

Staff Summary for June 17-18, 2026

12. Initial Private Lands Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Management Area (PLM) Plans and Licenses (Consent)

Today's Item

Information Action

Consider approving initial PLM plans and 2026-2030 licenses.

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

California Fish and Game Code subdivision 3402 subdivision (a) states that an application for a Private Lands Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Management Plan license may be issued by the Department upon approval by the Commission. 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 initial management plans for 10 new properties in six counties consisting of approximately 38,863 acres.

Habitat improvements accomplished under these management plans will enhance and maintain wildlife resources on and around the PLM area. The goals and objectives stated in the management plan are compatible with Department management plans for appropriate species in this area 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 the initial PLM plans and licenses for 2026-2030 seasons under a motion to adopt the consent calendar.

Department: Approve the initial PLM licenses, management plans, and proposed season harvests and habitat improvements under the conditions specified in Exhibit 2.

Exhibits

1. [Department memo, received June 8, 2026](#)
2. [PLM Area License Initial Management Plans, 2026-2027, received June 8, 2026](#)

Motion

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Commission adopts the staff recommendations for items 12-17 on the consent calendar.

Memorandum

Date: June 8, 2026

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

From: Meghan Hertel
Director

Subject: **Agenda Item for the June 17-18, 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 plans for 10 new properties in 6 counties consisting of approximately 38,863 acres. These new properties cover a variety of habitats including oak woodland, chaparral and riparian areas which benefit both game and non-game species. Proposed habitat improvements include oak woodland restoration, installing numerous water catchments, and improving the quality of riparian areas by removing non-native species. The Department received letters of concern from neighbors of 7 Oaks Ranch, in Tulare County, regarding hunting through the PLM Program. The Department addressed their concerns related to fire arms and are requesting their 3 PLM deer tags be archery only.

The Department has also reviewed 5-year renewals for 9 properties in 4 counties consisting of approximately 58,513 acres and the annual reports for 51 properties in 15 counties consisting of approximately 303,913 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.

Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission
June 8, 2026
Page 2

The attached tables represent the second, and final list of PLM properties recommended for approval by the Commission in 2026. We previously recommended a first list of PLM properties for approval at the April 16, 2026, Commission meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Victoria Barr at [REDACTED] or by email at [REDACTED].

Attachment

cc: Chad Dibble, Deputy Director
Wildlife and Fisheries Division
[REDACTED]

Scott Gardner, Branch Chief
Wildlife Branch
[REDACTED]

Mario Klip, Environmental Program Manager
Wildlife Branch
[REDACTED]

Victoria Barr, Environmental Scientist
Wildlife Branch
[REDACTED]

Initial Private Lands Management (PLM) Area Licenses for 2026-2030 with Proposed Seasons, Harvests and Habitat Improvements

NORTHERN REGION

PLM Area	2026 Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p><i>Bald Mountain Ranch</i></p> <p>Deer Zone X4</p> <p>Shasta</p> <p>995 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 2 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 2 buck deer tags for the period October 3, 2026, through October 18, 2026.</p> <p>No person shall take more than one buck deer annually in the X zones.</p>	<p>Remove at least 0.50 miles of fencing and replace with wildlife friendly fencing.</p> <p>Install small wildlife escape ramps in all 14 water troughs.</p> <p>Removal of at least 15 juniper trees annually that are encroaching into brush habitats.</p> <p>Installation, maintenance and monitoring of at least 9 kestrel boxes, 10 wood duck boxes and 4 owl boxes.</p> <p>Protection of all vernal pools and no equipment will be operated near pools during December through May.</p>
<p><i>Bar 11 Ranch</i></p> <p>Deer Zone C3</p> <p>Shasta</p> <p>1,846 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 4 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 4 buck deer tags for the period September 19, 2026, through October 25, 2026.</p>	<p>Replace at least 1.25 miles of fencing with wildlife friendly fencing.</p> <p>Remove at least 5/8 mile of down fencing.</p> <p>No commercial removal of trees or rocks.</p> <p>Maintenance and improvement of at least 12 ponds to retain water all year and improve access to water for wildlife.</p> <p>Installation, maintenance and monitoring of at least 10 kestrel boxes, 15 wood duck boxes and 6 owl boxes.</p> <p>Plant at least 1 acre of irrigated elk food plot annually.</p> <p>Plant at least 60 acres of dryland grain field and leave at least 1 acre uncut annually.</p> <p>Plant at least 5 acres of pea vetch field annually.</p>

**Initial Private Lands Management (PLM) Area Licenses for 2026-2030 with
Proposed Seasons, Harvests and Habitat Improvements**

PLM Area	2026 Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p><i>Elkhorn</i> Deer Zone B5 Tehama 15,158 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 20 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 20 buck deer tags for the period August 15, 2026 through September 9, 2026 (archery) and September 19, 2026, through October 25, 2026 (all legal methods of take).</p>	<p>Broadcast burn at least 250 acres of decadent brush.</p> <p>Install at least 4 water troughs with water holding systems to maintain the trough full throughout the year. These troughs will all be designed to allow accessibility for all wildlife and escape ramps installed.</p> <p>Create at least 100 brush piles that measure at least 6 feet by 15 feet.</p> <p>Targeted grazing on at least 200 acres, to maintain brush heights at a level that can be utilized by deer.</p> <p>Oak woodlands restoration and reseeded of 100 acres. This will entail removal of conifers and replanting oak trees if necessary.</p> <p>Creation of at least 1 mile of fuel breaks that will be reseeded with native grasses and forbs.</p> <p>Maintain at least 5 acres of forest roads to reduce the sedimentation of nearby waterways.</p>
<p><i>Jelly's Ferry Ranch</i> Deer Zone C4 Tehama 1,769 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 2 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 2 buck deer tags for the period September 19, 2026, through October 4, 2026.</p>	<p>Removal of at least 600 yards of woven wire fencing.</p> <p>At least 1 mile of fencing will be replaced with wildlife friendly fencing.</p> <p>No commercial removal of trees or rocks.</p> <p>Installation, maintenance and monitoring of at least 9 kestrel boxes and 4 owl boxes.</p> <p>Maintenance and improvement of at least 5 ponds to retain water all year and improve access to water for wildlife.</p>

Initial Private Lands Management (PLM) Area Licenses for 2026-2030 with Proposed Seasons, Harvests and Habitat Improvements

PLM Area	2026 Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>Log Springs</p> <p>Deer Zone B5</p> <p>Tehama</p> <p>1,661 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 5 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 5 buck deer tags for the period August 15, 2026 through September 9, 2026 (archery) and September 19, 2026, through October 25, 2026 (all legal methods of take).</p>	<p>Broadcast burn at least 50 acres of decadent brush.</p> <p>Install at least 2 water troughs with water holding systems to maintain the trough full throughout the year. These troughs will all be designed to allow accessibility for all wildlife and escape ramps will be installed.</p> <p>Create at least 50 brush piles that measure at least 6 feet by 15 feet.</p> <p>Targeted grazing on at least 50 acres, to maintain brush heights at a level that can be utilized by deer.</p> <p>Oak woodlands restoration and reseeding of 25 acres. This will entail removal of conifers and replanting oak trees if necessary.</p> <p>Creation of at least 1 mile of fuel breaks that will be reseeded with native grasses and forbs.</p> <p>Maintain at least 2 acres of forest roads to reduce the sedimentation of nearby waterways.</p>
<p>Muse Ranch</p> <p>Deer Zone B5</p> <p>Shasta</p> <p>878 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 2 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 2 buck deer tags for the period August 15, 2026 through September 9, 2026 (archery) and September 19, 2026, through October 25, 2026 (all legal methods of take).</p>	<p>Underburn at least 50 acres of mature oak stands. This is to reduce the populations of Curculio sp. (weevil)</p> <p>Replant suitable areas post fire with a dry pasture seed mix to improve forage quality available for wildlife.</p> <p>Retain year around water in at least 13-acre feet of ponds for wildlife habitats.</p> <p>Increase western pond turtle basking sites in all ponds through the addition of large woody debris being placed at the water's edge.</p>

Initial Private Lands Management (PLM) Area Licenses for 2026-2030 with Proposed Seasons, Harvests and Habitat Improvements

PLM Area	2026 Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>Muse Ranch (continued)</p>		<p>Control aquatic and non-native weeds on at least 3.7 acres annually.</p> <p>Identify and map infestations of invasive noxious weed species. Control treatments of noxious species may range from hand removal, controlled burning, pile burning, and herbicide treatments as appropriate.</p>
<p>Panther Rock Ranch Deer Zone A Mendocino/ Sonoma 887 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 5 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>Issue 5 buck deer for the period July 13, 2026 through September 13, 2026 (archery) and August 8, 2026, through September 20, 2026 (all legal methods of take).</p>	<p>Treat at least 160 acres of oak woodlands removing invasive vegetation through mastication and prescribed burning.</p> <p>Create at least 40 brush piles annually for wildlife use, measuring at least 6 feet high by 15 feet in diameter.</p> <p>Overseed masticated and cleared areas with a custom developed local seed mix for wildlife forage and ground cover.</p>

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

PLM Area	2026 Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>Pilot Creek Ranch Deer Zone D5 El Dorado 968 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 forked horn or better buck deer, 1 either-sex deer and 30 turkeys</p> <p>Issue 3 deer tags to take 3 forked horn or better buck deer for the archery period of August 15, 2026 through September 6, 2026 and the general rifle period of September 26, 2026 through November 1, 2026.</p> <p>Issue 1 deer tag to take 1 either-sex deer for the archery period of August 15, 2026 through September 6, 2026 and the general rifle period of September 26, 2026 through</p>	<p>Conduct prescribed burning on ~20 acres or mechanically treat a minimum of 5 acres of brush in a mosaic pattern.</p> <p>Apply targeted rotational grazing to approximately 5 acres of oak woodland understory. Following treatment, juvenile oak seedlings and saplings will be identified and protected with individual wire cages.</p> <p>Remove any located obsolete woven-wire fencing across 660 square meters.</p> <p>Operate and maintain the NRCS-funded agricultural well. Install 1 water trough, equipped with an automatic float valve and escape ramp.</p>

Initial Private Lands Management (PLM) Area Licenses for 2026-2030 with Proposed Seasons, Harvests and Habitat Improvements

PLM Area	2026 Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>Pilot Creek Ranch (continued)</p>	<p>November 1, 2026. This tag will be utilized by mentored youth or a novice hunter under CDFW R3 initiative or donated to a 501(c)(3) wildlife conservation organization.</p> <p>Issue 15 turkey tags to take 15 either-sex turkeys for the period of November 7, 2026 through December 6, 2026.</p> <p>Issue a total 15 turkey tags to take 15 bearded turkeys for the junior period of March 20-21, 2027, May 3 – 16, 2027, the archery period of May 3-16, 2027, and the general season of March 27, 2027 to May 2, 2027.</p>	<p>Graze ~50 acres of grassland pasture, using short-duration grazing followed by adequate rest to reduce thatch and improve forage quality.</p> <p>Mechanically treat approximately 1 acre of Himalayan blackberry within the Pilot Creek headwaters riparian corridor.</p> <p>Provide 1 basking log in the permanent pond for pond turtles.</p>

CENTRAL REGION

PLM Area	2026 Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>7 Oaks Ranch Deer Zone D8 Tulare 453 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 3 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tags issues will be ARCHERY ONLY (AO deer tag). <p>The hunt periods will be from August 15, 2026 - September 6, 2026, and September 26, 2026 through October 25, 2026.</p>	<p>Reduce excessive brush and decadent vegetation on approximately 5 acres through prescribed fire under CAL FIRE Vegetation Management Program or, if burning is not feasible, mechanical treatment to improve forage quality and wildlife movement.</p> <p>Install 1 automated fish feeder year-round on the primary ponds to support bait fish and fish forage availability and establish a consistent feeding schedule to enhance overall fish population health.</p> <p>Construct 1 wildlife brush pile measuring approximately 25 feet in diameter and 6 feet in height using on-site woody material.</p>

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PLM Area	2026 Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p>7 Oaks Ranch (continued)</p>		<p>Install 1 duck nesting box in suitable habitat near the pond following California Waterfowl Association specifications.</p> <p>Implement rotational grazing to ensure adequate residual vegetation remains available for wildlife forage throughout the year. During the October and December months having a designated pasture only for wildlife grazing.</p> <p>Continue existing water management practices to support wildlife forage and habitat.</p> <p>Enhance water availability by upgrading or installing a water tank to provide year-round access for wildlife.</p> <p>Plant 15 or more apple trees for wildlife benefit.</p>
<p>Three Rivers Sequoia River Ranch</p> <p>Deer Zone D8</p> <p>Tulare</p> <p>14,248 Acres</p>	<p>Authorized Harvest: 7 forked horn or better buck deer</p> <p>The hunt periods will be from August 15, 2026 - September 6, 2026, and September 26, 2026 through October 25, 2026.</p>	<p>Maintain operational status of springs, wells, troughs, and ponds throughout the year across the Ranch for wildlife access.</p> <p>Manage invasive plant species across the ranch and control new populations of invasive plants as they are observed.</p> <p>Conduct wild pig management adjacent to the Blue Ridge Ecological Preserve (inholding). Reduce rooting damage, habitat disturbance, and competition with native wildlife.</p> <p>Create 1 brush pile for quail habitat. Place brush pile in suitable areas to provide loafing cover, escape cover, and thermal protection for quail.</p> <p>Plant forage plots if seed bank did not recruit from previous season. Target approximately 1 acre area, within the irrigated pasture zones, of forage habitat each year for quail and turkey.</p>

**Initial Private Lands Management (PLM) Area Licenses for 2026-2030 with
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PLM Area	2026 Proposed Season and Harvest	Habitat Improvement Program
<p><i>Three Rivers Sequoia River Ranch</i> (continued)</p>		<p>Add 1 owl box on the ranch.</p> <p>Install 1 wood duck box. Place nest box in appropriate habitat areas where natural cavity availability may be limited.</p> <p>Add wildlife escape ramps to water troughs. Install escape structures in appropriate water developments to reduce accidental mortality of birds, reptiles, and small mammals.</p> <p>Conduct Chronic Wasting Disease sampling. Support wildlife health surveillance efforts by collecting samples as needed for monitoring.</p>