

WORKGROUP STAFF SUMMARY FOR NOVEMBER 1, 2016

2. PREDATOR POLICY**Today's Item****Information** **Decision**

Discuss and revise draft predator policy.

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

In Sep 2016, the Predator Policy Workgroup (Workgroup) reviewed and revised the draft policy provided by FGC staff. The draft revised at the Sep meeting was distributed to the Workgroup reviewers for their review and input following the meeting (Exhibit 1). Today, the Workgroup will discuss the reviewer comments and consider further revisions to the draft policy (Exhibit 2).

Significant Public Comments

1. Letter from Lynn Boulton regarding need to limit or suspend harvesting of focal predator species due to impacts from drought and climate change, among other stressors.
2. Letter from Lynn Boulton with suggested changes for the draft predator policy under consideration by the Workgroup.
3. Email from Friends of Griffith Park encouraging the FGC to develop a policy that acknowledges the beneficial impacts of native predators and to establish goals that are consistent with the State Wildlife Action Plan.

Recommendation (N/A)**Exhibits**

1. [Draft predator policy, revised Sep 28, 2016](#)
2. [Staff compilation of reviewer comments on draft policy, prepared Oct 19, 2016](#)
3. [Letter from Lynn Boulton, dated Oct 12, 2016](#)
4. [Letter from Lynn Boulton, dated Oct 12, 2016](#)
5. [Email from Friends of Griffith Park, dated Oct 13, 2016](#)

Workgroup Decision/Recommendation (N/A)

California Fish and Game Commission
Terrestrial Predators Policy
Draft Sept 28, 2016

I. *(Values statement)*

Pursuant to the objectives in Section 1801 of Fish and Game Code, the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) acknowledges that native terrestrial predators are an integral part of California's natural wildlife and possess intrinsic, historical, and cultural value which benefit society and ecosystems. The Commission shall ensure the ecological, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, and educational value of native terrestrial predators while minimizing adverse impacts on wildlife and reducing conflicts that result in adverse impacts to humans, including health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock.

II. *(Conservation + management principles)*

The Commission further recognizes that sustainable conservation and management strategies are necessary to encourage the coexistence of humans and wildlife. It is, therefore, the policy and practice of the Fish and Game Commission that:

A. Native terrestrial predator communities and their habitats are monitored, maintained, restored, and enhanced using the best available science. Wildlife managers shall protect, conserve, and provide optimal consumptive and non-consumptive recreational opportunities. The utilization of any population of native predator species through harvest shall be conducted in a way that ensures sustainable populations of predator and prey are maintained.

B. The foundation of predator management shall be to reduce conflict that results in adverse impacts to health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock by preventing habituation of predators. Wildlife managers shall consider human safety a priority, and management decisions shall evaluate and consider lethal and non-lethal controls that are efficacious and cost-effective and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

C. Wildlife managers shall consider the ecological relationships which may be affected and management decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or management plans for other species and consider affected habitat and other biological and social constraints. Management of terrestrial predator populations and their influence on other wildlife species shall include but are not limited to habitat manipulation for predators or prey and removal or take of predators as appropriate.

Comment [EC1]: Minority opinion to prioritize non-lethal

Comment [EC2]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

Comment [EC3]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

Summarization of topics for consideration by the Predator Policy Workgroup based on comments submitted by reviewers

Prepared by FGC staff
October 19, 2016

California Fish and Game Commission
Terrestrial Predators Policy
Draft Sept 28, 2016

I. *(Values statement)*

Pursuant to the objectives in Section 1801 of Fish and Game Code, the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) acknowledges that native terrestrial predators are an integral part of California's natural wildlife and possess intrinsic, historical, and cultural value which benefit society and ecosystems. The Commission shall ensure the ecological, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, and educational value of native terrestrial predators while minimizing adverse impacts on wildlife and reducing conflicts that result in adverse impacts to humans, including health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock.

II. *(Conservation + management principles)*

The Commission further recognizes that sustainable conservation and management strategies are necessary to encourage the coexistence of humans and wildlife. It is, therefore, the policy and practice of the Fish and Game Commission that:

- A. *Native terrestrial predator* communities and their habitats are monitored, maintained, restored, and enhanced using the best available science. Wildlife managers shall protect, conserve, and provide optimal consumptive and non-consumptive recreational opportunities. The utilization of any population of native predator species through harvest shall be conducted in a way that ensures sustainable populations of predator and prey are maintained.
- B. *The foundation of predator management* shall be to reduce conflict that results in adverse impacts to health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock by preventing habituation of predators. Wildlife managers shall consider human safety a priority, and management decisions shall evaluate and consider lethal and non-lethal controls that are efficacious and cost-effective and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
- C. *Wildlife managers shall* consider the ecological relationships which may be affected and management decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or

Comment [EC1]: General comments received:
1) Policy should emphasize FGC responsible for management of total ecosystem – predators, prey, and interaction with humans
2) Policy heavily weighted to consumptive view
3) Use of term 'shall' too regulatory in nature
4) Shift in organization may provide clarity by separating conflict resolution and recreation from conservation and management principles
5) Regarding title of policy – is policy intended to only address the 8 focal species or broader application

Comment [EC2]: From FGC staff – may be helpful to begin policy with a statement which frames the issue and necessity for policy.

Comment [EC3]: Areas of consideration:
1) Question over use of term 'native' and applicability to coyotes
2) Switching benefits to ecosystems over society
3) Inclusion of at risk/list species (minimizing conflicts)
4) Various suggestions over language for impacts to humans
5) Inclusion of publically managed lands (adverse impacts)

Comment [EC4]: Might require rewording if opt to reorganize

Comment [EC5]: Areas of consideration:
1) Add qualifier to monitor, maintain, restore, and enhance?
2) Best available science – peer reviewed??
3) Consumptive and non-consumptive recreation – optimal vs. judicious; how much weight to give to non-consumptive; balancing of sustainable ecosystems with recreational take
4) Have recreation as own section?
5) Is there a need define sustainable?
6) Need to clarify what it meant by 'predator and prey'

Comment [EC6]: Areas of considerations:
1) Lethal vs non-lethal – prioritization; need to word in a way that's implementable;
2) Preventing or minimizing habituation?
3) Use of tools to reduce conflict
4) Include publically-managed lands?
5) Recognition of role of human actions that contribute to habituation and need to reduce those actions

Comment [EC7]: Minority opinion to prioritize non-lethal

Comment [EC8]: Areas of consideration:
1) Prioritization of ecosystem health over recreational opportunity
2) Use of predator – prey – is there a need to make a distinction between large predators and small predators
3) Need to clarify intent of section - still confusing for some
4) Appropriateness of 'social constraints' as a consideration by wildlife managers

management plans for other species and consider affected habitat and other biological and social constraints. Management of terrestrial predator populations and their influence on other wildlife species shall include but are not limited to habitat manipulation for predators or prey and removal or take of predators as appropriate.

Comment [EC9]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

Comment [EC10]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

DRAFT

Comments submitted by Jim Conrad on behalf of the Southern California subgroup of reviewers, dated 10/6/16

Erin,

Our Southern California review group (Bob Smith, Robert Williams, Rick Lewis and I) have read the document and it sounds good to us. We agree that predators are a valuable part of the ecosystem, but they must be managed so the ecosystem does not get out of balance. We also agree with the emphasis on the safety issues associated with predators and the need to ensure the public's safety. We were glad to see the document include the option for lethal control if necessary.

We have no suggested language changes. If we were to change anything, we would emphasize that the Commission is responsible for management of the TOTAL ecosystem, including predators, prey and their interaction with humans.

Best regards,

Jim Conrad

Delegate, San Diego County Wildlife Federation (SDCWF)

October 14, 2016

Dear Ms. Chappell and Predator Policy Working Group,

The undersigned members of the Conservation Review Group would like to submit the attached policy language for consideration by the Working Group.

We would like to point out that the policy as it stands from the September 28 meeting appears heavily weighted to the consumptive view and we have addressed the language to speak towards ecosystem balance and toward prioritizing non-lethal conflict management practices before other methods are used.

We would also like to point out that while our perspective may be the minority in this group, we represent the vast majority of Californians who find education and enrichment in non-consumptive opportunities to enjoy this state's full suite of native wildlife. Predators are part of our public trust and as such, belong to all, not just the few consumptive users.

Finally, we would like to point out in regards to predator management that whether human benefits or benefits to other species are being considered, ecosystem health should take precedence over recreational opportunity, as without intact and fully functioning ecosystems, we do not have a healthy environment in which to live.

The overarching belief of our group is that predators are a necessary and valuable component of healthy ecosystems and that the Commission's management policy must speak to the humane and responsible stewardship of predators now and into the future.

Thank you for your dedicated work in challenging circumstances, on behalf of the California Fish and Game Commission.

Conservation Review Group

Marilyn Jasper
Sierra Club, Public Interest Coalition

Damon Nagami
Senior Attorney
Director, Southern California Ecosystems Project
Natural Resources Defense Council

Sharon Ponsford
California Council for Wildlife Rehabilitators

Keli Hendricks
Project Coyote, Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue

Erin Hauge
Certified California Naturalist

Tom O'Key
Project Bobcat

Miriam Seger
Wildlife Advocate

Christina Souto
Associate Director
California Wolf Center

Oliver Starr
President, Good Wolf

Fauna Tomlinson
Project Coyote and California
Council of Wildlife Rehabilitators

Susan Kirks, Naturalist (American
Badger)
Paula Lane Action Network

California Fish and Game Commission
Terrestrial Predators Policy
Conservation Review Group Comments, October 13, 2016
With Mark-ups

I. *(Values statement)*

Pursuant to the objectives in Section 1801 of Fish and Game Code, the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) ~~acknowledges~~ **agrees** that native terrestrial predators are an **essential and** integral part of California's natural wildlife and possess intrinsic, ~~historical,~~ and cultural value which benefits ~~society~~ and ecosystems. ~~The Commission shall ensure the ecological, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, and educational value of native terrestrial predators while minimizing adverse impacts on wildlife and reducing conflicts that result in adverse impacts to humans, including health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock.~~ **The Commission shall ensure the current and future ecological, scientific, aesthetic and recreational value of terrestrial predators while striving to inhibiting minimize adverse impacts to other species and impeding conflicts with humans, human enterprise and private property.**

II. *(Conservation + management principles)*

~~The Commission further recognizes that sustainable conservation and management strategies are necessary to encourage the coexistence of humans and wildlife.~~ **The Commission further identifies that justifiable conservation and management strategies are necessary to obligate the coexistence of humans and wildlife.** It is, therefore, the policy and practice of the Fish and Game Commission that:

- A. Native terrestrial predator communities and their habitats are monitored, maintained, restored, and enhanced using the best available science. Wildlife managers shall protect, conserve, and provide ~~optimal~~ **judicious non-consumptive** and ~~non-~~consumptive recreational opportunities. ~~The utilization of any population of native predator species through harvest shall be conducted in a way that ensures sustainable populations of predator and prey are maintained.~~ **A sustainable predator population requires local and regional genetic variability, physical health, undiminished social structure, and opportunities for dispersal as well as abundant prey and habitat.**
- B. ~~The foundation of predator management shall be to reduce conflict that results in adverse impacts to health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock by preventing habituation of predators. Wildlife managers shall consider human safety a priority, and management decisions shall evaluate and consider lethal~~

~~and non-lethal controls that are efficacious and cost-effective and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.~~

Wildlife managers shall consider human safety a priority and may use lethal control methods in cases where predators pose a risk to human health or safety. If conflicts arise between predators and human enterprise or private property, wildlife managers may resort to the limited use of lethal controls ~~methods that are in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, but only after all reasonable efforts at preventing habituation and/or preventing habituation and/or non-lethal methods have proven ineffective.~~

~~Wildlife managers shall consider the ecological relationships which may be affected and management decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or management plans for other species and consider affected habitat and other biological and social constraints. Management of terrestrial predator populations and their influence on other wildlife species shall include but are not limited to habitat manipulation for predators or prey and removal or take of predators as appropriate.~~

- C. When terrestrial predators adversely impact other wildlife species it may be necessary to employ strategies ~~methods~~ to reduce those conflicts. Evidence-based methods will be used to evaluate the relative long-term efficacy of conflict prevention and response alternatives. Wildlife managers shall consider the ecological relationships which may be affected. Management decisions shall be consistent with objectives or management plans for other species, and ecosystem health shall take precedence over recreational opportunity within the context of conflict resolution.

Comments submitted by Teri Faulkner, dated 10/14/16

California Fish and Game Commission
Terrestrial Predators Policy
Draft Sept 28, 2016

I. *(Values statement)*

Pursuant to the objectives in Section 1801 of Fish and Game Code, the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) acknowledges that native terrestrial predators are an integral part of California's natural wildlife and possess intrinsic, historical, and cultural value which benefit society and ecosystems. The Commission shall ensure the ecological, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, and educational value of native terrestrial predators while minimizing adverse impacts on wildlife and reducing conflicts that result in adverse impacts to humans, including health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock.

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- B. The foundation of predator management shall be to reduce conflict that results in adverse impacts to health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock by preventing habituation of predators. Wildlife managers shall consider human safety a priority, and management decisions shall evaluate and consider lethal and non-lethal controls that are efficacious and cost-effective and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

"crops"

How do predators affect crops – if they are predators? Or if crops become prey, does this make the deer a predator?

Comment [EC1]: Minority opinion to prioritize non-lethal

“preventing habituation of predators”

If CF&GC/CDFW were truly interested in preventing habituation of predators, they would re-instate the use of dogs for bear hunting. That way when a bear comes around a human habitation and hears dogs barking it may think to itself that if the bear gets much closer, it will have to do a lot more work than it wants to. People who live in the wildland/urban interface (WUI) zones will tell you that the bears are coming closer to their houses and they are ignoring the dogs. At that point the bear becomes a target and is exposing the humans & their critters to harm. Local wardens have said just as many bears are dying as before the anti-dog rule was invoked, but now it is through depredation not hunting.

“shall”

How would someone, the person making management decisions, prove they did the “shall”? Is there a list of efficacious and cost-effective non-lethal control methods that are published and can be referred to? How easy are these methods to use? What is considered to be effective? Is there the potential that the problem animal will be injured by using non-lethal methods? What will be the animal’s quality of life after non-lethal usage? How high is the initial set-up cost for non-lethal methods? Are non-lethal methods species specific?

- C. Wildlife managers shall consider the ecological relationships which may be affected Management decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or management plans for other species and consider affected habitat and other biological and social constraints . Management of terrestrial predator populations and their influence on other wildlife species shall include but are not limited to habitat manipulation for predators or prey and removal or take of predators as appropriate.

Comment [EC2]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

Comment [EC3]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

Wildlife managers shall consider the ecological relationships which may be affected by their management strategies (or decisions?, choices?,)

Management decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or management plans for other species. and consider

Comment [EC4]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

Affected habitat and other biological and social constraints (will?, shall?, are to?) be considered.

Management of terrestrial predator populations, and their influence on other wildlife species, shall include, but are not limited to, habitat manipulation for predators and/or prey and removal or take of predators as appropriate.

Comment [EC5]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

This is a very broad clause.....

Is there a separate term that would better characterize some of the smaller predators that are both predator and prey? Does there need to be some discrimination between small predators, such as weasels or skunks or badgers, and larger predators such as coyotes, cougars, bobcats, bears or wolves?

For example, for weasels, they need high protein diets and are definitely carnivores. But they may also be prey for the above mentioned large predators as well as predators from the sky such as hawks, falcons, eagles, owls and ravens?

How do feral pigs fit into this? They are a health and safety hazard, ruin crops and the environment, and may terrorize livestock, pets and humans. Are pigs predators? Prey? Scavengers?

This is another way that C may be expressed. It has made several sentences out of one large one. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done to make it understandable for the average person

Wildlife managers shall consider the ecological relationships which may be affected by their management strategies (or decisions?, choices?,) Management decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or management plans for other species. and consider Affected habitat and other biological and social constraints (will?, shall?, are to?) be considered. Management of terrestrial predator populations, and their influence on other wildlife species, shall include, but are not limited to, habitat manipulation for predators and/or prey and removal or take of predators as appropriate.

Comment [EC6]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

Comment [EC7]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

Joint comments Theresa Hew and Sally Barron, dated 10/13/16

California Fish and Game Commission
Terrestrial Predators Policy
Draft Sept 28, 2016

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II. *(Conservation + management principles)*

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B. The foundation of predator management shall be to reduce conflict that results in adverse impacts to health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock by preventing habituation of predators. Wildlife managers shall consider human safety a priority, and Management decisions shall evaluate and consider lethal and non-lethal controls that are efficacious, and cost-effective and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

C. Wildlife managers shall consider the ecological relationships which may be affected and management decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or management plans for other species and consider affected habitat and other biological and social constraints. Management of terrestrial predator populations and

Comment [T1]: How long does a species have to live in CA before being considered native? Coyotes originated in the plains states and moved west over two hundred years ago.

Comment [T2]: Will. The words "shall" is reserved as a regulatory term. Replace with "will."

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Comment [T3]: delete and. Include domestic pets. When humans domesticated cats and dogs they took on the responsibility to keep them safe from predators. This protection from predators must be clearly stated in policy.

Comment [T4]:

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Comment [T5]: delete restored and enhanced

Comment [T6]: delete shall, replace with will

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Comment [T7]: delete shall, replace with will

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Comment [T8]: delete shall, replace with will

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Comment [T9]: delete shall, replace with will

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Comment [T10]: Delete and

Comment [EC11]: Minority opinion to prioritize non-lethal

Comment [T12]: Delete shall, replace with will

Comment [T13]: Delete shall, replace with will

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Comment [T14]: Delete and

Comment [T15]: Delete and

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Comment [T16]: Delete shall, replace with will

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Comment [EC17]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

their influence on other wildlife species, ~~shall~~ include but are not limited to habitat manipulation for predators or prey and ~~removal or take of~~ predators as appropriate.

Comment [T18]: Delete shall, replace with will

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Comment [EC19]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

DRAFT

Comments submitted by Lori Jacobs, dated 10/14/16

**California Fish and Game Commission
Terrestrial Predators Policy**

Draft Sept 28, 2016

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- B. The foundation of predator management ~~shall~~ be to reduce conflict that results in adverse impacts to health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock by preventing habituation of predators. Wildlife managers ~~shall~~ consider human safety a priority. ~~and~~ Management decisions ~~shall~~ evaluate and consider lethal and non-lethal controls that are efficacious, ~~and~~ cost-effective and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
- C. Wildlife managers ~~shall~~ consider the ecological relationships which may be affected and management decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or management plans for other species and consider affected habitat and other biological and social constraints. Management of terrestrial predator populations and their influence on other wildlife species ~~shall~~ include

but are not limited to habitat manipulation for predators or prey and removal or take of predators as appropriate.

^[1] We would like to note that the reason we want Shall removed is because " Shall is defined as regulatory language and this is not regulatory."

^[i] ii I would also like to add that if non-consumptive is added to the policy then the people wanting this should have to start paying.

As of now Hunters and Fishermen are the only ones who contribute to helping our fish and wildlife with the license and tag fees that we pay.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Chappell, Erin@FGC](mailto:Chappell_Erin@FGC)
Subject: PPWG Policy - MLF Proposed Revisions
Date: Thursday, October 13, 2016 7:11:49 PM
Attachments: [MLF CLEAN PPWG DRAFT PredatorPolicy.docx](#)
[MLF MARKUP PPWG DRAFT PredatorPolicy.docx](#)

Dear Ms. Chappell and Predator Policy Working Group,

As an official reviewer, the Mountain Lion Foundation spent some time with the draft Predator Policy and came up with suggested language for the consideration of the Working Group.

Most of our effort is fairly clear and self-explanatory, however we did want to point out that the shift in organization of the document might help to focus your discussion. Breaking out conflict resolution and recreation from conservation and management principles was helpful in clarifying the purposes of the policy.

I want to highlight one sentence that I believe is essential to communicating the underlying requirements for real progress in predator conservation:

"A sustainable predator population requires local and regional genetic variability, physical health, undiminished social structure, and opportunities for dispersal as well as abundant prey and habitat."

Finally, whether conflict resolution is directed at human benefits or benefits to other species, it seems prudent to request that "ecosystem health shall take precedence over recreational opportunity."

Thank you for your hard work in difficult circumstances.

Best Wishes,

Lynn

Lynn Cullens - Executive Director
MOUNTAIN LION FOUNDATION

[REDACTED]

California Fish and Game Commission Terrestrial Predators Policy

Mountain Lion Foundation Comments on the Final Draft of Sept 28, 2016

I. *(Values statement)*

Pursuant to the objectives in Section 1801 of Fish and Game Code, the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) ~~acknowledges that is committed to stewarding the~~ native terrestrial predators ~~that~~ are an integral part of California's natural wildlife and ~~that~~ possess intrinsic, ~~historical,~~ and cultural values which benefit ~~ecosystems and society and ecosystems.~~ Thus, Californians should strive to avoid conflict, cruelty and the disruption of natural systems. The Commission shall ensure the ecological, scientific, aesthetic, ~~and~~ recreational, ~~and educational~~ value of native terrestrial predators while ~~inhibiting minimizing~~ adverse impacts on wildlife and reducing conflicts ~~with humans and human enterprise that result in adverse impacts to humans, including health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock.~~

II. *(Conservation + management principles)*

~~The Commission further recognizes that s~~Sustainable conservation and management strategies ~~are necessary to~~ encourage the coexistence of humans and wildlife. It is, therefore, the policy and practice of the Fish and Game Commission that:

A. A sustainable predator population requires local and regional genetic variability, physical health, undiminished social structure, and opportunities for dispersal as well as abundant prey and habitat.

B. Native terrestrial predator communities and their habitats are monitored, maintained, restored, and enhanced using the best available science. Scientifically valid conservation and management practices must serve a legitimate objective that benefits society and ecosystems. Management principles will support minimum consumptive utilization or killing of predators and will require accounting for the ecological importance of carnivores in fully functioning and robust ecosystems. Wildlife managers shall protect, conserve, and provide optimal consumptive and non-consumptive recreational opportunities. The utilization of any population of native predator species through harvest shall be conducted in a way that ensures sustainable populations of predator and prey are maintained.

III. *(Conflict Resolution)*

A. The A foundation of predator management shall be to prevent and reduce conflict that results in adverse impacts to human health, ~~and safety,~~ and private property, ~~crops, and livestock by preventing habituation of predators.~~ Wildlife managers shall consider human safety a priority. Wildlife managers will therefore emphasize

~~developing and promoting effective tools to prevent conflicts, and management decisions shall evaluate and consider lethal and non-lethal controls that are efficacious and cost-effective and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.~~

B. When terrestrial predators adversely impact other wildlife species it may be necessary to employ strategies to reduce those conflicts.

~~B. Evidence-based methods will be used to evaluate the relative long-term efficacy of conflict prevention and response alternatives. Wildlife managers shall consider the ecological relationships which may be affected, and mManagement decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or management plans for other species and ecosystem health shall take precedence over recreational opportunity within the context of conflict resolution. consider affected habitat and other biological and social constraints. Management of terrestrial predator populations and their influence on other wildlife species shall include but are not limited to habitat manipulation for predators or prey and removal or take of predators as appropriate.~~

IV. (Recreation)

Wildlife managers shall provide a variety of recreational opportunities related to enjoyment of native terrestrial predator species in a manner that ensures sustainable populations of predator and prey within thriving ecosystems.

Comments submitted by Chuck Morse, dated 10/13/16

California Fish and Game Commission
Terrestrial Predators Policy
Draft Sept 28, 2016

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Pursuant to the objectives in Section 1801 of Fish and Game Code, the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) acknowledges that native terrestrial predators are an integral part of California's natural wildlife and possess intrinsic, historical, and cultural value which benefit society and ecosystems. The Commission shall ensure the ecological, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, and educational value of native terrestrial predators while minimizing adverse impacts on wildlife and at risk species and minimizing reducing conflicts that result in adverse impacts to humans, including health and safety, publicly managed lands and private property, crops, and livestock.

Comment [cm1]: Predator management does involve minimizing impacts to T, E and sensitive sp.

Comment [cm2]: Publicly owned and managed lands suffer adverse impacts as well as private lands. The public's resource is affected.

II. *(Conservation + management principles)*

The Commission further recognizes that sustainable conservation and management strategies are necessary to encourage the coexistence of humans and wildlife. It is, therefore, the policy and practice of the Fish and Game Commission that:

A. Native terrestrial predator communities and their habitats are monitored, maintained, restored, and enhanced, as necessary, using the best available peer reviewed science. Wildlife managers shall protect, conserve, and provide optimal consumptive and non-consumptive recreational opportunities. The utilization of any population of native predator species through harvest shall be conducted in a way that ensures sustainable populations of predator and prey are maintained.

Comment [cm3]: This allows for the prescriptive "are" to be tempered with reality. If data shows it is not necessary to do *all four* of these things, this verbiage allows the Commission to respond appropriately.

Comment [cm4]: An obvious needed addition. Science and the scientific method is based on professional peer-review and repeatability of data presented and conclusions drawn. The "best available science" must include peer review.

B. The foundation of predator management shall be to reduce conflict that results in adverse impacts to health and safety, publicly managed lands and private property, crops, and livestock by minimizing preventing habituation of predators. Wildlife managers shall consider human safety a priority, and management decisions shall evaluate and consider lethal and non-lethal controls that are efficacious and cost-effective and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Comment [cm5]: One will never "prevent" predators from wanting to continue to use a ready food source, once discovered. However, steps can be taken to minimize the ability of predators to become habituated to such a food source.

Comment [EC6]: Minority opinion to prioritize non-lethal

Comment [EC7]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

~~C.~~ Wildlife managers shall consider the ecological relationships which may be affected and management decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or management plans for other species and consider affected habitat and other biological and social constraints. Management of terrestrial predator populations and

Comment [cm8]: Forcing Wildlife Managers to make management decisions consistent with "social constraints" puts them in an undefinable position, as these constraints are not uniformly defined or codified anywhere. Suggest this be removed.

their influence on other wildlife species shall include but are not limited to habitat manipulation for predators or prey and removal or take of predators as appropriate.

C.

Comment [EC9]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

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DRAFT

Comments submitted by Dale T. Steele, dated 10/12/16

California Fish and Game Commission

Terrestrial Predators Policy

Draft Sept 28, 2016

Comment [DTS1]: It isn't clear if this is intended for the list of 8 priority species agreed to by the PPWG or a broader application?

I. *(Values statement)*

Pursuant to the objectives in Section 1801 of Fish and Game Code, the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) acknowledges that native terrestrial predators are an integral part of California's natural wildlife and possess intrinsic, historical, and cultural value which benefit society and ecosystems. The Commission shall ~~ensure- conserve~~ the ecological, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, and educational value of native terrestrial predators while minimizing ~~adverse impacts on~~ wildlife ~~conflicts~~ and reducing ~~conflicts that result in~~ adverse impacts to humans, including health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock.

Comment [DTS2]: May not need this phrase if the goal is to minimize both conflicts with wildlife & adverse human impacts...

II. *(Conservation + management principles)*

The Commission further recognizes that ~~sustainable~~ conservation and ~~sustainable~~ management strategies are necessary to ~~encourage- enhance~~ the coexistence of humans and wildlife. It is, therefore, the policy and practice of the Fish and Game Commission that:

A. Native terrestrial predator communities and their habitats are monitored, ~~maintained~~~~managed~~, restored, and enhanced using the best available science. Wildlife managers shall protect, conserve, and provide ~~optimal- sustainable~~ consumptive and non-consumptive recreational opportunities. ~~U- The~~ utilization of ~~any population of~~ native ~~terrestrial~~ predator species through harvest shall be ~~conducted- regulated~~ in a way that ensures sustainable ~~native wildlife~~ populations of ~~predator and prey~~ are maintained.

B. ~~P- The foundation of~~ predator management ~~actions~~ shall ~~be to avoid and~~ reduce conflict that results in adverse impacts to ~~human~~ health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock by preventing habituation of predators ~~due to adverse human practices~~. Wildlife managers shall ~~consider- make~~ human safety ~~a top~~ priority, and management decisions shall ~~include altering adverse human practices and evaluate and consider lethal and non-lethal~~ applying control ~~measures~~ that are ~~efficacious effective, and cost-effective~~ economical and consistent with existing code of ~~ethics/standards for professional conduct~~ and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Comment [DTS3]: Not sure if "Wildlife Managers" is meant to include those who practice wildlife control commercially. Code of Ethics/Prof. Conduct could be a requirement with certification, training etc.

Comment [EC4]: Minority opinion to prioritize non-lethal

~~C-~~ Wildlife managers shall ~~consider- evaluate the~~ ecological relationships which may be affected and management decisions shall ~~be consistent with~~ ~~have documented~~ goals

and objectives ~~or, consistent with wildlife~~ management plans ~~for other species when available~~ and consider ~~affected habitat and other biological~~ and social constraints. ~~Management Conservation of native~~ terrestrial predator populations and ~~their influence on~~ other wildlife species shall ~~include primarily be through~~ but ~~are~~ not limited to habitat manipulation for predators ~~or and~~ prey ~~sustainable populations~~ and removal or take of ~~predators wildlife~~ as appropriate.

C.

Comment [EC5]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

Comment [EC6]: Language still under consideration by Workgroup

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DRAFT

Comments submitted by Les Wright, dated 10/12/16

California Fish and Game Commission
Terrestrial Predators Policy
Draft Sept 28, 2016

I. *(Values statement)*

Pursuant to the objectives in Section 1801 of Fish and Game Code, the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) acknowledges that native terrestrial predators are an integral part of California's natural wildlife and possess intrinsic, historical, and cultural value which benefit society and ecosystems. The Commission shall ensure the ecological, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, and educational value of native terrestrial predators- while minimizing adverse impacts on wildlife and reducing conflicts that result in adverse impacts to humans, including health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock.

II. *(Conservation + management principles)*

The Commission further recognizes that sustainable conservation and management strategies are necessary to encourage the coexistence of humans and wildlife. It is, therefore, the policy and practice of the Fish and Game Commission that:

A. Native terrestrial predator communities and their habitats are monitored, maintained, restored, and enhanced using the best available peer reviewed science. Wildlife managers shall protect, conserve, and provide optimal consumptive and non-consumptive recreational opportunities. The utilization of any population of native predator species through sport or recreation harvest shall be conducted in a way that ensures sustainable populations of predator and prey are maintained.

B. The foundation of predator management shall be to reduce conflict that results in adverse impacts to health and safety, private property, crops, and livestock by preventing habituation of predators. Wildlife managers shall consider human safety a priority, and management decisions shall evaluate and consider lethal and non-lethal controls that are efficacious and cost-effective and in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

C. Wildlife managers shall consider the ecological relationships which may be affected and management decisions shall be consistent with goals and objectives or management plans for other species and consider affected habitat and other biological and social constraints. Management of terrestrial predator populations and their influence on other wildlife species shall include but are not limited to habitat manipulation for predators or prey and removal or take of predators as appropriate.

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Comment [WL1]: Wildlife management is a science based endeavor. This must state "peer reviewed to keep junk science out of policy.

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Comment [WL2]: Depredation should be separated from sport and recreation.

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Comment [WL3]: Define more clearly, does this include rodents? Here and paragraph C. Also, add "at risk species" such as San Joaquin Kit Fox, etc.

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Comment [WL4]: Social constraints do not have a place in the management of a species. Most species do not fare well when emotions instead of peer reviewed science drive policy. This is clearly a discretionary judgement standard that promotes inconsistency. With this statement you may as well not have a guidance policy.

Comment [WL5]: Comment same as above

October 12, 2016

Predator Policy Work Group
California Fish and Game Commission
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1320
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Impacts of Climate Change

Dear Members of the PPWG Committee:

The words “best available science” are used in the principle statement. To me that means information in peer-reviewed research papers from the scientific community, which might include papers that predict changes in habitat, identify stressors that currently or will affect populations, or describe the state of a species. Should CDFW base decisions on just one research paper or should there be more? How many more? My concern is that some people reject the fully vetted science regarding Climate Change supported by many, many research papers and might reject the “best available science” as well. I contend that the best available science already shows that many California ecosystems are or will be severely stressed by the drought; enough so to suspend the harvesting of bobcats, coyotes, gray fox, mink, badgers, and weasels. I’m not trying to take away the right to hunt; I’m saying there isn’t or soon won’t be enough wildlife to support it.

For the past two years, Mono Lake, (near where I live) had a build up of algae, lower brine shrimp production, and starving Eared Grebes dependent on that shrimp, because of the drought. A year ago, I counted 150 dead Grebes that had washed up on a short stretch of shoreline. Hundreds more were dead at the other end of the lake. Even with 80% of normal snowpack this year in the mountains above us, Mono Lake dropped a foot. As fishermen know, drought immediately impacts aquatic life. The Lyle Glacier, which has been measured for years, will disappear with 5-6 more years of drought (see <https://vimeo.com/132441992>). If one of California’s largest glaciers is shrinking, the others will be disappearing around that same time too. The glaciers and permanent snowfields keep our streams flowing through the summer and into the fall. The whole length of the Eastern Sierra, there are narrow ribbons of riparian corridors coming down each canyon from the glaciers to the valley floor--our wildlife’s lifeblood. Lee Vining canyon, for example, has been home to bear, mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, gray fox, ringtail cat, beaver, mink, pine marten, chickaree, chipmunk, golden mantle, mice of all kinds, rabbit, and 20 resident species of birds including canyon wrens and kingfishers--an impressive list. The Mt. Conness, Mt. Dana and Mt. Gibbs glaciers feed Lee Vining Creek. It will be a crisis when these glaciers are gone. With drought, come forest fires. There were two forest fires this year within a mile of my home and little vegetation has come back from a close one 15 years ago. Think how much of our forests have burned and our trees have died in the past three years, then think about how much worse it will be five years from now. These burned forests will not recover in our lifetimes. What happens to the wildlife that lived in the forest?

Common sense and Climate Change science tell us we should suspend hunting of these focus predator species, now. CDFW has no idea how many of the focus predators there are, let alone the ability to keep track of the populations as they decline and shift with Climate Change. We should not pare them down at the onset of such huge habitat changes. It will be a miracle if

species survive the drought and fires on top of the thousands of stresses already affecting wildlife i.e. urban sprawl, increased land converted to agriculture and golf courses, logging, roads, fencing, rodenticides, disease, noisy ATVs and snowmobiles, intrusive hikers and bikers, etc.--all well documented in SWAP, California's Statewide Wildlife Action Plan. We need to let the focus predator species stabilize so they can build up their numbers and increase their chances that some will find a way to survive or to successfully migrate to new areas risking travel through populated areas and across highways. As the drought continues, species may leave or die out in areas they used to inhabit and become concentrated in areas with water sources making it seem like there is a surplus. However, these locations may also be the only populations of a particular species. To allow hunting under these circumstances is unconscionable.

The drought will be with us for decades and as a recent paper tells us, it may last even longer (<http://www.ioes.ucla.edu/pacific-oceans-response-greenhouse-gases-extends-californias-drought>). Many of us are looking to this committee to take the daring step to limit or suspend the harvesting of these focus predators now, in hopes they will survive the decades of Global Warming to come. We need to do as much as we can to protect California's biodiversity for our grandchildren and our posterity. Please lead the way.

Sincerely,
Lynn Boulton
Lee Vining, CA

October 12, 2016

Predator Policy Work Group
California Fish and Game Commission
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1320
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Draft Values/Principles Statement Dated 9/28/16

Dear Members of the PPWG Committee:

Thank you all for reviewing the state's policy for predators. The hunting and trapping regulations for predators are in need of an overhaul in light of how much California has changed over the past 60 years. The value statement in the meeting documents of 9/28 that you collectively put together is good. However, I have some concerns about the principles statements and believe they should be in sync with state plans e.g. SWAP and Safeguarding California, which are focused on conserving the state's wildlife. I know you discussed and changed the values and principles statement from the published meeting documents of 9/28, however, your revised version won't be posted online in time for me to respond to it. I'm presenting my issues in case my they have not been considered or discussed yet..

1) The Conservation/Management Principles statement should say extirpation should be prevented at regional levels and that harvested species should be carefully monitored and if reasonably current data of their population numbers isn't available, then regional limits should be cautiously low or harvesting should be suspended until there is data. Hunting and trapping has to be managed at the regional level or there will be boom and bust cycles around the state throwing the local ecosystems out of balance. It might also say that climate change refugia may be off-limits to hunting and trapping. Mono County has areas that will be climate change refugia for wildlife—at least for the next decade—cold air sinks, high elevations, water seeping out of volcanic layers, etc. and may support wildlife for longer than other parts of the state during the drought years. The current Board of Supervisors, knowing that ecotourism is a significant part of its economy, would not want its wildlife extirpated by hunting and trapping. The county's slogan is "Wild by Nature".

2) The Conservation/Management Principles statement read as if harvesting is the prime directive. I disagree. The principles statement should strongly state what is most important for all: for the state of California to have the maximum biodiversity possible and healthy thriving populations of all of the wildlife in its care. You can't harvest without wildlife. Science tells us how important biodiversity is and that isolated populations of species or small numbers die out. Only when a species is thriving should it be harvested with a healthy post-harvest population remaining (compensatory); not harvested to the maximum possible (additive).

3) The word "optimal" in the principles statement goes against the values statement. From a philosophical perspective, wildlife evolved before man and with us and is on this planet in its own right. From a pragmatic perspective, if you optimize harvesting, then there will be no wildlife for photography or viewing recreational opportunities and vice versa. Which recreational opportunity takes precedence, that of the majority? There are now 38.8 million people in California. The 2005 Wildlife Values in the West survey showed only 27.6% of

Californians had a utilitarian view of wildlife and according to the presentation at the October WRC meeting, the estimated number of resident hunting licenses sold in 2014-15 was 250,000. This shows that more Californians are non-consumptive users who like me, acknowledge and accept the hunt-to-table right of others and understand that ungulates and waterfowl are well managed. Apart from that, most Californians do not support harvesting--not at the risk of extirpation or at the loss of not seeing/having animals in the wild. You are being asked to consider what is best for our wild predators on behalf of all of us.

4) The phrase “by managing predator populations at a level that allows for increased fish and wildlife harvest” is disturbing. Are you concerned that predator populations might grow to the level that they will not leave hunters enough deer, fish, rabbits, rodents, birds, bird eggs, reptiles, and insects (which these predators eat) and need the assurance that you can lower the predator populations if they do? This begrudging sentiment does not belong in a principles statement. Of all the stresses affecting the prey populations, do you really think that predators are the *most* significant factor affecting their preys’ decline? I assume the concern is with the focus predators eating deer, fish, and waterfowl eggs. Take deer for example. I find it hard to believe that fox, mink, raccoons, weasels, and badgers take down deer. Bobcats will occasionally take a small deer if they are desperate, but their preferred food is rabbit, an easier target. That leaves coyotes. Just as we accept a more significant loss of deer to vehicle collisions, we can accept that coyotes have a right to eat deer. There are 1,667 deer fatalities annually in Inyo and Mono Counties along Highway 395 out of 10,000 head (6 herds). Killing coyotes isn’t going to change that. We can share. We can continue to manage the deer populations to meet the coyotes’ needs and our recreational hunting pleasures. If the problem is a shortage of fish in our streams, it will not be due to too many mink or bears. It will be due to under-stocking, overfishing, too many humans, and Climate Change.

The era of abundant wildlife and a few hundred early settlers in California is gone and the reverse is now true. We no longer have thousands of each species that we had even just 30 years ago. Most species are in decline worldwide. In the Eastern Sierra, chipmunks and mice are still abundant, but not the focus predators. Coyotes aren’t scarce, but the question is, are they abundant? Management of the extraction process needs to be much more precise to prevent extirpation, especially in light of Climate Change. People have the right to harvest predator species, but not to extinction or to the tipping point where another stress factor takes them out because that would take away my right to the chance sighting of a weasel running on top of a log, a mink coming out of the water, or a fox popping out of the sagebrush to dash across a dirt road. Thousands of people, Californians and our international visitors, enjoy our wildlife--*alive*. When a wild animal is harvested, only one person benefits.

Sincerely,
Lynn Boulton
Lee Vining, CA



Friends of Griffith Park

P.O. Box 27573
Los Angeles, CA 90027-0573
friendsofgriffithpark.org

October 13, 2016

Executive Director Valerie Termini
California Fish and Game Commission
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090
By email: fgc@fgc.ca.gov

Dear Ms. Termini,

Friends of Griffith Park is aware that State's predator management policies have traditionally focused on consumptive issues, and that these policies are now under revision. We applaud the Commission for adjusting its role as trustees of our natural resources. Taking into account the voice of a substantial base of non-consumptive stakeholders and looking at our resources on a more holistic ecosystem basis, rather than species by species, are important changes that we commend.

Through advocacy, support, education and service, Friends of Griffith Park works to preserve Griffith Park as L.A.'s signature green and open space, and linchpin in the survival of Southern California's native ecosystems. Our urban wilderness block serves as a unique model of a functioning ecosystem within the constraints of an extremely challenging wildlands interface zone, and our predator species play an essential role in maintaining the biodiversity of our native flora and fauna. As more and more areas throughout the state begin to experience a similar interface status, it's our hope that Griffith Park can provide important examples for enhancing predator friendly habitat and human/wildlife coexistence.

In fact, living with wildlife is deemed by many to be one of the most positively defining factors for quality of life in Southern California. Public enthusiasm for our apex predators is illustrated by widely documented empathy for Griffith Park's mountain lion P-22, and is underscored by the human-interest media coverage of each incident in which a local mountain lion is killed as the result of colliding with a vehicle.

As sponsors and funders of scientific studies/surveys, we seek to anticipate our future management directions by utilizing the best existing science in addition to creating new relevant science that reflects significant wildlife stress factors. Such stressors are largely the result of newer human-influenced conditions, some more prevalent in urban areas, including:

habitat fragmentation, compromised genetic exchange, rodenticides, pesticides, road mortality, fire, climate change and more.

Our science and outreach efforts are moving forward with partners at our side, such as USGS, NPS, NWF and Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. "Citizen science", is just one new means for connecting people with science. All evidence indicates a public that is motivated to learn about adopting new behaviors as their preferred method for long-term reductions in human/predator conflicts. We also maintain that the public is generally not tolerant of extermination policies by any agency.

In conclusion, we encourage the California Fish and Game Commission to craft predator policy revisions that acknowledge the beneficial impacts of our native predators, and address the growing interest for non-consumptive justifications for our wildlife.

We urge the California Fish and Game Commission to establish goals that are consistent with the 2015 California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Statewide Wildlife Action Plan which acknowledges new science which factors in the effects of modern stressors in assessing any species' population health. Allowable depletions can only be scientifically based when these stress factors are properly considered.

We would also like to note that we view any regulations permitting unlimited taking of native predators regardless of seasons or zones as supporting unsustainable practices, and that poisons should be prohibited in all cases.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gerry H.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gerry Hans
President

www.friendsofgriffithpark.org

Griffith Park Natural History Survey

Funded through Friends of Griffith Park

List of science work in Griffith Park

- Large Mammal Survey
- Herptile Survey
- Initial Carnivore Study of Griffith Park (published, Academy of Science)
- Bird Survey and annotated list produced
- Bat Survey (currently submitted for publication)
- Rare Plant Survey (comprehensive plant database, and published Fremontia)
- Butterfly Survey (fieldguide produced)
- A Hollywood Drama of Butterfly Extirpation...(Journal Insect Conservation)
- Mushroom and Lichen Survey (ongoing)
- Fern Dell Wildlife Survey
- Old Zoo Area Survey and Mitigation Concepts
- Griffith Park Connectivity Study (ongoing)
- Conservation of Western Gray Squirrels in Griffith Park

Partial list of science team for Griffith Park work:

- Dan Cooper, Harvard University, Masters Degree at U.C. Riverside, President, Cooper Ecological Monitoring. Principal investigator and scientific advisor for Friends of Griffith Park, Author, "Important Bird Areas of California".
- Stephanie Spehar, Ph.D. Anthropology at New York University, Professor University of Wisconsin
- Martin Byhower, bird surveys, President, Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society, Teacher, Director, Birding Southern California
- Paul Mathewson, Masters Degree at Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin, J.D at University of Wisconsin
- Stephanie Remington, Masters Degree at Cal State Polytechnic, California bat expert and technical bat field work pioneer
- Miguel Ordeñana, Master Degree, Ecology at U.C. Davis, wildlife biologist and educator at Natural History Museum
- Erin Boyston, Ph.D. Zoology at Michigan State University, carnivore expert with USGS co-opping with Wildlife Connectivity Study
- Timothy Bonebrake, U.C. Berkley, Ph.D. Biology at Stanford University, butterfly expert, associate professor at University of Hong Kong
- Gary Lincoff, Mycologist and teacher, New York Botanical Gardens, author various books, including Audubon Field Guide to North American Mushrooms
- Chris DeMarco, CSULA Biology Department