

UNCLASSIFIED

Oregon-Idaho HIDTA



2023 Drug Threat Assessment

June 2022

This product was created by the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA Investigative Support Center (ISC).

Please direct all questions and feedback about this report to: <https://oridhidta.org/contact>



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I. SCOPE

The Oregon-Idaho High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) produced this 2023 threat assessment to offer an overview of the current drug threats within Oregon and Idaho and to provide an outlook toward 2023. This document covers illicit drug trafficking and related activities occurring within, or directly impacting, the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA region as well as relevant public health information.

This threat assessment identifies the drug threats in the Oregon-Idaho region. This assessment addresses availability, transportation, use of these drugs, and the methods of Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) and Money Laundering Organizations (MLOs) that impact the area. This assessment fulfills the grant requirement issued by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and has been approved by Oregon-Idaho HIDTA's Executive Board.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year, Oregon-Idaho HIDTA's Executive Board directs the development of a strategy that focuses its resources on identifying and addressing the most serious drug trafficking threats in the HIDTA's area of operation. This program supports 18 distinctive enforcement task forces (referred to as "initiatives") that operate throughout Oregon and Idaho. Initiatives unite federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement personnel, as well as associated resources, with a common goal - *disrupt and dismantle DTOs and MLOs that are adversely impacting the region*. Coordinated enforcement efforts and information sharing through the HIDTA Investigative Support Analysis Coordination Center (ISACC) enables law enforcement agencies to efficiently and effectively allocate resources to address the identified drug threat for the region.

This document identifies these threats and presents a 12-month outlook based on the following key findings and supporting information:

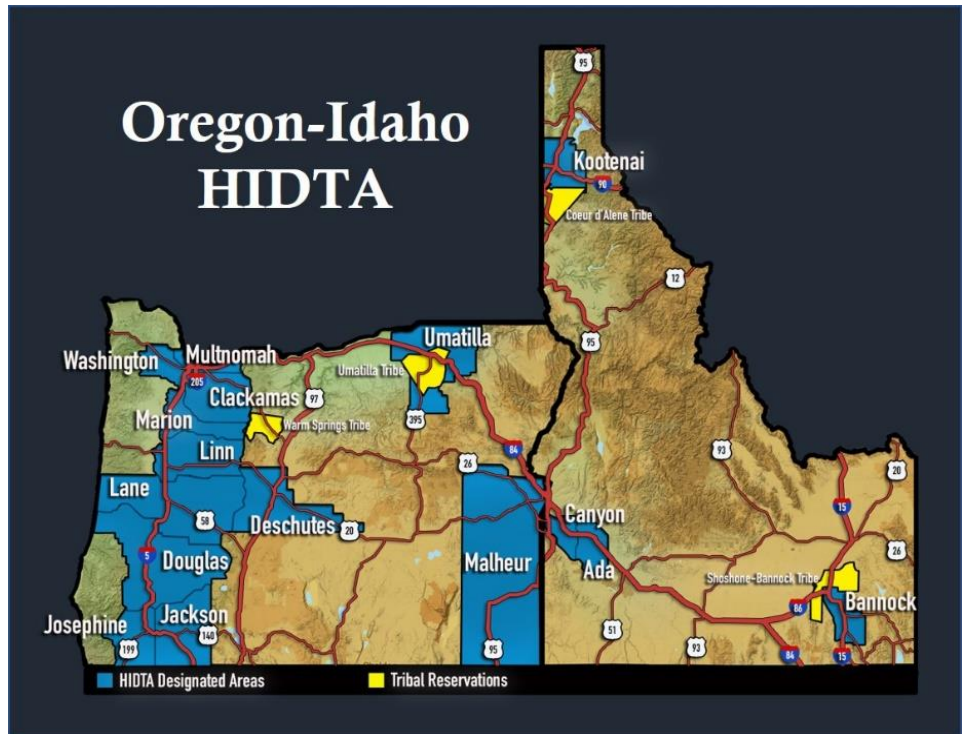
- The demand for fentanyl and other synthetic opioids evolved rapidly during 2021. While dangerous synthetic opioids have been more common in the region since 2017, fentanyl has been pushed into the area in much greater quantities and has resulted in increased overdose incidents and deaths. Fentanyl is primarily transported into the HIDTA in the form of counterfeit oxycodone pills and increasingly in powder form.
- Methamphetamine trafficking and availability continues to be high in the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA and is identified as the area's second greatest drug threat, followed by heroin, illicit marijuana, cocaine, and controlled prescription drugs.
- During 2021 heroin was widely available across the HIDTA, but demand for it appeared to have decreased. This decrease is likely due to the high availability, demand for, and low cost of fentanyl.
- Marijuana cultivation, use, and distribution occur at high rates in the HIDTA. Illicit manufacture and interstate trafficking of marijuana and extracts, such as hash oil and marijuana wax, continue to increase in the region.

- Cocaine availability and use remain low relative to other illicit drugs in Oregon and Idaho. HIDTA initiative drug seizures and law enforcement reporting indicated a modest increase in availability. The Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) report on the 2019-2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) showed that only 2.4% of Oregon respondents 12 and older admitted cocaine use in the previous twelve months, this ranks Oregon 8th nationally (1st being most prevalent drug use).¹ This low usage is most likely due to the high availability and the low cost of methamphetamine and other stimulant alternatives.
- During 2021 there were 136 active DTO/MLO investigations. Oregon-Idaho HIDTA initiatives disrupted or dismantled 40 multi-state, 28 local, and 15 international DTOs/MLOs.² This is an increase of 46% more DTOs/MLOs disrupted or dismantled in 2021 (83) than 2020 (57).³
 - Multi-state DTOs represent the greatest criminal drug threat to the HIDTA. Multi-state DTOs identified in 2021 were involved in trafficking methamphetamine, heroin, fentanyl, cocaine, or combinations of those drugs, as well as interstate trafficking of marijuana.
 - International DTOs connected to Mexico, either directly or indirectly through associated trafficking and distribution cells, represent another serious criminal drug threat in Oregon and Idaho.
 - Local DTOs involved in trafficking and distribution chains within Oregon and Idaho, represent a consistent threat in the region.
- Drug trafficking groups in the HIDTA also engage in money laundering activities - the legitimization of illegally obtained proceeds. Bulk cash smuggling, cash-intensive businesses, money service businesses, and bank structuring remain primary methods of transferring drug revenues into, throughout, and out of the HIDTA.

III. HIDTA REGION

The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) established the Oregon HIDTA in June of 1999. Oregon HIDTA was renamed the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA in 2015 with the addition of two counties in Idaho – Ada and Canyon. In total, the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA consists of 16 counties. HIDTA designated counties in Oregon are Clackamas, Deschutes, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Lane, Linn, Malheur, Marion, Multnomah, Umatilla, and Washington. HIDTA designated counties in Idaho are Ada, Bannock, Canyon, and Kootenai (Figure 1).

Figure 1



Tribal Lands

Oregon has nine federally recognized Native American tribes, two of the largest of which are situated in HIDTA designated areas. The Confederated Tribes of Umatilla is entirely in Umatilla County and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs is partially in Clackamas, Jefferson, and Wasco counties. Both tribal law enforcement agencies are active participants in their local HIDTA drug task force initiatives. Idaho has five federally recognized Native American tribes across the state with two of them being in HIDTA designated counties; Coeur d'Alene Tribe in Kootenai County and Shoshone-Bannock Tribe in Bannock County. The Bureau of Indian Affairs Drug Enforcement section works with the local HIDTA drug task force in Kootenai County to provide drug enforcement assistance on Coeur d'Alene and Kootenai tribal lands.

Demographics and Crime

Oregon encompasses a land area of 95,988 square miles and is the ninth-largest landmass in the nation. Oregon's geography is divided into six areas: the Oregon Coast, Willamette Valley, Cascade Mountain Range, Columbia River Basin, Eastern Oregon Basin and Range, and the Southern Oregon Basin and Range. Idaho encompasses a land area of 82,643 square miles and is the fourteenth largest state in the nation. Idaho lies on part of the Columbia Plateau that extends out of Washington and Oregon and includes the Snake River Plain. Nearly half of the state is comprised of national forest land. In total, the designated land area in the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA covers 40,632 square miles, a landmass about the size of Kentucky.

According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, Oregon ranks 27th in the country in population, with nearly 4.2 million residents in 2021.⁴ Most of the state's population is concentrated in the Willamette Valley, primarily in the cities of Portland (658,773), Salem (177,694), and Eugene (175,626).⁵ Idaho ranks 39th in the nation in population with over 1.9 million residents in 2021. Nearly 40% of Idaho's population resides in the Treasure Valley counties of Ada and Canyon, with the largest concentration of residents in the cities of Boise (235,684), Meridian (117,635), and Nampa (100,200).^{6,7,8} The combined estimated total population of the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA was over 6.1 million in 2021.⁹ The region's population (Oregon and Idaho combined) is predominately non-Hispanic Caucasian (78.8%), followed by Hispanic (13.5%), Asian (4%), African American (1.8%), and Native American (1.8%).

The National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data for Oregon indicated a steep decline in drug-related arrests from 10,684 in 2020 to 4892 in 2021.¹⁰ Oregon Ballot Measure 110 (the Drug Addiction Treatment and Recovery Act) is likely a factor in the decrease in arrests and subsequent drug evidence submissions for analysis to the Oregon State Police crime lab. The act decriminalized the possession of personal user-level amounts of most illicit drugs.^a Despite the decrease, roughly 33% of all arrests were related to methamphetamine and 10% for heroin.¹¹

In 2021, the number of Oregon adults on probation, in jail, or in state prison for drug offenses were 290, 40, and 221, respectively.¹² Thirty of these intakes were individuals who committed their first offense and fourteen were revocations of probation.¹³ These figures, particularly the number of adults in prison for drug offenses, have decreased in recent years. The number of intakes for this category were 440 in 2019, 283 in 2020 and 219 in 2021.¹⁴ The Oregon Department of Corrections January 2022 reported that 53.4% of adults in custody (AICs) are dependent/addicted to drugs; 14.2% claim some level of substance abuse.¹⁵ This total suggests that 67.4% of AICs have a substance use disorder.

Idaho Department of Corrections information from 2020, (the most recent available information) documented over 8,000 inmates¹⁶ in their system, the largest portion of inmates were incarcerated for drug crimes (34.7%), then assault (22.3%) and sex offenses (16.3%). Individuals under parole or probation supervision were most related to drug crimes at 39.2%, then property (21.8%), and assault related crimes (18.1%). Additionally, recent reporting advised 76.3% of those on parole or probation were estimated to need substance abuse treatment.¹⁷

The United States Marshals Service (USMS) Portland office, an Oregon-Idaho HIDTA initiative focused on fugitive apprehension, surveyed federal warrants in the District of Oregon in 2022. In 2021 they found that 11 fugitives were tied to Regional Priority Organization Targets (RPOT), 12 fugitives linked to Consolidated Priority Organization Targets (CPOT), and 20 fugitives connected to Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF)^b cases. Thirty-three federal felony drug warrants were active in Oregon at the time of this writing.¹⁸ Additionally in 2021, the Oregon USMS apprehended over 736 fugitives, and cleared over 500 federal and 554 state warrants, with 97.5% of arrestees classified as violent offenders and 19% of the cases classified as drug related.^{19,20}

^a Drug Addiction Treatment and Recovery Act (Measure 110) started February 1, 2021, and decriminalized drug possession to a citation for a \$100 fine or the person can complete a health assessment to avoid paying the fine.

^b RPOT: drug trafficking/money laundering organizations that have a significant impact in a specific OCDETF region; CPOT: leaders of the most prolific drug trafficking/money laundering organizations who have the greatest impact on the US illicit drug supply.

Interstate Highways

The interstate and state road system within the HIDTA provide DTOs easy access to major population centers, medium-sized cities, and smaller communities in the region. The major cities in the HIDTA are located along the Interstates 5 (I-5) and 84 (I-84), providing market incentives and abundant opportunities for transporting illegal drugs and currency through the region. Alternative routes in the region include US Route 97 and Oregon Route 140 in Oregon and Interstate 15 in Idaho. Interdiction seizures reported to the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) by Domestic Highway Enforcement (DHE)^c initiative participants in the region between 2016 and 2021, identified Interstate 5 as the most used route by traffickers in Oregon and Interstate 84 was the most used route in Idaho, followed by Interstate 90 in Northern Idaho. During 2021 over \$906,000 in bulk cash, as well as 2,751 kilograms (6,054 pounds) of marijuana, 137 kilograms (303 pounds) of methamphetamine, 16 kilograms (36 pounds) of heroin, 9 kilograms (20 pounds) of cocaine, and 14 kilograms (31 pounds) and 64,700 dosage units of fentanyl was seized on Oregon-Idaho highways.²¹

Rail

The railway system in Oregon and Idaho includes passenger trains and a combined total of 31 freight railroad companies that operate on more than 4,000 miles of active track. Two transcontinental railways operate in Oregon and Idaho along with one regional and 28 short line or local railways, moving freight throughout the region. Amtrak operates in Oregon and Idaho and is the largest passenger rail system, with routes running north and south through California, Oregon, and Washington, primarily traveling parallel to Interstate 5. Passengers can get on and off the train in Klamath Falls, Chemult, Eugene, Albany, Salem, Oregon City, and Portland in Oregon. Idaho has one Amtrak stop on a route running east and west in Sandpoint, which is between Spokane, Washington, and Libby, Montana.²² During 2021 law enforcement made a significant seizure of 83 pounds of bulk marijuana which originated in Oregon and destined for Chicago but confiscated in Nebraska, thereby displaying the wide scope of interstate trafficking.²³

Air

Trafficking by air is a potential vulnerability in the HIDTA. Oregon and Idaho have 400 privately owned airports, heliports, and other landing areas.²⁴ Oregon has over 100 public airports, six of which offer commercial passenger flights in and out of Portland, Eugene, Medford, North Bend, Redmond, and Pendleton. Idaho has over 120 public airports including, six of which offer commercial passenger flights in and out of Boise, Sun Valley, Idaho Falls, Lewiston, Pocatello, and Twin Falls. Air travel was reduced significantly during 2021 due to COVID-19, and the latest available law enforcement seizure information for Oregon showed nearly \$1.5 million in cash, 152 pounds of marijuana and marijuana extracts as well as several small seizures of other illicit drugs connected to flights at the Portland International Airport.

^c The Domestic Highway Enforcement (DHE) Strategy promotes collaborative, intelligence-led policing in coordinated multi-jurisdictional law enforcement efforts on U.S. highways.

Water

Oregon has 22 seaports along the 362 miles of the Pacific Coast and 300 miles of the Columbia River, including the international seaports in Portland and Coos Bay²⁵. Idaho has one seaport along the Columbia River in Lewiston.²⁶ Millions of tons of cargo and food products, such as seafood and grain, go through these seaports each year. Currently not enough information exists to adequately assess the maritime narcotics trafficking threat.

Parcel

Criminal groups in the HIDTA have increasingly used parcel delivery services to transport illicit drugs and cash into and out of the region to avoid law enforcement detection and rapidly move contraband to destinations throughout the United States. Cooperative efforts between Oregon-Idaho HIDTA initiatives and parcel delivery companies have resulted in numerous seizures of illicit contraband - mainly marijuana and drug-related cash, but also methamphetamine, heroin, synthetic opioids, and controlled prescription drugs. During 2021, HIDTA task forces reported 101 parcel interdictions containing illicit drugs, (up from 67 reported in 2020), with 70% marijuana related. A total of 907 kilograms (1,997 pounds) of illicit substances were confiscated (1,755 pounds of marijuana and 153 pounds of THC liquid), plus over 33,000 dosage units of fentanyl and controlled prescription medications, and designer drugs, plus over \$629,680.00 in currency.²⁷

IV. DRUG THREATS

Threat Overview

Fentanyl and methamphetamine were the most significant threats to Oregon and Idaho during 2021 based on drug seizures, drug related death data, initiative interviews, and surveys conducted in early 2022. The 18 Oregon-Idaho HIDTA enforcement initiatives based their survey responses on a criterion of drug availability, impact on case load, and community impact.

One-third of HIDTA initiatives listed methamphetamine as their single greatest drug threat, while one third stated fentanyl alone as their greatest threat. However, three task forces stated that fentanyl and methamphetamine pose an equal threat in their jurisdictions. Sixteen initiatives identified methamphetamine as being the most available substance in their jurisdiction – either individually or in combination with other drugs. However, the Idaho and Oregon Domestic Highway Enforcement (DHE) initiatives each listed illicit marijuana as their most prominent threat.

The Oregon State Police (OSP) forensic laboratory statistics for 2021 showed 50.7% of the samples submitted for analysis were methamphetamine. Heroin made up another 17.6% of submitted samples. Fentanyl accounted for 8.9% of samples. Cocaine and cannabis/THC each were roughly 3% of submitted samples. Another 2% of samples contained multiple drugs. Finally, all other drug types represented 13% of samples.²⁸

In Idaho, methamphetamine represented 43% of samples analyzed in 2021, while marijuana was 23.5%. Heroin accounted for 8.8% of samples and fentanyl or fentanyl analogues were 5%). Additional drugs made up the remaining sample percentages: controlled prescription drugs (3%), other dangerous drugs (2.7%), cocaine (2.4%), and drug combinations (1.5%), the majority being methamphetamine combined with heroin^d.²⁹

The Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) release their findings from the 2019-2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). Based on SAMHSA findings SAMHSA Oregon ranked 1st nationally for illicit drug use disorder in the past year.³⁰ Oregon also ranked 2nd nationally for individuals 12 and older admitting illicit drug abuse in the past month.³¹ SAMSHA also advised respondents aged 12 and older, Oregon ranked and 1st for past year methamphetamine use, 2nd for past-month marijuana use, 8th for past year cocaine use, 1st for past year misuse of prescription pain relievers.³² Oregon also ranked 1st for methamphetamine use for respondents 18 and older (figure 2).

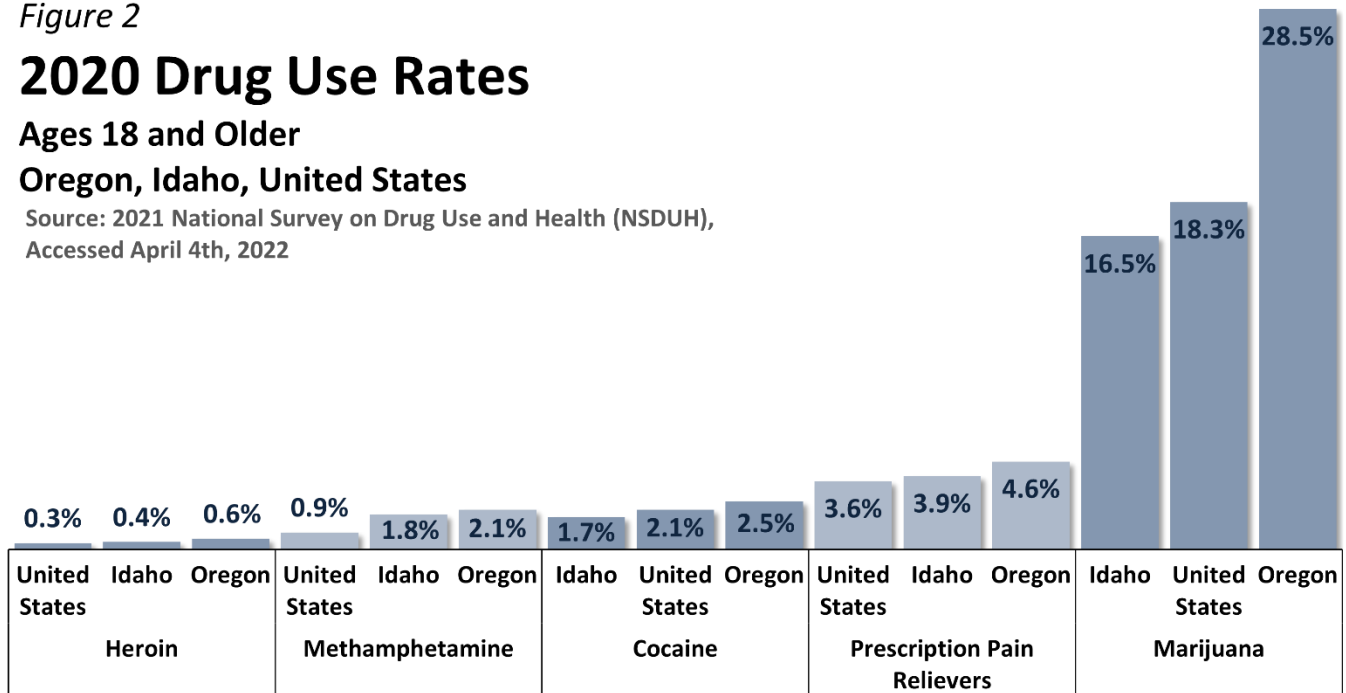
Figure 2

2020 Drug Use Rates

Ages 18 and Older

Oregon, Idaho, United States

Source: 2021 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH),
Accessed April 4th, 2022



Idaho ranked lower than Oregon across all categories, but misuse of prescription pain relievers and methamphetamine is still high. Idaho ranked 35th nationally for individuals 12 and older admitting illicit drug abuse in the past month.³³ SAMSHA stated for residents aged 12 and older, Idaho ranks 4th for past year methamphetamine use, 7th for past year misuse of prescription pain relievers, 32nd for past-month marijuana use and 40th for past year cocaine use.³⁴ Idaho also ranked 4th for methamphetamine use for respondents 18 and older (figure 2).

Preliminary data available from 2021 identified 860 unintentional or undetermined drug-related deaths in Oregon. Deaths related to fentanyl during this time increased 72% from 226 deaths in 2020 to 390 for most of 2021.^e According to the Oregon Health Authority, there was a reported rise of

^d Includes samples where multiple drugs, licit and/or illicit, were detected.

^e State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System (SUDORS) has been in use in Oregon since June 2019. Overdose data prior to 2020 was obtained from the Medical Examiner’s office and is reportedly less accurate than the new system currently in use.

overdose deaths during April and May 2021, similar to, but longer than the spike in deaths April to May 2020.³⁵

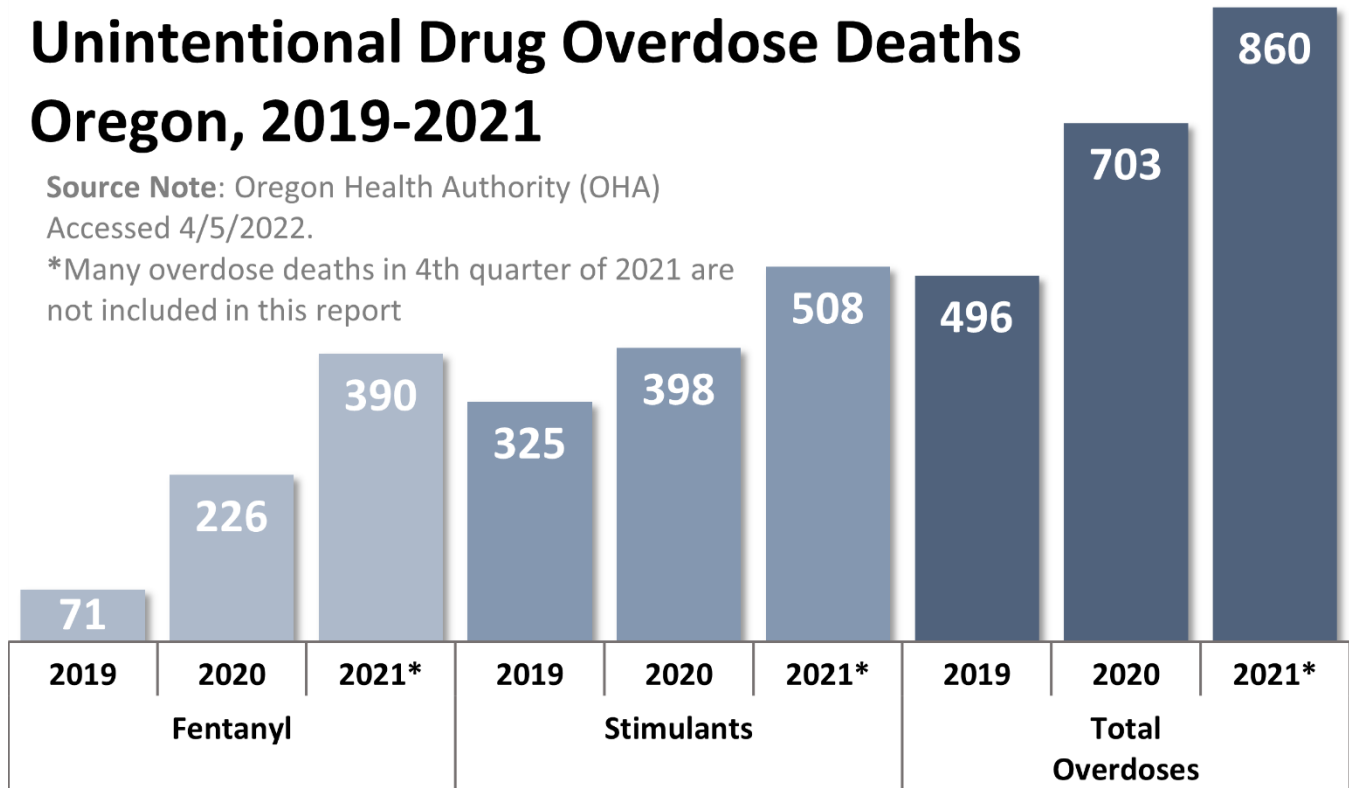
In Idaho, rates of death from drug poisoning overall and accidental death related to drug use continued to increase, with the death count rising from 261 in 2009 to 280 in 2019.³⁶ In 2018, deaths related to methamphetamine (78) surpassed the number of deaths related to pharmaceutical opioids (68) as the leading drug involved in overdose deaths and continued to increase in 2019 (97). Heroin (39) and fentanyl (32) drug-related deaths continue to rise, while cocaine-related deaths decreased slightly from 8 in 2018 to 6 in 2019.

Figure 3

Unintentional Drug Overdose Deaths Oregon, 2019-2021

Source Note: Oregon Health Authority (OHA)
Accessed 4/5/2022.

*Many overdose deaths in 4th quarter of 2021 are not included in this report



According to the 2019 Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) report published June 2021, there was a reported significant drop in treatment admissions for those aged 12 years and older between 2018 (1,450) and 2019 (680) in Idaho, with nearly half admitted for methamphetamine (281), followed by marijuana (112), and heroin (77).³⁷ Oregon does not provide treatment data to TEDS, making it difficult to assess treatment admissions.

1. Fentanyl and Synthetic Opioids

Availability and use of fentanyl, fentanyl analogs, and other synthetic opioids are expanding in the United States and are a growing trend in the HIDTA region. Fentanyl trafficking into Oregon increased on a massive scale during 2021 as illicit producers continued to develop new derivative forms to supply an expanding market.

Availability

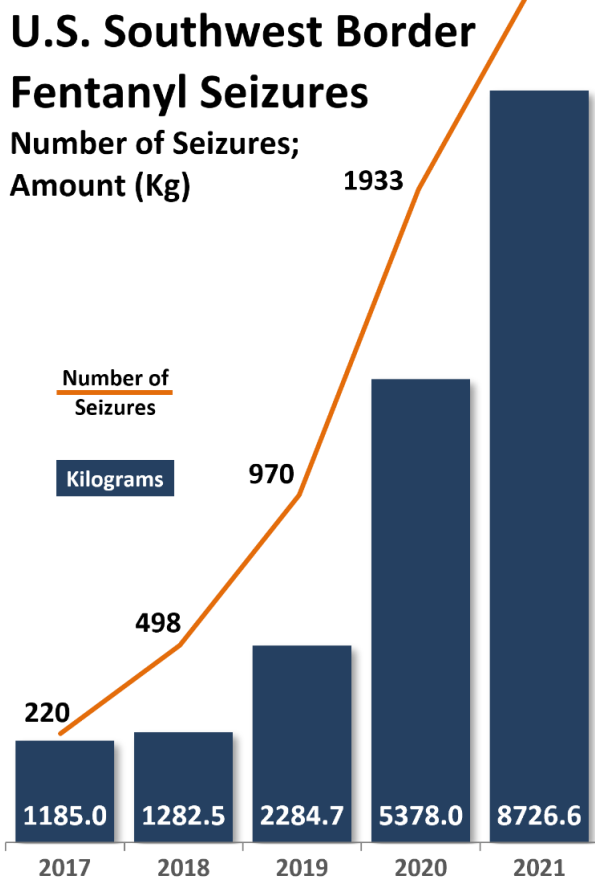
Illicitly manufactured fentanyl and fentanyl analogs are increasingly found in counterfeit prescription pills that are being produced in large quantities by Mexican Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCO), specifically the Sinaloa and the New Generation Jalisco (CJNG) drug cartels; the two largest organizations responsible for most of the drug distribution to independent DTOs in the United States.^{38,39}

Law enforcement agencies along the Southwest Border seized 8,726 kilograms (19,000 pounds) in 2021, a 62% increase from 5,378 kilograms (11,000 pounds) seized in 2020 (Figure 4).⁴⁰ Oregon-Idaho HIDTA seizure numbers and amounts increased similar to the Southwest Border (Figure 5).

Approximately 55% of Oregon-Idaho HIDTA initiatives surveyed in 2022 reported that fentanyl availability, predominately as counterfeit pills, increased in their jurisdictions. Most initiatives advised fentanyl was identified in seized counterfeit versions of oxycodone blue ‘M-30’ or alprazolam (Xanax) pills. Two initiatives (11%) reported an increase of fentanyl in their areas while sixteen (89%) reported a significant increase.⁴¹ User-level prices (per dosage unit) remained unchanged for counterfeit oxycodone pills across the region.

Since 2017, there has been a marked increase in the number of fentanyl and fentanyl analog samples analyzed, with a higher incidence of single substances submitted since 2018. In 2020, 285 drug samples were submitted that contained fentanyl or fentanyl analogs, a 149% increase from 2018 (108). Of these samples, 256 were fentanyl, 13 were fentanyl analogs, and 16 were heroin mixed with fentanyl. Drug sample analysis in Idaho increased from 2020 to 2021 from 64 to 833 – eighteen of these samples contained heroin or methamphetamine.⁴²

Figure 4



Source: El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), Accessed April 4th,

Fentanyl seizures in dosage units continued to rise exponentially over the past five years. In 2021, most seized fentanyl was reported to be in the form of counterfeit oxycodone “M-30” pills. Initiatives seized over 1,500,000 pills and 5 kilograms (11 pounds) of fentanyl powder across the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA⁴³ (Figure 5). An additional 20,218 pills identified as controlled prescription drugs (oxycodone, alprazolam, and amphetamine) were suspected by law enforcement officers to contain fentanyl based on investigations but are still pending forensic testing to confirm.

Use

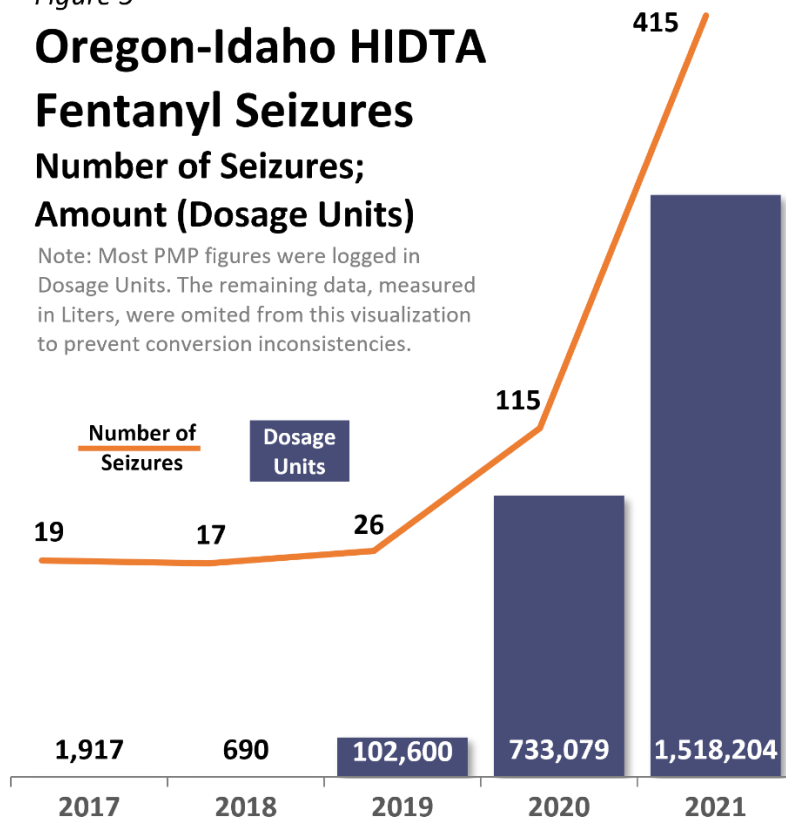
Counterfeit prescription pills containing fentanyl are assessed as the primary means of ingestion by users in the region. According to the DEA, heroin users have been switching to fentanyl as it is

Figure 5

Oregon-Idaho HIDTA Fentanyl Seizures

Number of Seizures; Amount (Dosage Units)

Note: Most PMP figures were logged in Dosage Units. The remaining data, measured in Liters, were omitted from this visualization to prevent conversion inconsistencies.



Source: Performance Management Process (PMP) | Accessed April 4th, 2022

cheaper and easier to use. The average pill price across the region was reported by the Portland Police Bureau as roughly \$5-\$10 2021.⁴⁴ More than two-thirds (77%) of initiatives surveyed in Oregon and Idaho reported seizing counterfeit pills in the last year, including counterfeit oxycodone and alprazolam.⁴⁵ Exactly half of initiatives surveyed in 2022 reported that trafficking groups added counterfeit prescription pills to their inventory during the last year.

In Oregon and Idaho, initiatives surveyed reported that acquisition of counterfeit drugs occurs mainly through direct sales – most often bought in person or purchased through social media. Surveyed officers indicated that direct transportation and mail/parcel delivery were used in the last year to distribute counterfeit drugs in their jurisdictions.⁴⁶

The Oregon Health Authority reported 390 fentanyl-related deaths during the first nine months of 2021, as compared to 226 for all of 2020. Preliminary death information showed fentanyl specific death jumped from 45 in 2020 to 142 in 2021.^{47 48}

Production

Most non-pharmaceutical fentanyl, fentanyl analogs, and synthetic opioids that are available in the HIDTA are illicitly manufactured in foreign countries such as China or Mexico and are then imported into the region.⁴⁹ Still, local production in the form of pill processing labs has been reported in the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA. Since 2017, a total of 9 pill presses have been seized in the region with the most recent reported seizure occurring in Idaho in 2020.⁵⁰ The pills were designed to resemble legitimate prescription pills such as oxycodone and alprazolam, but contained various mixtures of fentanyl, alprazolam, and other substances.⁵¹

Transportation

According to the DEA, existing supply lines for heroin have been utilized by Mexican TCOs to import fentanyl into the United States through the Southwest Border states.⁵² In the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA, law enforcement reporting suggests that the supply of illicit fentanyl from Mexico in the region has become more prevalent. Over 50% of Oregon-Idaho HIDTA initiatives surveyed in 2022 reported their fentanyl investigations were directly tied to sources in Mexico.⁵³ Buyers and sellers

used online connections, often found on the “dark web”, to arrange purchases and delivery into the region using mail or parcel delivery services.⁵⁴

Intelligence Gaps

- The degree to which fentanyl powder is converted to counterfeit pills via pill presses in Oregon and Idaho

2. Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine in the form of crystal methamphetamine, or “ice,” is highly available and widely used in the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA and is in competition with fentanyl as the region’s most critical drug threat. Seven Oregon-Idaho HIDTA initiatives (39%) listed methamphetamine alone as their single greatest drug threat and two (11%) listed a combination of fentanyl and methamphetamine.

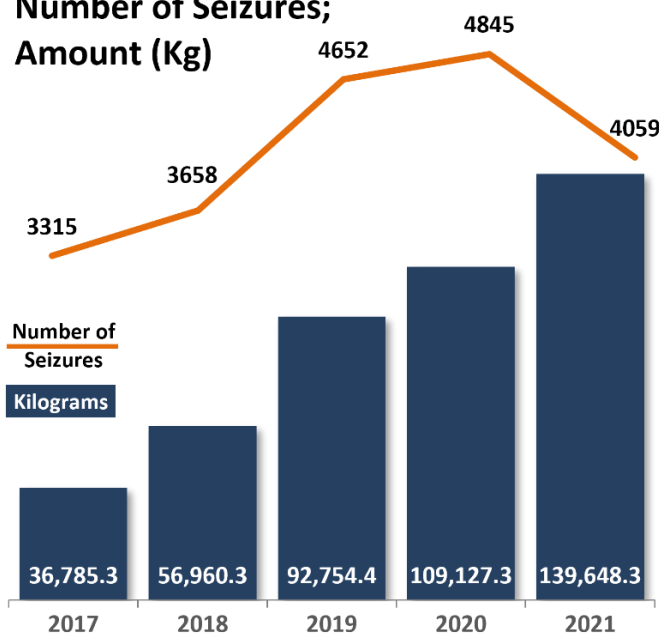
Availability

Most methamphetamine available in the region is imported from Mexico, through the Southwest Border states, then transported north to Oregon and Idaho. The continued high production in Mexico has likely contributed to the increased flow of highly potent crystal methamphetamine into the United States and the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA region.

Figure 6

U.S. Southwest Border Methamphetamine Seizures

Number of Seizures;
Amount (Kg)



Source: El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), Accessed April 4th, 2022

Every Oregon-Idaho HIDTA initiative surveyed in 2022 advised that crystal methamphetamine was highly available in their jurisdictions.⁵⁵ Methamphetamine prices in the region were stable for 2021 in Boise and Portland – two major population centers.⁵⁶

The drug samples submitted to the Oregon and Idaho State Police forensic laboratories further support the high availability of crystal methamphetamine in Oregon and Idaho. Methamphetamine made up 53% of samples tested by the Oregon State Police.⁵⁷ Similarly, methamphetamine was 43% of samples analyzed by the Idaho State Police (ISP) in 2021.⁵⁸

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) seized over 139,000 kilograms (307,000 pounds) of methamphetamine during calendar year 2021, an increase from the 109,000 kilograms

(240,000 pounds) seized in 2020. (Figure 6).⁵⁹

⁶⁰ Lower seizure numbers with increased weight seized indicate increased production. Oregon-Idaho HIDTA initiatives confiscated 1,066 kilograms (2,239 pounds) in 2021, a modest increase from the 888 kilograms (1,954 pounds) seized in 2020 (Figure 7). The largest single seizures in each state were 181 kilograms (398 pounds) by Oregon HIDTA DEA and 11.8 kilograms (26 pounds) in Idaho reported by the DEA Boise District Office Task Force.⁶¹

Furthermore, the amount of methamphetamine confiscated on Oregon’s highways has increased in the past five years; the total seized in 2021 was 160 kilograms (354 pounds), a 23% increase from total 2020 seizures (130 kilograms / 288 pounds).⁶² Idaho State Police reported 61 seizures totaling 55 kilograms (123 pounds), a 27% decrease from the 76 kilograms (169 pounds) confiscated in 2020.⁶³

Use

The use of methamphetamine remains high in the HIDTA, as evidenced by recent data on reported use, as well as the high number of related deaths, drug use survey data, and arrests in the region. According to 2020 SAMSHA information, past year methamphetamine use rate in Oregon increased between 2019 (1.26%) and 2020 (1.93%), rising from 9th nationally to 1st.⁶⁴ Use in Idaho increased slightly from 2nd nationally in 2019 (0.81%), to 4th in 2020 (1.66%).⁶⁵

Methamphetamine is the most widely used illicit stimulant in the HIDTA. Stimulant related deaths increased steadily from 2019 through 2021. Oregon Health Authority has reported 325 stimulant associated deaths in 2019, 398 in 2020, and 508 in 2021.⁶⁶ Similarly, provisional data for Idaho shows methamphetamine related overdoses accounted for at least 90% of stimulant related deaths in 2019 (81 of 90), 2020 (96 of 102), and in 2021 (120 of 129).⁶⁷

Production

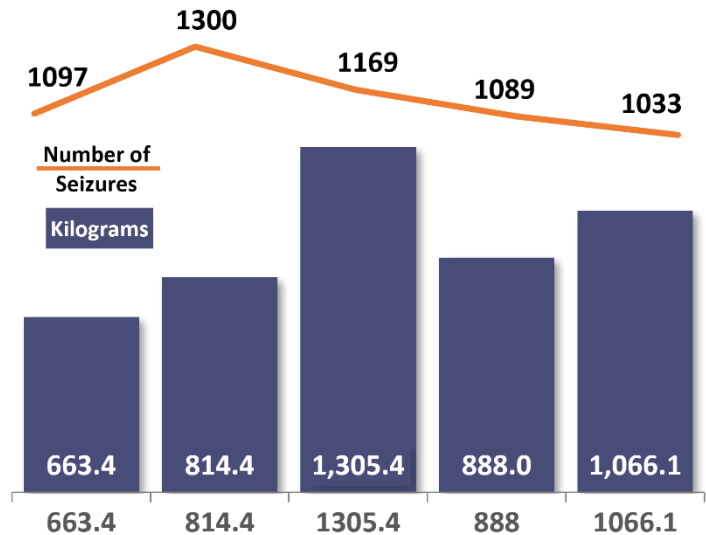
Precursor chemical controls at the state and federal level along with sustained law enforcement pressure have contributed to a decline in reported methamphetamine lab seizures in Oregon. The number of clandestine methamphetamine labs in Oregon has continued to drop from a total of 9 in 2014 to none in 2021.⁶⁸ Methamphetamine production has remained low in Idaho, with 4 labs seized between 2014 and 2021.⁶⁹

Figure 7

Oregon-Idaho HIDTA Fentanyl Seizures

**Number of Seizures;
Amount (Dosage Units)**

Note: Most PMP figures were logged in kilograms. The remaining data, measured in liters or dosage units, were omitted from this visualization to prevent conversion inconsistencies.



Source: Performance Management Process (PMP)
Accessed April 4th, 2022

Transportation

Methamphetamine is mostly transported into Oregon and Idaho from Mexico through California and routes starting in Arizona. Mexican TCOs^f control most of the transportation of the drug into the region. Most (89%) of initiatives surveyed in 2022 assessed methamphetamine is transported by highway. Additionally, 56% of initiatives advised methamphetamine is sent by parcel, though only two initiatives seized methamphetamine from parcel interdictions throughout 2021.^{70 71 72} Preferred routes in Oregon include Interstate 5, US Highway 97, and Interstate 84. Common routes in Idaho include Interstate 15 and 90. Mexican TCOs also supply methamphetamine to multi-state and local DTOs operating in the region, facilitating distribution in the HIDTA and surrounding region. Initiatives surveyed in 2022 assessed California (94%) as the most probable domestic point of origin for methamphetamine seized in 2021, followed by Arizona (39%), Washington (22%), and Nevada (22%).^{73 74}

Intelligence Gaps

- The number of methamphetamine related deaths in Idaho
 - The amount of methamphetamine trafficked through parcel post, by rail, by air, or by waterways
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3. Heroin

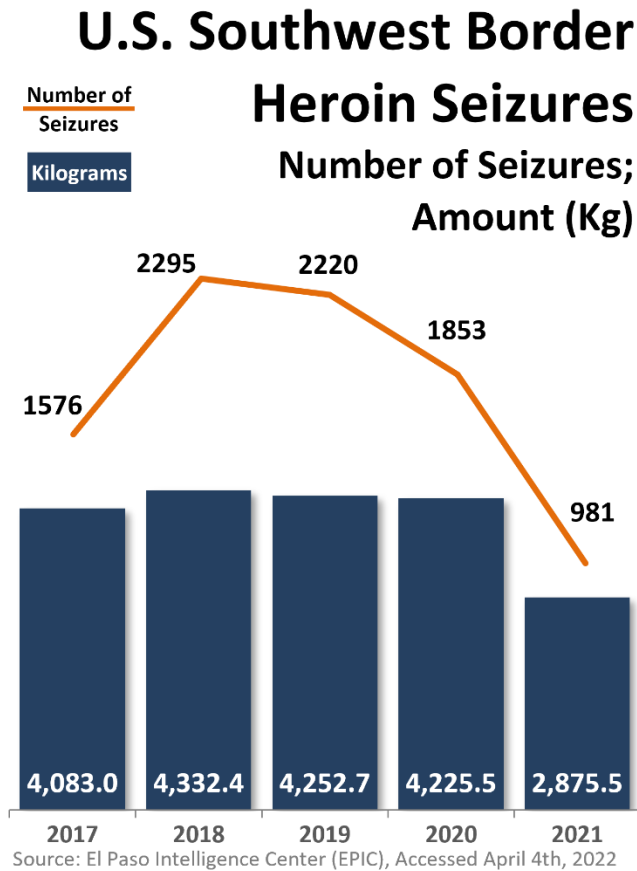
Heroin availability has grown in the HIDTA in the last decade, fueling a rise in the number of heroin seizures, the number of new users, and the rate of associated overdoses. During 2021 heroin availability was offset due to the high availability and lower cost of fentanyl. Current availability and use in the HIDTA suggest heroin will remain a critical threat, though behind fentanyl and methamphetamine.

Availability

Fifteen of the eighteen HIDTA initiatives surveyed in 2022 advised that heroin is still a major drug threat to their area due to high availability and overdose potential.^{g,75} Most survey respondents reported that a high level of heroin, mostly black tar, was available in their area in 2021. Approximately one-quarter (27%) of initiatives surveyed indicated increased heroin availability for their jurisdiction during 2021, while 55% stated *no change* to availability, and a few (17%) noted a decrease.⁷⁶

^f TCOs are groups of individuals who operate transnationally for the purpose of obtaining power, influence, and monetary and/or commercial gains, wholly or in part by illegal means, which includes Mexican drug cartels according to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

Figure 8



slightly from 2020 (645) to 2021 (509); the quantity seized increased just 2% in the year (Figure 9 next page).^{79, 80}

Use

In the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA, widespread availability and low cost of heroin continue to accommodate demand. According to the 2020 NSDUH, Oregon past-year heroin use increased from 0.48% in 2019 to 0.56%, placing Oregon 12th nationally.⁸¹ Idaho ranks 24th nationally, with a rate of 0.38% of those 18 and older having used heroin in the previous year.⁸²

Heroin overdoses increased from 2019 to 2020 then, based on preliminary data, decreased in 2021 (146 up to 200 then down to 174).⁸³ Preliminary 2021 data showed heroin-related deaths decreased in Idaho from 40 in 2020 to 20 in 2021.⁸⁴

Production

The latest government estimates show that 92% of wholesale heroin imported into the United States originates from Mexico.⁸⁵ According to federal estimates, the cultivation of opium fell 27% from 41,800 hectares in 2018 to 30,400 hectares in 2019, with the estimated pure potential production of heroin also decreasing from 106 metric tons in 2018 to 78 metric tons in 2019.⁸⁶ According to the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) 2020 National Drug Threat Assessment, the decline is

Heroin seizures by law enforcement along the Southwest Border rose from 2017 to 2018. Seizures by total weight were consistent from 2018 through 2020 but total seizures declined. CBP reported a nearly 50% percent drop in seizures from 2020 to 2021, and a roughly 32% decrease of physical product (Figure 8).

The number of samples tested by the OSP forensic lab supports that heroin's availability has plateaued. The number of samples testing positive for heroin in Oregon decreased from 2,387 in 2020 to 1,422 in 2021. This represents a reduction from 20% to 18.77% of tested samples.⁷⁷ In Idaho, the number of drug samples identified as heroin continues to remain high, with 1,441 submitted in 2021, a significant increase from 823 in 2020. Heroin accounted for 8% of drug samples submitted, third after methamphetamine and marijuana.⁷⁸

Access to heroin continues to remain high in the HIDTA, as partly evidenced, by the relatively steady amount seized by HIDTA initiatives. Although the number of heroin seizures decreased

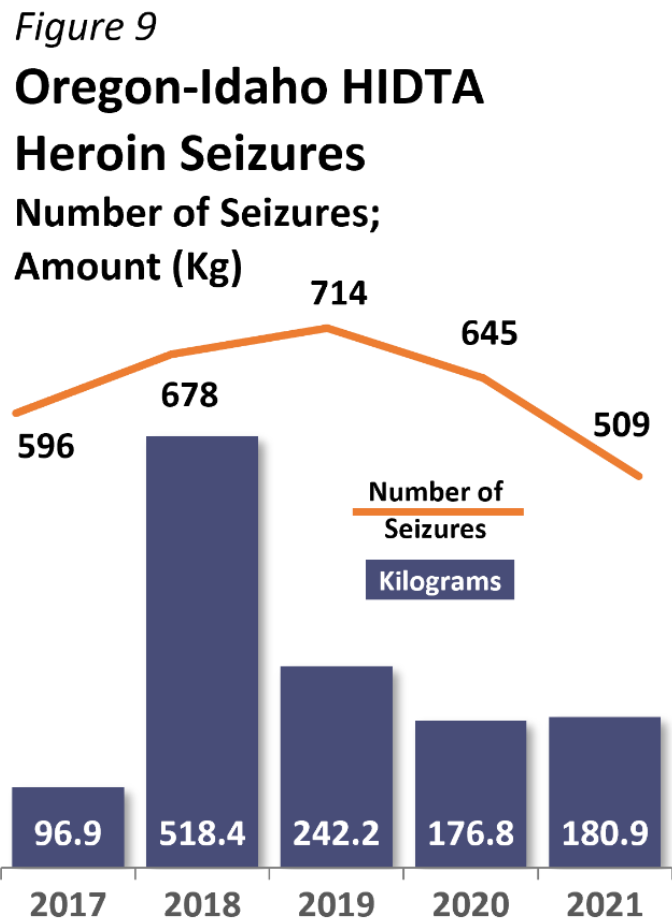
likely a result of an increase in fentanyl production and low prices paid to poppy farmers in Mexico.⁸⁷ No local production of heroin has been reported in the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA region.

Transportation

Mexican TCOs dominate the trafficking of black tar and brown powder heroin into and through Oregon and Idaho. Heroin is transported into or through the region from California and, increasingly, from Arizona and Nevada. Ninety-four percent of task forces stated heroin is largely transported by highway in private and commercial vehicles from Mexico, California, and Southwest states along Interstate 5 corridor, and US Highway 97, Interstates 15 and 84, and to a lesser extent U.S. Highway 395. Multi-state and local DTOs operating in Oregon and Idaho acquire the product from Mexican TCOs⁸⁸, facilitating transportation to the HIDTA and surrounding region. In 2022 task forces indicated domestic origins for heroin seized in 2021 were California (89%), followed by Arizona (33%), Washington (28%), Nevada (28%), and Utah (6%).⁸⁹

Intelligence Gaps

- Relationship between polydrug use and heroin-related deaths in Idaho
- If the demand for heroin is actually being offset by availability and low cost of fentanyl
- The amount of heroin trafficked through parcel post, by rail, by air, or through use of waterways



Source: Performance Management Process (PMP)
 Accessed April 4th, 2022

Note: Most PMP figures were logged in Kilograms. The remaining data, measured in Liters or Dosage Units, were omitted from this assessment to prevent conversion inconsistencies.

4. Marijuana

Oregon remains a source area for marijuana produced and trafficked outside the legal framework of the Oregon Medical Marijuana Program (OMMP), existing recreational laws, and hemp regulation. In contrast, Idaho marijuana laws remain some of the toughest in the nation with all possession, manufacture, and sale of the drug strictly prohibited.⁹⁰

Availability

Most Oregon and Idaho law enforcement officers surveyed in 2022 reported a high level of illicit marijuana and extracts available in the last year (88%), with more than a quarter (27%) indicating a rise in prevalence.⁹¹ Ounce and pound prices for marijuana continue to fall in the region, with some of the cheapest prices reported in the Southern Oregon region.

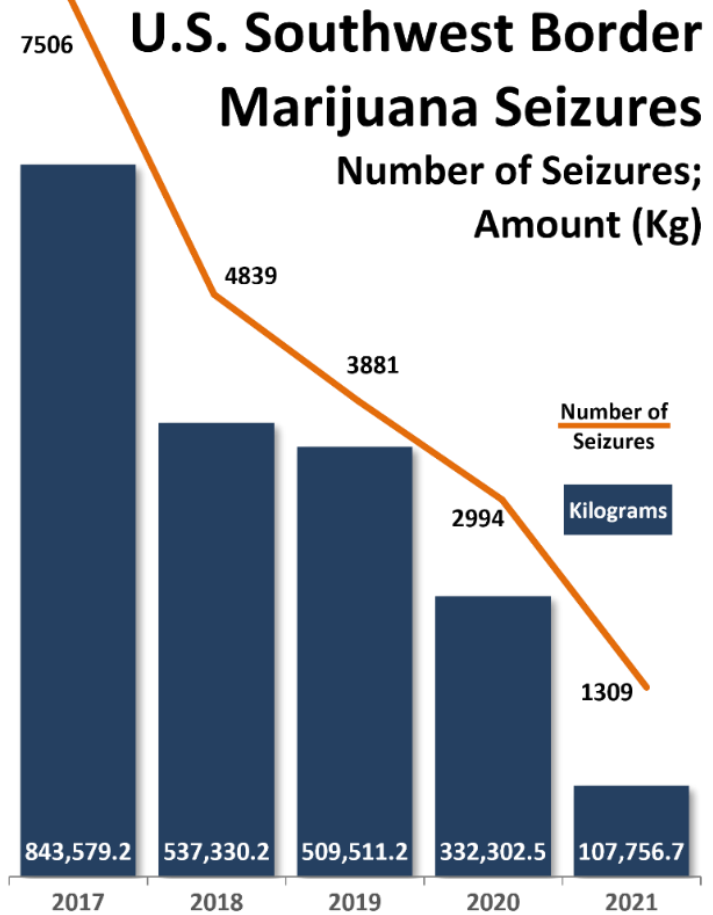
Analysis of forensic lab data in Idaho shows that marijuana submissions remain the second-highest substance analyzed in 2021, representing nearly one-third (3,840) of total submissions during the year.⁹² In comparison, Oregon forensic data revealed that marijuana/THC represented 5.4% (407 samples) of total drug samples in 2021.⁹³ Seventy-six percent of the marijuana submissions processed by the laboratories in Oregon were submitted by agencies within the designated HIDTA counties.

The amount of marijuana seized along the Southwest Borders has steeply declined since 2017 (Figure 10) but quickly increased in the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA. Seizures by HIDTA initiatives more than doubled from 2017 to 2018, rose significantly from 2019 to 2020 and exponentially in 2021 (Figure 11). The initiatives made 483 seizures in 2021 totaling over 757,015 kilograms (265,000 pounds) of bulk marijuana and marijuana extract products, over 82,000 indoor plants, and more than 1.3 million outdoor plants. Most of the plants were seized by southwest Oregon initiatives.⁹⁴ The high cannabis quantities produced in Oregon since legalization, the continued sale of the surplus product on the black market, along with insufficient resources for monitoring compliance, encourage prolific interstate trafficking. According to a recent analysis of national highway interdiction data, marijuana originating in Oregon is frequently seized in other states.⁹⁵ Much of the marijuana seized was destined to the black market in the eastern half of the United States. During 2021, Oregon marijuana was frequently seized while in transport to Colorado, Florida, Missouri, Ohio, South Carolina, and Utah. Douglas, Jackson, and Josephine in Oregon were the most frequently identified points of origin for marijuana seized in other states.⁹⁶

Use

Data published by SAMHSA for the 2019-2020 National Study on Drug Use and Health showed an increase of respondents aged 12 years and older who claimed to have used marijuana in the past year. The national rate in 2020 was 17.7%,⁹⁷ while the Oregon past year rate was 27.8%.⁹⁸ The survey also estimated 19.8% of Oregonians and 11.5% Idahoans aged 12-17 claimed use in the past year.

Figure 10



Source: El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), Accessed April 4th, 2022

Additionally, the national average for marijuana use in the past year was 35% (respondents aged 18-25), but the Oregon average was 46.6%. Lastly, 30.6% of Idaho respondents claimed past-month marijuana use.⁹⁹

Production

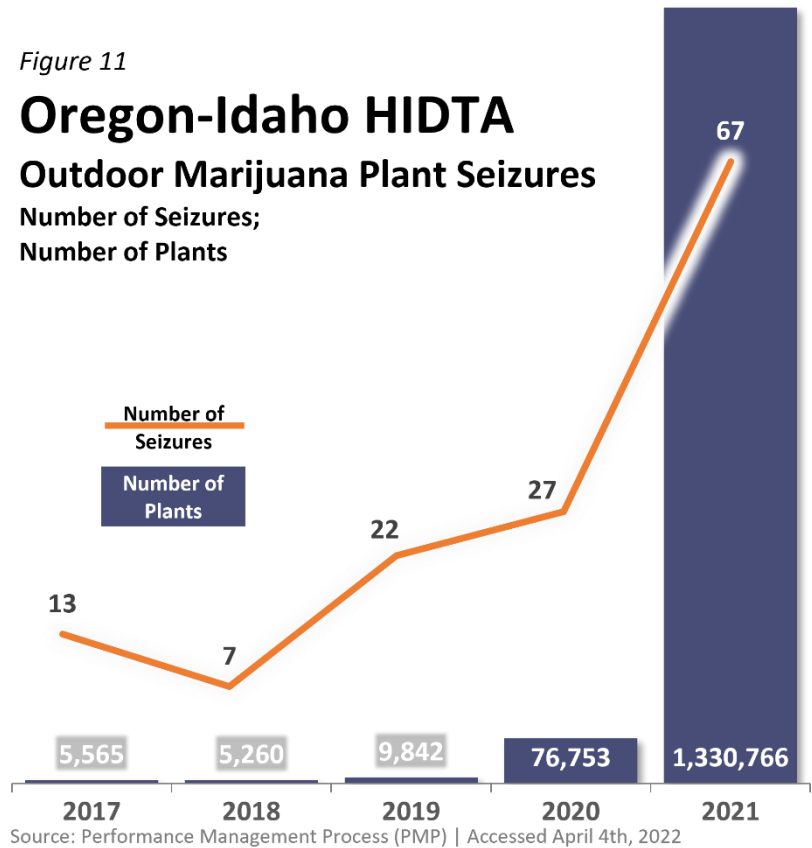
Most marijuana available in the HIDTA is produced on private property in Oregon both outdoors and indoors. Conditions in Oregon’s Southern region are very good for marijuana cultivation. Experienced growers can produce multiple marijuana harvests per growing season.

Large marijuana grows on public lands have decreased since 2016, from either impact of federal prosecution, decreased marijuana eradication funding, or legalization in Oregon. In 2021, initiatives across Oregon seized 67 large-scale outdoor marijuana grows. The grows yielded more than 1,330,766 plants. Additionally, they seized roughly 82,487 indoor plants from 30 indoor grows.¹⁰⁰ Seizures of bulk marijuana and total weight increased from 2020 to 2021 (Figure 12).

Figure 11

**Oregon-Idaho HIDTA
Outdoor Marijuana Plant Seizures**

Number of Seizures;
Number of Plants



HIDTA Initiatives dismantled 90 cannabis oil extraction (or BHO) labs in 2021. Eight-two (82) of the labs had a production capacity of 32-159 ounces of oil, while seven more were able to produce more than 4.5 kilograms (10 pounds). Initiatives seized over 136 gallons of liquid THC and 147 kilograms (325 pounds) of THC resin throughout 2021.¹⁰¹

Transportation

Marijuana either grown illegally or diverted from licensed cultivation sites in Oregon, is transported to markets within the region by local DTOs or transported across state borders by out-of-state marijuana traffickers. Most of the marijuana grown locally is primarily trafficked through the highway system, as well as parcel post and ground freight.

A continued vulnerability is the passage of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018^h, which defined hemp as an agricultural commodity and removed it from the list of federally controlled substances.¹⁰² Interstate transportation of hemp, now legal, is complicated by the fact that the only way to distinguish hemp from marijuana is to measure the level of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) through

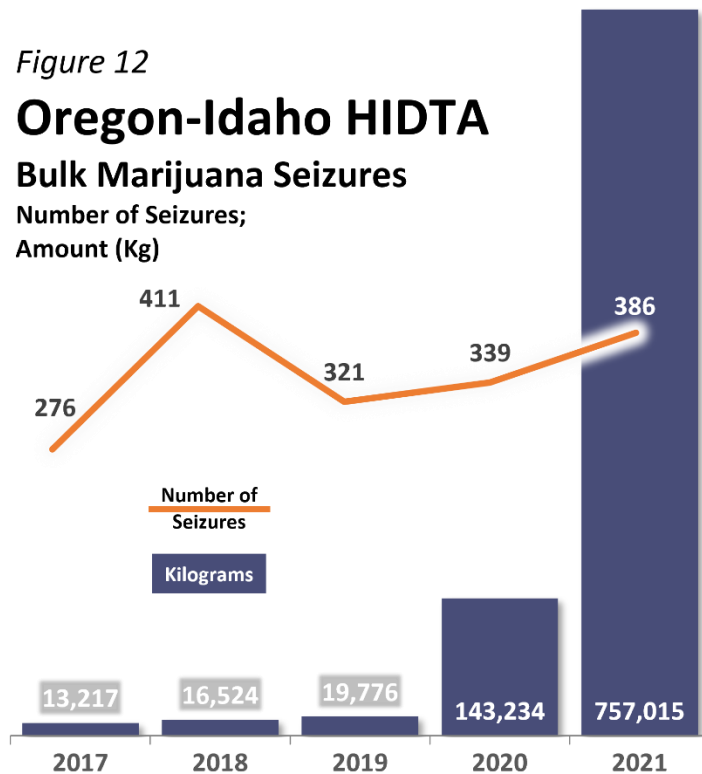
^h The Agriculture Improvement Act was passed into law on 12/20/2018.

Figure 12

Oregon-Idaho HIDTA

Bulk Marijuana Seizures

Number of Seizures;
Amount (Kg)



Source: Performance Management Process (PMP) | Accessed April 4th, 2022

quantitative testing at a lab (quantitative field testing is not widely yet available), as marijuana and hemp have the same appearance and smell.

Intelligence Gaps

- The amount of marijuana produced outside of the legal market in Oregon
- The amount of marijuana diverted from the legal market to destinations outside of Oregon
- The extent to which marijuana traffickers exploit the industrial hemp industry as a strategy to avoid law enforcement detection

5. Cocaine

Mirroring national trends, the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA region continues to experience an increase in cocaine availability and use, primarily in powder form. This increase is likely due to expanding cocoa production in South America according to the DEA.¹⁰³ Although not considered one of the main drug threats to the region by law enforcement officers, close to half (44%) of initiatives surveyed in 2022 indicated that a moderate level of powder cocaine was available in their jurisdiction in the last year with over 20% of respondents reporting an increase in availability.

Availability

Cocaine seizures by law enforcement along the Southwest Border have varied since 2017. Total seizures and weight declined from 2020 to 2021 from over 19,090 kilograms (42,000 pounds) seized in 2020 down to just under 18,136 kilograms (39,900 pounds) in 2021 (Figure 13).¹⁰⁴

In the HIDTA, the prevalence of crack cocaine remains at a low level in the region, with most products concentrated in Oregon's Portland Metropolitan area.¹⁰⁵ Cocaine prices varied depending on the region. In Oregon, the pound price of cocaine decreased (10%) between 2019 and 2020, while the ounce price increased 18%. Pound price in Idaho decreased slightly (3%), while the ounce price increased 23%.¹⁰⁶

Over 20% of initiatives surveyed in 2022 reported an increase in powder cocaine availability, while 55% reported no change and one initiative in Portland reported a decrease.¹⁰⁷ Only 11% of surveyed initiatives indicated DTOs trafficking other drugs added cocaine to their supply during 2021.¹⁰⁸

The number of seizures and weight of cocaine seized by HIDTA task forces has varied widely since 2017. There was a significant increase in seizures from 2020 (144) to 2021 (240) and moderate increase of pounds seized from 245 to 318 (Figure 14).¹⁰⁹ The Oregon State Police Crime Lab received 168 samples for testing in 2021, a significant increase from the 36 in 2020. Meanwhile the Idaho State police crime Lab received 387 samples for the entire year.^{110,111}

Use

The 2020 NSDUH survey results released by SAMHSA, showed Oregon dropped from 4th to 7th nationally for cocaine use in the past year. Idaho rose from 49th nationally to 39th for ages 12 and older.¹¹² This corresponds to law enforcement reporting that indicates the user base in most areas has remained unchanged despite the increased availability of cocaine. The price of cocaine is high compared to other more potent stimulants, such as methamphetamine, and likely inhibits demand.¹¹³

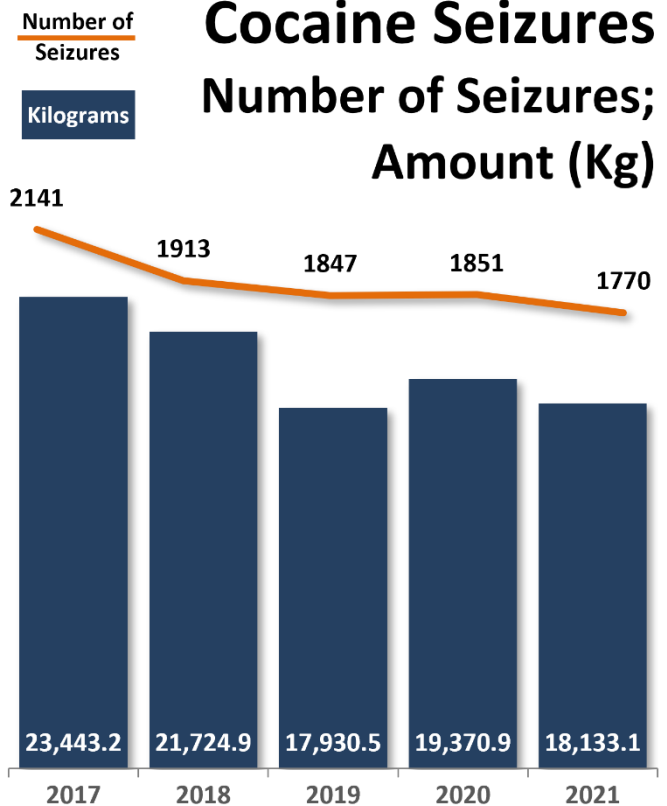
Cocaine linked overdose deaths in Oregon are the lowest of any major drug.¹¹⁴ Cocaine has been included in the ‘stimulant’ category (along with methamphetamine) for death data. Data for specific cocaine overdoses since mid-2020 has not yet been released.¹¹⁵ In Idaho, cocaine overdose deaths remain comparatively low, rising from 5 in 2020 to 8 in 2021. Cocaine and marijuana had the only single digit related overdose deaths in 2021 for Idaho, while all other non-opioid death were in double to triple digits.¹¹⁶

Production

Most of the world’s cocaine supply is cultivated and produced in South America and is the primary source area for cocaine seized in the United States.¹¹⁷ No local production has been reported by law enforcement agencies in the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA region.

Figure 13

U.S. Southwest Border Cocaine Seizures



Source: El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), Accessed April 4th, 2022

Transportation

Most cocaine in the area is transported over land from Mexico by Mexican TCOs through California and other Southwest Border states. Fourteen task forces said cocaine is brought into their jurisdiction in private and commercial vehicles on Interstates 5, 84, and 15, and U.S. Highways 97 and 395. Multi-state and locally based DTOs operating in Oregon and Idaho obtain cocaine from Mexican TCOs, transporting the product throughout the HIDTA and the surrounding region. Initiatives surveyed about their 2021 cocaine seizures assessed that California (89%), Arizona (33%), and Washington (22%) were the drug’s primary domestic points of origin.

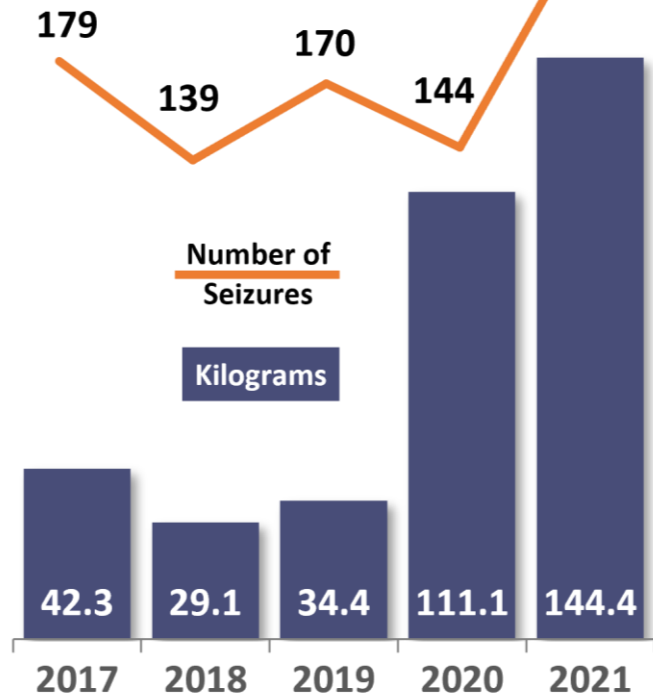
Intelligence Gaps

- Prevalence of cocaine trafficking in rural areas in Oregon and Idaho
- Relationship between the rise in cocaine availability and increased cocaine-related deaths in the region

Figure 14

Oregon-Idaho HIDTA

Cocaine Seizures
Number of Seizures;
Amount (Kilograms)



Source: Performance Management Process (PMP)
 Accessed April 15th, 2022

6. Pharmaceuticals and Designer Drugs

The threat posed by the misuse of controlled prescription drugs (CPDs), specifically prescription opioidsⁱ, has steadily declined since 2017 in the Oregon and Idaho region.¹¹⁸ Although opioid prescriptions have continued to decline in Oregon, there has been a steady increase over the past eight years in stimulant prescribing.

Availability

Diversion of pharmaceutical drugs is becoming less common in the HIDTA as a direct result of changes in traditional prescribing practices. Three-quarters (75%) of Oregon and Idaho initiatives

ⁱ Controlled prescription drugs are regulated under the Federal Controlled Substances Act (CSA) that classifies drugs under five schedules according to their potential for abuse, their use in accepted medical treatment in the United States, and their potential for physical or psychological dependence.

surveyed in 2022 reported seizures of prescription drugs were rare or did not occur in their area.¹¹⁹ HIDTA initiatives seized 16 kilograms and 98,000 dosage units of Central Nervous System (CNS) depressants and 53 kilograms plus 55,000 dosage units in 2021. Many of these seizures were types of benzodiazepines, also referred to as New Psychoactive substances.¹²⁰ While viewed as an emerging threat in 2020 they were seized in relatively low amount compared with counterfeit pills containing fentanyl. These substances may still pose a larger threat to the HIDTA in coming years.

While opioid prescribing rates in Oregon have declined since 2019, prescriptions filled per 1,000 residents for stimulants have steadily increased since 2019.^j According to the Oregon Health Authority prescribing and drug overdose data, the prescription rate increased between Q1 2019 and Q4 2021 at a rate consistent for most age groups, roughly 21%. However, the age group 30-44 increased 51% between Q1 2019 and Q4 2021: rising from 62,000 monthly prescriptions to 94,000 prescriptions monthly.¹²¹

New psychoactive substances (NPS) are an emerging threat throughout the United States, often found in counterfeit oxycodone or alprazolam pills.¹²² In 2021, 206 lab samples submitted to Oregon and Idaho forensic laboratories were identified as containing an NPS. Of these samples, 44% were identified as clonazepam, followed by flualprazolam (25%), etizolam (19%), and flubromazolam (12%).¹²³

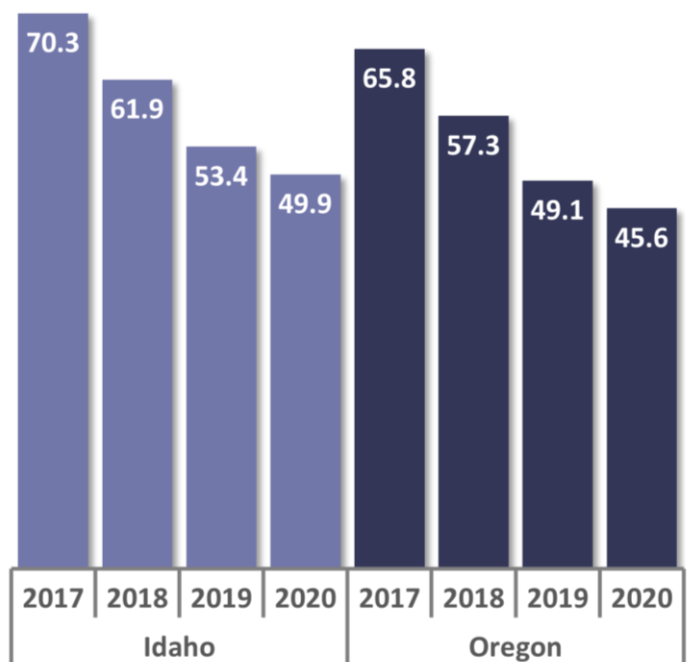
Use

The number of substances submitted to the Oregon crime lab that tested positive for CPDs continues to decline, dropping by more than 43% from 519 submissions in 2020 to 296 submissions in 2021, an indication that the illicit use of pharmaceutical drugs is declining in the state.¹²⁴ In Idaho, the number of CPD submissions analyzed by the Idaho crime lab increased 22% from 271 in 2020 to 332 in 2021.¹²⁵

SAMHSA reports that 4.46% of Oregon residents 12 and older have misused prescription pain relievers in the past year, the highest rate in the nation for this demographic. Idaho ranks 7th at 3.71%.¹²⁶ However, when narrowing the range to those 18-25 years old, Idaho claims the highest misuse rate at an estimated 5.87% – higher than Oregon’s 4.86% for this demographic.¹²⁷

Between Q1 2019 and Q4 2021 the number of opioid prescriptions filled per 1,000

Figure 15
Opioid Prescription Dispensations per 100 Residents
OR-ID HIDTA



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Accessed April 14th, 2022

^j Stimulants include prescriptions such as methylphenidate, amphetamines, and related drugs.

residents dropped from 182 to 162 (all ages combined).^{128, 129} While Idaho is above the national average of 43.3 opioid prescriptions per 100 persons, recent reporting shows a decline in the state's prescribing rates – a reduction from 53.4 prescriptions per 100 in 2019 to 49.9 in 2020. (Figure 15)¹³⁰

Oregon pharmaceutical opioid death information has not been released since mid-June 2020. That data identified 51 deaths related to prescription opioids from January to June 2020, a 31% decrease from 2019 (74).¹³¹ Idaho deaths tied to pharmaceutical opioids^k were essentially stable between 2019 (76), 2020 (85), and 2021 (80).¹³²

Intelligence Gaps

- In what form are NPSs being seized in the region
 - Will the increase in stimulant prescriptions lead to an increase in illicit stimulants
-

7. Other Dangerous Drugs

Several other illicit drugs, including designer drugs and plant-based hallucinogens, are available in the HIDTA. “Designer drugs” belong to a group of clandestinely manufactured substances that are deliberately created, or “designed,” to mimic other drugs of abuse but with a slightly modified chemical structure. Manufacturers frequently alter the chemical compositions of these substances to circumvent government bans^l on key ingredients. The continually changing mix of chemicals used in manufacturing processes, along with a lack of quality controls and consistent dosage, leads to physical and psychological effects that are highly unpredictable and dangerous.

Availability and Use

Seventy percent of initiatives surveyed in 2022 reported low to moderate levels of designer drugs in their area. The most common designer drug was, 4-Methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDMA), lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) and N, N-dimethyltryptamine (DMT).¹³³ Forensic samples analyzed in Oregon reveal that the highest proportion of designer drugs analyzed in 2021 were MDMA (48) and LSD (38).¹³⁴ In Idaho, designer drug samples submitted were highest for LSD (110) and MDMA (81).¹³⁵

MDMA, a common designer stimulant, is a Schedule I drug under the federal Controlled Substance Act and is commonly distributed in powder form or pressed into pills and sold as “Ecstasy.” Initiatives seized small amounts across the HIDTA totaling over 16 pounds of MDMA in by the end of 2021.¹³⁶ Seizures have increased since 2016 when initiatives seized less than 1 pound and 10 dosage units of MDMA.

^k Category includes oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, and methadone.

^l On January 4, 2013, the Synthetic Drug Abuse Prevention Act of 2012 went into effect permanently placing 26 types of synthetic cannabinoids and cathinones into Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. In January 2015, the DEA added three new forms of synthetic cannabinoids to its list of banned substances.

Psychedelic designer hallucinogens, such as LSD and DMT, are also available in the HIDTA. Law enforcement seizures fluctuated each year. During 2021 HIDTA initiatives seized much less of each than in previous years, with only 2,877 LSD dosage units and 100 DMT during 2021, mostly from Oregon's Southern region.¹³⁷ Additionally, initiatives HIDTA wide seized a total of almost 44 pounds and over 14,000 dosage units of psilocybin in 2021.

Production

DMT is produced to a limited extent in the HIDTA. The drug is manufactured synthetically but can also be produced from amphibians or plants. The root bark, *Mimosa Tenuiflora* (*Hostilis*), is a major source of DMT and is widely available for purchase on the internet. No DMT Labs were seized in Idaho in 2021, but one was seized in Oregon.¹³⁸

Law enforcement reporting indicates that MDMA is rarely manufactured in the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA but is commonly imported from Canada.¹³⁹ No MDMA labs were seized between 2017 and 2021 in Oregon or Idaho.^{140,141}

Transportation

Other dangerous drugs that are not produced locally in the HIDTA, are manufactured in other countries, commonly China, and distributed in the HIDTA through online marketplaces and dark web marketplace purchases.¹⁴² These substances are also imported into the region via private vehicles and via parcel delivery services.¹⁴³

Intelligence Gaps

- The degree to which criminal trafficking organizations in the region acquire and distribute synthetic drugs through internet sites such as online classifieds or the dark web
 - The extent to which synthetic drugs are produced in the region
-

V. DRUG TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS

Overview

Criminal organizations engage in the production, transportation, and distribution of illegal drugs in Oregon and Idaho. The Oregon-Idaho HIDTA region has a sophisticated transportation infrastructure that facilitates the distribution of illicit drugs from foreign and domestic source areas.

DTOs with a multi-state operational scope present the greatest criminal drug threat to the region, followed by international and local DTOs. HIDTA initiatives identified 72 DTOs during 2021, with

two-thirds of investigations focused on multi-state or international scope (Table 1). The total identified DTO members was 378 individuals, with 86 known leaders. Organizational size ranged from 5 to 10 members and averaged roughly 5 members per DTO.

DTOs identified in 2021 were nearly even between single drug DTOs and polydrug DTOs. Of the DTOs that trafficked in single drugs (35), most were involved in methamphetamine trafficking and distribution (20), followed by heroin (6), marijuana (4), fentanyl (2), and cocaine (1). The remaining half (31) of DTOs identified in 2021 were polydrug, largely trafficking in methamphetamine and heroin (16), followed by fentanyl, heroin, and methamphetamine (9) and four DTOs trafficked cocaine with either heroin and/or methamphetamine. Additional combinations included marijuana and methamphetamine, as well as fentanyl along with benzodiazepines and raw opium.¹⁴⁴

Table 1

DTO Threat Ranking by Operational Scope Newly Identified DTOs in 2021			
	1) International DTOs	2) Multi-State DTOs	3) Local DTOs
Total Identified	14	35	23
Total Members (Leaders)	65 (16)	171 (41)	142 (29)
Drugs Trafficked	Ice, heroin, fentanyl, cocaine, raw opium, prescription drugs	Ice, heroin, cocaine, fentanyl, marijuana, marijuana plants (indoor), amphetamine	Ice, heroin, cocaine, fentanyl, marijuana, amphetamine
Violent	1	3	1
Gang-Related	0	2	1
Polydrug	5	8	2

Source: HIDTA Performance Management Process database. Accessed 4/15/2022.

Multi-State Drug Trafficking Organizations

Based on HIDTA initiatives reporting and law enforcement survey results, multi-state DTOs^m represent the most serious criminal drug threat in the region.^{145,146} Multi-State operational scope DTOs transport and distribute illicit drugs within Oregon and Idaho but also impact the drug market in other states. These DTOs are involved in trafficking fentanyl, methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, or increasingly a combination of those, while others conduct interstate trafficking of Oregon grown marijuana.

A total of 58 multi-state DTOs were under investigation by HIDTA initiatives in 2021, with 35 new DTOs identified during the year (Table 2).

^m A multi-state DTO is an organization that regularly carries out illegal drug trafficking activities in more than one state. A DTO is not considered to be multi-state if it conducts activities within a single metropolitan area, even if that area includes parts of more than one state.

Affiliation and Membership

Multi-state DTOs identified in 2021 consisted of a total membership of 171 membersⁿ and 41 leaders^o (Table 2). According to initiative investigations into the multi-state DTOs identified during 2021, California was identified as the primary source location for the drugs trafficked into the HIDTA region (56%), followed by Oregon (28%) and Mexico (13%). Seventy percent of the multi-state DTOs were sourced from Mexican drug trafficking organizations.

Activities and Methods

Over 18% of multi-state DTOs under investigation in 2021 were described as polydrug organizations (9), four of which trafficked fentanyl, methamphetamine, and heroin, and 2 DTOs trafficked various methamphetamine and heroin, one moved fentanyl and heroin, and two trafficked marijuana and marijuana-based extracts. Thirteen single drug DTOs primarily trafficked crystal methamphetamine (4), heroin (4), marijuana (3), fentanyl (1), and amphetamines (1). Of multi-state DTOs newly identified in 2021, nearly half trafficked in multiple drugs (12). Six of which trafficked heroin and methamphetamine, while the other six trafficked different combinations of heroin, methamphetamine, fentanyl, cocaine, and marijuana (Table 2).¹⁴⁷

Task Force Officers advised DTOs primarily used *passenger vehicles* to transport drugs and bulk cash into and throughout the HIDTA. Nearly one quarter (23%) of initiatives surveyed in 2022 identified the use of legitimate businesses to launder drug proceeds and the use of parcel services such as the U.S. Postal Service, to ship marijuana, fentanyl, methamphetamine, and bulk currency into and out of the area.

Intelligence Gaps

- Level of involvement of multi-state DTOs in mid-level poly-drug transportation and distribution
- Level of communications & transportation coordination multi-state DTOs have
- Level of control Mexico regional cartels have over multi-state DTOs

Table 2

Multi-State DTOs, Oregon-Idaho HIDTA		
	Newly Identified in 2021	Under Investigation in 2021*
Characteristics		
Total Multi-State DTOs	35	58
Total Members (Leaders)	171 (41)	377 (72)
Average DTO Size	6.3	6.5
Gang-Related	2	2
Violent	3	1
Polydrug	8	22
Money Laundering Activities	0	0
Federal Case Designations		
CPOT	0	0
PTO	0	1
OCDETF	0	0

*Includes open cases identified prior to 2020. Source: HIDTA Performance Management Process database, 4/15/22.

ⁿ The HIDTA defines a “member” as an individual who is part of a DTO organization and who takes direction from the organization’s leader(s) to facilitate or carry out the organization’s activities.

^o The HIDTA defines a “leader” as an individual who directs the operation of the DTO under investigation. The leader may be the head of an entire DTO or the leader of a DTO cell.

Local Drug Trafficking Organizations

Based on HIDTA initiatives reporting and law enforcement survey data, local DTOs^p pose another criminal drug threat in Oregon and Idaho.^{148,149} Local DTOs transport and distribute primarily crystal methamphetamine and heroin, and to a lesser extent, marijuana, cocaine, fentanyl, and pharmaceutical drugs. During 2021 a total of 23 local DTOs were under investigation by HIDTA initiatives, with 18 new DTOs identified within the year (Table 3).¹⁵⁰

Affiliation and Membership

Local DTOs identified during 2021 were mainly comprised of a total membership of identified local DTOs consisting of 241 members, including 52 leaders (Table 3). Investigators identified California as the main source for drugs trafficked into the region (31%), closely followed by Oregon (28%) and Mexico (24%). Of the source organizations identified, 58% were described as Mexican drug trafficking organizations.

Activities and Methods

Over 30% of local DTOs under investigation in 2021 were polydrug organizations (4), all trafficked methamphetamine and heroin, with one also trafficking fentanyl and cocaine. Single drug DTOs under investigation with a local scope (39) trafficked methamphetamine (5), heroin (1), cocaine (2), fentanyl (1), and marijuana (2). Newly identified single drug DTOs operating locally trafficked crystal methamphetamine (7), heroin (3), cocaine (1), fentanyl (1), and marijuana (1).¹⁵¹ Local DTOs that transport methamphetamine, heroin, and cocaine are typically supplied by multi-state or international DTOs in the region.

HIDTA task forces identified the use of passenger vehicles as the most common mode of transportation to move drugs and money into and out of the region. At least three investigations were gang-related, with two of them identified as using violence and/or intimidation to facilitate their drug trafficking. Two of the local DTO investigations involved drug trafficking organizations that were also involved in illicit firearms trafficking.

Intelligence Gaps

- The extent to which local DTOs distribute illicit drugs online

^p A local DTO is an organization whose illegal drug trafficking activity is generally, but not always, limited to the same metropolitan area, or are limited to an easily defined region or small number of geographically proximate counties. A local DTO can include a metropolitan area that comprises parts of more than one state.

Table 3

Local DTOs, Oregon-Idaho HIDTA		
	Newly Identified in 2021	Under Investigation in 2021*
Characteristics		
Total Local DTOs	18	23
Total Members (Leaders)	142 (29)	241 (52)
Average DTO Size	5.9	5.9
Gang-Related	0	3
Violent	0	4
Polydrug	5	9
Money Laundering Activities	0	0
Federal Case Designations		
CPOT	0	0
PTO	0	0
OCDETF	0	0

*Includes open cases identified prior to 2020. Source: HIDTA Performance Management Process database, 4/15/22.

- The degree to which drug distribution by criminal street gang members fund street gang activity in the region

International Drug Trafficking Organizations

International DTOs⁹, specifically, trafficking organizations connected to Mexico, either directly or indirectly through allied trafficking and distribution cells, represent a serious criminal drug threat to the HIDTA based on an analytical assessment of initiative and law enforcement survey data. These criminal organizations control the transportation and distribution of crystal methamphetamine, heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine into the region.

A total of 35 international DTOs were under investigation by HIDTA task forces in 2021, with 14 DTOs newly identified during the year (Table 4).

Table 4

International DTOs, Oregon-Idaho HIDTA		
	Newly Identified in 2021	Under Investigation in 2021*
Characteristics		
Total International DTOs	14	35
Total Members (Leaders)	65 (16)	170 (39)
Average DTO Size	6	6
Multi-Ethnic Total	0	0
Gang-Related	2	3
Violent	4	4
Polydrug	14	22
Money Laundering Activities	0	0
Federal Case Designations		
CPOT	0	0
PTO	2	2
OCDETF	2	2

*Includes open cases identified prior to 2021. Source: HIDTA Performance Management Process database, 4/15/22.

Affiliation and Membership

International DTOs identified in 2021 were comprised of a total membership of 65 members, 16 of which were leaders.

Over three-quarters, (89%) of the international DTOs identified in 2021 had a direct operational connection to Mexico, specifically the Sinaloa and Tijuana areas. Of the DTOs investigated during 2021, nearly all (24) identified Mexico as the source country for drugs trafficked into the region using established vehicle trafficking routes from the southern border of the United States (23) or through the northern border from Canada (1).

Activities and Methods

Over two-thirds of the international DTOs under investigation by HIDTA initiatives were polydrug organizations (20), eight of which trafficked crystal methamphetamine and heroin, five trafficked fentanyl, heroin, and methamphetamine, and seven trafficked various combinations of methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, fentanyl in the form of counterfeit prescription pills, MDMA, steroids, and/or raw opium. Single drug DTOs with an international scope were largely involved in

⁹ An international DTO is an organization, or identifiable cell of an organization, that regularly conducts illegal drug trafficking in more than one country, or that is based in one country and conducts or coordinates illegal activities in another.

trafficking methamphetamine (6), followed by heroin (1) and marijuana (1). Of the 18 international DTOs identified in 2021, 14 trafficked multiple drugs, including various combinations of heroin, crystal methamphetamine, cocaine, MDMA, and/or fentanyl. Single drug DTOs with an international scope identified in 2021 trafficked mainly crystal methamphetamine (3) and marijuana (1) (Table 4).¹⁵²

International DTOs, specifically Mexican DTOs, operating in the HIDTA employ a variety of methods to transport methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, and recently fentanyl to and through the region, including use of private and commercial vehicles, trains, and mail/parcel delivery services (to a lesser extent). Mexican DTOs are also the primary wholesale distributors of crystal methamphetamine, heroin, and powder cocaine in the HIDTA. These organizations coordinate with multi-state and local DTOs, independent dealers, and criminal street gangs to facilitate retail level distribution in and through the HIDTA. Mexican DTOs also distribute retail quantities of crystal methamphetamine, heroin, and cocaine through direct exchange and social networking sites.¹⁵³

Intelligence Gaps

- Relationship between Mexican DTOs and criminal street gangs in drug transport and distribution
- The extent to which Mexican TCOs partner with other DTOs to facilitate drug trafficking and distribution

VI. MONEY LAUNDERING ORGANIZATIONS

Overview

Legitimization of illegally obtained money, or money laundering, allows criminals to transform illicit gain into seemingly lawful funds or assets. As in other areas, investigators find that MLOs in Oregon and Idaho engage in money laundering activities based upon the size and scope of the organization and are often connected to drug trafficking organizations operating in the region.¹⁵⁴ The following information is based on Oregon-Idaho HIDTA initiative investigations in 2021, as well as information collected from the 2021 HIDTA law enforcement survey.

Affiliation and Membership

HIDTA task forces investigated three MLOs in 2021, including a local MLO identified late in the year (Table 5). The three MLOs investigated during 2021 ranged in size from 3 to 6 members, with a total of 9 members, including 3 leaders. The newly identified MLO in 2021 had 2 members and 1 leader.¹⁵⁵ In addition to money laundering activities, these MLOs trafficked methamphetamine (1), cocaine and heroin (1), and marijuana (2).^{156 157}

Three initiatives among those surveyed in 2022 reported investigating money laundering organizations in the last two years. Local (2) and multi-state (2) MLOs were equally ranked as a money laundering threat to their area, followed by international (1).

Table 5

Money Laundering Organizations, Oregon-Idaho HIDTA				
	Total	International	Multi-State	Local
Newly Identified in 2021	2	1	0	1
Under Investigation in 2021*	4	1	2	1

*Includes open cases identified prior to 2021. Source: HIDTA Performance Management Process database, 4/15/22.

Of officers reporting investigations of multi-state MLOs, approximately half indicated membership was based on familial connections (50%) and/or a shared native culture (50%) with an equal portion indicating operational ties to a foreign source country (50%). Additionally, half of the officers surveyed in 2022 reported multi-state MLOs were based on business relationships (50%), including associations with Mexican DTOs and marijuana trafficking organizations.¹⁵⁸ Officers reported the international MLOs were based on familial connections with direct ties to Mexican drug trafficking organizations.

Local MLOs investigated were identified as groups mainly based on business relationships (60%) and to a lesser extent family connection (40%). Far fewer MLOs were reported to be based on native culture or locality/neighborhood.¹⁵⁹

Intelligence Gaps

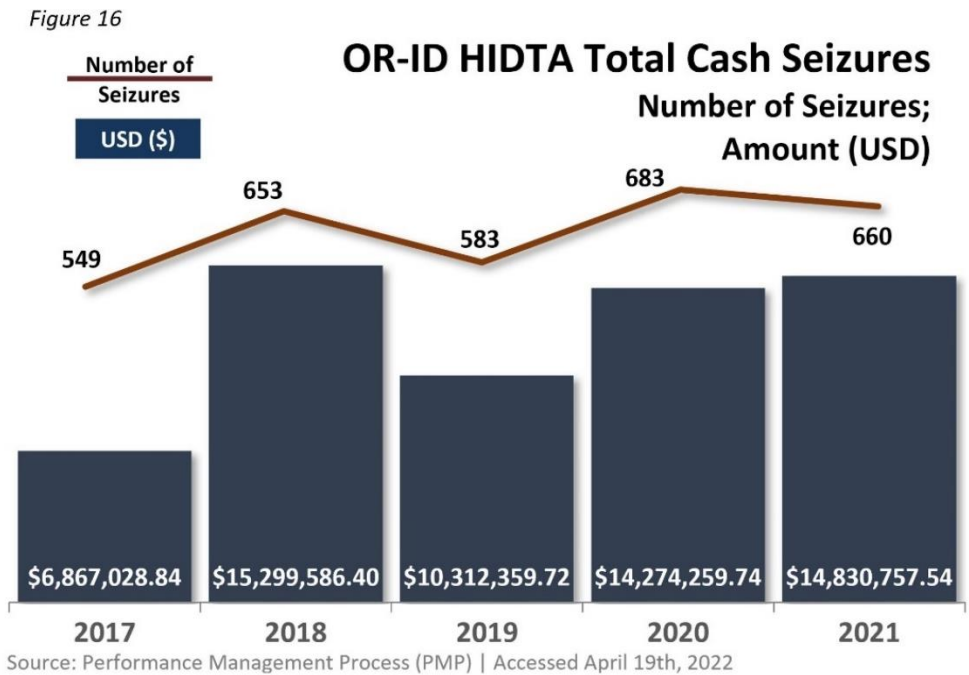
- The extent MLOs are involved in the international movement of currency

VII. ILLICIT FINANCE

Drug trafficking is unquestionably centered on monetary gain. Survey results in 2021 reiterated bulk cash smuggling continued to be the primary method for moving illicit proceeds in and out of the region. Initiatives made 660 seizures with an approximate total of \$17.4 million in bulk cash plus multiple assets. In 2021, Oregon HIDTA initiatives seized approximately \$14.8 million in currency (Figure 16) and roughly \$2.1 million in assets, including 48 vehicles. Idaho initiatives seized \$528,000 dollars, and \$108,000 in physical assets.¹⁶⁰

Other money laundering strategies reported being most prevalent in the region were the use of money service businesses, cash-intensive businesses, banks, and prepaid cards.¹⁶¹

Drug trafficking and money laundering organizations commonly use structured money transfers through money remitter services or banks to launder drug proceeds and transfer profits outside of the country. New financial products and technology, such as stored value cards and virtual currency, have become attractive methods for the cross-border movement of illicit drug proceeds. Virtual currencies such as bitcoin^r are common forms of payment on dark websites and are used by criminals to transfer value anonymously to other countries.¹⁶²



Smuggling bulk cash out of the United States is a well-established method utilized by traffickers to bypass financial transparency reporting requirements.^s Large amounts of cash are easily concealed in vehicles, commercial shipments, express packages, and on private aircraft or boats. Mexican DTOs and other criminal groups transport cash in bulk to southwestern states where funds are often aggregated and then smuggled to Mexico.¹⁶³ The number of cash seizures made by HIDTA initiatives during investigations decreased slightly between 2020 (632) and 2021 (511). Task forces seized \$13.5 million in bulk cash and a single seizure of \$111,000 in cryptocurrency.

Oregon and Idaho were pass-through states for 22 cash seizures, totaling over \$580,000. These specific pass throughs were primarily from or going to California and Washington state, with individual sources or destinations of Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Nevada, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, and Utah.¹⁶⁴

Over the past five years, Oregon and Idaho State Police continue to seize millions of dollars from the region’s highways, with Oregon officers seizing an annual average of \$1.2 million and Idaho officers seizing an annual average of \$208,000. Oregon’s currency value seizures decreased slightly from \$1.5 million in 2020 to \$1.47 million in 2021. Idaho’s currency value seizures decreased roughly 33% from \$293,361 in 2020 to \$193,480 in 2021.¹⁶⁵

^r Bitcoin is a digital currency that operates without a central bank or single administrator and can be exchanged for other currencies, goods, or services.

^s Bank Secrecy Act filing requirements state that individuals who physically transport, ship, mail, or receive currency or monetary instruments more than \$10,000 across U.S. borders must file FINCEN form 105, *Report of International Transportation of Currency or Monetary Instruments (CMIR)*.

Intelligence Gaps

- The extent emerging technologies such as online environments, the dark web, and web-based apps are used to facilitate money laundering in the region
- The degree cryptocurrencies are used as a technique by money launderers to disguise illicit proceeds in the region
- The extent bulk cash is transferred using the parcel delivery system in the region

VIII. OUTLOOK

The Oregon-Idaho HIDTA assesses the following outlook for 2023 with high confidence as it relates to the drug threats identified during 2022 in Oregon and Idaho.

- **Fentanyl:** Based on the findings of this analysis, the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA assesses with high confidence that the supply of fentanyl in counterfeit pill and powder form will continue to meet the increasing demand across the HIDTA; constant supply will increase availability and thereby use; it will likely be as available as methamphetamine and therefore the greatest threat in the HIDTA. Finally, availability and rapid increase of use will result in more overdose deaths in the region.
- **Methamphetamine:** Methamphetamine will remain highly available, inexpensive, and, along with fentanyl, will be the most serious drug threat in the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA region. Due to widespread trafficking and use methamphetamine will continue to require the attention of law enforcement resources.
- **Heroin:** Heroin seizures along the Southwest Border and locally have decreased. This indicates a lower supply and thereby a probable lower demand. This lower demand for heroin is most likely the result of the growing demand and increased supply of fentanyl as it gives more desired effects and is cheaper to produce and traffic. Heroin demand, and accordingly supply, will likely continue to decrease in the coming year.
- **Marijuana:** The Oregon-Idaho HIDTA assesses with high confidence that overproduction of marijuana in Oregon, coupled with inadequate resources for monitoring compliance with state marijuana laws, will continue to contribute to illegal sales of excess marijuana and marijuana products trafficked across the United States.
- **Cocaine:** Based on the continued increase in cocaine seizures in the region, the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA assesses with moderate confidence that the availability of cocaine in the region will remain stable. Cocaine use in the HIDTA will remain low in the near term based on user cost versus the high availability and low cost of methamphetamine.
- **Other Dangerous Drugs:** With the use of new psychoactive substances (NPS) increasing throughout the United States, the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA assesses with a high level of confidence that the identification of NPSs in illicit drugs seized will continue to rise in Oregon and Idaho.

- **Multi-State DTO:** The Oregon-Idaho HIDTA assesses with high confidence that multi-state DTOs will continue to present the most serious criminal drug threat to the region. These DTOs will remain active in trafficking fentanyl, methamphetamine, heroin, and cocaine within the region and will continue to influence the drug market in other states. Multi-state DTOs involved in illegal marijuana cultivation operations in Oregon will continue to export wholesale quantities of the product across state borders.
- **International DTO:** The Oregon-Idaho HIDTA assesses with high confidence that Mexican DTOs with Mexico connections, will continue to control the transportation and distribution of methamphetamine, heroin, fentanyl and cocaine into the HIDTA and the surrounding region. These DTOs will likely continue to expand fentanyl trafficking in the region.
- **Illicit Finance:** Bulk cash smuggling, cash-intensive businesses, and money service businesses will remain the primary methods of transferring drug revenues into, throughout, and out of the region. The Oregon-Idaho HIDTA assesses with low confidence that investigations into the money laundering activities of drug trafficking organizations by law enforcement officers, will impede the flow of drug proceeds through the region, impacting organizations that rely on these funds to operate.
- The Oregon-Idaho HIDTA will continue to monitor the impact of the Drug Addiction Treatment and Recovery Act as it relates to user rates, overdose deaths and drug threats.

IX. APPENDICES

A. Methodology

This report was developed through consideration of quantitative and qualitative information from federal, state, and local law enforcement reporting and data, public health data, and open-source reporting to provide a balanced approach to determining the most critical drug threats and the most significant drug trafficking organization threats to the region. Quantitative data was collected and reviewed from a variety of drug-related measures such as use, seizures, arrests, drug testing, forensic lab submissions, deaths, treatment, hospitalizations, and impaired driving.

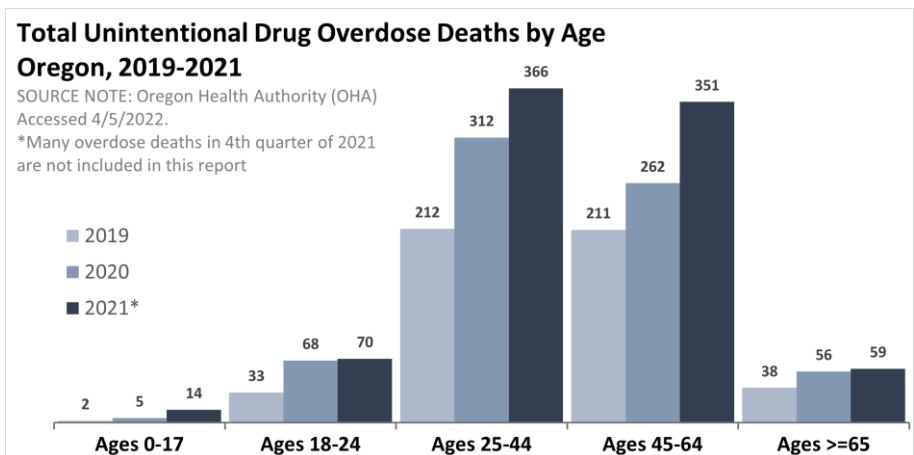
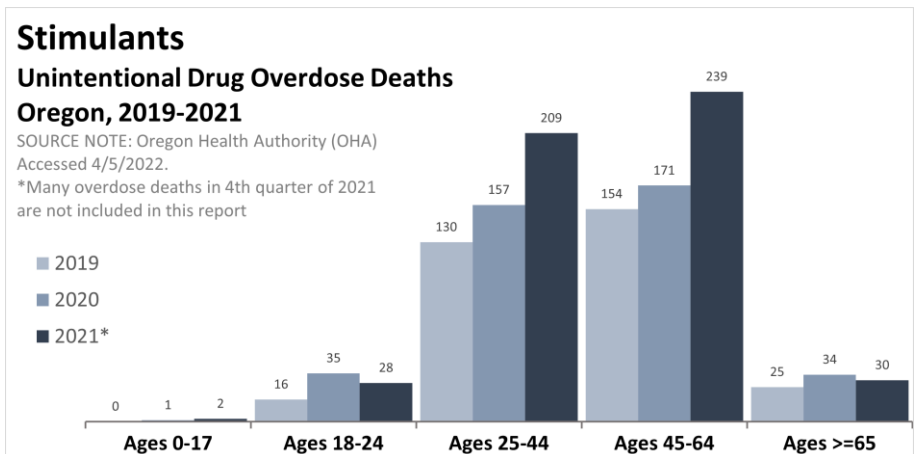
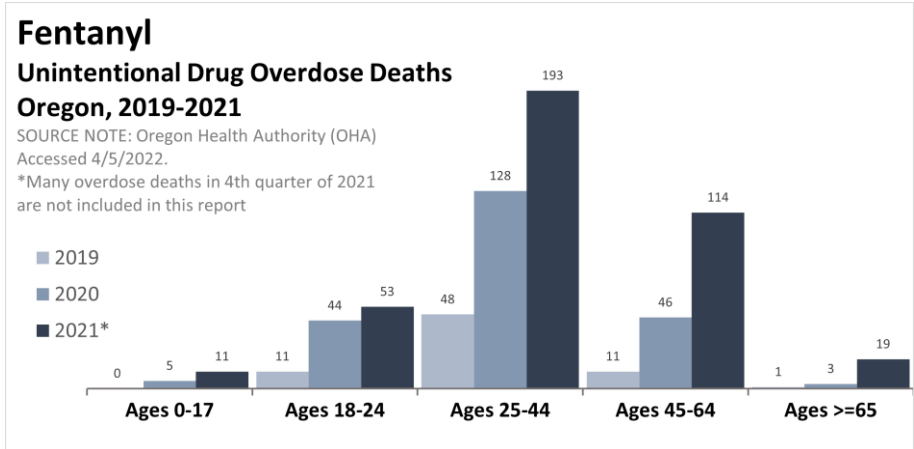
The 2021 Oregon-Idaho HIDTA Drug Threat Survey was a primary source for qualitative information related to drug demand and supply, drug trafficking organizations, money laundering activity, and organizations operating in the HIDTA. Survey interviews were conducted with Oregon-Idaho HIDTA initiative commanders and team members resulting in a 95% response rate (n=18). The survey form requested information on regional drug threats, including trends in availability and use, transportation, and distribution methods, as well as characteristics and activities of drug trafficking and money laundering organizations.

The HIDTA Performance Management Process (PMP) database was accessed for information on drug seizures and the presence and level of involvement of organized criminal groups in drug trafficking and distribution, money laundering, and criminal activity in the HIDTA and neighboring region.

B. Oregon Unintentional Drug Overdoses By Age

The following graphics were derived from OHA data, as provided by CDC’s State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System (SUDORS). Data represents fentanyl, stimulants, and total unintentional drug overdose deaths in Oregon from 2019 through 2021. Additionally, the total unintentional drug overdose graphic includes fentanyl, stimulants, and all other drug types.

Note: When two drugs are implicated in an overdose death, both drugs may be counted as contributing. This method can result in a total sum greater than 100% for some drugs across categories. Be cautious when attributing drug overdose deaths to specific drugs where multiple drugs are involved.



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- ¹⁵⁸ 2020 and 2021 Oregon-Idaho HIDTA Drug Threat Surveys.
- ¹⁵⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁶⁰ HIDTA Performance Management Process database. Accessed 4/15/2022.
- ¹⁶¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁶² Ibid.
- ¹⁶³ Drug Enforcement Administration (2021). *2020 National Drug Threat Assessment*.
- ¹⁶⁴ HIDTA Performance Management Process database. accessed 4/14/2022.
- ¹⁶⁵ Ibid.