

STAFF SUMMARY FOR APRIL 26-27, 2017

5. FIVE-YEAR PLM HARVEST PROGRAMS**Today's Item**Information ☐Action ☒

Approve the five-year renewal of Private Lands Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Management (PLM) Area licenses for 2017-2022 and seasons, harvests and habitat improvements for 2017-2022 on five properties.

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

Fish and Game Code sections 3400-3409, and Title 14 Section 601 prescribe conditions for a PLM program that 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 extended seasons ("harvest program"). In return for a harvest program, 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 actions associated with the PLM program: an initial five-year PLM license; an annual list of PLM seasons, harvests, and habitat improvements; and a five-year PLM license renewal, with conditions unique to each participant's property.

Proposed wildlife management plans and annual seasons, harvests, and habitat improvements for the five properties have been reviewed by DFW and found to be in compliance with FGC regulations and policies for PLMs; applicants have identified location where records will be kept and made available for inspection (Exhibit 1).

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

FGC staff: Approve five-year renewal of PLM licenses, and annual seasons, harvests and habitat improvements as recommended by DFW, under a motion to adopt the consent calendar.

DFW: Approve the specified wildlife management plans, five-year PLM license renewals for 2017-2022, and seasons, harvests, and habitat improvements for 2017-2022 for five properties, under the conditions specified in Exhibit 2.

Exhibits

1. [DFW memo, received Mar 21, 2017](#)
2. [PLM proposed five-year details](#)
3. [Alphabetical listing of five properties](#)

Motion/Direction

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Commission adopts the consent calendar, items 3-6.

State of California
Department of Fish and Wildlife

RECEIVED
CALIFORNIA
FISH AND GAME
COMMISSION

2017 MAR 21 AM 7:52

Memorandum

Date: March 13, 2017

To: Valerie Termini
Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission

From: Charlton H. Bonham
Director



Subject: **Agenda Item for the April 26, 2017 Fish and Game Commission Meeting Private Lands Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Management (PLM) Area Licenses**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife has reviewed the Annual and 5-year renewals for 56 properties in 16 counties consisting of approximately 570,621 acres.

The Annual renewal PLM areas were previously licensed under Commission regulations Section 601, Title 14, California Code of Regulations. Full payment was made for all tags used in 2016, and all habitat work was completed.

The 5-year renewal management plans 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 plans, applications, and each 2017/18 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.

Attachment

Valerie Termini, Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission
March 13, 2017
Page 2

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

T.O. Smith, Branch Chief
Wildlife Branch
Timothy.Smith@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
NEW 5-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLANS, 2017-2022
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS**

PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
NORTHERN REGION		
STOVER RANCH HUMBOLDT 7,000 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 September 1, 2017 through November 30, 2017. • Issue 2 antlerless elk tags for the period October 1, 2017 through November 30, 2017. • One of the antlerless elk tags will be made available for DFW to distribute to an Apprentice Hunter through the SHARE Program. The SHARE Program will reimburse Stover Ranch for the tag fee, but Stover Ranch will otherwise provide the hunt free of charge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remove all conifer trees less than 4 inches diameter-breast-height from at least 11 acres of oak woodland. ➤ Remove all conifer trees less than 12 inches diameter-at-breast height from at least 78 acres of Grassland Core Treatment areas ➤ Remove all conifer trees less than 8 inches diameter-at-breast height along at least 3,300 linear yards of grassland margins. Treated areas will extend from the grassland margins back to areas dominated by larger conifers.
BAY DELTA REGION		
CONNOLLY AND CORRAL HOLLOW RANCH SAN JOAQUIN 11,758 ACRES	<p>Authorized Harvest: 2 bull elk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 2 bull elk tags for the periods of July 15, 2017 through September 15, 2017 and November 15, 2017 through December 15, 2017. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide 800 acres of grasslands on the Connolly ranch for exclusive use by elk from July through March. ➤ Provide 480 acres of grasslands on the Corral Hollow ranch for exclusive use by elk. ➤ Continue to implement a rotational cattle grazing regime to provide adequate forage for elk. ➤ Fell 3 acres of gray pines to provide additional forage for elk and to increase cover for small mammals, birds and reptiles. Trees will be felled outside bird breeding season (March 1 – June 30) and any trees with birds of prey nests shall be avoided altogether.

PLM AREA LICENSE
NEW 5-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLANS, 2017-2022
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS

PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
CENTRAL REGION		
<p>AVENALES RANCH</p> <p>SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY</p> <p>11,300 ACRES</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 4 bull elk, 3 antlerless elk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 2 bull elk tags for the period of July 15, 2017 through December 31, 2017. • Issue 2 antlerless elk tags for the period of September 15, 2017 through December 31, 2017. <p>Note: Avenales Ranch is <u>not</u> requesting the full approved allocation (“authorized harvest”) of tags.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Install 2 “Elk Crossings” in barbed wire fence lines (East Fields and Eperly Ridge) to facilitate elk movement through property. ➤ Install new water point at entrance to Machesna Canyon to provide water for cattle and wildlife. ➤ Construct 10 brush piles around the water trough at the old homestead to provide cover for wildlife. ➤ Assist the Department in conducting a mountain lion study on the ranch over the next 3 years. ➤ Check on and maintain projects constructed in 2012.
<p>LEWIS RANCH</p> <p>SAN BENITO</p> <p>512 ACRES</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 1 bull elk, 1 antlerless elk. (1 bull elk tag available every <u>other</u> year)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 1 antlerless elk tag for the period of August 15, 2017 through December 31, 2017. <p>Note: This is an off cycle year where Lewis Ranch is only eligible for the antlerless tag.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No cattle grazing on 512 acres to provide high quality habitat for tule elk, quail and other wildlife. ➤ Maintain perennial water for wildlife in four guzzlers. ➤ Maintain 12 brush piles by adding to them as needed. ➤ Disc 5 fields, seed with barley and fertilize to provide supplemental food and cover for wildlife. ➤ Clean and repair 4 existing owl boxes for the upcoming nesting season. ➤ Disc 1 field in spring, seed with safflower and fertilize to provide supplemental food and cover for wildlife. ➤ Plant 4 Red huckleberry bushes in each of the 3 guzzler locations. Fence to protect them. Water as needed to help establish.
<p>TRINCHERO RANCH</p> <p>SAN BENITO</p> <p>4,452 ACRES</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 bull elk, 1 antlerless elk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue 2 bull elk tags for the period of July 15, 2017 through December 31, 2017. <p>Note: Trinchero Ranch is <u>not</u> requesting the full approved allocation (“authorized harvest”) of tags.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Limited cattle grazing on approximately 4,000 acres in Black and Red Mountain pastures from December through May. ➤ Burn or “brush crush” 5 acres to stimulate new forage growth for wildlife. ➤ Reseed 5 acres of brushed areas with grasses and legumes to improve forage quality for wildlife. ➤ Construct 4-6 brush piles for use by wildlife.

Approve five-year Private Lands Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Management Area (PLM) plans and 2017-2022 licenses for: (Pursuant to Section 601, Title 14, CCR)

- (A) Avenales Ranch (San Luis Obispo County)
- (B) Connolly and Corral Hollow Ranch (San Joaquin County)
- (C) Lewis Ranch (San Benito County)
- (D) Stover Ranch (Humboldt County)
- (E) Trincherro Ranch (San Benito County)