

Possible Changes to Public Use Regulations for CDFW Lands

June 2019

Background Information:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) manages 110 wildlife areas (totaling 712,123 acres) and 135 ecological reserves (totaling 229,953 acres). The purposes of wildlife areas are set in the California Fish and Game Code, sections 1526, 1528 and 1745. These include the conservation of wildlife and habitats and providing opportunities for compatible recreation -- primarily hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, photography, conservation education and research. The purposes of ecological reserves are set in the California Fish and Game Code, sections 1580, 1584 and 1585. These include the conservation of rare species and specialized habitat types, conservation education activities and research. Other uses such as hiking and photography are allowed at most ecological reserves, but some sites are closed to general public access.

California Fish and Game Code, sections 1525, 1526, 1580 and 1584 authorize the California Fish and Game Commission to designate CDFW lands (or "Department lands") as wildlife areas or ecological reserves and to authorize compatible public uses. These designations and authorizations are in the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, as follows:

Section 550: Public use regulations that apply to all Department lands.

Section 550.5: Regulations about special entry or use requirement (reservations, permits, passes) on certain Department lands.

Section 551: List of wildlife areas, wildlife area types and site-specific regulations.

Section 552: Site-specific regulations for nine National Wildlife Refuges that are also listed as wildlife areas in section 551 and managed under a cooperative agreement.

Section 630: List of ecological reserves and site-specific regulations for ecological reserves.

The Fish and Game Commission can change regulations via the procedure described in the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) (Government Code, sections 11340-11361). This includes a required 45-day public comment period. The Commission accepts comments for a longer period than required, from the day a public notice of the proposed changes is published until the Commission votes on adoption, which, for the types of regulations involved, is approximately four months.

Status of the regulation changes and information about the outreach meetings:

The regulatory process begins when the Fish and Game Commission decides that a petition for regulation changes should be considered and a public notice is published about 10 days later. This is the start of the public comment period. This process is expected to begin for the land regulations in October 2019.

The purposes of the four outreach meetings being held from June 18 through June 25, 2019, are to provide the public with an early look at the possible regulation changes, address questions about the process and about specific properties and to obtain input.

The early outreach meetings will be “open house” style from 6 – 8 pm at:

Tuesday, June 18

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
South Coast Region Headquarters
3883 Ruffin Road
San Diego, CA 92123

Wednesday, June 19

Oroville Branch Library
1820 Mitchell Ave.
Oroville, CA 95966

Monday, June 24

Grassland Environmental Education Center
Los Banos Wildlife Area
18110 Henry Miller Ave.
Los Banos, CA 93635

Tuesday, June 25

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
45211 County Road 32B (Chiles Road)
Davis, CA 95618

Summary of the proposed regulation changes:

1. Designate eight new properties as ecological reserves and one property as a wildlife area.
2. Remove the designations of three wildlife areas, two units of a fourth wildlife area, and one ecological reserve from Title 14 because CDFW no longer has management authority for those properties.
3. Make site-specific regulation changes for eleven existing wildlife areas and ecological reserves.

4. Minor changes to existing regulations to improve consistency, clarity, and remove redundancies.

Examples of minor changes:

- Section 550.5(c)(7), clarifies that junior hunters under the age of 16 will only be issued a hunting permit when accompanied by an adult (a previous regulation change raised the maximum age of juniors to 17).
- Lake Sonoma Wildlife Area is listed incorrectly in sections 551(b) and 551(c), when it should only be listed in section 551(c).
- Update language in Section 552 for consistency with federal regulations. These are National Wildlife Refuges on which hunting is managed by CDFW under an agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

See the following pages for more details about the proposed changes.

How to participate in the regulatory process:

- 1) Add your name to the Fish and Game Commission's e-mail list. Go to www.fgc.ca.gov (right side of page). They will not share your name or contact information, and you can select the topics for which you wish to receive notices.
- 2) Information about how to participate in the APA process is also at www.fgc.ca.gov (just below the sign-up for the e-mail list).

If you have questions or comments about the information presented here or at the outreach meetings, please contact Julie Horenstein, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisor), at julie.horenstein@wildlife.ca.gov or at (916) 324-3772.

DRAFT: Possible Changes to Site-Specific Public Use Regulations for CDFW Lands for 2019/2020

"Designate", as used in the "Type of Change" column, means that a property would be added to Section 551 as a wildlife area or Section 630 as an ecological reserve in Title 14 of the CA Code of Regulations. Typically these properties are relatively new to CDFW.

= designations

County	CDFW Region	Property Name	Type of Change	Notes	Title 14 Section
Butte	2	Gray Lodge Wildlife Area	Reduce or eliminate consecutive pheasant hunt days early in the season	Limited pheasants/opportunity/staff resources	551(s)
Butte	2	Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area	Reduce or eliminate consecutive pheasant hunt days early in the season	Limited pheasants/opportunity/staff resources	551(s)
Fresno	4	Mendota Wildlife Area	Reduce or eliminate consecutive pheasant hunt days early in the season	Limited pheasants/opportunity/staff resources	551(s)
Inyo	6	Deep Springs Ecological Reserve	Designate as an ecological reserve	Open for public uses authorized in the general regulations; no site-specific regulations recommended	630(b)
Inyo	6	Round Valley Wildlife Area	Designate as a wildlife area (Type C)	Open for public uses authorized in the general regulations; no site-specific regulations recommended	551(b)
Inyo	6	Tecopa Ecological Reserve	Designate as an ecological reserve	Open for public uses authorized in the general regulations; no site-specific regulations recommended	630(b)
Kern	4	Indian Wells Valley Ecological Reserve	Designate as an ecological reserve; close to general public access; allow special hunts	Property transferred to CDFW as mitigation for impacts to sensitive species and habitats.	630(b), (d) and (h)
Kern	4	South Fork Wildlife Area	Remove from the list of wildlife areas	Owned by USFS/ No longer managed by CDFW	551(b)
Merced	4	Los Banos Wildlife Area	Reduce or eliminate consecutive pheasant hunt days early in the season	Limited pheasants/opportunity/staff resources	551(s)

County	CDFW Region	Property Name	Type of Change	Notes	Title 14 Section
Merced/ Stanislaus	4	North Grasslands Wildlife Area	Reduce or eliminate consecutive pheasant hunt days early in the season	Limited pheasants/opportunity/staff resources	551(s)
Napa	3	Lake Berryessa Wildlife Area	Remove from the list of wildilfe areas	Owned by Bureau of Reclamation; no longer managed by CDFW	551(c)
Napa	3	Napa-Sonoma Marshes WA	Bike use on Green Island Unit; Open Southern Crossing Unit to limited uses	Green Island: bikes allowed on designated regional trail	551(j) and(o)
Nevada	2	Truckee River Wildlife Area	Firearm and archery prohibition on Boca, Polaris, and West River Units	Public safety; fishing access units near Truckee; total acreage less than 4% of wildlife area	551(r)
Riverside	6	Santa Margarita River ER	Designate as an ecological reserve; Close to general public access	Mitigation land adjacent to non-CDFW land open for public uses	630(b) and (h)
San Diego	5	Cañada de San Vicente ER	Designate as an ER in Sec. 630; allow special hunts;	Additional site-specific regulations may be proposed.	630(b), (d)
San Diego	5	Del Mar Mesa/Lopez Ridge ER	Close to general public access	Listed species and rare habitat; per Sec. 550(c)(2)(D)(2) can be accessed with written authorization from CDFW; adjacent to non-CDFW lands open for recreation	630(h)
San Diego	5	Hollenbeck Canyon WA	Extend crow hunting, with certain conditions, to early April	Currently prohibited after Jan. 31 on this property	551(o)
San Diego	5	San Vicente Highlands ER	Designate as an ecological reserve; allow special hunts	Designation opens land for public uses authorized in the general regulations	630(b) and (d)
San Joaquin	3	White Slough Wildlife Area	Remove from the list of wildilfe areas in Section 551	Owned by DWR; no longer managed by CDFW	551(b)
San Luis Obispo	4	North Carrizo Ecological Reserve	Designate as an ecological reserve. Close to general public access; allow special hunts	Mitigation land bordered by extensive solar energy installations	630(b), (d) and (h)

County	CDFW Region	Property Name	Type of Change	Notes	Title 14 Section
Santa Barbara	5	Cienega Springs Ecological Reserve	Designate as an ecological reserve; allow special hunts	Designation opens land for public uses authorized in the general regulations	630(b) and (d)
Solano	3	Grizzly Island Wildlife Area	Reduce or eliminate consecutive pheasant hunt days early in the season	Limited pheasants/opportunity/staff resources	551(s)
Solano	3	Grizzly Island Wildlife Area	Remove Gold Hills and Garibaldi Units from Grizzly Island Wildlife Area (GIWA)	Units transferred to Pacific Flyway Center (wetlands education) in exchange for acreage added to the Crescent Unit, GIWA	551(b)
Tulare	4	Yaudanchi Ecological Reserve	Remove from list of ecological reserves	Owned by Dept. of Developmental Services; no longer managed by CDFW	630(b)
Yolo	3	Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area	Reduce or eliminate consecutive pheasant hunt days early in the season	Limited pheasants/opportunity/staff resources	551(s)

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Lands to be Designated in or Removed from Title 14

June 2019

