

## COMMITTEE STAFF SUMMARY FOR MAY 16-17, 2023 WRC

**3. WILD PIG VALIDATIONS****Today's Item****Information** ☒**Action** ☐

Discuss a future rulemaking regarding the designation and hunting of wild pig, stemming from statutory changes due to Senate Bill 856 (Chapter 469, Statutes of 2022).

**Summary of Previous/Future Actions**

- |                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • <b>Today's discussion</b>    | <b>May 17, 2023; WRC</b> |
| • Potential WRC recommendation | September 21, 2023; WRC  |

**Background**

Wild pig is a non-native, invasive species that causes damage to natural areas, agricultural lands, and other areas throughout California. Additionally, individual pigs are vectors for diseases and can be a public safety hazard.

Signed into law in September 2022, Senate Bill 856 made a number of changes to statutes affecting wild pig management and hunting, including:

- Creating a new category of wildlife called "exotic game mammal" and designating wild pig as such;
- changing wild pig tags to a validation scheme, allowing unlimited take of wild pig;
- eliminating hunting of wild pig in any new contained hunting preserves; and
- prohibiting the intentional or knowing release of any hog, boar, pig or swine to live in a wild or feral state upon public or private land.

The changes specified in SB 856 may require amendments to the Commission's Title 14 regulations to bring the regulations into alignment with amended statute.

Today, the Department will propose regulatory changes to implement the bill (Exhibit 1), for discussion by the Wildlife Resources Committee.

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

1. [Department presentation](#)

**Committee Direction/Recommendation (N/A)**

# **Senate Bill 856 (2022) - Wild Pig Validations**

**Presented to the California Fish and Game Commission  
Wildlife Resources Committee**

May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023

---

Dan Skalos  
Upland Game Unit Supervisor  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife

# Senate Bill 856 (2022)

---

Senator Bill Dodd – Napa

Signed into law September 2022; effective January 1, 2023

*Intent: Provide Department and public more tools to “manage” wild pigs*





# Changes to Fish and Game Code

---

- Bill impacted 19 code sections
- Created 4 new sections
- Many changes for consistency and administration:
  - Examples: Nonlead ammo requirement, replacing “tag” with validation, establishing validation fee structure, etc.
  - Those sections: 3003.1, 3004.5, 3950, 4150, 4181, 4304, 4651.5(b), 4653, 4654, 4655, 4657



Credit: Force of Nature.com



# Changes to Fish and Game Code

---

- New category of wildlife
  - **“Exotic Game Mammal”**
  - Separates pigs from game and nongame mammals for flexibility in setting regulations



Credit: Times Herald



# Definition of wild pig

---

- Does not have permanent mark (brand/tattoo) or visible tag
- Physical characteristics: coat, head, snout, ears, legs, tail and teeth
- A free-roaming pig, feral pig, or European wild boar having no visible tags, markings, or characteristics indicating that the pig or boar is from a domestic herd



Credit: University of Illinois

# Hunting related changes

---



## *Fishing & Hunting Licenses*

- Established a validation in place of tags
  - Similar fee as one tag, \$27
  - Unlimited take
  - Validation in lifetime licenses - big game package
- Wild pigs can be taken w/two-day nonresident license
- Wild pigs can be taken on free hunt days w/validation

# Hunting to reduce damage

---

- Requires Department to engage landowners to alleviate damage by wild pigs through hunting
  - Shared Habitat Alliance Through Recreational Enhancement Program





# Big Game Management Account

---

- Validation revenues put in Big Game Management Account for expenditure by the Department
- Provides a mechanism for:
  - Habitat restoration
  - Expanding hunting opportunity

Credit: Ron Koeberer





# Captive hunting operations

---

- ***New*** contained hunting preserves for wild pigs are ***prohibited***
- Businesses in operation before January 1, 2022 can continue to operate
  - Cannot expand in size
  - Sale or transfer of existing operations is prohibited



Credit: Texas Outdoors

# **Live animals: Possession and release**

- Exotic game mammals cannot be taken from the wild and possessed in captivity, except under conditions specified by the Commission
- Unlawful to intentionally or knowingly release any swine to live in a wild or feral state upon public or private land



# Proposed changes to Title 14 – Transportation and reporting

---

- *The commission shall adopt regulations governing the transportation of wild pigs and the reporting of any take*
- Minimum reporting requirements specified in code:
  - Name, date and location.
  - Any other information the commission finds would be appropriate...
- **Staff proposed report in ALDS:**
  - Name, Month, County, Number taken
  - Report complete at the end of hunting-license year

# Proposed changes to Title 14 – New regs

- **Section 325: Exotic game mammal defined**

- Proposed: “Exotic game mammal” means the following: wild pig, feral pigs, European wild pigs and their hybrids (genus *Sus*)

- **Section 326: Shooting hours on exotic game mammals**

- No proposal at this time
- Big game: ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset



# **Proposed changes to Title 14 – New Regs**

- **Section 327: Methods authorized for taking exotic game mammals**
  - No proposal at this time
  - Default, accept similar conditions as big game, potentially more liberal methods, e.g. crossbows



# Depredation

---

- 760 permits issued in 2022
  - Mainly Department Regions 3 & 4
- **Proposed changes:**
  - Multi-year permit
  - Eliminate tags
  - Survey of permit holders?



Credit: Gulf Coast Media

# Department Lands and additional clean-up

- **Sections 551 – 552: Department Lands...**
  - Remove the word “tag” from 551(s)(8) and 551(s)(19)
  - Lands will incorporate these changes
  - Other potential changes may include liberalizing seasons on wildlife areas
  - These changes would be incorporated at a later date
- Extensive clean-up for consistency
  - Numerous sections in Chapters 1 and 3



# Questions or Comments?

---

Contact:

Dan Skalos

Upland Game Unit Supervisor

[Dan.Skalos@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Dan.Skalos@wildlife.ca.gov)

