



**Meeting Report**  
**Multi-stakeholder Meeting on Wolves in California**  
**February 5, 2013**



UC Davis - Kenneth L. Maddy Building  
620 West Health Science Drive  
Davis, California 95616

**California Department of Fish and Wildlife**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

In 2011 the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW; the Department) began discussions about the need to begin gathering data on the history of gray wolves in California, and established the framework for an informational website on the topic. On December 28, 2011, a male radio-collared and GPS tracked gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) named OR7 entered California from Oregon. With the entry of OR7 into the state, CDFW initiated a series of actions to follow and protect the wolf, and keep stakeholders and the general public informed. The website framework was implemented to provide wolf history, and to provide updates on the status and general whereabouts of OR7. On April 23, 2012, CDFW held the first meeting of stakeholders to review actions to date, and obtain input on future actions. On February 5, 2013, the stakeholders were reconvened so that CDFW could provide updates on OR7 and progress since the April, 2012 meeting, and receive input on the direction of a gray wolf planning process for California. The following is a report of the February, 2013 meeting.

## **2.0 Meeting Objectives and Mechanics**

The meeting was conducted in Davis, California, on February 5, 2013, and was led by CDFW representatives. The stated purpose of the meeting was to:

Re-engage with stakeholders, acknowledge new ones, and request their assistance in developing the overall framework for a California wolf plan.

Objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Provide an update on OR7 since April, 2012
2. Review current California Fish and Game Commission (FGC)/California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) activities
3. Review the summary of the April, 2012 meeting, and report what CDFW has done since
4. Review and discuss components of the draft outline for the wolf plan
5. Develop a calendar for future meetings for stakeholder involvement/participation

The meeting was attended by 25 stakeholders, 1 USFWS representative, and 7 CDFW staff. Appendix A provides a list of attendees and their contact information.

The meeting agenda is provided in Appendix B of this document. After introductions, CDFW staff began with an overview of the meeting's objectives, followed by a history and updates on OR7. This was followed by a review of the activities that have been conducted by FGC/CDFW and the USFWS since the April, 2012 meeting.

Next, an effort was made to engage the group in a discussion of a draft outline for a wolf plan. The goal of the effort was to elicit comments as to the thoroughness of the outline,

and whether the group felt all relevant topics pertaining to wolf planning in California had been addressed. The draft outline is captured in Appendix C.

Stakeholders were then asked to discuss the frequency at which the group should meet in upcoming months to attempt to accomplish the timeline for completion of a draft plan.

Finally, individuals were asked for concluding remarks that would convey their thoughts about the results of the meeting, and their overall perception of how they feel the process is going. The meeting was then adjourned.

## **3.0 Meeting Outputs**

### ***3.1 Presentation Synopses***

#### **OR7 History and Updates**

A brief overview was presented describing the history of the recovery efforts by USFWS for gray wolves in the United States which included reintroductions into the Greater Yellowstone area, and central Idaho. These very successful reintroductions have led to rapid expansion of wolves into neighboring states, including Oregon. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) monitoring efforts included radio-collaring wolves with dual VHF/GPS collars which allowed them to notify CDFW when a wolf they had named OR7 entered California on December 28, 2011.

Since entering California, CDFW has been able to monitor the general whereabouts of OR7 due to daily downloads via satellite from his GPS collar. With the exception of a brief period during which he reentered Oregon, OR7 has remained in California for over a year. During that time he has traveled over 2,000 miles in Siskiyou, Modoc, Lassen, Shasta, Tehama, Butte, and Plumas counties, and has utilized every type of habitat found in northeastern California, on both public and private lands.

His patterns of movement seem to indicate that he is generally following deer between their winter and summer ranges. An analysis of his diet has been conducted primarily via examining his scat and prey remains. He has eaten primarily deer and was found to feed on the remains of a wild horse carcass. There has been some evidence that OR7 attempted to dig up a ground squirrel where fur was found. There is no evidence to date of livestock depredation by OR7.

Trail cameras that CDFW has deployed in various locations have failed to capture images of OR7, so the only image of him to date is the one captured by CDFW unit biologist Richard Shinn in May, 2012. Numerous reports of sightings of wolves by the public have been received however have been found to be coyotes or domestic dogs.

Site visits to locations where OR7 has visited, as well as numerous trail cameras in place have not detected additional wolves, although that possibility cannot be ruled out. CDFW staff believes that OR7's scent markings would attract other wolves and they would be detected if they were present.

### **FGC/CDFW and USFWS activities**

Since the April, 2012 meeting, the California Fish and Game Commission (FGC) was petitioned to list the gray wolf as endangered in California under the state Endangered Species Act (CESA). The Department evaluated the petition and other information in 12 topic areas:

1. Population trend
2. Range
3. Distribution
4. Abundance (number of animals)
5. Life History
6. Kind of Habitat Necessary for Survival
7. Factors Affecting Survival/Reproduction
8. Degree and Immediacy of Threat
9. Impact of Existing Management
10. Suggestions for Future Management
11. Availability and Sources of Information
12. Detailed Distribution Map

CDFW recommended that FGC accept the petition for further consideration, not based on information provided with the petition, but rather on other relevant information that was uncovered during the petition evaluation. FGC voted 3 – 0 in favor of accepting the petition.

Now that the petition for listing has been accepted, CDFW is in the 12 month status review period. This involves a review of the best scientific information available on the status of the gray wolf in California and identification of essential habitat, as well as recommending management activities for recovery of the species. There will be significant coordination with other agencies during this review. After conducting the status review, the Department will make a recommendation to the FGC as to whether the listing of the gray wolf in California is or is not warranted.

### **Review of 2012 Stakeholders Meeting Report**

The report from the April 2012 meeting was reviewed to remind stakeholders who were in attendance at that meeting, what was covered, and to inform new members of the

stakeholders group as to what transpired at that meeting. This time was also used to list accomplishments CDFW has achieved from the “What should CDFG(W) do next” items.

Since April, 2012, CDFW has requested and been granted Section 6 funding from the USFWS. The two year grant for \$300,000 will be used to develop the wolf plan, including the dedication of one full-time staff for that purpose. In addition, CDFW has been maintaining updates to OR7’s general whereabouts on the gray wolf web page.

The USFWS representative reported that they have undertaken their status review of the wolf, coordinated from the Washington, D.C. office. They are reviewing at both the species and subspecies levels to determine whether there are any entities warranting federal listing status. Their review is expected to be completed in spring of 2013.

### **Draft Wolf Plan Outline**

A draft outline for a California wolf plan was developed by CDFW prior to the February, 2013 stakeholders meeting. This outline was developed by reviewing primarily the Washington and Oregon wolf management plans, and extracting sections that were felt to be relevant in a California plan. The draft outline was presented to stakeholders with the objective of eliciting input from them. A number of questions, concerns, and comments were voiced by stakeholders, and addressed by CDFW representatives. A synopsis is presented in the next section.

The CDFW representatives asked the participants to discuss how best to proceed with the plan development. A conversation ensued in which it was agreed that the Department needed to get the foundational science in place, and then bring the stakeholders together in smaller groups that will focus on subsections of greatest interest to the participants. Different stakeholders have different topics areas of greater interest to them. The Department is also considering a suggestion to put together a “straw man” document for the subgroups to comment on as part of developing their respective subsections.

### **Calendar**

Because of the ambitious timeline under which the group is working, CDFW asked the group if monthly meetings were acceptable to facilitate meeting the proposed deadline of September, 2013 for a draft plan. (This deadline would coincide with the FGC decision on the proposed CESA listing of gray wolf in California.) The group agreed on this timing, but asked if a conference line could be provided for those who would prefer remote participation, and a Doodle poll developed to find dates that will work for the group. It was agreed that this would occur, but suggested that meeting in person is best for achieving the team participation that is hoped for in this process. CDFW staff will communicate the group’s concerns about the ambitious timeline to the Director.

It was also asked that consideration be made to holding future stakeholder meetings in different parts of the state, especially further north, since so many stakeholders come from there. One member suggested that since many of the stakeholders travel for FGC meetings, the next meeting could coincide with the March FGC meeting in Mt. Shasta. CDFW staff agreed to work on that effort, and will be in contact with further information about a date and venue.

### ***3.2 Synopses of Stakeholders' Questions/Comments***

During the various presentations, a number of questions and comments were offered by participants. Below is a synopsis of those questions and comments, and the responses offered by CDFW representatives:

**Q:** Is there any evidence that there may be other wolves in California, and what effect would that have on OR7's behavior (i.e. would they seek each other, or avoid each other)?

**A:** We think they would find each other through scent markings, however we have not found any evidence of another wolf. No second set of tracks, no images on trail cameras, etc.

**Q:** What is the remaining battery life of OR7's radio collar, and is there any plan to re-fit him with a new one so that we can continue to monitor him?

**A:** The collar is in its third year of a three year lifespan; there are currently no plans to re-fit him.

**Q:** Why is CDFW focusing on the Washington and Oregon wolf plans? It's important to look at what other states have done as well.

**A:** The Oregon and Washington plans are more recent than other states', and the mode of establishment of wolves in those states is more similar to the way it will occur in California. That does not mean we won't be looking at other states' plans as well.

**Q:** Are wolves state listed in the Rockies states?

**A:** They are probably not state listed in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, but they were required to develop plans in order for the USFWS to consider delisting them.

**Q:** Has any new information on wolf biology, ecology, history in California been uncovered during the status review period?

**A:** We will be asking for information from the public and stakeholders for information that will be incorporated into the status review (a separate process from this planning effort). Any information will be of value.

**Q:** Will the Department share peer reviewed articles with us via a Drop Box process? Many of us do not have access to such literature.

**A:** There are copyright issues for literature that is not already freeware. We can provide citations lists and abstracts.

**Q:** What options for management activities can we engage in when the wolf is federally listed, including deterring them from livestock?

**A:** The Section 6 agreement provisions give CDFW full partner status in implementing a recovery program. There is also a short term interagency response plan. Any activities we engage in will be consistent with the federal recovery plan. The planning process will allow us to explore and explain what latitude there will be for our actions, and what the boundaries are. Such measures as range riders, fladry, and guard dogs can legally be used as deterrents.

**Q:** We know that deer populations are decreasing from a number of factors, and we are concerned about the impact wolves will have, causing further decreases. How will the plan address the impacts of wolves on deer?

**A:** We will have to consider the fair distribution approach (among the various interests). Also, we may be able to consider this an opportunity to better manage some of the other threats to deer such as habitat decline. Because interspecies interactions are complex, this is the place to let science guide us and use an adaptive approach. In some situations where gray wolves have reoccupied former habitat (other states), ungulates have declined, and in others they have not. We can only make probable projections for what will occur in California based on modeling; we do not know if mortality of deer from wolves will be additive or compensatory.

**Q:** Will we be dividing up the state into functional regions for wolf management as has been done in other states?

**A:** We have not considered that yet.

**Q:** Can we consider mitigation to offset impacts to ungulates from wolves? We see mitigation for losses to wildlife all the time. Why not seek funding to enhance habitat on private lands to encourage people who want to support ungulates, especially since helping ungulates helps wolves? Couldn't the wolf plan be an avenue for supporting deer and elk habitat improvements?

**A:** We want to capture the full range of ideas people have. We will consider these options and give reasoned analyses for why or why not to accept. Since the US Forest Service and USFWS focus on habitat for listed species, we should work with them on doing early successional species' habitat to support a variety of species, not just the listed ones.

**Comment:** It makes sense to have a comprehensive conservation strategy for the region, not just a wolf strategy. The Department should consider approaching this as a



holistic plan to restore not just the predators, but the habitat for their prey (agreement on this comment from several participants).

**A:** It seems we have agreement from most of you that we should focus on the ecosystem that supports the wolf and what it needs rather than focusing solely on the wolf.

**Q:** Why is the timeline for a draft plan so short, and will it give adequate time for incorporating the legally required public comment periods? We would rather see a good plan that may take longer.

**A:** CESA status review has specific requirements and timelines. We want to be able to tell the FGC when they look at the status review in September that we are working on this plan, which does not have the same timelines and requirements. However we also want to provide a broader amount of information for consideration than is required under status review. We currently do not consider that this plan will trigger a CEQA process. We do not at this time believe that we are proposing a physical change to the environment, which is the definition of a project under CEQA. This plan's development may cause us to change that. But for now our intention is to use science to inform stakeholders who will develop policy. That is a different process.

**Q:** What will the method of data collection be for the "values" piece in the plan? I suggest a poll.

**A:** Some will be from a literature search, some from previous work that's been done; generating much original data in such a short time frame will be difficult. If folks know of reports regarding social or economic costs, please forward them to us.

**Q:** Where do values fit into a science-based document?

**A:** Values don't have a hard science component but are among many items that are important to discuss in how they affect wolf management.

### ***3.3 Concluding Remarks***

Participants were asked to provide any concluding remarks as to their opinions about the meeting and the process so far. Following is a list of their remarks:

- It seems like we're on the right track
- I still think smaller is better for the working groups
- There is lots of work ahead of us
- I feel encouraged
- Monthly meetings should be more focused on topics
- This process has been good for candid feedback
- I like the idea of focusing on the nuts and bolts
- It's important to recognize that we face some really big issues and we need to approach them slowly/cautiously
- I'm impressed with the collaborative process with this big job

- I'm concerned about the fast timeline; it's already February
- I'm looking forward to working on this
- There is a lot to be done but the collaboration is promising
- We need some foundational information first, then break the plan into sections to work on in smaller pieces
- I'm excited we're not going to be meeting daily
- This feels like a natural follow-up to the vision process; I encourage setting a loftier goal of having this process set a new standard for how the state deals with wildlife issues, especially predators
- I feel encouraged
- There is so much to say I'm not going to say anything
- I think we have a good foundation for collaboration but hard conversations are coming; we should slow the timeline so we can address the hard issues
- I appreciate being invited and look forward to working on the plan
- I'm inspired by this collaborative approach and excited at the opportunity to make a polarizing issue work to address everyone's concerns
- We have a tremendous opportunity here; we have more in common than we think
- There is hard work to come but we're on the right track

## APPENDIX A. WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

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## **APPENDIX B. AGENDA**

### *California Department of Fish and Wildlife* Agenda

#### Multi-stakeholder meeting on wolves in California Tuesday February 5, 2013

UC Davis - Kenneth L. Maddy Building  
620 West Health Science Drive  
Davis, California 95616

<http://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/about/maps.cfm>

Parking is available on the street or in Parking Lot 57 (a permit is required \$7.00).

1:00 Welcome

Purpose  
Objectives  
Introductions

Background and update on wolf OR7

Current FGC/DFW activities (petition and status review, Sec 6 funding/staffing, etc.)

Break

Report on progress since April meeting

Present example management plan template

Input from participants

Discuss process and schedule for completing a management plan

Future stakeholder planning

Conclusion

4:30 Adjourn

## **APPENDIX C. PRELIMINARY DRAFT OUTLINE OF TOPIC AREAS**

### **California Department of Fish and Wildlife**

### **Gray Wolf Conservation Plan: Anticipating Wolves in California**

### **[PRELIMINARY DRAFT OUTLINE OF POSSIBLE TOPIC AREAS FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES]**

#### Table of Contents

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### INTRODUCTION- PURPOSE AND NEED

#### I. BACKGROUND

- A. Known History of Wolves in California
- B. Biology and Ecology
- C. Legal Status
- D. Social, Cultural, and Economic Values in the West
- E. Wolf Plan Development

#### II. WOLF CONSERVATION

- A. Wolf Distribution
- B. Likelihood of Wolves Inhabiting California
- C. Objectives for California
- D. Management Phases and Population Objectives
- E. Monitoring Wolf Populations
- F. Monitoring Wolf Diseases and Health
- G. Coordination with Other States and Agencies
- H. Conservation and Management Based on United States Fish and Wildlife Service actions
- I. Timelines for Progress

#### III. WOLF-UNGULATE INTERACTIONS

- A. Wolf Predation on Ungulates
  - a. Effects of Wolves on Ungulate Populations in Other States
- B. Ungulate Objectives and Status in California
- C. Predicted Levels of Wolf Predation on Ungulates
- D. Strategies to Address Wolf-Ungulate Interactions
- E. Management Implications

#### IV. WOLF INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER WILDLIFE SPECIES

- A. Wolves and Other Carnivores
- B. Wolves and Scavengers
- C. Wolves and Listed/Candidate Species
- D. Vegetation and Other Ecosystem Responses
- E. Strategies to Address Wolf Interactions With Other Species
- F. Management Implications

#### V. WOLF-HUMAN INTERACTIONS

- A. Human Safety
- B. Interactions with the Public
- C. Interactions with Domestic Canids
  - a. Domestic dogs
  - b. Wolf hybrids and pet wolves
- D. Diseases and Wolves
- E. Human Caused Mortality
- F. Strategies to Address Negative Wolf-Human Interactions

#### VI. WOLF-LIVESTOCK CONFLICTS

- A. Livestock Depredation and Other Effects of Wolves
- B. Agency Response to Wolf Depredation
- C. Strategies to Address Wolf-Livestock Conflict
  - a. Management Tools for Reducing Wolf Depredation
  - b. Compensation Programs for Wolf-Related Losses in Other States
  - c. Livestock Producer Assistance Development for California

#### VII. LAND MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- A. Federal Land
- B. State Land
- C. Private Land

#### VIII. INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

- A. Communications Plan
- B. Stakeholder Involvement
- C. Strategies for Information and Education

#### IX. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION-EVALUATION AND REPORTING

- A. Tracking Plan Progress and Updates of Activities
- B. Feedback and Adapting to Changing Conditions Related to the Plan
- C. Strategies for Evaluation and Reporting

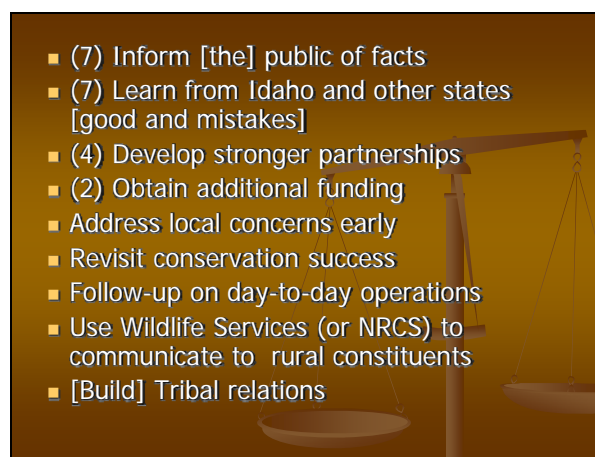
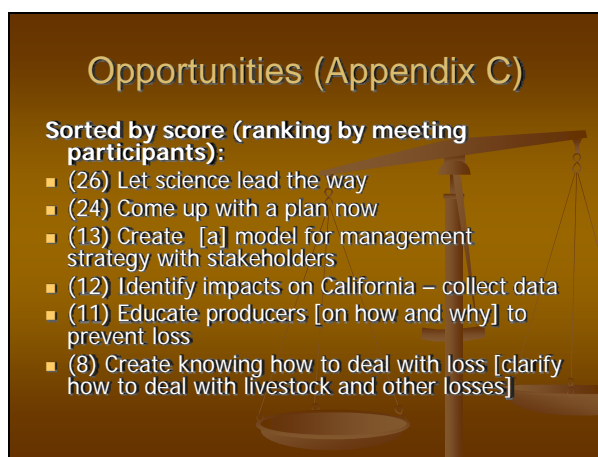
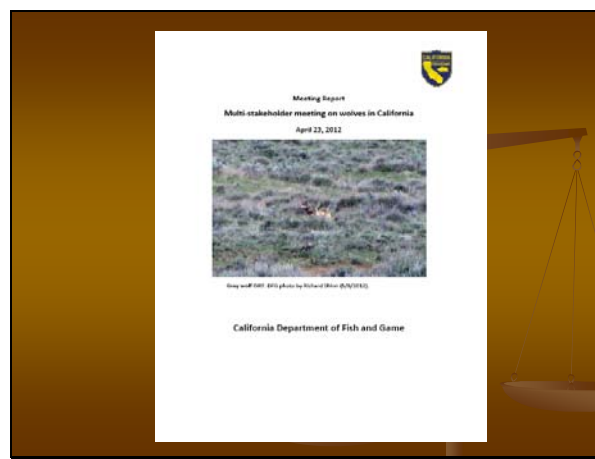
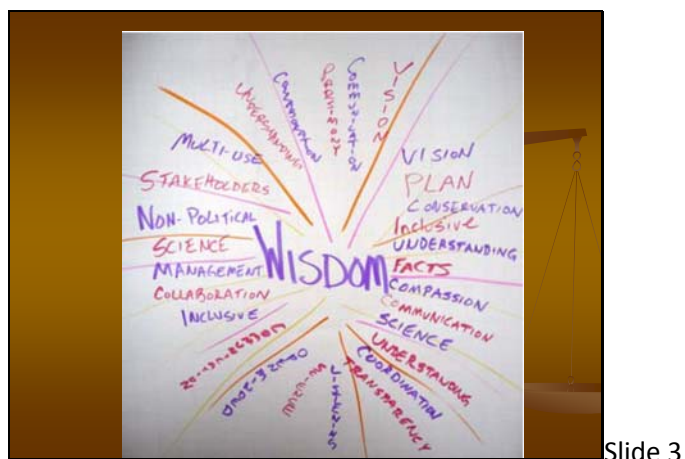
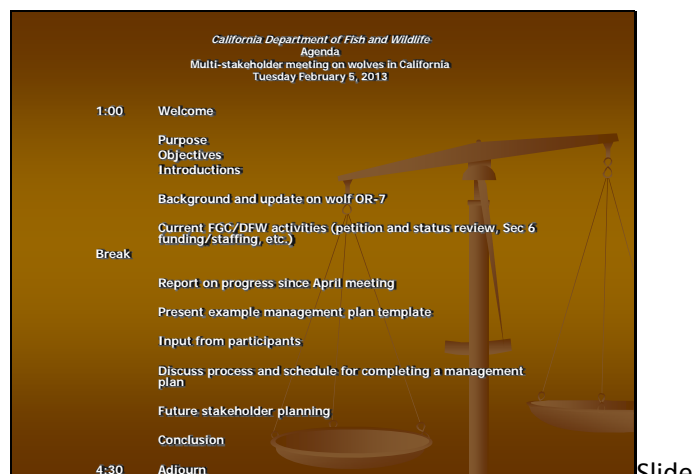
#### X. RESEARCH AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- A. Research Needs

#### XI. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## APPENDIX D. SLIDE PRESENTATION #1 (Kovacs)



- Information distributed throughout the state (education)
- Brochure on wolf status information / Brochure with targeted audiences (e.g., stakeholder groups)
- In-person discussions with diverse groups
- Catalyze relationships between groups
- Focus area workshops i.e., avoiding conflicts [etc.]
- Assign] point-person for northern counties
- [Prepare] fact sheets – myth busters
- Wolf mission statement
- Partnerships in communication
- Early discussion on depredation issues

Slide 7

### ***What Can DFG Do Now? (Appendix E)***

*Participants were asked for their opinions about what they would want to see DFG do now. To summarize in broad categories, the participants suggested that DFG:*

- Collect information that will aid in the preparation of a management plan
- Secure adequate funding for the plan preparation and management of wolves
- Create a clear process for completion of the plan
- Provide training to staff and others dealing with wolves
- Continue to engage stakeholders

Slide 8

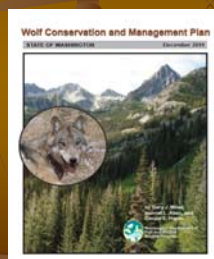
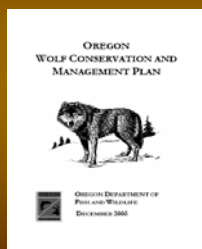
- DFG plans to:
- Get back to meeting participants with a written summary of the meeting.
- Maintain email contact with the participants (and add additional participants as appropriate) regarding DFG progress and work on wolves. This will involve providing information, products, or informing of significant progress that might generate feedback from the group.
- Initiate development of a framework for a "plan" related to the future possibility or likelihood of a wolf population in California. Whether the plan is an initial plan for wolves in California; a wolf management plan; a wolf in California response plan; or some other title, has not yet been determined.
- Include input from this meeting as possible elements of a plan. For example, Outreach was mentioned as a needed component-- we will be including a strategy for outreach.
- Continue providing website updates about OR7 in California.

Slide 9

- Improve and broaden our survey and monitoring efforts on the potential primary prey species (deer and elk) that a wolf population would rely on in California.
- Seek funding and cooperators to effectively plan for, and manage wolves in California's future.
- Continue our coordination with USFWS on developing habitat capability/suitability modeling that is tailored to California's ecosystems and habitats.
- Communicate with stakeholders and interested parties to indicate what we do know, what we don't know, and where we are uncertain.
- Continue to learn and gain experience and knowledge about managing wolves and working with those interested in wolves.

Slide 10

Oregon  
[http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wolves/management\\_plan.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wolves/management_plan.asp)  
 Washington  
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/00001/wdfw00001.pdf>



Slide 11



## APPENDIX E. SLIDE PRESENTATION #2 (Loft)

### Petition Evaluation (completed Oct. 2012)

...the department shall evaluate the petition on its face and in relation to other relevant information the department possesses or receives, and submit to the commission its written evaluation report.

Evaluated the petition and other information in 12 topic areas



Slide 1

Measure or Criteria Evaluated	Sufficient Scientific Information in California?	Other Relevant Information?
Population Trend	No	Likely relevant
Range	No	Likely relevant
Distribution	No	Likely relevant
Abundance (number of animals)	We know of 1	Uncertain relevance
Life History	No	Likely relevant
Kind of Habitat Necessary for Survival	No	Uncertain relevance
Factors affecting Survival/Reproduction	No	Uncertain relevance
Degree and Immediacy of Threat	No	Uncertain relevance
Impact of Existing Management	No	Uncertain relevance
Suggestions for Future Management	No	Likely relevant
Avail and Sources of Information	No and Yes	No
Detailed distribution map	No	No

Slide 2

## Department Recommendation

- The Department's review of relevant information in relation to the petition leads the Department to recommend that the Commission accept the petition for further consideration.
- The Department believes there is sufficient information to indicate that the petitioned action may be warranted.
- Commission voted 3-0 to accept the Department recommendation at Oct 2012 meeting



Slide 3

## Now in 12 month “status review” period

### Elements:

- based upon the best scientific information available to the department.
- indicates whether the petitioned action is warranted.
- includes a preliminary identification of the habitat that may be essential to the continued existence of the species.
- recommends management activities and other recommendations for recovery of the species.



Slide 4