



Figure 2. The approximate historic and current distribution of the pygmy rabbit in Washington and Oregon (Weiss and Verts 1984; WDFW 1995).

BILLING CODE 4310-55-C

Once thought to be extirpated, Columbia Basin pygmy rabbits were again located in Washington in 1979. Intensive surveys in 1987 and 1988 discovered five small subpopulations in southern Douglas County; three occurred on State lands and two on private lands (WDFW 1995a). With the exception of a single site record from

Benton County in 1979, Columbia Basin pygmy rabbits have been found only in southern Douglas and northern Grant counties since 1956 (WDFW 2000a). The Washington Wildlife Commission designated the pygmy rabbit as a State threatened species in 1990, and reclassified it as endangered in 1993 (WDFW 1995a).

The number of Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit subpopulations and active burrows in Washington has declined over the past decade (WDFW 2001a). Four of the five subpopulations located in 1987 and 1988 were very small, with fewer than 100 active burrows (WDFW 1995a); the largest subpopulation (at the State-owned Sagebrush Flat site in