

WORKGROUP STAFF SUMMARY FOR SEPTEMBER 28, 2016

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

Discuss and revise draft predator policy.

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

In July 2016, the Predator Policy Workgroup (Workgroup) initiated work on tasks under Objectives 1 and 2 of their work plan (Exhibit 1) by reviewing existing predator policies and identifying the key elements to include in a draft predator policy. The Workgroup identified the following elements:

- Role of predators in the ecosystem – both positive and negative impacts to other wildlife, especially other managed prey/species
- Value – intrinsic, ecological, recreational, aesthetic, educational, economic, fiscal, scientific, historical significance/heritage
- Public health and safety – both positive and negative impacts
- Economic losses/impacts
- Use and enjoyment
- Recognition of human-wildlife conflicts
- Consideration of definitions for predators and prey (domestic vs. wild and native vs. non-native) and how to use in the policy

Today, the Workgroup will begin work on developing a draft predator policy (see work plan Objective 2, Task 2) by reviewing, discussing, and revising language drafted by FGC staff (Exhibit 2).

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

1. [PPWG work plan, dated May 27, 2016](#)
2. [Draft predator policy prepared by FGC staff, dated 09/02/16](#)

Workgroup Decision/Recommendation (N/A)

**Wildlife Resources Committee
Predator Policy Workgroup
Proposed Work Plan
Revised May 27, 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 2016
 - Task 4: Sep 2016
 - Task 5: Oct-Nov 2016
 - Task 6: Oct-Nov 2016
 - Task 7: Nov 2016
 - Task 8: Dec 2016-Jan 2017(WRC)
 - Task 9: 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 4: Feb-Apr 2017
 - Task 5: Apr-May 2017 (WRC)
 - Task 6: May-Jun 2017 (Commission)

California Fish and Game Commission

Terrestrial Predators Policy

Draft Sept 2, 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 benefits all persons. The Commission shall govern native terrestrial predators to ensure their future ecological, scientific, aesthetic, recreational, and educational values while minimizing adverse impacts on wildlife and reducing conflicts with humans and human enterprise.

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, preserve, and provide optimal recreational opportunities including harvest by managing predator populations at a level that allows for increased fish and wildlife harvest while maintaining viable predator populations. The utilization of any population of native predator species shall be conducted in a way that ensures a sustainable population is maintained.
- B. The foundation of predator management shall be to foster coexistence with humans by preventing habituation of predators and decreasing the risk of conflict among domestic animals and wild predators. Wildlife managers shall consider human safety a priority, and management decisions shall emphasize non-lethal controls, where feasible and cost-effective. Lethal predator control is reserved as a practical measure and shall be conducted humanely and in compliance with all applicable law and regulation.
- C. Terrestrial predator populations shall be managed through habitat manipulation and/or removal as appropriate. 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 wildlife populations, affected habitat, and other biological and social constraints.