



**Meeting Report
Wolf-Livestock Stakeholder Subgroup
October 22, 2014**

CDFW Wildlife Branch Conference Room
1812 9th Street,
Sacramento, CA 95811



California Department of Fish and Wildlife

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1.0 Introduction

On October 22, 2014 the Wolf-Livestock Interactions Subgroup convened in the conference room of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Wildlife Branch office in Sacramento. This was the thirteenth meeting of this subgroup, which was established to assist the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW, Department) in developing recommendations on a consensus-driven framework of management strategies for effectively dealing with potential wolf impacts on California's livestock populations.

2.0 Meeting Objectives and Mechanics

The purpose of the meeting was to continue building consensus through discussion of potential strategies for inclusion in a Wolf-Livestock Interactions chapter in the California Wolf Plan (Plan).

Objectives of the meeting as initially planned were:

- Determine points of agreement on Wolf-Livestock Depredation Strategy
- Confirm Wolf-Livestock schedule moving forward

The meeting was attended in person by the meeting facilitator Mr. Sam Magill, seven stakeholders, three staff, and one legislative representative. In addition, one CDFW staff and one member of the public attended via conference line. Appendix A provides a list of participants, their affiliations, and their contact information. Appendix B contains the meeting agenda, and Appendix C contains the current version of the Phased Wolf Conservation and Livestock Conflict Strategies.

3.0 Meeting Outputs

Updates/Housekeeping

- The September 19th meeting report from this subgroup is not completed yet. Staff will send to members as soon as possible.
- Mr. Pat Griffin will present a summary of this meeting at the next full Stakeholder Working Group Meeting.
- The Wolf-Livestock Interactions chapter is essentially finished, with just the conflict strategies yet to be incorporated.
- There are no updates to the overall plan since the last meeting.
- The Department is waiting for commitments from two final prospective scientific peer reviewers.

- The Fish and Game Commission ratified their findings to list the gray wolf as endangered under CESA at their October 8th meeting; staff anticipates official listing status by Spring, 2015.

Review/Discuss Wolf-Livestock Depredation Strategies

- Concern continued to be expressed over the Department's basis for using 4 successful breeding pairs to conclude Phase 1, and 8 successful breeding pairs to conclude Phase 2. While no consensus was reached on the issue, suggestions were made to provide a trigger at which point the Department would consider the status of California's wolf population, and thus possibly develop a recovery or delisting strategy, or at minimum provide a basis for revising the wolf population objectives for Phase 2. All members agreed that a status report to the Commission should be conducted periodically to determine the efficacy of the elements of the strategy and overall wolf plan. Language will be therefore be added to Element B – Phase 2, similar to the following:
 - CDFW will conduct a status review to examine the California wolf population, and prospects for the future of wolves in California, and report findings to the Fish and Game Commission.
- Additional structures should be added to the list of residential and agricultural structures in Element C
- Suggestions were made that the Department develop a more formalized non-lethal deterrence/wolf coexistence and depredation compensation program, which should include ongoing collaborative education on best practices at a local level, measures for ensuring appropriate non-lethal effort is applied by producers, training and certification of competence for conflict specialists, and implementation through a county-level advisory committee. The Department requested that subgroup members craft language for further consideration at the November 4th follow-up meeting.
- More specifics are needed with respect to the use of lethal control for livestock depredation. Not all wolves make the same contribution to the pack, and each individual's value in terms of their potential social, genetic, or breeding contribution to the pack should be considered. Additionally members discussed the appropriateness of removing an entire pack versus single animals. CDFW staff assured members that such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis after a thorough consideration of the circumstances. However in the early period of wolf recolonization, the removal of an entire pack is more likely to violate the “no greater than 10% human-caused mortality” constraint in Element J.
- Members proposed to CDFW staff to form a public wolf advisory group to meet periodically and discuss wolf plan implementation as it unfolds, and make

recommendations to the Department as new information is available, in an adaptive approach to wolf management. Such a group would also be able to make recommendations on an emergency basis in the event that unanticipated conflicts or circumstances arise. CDFW staff requested that members draft language to describe such a group, and present it at the full Stakeholder Working Group meeting on November 18th.

- Several members expressed concern that 2 depredation incidents in 6 months is not an appropriate measure of “chronic” depredation. They believed that either the number of incidents should be increased over 6 months, or the timeframe in which 2 incidents occurs should be shortened, for depredation to be considered chronic. Members were not prepared to offer a suggestion yet as to the correct figures, and CDFW staff requested they confer and be prepared to offer an alternative at the November 4th meeting.
- Some concern was expressed over a requirement for livestock producers to participate in a cooperative agreement with the Department, before lethal control for wolf-livestock conflict will be considered in Phase 2. Some members were concerned that a producer who is not willing to participate in a cooperative agreement, but who is otherwise properly employing non-lethal methods, will be penalized. The Department agreed to strike the requirement (Item 4 in Element K – Phase 2)
- To determine the level of potential agreement on the lethal control elements, Mr. Magill asked members whether lethal control should be removed from the strategy entirely. All members present at the meeting acknowledged that lethal control could be appropriate in certain situations, with the following **important notes**:
 - Members representing agricultural/livestock producers agreed that lethal control must be included in the strategy.
 - Members representing the environmental organizations present noted that the specifics of a lethal management element need to be very explicit, and only utilized as a last resort for problem animals (such as in the case of significant, persistent livestock depredation).
 - Members generally agreed that *when* lethal control can be implemented is entirely dependent on the trigger to move from Phase 1 to Phase 2 and from Phase 2 to Phase 3. As noted above, there was no consensus on the correct number to move between Phases; staff acknowledged that the Department would need to weigh stakeholder input and develop its own recommendation.

Action Items and Next Steps

- Department will re-order elements in the strategy document to reflect a progression of deterrence measures from least to most aggressive

- Department will make edits to strategy document to reflect agreed upon changes based on today's discussion, and will redistribute before Friday, October 31st
- Subgroup members will develop recommendations for a formalized structure to implement a non-lethal program that incorporates input on a local level for discussion at the November 4th subgroup meeting
- Subgroup members will develop recommendations for a wolf advisory council to discuss at the November 18th full Stakeholder Working Group meeting
- Subgroup members will consider recommendations for an alternative set of parameters to constitute "chronic" depredation.

APPENDIX A WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Name	Affiliation	Email
Stakeholders		
Noelle Cremers	California Farm Bureau	ncremers@cfbf.com
Mark Rockwell	Endangered Species Coalition	mrockwell@endangered.org
Lesia Eidman	California Woolgrowers Association	lesa@woolgrowers.org
Pat Griffin	CA Agriculture Commission – Siskiyou Co.	pgriffin@co.siskiyou.ca.us
Kirk Wilbur	CA Cattlemen's Association	kirk@calcattlemen.org
Kim Delfino	Defenders of Wildlife	kdelfino@defenders.org
Karin Vardaman	CA Wolf Center	karin.vardaman@californiawolfcenter.org
California Department of Fish and Wildlife Staff		
Karen Kovacs	Wildlife Program Manager – Region 1	karen.kovacs@wildlife.ca.gov
Karen Converse	Environmental Scientist – Lands Program	karen.converse@wildlife.ca.gov
Mark Stopher	Senior Policy Advisor	mark.stopher@wildlife.ca.gov
Pete Figura	Environmental Scientist – Region 1	pete.figura@wildlife.ca.gov

PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS AND COMMENTS

Name	Affiliation	Email
Legislative Representatives and Public		
Catherine Bird	Senator Ted Gaines' Office	catherine.bird@sen.ca.gov
Kathy DeForest	President Big Valley Cattlemen's Assn.	

De Forest:

- I appreciate what Kim just said about the biologists needing training, but when discussing non-injurious harassment you need to also consider the livestock and wildlife behavior. When I look at the nonlethal tools for ranchers to use, not only will they harass the wolf but they will be stressful to the sheep and cattle. We need someone who understands both livestock and wolves.
- The most effective method of control of predators is a range rider 24 hours a day, but that doesn't make economic sense. It could cost \$12,000 for a 6 month period. We will be glad if we can find alternatives that don't also harass the livestock.
- I thought this was a very useful discussion. Thank you for letting me join in, and keep up the communication

Bird:

- I think its fantastic (initiation of a status review in Phase 2). Our concern has been there has been no relief valve. This gives the public the feeling that there is a possibility of something that can be done in a bad situation. I think my boss would like it.
- Today was a very productive meeting. Well done everyone.

APPENDIX B – AGENDA

PROPOSED AGENDA

Wolf-Livestock Subgroup
9am-1 PM October 22, 2014
1812 Ninth Street, 2nd Floor conference room, Sacramento
Teleconference Line 877.860.3058, PC 758045#

*Parking is available on the street (bring lots of quarters) or parking garages on both 10th and 11th streets between “O” and “P” streets

Objectives:

- Determine points of agreement on Wolf-Livestock Depredation Strategy
- Confirm schedule for Wolf-Livestock subgroup moving forward

1. Introductions and Logistics (5 minutes)
2. Updates/Housekeeping (15 minutes)
 - a. Identify Stakeholder member for update at next SWG meeting
 - b. Review, discuss, and revise September 19 meeting report
 - c. Discuss Wolf-Livestock Subgroup Scheduling
 - d. Status of Wolf-Livestock chapter
3. Review/Discuss Wolf-Livestock Depredation Strategy (90 minutes)
 - a. Walk through changes to strategy since 9/19 meeting
 - b. Examine each element and determine points of agreement/disagreement
 - c. Breakout sessions for each caucus will be used as needed
4. BREAK (20 minutes)
5. Discuss Wolf-Livestock Depredation Strategy-Continued (90 minutes)
6. Public questions (10 minutes)
7. Discuss Action Items and Next Steps (10 minutes)
 - Action Item Review
 - Next Steps

Agenda items subject to change as needed. For agenda items 3 and 5, each interest group/caucus is given the opportunity to request a breakout session to discuss specific points of the strategy internally. The facilitator will coordinate breakout sessions as needed.

APPENDIX C
PHASED WOLF CONSERVATION AND LIVESTOCK CONFLICT STRATEGIES

	Element/Phase	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
A	Parameters for Concluding Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four successful breeding pairs¹ anywhere in California for two successive years² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eight successful breeding pairs anywhere in CA, for two successive years 	Indeterminate
B	Commence development of next phase when:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two successful breeding pairs for two consecutive years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six successful breeding pairs for two consecutive years 	If and when warranted based on experience implementing the Plan or changes to controlling law.
C	Non-injurious harassment, including: ³ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air horns or whistles Firearm discharge aimed in a safe direction at an angle of 45° or more away from wolves Cracker shells Shouting Throwing objects Motion activated lights or sprinklers Using deterrent sprays Radio activated guard 	Same for all three phases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowed when wolves are within 100 yards of a residential or agricultural structure (i.e. barns, shops, storage sheds or lambing sheds) or within 0.25 mile of livestock. Harassment is not allowed within 0.25 mile of known den or rendezvous sites. CDFW will advise affected livestock producers of these locations. 		

Comment [MS1]: Agriculture caucus suggested expanding this list. Specific suggestions requested. Do not suggest: fences, roads, powerlines, irrigation or drainage facilities.

¹ A successful breeding pair is an adult male and adult female which produce at least two pups in a breeding season, all of which survive until December 31 of the year of their birth.

² Four successful breeding pairs explicitly means at least sixteen living wolves at the end of a calendar year. In Oregon and Washington the existing data indicates that four successful breeding pairs are correlated with a range of 45-65 wolves at years end. These numbers are not intended to have meaning for CESA listing status.

³ Additional methods may become available during implementation of this plan

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 Phased Wolf Conservation and Livestock Conflict Strategy
 10202014
 Draft for Discussion with members of the stakeholder working groups

	Element/Phase	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
	boxes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chasing wolves on foot or horseback for no more than 0.5 mile 			
D	Injurious harassment ⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not allowed while federally listed Not proposed in Phase 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowed when specifically authorized by CDFW, subject to criteria for when, where and how this may be implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Phase 2
E	Non-lethal livestock depredation assistance by CDFW	Same for all phases <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provide technical information (e.g. telephone and email assistance, web access to information, local public meetings). On-site evaluations and recommendations if requested by livestock producers. Focused disclosure when GPS collared wolves are detected within a geographic area (i.e. polygon) developed for a specific livestock producer. An information sharing agreement between CDFW and the livestock producer must be in place for this to occur. A commitment to not disclose provided information will be required. Short-term loan of equipment (e.g. fladry, RAG box, noisemakers). Individual agreements will set terms of the loan. Technical assistance, funding and approval for Wolf Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements. 		
F	CDFW Wolf Damage Prevention Cooperative Agreements (WDPCA) ⁵ with livestock producers	Same for all phases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented in priority counties with sympatric distributions of wolves and livestock. List of priority counties to be updated as needed, but at least annually by CDFW. CDFW shall withhold 10% of available funding, on an annual basis, from regular allocation, as an 		

⁴ Defined as any harassment that causes any object to physically contact a wolf, including firearms discharging nonlethal ammunition (e.g. rubber bullets or bean bags) or using motorized equipment (e.g. an all-terrain vehicle, motorcycle, or four wheel drive vehicle) to follow or pursue a wolf.

⁵ Potential Cooperating entities include: County Agricultural Commissioners, USDA Wildlife Services, University of California Cooperative Extension, Natural Resources Conservation Service

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	Element/Phase	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
		emergency response fund. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost share (i.e. 50%) funding up to \$10,000 annually by State for CDFW approved plans⁶ • Plans are valid for 12 month period from time of approval and may be renewed or amended. • CDFW may cap the funds to be allocated by county. • On-site evaluation by CDFW required. • Livestock producer must report on implementation and effectiveness of the actions. • An evaluation by CDFW is required prior to amending or renewing an Agreement. 		
G	Payments to livestock producers for wolf presence	Same for all phases <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implemented in priority counties with sympatric distributions of wolves and livestock. List of priority counties to be updated as needed, but at least annually by CDFW. 2. Applications by livestock producers will be scored based on a formula which accounts for wolf presence, number of livestock exposed to wolves, and implementation of non-lethal deterrents by the livestock producer. 3. Annual payments for wolf presence will be reduced by any amounts paid in compensation for confirmed depredation by wolves on livestock. 		
H	State managed livestock depredation compensation program	Same for all phases <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through CA Victim's Compensation and Government Claims Board with supporting documentation by CDFW 2. Livestock producer must notify CDFW within 24 hours, or as soon as possible, of discovery of dead or injured livestock 3. Protect the carcass(es) and site and provide access to CDFW or its agent to investigate 4. File a claim within 6 months of CDFW determination of confirmed or probable wolf depredation 5. 100% of fair market value for confirmed⁷ 6. 50% for probable 7. After two confirmed depredation incidents in any twelve month period, future compensation for the affected producer is available only if that producer has applied for a Wolf Damage Prevention 		

⁶ Funding priority will be established by relative scoring of all plans received during the designated application period which exceed a previously established minimum acceptable score.

⁷ Process claims in the chronological order received and pay claims on a July 1-June 30 fiscal year basis until annual funds are exhausted.

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	Element/Phase	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
		Cooperative Agreement with CDFW and the application is still active or has been approved.		
I	Lethal control for human safety ⁸	After Federal delisting, allowed when authorized by CDFW and carried out by CDFW or its agent. No limit on how many wolves can be removed for public safety.		
J	Use of lethal control for management. Allowed when authorized by CDFW in Phases 2 and 3, if legal to do so, and carried out by CDFW or its agent. Allowed consistent with required preliminary measures.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not allowed while federally listed 2. Not proposed in Phase 1 3. Not currently allowed under State law 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not allowed while federally listed 2. If allowed under State law, managed consistent with the following criteria 3. Allowed if the most recent annual statewide wolf population estimate increased by at least 5% compared to the preceding calendar year 4. Allowed to the extent that total human caused mortality⁹ in any year does not exceed 10% of the estimate of the statewide wolf 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not allowed while federally listed 1. If allowed under State law, managed consistent with the following criteria 2. Allowed if the most recent annual statewide wolf population estimate decreased by no more than 5% compared to the preceding calendar year 3. Allowed to the extent that total human caused mortality in any year does not exceed 15% of the estimate of the statewide wolf

⁸ This is anticipated to be an extremely rare occurrence. Will be implemented when a wolf demonstrates aggressive action that has resulted in physical contact with a human; or a wolf exhibits an immediate threat to public health and safety, given the totality of the circumstances. Immediate threat refers to a wolf that exhibits one or more aggressive behaviors directed toward a person that is not reasonably believed to be due to the presence of responders. Public safety includes situations where a wolf remains a threat despite efforts to allow or encourage it through active means to leave the area.

⁹ Human caused mortality includes public safety take, poaching, vehicle accidents, accidental death from trapping or hunting and any authorized lethal take for management.

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	Element/Phase	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
			population at the end of the preceding calendar year 5. Subject to additional requirements of the wolf-livestock conflict management strategy 6. Subject to additional requirements of the wolf-ungulate conflict management strategy	population at the end of the preceding calendar year 4. Subject to additional requirements of the wolf-livestock conflict management strategy, 5. Subject to additional requirements of the wolf-ungulate conflict management strategy
K	Lethal control of wolves depredating livestock	1. Not allowed while federally listed 2. Not proposed in Phase 1	Allowed when carried out by CDFW or its agent, consistent with Row J and the following criteria: 1. There have been at least two separate incidents of livestock depredation confirmed by CDFW in a six-month period by the same wolf or pack 2. Non-lethal deterrent methods recommended by CDFW to the producer have been implemented after the first depredation incident	To be determined in the Phase 3 development process based on wolf population and legal status, best available scientific information and experience gained during Phases 1 and 2

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	Element/Phase	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
			3. Restricted to wolves in packs confirmed by CDFW to have depredated livestock 4. The livestock producer has applied for a WDPCA.	