Meeting Report
Stakeholder Working Group
Meeting on Wolves in California
April 30, 2014

CDFW Office of Training and Development
Training Center
1740 North Market Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95834

Photo Courtesy of Gary Kramer

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

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1.0 Introduction

On April 30, 2014 the California Wolf Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) reconvened to continue their work toward the development of a California wolf management plan. The meeting took place at the Training Center at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Office of Training and Development (OTD) in Sacramento, CA. The group's previous general meeting took place on March 26, 2014, also at the OTD training center.

2.0 Meeting Objectives and Mechanics

The stated purpose of the meeting was to:

Continue to engage the SWG in the wolf planning process and work toward the completion of a California wolf plan.

Stated objectives were:

1. Arrive at a common understanding of native ungulate management in California
2. Receive peer review recommendations for consideration from each "caucus"

The meeting was attended in person by 15 stakeholders, with two additional members attending via conference line. Seven CDFW staff attended in person. Appendix A provides a list of participants, their affiliations, and their contact information. Also in attendance was one legislative representative, whose name and contact information are captured in Appendix B. The meeting agenda is provided in Appendix C of this document, and all slides presented are captured in Appendix D.

3.0 Meeting Outputs

The SWG's standing ground rules are:

- Seek to learn and understand each other's perspective
- Encourage respectful, candid, and constructive discussions
- Provide balance of speaking time
- Seek to resolve differences and reach consensus
- Discuss topics together rather than in isolation
- Make every effort to avoid surprises
- Limit sidebars
- Turn off cell phones/switch to non-ring mode

The SWG's operating principles goals are:

1. If and when wolves establish in California, seek to conserve self-sustaining populations of wolves in the state

2. Manage the distribution of wolves in the state where there is adequate habitat
3. Manage native ungulate populations in the state to provide abundant prey for wolves and other predators, intrinsic enjoyment by the public, and harvest opportunities for hunters
4. Manage wolf-livestock conflicts to minimize livestock losses
5. Communicate to the public that natural dispersal of wolves into California is reasonably foreseeable given the expanding populations in the Pacific Northwest, inform the public with science-based information of gray wolves and the conservation and management needs of wolves in California, as well as the effects of having wolves in the state

Introductions and Housekeeping

Ms. Kovacs opened the meeting with a welcome, housekeeping, and introductions. She then introduced Mr. Sam Magill of Kearns and West, the facilitation contractor who will be the SWG's facilitator when the contract is complete. Next, Ms. Kovacs went over the agenda and ground rules, stressing the importance of the ungulate presentation that will be given by CDFW ungulate biologists, as gaining a common understanding on this topic will help the group develop strategies and management actions for the plan.

Updates

- Gray wolf CESA listing petition April 16, 2014 Fish and Game Commission (FGC) meeting: the FGC has the Department's status review and decided to hold off on a decision for 90 days. They took testimony from the public during their meeting in Ventura, and it was clear that they are counting on the development of the wolf plan. Ms. Kovacs will be providing them with an update on the planning effort at their June meeting in Fortuna, after which the FGC may look to schedule a special meeting at which to issue their decision in July.

- OR7: is staying in the same general area between Mt. McLoughlin and Crater Lake in Oregon. His collar is overdue to expire. Any plans to re-collar him would be the decision of the Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). One stakeholder stressed the importance of OR7 to California, and requested the Department reiterate the value in an interagency agreement to get him re-collared.

- USFWS proposal to delist gray wolf: no changes per USFWS representative Lisa Ellis

- Dates for future SWG meetings: the last one scheduled is in June, with multiple subgroup meetings scheduled as well. We may be able to add one additional meeting in July.

- Status of wolf plan by chapter: the Background chapter is essentially complete; the Wolf Conservation chapter is partially complete, with objectives and management phases yet to be addressed; the Wolf-Ungulate Interactions chapter is well along the way with more complicated sections like strategies still needing work; the Wolf-Human Interactions chapter is about two-thirds complete; the Wolf Interactions with Other Wildlife Species chapter is partially complete; the narrative portion of the Wolf-Livestock Conflicts chapter is complete, with stakeholder feedback having been incorporated, but strategies still in preparation; the Information and Education chapter is complete; the Land Management Considerations, Plan Implementation Evaluation and Reporting, Research and Information Management, and Funding Opportunities chapters have not yet been started.

    - Ms. Kovacs asked the group to consider forming a subgroup to work on developing the Funding Opportunities chapter.

- Revised schedule for plan completion and expectations for SWG meetings: the next six weeks will be fast-paced, with many meetings scheduled, and the Department will be sending out a lot of materials for stakeholders to read and provide feedback on. One stakeholder expressed a desire for an opportunity to have the SWG meet again after there has been scientific peer review input as well as public input on the draft plan. Ms. Kovacs revived a suggestion made early in the stakeholder process, that the stakeholders may wish to consider drafting a letter to the public, similar to that produced by Oregon and Washington stakeholders for their wolf planning efforts.

- Updated Western States wolf demographic data: the table presented is an update to a previously presented table, to include data from 2013. The data shows an approximately 1/3 reduction in confirmed cattle depredation from 2012. Sheep depredation remained approximately the same, and wolf population also remained about the same or increased slightly with the exception of Idaho which experienced about a 2.2% decline. Wolf breeding pairs in Oregon decreased by two, whereas the overall Oregon population increased by 16, an increase of 39%. Lethal control wolf mortality decreased by approximately 13%. The annual reports from the Northern Rocky Mountain states infer that legal hunting and trapping reduce the need for lethal control of wolves. Hunting and trapping of

wolves increased by approximately 14%. Overall, annual mortality of wolves for the Northern Rocky Mountain states was about 37% to 38%, and the population is stable. This is consistent with literature that predicts a 34% to 35% annual mortality rate beyond which wolf populations tend to decline.

- Reliability of recent new information on wolves for use in the CA wolf plan: three new sources of information that have been circulated of late were discussed. The first was The Wildlife Society published document titled “50 Shades of Gray” which was a review of a publication in Science magazine documenting the author’s attempt to reveal flaws in the open access scientific journal publication process. This author had his bogus article, containing several fatal flaws, accepted for publication by numerous such publishers. The purpose of presenting this document to the SWG was to encourage members to read articles carefully, paying particular attention to the article’s results section as opposed to only reading the discussion. The second item discussed was a book titled “The Real Wolf.” The book appears well-written, containing some factual information, but also some manufactured information, and some pertinent information is omitted. Many of the book’s citations are personal blogs, personal conversations, and newspaper articles. The third item discussed was a video currently circulating on YouTube which claims that wolves change the course of rivers due to their influence on ecosystems as apex predators. The authors of both of these media are attempting to influence readers/viewers to their perspectives. The Department has attempted to address the perspectives of such material by providing data for stakeholders to interpret.

Summary of Subgroup Meetings

Wolf-Livestock Subgroup (WLS) – Ms. Lauren Richie

The last meeting of this group was on April 9, and consisted of working on revisions to the draft chapter, focusing on direct and indirect effects of wolves on livestock. They discussed that the subsection on dogs may be pulled from this chapter, and placed in a separate chapter dedicated to wolf and domestic dog interactions. Members had provided their comments and edits in track changes, and the Department compiled these into a single document which was then discussed step by step by the group. Mr. Figura is currently revising the chapter based on those discussions, and the next meeting is scheduled for May 6.

Wolf –Ungulate Subgroup (WUS) – Mr. Rich Fletcher

At the last meeting the group was presented with some ungulate and wolf demographics in Idaho based on Idaho hunt units. Factors that influenced elk

populations were complex, and not one factor stood out as primary. There were many compensatory events such as agriculture or poor habitat as well as wolf predation. The group learned that it is difficult to evaluate wolf-ungulate relationships in terms of population dynamics. The group then discussed California's ungulates and how wolves may interact with them. It is difficult to predict the future of wolves in California given the uncertainty of our ungulate populations. Dr. Loft added that the group also discussed the possibility of deriving different models for predicting wolf population based on their biomass requirements, looking at how this was done in other states. With several models' results presented in the Wolf-Ungulate Interactions chapter, we can then develop wolf conservation objectives.

Wolf Conservation Subgroup (WCS) – Mr. John McNerney

The group has met twice since the last SWG meeting. At the April 9 meeting the group was presented with a brief contrast between mule deer and white tailed deer in terms of their habitat uses, and predator avoidance behaviors. Because of these differences their interactions with wolves are also different. The group also discussed the habitat suitability modeling used in the Washington wolf plan, and how a similar approach could be applied in California. Next, the group discussed the landscape management units concept as presented previously by Mr. Steve Torres – whether they would be useful for conservation purposes, management purposes, or possibly both. Finally, the group discussed possibly engaging in some additional fact finding on effects of human-induced mortality on wolves, wolf population objectives as developed by other states, the economics of wolf management, and the possibility of bringing in wolf experts from other states to address the group.

At the April 29 meeting the group spent significant time discussing a conservation assumptions document, which is derived from other states' experiences. It consisted of a list of 13 assumptions about wolf conservation in California, such as those factors to which wolves are likely to be positively correlated: proximity to Oregon, wild ungulate density, and forest cover; and those to which wolves are likely to be negatively correlated: human density, livestock density, intensive agriculture.

Native Ungulates in California Presentation

After a break, Mr. Craig Stowers, Environmental Program Manager for the CDFW Game Program, gave a presentation on deer, and briefly on bighorn sheep, in California. He explained that today's deer issues are directly related to the history of deer management in California. Going back to the 19th century, there is little known about the size of deer populations, but anecdotally it is not considered to have been large. The onset of market hunting had a huge impact on native ungulates, nearly wiping out the elk and antelope in California. Vast tracts of forest were cut with the influx of people in

the gold rush, leading some to speculate that this led to migratory behavior in mule deer. As values changed in the late 19th century, with people realizing that the deer were not inexhaustible, they set hunting seasons, began to require hunting licenses, and restricted areas available for hunting. By the 1940s to 1950s these management actions along with habitat changes in the forests had led to a boom in deer. To control the population, in 1956 a doe hunt was implemented which was very successful and reduced the numbers significantly. However, changing values led to other changes, which contributed to additional deer declines. Reduced timber production, and increased livestock use of public lands ultimately resulted in lower deer populations. By the 1980s increased tag prices provided funds to increase research, which led to vastly increased knowledge of deer habitat needs, reproductive potential, behavior, etc; and to conduct revegetation efforts on public lands to help the now continuously declining deer population. However it has been difficult to coordinate efforts with the major land management agencies, which have multiple use mandates, to conduct adequate deer habitat efforts. It has also been difficult to collect adequate data in order to make accurate estimates of deer populations, due to the high cost of manpower and technology. The current population estimates are trends based on annual herd performance data and hunter returned harvest report cards, which may not always provide accurate estimates, because hunter success is as much a factor of hunter effort or weather as it is deer population. It is possible to get more accurate data but it would require a shift in the way the Department collects the data.

Deer populations are impacted by a number of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. They have the ability to readily take advantage of changing environmental conditions, they breed at a young age, and they breed every year, sometimes producing twins. Their strategy for dealing with predators is to synchronize birthing, essentially flooding the environment with fawns, such that the sheer number of fawns overwhelms predators. They are long-lived, thus having the capacity to produce numerous offspring over their reproductive lives. As a consequence of these intrinsic characteristics, deer populations are actually regulated by extrinsic factors such as predation, disease, accidents, and particularly food availability. Deer thrive on early successional habitats of grasses, forbs, and young shrubs as opposed to more mature vegetation. Type conversion, in which habitats change from one type to another, is detrimental to deer, particularly when it involves encroachment of non-native species such as cheatgrass. Actions that help to maintain adequate deer habitat include fire and mechanical disturbance of mature shrubs, which leads to stump sprouting and seed release, making young vegetation available to deer. The Department attempts to improve habitat for deer through management of CDFW-owned lands, through private land management programs, and through consultation with federal land management agencies. With respect to the ability of California's deer to support some number of wolves, Mr. Stowers believes it is possible, but it will require

creating more deer habitat to increase the deer population to avoid reducing them for the predators that depend on them, including the hunting community.

There are no bighorn sheep in Northern California, where wolves are likely to first colonize the state. They may have occurred there historically in the Warner Mountains and the northern Sierra, but probably not in the Siskiyous. Several attempts to transplant bighorns to the Warner Mountains failed because of disease transmissions from domestic sheep. There are a number of diseases that can be transmitted from domestic ungulates to bighorn, such that in some states they will kill rams that come into contact with domestic sheep to avoid the possibility of bringing a disease back to the herd. In fact there was an outbreak of pneumonia that killed several bighorn this spring that was likely transmitted by some feral goats in the area. So we did not spend much time addressing bighorn today because wolves will likely not be encountering them in the foreseeable future.

Next, Mr. Joe Hobbs, Statewide Elk and Antelope Coordinator, gave a presentation on elk and pronghorn in California. There are three subspecies of elk in California: Roosevelt on the coast, tule in the Central Valley and foothills of the Sierra and Coast range, and Rocky Mountain in the east. The market hunting, agricultural conversion, and gold rush of the 19th century decimated the elk populations in California such that tule elk were reduced to a single herd in Kern County composed of highly related individuals. California's elk numbers are still very low but are increasing. Population objectives for the various elk management units are being developed in collaboration with the CDFW unit biologists, and will be finalized in the upcoming elk management plan. It's important to note that the elk distribution polygons representing the elk management units appear as if they are densely populated with elk, but the animals are actually spread out within each area. Relocations of tule elk have helped to increase the population, which is now leveling off due to declining availability of appropriate areas for release. Roosevelt elk populations are increasing steadily, as are Rocky Mountain elk, but the Rocky Mountain appear stable in the population graph due to lack of survey effort.

Elk are primarily grazers of grasses and forbs, and will sometimes browse on shrubs. Quality habitat is essential for elk to thrive, and conversion of habitat to nonnative species such as cheatgrass is a concern for elk. The Department cooperates with private landowners as well as federal land management agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service for elk habitat, but they have constraints on what management they can do, such as endangered species concerns. The Department also cooperates with non-profit entities such as Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) to fund and implement habitat projects on public and private property.

The Department also has constraints on elk population monitoring due to survey difficulties, staffing, and budget issues, and much more intensive survey efforts are needed to accurately estimate the size and distribution of California's elk. Some current research projects include GPS collared animals in the Marble Mountains, and some vegetation mapping in San Luis Obispo to determine what the elk are eating relative to its availability. Future plans for additional elk research include examining movement and distribution of animals in Inyo and Merced counties, a statewide examination of survey methodology, potentially collecting DNA from pellets, and unmanned aerial system surveys (drones). Funding for the elk and pronghorn programs comes solely from revenue generated by the hunt programs and the federal Wildlife Restoration Act program, which is an excise tax on firearm and ammunition sales. Elk tag allocations for most areas is very conservative. This allows for some public use, while allowing the populations to continue increasing.

Pronghorn are concentrated primarily in the northeast part of the state, with some small herds along the coast range and in Mono County. Small populations of antelope do not do well, as they depend on large numbers for predator avoidance. The western edge of the larger northeastern population is also declining, but overall that group is stable. Nearly 40% of the population was lost during the winter of 1992-93 due to severity of the weather. Since then the population has been relatively steady. The overall tag numbers allotted are low enough that they have little impact on the population. Pronghorn are a plains species, so are easily surveyed by fixed-wing airplane, but survey efforts have declined in recent years. Hunter harvest data and radio-collaring are both sources of information on antelope populations. The three main landowners in antelope range in California are BLM, USFS, and private.

Some comments and questions presented to Mr. Hobbs and Mr. Stowers are listed below:

- In what capacity does the Department provide the large landowners with input on management, and what opportunity do we have to effect changes that promote the early seral habitat ungulates need? *We've met with them in the past and tried to give input and met with varying degrees of success. A motivated USFS employee willing to jump through the hurdles to implement something on the ground can go a long way. They used to have a big game coordinator in the USFS who was great to work with and motivated the USFS to get projects done. The RMEF has annual meetings with them, and knowing people increases the likelihood of getting something done. With deer we need to communicate with the landowners as to the vegetation issues and historical deer use, and try to identify those areas where we have the best chance of success based on historical use. They need to identify it as a priority in the Forest Plan revisions.*

- Does the Department have deer and elk population goals? *For deer it's mostly about ratios, buck objectives, and maximizing hunter success. It's hard to identify a goal that we can't meet or that people will not have a problem with. The deer population is in the eye of the beholder, as adequate to one is too many to another. We can identify minimums or objectives but they are just ours. For this situation though it needs to be done.*
- The Forest Plan revisions are an important place for you to provide your input to the USFS on habitat recommendations. I don't think they need to know exactly what your goals are, but just generally desired conditions to some degree of early seral habitat for key species. The Northern California Prescribed Fire Council is a new group that the Department could provide with some priorities. *Thank you.*
- Do you see areas where you can visualize wolves successfully establishing packs and in those areas could you hypothesize how elk management might be impacted? *No. Mark's example of the Lolo herd in Idaho is a population of 5000. That one herd is more than half of California's total population. It's hard to imagine such a small prey base, and elk is primary prey for wolves, and have them stay there. The numbers are so different than what you see in other western states.*
- Is there an average home range or number of miles elk travel in a year? And what about deer? *With elk it will vary by year and by region. With deer there are some generalizations about local deer but the migratory deer are different. They are very traditional so they use the same movement patterns every year.*
- In the past on Horseshoe Ranch on the Oregon border, there was a lot of habitat work done, but that has subsided. Is that an indication of the future? Is management of habitat more hands off now? Could the wolf be a catalyst to re-engage in habitat work? *That's why we're here. I was going to say that the difference between 30 years ago and now is a reflection of the changing needs of the public and the agency. Thirty years ago people wouldn't have been sitting around in a room talking, they would be out using equipment in the field. We didn't have CEQA, NEPA, CESA. These things take more time and resources, and they are priorities for the Department but they do take us away from other things. But that's why I wanted to come to this meeting because anything that increases the discussion about deer conservation is a good thing. It might lead us to do more habitat work.*
- What is the success rate of elk hunting? *About 50% to 75%*

Discussion of:

Peer Review Recommendations

The Department had originally hoped to receive all SWG recommendations for scientific peer reviewers by today. They had requested that each "caucus" provide a prioritized list of names that caucus members had agreed upon, and a separate prioritized list from The Wildlife Society. As of today the Department had received recommendations from The Wildlife Society, from one member acting individually, and from the conservation caucus. The agriculture and sportsmen's caucuses agreed that they would provide their recommendations by May 2nd.

Possible New Chapters

In this section Ms. Kovacs presented the idea of adding three possible new chapters. Because wolf interactions with different types of dogs (i.e. livestock guard dogs, hunting dogs, wolf-hybrids, and pets), and wolf-related diseases both can be addressed in multiple chapters, the Department has considered developing these topics within their own chapters, however the decision to do so is not yet finalized. One member requested collaboration with the veterinarian from the Department of Food and Agriculture on the diseases chapter.

A third chapter was proposed, which would contain a summary of the proposed strategies from each of the other chapters, as well as the management objectives and actions proposed to achieve objectives.

Review of Tabled Items from Previous Meetings

Ms. Kovacs brought forward a number of tabled items from previous meetings which have since been addressed. As such, these will now be removed except where noted below.

Strategy for determining goals for wolf population

- These will be developed by the Wolf Conservation and Wolf-Ungulate Interactions subgroups, so the item will be removed from the SWG table.

Differences between CESA and ESA

- This will continue to be tabled until the appropriate staff are present to address the topic.

Comments on draft chapters by non-subgroup members received

- None have been received.

Edits to subgroup meeting reports

- None have been received.

Conclusion and Wrap-up

During this section, some members expressed extreme concern over the timeframe allotted for completion of the plan. They felt that they do not have adequate time to fully review and comment on the high volume of documents that the Department is sending them, and that the quality of the products, and therefore their ability to approve of them, could therefore be compromised. They were especially concerned that the Fish and Game Commission may be relying on the completion of the plan in formalizing their opinions on the listing status petition for wolf. Others were less concerned about the timeline, and instead expressed the need for urgency to show good faith that the Department is making every effort to complete the plan in a timely fashion. Ms. Kovacs asked the group for a vote on how much more time they would request, and the group generally agreed that 3 to 6 months would be sufficient. Ms. Kovacs agreed to convey their request to the Director.

Action Items

- Correct wolf mortalities for 2013 in Washington in Table 1 and resend
- Notification of a July SWG meeting
- Convey the SWG member's concerns regarding the timeline for plan completion to the Director
- The agriculture and sportsmen's caucuses agreed that they would provide their scientific peer review recommendations by May 2nd.

APPENDIX A. WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Name	Affiliation	Email
Stakeholders		
Mike Ford	Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	mford@rmef.org
Marilyn Jasper	Sierra Club	marilyn.jasper@mlc.sierraclub.org
Pamela Flick	Defenders of Wildlife	pflick@defenders.org
Noelle Cremers	California Farm Bureau	ncremers@cfsf.com
Rich Fletcher	Mule Deer Foundation	richfletcher@sbcglobal.net
Natalynne DeLapp	Environmental Protection Information Center	natalynne@wildcalifornia.org
Jack Hanson	CA Cattlemen's Association	hansonwcranch@frontier.com
Bill Gaines	California Houndsmen for Conservation	bill@outdoorheritage.org
John McNerney	The Wildlife Society – Western Section	jmcnerney@cityofdavis.org
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Lesa Eidman	CA Wool Growers Association	lesa@woolgrowers.org
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California Department of Fish and Wildlife Staff		
Karen Kovacs	Wildlife Program Manager – Region 1	karen.kovacs@wildlife.ca.gov
Dr. Eric Loft	Wildlife Branch Chief	eric.loft@wildlife.ca.gov
Mark Stopher	Senior Policy Advisor	mark.stopher@wildlife.ca.gov
Karen Converse	Environmental Scientist –Wildlife Branch	karen.converse@wildlife.ca.gov
Craig Stowers	Environmental Program Manager – Game Program	steve.torres@wildlife.ca.gov
Joe Hobbs	Statewide Elk Coordinator – Wildlife Branch	joe.hobbs@wildlife.ca.gov
Stuart Itoga	Senior Environmental Scientist – Supervisor – Big Game Program	stuart.itoga@wildlife.ca.gov

APPENDIX B. PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS AND COMMENTS

Name	Affiliation	Email
Legislative Representatives		
Catherine Bird	Senator Ted Gaines's Office	catherine.bird@sen.ca.gov

- Thank you all for the hard work you are putting into this effort to find consensus on a wolf plan for California

APPENDIX C. AGENDA

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Wolf Stakeholders Working Group (SWG) Meeting
Department of Fish and Wildlife, Office of Training and Development,
1740 North Market Blvd., Sacramento
April 30, 2014

Conference Call 888.379.9287 Participant Code 476990

Purpose – To continue to engage the SWG in the wolf planning process and work towards the completion of a California wolf plan

Objective 1 – Arrive at a common understanding of native ungulate management in California
Objective 2 - Receive peer review recommendations for consideration from each "caucus"

Agenda

- Gather in the meeting room 8:45
- Welcome and Introductions 9:00
- Facilitator Introduction 9:10
- Agenda and Ground Rules/Operating Principles/Looking Ahead 9:15
- Updates: 9:20

    1. Petition to list gray wolf and FGC action (Eric Loft)
    2. OR7
    3. Federal proposal for delisting (Lisa Ellis)
    4. Dates for future SWG meetings
    5. Status of plan by Chapter
    6. Revised schedule for plan completion and expectations for SWG meetings
    7. Updated western states wolf demographic data (Mark Stopher)
    8. Reliability of recent new information on wolves for use in CA Wolf Plan (Mark Stopher)

- Summary of subgroup SWG meetings/next steps 9:50
  Wolf-Livestock – (Lauren Richie/Mark Stopher)
  Wolf-Ungulate – (TBD/Eric Loft)
  Wolf Conservation – (John McNerney/Mark Stopher)

BREAK 10:20

- Native Ungulates in California (deer, elk, antelope, bighorn sheep) 10:30

LUNCH 12:45

- Peer review recommendations from each "caucus" 2:00

- Possible new Chapters – a) domestic dogs 2:30
  b) diseases
  c) summary of strategies and management actions

- Review of Tabled Items (from prior meetings) 2:45
  1. Strategy for determining goals for wolf population ((Chapter 2 -where, how many)
  2. Differences between ESA and CESA
  3. Comments on draft chapters by non-subgroup members received
  4. Edits to Subgroup meeting reports

- New Action Items from Today's Meeting 3:00

- Future meeting date (May 28, 2014) and location for next SWG meeting 3:15

- Review, Conclusions and Wrap-Up 3:30

- Questions from the public 3:45

Adjourn 4:00

Attachments:

"More Than 50 Shades of Gray" by Gary C. White. The Wildlife Professional, Spring 2014

Subgroup Reports:

Wolf Conservation Subgroup Meeting Report – April 9, 2014

Wolf-Livestock Interactions Subgroup Meeting Report – April 9, 2014

Wolf-Ungulate Interactions Subgroup Meeting Report – March 19, 2014

Wolf Plan Chapter Outline (draft April 2014)

Table 1. Detailed Data by State for Cattle and Sheep Depredation, Wolf Populations and Wolf Mortality

APPENDIX D. POWERPOINT SLIDES PRESENTED

Slides Presented by Ms. Kovacs

Slide 1

Slide 2

Welcome and Introductions

Slide 3

Facilitator Introduction

Slide 4

PURPOSE

To continue to engage the Wolf Stakeholder Working Group in the wolf planning process and work towards the completion of a California wolf plan

Slide 5

Objective 1 - Arrive at a common understanding of native ungulate management in California

Objective 2 -Receive peer review recommendations for consideration from each "caucus"

Slide 6

Agenda

- Ground rules/Operating Principles/Looking Ahead
- Updates
- Summary of subgroup SWG meetings/next steps

Break (10:20 am)

- Native ungulates in California

Lunch (12:45 am)

- Peer review recommendations from each "caucus"
- Possible new Chapters
- Review of tabled items from previous and new items (today)
- New action items (today)
- Future meeting date and location
- Review, conclusion and wrap up
- Questions from the public

Adjourn (4:00)

Slide 7

Ground Rules

- Seek to learn and understand each other's perspective.
- Encourage respectful, candid, and constructive discussions.
- Provide balance of speaking time.
- Seek to resolve differences and reach consensus.
- Discuss topics together rather than in isolation.
- Make every effort to avoid surprises.
- Limit sidebars.
- Turn off cell phones/switch to non-ring mode.
- Reminder to public regarding their participation.

Slide 8

Looking Ahead

Slide 9

Build as much agreement as possible

Slide 10

Updates

1. Petition to list gray wolf and FGC action
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8. Reliability of recent new information on wolves for use in CA Wolf Plan

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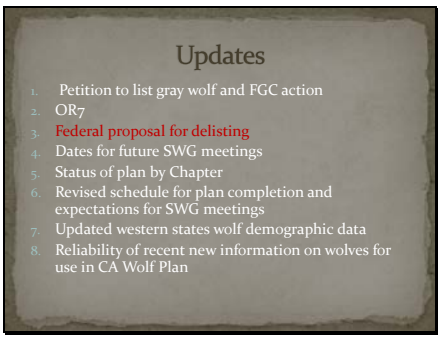

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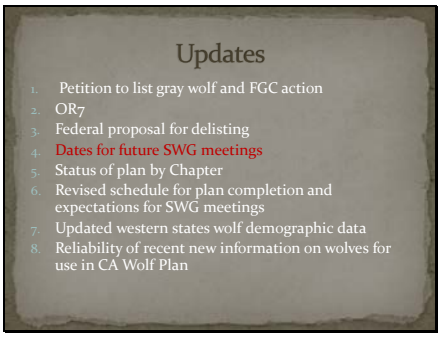

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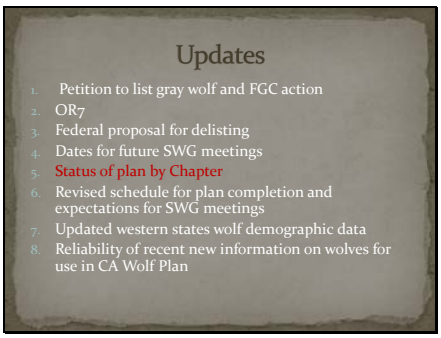

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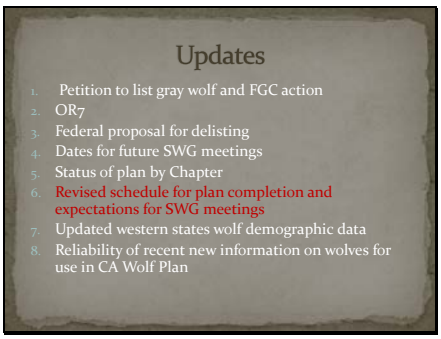

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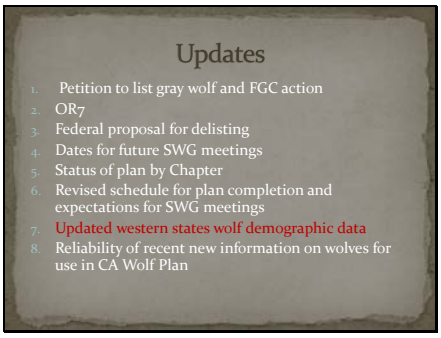

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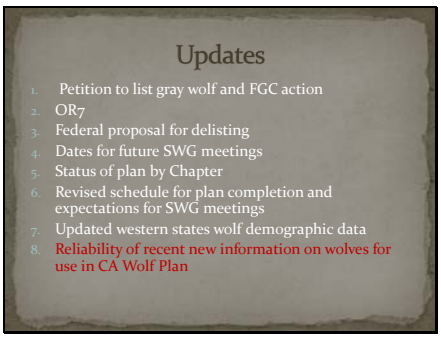

Slide 19

Summary of subgroup SWG meetings/next steps

Wolf –Livestock Conflicts (Lauren Richie/Mark Stopher)

Wolf-Ungulate Interactions (Rich Fletcher/Eric Loft)

Wolf Conservation (John McNerney/Mark Stopher)

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Summary of subgroup SWG meetings/next steps

Wolf –Livestock Conflicts (Lauren Richie/Mark Stopher)

Wolf-Ung (Rich Fletcher/Eric Loft)

Wolf Cons Nerney/Mark Stopher)

Slide 21

Summary of subgroup SWG meetings/next steps

Wolf –Livestock Conflicts (La

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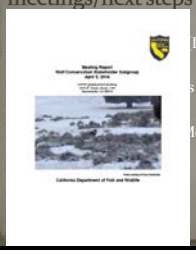
Wolf Conservation (John McN

Slide 22

Summary of subgroup SWG meetings/next steps



Lauren Richie/Mark Stopher)

s (Rich Fletcher/Eric Loft)

McNerney/Mark Stopher)

Slide 23

Break – 10 minutes

Slide 24

Native Ungulates in California – deer, elk, antelope, and bighorn sheep

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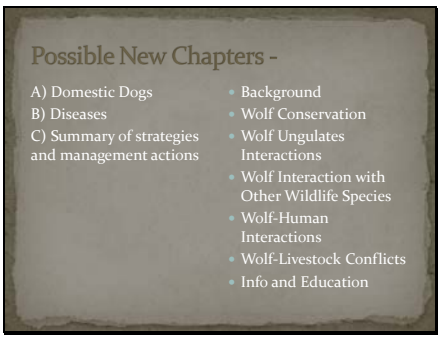

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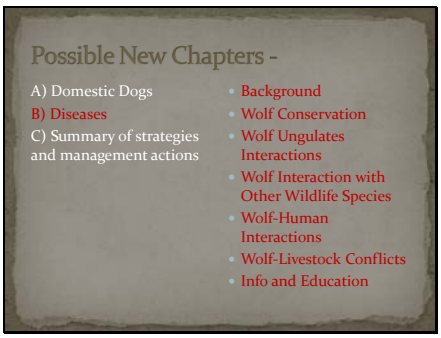

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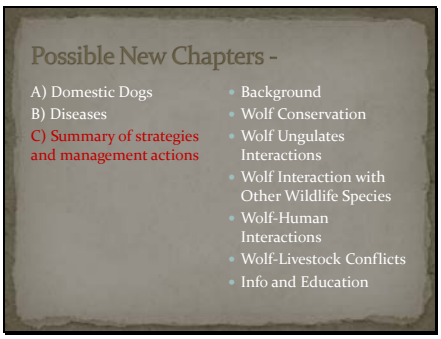

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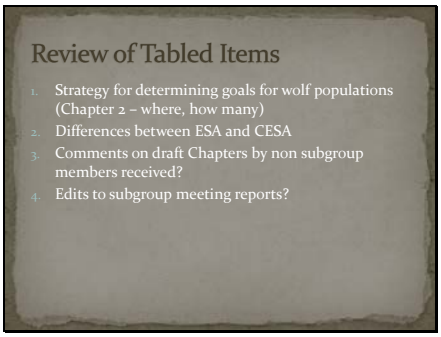

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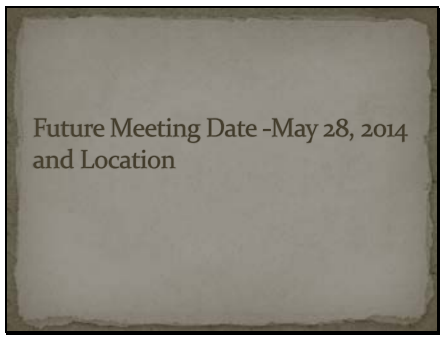

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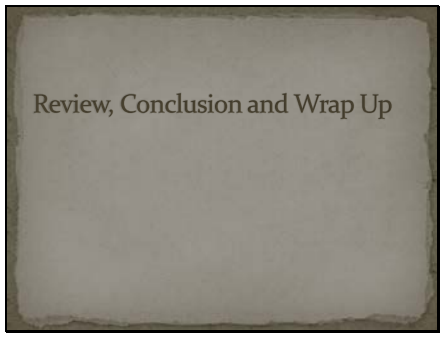

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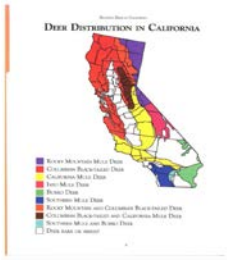
Slides Presented by Mr. Stowers

Slide 1

Deer in California:

A **BRIEF** Overview

Slide 2



Slide 3

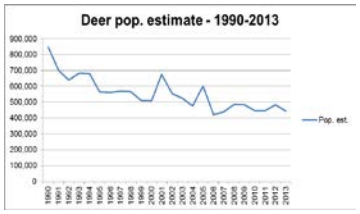
Deer Herds

Slide 4

Deer Zones/Management Units

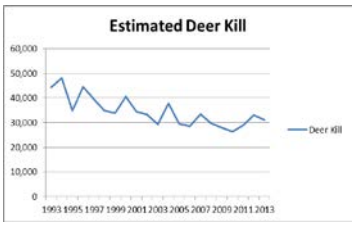
Slide 5

Deer Population Trend



Slide 6

Deer Harvest Trend



Slides Presented by Mr. Stowers

Slide 7

Deer Harvest "Highlights"

1954	Harvest	
Alameda	911	record harvest year for Alameda County
Lassen	2,643	record harvest in 1951 – 4,499
State-wide	75,602	

1984	Harvest	
Alameda	156	approx. 82% decline in 30 years
Lassen	1,940	approx. 30% decline in 30 years
State-wide	32,190	approx. 57% decline in 30 years

2009	Harvest	
Alameda	117	approx. 25% decline in 25 years; approx. 87% in 55 year span
Lassen	427	approx. 78% decline in 25 years; approx. 84% in 55 year span
State-wide	27,086	approx. 16% decline in 25 years; approx. 64% in 55 year span

Slide 8

Basic Deer Population Dynamics

- Complex variety of intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence deer populations
- Predisposed to quickly respond to changes in environmental conditions
  - Young age to sexual maturity
  - Annual production of many (several) young
  - "High" survival of young
  - Relatively long production cycle
  - Defined as "high reproductive potential" or "K-selected species"

Slide 9

Negative Factors

- Mortality
  - Predation
  - Disease
  - "Accidents"
- Habitat Changes
  - Natural succession
  - Type Conversion (Unnatural succession?)
  - Development

Slide 10

Positive Factors

- "Anything" (**feasible**) which reduces annual mortality…but more importantly…
- Actions which increase the quality and/or quality of available habitat-especially on a large scale

Slide 11

Goal of Modern Deer Management

- Primary goal is to provide **sustainable** populations to:
  - meet needs of natural system they inhabit
  - meet human needs.

Slide 12

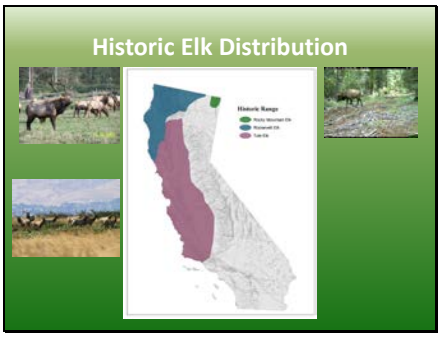
Deer Management "Challenges" in CA

- Little direct influence on habitat
- Legal restrictions regarding population management options
- Conflicting demands from user/interest groups
- Resources to meet ever higher standards - data & analysis - to support management actions. Everything is expensive - people and materials!!

Slides Presented by Mr. Hobbs

Slide 1

Slide 2



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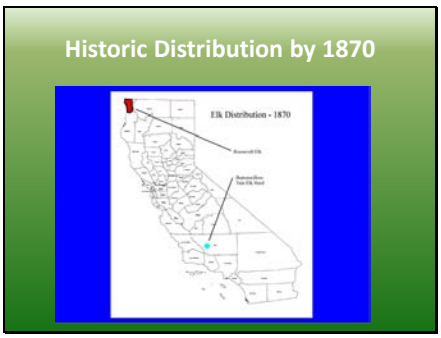

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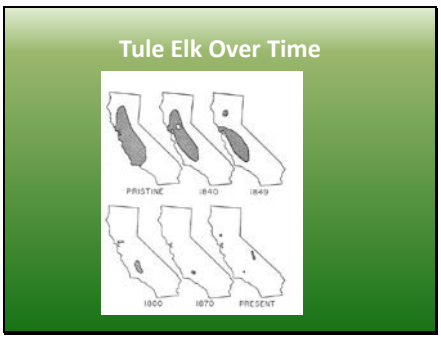

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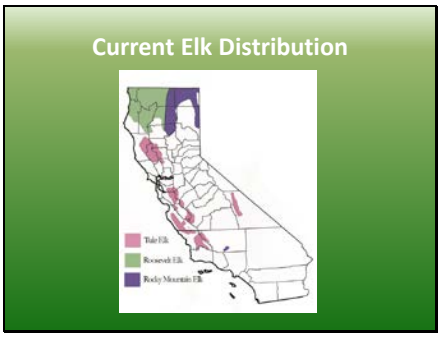


Slide 6

Slide 7

Subspecies Population Estimates

- Rocky Mountain Elk 1,500 – 2,000
- Roosevelt Elk 5,000-6,500
- Tule Elk 4,000 – 4,300

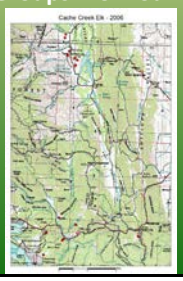
Slide 8

Elk Management Unit Population Estimates

EMU's within potential early wolf occupation range			
Elk Management Unit	Subspecies	Population Estimate*	Objective**
Northeastern	Rocky Mountain	800 - 1,000	TBD
Siskiyou	Roosevelt	400 - 700	TBD
Marble Mountains	Roosevelt	2,000 - 2,700	TBD
North Coast	Roosevelt	2,200 - 2,600	TBD
EMU's adjacent to potential early wolf occupation range			
Elk Management Unit	Subspecies	Population Estimate*	Objective**
Mendocino	Roosevelt/tule	500-650	TBD
Lake Pillsbury	tule	100-125	TBD
East Park	tule	100-120	TBD
Cache Creek/Bear Valley	tule	150-200	TBD

Slide 9

Tule Elk Groups From Survey Flight

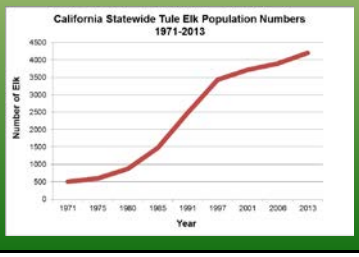


Slide 10

Northern Region – GPS Collars

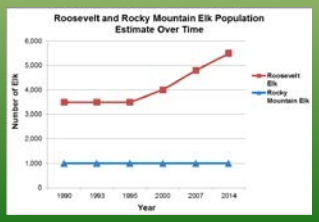
Slide 11

Tule Elk Population Through Time



Slide 12

Roosevelt and Rocky Mountain Elk Population Estimates Through Time



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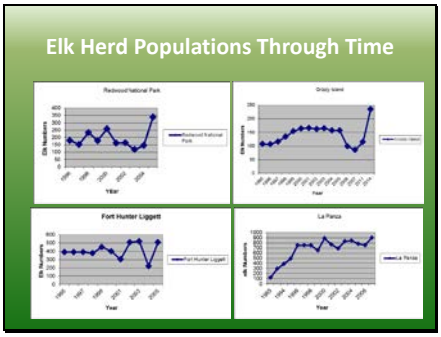

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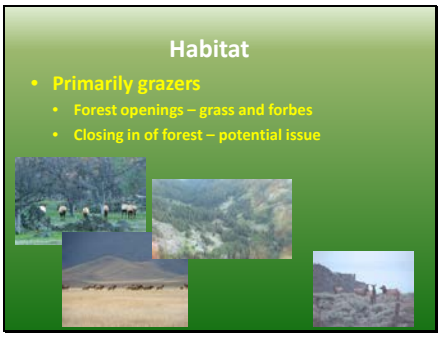

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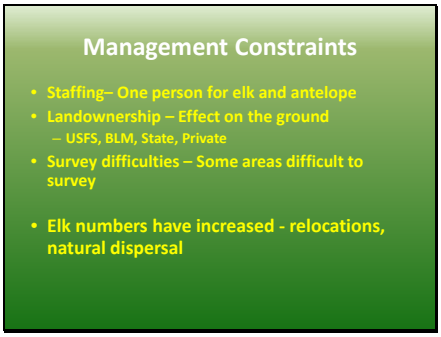

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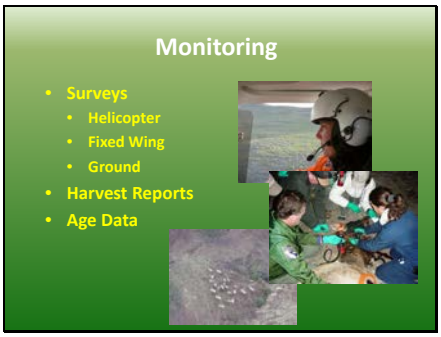

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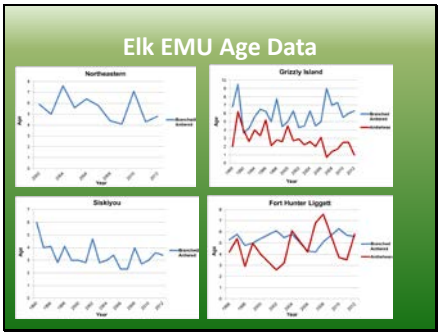

Slide 19

Mortality

- Predators
- Hunting
- Vehicles
- Disease
- Poaching

Slide 20

Data Needs

- Comprehensive Survey Data - #'s, Ratios
- Survival/Mortality

Slide 21

Data Needs

- Population Estimates
- Distribution
- Home Ranges

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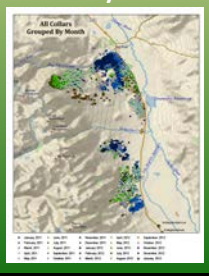
Recent and Current Elk Projects

- Marble Mountains (Siskiyou and Trinity Counties)
- Shasta County
- Owens Valley (Inyo County)
- La Panza (San Luis Obispo County)

Slide 23

Owens Valley GPS Collars



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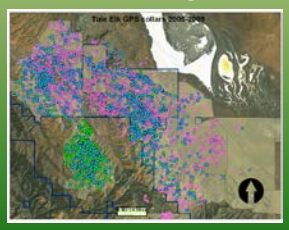
San Luis Obispo County – Grazed vs Ungrazed



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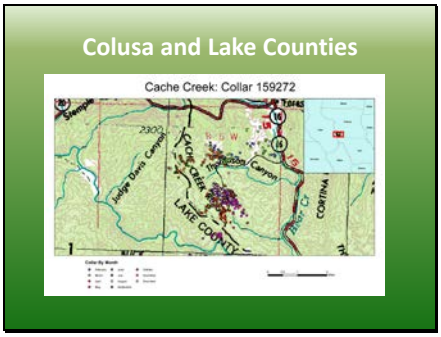

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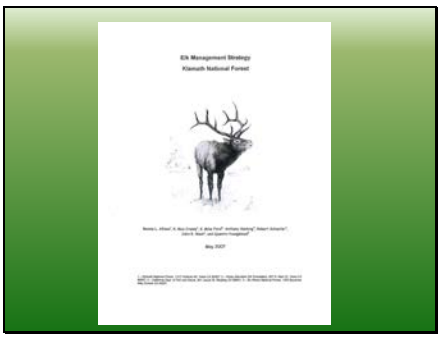

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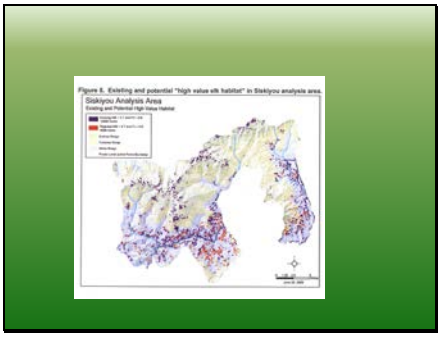

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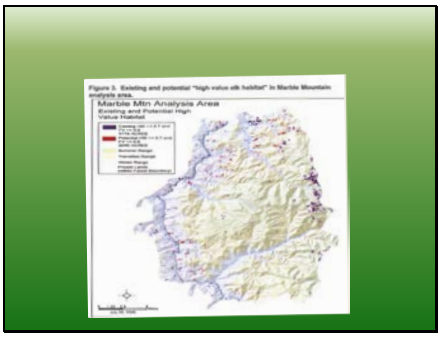

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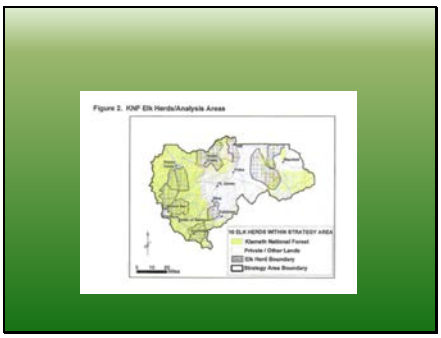

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Future Elk Projects

- Siskiyou and Trinity Counties
- Inyo County – (movement and distribution)
- Merced County – (subgroup movement and distribution)
- Statewide Survey Methodology study
- Unmanned Aerial System surveys (Drone)

Slide 32

Funding

- Paid for out of the revenue generated by the hunting program
- Pittman Robertson (PR) funding
  - Excise tax on sporting equipment (firearms and ammunition)

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Hunting –Tag Allocation

- Conservative harvest (most areas)
  - Allows public use and populations to expand

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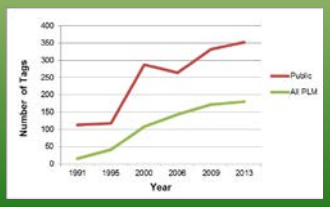
Elk Tags Issued



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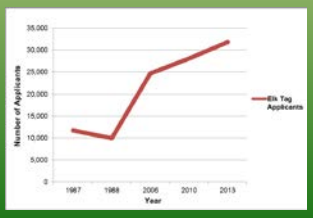
Demand for Elk Tags



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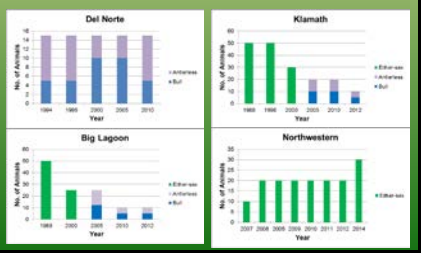
North Coast Elk Tags
Multiple hunt units within the EMU



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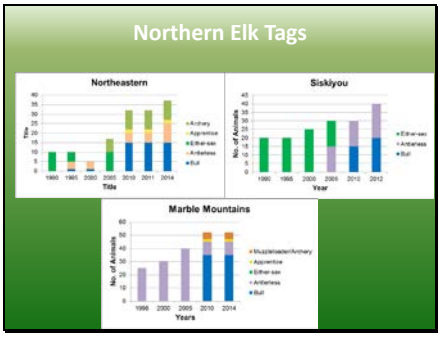

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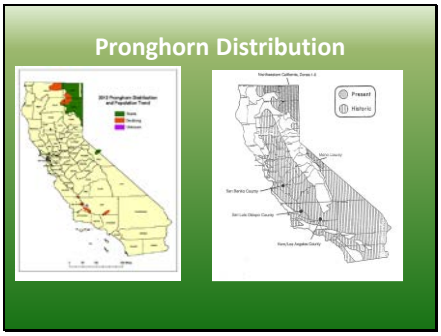

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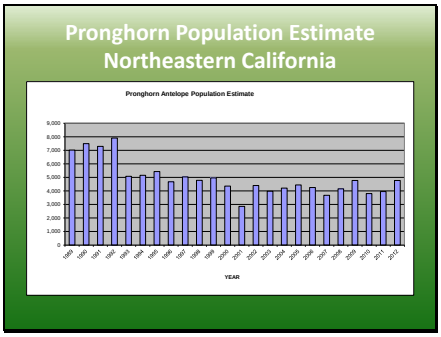

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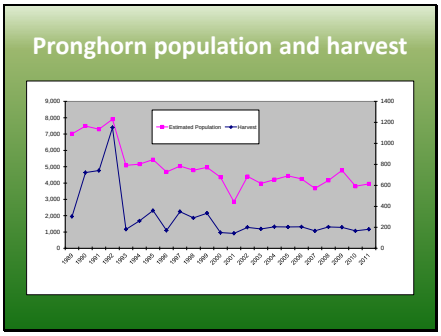

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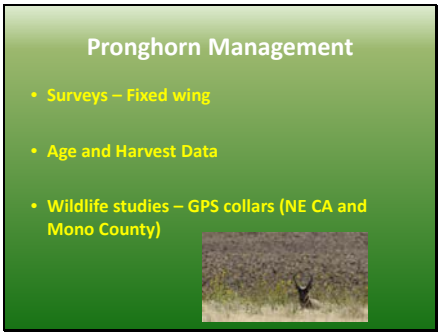

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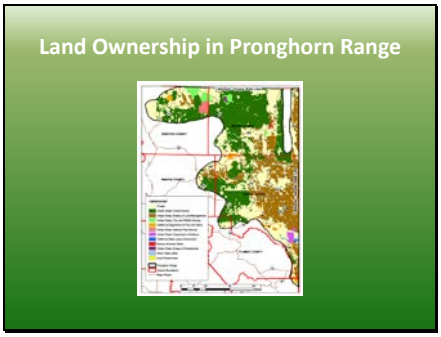

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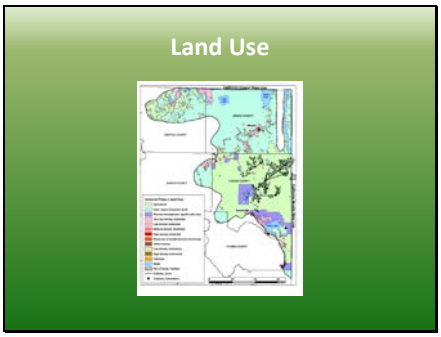

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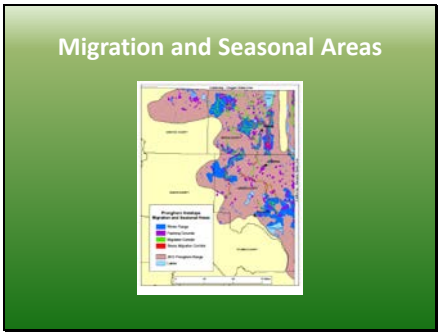

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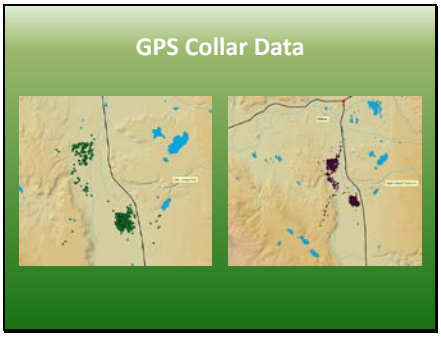

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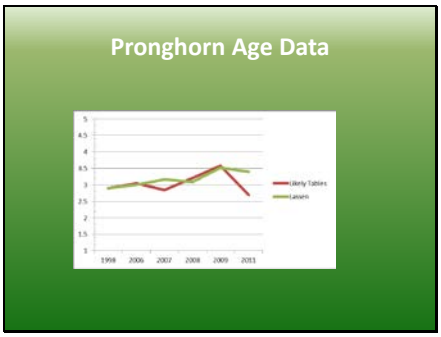

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APPENDIX E. CALIFORNIA WOLF PLAN
PRELIMINARY DRAFT OUTLINE (APRIL, 2014 VERSION)

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Gray Wolf Conservation Plan

PRELIMINARY DRAFT OUTLINE OF POSSIBLE TOPIC AREAS

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APPENDIX F

TABLE 1. DETAILED DATA BY STATE FOR CATTLE AND SHEEP DEPREDATION, WOLF POPULATIONS, AND WOLF MORTALITY

APPENDIX G.
“MORE THAN 50 SHADES OF GRAY”