

COMMITTEE STAFF SUMMARY FOR MAY 18, 2016

7. PREDATOR POLICY WORKGOU**Today's Item**Information Direction

Provide an update on recent predator policy workgroup (PPWG) activities. Discuss and approve recommendation for proposed work plan.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

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|-----------------------------|--|
| • Previous PPWG meeting | Feb 24, 2015, PPWG, Sacramento |
| • Previous PPWG meeting | Apr 26, 2015; PPWG, Sacramento |
| • Today's discussion | May18, 2016; WRC, West Sacramento |
| • Next PPWG meeting | Jul 12, 2016; PPWG, Sacramento |

Background

The WRC's PPWG met in Feb 2016 to discuss basic structure, rules, and guiding principles for the workgroup, the workgroup scope and objectives, and meeting frequency and location. The workgroup established ground rules and guiding principles but wanted to further explore some elements of the structure and workgroup scope and objectives. The workgroup was generally comfortable with the objectives presented and determined that development of a work plan, including a final decision on which predators to include, should be the emphasis of the next workgroup meeting.

In Apr 2016, the workgroup met to develop the draft work plan and continue their discussion on structure, including coordination with the reviewers. The workgroup prefers to work with a consistent group of reviewers (see recommendations below). Using a template prepared by FGC staff, the workgroup prepared a draft work plan for consideration by the WRC today (Exhibit 1). In addition, DFW prepared a list of California terrestrial predators and furbearers with their recommendations to the WRC on which species to include in this effort (Exhibit 2).

Today FGC staff will provide an overview of the proposed work plan.

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

Workgroup: Recommends that FGC not allow more reviewers to be added to current list.

FGC Staff: Provide a recommendation that FGC approve the PPWG proposed work plan as recommended by the workgroup.

Exhibits

1. [PPWG proposed work plan](#)
2. [DFW memo regarding Predator Policy Workgroup and Recommended Species for Inclusion, dated Mar 28, 2016](#)

Committee Direction/Recommendation

The WRC recommends that FGC approve the draft PPWG work plan as proposed.

**Wildlife Resources Committee
Predator Policy Workgroup
Proposed Work Plan
Revised May 5, 2016**

The Predator Policy Workgroup (Workgroup) is a body of the Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC) which was formed to allow greater time to investigate predator management policy issues in more detail than would otherwise be possible before the WRC. The Workgroup is comprised of ten member appointed by the Fish and Game Commission (Commission). The Workgroup is charged with providing input, developing ideas, and preparing recommendations concerning predator management policy and regulations in California.

To assist with the preparation of the report the Workgroup is proposing the following work plan which outlines the project scope, objectives and tasks, and timeline for this project. As the report is being drafted the Workgroup will solicit input, guidance, support, and review from project reviewers, interested stakeholders, and Department staff. This proposed work plan is being presented to the WRC for consideration and possible recommendation to the Commission.

WORK PLAN

Project scope

- **Purpose:** To evaluate whether existing predator policies and regulations reflect current understanding of science, wildlife management practices, ecological and environmental effects, economic concerns, social values, and public health and safety concerns.
- **Breadth:**
 - **Species** - Priority focus species include coyote, bobcat, badger, gray fox, mink, raccoon, short-tailed weasel, and long-tailed weasel. Black bear, mountain lion, gray wolf, striped skunk, spotted skunk, and opossum are included as secondary focus species.
 - **Level of Governance** - Project will focus on predator management as it relates to state-level governance including Commission policy, California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 14, and relevant State statutes.
- **Deliverable:** A report with the Workgroup's recommendations for predator management policy and regulatory proposals for consideration by the WRC.

Project Objectives and Tasks

- **Objective 1: Review existing predator policies and regulations**
 - Task 1: Compile summary of relevant, existing California predator management policies and regulations
 - Task 2: Research and compile predator management policies and regulations used in other states, at federal level, at local level, or countries/provinces and other management practices
 - Task 3: Identify what predator management issue(s) are not adequately addressed under existing policies and regulations
- **Objective 2: Develop proposed Commission Predator Management Policy**
 - Task 1: Based on findings from Objective 1, identify key elements to include in a draft predator management policy
 - Task 2: Develop draft policy for review and full discussion
 - Task 3: Prepare final draft policy for initial review and full discussion by Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC)
 - Task 4: Prepare final recommended policy for consideration and possible recommendation by the WRC to the Commission
- **Objective 3: Develop CCR Title 14 regulatory proposals**
 - Task 1: Based on findings from Objective 1, identify which existing regulations may be in need of revision
 - Task 2: Based on findings from Objective 1, identify issues that would need to be addressed through new regulations
 - Task 3: Fully vet the regulations identified under Task 1 to determine which to propose for revision
 - Task 4: Fully vet possible new regulations identified under Task 2 to determine which to propose for drafting
 - Task 5: Draft proposed revisions to language in existing regulations identified under Task 3 for review and full discussion
 - Task 6: Draft proposal for new regulations identified under Task 4 for review and full discussion
 - Task 7: Review and revise Tasks 5 and 6 for consistency with draft policy
 - Task 8: Based on outcomes from Task 7, develop draft regulatory proposal for initial review and full discussion by WRC
 - Task 9: Prepare final regulatory proposal for consideration and possible recommendation by the WRC to the Commission
- **Objective 4: Prepare summary of proposed statutory changes (Fish & Game Code)**
 - Task 1: Compile summary of existing, relevant statutes

- Task 2: Evaluate statutes identified in Task 1 for consistency with draft policy and regulatory proposals (Objectives 2 and 3)
- Task 3: Identify if and where statutory changes are needed for alignment with draft policy and regulatory proposals
- Task 4: Draft summary of proposed statutory changes for review and discussion
- Task 5: Revise summary and present to WRC for initial review and discussion
- Task 6: Prepare final summary for consideration and possible recommendation by the WRC to the Commission

Project Timeline

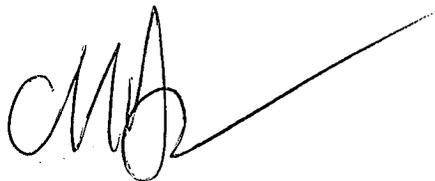
- Objective 1: Review existing predator management policies and regulations
 - Task 1: Jun 2016
 - Task 2: Jun 2016
 - Task 3: Jul 2016
- Objective 2: Develop draft Commission predator management policy
 - Task 1: Jul 2016
 - Task 2: Jul-Aug 2016
 - Task 3: Aug-Sep 2016 (WRC)
 - Task 4: May-Jun 2017 (Commission)
- Objective 3: Develop draft CCR Title 14 regulatory proposals
 - Task 1: Aug 2016
 - Task 2: Aug 2016
 - Task 3: Sep -Nov 2016
 - Task 4: Sep-Nov 2016
 - Task 5: Nov 2016
 - Task 6: Nov 2016-Jan 2017 (WRC)
 - Task 7: May-Jun 2017 (Commission)
- Objective 4: Prepare summary of proposed statutory change recommendations
 - Task 1: Oct-Nov 2016
 - Task 2: Dec 2016-Jan 2017
 - Task 3: Jan-Feb 2017
 - Task 3: Feb-Apr 2017
 - Task 5: Apr-May 2017 (WRC)
 - Task 6: May-Jun 2017 (Commission)

Memorandum

Date: March 28, 2016

To: Mike Yaun, Acting Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission

From: Charlton H. Bonham
Director



Subject: **Predator Policy Workgroup and Recommended Species for Inclusion**

Attached to this memo is a spreadsheet with the Department of Fish and Wildlife's (Department) compilation of carnivore species that we recommend be considered in the deliberations by the Wildlife Resource Committee (WRC) in developing a predator policy and regulations. The list was originally developed by the Department in consultation and coordination with stakeholders of the WRC predator policy effort.

We have color-coded and indicated on the spreadsheet with a Yes (Y) or No (N) as to whether we recommend the species be included in the WRC effort, and provide reasons for that recommendation (Recommendation for Inclusion in WRC/FGC Predator Policy Development Effort). For example, we do not recommend including the state/federal listed species at this time because there either is no take authorized, or there may already be significant conservation/recovery action taking place. We do emphasize those species for which take does occur and for which there may be concern regarding that take, and for which additional ecological data on distribution and abundance would prove beneficial to inform decision-making.

Additionally, and significantly for the Department, we have provided the Department's recommendation for our own efforts at invigorating our attention to carnivore species conservation and management (a multi-species carnivore conservation/management strategy). We have identified the suite of species for which substantial effort already occurs (e.g., gray wolf, Sierra Nevada red fox, and black bear); as well as the species for which we have limited data and limited conservation/management activity (e.g., badger, wolverine, desert kit fox).

This initial analysis represents what we anticipate could be a new era for the Department in conserving and managing many of these highly relevant carnivore species that have had relatively little attention paid to them over the decades of wildlife conservation in the state.

As a reminder, the Department has embarked on a somewhat parallel, but slightly different, track to the WRC predator policy group, by beginning to investigate the broader concept of carnivore conservation in California.

Mike Yaun, Acting Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission
March 28, 2016
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Our purpose is to develop biological/ecological data in support of the Fish and Game Commission's WRC priority areas for predator policy, but also develop a sound conservation framework for California's carnivores.

If you have any questions or desire additional information, please contact Eric Loft, Chief of Wildlife at eric.loft@wildlife.ca.gov or 916-445-3555.

Attachment

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California Terrestrial Predators and Furbearers	Recommendation for Inclusion in WRC/FGC Predator Policy Development Effort?	Recommended species for which CDFW would propose developing a multi-species carnivore conservation/management strategy*	Fam	Genus	Species	Subsp	Take
Northwestern Black Bear	N-Significant management action is already in place, species plan exists. Public opportunity to engage at any time exists.	N- But consider how current efforts may affect multi-species conservation strategy.	Carnivora	Ursus	americanus	altifrontalis	season/area \$365
California Black Bear	N-Significant management action is already in place, species plan exists. Public opportunity to engage at any time exists.	N- But consider how current efforts may affect multi-species conservation strategy.	Carnivora	Ursus	americanus	californiensis	season/area \$365
Fisher	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	Y - Develop multi-species conservation strategy	Carnivora	Martes	pennanti		No Take-\$460/ Threatened FG 2080
Marten	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	Y - Develop multi-species conservation strategy	Carnivora	Martes	americana		No Take-\$460/ Candidate FG 2080
River Otter	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	Y - Develop multi-species conservation strategy	Carnivora	Lontra	canadensis		No Take-\$460
Desert Kit Fox	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	Y - Develop multi-species conservation strategy	Carnivora	Vulpes	macrotis	arsipus	No Take-\$460
Native Valley Red Fox	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	Y - Develop multi-species conservation strategy	Carnivora	Vulpes	vulpes	ssp	No Take-\$460
Sierra Nevada Red Fox	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	Y - Develop multi-species conservation strategy, perhaps address independently since very rare.	Carnivora	Vulpes	vulpes	nector	No Take-\$460/ Threatened FG 2080
Badger	Y	Y - Develop multi-species conservation strategy	Carnivora	Taxidea	taxus		season \$461
Gray Fox	Y	Y - Develop multi-species conservation strategy	Carnivora	Urocyon	cinereoargenteus		season \$461
Muskrat	N - Not carnivora	N - but consider current levels of take.	Rodentia	Ondatra	zibethicus		season \$462
Mink	Y - Consider current levels of take	N - but consider current levels of take.	Carnivora	Mustela	vison		season \$462
Beaver	N- Not carnivora	Y - but not under the umbrella of carnivores - as a stand-alone	Rodentia	Castor	canadensis		season/area \$463
Raccoon	Y - Consider current levels of take	N - but consider current levels of take	Carnivora	Procyon	lotor		season/area \$464
Bobcat	Y	Y	Carnivora	Lynx	rufus		season \$478
Coyote	Y	Y	Carnivora	Canis	latrans		year round \$472 \$474
Striped Skunk	N- Effort not needed, primarily a depredation species	N - but consider how take may affect other predators	Carnivora	Mephitis	mephitis		year round \$472 \$474
Spotted Skunk	N- Effort not needed, primarily a depredation species	N - but consider how take may affect other predators	Carnivora	Spirogale	gracilis		year round \$472 \$474
Opossum	N - Not carnivora	N	Didelphimorphia	Didelphis	virginiana		year round \$472 \$474
Short-tailed Weasel	Y	Y but within this category of carnivores, a species of lesser knowledge as well as perhaps cons/mgt need.	Carnivora	Mustela	erminea		year round \$472 \$474
Long-tailed Weasel	Y	Y but within this category of carnivores, a species of lesser knowledge as well as perhaps cons/mgt need.	Carnivora	Mustela	frenata	(9)	year round \$472 \$474
Gray Wolf	N - Significant management action planning is already in place, species plan exists. Public opportunity to engage at any time exists.	N- But consider how current efforts may affect multi-species conservation strategy.	Carnivora	Canis	lupus		depredation dnlly- FG4152/ Endangered FG 2080
Island Spotted Skunk	N- Effort not needed	N - Island not accessible to public	Carnivora	Spirogale	gracilis	amphialus	No Take NP/Nature Conservancy managed lands.\$670.5
San Joaquin Kit Fox	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	N-Current State/Federal Coordination on Conserv/Manage	Carnivora	Vulpes	macrotis	mutica	No Take-FG 2080
Island Fox	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	N- Current State/Federal Coordination on Conserv/Manage,	Carnivora	Urocyon	littoralis	(6)	No Take-FG 2080
Santa Cruz Island Fox	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	N- Current State/Federal Coordination on Conserv/Manage	Carnivora	Urocyon	littoralis	santacruzae	No Take-FG 2080
Catalina Island Fox	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	N- Current State/Federal Coordination on Conserv/Manage	Carnivora	Urocyon	littoralis	catalinae	No Take-FG 2080
Mountain Lion	N- Significant management action planning is already in place. Public opportunity to engage at any time exists.	N- But consider how current efforts may affect multi-species conservation strategy.	Carnivora	Puma	concolor	cougar	No Take-FG 4800, \$251.4
Wolverine	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	Y - Wolverine perhaps addressed independently given the potential future opportunities for translocation to CA.	Carnivora	Gulo	gulo	luscus	No Take-FG 4700
Ring-tailed Cat	N- There is no legal authorized take outside of Scientific purposes	Y - but within this category of carnivores, a species of lesser knowledge as well as perhaps cons/mgt need.	Carnivora	Bassariscus	astutus		No Take-FG 4700
		* Dependent upon funding and personnel resources to implement.					