

# Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation: Population Projections, Updated

In 2022, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (Colville) contracted with Wilder Research to conduct a study and produce population projections for the tribe.

The purpose of this study is to help Colville and its tribal citizens better understand population trends, and specifically understand the tribe's population trajectory under the current tribal membership criteria and alternative scenarios. This report describes the study methods and detailed results of the population projections completed by Wilder Research. Population projections through the year 2122 were completed under six scenarios for tribal enrollment criteria:

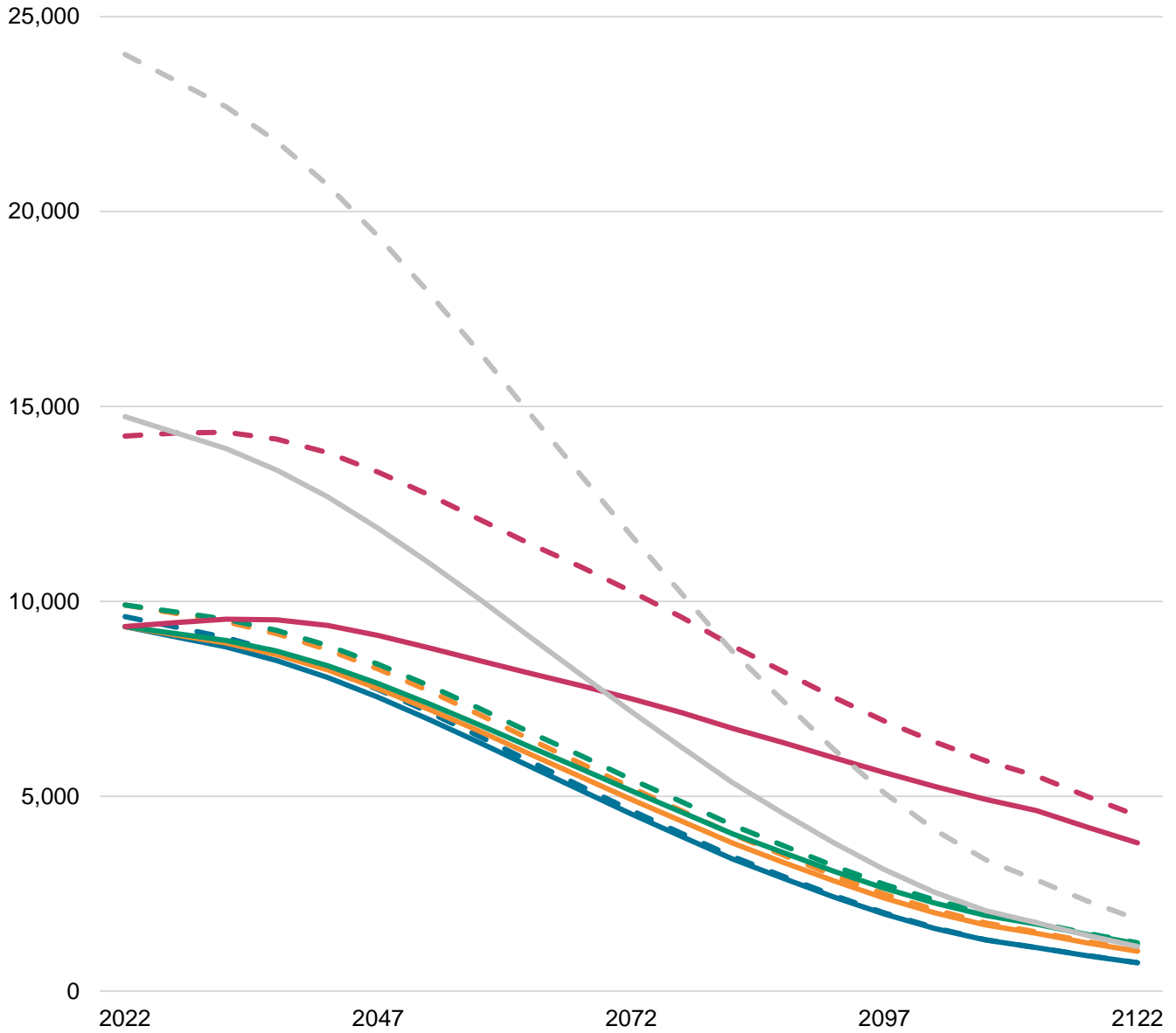
- **Scenario 1:** Current tribal enrollment eligibility criteria is maintained (1/4 blood quantum of Colville Tribe blood).
- **Scenario 2:** Allow blood from non-Colville federally recognized local Plateau American Indian Tribes and Canadian First Nations to count toward the requirement of 1/4 blood quantum, as long as they have some Colville blood quantum.
- **Scenario 3:** Allow blood from any federally recognized American Indian Tribe or Canadian First Nation to count toward the requirement of 1/4 blood quantum, as long as they have some Colville blood quantum.
- **Scenario 4:** Require 1/8 blood quantum from Colville Tribe.
- **Scenario 5:** Redefine everyone on the 1937 base roll to have 4/4 blood quantum, and redefine descendants' blood quanta accordingly; maintain the current tribal enrollment eligibility criteria.
- **Scenario 6:** Allow citizenship for any lineal descendant from the 1937 Colville Tribe base roll.

This report summarizes the findings of this study. More detailed information is available in the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation Population Projections Methodology Report (Corrected May 2024). The methodology report details the corrections that were applied in May 2024.

## Key findings

- The overall population of Colville Tribe is declining rapidly under the current enrollment criteria (1/4 blood quantum from Colville only).
- All of the scenarios using 1/4 blood quantum (Scenarios 1, 2, 3, and 5) will result in population declines over the remainder of this century and into the next one.
- The scenario using 1/8 blood quantum (Scenario 4) results in a slight initial increase in population size; we project that the population size would remain relatively constant for about 25 years then start to decline to around 4,000 tribal members by 2122.
- The scenario using lineal descendants (Scenario 6) will result in initial population growth for Colville Tribe and then decline, with a population in 2122 that could range between 15,000 to up to about 40,000 tribal citizens.

**1. SUMMARY CHART: PROJECTED FUTURE POPULATIONS UNDER ENROLLMENT SCENARIOS WITH BLOOD QUANTUM REQUIREMENT**



- Scenario 1: Starting point is currently enrolled Colville citizens
- Scenario 1: Starting point is currently enrolled Colville citizens plus other enrollable individuals
- Scenario 2: Starting point is currently enrolled Colville citizens
- Scenario 2: Starting point is currently enrolled Colville citizens plus other enrollable individuals
- Scenario 3: Starting point is currently enrolled Colville citizens
- Scenario 3: Starting point is currently enrolled Colville citizens plus other enrollable individuals
- Scenario 4: Starting point is currently enrolled Colville citizens
- Scenario 4: Starting point is currently enrolled Colville citizens plus other enrollable individuals
- Scenario 5: Starting point is assuming 5,386 people are eligible after base roll change
- Scenario 5: Starting point is assuming 14,679 people are eligible after base roll change

## Study methods

As a part of this study, Wilder Research conducted a tribal citizen survey that included 9,315 Colville tribal citizens who were included in the enrollment file we received from the Tribe in October 2022. (Some of these citizens were removed from future mailings due to having bad addresses, and some minors who were mistakenly included in the sample file were excluded from analysis.) Overall, 1,078 tribal citizens completed the survey, which provided sufficient information to complete the population projections.

Wilder Research worked with Professor Carolyn Liebler from Pika Insights (who also works for the University of Minnesota’s Department of Sociology and Minnesota Population Center) to obtain information from publicly available sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to establish fertility and mortality rates in this population in order to produce reliable and valid population projections. We also worked with Colville Tribe to conduct the survey and to obtain the 1937 base roll to be used for the projections based on lineal descent. More detailed information is available in the Confederated Tribes of Colville Reservation Population Projections Methodology Report (Corrected May 2024).

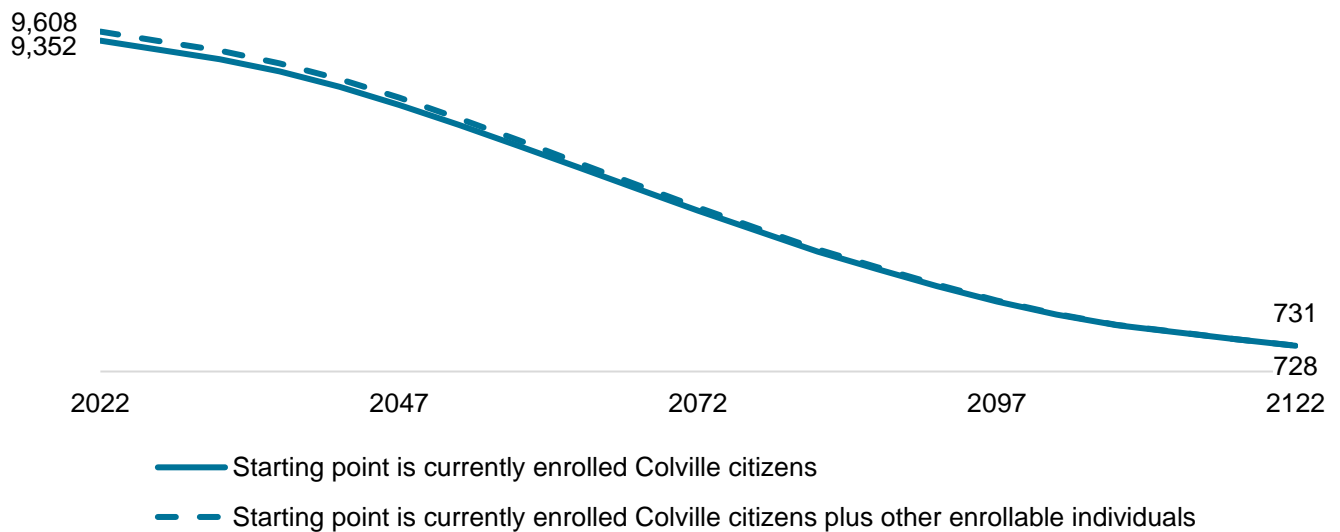
## Scenario 1

**Population projections for Colville Tribe, assuming no changes are made to the enrollment criteria, which is currently set at a threshold of 1/4 Colville blood to be eligible for enrollment:**

This is the most restrictive scenario, since it limits enrollment to the current standard of at least 1/4 Colville blood quantum to be eligible for tribal enrollment. Leaving the tribal enrollment criteria as is, the **projected enrolled population declines from just over 9,300 in 2022 to around 730 people in 2122**. This represents a very steep decline in the population.

The projection that assumes that individuals who are currently alive who meet this criterion but are not enrolled (based on the survey results, dashed line) also estimates a population of around 730 people in 2122.

### 2. SCENARIO 1: 1/4 COLVILLE BLOOD QUANTUM



## Scenario 2

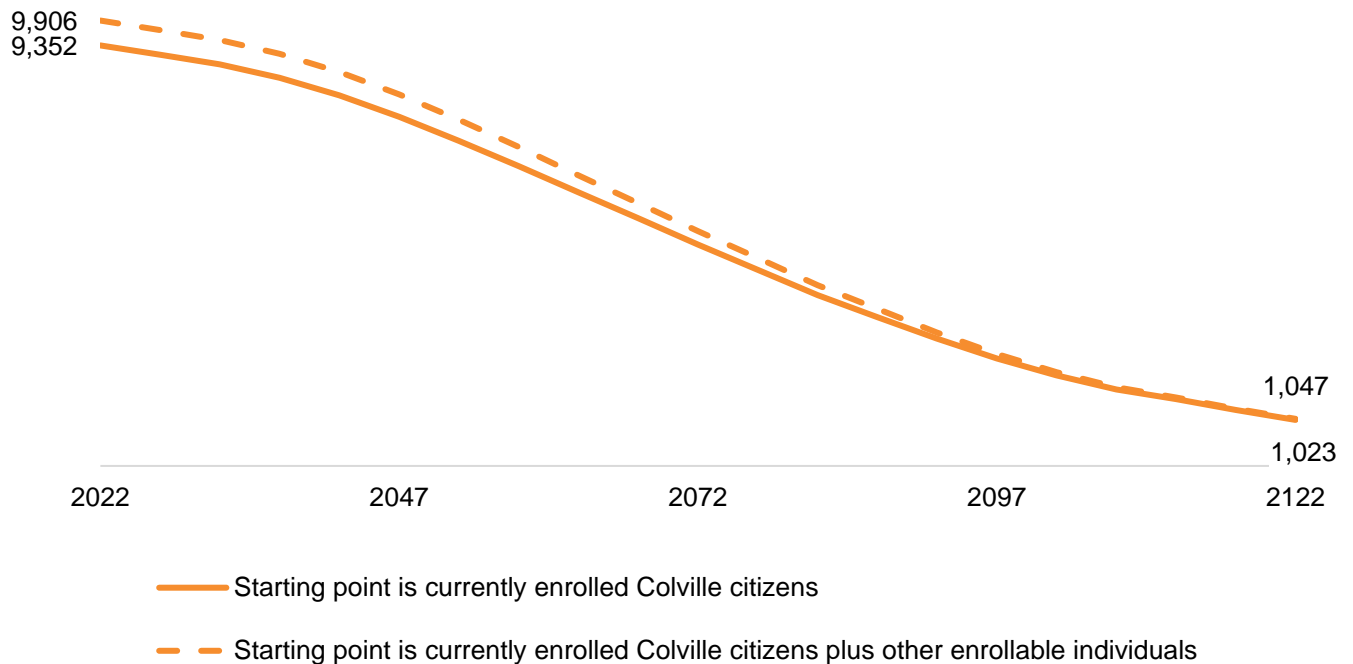
**Population projections for Colville Tribe assuming changes are made to the enrollment criteria to allow the total blood quantum of Colville plus all other Plateau Tribes' blood from federally recognized American Indian Tribes and Canadian First Nations to count toward the requirement of 1/4 blood quantum to be eligible for enrollment:**

In terms of population size, this scenario is slightly less restrictive than the current tribal enrollment criteria (illustrated in Scenario 1) because it allows **all other Plateau Tribes'** blood from federally recognized American Indian Tribes and Canadian First Nations to be added to Colville blood, resulting in a combined blood quantum of at least 1/4.

The projection assumes that starting in 2023 new births would be eligible for enrollment under the new criteria. **The projection under this scenario (solid line) results in a total Colville population of about 1,000 members in the year 2122**, which is only slightly higher than the projection of population size if the enrollment criteria is left as is.

**The projection that assumes that individuals who are currently alive who meet this criterion would also be eligible to enroll (dashed line) also estimates a population of just over 1,000 in 2122.**

### 3. SCENARIO 2: 1/4 COLVILLE + OTHER PLATEAU TRIBES' BLOOD QUANTUM



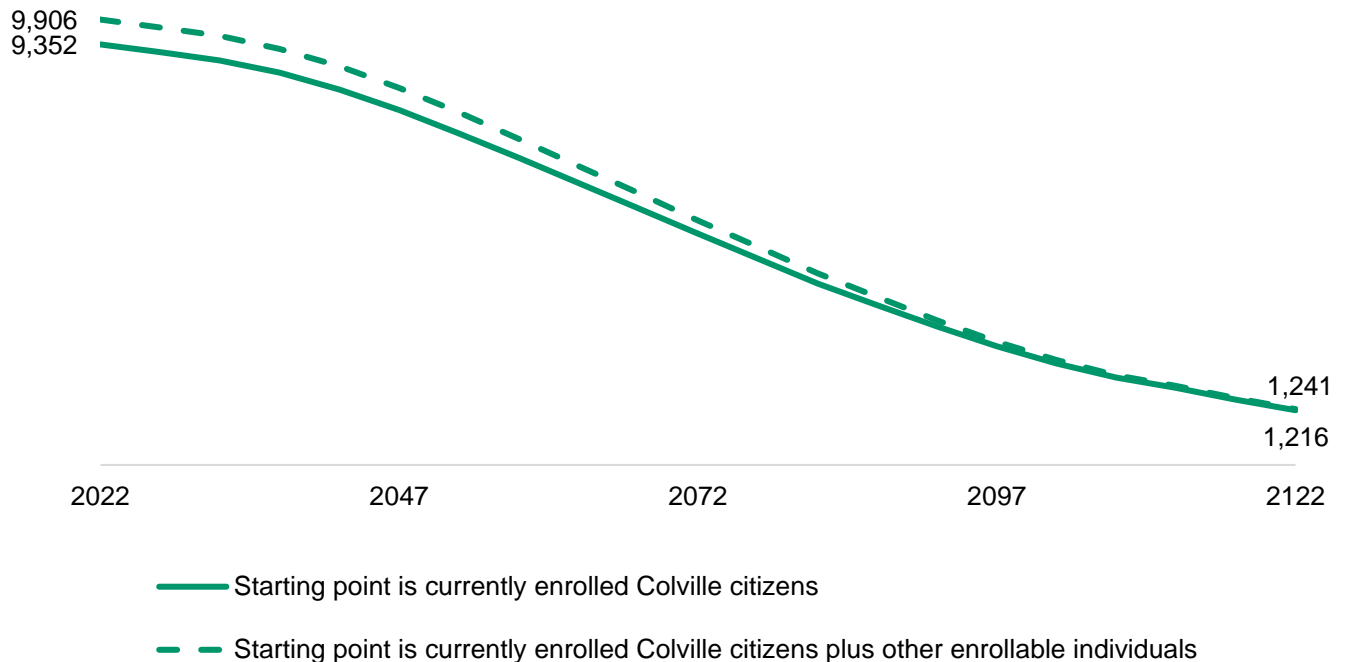
## Scenario 3

**Population projections for Colville Tribe assuming changes are made to the enrollment criteria to allow the total blood quantum of Colville plus all other federally recognized American Indian Tribes and Canadian First Nations to count toward the requirement of 1/4 blood quantum to be eligible for enrollment:**

The projection assumes that starting in 2023 new births would be eligible for enrollment under the new criteria. **The projection under this scenario (solid line) results in a total Colville population of approximately 1,200 people by the year 2122**, which is more than scenario 1 but still represents a steep decline.

**The dashed line shows a projection that assumes that an estimated 554 individuals are currently alive who meet this criterion. If they all enrolled, this projection estimates a population of about 1,200 in 2122.**

### 4. SCENARIO 3: 1/4 COLVILLE + OTHER AMERICAN INDIAN OR CANADIAN FIRST NATIONS BLOOD QUANTUM



## Scenario 4

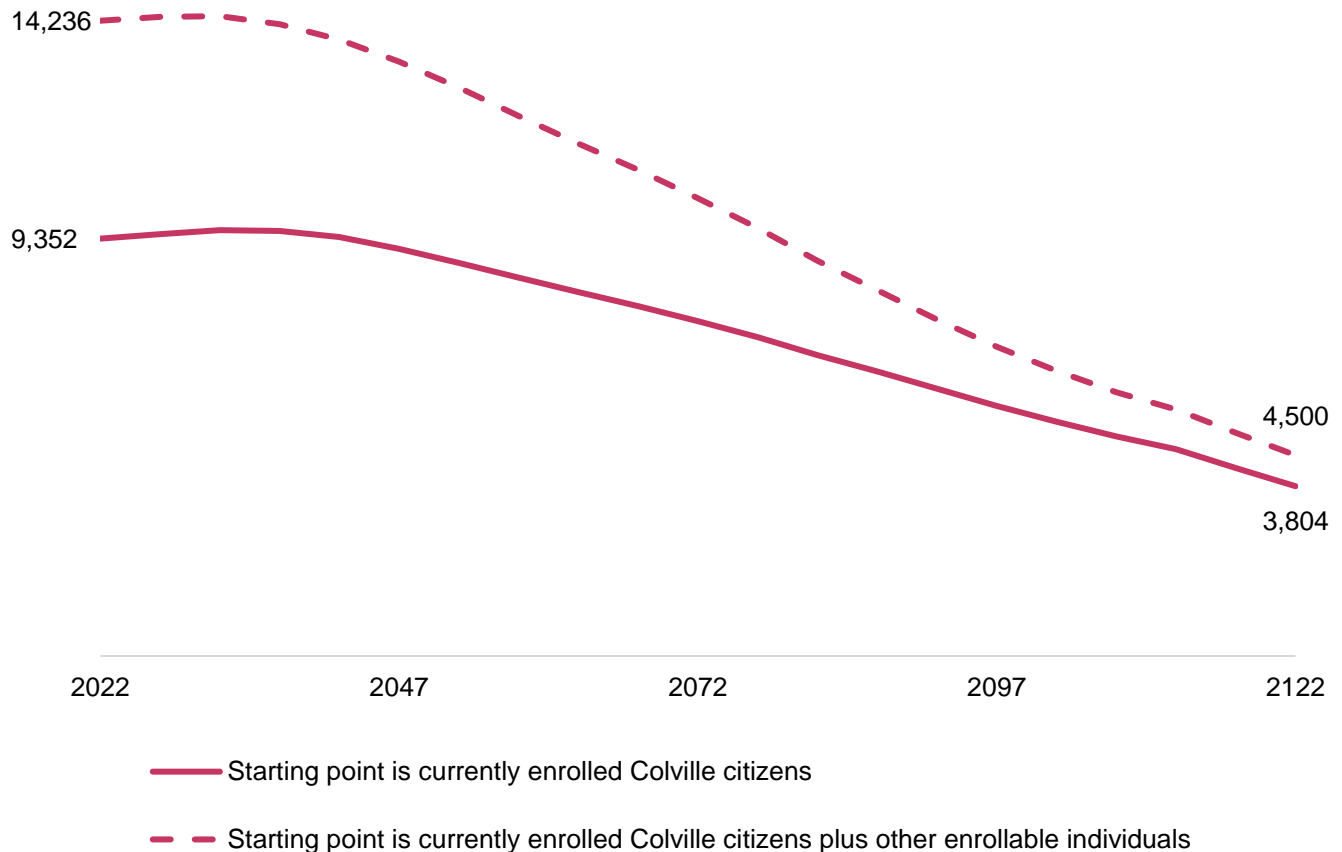
### Population projections for Colville Tribe assuming the enrollment criteria is changed to 1/8 Colville blood quantum to be eligible for enrollment:

This is a much more open scenario than scenarios 1 through 3 because it lowers the overall blood quantum requirement to 1/8 Colville blood quantum. Under this scenario, the **projected enrolled population will decrease over time but at a slower rate than the scenarios that use 1/4 blood quantum.**

The projection shown with the solid line assumes that starting in 2023 new births would be eligible for enrollment under a 1/8 Colville blood quantum criteria and estimates a population of about 3,800 in 2122.

The projection shown in the dashed line assumes that an estimated 4,884 individuals are currently alive who meet this criterion of 1/8 Colville blood quantum. If all of them enrolled, the projection estimates a population of about 4,500 in 2122. The likely actual Colville Tribe population if the enrollment criteria were to be changed to 1/8 Colville blood quantum is likely somewhere in between these two estimates.

#### 5. SCENARIO 4: 1/8 COLVILLE BLOOD QUANTUM



## Scenario 5

**Population projections for Colville Tribe assuming the enrollment criteria is kept at 1/4 Colville blood quantum, but everyone on the base roll is defined as 4/4 and descendants' blood quantum is redefined accordingly:**

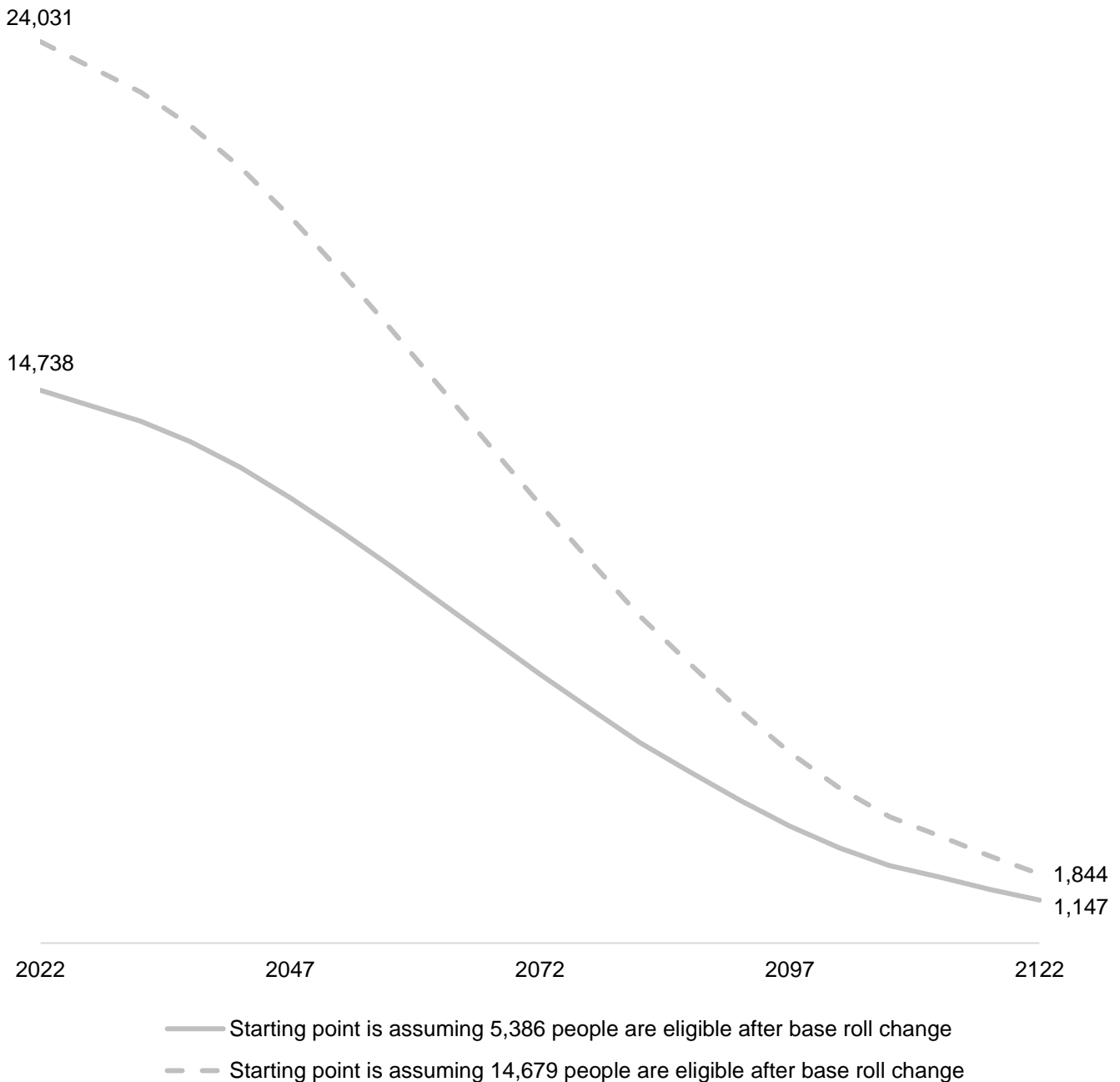
The projection shown in the solid line under this scenario estimates that an additional 5,386 people would have their blood quantum redefined to be above the 1/4 Colville blood quantum, resulting in a current population of 14,738.

**However, by 2122 the number of enrolled tribal members is projected to decrease to less than 1,200 people.**

The projection shown in the dashed line under this scenario estimates that an additional 14,679 people would have their blood quantum redefined to be above the 1/4 Colville blood quantum, resulting in a current population of 24,031.

**However, by 2122 the number of enrolled tribal members is projected to decrease to about 1,800 people.** The likely actual Colville Tribe population under Scenario 5 is likely somewhere in between these two estimates.

### 6. SCENARIO 5: 4/4 BASEROLL ADJUSTMENT



## Scenario 6

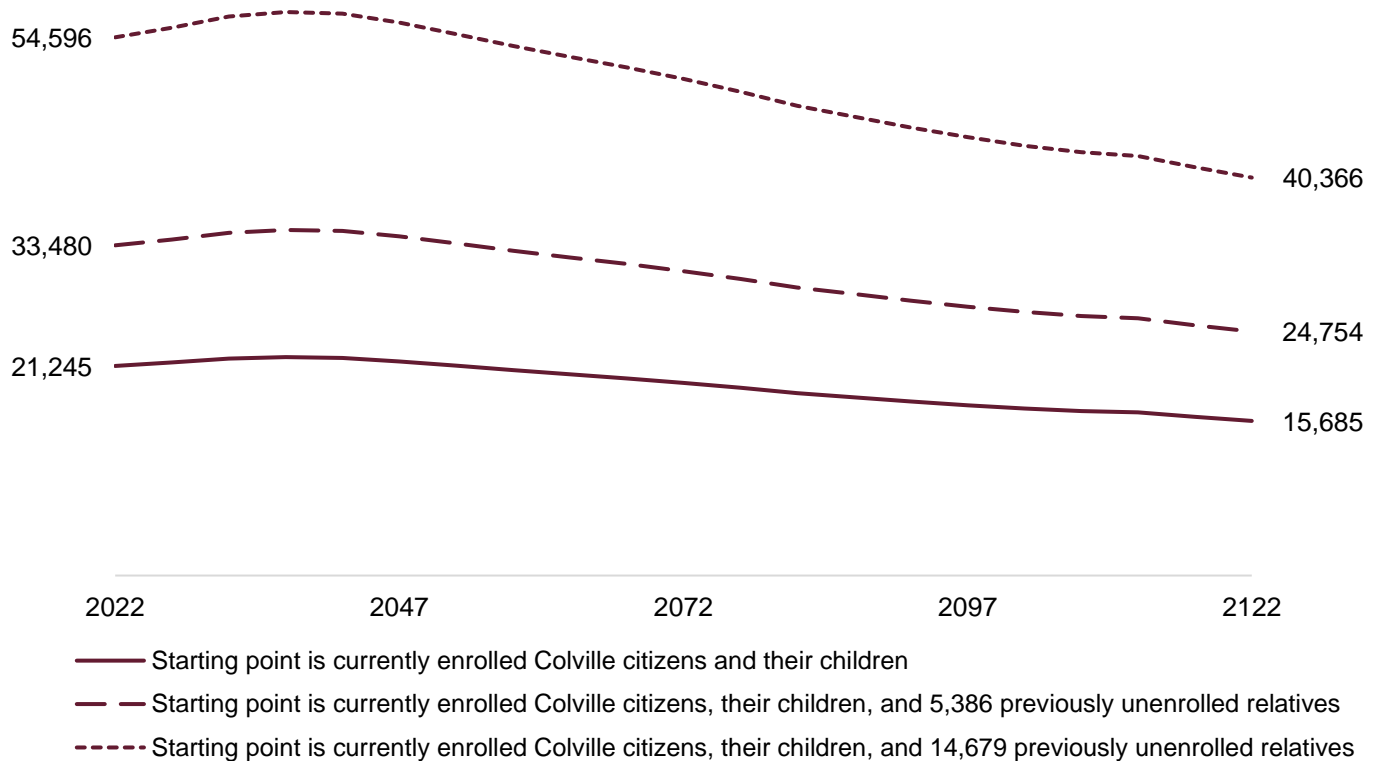
### Population projections for Colville assuming the enrollment criteria is changed to allow any descendant from the 1937 Colville Tribe base roll to be eligible for enrollment (no blood quantum requirement):

Compared with the other scenarios under consideration, lineal descent would open enrollment to more individuals because it would not use blood quantum, but instead would make any direct descendant of someone on the 1937 Colville base roll eligible for enrollment.

We calculated three projections under this scenario. The solid line starts with currently enrolled Colville citizens plus their unenrolled children but does not include other currently non-enrolled descendants of base roll members. The dashed line starts with currently enrolled Colville citizens, their unenrolled children, and an estimated 5,386 individuals who would be enrollable in 2023 if the criteria were changed. The dotted line starts with currently enrolled Colville tribal citizens and their children, plus an estimated 14,679 individuals who would be enrollable in 2023 if the criteria were changed.

By 2122, the Colville Tribe population under this scenario could range from a lower end estimate of about 15,600 to a higher end estimate of about 40,000. This huge range depends on how many descendants there are now, and whether eligible people would choose to enroll.

#### 7. SCENARIO 6: LINEAL DESCENT FROM 1937 BASE ROLL



Note: See the methodology report for details.