

California Department of Fish and Game
Climate Change Program Activities
February 2010

DFG is committed to minimizing to the maximum extent practical the effects of climate change on the state's natural resources. Our approach involves integrating climate change into our activities and adaptation planning at federal, state, and local levels. DFG has a full-time Climate Change Advisor, Dr. Amber Pairis, whose responsibility is to coordinate DFG's internal and external climate change efforts. The following are some of the activities of the Climate Change Program:

- **California Climate Action Team:** DFG Director McCamman sits on this team, which oversees climate change activities across state agencies. DFG is now the lead on the CAT Biodiversity Working Group.
- **DFG Climate Change Stakeholder Meetings:** Well-attended meetings of more than sixty stakeholders are held regularly, and are an inclusive process with NGOs, state, federal, academic, private, and local land trusts at the table. Three working groups have been formed that will focus on outreach, workshops & research, and creating a framework (policy) for successfully implementing climate change adaptation strategies across the state, and across agencies.
- **California Climate Adaptation Strategy (CAS):** CA Resources Agency led the creation and release of the first comprehensive multi-sector climate change adaptation strategy across the nation. DFG and State Parks co-lead the Biodiversity and Habitat Sectors and relied heavily on input from DFG workshops, public meetings, and stakeholder input. The Strategy document was released December 2009. <http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/adaptation/>
- **DFG Adaptation Strategy:** DFG's internal climate change adaptation strategy "Confronting Climate Change: Adaptation Actions to Conserve California's Natural Resources" is nearing completion. The strategy contains many of the same elements as the CAS but goes even further to identify the steps necessary for implementing the actions and the staff and funding requirements. The strategy also identifies the existing tools the Department will rely on to deliver actions on the ground and will be an important communication tool as well as a vision for actions needed to help species persist in a changing climate.
- **California Wildlife Action Plan Revision:** The climate change program is working closely with the wildlife program to provide a stronger climate change component within the revision. In addition, looking into conducting a vulnerability assessment as part of this effort.
- **Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Strategy:** Director McCamman is a participant with AFWA and the USFWS on discussions about the creation of a national strategy for climate change. DFG is the Western States representative for AFWA; this includes all states west of the Mississippi.
- **Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (DFG initiated this group, which includes all states west of the Mississippi, and Canada and Mexico):** Director McCamman is the chair for the WAFWA climate change committee. This newly formed committee already has several products related to the committee's activities. A working group is being formed to provide guidance to WAFWA members on the required elements of a state adaptation strategy to prepare member states for possible federal climate change legislation. Director McCamman delivered this proposal to the WAFWA Directors at the January meeting.

- **DFG Going Green: Reducing our Carbon Footprint:** On October 30 a Director's Bulletin was sent out to all staff regarding the completion of a guidance document to help the Department reduce its carbon footprint and save the Department valuable resources <http://dfg.ca.gov/climatechange/activities.html>. A DFG Going Green Working Group is currently being formed to come up with an implementation strategy for Going Green. The first meeting is scheduled for early February, and has large support from both the Director and staff.
- **Regional Climate Change Committees:** The Northern Region Climate Change Committee (see below) has been meeting for almost one year. Other Regional Committees are in planning stages.
- **BAECCC:** DFG is involved in a recently formed group "Bay Area Ecosystems Climate Change Consortium," a group of federal, state, and NGO partners looking to create a demonstration project in the Bay Area for large-scale climate change adaptation activities.
- **Council on Environmental Quality /General Accounting Office (GAO):** DFG was requested to participate in a survey on climate change adaptation activities being conducted by the GAO. The final report was recently released recommending that the Federal Agencies begin working on a national climate change strategy. As follow up, the DFG was requested to participate in a listening session held by the White House Office Council on Environmental Quality.
- California DFG Climate Change Program website: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/climatechange/>

DFG Northern Region¹ Climate Change Committee

Committee lead: Mark Smelser; Committee members: Jennifer Carlson, Vicki Frey, Gayle Garman, Eric Haney, Sharon Hope, Tony LaBanca, Gordon Leppig, Rich Lis, Linda Miller, Amber Pairis, Bruce Webb, Mark Wheatley

This DFG regional committee was formed to assist DFG Regional staff in better understanding and managing the numerous issues associated with climate change in our personal and professional lives, and to help move DFG forward on climate change issues. The Committee works closely with DFG's Climate Change Advisor, Amber Pairis. The Committee meets monthly.

Initiatives/Goals:

- Keep informed of current literature and Climate Change news; inform ourselves and staff of local impacts to the resources in our region; summarize existing literature to share with staff
- Integration of climate change issues into CEQA Guidelines, both for project proponents (public), and for internal guidance to DFG staff responsible for reviewing projects
- Maintain Northern Region Climate Change Intranet Portal, to increase communication among Regional staff
- DFG Going Green. Assisted in development of DFG Going Green document <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/climatechange/>
- Paperless Office. Goal is to reduce our production/consumption of paper in office communications and business
- High Elevation Species Loss. Will be evaluating climate change and its impacts on wildlife habitat at higher elevations, e.g., Sierra Nevada Red Fox, American Pika
- Coastal Watershed Impact Analysis. Investigate strategies to predict and assess the impacts of climate change at the scale of a small watershed (e.g., less than 100 sq miles).

¹ *DFG's Northern Region includes California's eight northernmost counties plus Mendocino County

- Sea-level Rise. Goal is to educate ourselves and inform staff about impacts of sea-level rise, and develop recommendations for incorporating into project review process. Pilot project is a presentation with maps showing potential impacts to Humboldt Bay resources
- Give input to statewide documents such as the Resources Agency Climate Adaptation Strategy, and DFG's Climate Adaptation Strategy
- Understand and communicate both sides of Climate Change argument
- Keep abreast of what local partners are doing, cross-communication