 9, SMP Implementation Components

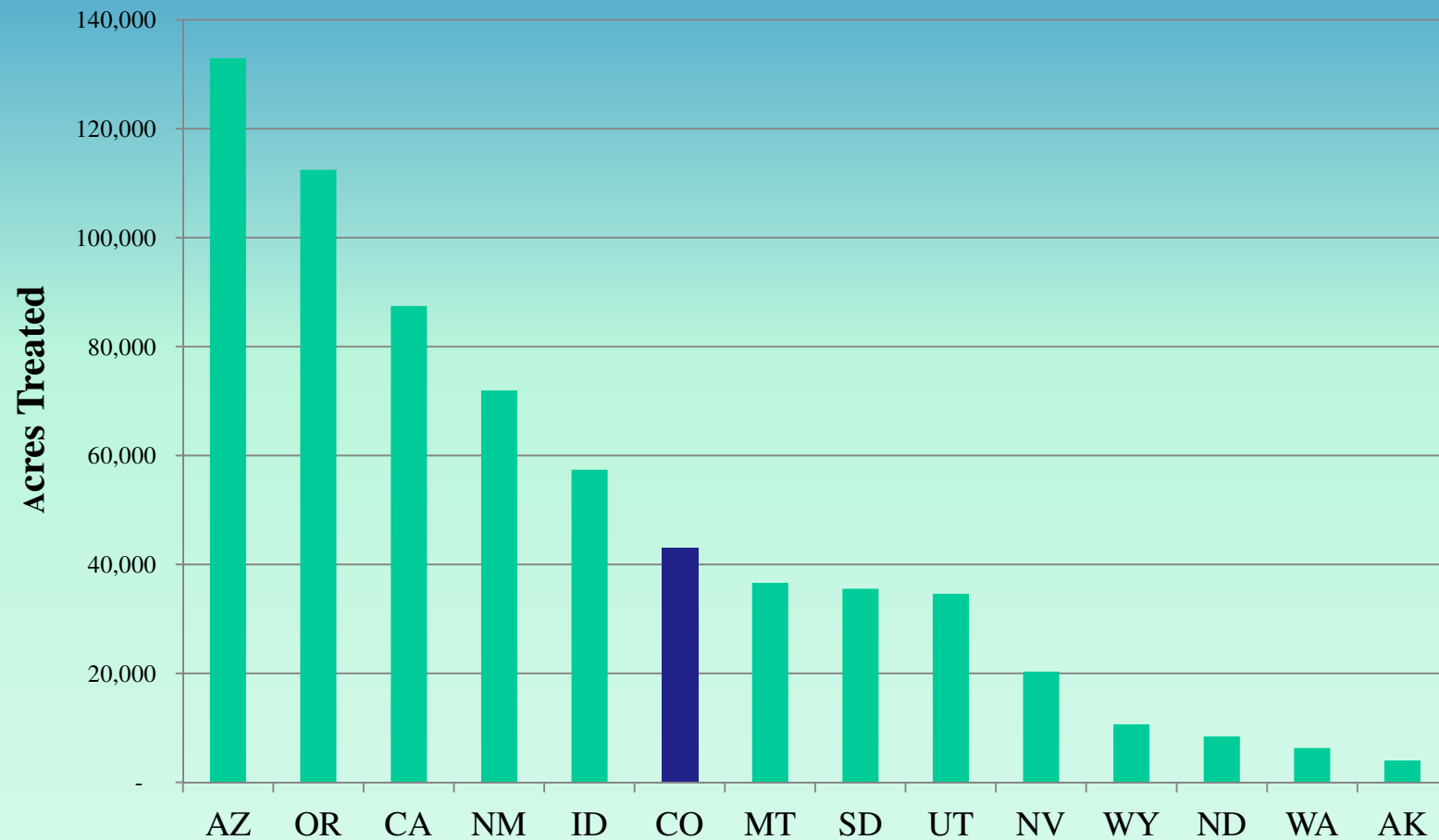
- **Permits with appropriate conditions**
- **Site inspections to burn projects and visits to field offices across the state**
- **Communications and outreach including stakeholder meetings and newsletters**
- **Compliance assistance and enforcement**
- **Activity and emission inventory tracking**
- **Comprehensive web presence**
- **Fees (self-supporting program per CRS 25-7-106(7)(a))**

300-450 Permits/Year

broadcast + pile burns



How Does Colorado Compare to Other Western States (2008)?

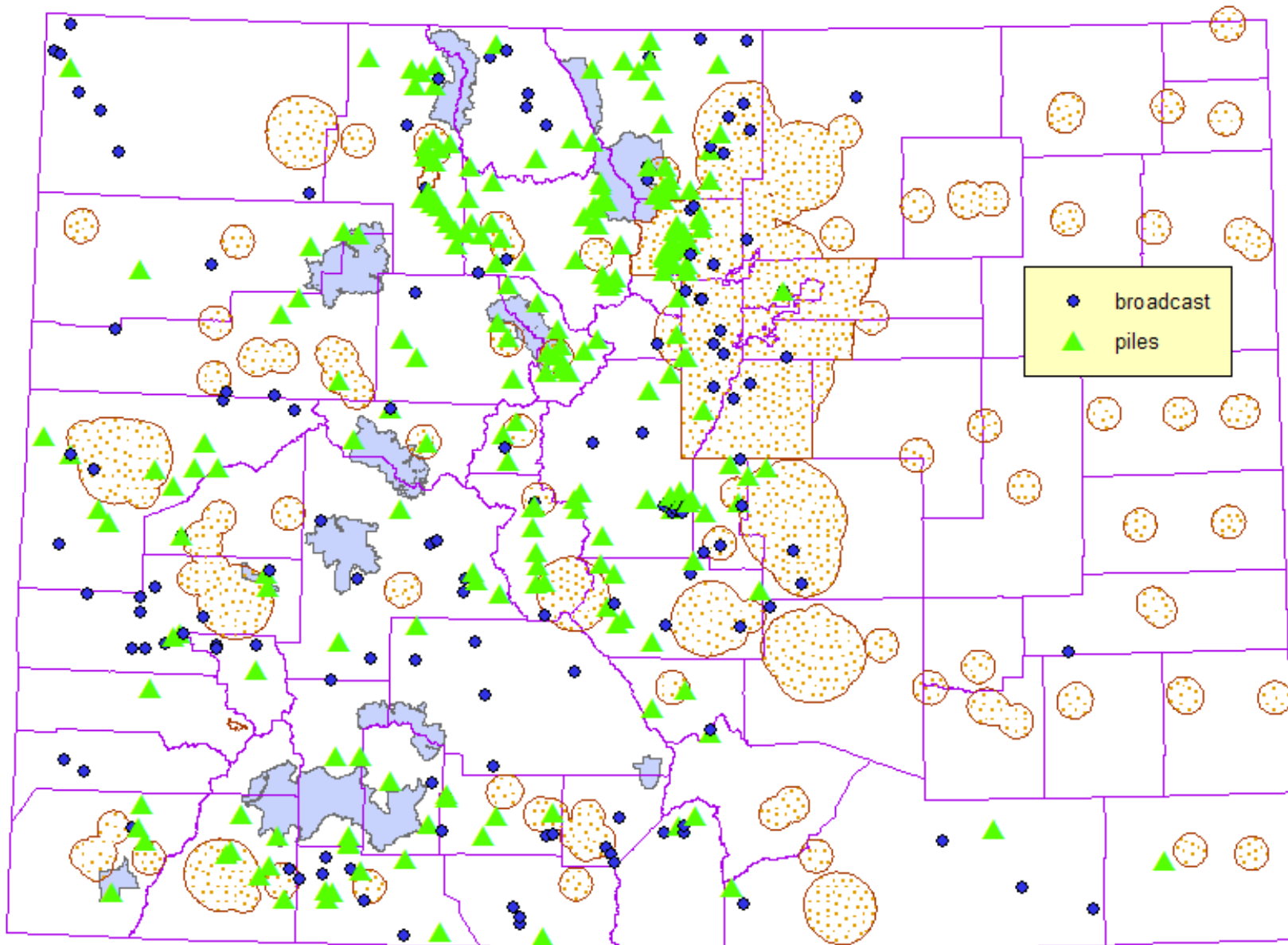


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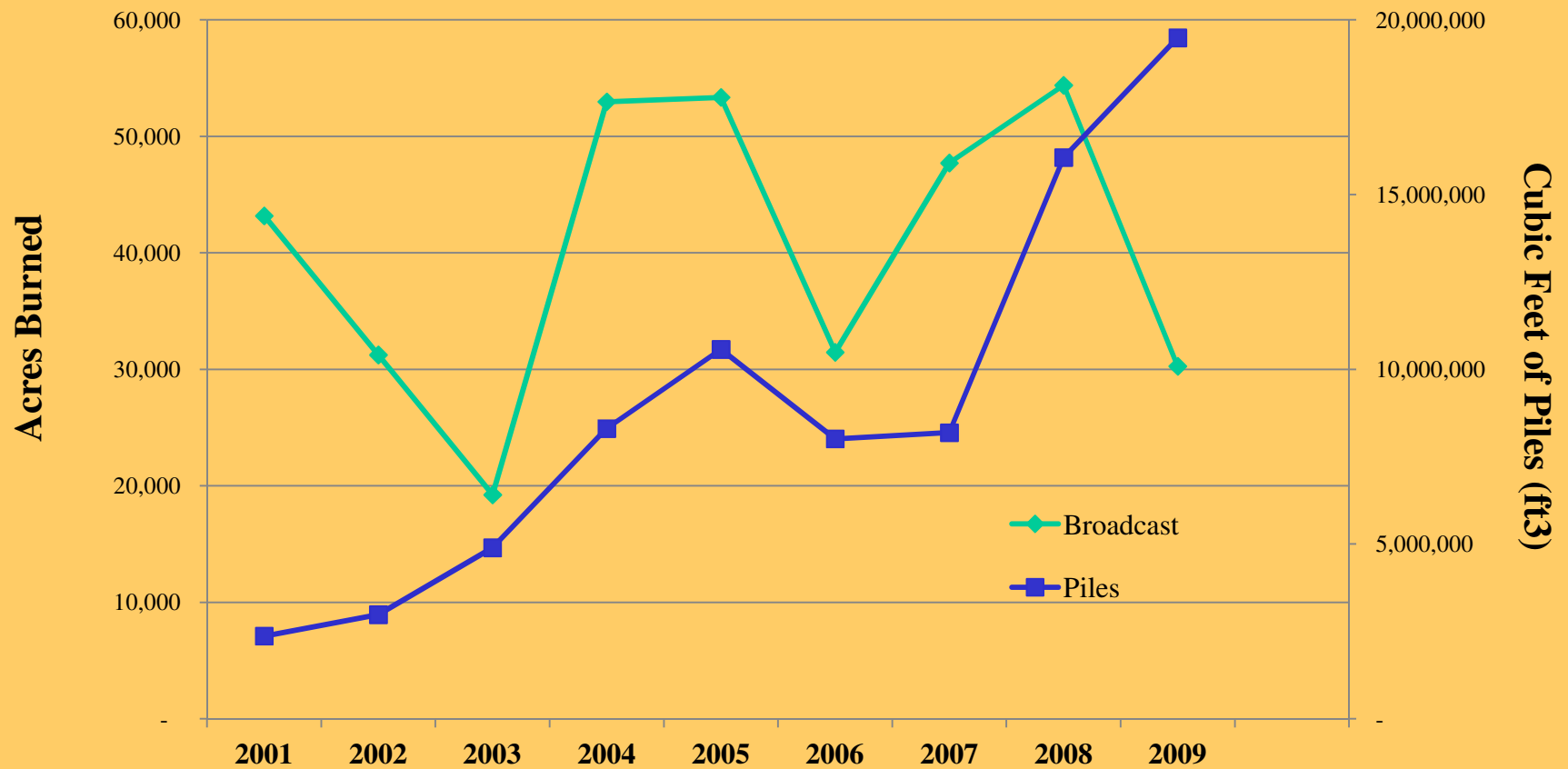
**NIFC data = mostly federal acres,
broadcast + piles combined**

Colorado 2010 Prescribed Fire Permits

with Class I Airsheds and Mapped Smoke-Sensitive Areas

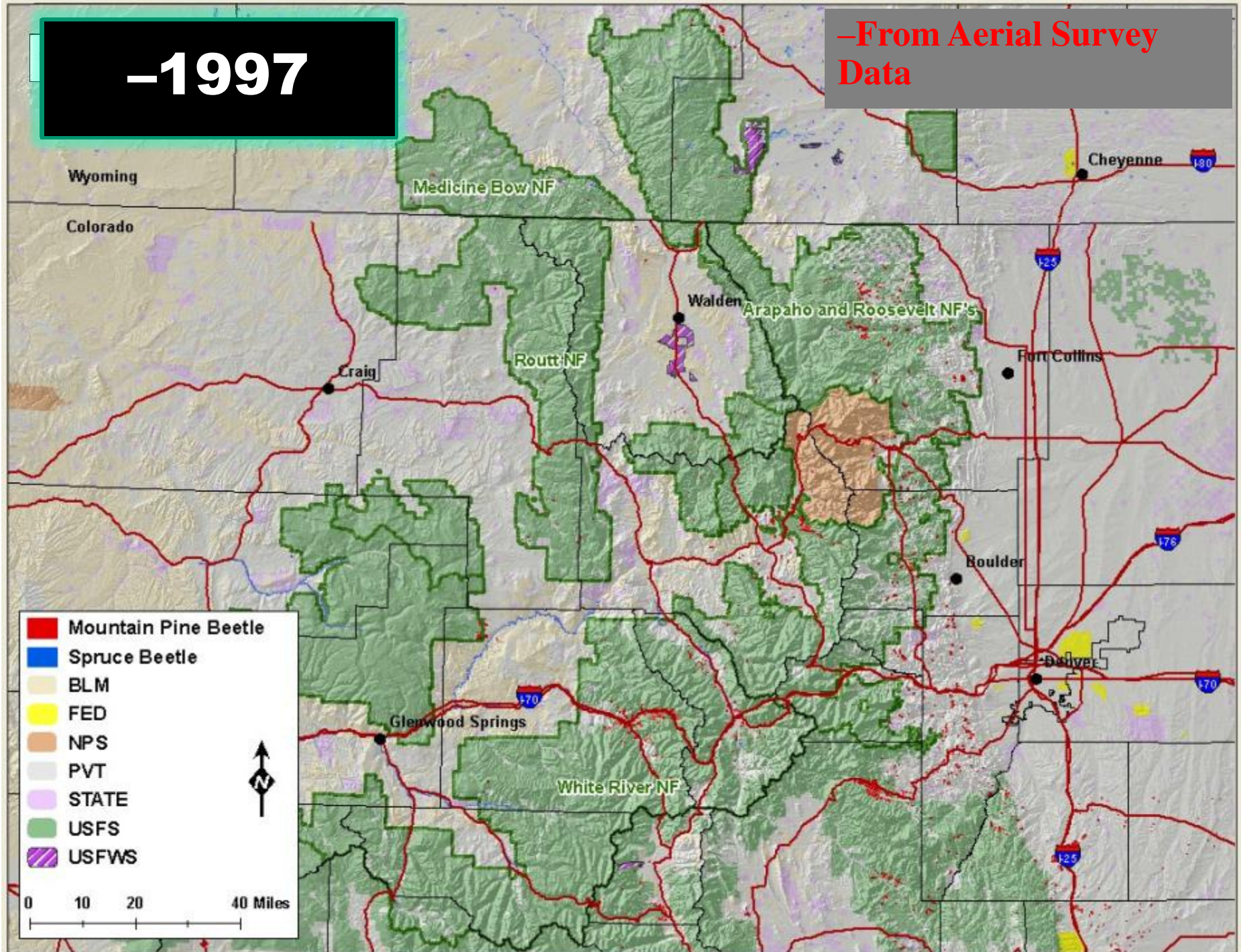


How Does Broadcast and Pile Burns Trend Over Time?



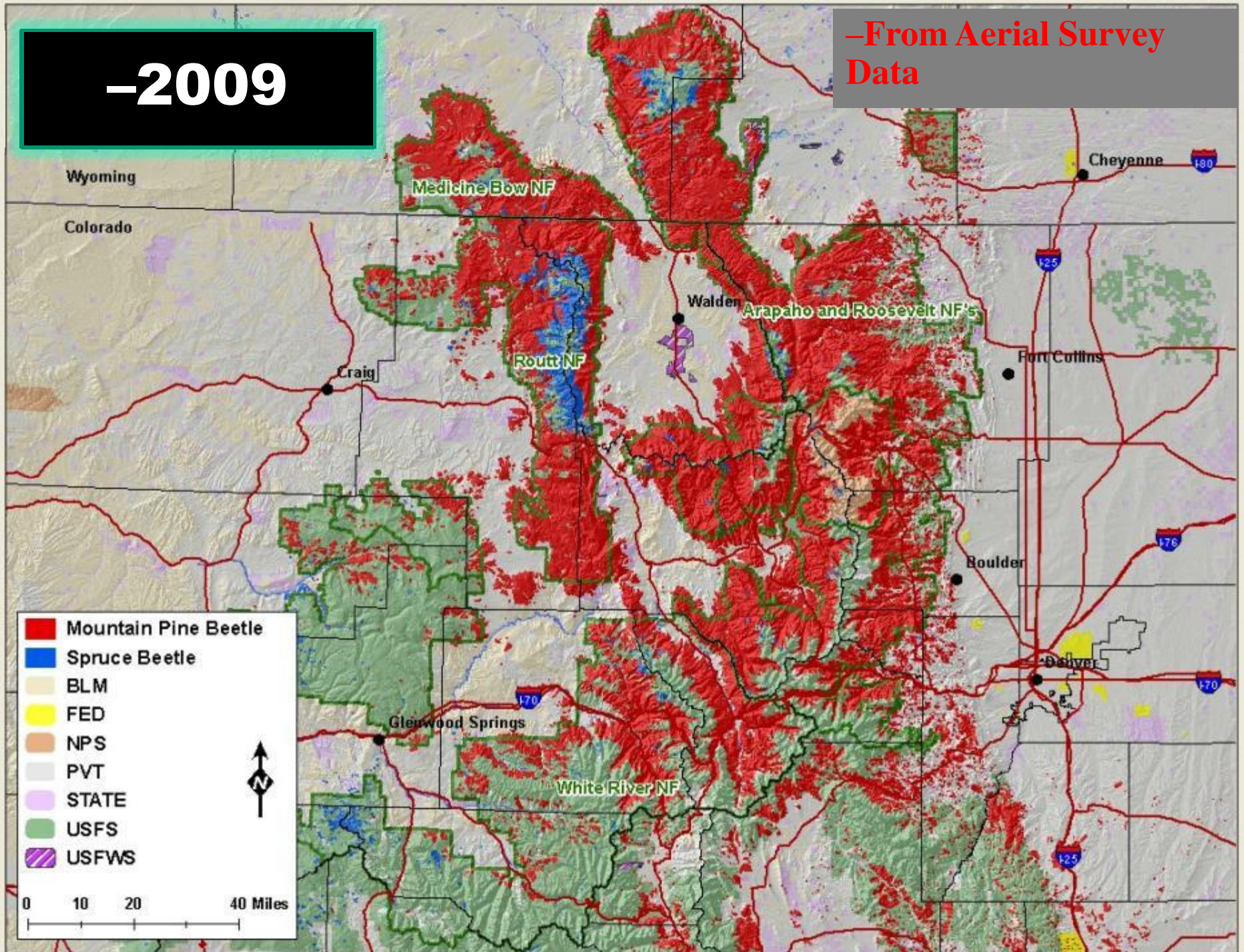
-1997


-From Aerial Survey Data



-2009

-From Aerial Survey Data





HB09-1199
CRS 25-7-111(5)

“The division shall... evaluate existing prescribed fire permit program rules and implementation

so as to support, and increase where possible, appropriate responsible use of prescribed fire consistent with section 25-7-106 (7) and (8).”

Colorado's SMP Structure = Hybrid of Decision-Based and Outcome-Based

- **Recommendations**
 - **Commit to continue hybrid program**
 - **Focus on practical steps for implementation**
 - **Participation/collaboration of fire managers**
 - **Building infrastructure for monitoring, ongoing operation, and analysis**
 - **Continue to evaluate computer dispersion models**
 - **Collaboration**

View Forward

- **Air Division believes the HB09-1199 report offers a responsible path forward**
- **Appropriate, increased use of Rx fire in CO can continue under Reg. 9 and CO's SMP**

View Forward...

- **Challenges should not be minimized**
 - **Most land managers experience considerable pressure to increase use of fire, especially broadcast**
 - **At the same time the Air Division must contend with how to accommodate this within existing state and federal law**
 - **Public attitudes towards increased use of fire in Colorado are now negative**



Questions?
Comments?

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