

## Staff Summary for April 15-16, 2026

**9. Five-Year Private Lands Management (PLM) Plans and Licenses (consent)**

Today's Item

Information Action 

Consider approving five-year PLM plans and 2026-2031 licenses.

**Summary of Previous/Future Actions****Background**

California Fish and Game Code Section 3402 subdivision (a) states that an application for a wildlife habitat enhancement and management area license may be issued by the Department upon approval by the Commission; 3406 subdivision (c) requires that the activities conducted pursuant to each Private Lands Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Management Plan shall be reviewed annually by the Department and by the Commission at a public hearing. Licenses for such areas may be granted by the Commission for a period of five years following department review and approval of the management plan (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Subsection 601(a)).

The PLM program 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.

The Department has reviewed the five-year management plan for 11 properties in seven counties consisting of approximately 111,182 acres.

Habitat improvements accomplished under the management 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 and the Department finds they comply with Commission regulations and policies for PLM licenses and plans.

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

**Commission staff:** Approve five-year PLM license renewals for 2026-2031, and proposed seasons, harvests and habitat improvements for 2026-2031 as recommended by the Department for 11 properties, under a motion to adopt the consent calendar.

**Department:** Approve five-year PLM license renewals for 11 properties, under the conditions specified in Exhibit 2.

**Exhibits**

1. [Department memo, received March 24, 2026](#)
2. [PLM Area License 5-Year Renewals, 2026-2031, Proposed Seasons, Harvests, and Habitat Improvements, received March 24, 2026](#)

Staff Summary for April 15-16, 2026

**Motion**

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ that the Commission adopts the staff recommendations for items 8-14 on the consent calendar.

# MEMORANDUM

Signed original on file,

Received March 24, 2026

Date: March 20, 2026

To: Melissa Miller-Henson  
Executive Director, Fish and Game Commission

From: Meghan Hertel, Director

**Subject: Agenda Item for the April 15-16, 2026 Fish and Game Commission Meeting  
Private Lands Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Management (PLM) Area  
Licenses**

California Fish and Game Code Section 3406(c) requires that the activities conducted pursuant to each Private Lands Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Management Plan (PLM) shall be reviewed annually by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) and by the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) at a public hearing. Licenses for such areas may be granted by the Commission for a period of five (5) years following department review and approval of the management plan (Title 14, California Code of Regulations Section 601(a)).

The Department has reviewed the Initial management plan for 2 new properties in 2 counties consisting of approximately 18,733 acres and the 5-year renewals for 11 properties in 7 counties consisting of approximately 111,182 acres. Additionally, the Department has reviewed the annual reports for 53 properties in 15 counties consisting of approximately 843,262 acres.

The Department recommends that the Commission approve the wildlife management plans, applications, and each 2026/27 harvest program under conditions specified in the attached tables. 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.

The remaining PLM areas will be submitted to the Commission for approval at the June 17-18 meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Victoria Barr at (916) 203-0567 or by email at [Victoria.barr@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Victoria.barr@wildlife.ca.gov).



Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director  
Fish and Game Commission  
March 20, 2026  
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Attachment

ec: Chad Dibble, Deputy Director  
Wildlife and Fisheries Division

Scott Gardner, Branch Chief  
Wildlife Branch

Mario Klip, Environmental Program Manager  
Wildlife Branch

Victoria Barr, Environmental Scientist  
Wildlife Branch

**PLM AREA LICENSE  
5-YEAR RENEWALS, 2026-2031  
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS**

**NORTHERN REGION**

<b>PLM Area</b>	<b>2026 Proposed Season and Harvest</b>	<b>Habitat Improvement Program</b>
<p>R-R Ranch Mendocino Deer Zone A 1,470 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 7 forked horn or better buck deer, 2 bull elk and 6 antlerless elk</p> <p>Issue 7 buck deer tags for the period of July 15, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p> <p>No more than 3 buck deer may be harvested after September 21, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 2 bull elk tags for the period of July 15, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 4 antlerless elk tags for the period of September 5, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p> <p>On or before October 15, 2026, the licensee may request (in writing) up to 1 bull elk tag up to 2 additional antlerless elk tags to accomplish the authorized harvest.</p> <p>In no case shall the number of tags issued be used to exceed the authorized harvest.</p> <p>The number of tag holders actively hunting shall not exceed the number of elk available to harvest.</p>	<p>Irrigate a 7-acre alfalfa pasture. If the alfalfa production falls below a total cover of 50% in the fall, rip, replant and roll the pasture at a rate of 20 lbs./acre the following March or April with a clover and alfalfa seed mix to provide high quality forage for wildlife. The first cutting of hay will be removed and all subsequent growth will be left for wildlife use.</p> <p>Grass cutting and spraying herbicide on 100-acre dryland plot to control invasive species.</p> <p>Maintain 2 ponds, 3 springs, and 3 water troughs for wildlife use.</p> <p>Create at least 4 wood piles at least 15 feet in diameter and 6 feet high for wildlife. Recycle 50% of existing decadent wood piles by burning.</p> <p>Establish 2 new irrigated pastures that will be at least 1 acre each in the West and East Pastures.</p> <p>Plant 50 willow cuttings annually near Mewhinney Creek riparian zone. Cuttings will be protected from herbivory.</p> <p>Brush manipulation on at least 1 acre annually to rejuvenate browse available for wildlife.</p>

**PLM AREA LICENSE  
5-YEAR RENEWALS, 2026-2031  
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS**

PLM Area	2026 Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>R Wild Horse Ranch</p> <p>Deer Zone B5</p> <p>Tehama</p> <p>4,000 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 4 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 4 buck deer tags for the period of November 16, 2026, through November 20, 2026.</p>	<p>Mechanically treat at least 10 acres of decadent brush to promote new growth and create wildlife travel corridors annually.</p> <p>Create a 0.50 acre dugout water catchment basin to provide a water source for wildlife annually.</p> <p>Build at least 10 brush piles, each 20 feet in diameter, to provide escape cover for wildlife.</p> <p>Burn brush piles annually that were created five years prior.</p>
<p>Shamrock Ranch</p> <p>Deer Zone B1</p> <p>Mendocino</p> <p>16,400 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 8 bull elk, 10 antlerless elk, 50 deer (of which no more than 30 may be forked-horn or better buck deer, and 20 may be antlerless deer)</p> <p>Issue 8 bull elk tags for the period of July 11, 2026, through December 13, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 10 antlerless elk tags for the period of September 15, 2026, through December 13, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 25 either-sex deer tags for the period of July 11, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p> <p>No antlerless deer shall be harvested before September 15, 2026.</p> <p>No more than 15 buck deer may be taken after October 25, 2026.</p>	<p>Continued removal and/or treatment of at least 20 acres of invasive scotch broom in the Anderson pasture near the springs.</p> <p>Burn or mechanically treat at least 500 acres of decadent brush and associated vegetation with CalFire VMP.</p> <p>Mechanically treat at least 0.50 acres of Rosa Californica and blackberries to create new browse.</p> <p>Fertilize, reseed and irrigate at least 15 acres of hay meadow from June through mid-September to provide forage for wildlife.</p> <p>Thin at least 2 acres of dense tan oak, to encourage new growth and browse habitat.</p> <p>Rebuild and maintain the fencing at the 6-acre Meyer pasture livestock enclosure.</p> <p>Initiate a high intensity/ short duration cattle grazing treatment in the Meyers enclosure to remove accumulated mature, decadent forage.</p>

**PLM AREA LICENSE  
5-YEAR RENEWALS, 2026-2031  
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS**

<b>PLM Area</b>	<b>2026 Proposed Season and Harvest</b>	<b>Habitat Improvement Program</b>
Shamrock Ranch Cont.	On or before October 15, 2026, the licensee may request (in writing) up to 15 additional either-sex deer tags to accomplish the authorized harvest.	<p>Create at least 16 new brush piles measuring 6 feet by 15 feet. Fifteen mature (&gt;5yr old) brush piles will be burned and reseeded.</p> <p>Leave approximately 10.50 acres of hay meadow in the North Meadow and 30 feet wide by approximately 1,900 feet long buffer strip along Long Valley Creek in the South Meadow during haying to provide mature forage for elk and cover for the calves.</p> <p>Limit cattle grazing in the hay meadows and surrounding area which encompasses approximately 200 acres to mid-October through mid-December.</p> <p>Check and maintain 21 ponds and 8 springs. Exclusionary fencing will be wildlife friendly to provide water and habitat for wildlife.</p> <p>Wildlife guzzler will be added in the Horse Hollow Sub Area to provide year around water for wildlife.</p>
<p>Wilkinson Hunting Club</p> <p>Deer Zone B1</p> <p>Humboldt and Trinity</p> <p>5,376 acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 14 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 14 buck tags for the period of August 15, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p> <p>No more than 7 buck deer may be harvested after October 25, 2026.</p>	<p>Remove 11 acres of conifer trees from oak woodlands annually 12" Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) or less in oak woodland areas.</p> <p>Create at least 3 brush piles annually measuring at least 15 feet in diameter and 6 feet high.</p> <p>Develop or rehabilitate at least 5 springs.</p>

**PLM AREA LICENSE  
5-YEAR RENEWALS, 2026-2031  
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS**

**CENTRAL REGION**

<b>PLM Area</b>	<b>Proposed Season and Harvest</b>	<b>Habitat Improvement Program</b>
<p>Camp 5 Outfitters – Roth Ranch</p> <p>Deer Zone A</p> <p>Monterey</p> <p>4,644 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 bull elk, 4 antlerless elk, 6 forked horn or better buck deer and 3 either-sex deer</p> <p>Issue 3 bull elk tags for the period of July 2, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 4 antlerless elk tag for the period of September 15, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 6 buck deer tags for the period of July 2, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 3 either-sex deer tags for the period of July 2, 2026 through November 30, 2026 for bucks and September 1, 2026 through November 30, 2026 for antlerless deer.</p>	<p>Install 1 new elk crossing annually in high-use movement corridors.</p> <p>Monitor crossings and repair fencing where elk damage occurs repeatedly.</p> <p>Maintain existing elk crossings to ensure long-term functionality and effectiveness.</p> <p>Install concrete escape ramps to improve wildlife access at livestock troughs.</p> <p>Maintain troughs, tanks, and pipelines to ensure reliable year-round water.</p> <p>Evaluate water distribution annually and identify locations needing additional improvements.</p> <p>Plant approximately 50 acres of dryland grains annually for elk and deer.</p> <p>Rotate forage planting locations to maintain soil productivity and habitat diversity.</p> <p>Monitor forage plots to evaluate use by elk, deer, and upland birds.</p> <p>Implement control of yellow star thistle using disking and hand removal.</p> <p>Monitor treated invasive plant areas annually and follow up as needed.</p> <p>Contribute to CDFW chronic wasting disease (CWD) surveillance by providing samples from harvested elk.</p>

**PLM AREA LICENSE  
5-YEAR RENEWALS, 2026-2031  
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS**

PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>DeFrancesco &amp; Eaton Ranch</p> <p>Deer A Zone</p> <p>Merced</p> <p>4,149 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: Issue 4 bull elk, 4 antlerless elk, 10 forked horn or better buck deer and 1 antlerless deer</p> <p>Issue 4 bull tags for the period of July 15, 2026 through November 15, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 4 antlerless elk tags for the period of September 9, 2026 through November 30, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 10 buck deer tags for the period of July 15, 2026 through November 30, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 1 antlerless deer tag for the period of July 15, 2026 through November 30, 2026.</p>	<p>Maintain elk crossings.</p> <p>Maintain water sources.</p> <p>Replace 2.50 miles of fencing to be wildlife friendly.</p> <p>Rewire elk crossing point in fence.</p> <p>Install wildlife friendly crossings.</p> <p>Install cattle exclusion fencing in sensitive habitat areas (i.e. meadows).</p> <p>Rotational cattle grazing.</p> <p>Install 1 guzzler, tank and trough.</p> <p>Shallow discing to reduce invasives plants, promote native vegetation and bare ground habitat.</p> <p>Install brush piles near water sources for wildlife to use as cover.</p> <p>Conduct population surveys of big game species in collaboration with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for both ground and aerial surveys.</p> <p>Support game wardens and CDFW staff access for wildlife research and management efforts (game counts, biological surveys, capture/collar efforts, etc.).</p> <p>Contribute to CDFW disease surveillance in deer and elk by providing samples to improve statewide disease surveillance (at least 1 CWD sample per year).</p>

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5-YEAR RENEWALS, 2026-2031  
PROPOSED SEASONS, HARVESTS, AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS**

PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>Indian Valley Cattle Company (IVCC) – Lombardo Ranch</p> <p>Deer Zone A</p> <p>Monterey</p> <p>12,500 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 bull elk tags, 2 antlerless elk tags and 6 forked horned or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 3 bull elk tags for the period of July 15, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 6 buck deer tags for the period of July 2, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p> <p><i>Note: IVCC is not requesting their 2 antlerless elk tags for 2026.</i></p>	<p>Provide CDFW with CWD samples from Lombardo Ranch.</p> <p>Burn or brush crush 3-5 acres of chapparal.</p> <p>Create 4-6 brush piles for use by wildlife.</p> <p>Maintain cattle stocking rate of approximately 300 animals to provide feed and reduce competition with wildlife.</p> <p>Plant 350 acres of barley.</p> <p>Rotationally graze all pastures and rest others to increase wildlife access.</p> <p>No grazing in the Big Sandy Creek.</p> <p>Rotate cattle grazing of volunteer barley to facilitate wildlife use.</p> <p>Rehabilitate 25-50 acres of abandoned farmland to improve habitat value.</p> <p>Maintain and operate 16 ground level water access points.</p>
<p>Lone Ranch</p> <p>Deer Zone A</p> <p>San Benito</p> <p>12,500 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 bull elk, 2 antlerless elk and 4 forked horned or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 3 bull elk tags for the period of August 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 2 antlerless elk tag for the period of September 15, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 4 buck deer tags for the period of July 2, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p>	<p>Implement regenerative grazing using 30 – 45 day pasture rotation schedules.</p> <p>Adjust livestock movement to improve forage recovery and suppress invasives.</p> <p>Control Yellow star thistle and Medusa head using disking and reseeding.</p> <p>Restore over 35 acres of wildlife habitat in Lower McCoy.</p> <p>Remove Tamarisk annually using mechanical or cut-stump treatments.</p> <p>Install new troughs, tanks, and waterlines to improve drought resilience.</p>

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PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>Lone Ranch Cont.</p>	<p><i>Lone Ranch did not fill any tags in 2024 and 2025 as the elk herd is on adjacent properties. Tags will be allocated elsewhere in Coastal Reg 4 until elk return.</i></p>	<p>Equip all wildlife troughs with escape ramps to prevent mortality.</p> <p>Remove redundant barbed wire and install wildlife-friendly fence crossings.</p> <p>Actively manage wild pigs and restore rooting-damaged habitats annually.</p> <p>Conduct brush crushing in Chamizo Flats, Stevenson Pond, and Mid McCoy.</p> <p>Install bat apartments in Headquarters, Johnson, and Lower McCoy areas. Provide CWD samples from Lone Ranch hunter harvest as a part of CDFW disease surveillance.</p>
<p>Peachtree Ranch  Deer Zone A  Monterey  32,104 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 7 bull elk and 9 antlerless elk</p> <p>Issue 7 bull elk tags for the period of July 2, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 9 antlerless elk tags for the period of September 15, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p>	<p>Install additional elk crossings in high-use travel routes and monitor with cameras.</p> <p>Install escape ladders in troughs to reduce wildlife drowning mortality.</p> <p>Maintain water through network to provide reliable summer and fall water.</p> <p>Conduct 3-4 tule elk counts annually to provide to CDFW.</p> <p>Monitor vegetation height and residual forage to guide grazing management.</p> <p>Install a combination of bird, bat, and owl boxes to improve nesting habitat annually.</p> <p>Provide annual youth hunt to promote conservation and responsible hunting.</p> <p>Install 1 guzzler to provide water for birds and small mammals.</p> <p>Create snags from dying trees to provide raptor perches.</p>

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PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
Peachtree Ranch Cont.		<p>Construct and maintain brush piles for birds, reptiles, and small mammals.</p> <p>Protect regenerating oak and gray pine using fencing and grow tubes.</p> <p>Restore pig-disturbed areas and control invasive plants in priority habitats.</p> <p>Maintain wildlife travel corridors and diverse pasture structures through grazing rotation.</p> <p>Provide CWD samples from Peachtree Ranch hunter harvest as a part of CDFW disease surveillance.</p>
<p>Rancho La Cuesta</p> <p>Deer Zone A</p> <p>San Benito</p> <p>4,000 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 2 bull elk, 2 antlerless elk, and 4 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 2 bull elk tags for the period of July 15, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 2 antlerless elk tag for the period of September 15, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 2 buck deer tags for the period of July 15, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p> <p><i>Rancho La Cuesta is not requesting their full allocation of deer tags.</i></p>	<p>Clean and maintain water points on the ranch to provide water for wildlife.</p> <p>Provide water for the upper ranch.</p> <p>Continue to repair pond damage that occurred in 2023.</p> <p>Plant 5 acres of grass and legumes to provide high quality food for elk and deer.</p> <p>Maintain 2,350-acre cattle free refuge on the upper portion of the ranch for exclusive use by wildlife.</p> <p>Burn or mechanically manipulate 5 acres of decadent chaparral to stimulate growth of quality brows for wildlife.</p> <p>Contribute to CDFW CWD surveillance by providing samples from harvested elk.</p>

**PLM AREA LICENSE  
5-YEAR RENEWALS, 2026-2031  
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PLM Area	Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>Sky Rose Ranch Deer Zone A Monterey 14,039 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 7 forked horn or better buck deer, 2 antlerless deer, 2 bull elk and 2 antlerless elk</p> <p>Issue 7 buck deer tags for the period of July 1, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 2 antlerless deer tags for the period of July 1, 2026, through November 30, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 2 bull elk tags for the period of July 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 2 antlerless elk tag for the period of July 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026.</p>	<p>Install elk crossings in high-use corridors and monitor wildlife use.</p> <p>Install and maintain wildlife waterers in the southwest pastures.</p> <p>Convert livestock troughs to wildlife-friendly designs with escape structures.</p> <p>Plant approximately 50 acres of barley annually for wildlife forage and cover.</p> <p>Establish wildlife food plots using rye, clover, or native grains.</p> <p>Control goathead and starthistle; reseed treated areas with natives.</p> <p>Restore and enhance riparian corridors using site-appropriate native vegetation.</p> <p>Lollipop juniper trees to improve habitat structure for birds and mammals.</p> <p>Install a combination of bat, owl, and swallow nesting boxes annually.</p> <p>Convert degraded areas to native perennial grasslands for herbivores and pollinators.</p> <p>Promote native plant regeneration through prescribed or rotational grazing.</p> <p>Provide CWD samples from Sky Rose Ranch hunter harvest as a part of CDFW disease surveillance.</p>