

STAFF SUMMARY FOR June 22-23, 2016

25. FIVE-YEAR PLM HARVEST PROGRAMS**Today's Item**Information Action

Approve the five-year Private Lands Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Management (PLM) Area management plans and licenses on 12 properties.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions (N/A)**Background**

DFW has operated the PLM Program pursuant to Fish and Game Code Sections 3400-3409, and Sections 601 and 702, Title 14 since 1983. The program provides incentives for landholders to manage their property for the benefit of fish and wildlife in exchange for access to increased recreational opportunities, such as hunting tags or seals, which may generate an income for landholders. In return for a harvest program under conditions specified by DFW, the landholder must prepare a biologically sound wildlife management plan and complete specific wildlife habitat improvements on the PLM property.

There are three types of applications to the PLM Program: an *initial application*, an *annual renewal application*, and a *five-year renewal application*. DFW has reviewed the new 5-year management plans and renewal applications for these 12 properties and has found that they are in compliance with FGC regulations and policies for PLM's. Full payment was made for all tags used in 2015, and all habitat work was completed (Exhibit 1).

Significant Public Comments (N/A)**Recommendation**

FGC Staff: Approve 12 harvest programs as recommended by DFW.

DFW: Approve the 5-year wildlife management plans, applications, and 2016/2017 harvest programs for 12 properties, under the conditions specified in Exhibit 2.

Exhibits

1. [DFW Memo, received May 24, 2016](#)
2. [PLM proposed 5-year details](#)

Motion/Direction

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Commission adopts the consent calendar, items 19-25.

2016 MAY 24 PM 12:30

Memorandum

Date: May 16, 2016

To: Valerie Termini
Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission

From: Charlton H. Bonham
Director



Subject: **Agenda Item for the June 22-23, 2016 Fish and Game Commission Meeting 5-Year Private Lands Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Management (PLM) Area License**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife has reviewed the 5-year management plans and renewal applications for 12 properties in 9 counties consisting of 108,483 acres.

The new 5-year management plans for these areas are in compliance with Commission policy for private lands management. The applicants have identified the location where records will be kept and made available for inspection.

Habitat improvements accomplished under these plans will enhance and maintain wildlife resources on and around the PLM areas. The goals and objectives stated in the management plans are compatible with Department management plans for appropriate species in these areas. In addition, access to public lands will not be diminished under implementation of these management plans.

The Department recommends that the Commission approve the specified wildlife management plan, application, and the 2016/17 harvest program under conditions specified in the attached table.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Victoria Barr at (916) 445-4034 or by email at victoria.barr@wildlife.ca.gov.

Valerie Termini, Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission
May 16, 2016
Page 2

Attachment

ec: Stafford Lehr, Acting Deputy Director
Wildlife and Fisheries Division
Stafford.Lehr@wildlife.ca.gov

Karen Miner, Acting Chief
Wildlife Branch
karen.miner@wildlife.ca.gov

Craig Stowers, Environmental Program Manager
Wildlife Branch
craig.stowers@wildlife.ca.gov

Stuart Itoga, Senior Environmental Scientist
Wildlife Branch
stuart.itoga@wildlife.ca.gov

Victoria Barr, Environmental Scientist
Wildlife Branch
victoria.barr@wildlife.ca.gov

PLM AREA LICENSE
5-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLANS, 2016-2021
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
NORTHERN REGION		
<p>DIXIE VALLEY RANCH</p> <p>DEER ZONE X3A</p> <p>LASSEN</p> <p>12,500 ACRES</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 4 buck deer, forked horn or better and 1 buck pronghorn antelope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 4 buck deer tags for the period of August 1, 2016 through November 30, 2016. • No more than 3 buck deer may be harvested after October 23, 2016. • No person shall take more than 1 buck deer annually in the X zones. • Issue 1 buck pronghorn antelope tag for the period of August 1, 2016 through October 30, 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remove western junipers from 100 acres to increase shrub recruitment for wildlife forage. ➤ Exclude cattle grazing from 250 acres of a natural pasture that contains a large pond, a creek, and several springs to provide forage and water for wildlife. ➤ Exclude cattle permanently from 800 acres of alfalfa on the western side of the ranch. ➤ Establish a 10-acre legume plot for elk within the 800 acre irrigated pasture. ➤ Leave unharvested the 3rd cutting of irrigated alfalfa to provide forage for wildlife. ➤ Retain 5 acres of dry-farmed grain to provide forage for wildlife. ➤ Remove ½ mile of unnecessary fencing to prevent wildlife entanglement. ➤ Install 5 goose nesting platforms and check for use annually. ➤ Remove encroaching conifers from a 2 acre aspen stand. ➤ Maintain and improve existing water sources, including removal of obstacles, checking dams for erosion or cattle damage, repairing spillways and where appropriate enlarging ponds. ➤ Plant 20 willow saplings at a water source.
<p>ROSEBURG RESOURCES – PONDOSA</p> <p>DEER ZONE C1</p> <p>SISKIYOU</p> <p>27,734 ACRES</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 2 bull elk and 2 antlerless elk and 3 either-sex deer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 2 bull elk tags and 2 antlerless elk tags for the period of September 1, 2016 through October 31, 2016. • Issue 3 either-sex deer tags for the period of September 1, 2016 through October 31, 2016. • No antlerless deer shall be harvested before September 15, 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintain 165 acres of aspen and meadow restoration areas by removing encroaching conifer seedlings and saplings. ➤ Retain 130 acres of conifers within clear cut units in the Whitlow area and on the northern boundary of the property for late seral recruitment for wildlife use. ➤ Decommission 6.25 acres of road by removing road crossing structures, installing erosion control features and blocking use of the roads with gates or rock structures. ➤ Create 4 brush piles for wildlife cover.

PLM AREA LICENSE
5-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLANS, 2016-2021
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>R-R RANCH MENDOCINO 1,460 ACRES</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 2 bull and 6 antlerless elk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 2 bull elk tags for the period of August 1, 2016 through November 30, 2016. • Issue 4 antlerless elk tags for the period of September 15, 2016 through November 30, 2016. • On or before October 15, 2016, the licensee may request (in writing) up to 2 additional antlerless elk tags. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Irrigate a 7-acre alfalfa pasture. If the alfalfa production falls below a total cover of 50% in the fall, the pasture will be ripped, replanted and rolled at a rate of 20 lbs/acre the following March or April with a clover and alfalfa seed mix to provide high quality forage for wildlife. ➤ Maintain a dryland plot of 100 acres with a rye grass/clover mix by harvesting and thatching every summer. This provides the stimulation to naturally maintain itself. ➤ Clean and maintain 3 natural springs and associated water holding structures. ➤ Exclude livestock from the ranch to improve forage and cover for wildlife. ➤ Remove sediment from Mud Lake to increase its storage capacity, if it dries sufficiently during the license year. ➤ Use large oak branches that have fallen naturally from trees to create wood piles for non-game wildlife. To reduce flammable fuels, approximately 50% of the piles will be burned each year.
<p>SALT CREEK RANCH DEER ZONE B5 TEHAMA 640 ACRES</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 buck deer, forked horn or better</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 3 buck deer tags for the period of September 1, 2016 through November 30, 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mechanically crush 5 acres of decadent brush to promote new growth. ➤ Mechanically crush 5 acres of decadent brush and plant with rye, oats, and clover. ➤ Maintain previously treated areas by replanting with annual grains and clover.

PLM AREA LICENSE
5-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLANS, 2016-2021
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>SHAMROCK RANCH DEER ZONE B1 MENDOCINO 16,400 ACRES</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 8 bull elk, 10 antlerless elk, 50 deer of which no more than 30 may be forked horn or better buck deer and 20 may be antlerless deer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 8 bull elk tags for the period of July 12, 2016 through November 30, 2016. • Issue 8 antlerless elk tags for the period of September 15, 2016 through November 30, 2016. • Issue 35 either-sex deer tags for the period of July 12, 2016 through November 30, 2016. • No antlerless deer shall be harvested before September 15, 2016. • No more than 15 buck deer may be taken after October 23, 2016. • On or before October 15, 2016, the licensee may request (in writing) up to 15 additional either-sex deer tags to accomplish the authorized harvest. • On or before October 15, 2016, the licensee may request (in writing) up to 2 additional antlerless elk tags to accomplish the authorized harvest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Install a solar pump in a well in the Meyers livestock enclosure to provide water for wildlife. ➤ Fertilize and irrigate 15 acres of hay meadow from mid-July through mid-September to provide forage for wildlife. ➤ Maintain the livestock exclusion fence along the tributary to Long Valley Creek and Meyers livestock enclosure. ➤ Treat the Meyers livestock enclosure by using a high intensity/short duration grazing system to remove mature, decadent forage. ➤ Limit cattle grazing on approximately 200 acres in the Anderson Pasture sub-area to mid-October through mid-December. ➤ Mechanically hedge 1/8 of an acre of blackberry and/or wild rose brush in the Anderson pasture sub-area to rejuvenate browse for wildlife. ➤ Create 4 new windrow brush piles in the Grosscup sub-area. ➤ Burn 3 mature brush piles in the Grosscup sub-area to provide ash for deer use. The burn areas will be seeded with a legume mix to improve forage for wildlife. ➤ Thin ¼ acre of dense mature tan oak in the Meyers Pasture sub-area to rejuvenate browse and improve acorn production for wildlife. ➤ Remove 660 feet of old woven wire fencing in the Grosscup sub-area to reduce wildlife entrapment.
<p>TRIPLE B RANCH DEER ZONE C3 SHASTA 600 ACRES</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 buck deer, forked horn or better</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 3 buck deer tags to take forked horn or better buck deer for the period of August 1, 2016 through November 30, 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintain 10 water sources to provide water for wildlife by checking for broken pipes and repairing as necessary. ➤ Annually inspect, clean, and make any necessary repairs to 20 artificial cavity nesting boxes. ➤ Install 5 new nest boxes for wildlife and document use annually. ➤ Install 3 solar pumping stations to pipe water to ponds for wildlife use. ➤ To reduce erosion and stream sedimentation, reduce livestock grazing to 150 AUMs from December through April. ➤ Prohibit commercial firewood cutting on the property to retain the oaks for wildlife. ➤ Establish a 5-acre forage plot planted with wheat for wildlife use.

PLM AREA LICENSE
5-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLANS, 2016-2021
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
BAY DELTA REGION		
BUCKEYE RANCH DEER ZONE A SOLANO 3,000+ ACRES	<p>Authorized Harvest: 12 bucks and 4 antlerless deer tags</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 12 buck deer tags to take forked horn or better bucks for the period of July 9, 2016 to November 30, 2016. No more than 4 buck may be taken after the close of A Zone deer rifle hunt, September 25, 2016. • Issue 4 antlerless deer tags for the period of July 9, 2016 to November 30, 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Install 3 wildlife guzzler. ➤ Inspect and maintain on-site wildlife water sites 2 times per year. ➤ High-blade 3 to 4 acres of chamise-chaparral before July 15, 2016. ➤ Construct 3 piles of chamise-chaparral or other woody vegetation for bird nesting habitat. Piles should measure at least 15' x 15' wide x 4' tall. ➤ Disk and plant 4, 1-acre wildlife habitat plots. The planting mix should contain a mixture of forbs such as clover. NOTE: safflower requires reliable water throughout the growing season; consider drought tolerant alfalfa.
CENTRAL REGION		
DE FRANCESCO & EATON RANCH DEER ZONE A MERCED 4,149 ACRES	<p>Authorized Harvest: 9 deer of which no more than 5 may be forked horn or better buck deer and 4 may be antlerless deer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 9 either-sex deer tags for the period of August 15, 2016 through November 30, 2016. • No antlerless deer shall be harvested before September 15, 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Eliminate cattle grazing on APNs 087-070-011 and 087-070-013 between May 31, 2016 and December 15, 2016. ➤ Maintain water troughs at Main Spring, Deer Camp, Laurel Spring, and Hay Barn for wildlife.

PLM AREA LICENSE
5-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLANS, 2016-2021
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
INDIAN VALLEY CATTLE COMPANY (LOMBARDO RANCH) DEER ZONE A MONTEREY 12,500 ACRES	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 bull elk, 2 antlerless elk and 4 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 3 bull elk tags for the period of July 15, 2016 through December 31, 2016. • Issue 2 antlerless elk tags for the period of August 15, 2016 through December 31, 2016. • Issue 4 buck deer tags to take forked horn or better bucks for the period of July 2, 2016 through November 30, 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Construct 6 brush piles for use by wildlife. ➤ Maintain a lower cattle stocking rate of 300 animals on 12,500 acres to share high quality habitats with wildlife. ➤ Plant 350 acres of barley for use by wildlife. ➤ Employ a rotational grazing regime to maintain high quality habitats for wildlife. ➤ Maintain 16 ground level water access points. ➤ Provide 300 acres of ungrazed area in Big Sandy creek to maintain high quality habitats for wildlife. ➤ Install 4400' of water line, a new 5,000 gallon water tank and 1 wildlife friendly trough.
LONE RANCH DEER ZONE A SAN BENITO 12,500 ACRES	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 bull elk, 2 antlerless elk and 4 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 3 bull elk tags for the period of August 1, 2016 through December 30, 2016. • Issue 2 antlerless elk tags for the period of August 15, 2016 through December 30, 2016. • Issue 4 buck deer tags to take forked horn or better bucks for the period of August 1, 2016 through November 30, 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Exclude cattle from entire ranch (12,500 acres) to provide forage for wildlife. ➤ Mechanically treat 10 acres of decadent brush in the "Loco flat" area to improve wildlife forage production. ➤ Add a water trough to the "Loco flat" area to provide water for wildlife.
PEACHTREE RANCH MONTEREY 13,000 ACRES	<p>Authorized Harvest: 4 bull elk and 2 antlerless elk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 4 bull elk tags for the period of July 15, 2016 through December 31, 2016. • Issue 2 antlerless elk tags for the period of August 15, 2016 through December 31, 2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create 5 brush piles to provide nesting habitat for quail and other small birds. ➤ Replace any escape ladders in the water troughs that need replacing. ➤ Install 2 elk crossings in appropriate line fence locations. ➤ Check and repair any elk crossings that need work. ➤ Build and install 6 bird nesting boxes. ➤ Build 2 ground level water sources near cattle troughs to make water more available to quail and other small wildlife. ➤ Monitor and report the height of the vegetation by pasture after the steers have been shipped.

PLM AREA LICENSE
5-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLANS, 2016-2021
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>RANCHO LA CUESTA</p> <p>DEER ZONE A</p> <p>SAN BENITO</p> <p>4,000 ACRES</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 bull elk, 1 antlerless elk and 4 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 4 bull elk tags (to take no more than 3 bull elk) for the period of July 15, 2016 through December 31, 2016. • Issue 2 buck deer tags to take forked horn or better bucks for the period of July 15, 2016 through November 30, 2016. <p>Note: Rancho La Cuesta is not requesting their full allocation of tags.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Plant 5 acres of grasses and legumes to provide high quality food for elk and deer. ➤ Clean out and maintain water points on the ranch to provide water for wildlife. ➤ Maintain a 2,530 acre cattle-free refuge on the upper portion of the ranch for exclusive use by wildlife. ➤ Burn or mechanically manipulate 5 acres of decadent chaparral to stimulate growth of quality browse for wildlife. ➤ Build 5 brush piles for use by wildlife.