

California Department of Fish and Game
Update: Climate Change Activities
December 2011

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***Note* New DFG Climate Change Stakeholders Google listserv is up and running!**
We have transitioned DFG’s climate stakeholder email list to a new listserv to better streamline communication and ensure that all partners are receiving updates. This new listserv is our primary means of communication and offers the opportunity for partners to post a response or share information among each other. If you would like to join please email climatechange@dfg.ca.gov.

Highlights

- ***DFG Climate Change Stakeholders meeting February 21, 2012!*** This meeting will be held in the Natural Resources Building Auditorium from 10-12. More information coming soon!
- ***Public Meeting: National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy:*** The DFG and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies will co-host a public meeting to discuss the draft strategy on January 31, 2012 at Modoc Hall on the Sacramento State Campus from 9-12. The public draft of the strategy is expected to be released in December 2011. More information coming soon!

California Fish and Wildlife Strategic Vision

In 2010, the AB 2376 (Huffman) bill was signed into law, requiring the California Natural Resources Agency to convene an executive committee to develop a new strategic vision for the DFG. The DFG is fully engaged and supporting this process. A draft interim strategic vision plan was released to the public on November 22, 2011 and a series of public meetings are taking place around the state. The draft strategic vision contains a description of the process, a summary of past plans, partial report on barriers to implementation, and suggestions for public recommendations.

Governor's Conference on Climate Change and Extreme Events

California Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. and environmental, business and public health and safety leaders will come together on December 15 in San Francisco at "The Governor's Conference on Extreme Climate Risks and California's Future." DFG's Director will attend the conference. In conjunction, a special workshop will be held to focus on "Vulnerability and Adaptation to Extreme Events in California in the Context of a Changing Climate: New Scientific Findings". DFG's Climate Change Advisor is a co-author on the "Impacts of Extreme Weather and Climate on Terrestrial and Aquatic Biota in California" presentation that will be given at the meeting by Terry Root, Ph.D.

California Wildlife Action Plan Revision

The state's Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) is scheduled to be revised by 2015. Primary objectives of the revision are to incorporate new information developed through updates to Species of Special Concern documents for birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and fish; update the stressors and actions affecting fish and wildlife on an ecoregional scale; expand the analysis of threats posed by climate change and down-scale the state's adaptation strategy to on-the-ground, implemental actions. The DFG is working with Defenders of Wildlife to facilitate a training for DFG staff to use the Open Standards Process to guide the development of the two-phase update. The first phase of the revision will include public scoping and coordination with stakeholders, agencies and tribes with the goal of making the SWAP relevant to all levels of natural resource managers in California. This revision is being led by Armand Gonzales. For more information please email agonzales@dfg.ca.gov.

National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy

DFG is working with the Department of Interior, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other states to develop a national strategy that will provide decision makers and resource professionals with adaptation actions to promote species and habitat resiliency in the face of climate change. The intent is to promote a nationwide unified approach to climate driven adaptation strategies, reflecting shared principles and science-based practices to safeguard the nation's biodiversity, ecosystem function and sustainable human uses of fish, wildlife and plants. A draft of this strategy was released for agency review in November and comments were submitted by the DFG. A public draft is expected to be released in December 2011. The DFG is co-hosting a **public meeting** to discuss the draft strategy on **January 31, 2012** at Modoc Hall on the Sacramento State Campus from 9-12. More information coming soon!

Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for Rare Plants

The DFG is currently carrying out the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for Rare Plants Project which uses NatureServe's Climate Change Vulnerability Index to assess the risk from various climate change scenarios for 140 rare plants in California. This study serves as a pilot for further comprehensive assessment of all plant species on the DFG Special Plants List and other key plants which serve as habitat for animals of greatest conservation need. This assessment is scheduled for completion in early 2012. More information at

http://www.dfg.ca.gov/Climate_and_Energy/Climate_Change/Activities/.

DFG Climate Change Training Course

The DFG climate team is currently planning a climate science training course to be made available to all DFG staff. The training course will cover the fundamentals of climate science and will provide the tools and resources necessary to empower staff to better incorporate climate change into their responsibilities. The course will include monthly guest speakers, required readings, discussion forums, and an end-of-course project where staff will have the opportunity to think about the ways in which their job might change because of climate change. All course materials, including webinars, required reading materials, and optional reading materials will be archived as a permanent resource for staff and partners. The climate training course is tentatively slated to begin in the spring of 2012.

National Climate Assessment

The National Climate Assessment (NCA) is being conducted under the auspices of the Global Change Research Act of 1990, which requires a report to the President and the Congress that evaluates, integrates and interprets the findings of the \$2.6 billion federal research program on global change (USGCRP) every four years. The DFG is a core member of the technical team for Ecosystems for the National Climate Assessment section of the report, "Ecosystems, Biodiversity, and Ecosystem Services: Assessing Climate Change Impacts and Evaluating Responses."

Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Climate Change Committee

DFG continues to oversee and serve as the chair for the WAFWA climate change committee. All products and committee activities including white papers and climate change updates from members can be found at

http://www.dfg.ca.gov/Climate_and_Energy/WAFWA/

- **National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy (NFWPCAS):** On November 1, 2011 a draft of the NFWPCAS was released for agency review. In order to help coordinate and facilitate the review process on behalf of the WAFWA member states the DFG created a summary of the western states overall comments regarding the draft strategy. The WAFWA climate change committee leadership is committed to working with the NFWPCAS steering committee to ensure the creation of a national strategy that reflects a collective vision for all partners while also supporting WAFWA states' on-going and future efforts to address the challenges associated with climate change.
- The committee is partnering with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) Climate Change Committee to develop a positive messaging document to better communicate and build support for state agencies' existing and ongoing efforts to respond to climate change.

DOI Southwest Climate Science Center

The DFG has been invited to participate on the stakeholder advisory committee for the Southwest Climate Science Center. The first advisory committee meeting will be in December.

National Conference on Climate Change Adaptation

Facilitated by EcoAdapt, DFG is on the steering committee for the creation of a national conference on climate change adaptation. Current planning participants include a variety of state and federal agencies, AFWA, universities, and non-governmental organizations. This conference is in the early stages of development and more details will be released when available.

***New* DFG Climate Change Resources**

The DFG has recently completed several climate change documents that are now available online. In addition the DFG Climate Website has been completely updated with new information on DFG's climate change projects and products as well as new resources for DFG staff and the public. All materials detailed below can be found on the web at http://www.dfg.ca.gov/Climate_and_Energy/.

- **DFG Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment Resource Center:** The number of climate change vulnerability assessments being conducted has skyrocketed in recent years. As the DFG began accelerating its own efforts on adaptation planning and vulnerability assessments, we recognized a unique opportunity to begin compiling this information at the early stages of development and to present it in a venue that is accessible and convenient for others to use. The DFG already

houses a well established base of biogeographic and biological data, making it a natural fit for amassing this information, especially since our current data catalog can be extensively utilized in fish, wildlife, and habitat vulnerability assessments state-wide. The DFG will continue to regularly maintain this site as updated and new project information becomes available. Specifically, the website provides links to tools and guidelines for conducting climate change vulnerability assessments for fish and wildlife in addition to specific assessments for fish and wildlife that have been conducted around the world.

http://www.dfg.ca.gov/Climate_and_Energy/Vulnerability_Assessments/

- ***DFG Climate Change Case Studies:*** New case studies have been added to the web to highlight DFG's partnership with the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives and the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project. More information online at http://www.dfg.ca.gov/Climate_and_Energy/Climate_Change/Case_Studies/.

DFG Going Green Activities

DFG has had an ongoing effort to address its carbon footprint and create a more sustainable work environment. The Director convened a "Going Green Work Group" to provide guidance and recommendations for consideration by DFG leadership. Activities listed below.

- ***DFG Bikes!:*** In response to the release of the department-wide guidelines a new DFG Going Green committee was formed called DFG Bikes! The goal of the committee is to create incentives to encourage employees to bike more frequently in order to reduce the Department's carbon footprint while increasing employee morale around an activity that promotes a healthy lifestyle. Activities to date have focused on creating incentives to encourage employees to bike more frequently and tools and resources for existing bikers. A new DFG Bikes! forum was created for DFG staff and a public web page can now be found online at http://www.dfg.ca.gov/Climate_and_Energy/Going_Green/DFG_Bikes.aspx.
- ***Paperless Office Pilot Project:*** The DFG believes that there are significant benefits to be gained by converting many internal forms to an automated, electronic document format utilizing electronic signatures. This simplifies the process of filling out, submitting and routing forms, and saves time and money while reducing DFG's overall carbon footprint. As a first step a memo was released by the Director in November with guidelines for creating electronic signatures. The DFG continues to make great strides in moving towards a more paperless process.