

CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME COMMISSION UPDATE

APRIL 16, 2024

This “*California Fish and Game Commission Update*” is intended to provide the status of items of concern currently in front of the California Fish and Game Commission – including what to expect at this week’s meeting of the Commission in San Jose, and a recap of what took place during the Commission’s February 2024 meeting in Sacramento.

CALIFORNIA FISH & GAME COMMISSION – April 2024 Meeting Agenda

The April 2024 meeting of the California Fish and Game Commission is a two-day meeting scheduled for April 17th and 18th. The public can attend this meeting in person at the following location:

***San Jose Scottish Rite Center
2455 Masonic Drive
San Jose, CA 95125***

The meeting will be live streamed. Visit www.fgc.ca.gov the day of the meeting to watch or listen. You may join the webinar directly at [April 2024 FGC Mtg - Webinar](#) To provide public comment during the meeting, join via zoom or by telephone. For instructions on how to join via zoom or telephone, click [here](#).

To view the full agenda, click [FGC – April 2024 Mtg Agenda](#)

All marine related items will be considered on the first day, while all wildlife and sport fish related topics will be considered on the second day. As a result, this Report will focus on the second day – Thursday, April 18th.

All agenda items of interest and concern to CBH are highlighted below:

Thursday, April 18, 2024 – 8:30 AM

Agenda Item 14 – Readoption of White Sturgeon Emergency Regulation (CONSENT)

This item will serve as an opportunity for the Commission to consider adopting a 90-day extension of emergency regulations concerning recreational take of white sturgeon.

At their October 2023 meeting, the Commission adopted emergency regulations to amend recreational take of white sturgeon to support recovery of populations and to track fishing pressure and success. The Commission adopted an emergency regulation that implemented four concepts:

- 1) *Reduced the white sturgeon slot limit from 40 to 60 inches to 42 to 48 inches.*
- 2) *Reduced the number of fish harvested to one fish per report card per year but allowed anglers to continue catch and release fishing after they have harvested one fish.*
- 3) *Applied a seasonal closure in upper spawning grounds from January through May.*

4) *Reduced the vessel limit to two fish per day per boat.*

The emergency regulation went into effect on November 16, 2023 for a period of 180 days. Should the Commission not extend the emergency regulation at this meeting, the current emergency regulation will expire May 15, 2024.

To review the Commission staff summary on agenda item 14 regarding adoption of a 90-day extension of the white sturgeon emergency regulations, click [FGC Staff Summary – White Sturgeon](#)

Agenda Item 16 – Inland Sport Fishing

Under this item the Commission will consider authorizing publication of notice of intent to amend regulations for freshwater sport fishing bag limits, gear, and low-flow information.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) is recommending the Commission amend inland sport fishing regulations to align with current fisheries management goals and objectives, improve angling opportunities, correct errors and inaccuracies in existing regulations, and improve regulatory enforcement. The inland sport fishing regulations DFW is proposing to amend include a variety of site-specific changes to individual streams and bodies of water.

This item will be discussed further at the Commission’s June 2024 meeting, with additional discussion and possible final adoption taking place at their August 2024 meeting.

To review the Commission staff summary for agenda item 16 regarding inland sport fishing – including complete detail on all the changes DFW is recommending, click [FGC Staff Summary – Inland Sport Fish](#)

Agenda Item 17 – White Sturgeon Sport Fishing Regular Rulemaking

Under this item the Commission will consider authorizing publication of notice of intent to amend regulations through a “regular” rulemaking to formally adopt what are currently emergency rules for the recreational take of white sturgeon.

Possible changes to white sturgeon regulations are currently being considered by the Commission on three levels: 1) extension of the emergency regulations originally adopted through an emergency rulemaking in October 2023 (see agenda item 14 above); 2) a request for the Commission to consider a regular rulemaking which would put the “temporary” emergency regulations into effect for as long as necessary; and 3) another regular rulemaking for different regulation changes to take effect for white sturgeon in 2025.

Instead of extending the current emergency regulations for 90 days at a time, under this agenda item the Commission will consider noticing a proposal to keep the current emergency regulations in place for the remainder of 2024, with another rulemaking for different white sturgeon regulations which would go into effect in 2025 to be introduced for notice at the June 2024 Commission meeting.

To review the Commission staff summary for agenda item 17 regarding a regular rulemaking for white sturgeon regulations through 2024, click [FGC Staff Summary – White Sturgeon 2024](#)

Agenda Item 18 – Central Valley Sport Fishing

This item will serve as the second, or “discussion” hearing on 2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations for the Sacramento, Feather, Mokelumne and Lower American Rivers. As part of the annual process, specific bag, possession and size limits for Sacramento River fall-run Chinook salmon (SRFC) are

scheduled for adoption by the Commission after the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) has reviewed the status of West Coast salmon stocks and adopts their final recommendations in early April.

At their April 10th meeting – due to low ocean abundance forecasts, combined with low 2023 returns – the PFMC unanimously recommended a closure of California’s recreational and commercial ocean salmon fisheries through the end of 2024. After reviewing the PFMC recommendation, it is anticipated that the National Marine Fisheries Service will soon take regulatory action to enact the closure, effective mid-May.

At the February 2024 Commission meeting – prior to the PFMC recommendation of closure – DFW brought forward intentionally broad proposed changes to Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations to allow flexibility to meet PFMC management objectives for SRFC. The scope of options brought forward for Commission consideration by DFW in February were as follows:

2024 Regulatory Options

- *Option 1: Any Size Chinook Salmon Fishery: ➤ Allow the take of up 0-4 salmon of any size per day, 0-12 in possession;*
- *Option 2: Adult and Grilse Fishery: ➤ 0-4 bag limit, 0-12 possession limit. Could limit number of adults, with grilse making up the remainder;*
- *Option 3: Grilse-only Chinook Salmon fishery ➤ Allow for a grilse-only salmon fishery. 0-4 bag limit, 0-12 possession limit;*
- *Option 4: Closed to the take and possession of Chinook salmon.*

Note: Options 1-4 can be used independently or in combination for the same water body., as specified by river reach(es).

At this meeting, DFW will present their recommended 2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations.

The Commission is scheduled to consider adopting final 2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations at their May 15th meeting, which will be held via teleconference.

To review the Commission staff summary on agenda item 18 regarding 2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations, click [FGC Staff Summary – 2024 Central Valley Salmon](#)

Agenda Item 19 – Klamath River Basin Sport Fishing

This item will serve as the second, or “discussion” hearing on 2024 Klamath River Basin salmon regulations. As with Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations, the Commission adopts Klamath River Basin salmon sport fishing regulations on an annual basis to align state regulations with federal fishery management goals set by the PFMC. As with SRFC, specific bag, possession and size limits for Klamath River fall-run Chinook salmon (KRFC) are scheduled for adoption by the Commission after the PFMC adopts their recommended fishery allocations in early April.

As noted under agenda item 18, “Central Valley Sport Fishing” above, at their April 10th meeting, the PFMC unanimously recommended a closure of California’s recreational and commercial ocean salmon fisheries through the end of 2024.

At the February 2024 Commission meeting – prior to the PFMC recommendation of closure – DFW proposed a wide range of bag and possession limits for KRFC to encompass possible PFMC 2024

recommendations. The range of 2024 regulatory options brought forward by DFW for Commission consideration at their February meeting were as follows:

- *Klamath Basin Quota Range: 0 – 67,600 fish > 20 – 24 Inches;*
- *Bag Limit Range: 0 – 4 fish > 20 – 24 Inches;*
- *Possession limit range: 0 – 12 fish > 20 – 24 Inches;*
- *Season: August 15 – December 31 (Klamath River);*
- *Season: September 1 – December 31 (Trinity River);*
- *Closed to the take and possession of KRFC.*

At this meeting, the DFW will present their recommended 2024 Klamath River Basin sport fishing regulations.

The Commission is scheduled to consider adopting final 2024 Klamath River Basin salmon sport fishing regulations at their May 15th meeting, which will be held via teleconference.

To review the Commission staff summary on agenda Item 19 regarding 2024 Klamath River Basin sport fishing regulations, click [FGC Staff Summary – 2024 Klamath River Basin Salmon](#)

Agenda Item 20 – Waterfowl Hunting

This item will serve as the final adoption hearing on waterfowl regulations DFW is proposing for the 2024/2025 waterfowl season.

Notable changes DFW is recommending for the 2024/2025 waterfowl season are:

- *Decreasing the duck season length from 103 to 98* days for the Southern San Joaquin*
- *Valley Zone, the Southern California Zone, and the Balance of State Zone;*
- *Allowing up to five days of “falconry-only” season for the San Joaquin Valley, Southern California and Balance of State zones;*
- *Option to allow take of geese during the Veterans Weekend Hunt in the Balance of the State Zone.*

** Note that the reduction in days from 103 to 98 for most zones is due to how the calendar will fall in the 2024/2025 season.*

Because waterfowl are migratory and cross international and state boundaries, DFW recommendations must stay within the sideboards of a proposed “federal framework.” The federal frameworks describe the earliest dates that waterfowl hunting seasons may open, the maximum number of days hunting can occur, the latest dates that hunting seasons may close, and the maximum daily bag limit. The federal frameworks for the 2024/2025 waterfowl season include no change from the 2023/2024 season for both ducks and geese.

At this meeting, DFW Waterfowl Program Lead Melanie Weaver will provide a detailed overview of DFW’s recommended seasons and bag limits for ducks and geese in all five of California’s waterfowl hunting zones for 2024/2025.

DFW’s specific recommended waterfowl regulations for 2024/2025, by zone, are as follows:

DFW Recommended Duck Bag Limit

- 7-duck daily bag limit, including up to:
 - 7 Mallards (2 hens)
 - 1 Pintail
 - 2 Canvasback
 - 2 Redheads
 - 2 Scaup

DFW Recommended Duck Seasons

- *Northeastern Zone Season:*
 - *Regular Season: October 5 – January 15*
 - *Scaup: October 5 – December 1 and December 19 – January 15*
- *Balance of the State/Southern San Joaquin Valley/Southern California Zones:*
 - *Regular Season: October 26 – January 31*
 - *Scaup: November 7 – January 31*
- *Colorado River Zone:*
 - *Regular Season: October 23 – January 31*
 - *Scaup: November 7 – January 31*
(CA Must Match AZ Regulations)

DFW Recommended Goose Seasons & Bag Limits

- *Northeastern Zone Goose Seasons:*
 - *Regular Season:*
 - *Canada Geese: October 5 – January 12*
 - *White Geese and Whitefront Geese: October 5 – December 1 and January 3 – January 15*
- *Late Season: White Geese & Whitefronts: February 5 – March 10*
- *Northeastern Zone Goose Bag Limits:*
 - *30 Birds Total/Day:*
 - *20 White Geese*
 - *10 Dark Geese*
 - *No More Than 2 Large Canada Geese*
- *Balance of the State Zone Goose Seasons:*
 - *Early Canada Goose Season: September 28 – September 30*
 - *Regular Season: October 26 – January 31*
 - *Late Season: Canada Geese February 15 – 16* or February 8 – 9***
White Geese & Whitefronts: February 15 – 19 or February 8 – 9***

** Option 1: Would maintain goose closure on Type A/B Areas*

*** Option 2: Would allow geese on Type A/B Areas*

- *Balance of the State Zone Goose Bag Limits:*
 - *30 Birds Total/Day:*
 - *20 White Geese*

- 10 Dark Geese
- *Southern San Joaquin and Southern California Zone Goose Season:*
 - *Regular Season: October 26 – January 31*
- *Southern San Joaquin and Southern California Zone Goose Bag Limits:*
 - *30 Birds Total/Day:*
 - 20 White Geese
 - 10 Dark Geese (*Southern San Joaquin Zone*)
 - 3 Dark Geese (*Southern California Zone*)
- *Colorado River Zone Goose Season:*
 - *Regular Season: October 23 – January 31*
(*CA Must Match AZ Regulations*)
- *Colorado River Zone Goose Bag Limits:*
 - *25 Birds Total/Day:*
 - Up to 20 White Geese
 - 5 Dark Geese
(*CA Must Match AZ Regulations*)
- *Black Brant*
 - *Northern Zone: November 18 – December 14*
 - *Balance of the State Zone: November 19 – December 15*
- *Black Brant Bag Limits*
 - 2 Birds/Day

Special Management Areas

- *North Coast*
 - *Regular Season: October 5 – December 21*
 - *Late Season: February 12 – March 10*
- *Klamath Basin*
 - *White Geese & Whitefronts: October 5 – January 17*
 - *Canada Geese: October 5 – January 12*
- *Sacramento Valley*
 - *Regular Season: October 26 – December 21*
- *Imperial Valley*
 - *Regular Season: November 4 – January 31*
 - *Late Season: February 3 – 9, February 12 – 20*

Youth Hunt Weekend

- *Northeastern Zone: September 21 and 22*
- *Other Zones: February 1 and 2*
(*Except Colorado Zone: February 8 and 9*)

Veterans and Active Military Personnel (VAMP) Hunt Weekend

- *Northeastern Zone: January 18 and 19*
- *All Other Zones: February 8 and 9*

Falconry-Only

- *Northeastern Zone: None*
- *Balance of State Zone, Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone, and Southern California Zone: February 22 - 26*
- *Colorado River Zone: February 1 – 4*

Our partner and lobbyist will be pleased to again provide testimony on this topic at this meeting to ensure that the maximum scientifically justifiable waterfowl hunting opportunity is made available for all waterfowlers – including youth and veterans – during the 2024/2025 season in all five California waterfowl hunting zones.

To review the Commission staff summary on agenda item 20 regarding 2024/2025 waterfowl regulations, including Ms. Weaver’s presentation, click [FGC Staff Summary – 2024/2025 Waterfowl](#)

Agenda Item 21 – Mammal Hunting

This item will serve as the final adoption hearing on DFW’s recommended 2024 mammal hunting regulations.

This item will include a presentation by DFW on their recommended 2024 hunting regulations and tag allocations for bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, elk, and black-tailed and mule deer.

DFW’s proposed changes to 2024 mammal hunting regulations include the following:

Nelson Bighorn Sheep

Recommended bighorn sheep tag quotas are as follows:

| <u>Nelson Bighorn Sheep Hunt Zones</u> | <u>2023/24 Season Allocation</u> | <u>2024/2025 Recommended</u> |
|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Zone 1 – Marble/Clipper Mountains</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>Zone 2 – Kelso Peak/Old Dad Mountains</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>2</i> |
| <i>Zone 3 – Clark/Kingston Mountain Ranges</i> | <i>4</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Zone 4 – Orocopia Mountains</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>Zone 5 – San Geronio Wilderness</i> | <i>0</i> | <i>0</i> |
| <i>Zone 6 – Sheep Hole Mountains</i> | <i>0</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>Zone 7 – White Mountains</i> | <i>6</i> | <i>4</i> |
| <i>Zone 8 – South Bristol Mountains</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>Zone 9 – Cady Mountains</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>2</i> |
| <i>Zone 10 – Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains</i> | <i>6</i> | <i>6</i> |
| <i>Open Zone Fund-Raising Tag</i> | <i>0</i> | <i>0</i> |
| <i>Marble/Clipper/South Bristol Mountains Fund-Raising Tag</i> | | |
| <i>Cady Mountains Fund-Raising Tag</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>Total sheep tag allocation:</i> | <hr/> <i>25</i> | <hr/> <i>23</i> |

Pronghorn Antelope

Recommended pronghorn antelope tag quotas are as follows:

| <i>Hunt Code</i> | <i>Hunt Zone Description</i> | <i>2023 Approved</i> | <i>2024 Recommended</i> |
|------------------|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 710 | Zone 1 - Mount Dome General – Buck | 2 | 2 |
| 720 | Zone 2 - Clear Lake General - Buck | 15 | 12 |
| 728 | Zone 2 - Clear Lake Archery – Buck | 1 | 1 |
| 730 | Zone 3 - Likely Tables General - Buck - Period 1 | 25 | 5 |
| 732 | Zone 3 - Likely Tables General - Buck - Period 2 | 25 | 5 |
| 738 | Zone 3 - Likely Tables Archery – Buck | 15 | 5 |
| 734 | Zone 3 - Likely Tables Apprentice - Either-sex | 5 | 5 |
| 740 | Zone 4 - Lassen General - Buck - Period 1 | 35 | 35 |
| 742 | Zone 4 - Lassen General - Buck - Period 2 | 35 | 35 |
| 745 | Zone 4 - Lassen Archery - Buck | 5 | 5 |
| 790 | Zone 4 - Lassen Apprentice - Either-sex | 5 | 5 |
| 750 | Zone 5 - Big Valley General – Buck | 20 | 5 |
| 755 | Zone 5 - Big Valley Archery – Buck | 1 | 1 |
| 780 | Zone 5 - Big Valley Apprentice - Either-sex | 1 | 1 |
| 760 | Zone 6 - Surprise Valley General – Buck | 10 | 10 |
| 765 | Zone 6 - Surprise Valley Archery – Buck | 1 | 1 |
| 766 | Zone 6 - Surprise Valley Apprentice - Either-sex | 4 | 4 |
| <i>Total</i> | | 205 | 137 |

Elk

DFW’s recommended regulation changes for the 2024 elk hunting season are as follows. Tag quotas for hunt zones not listed below remain unchanged from the 2023 tag allocation.

| <i>Hunt Zone Description</i> | <i>2023 Approved</i> | <i>2024 Recommended</i> |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Grizzly Island Period 10 Bull</i> | 3 | 4 |
| <i>Grizzly Island Period 12 Bull</i> | 3 | 4 |
| <i>Grizzly Island Period 13 Bull</i> | 0 | 3 |
| <i>Siskiyou SHARE Roosevelt Elk Bull</i> | 2 | 20 |
| <i>Siskiyou SHARE Roosevelt Elk Antlerless</i> | 2 | 20 |
| <i>Northwestern SHARE Roosevelt Elk Bull</i> | 34 | 40 |
| <i>Northwestern SHARE Roosevelt Elk Antlerless</i> | 34 | 60 |
| <i>Tehachapi SHARE Rocky Mountain Elk Bull</i> | 20 | 40 |
| <i>Tehachapi SHARE Rocky Mountain Elk Antlerless</i> | 15 | 60 |
| <i>Mendocino SHARE Roosevelt/Tule Elk Bull</i> | 2 | 20 |
| <i>Mendocino SHARE Roosevelt/Tule Elk Antlerless</i> | 4 | 30 |

DFW has also identified a few elk hunt zones with chronic, elevated human-elk conflict where elk almost exclusively occupy private property. These “conflict areas” include:

- Northwestern

- Mendocino
- Tehachapi

Note that Siskiyou County was also included as a “conflict area” in DFW’s initial proposal for 2024 elk regulations. However, following meeting with county leadership and receipt of a letter from the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors requesting that the Siskiyou Elk Management Unit not be designated as a conflict zone, DFW is supporting removing Siskiyou from proposed conflict zones. *(For more detail, see agenda item 21 “Mammal Hunting” from the February 15, 2024 Commission meeting below.)*

Although regulated hunter harvest is DFW’s preferred method for reducing elk populations in these conflict areas, gaining hunter access to private property via signing landowners up for the Shared Habitat Alliance for Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Program has proven to be difficult.

In addition to trying to enroll landowners in SHARE, DFW is also working to address elk problems in conflict areas via other means. These include site consultation visits, assisting with exclusionary methods (such as fencing), and habitat restoration projects to promote elk moving into desirable areas (such as public lands).

Further, to reduce elk populations in these conflict areas, DFW is proposing the following changes to the Cooperative Elk Area Landowner (LO) Tags program:

- *Reduce qualifying landowner criteria from 640 acres to 60 acres;*
- *Increase antlerless tag distribution relative to public tags from 20% to up to 100%*
- *Extend the landowner season through November;*
- *Increase SHARE tags in tandem to also offer more public hunt opportunity on private property.*

For the past several months, our partner and lobbyist, the *California Bowmen Hunters/State Archery Association (CBHSAA)*, and the *Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF)* have been meeting with DFW in an effort to increase public hunting opportunity on both public and private lands via: adding general draw tags; offering to assist DFW with enrolling new landowners into SHARE by way of hosting “townhall” meetings and other outreach activities; adding “archery only” (AO) tags within “conflict zones” where firearms may not be appropriate; and possibly adding additional general draw AO tags and hunt periods in the Tehachapi hunt zone, Marble Mountains, San Luis Reservoir and elsewhere. Our partner and lobbyist, *CBHSAA*, and *RMEF* will continue to work hard to secure additional elk hunting opportunities in 2025.

Deer

DFW’s recommended changes to 2024 deer hunting regulations include the below changes to the current preference point system:

- *Modify hunting regulations to make hunting opportunities more equitable by only allowing individual party members to return tags if their points are less than or equal to the party’s point average. If a party member’s points are greater than the party’s average and that party member wishes to have their points reinstated, all party members must return their tags for all to have points reinstated;*
- *Require junior hunters to return all first-choice tags to be eligible for preference points reinstatement;*
- *Require the carcass portion of tag be included with harvest report for point reinstatement.*

DFW is also proposing some changes to Cooperative Deer Hunting Area regulations. Currently, DFW allows private landowners who own at least 640 acres to be eligible to submit a single application for one

deer tag for themselves and one deer tag for an immediate family member. However, because landowner tags as a percentage of public quota in zones X3a, X5a, and X5b are two to three times that of all other zones, DFW is recommending that the number of available Cooperative Deer Hunting Area tags per application be reduced from two to one in those zones. Further, DFW is proposing to clarify application instructions and provide a definition of “immediate family member.”

To review the Commission staff summary on agenda item 21 regarding 2024 mammal hunting regulations, click [FGC Staff Summary – 2024 Mammal](#)

Agenda Item 26 – Committee and Department Reports

(A) Wildlife Resources Committee

Because the Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC) serves as a subcommittee of the Commission, its topic areas, meeting agendas and Work Plan are subject to Commission approval.

Commission staff Wildlife Advisor Ari Cornman should open this item stating that topics that have been referred from the Commission to WRC are displayed in a Work Plan that is provided in the Commission meeting binder for scheduling and tracking. Mr. Cornman should then note that there are no new topics for Commission referral at this time.

Mr. Cornman should then state that the next meeting of the WRC is currently scheduled for May 16, 2024, with webinar and phone options. The May WRC meeting was scheduled to be held in Yreka to accompany a site visit to the Klamath River dam removal sites. However, that site visit will now be held separately. As such, staff are requesting to move the next WRC meeting to the Redding area to simplify travel and to facilitate locating a suitable meeting venue.

In addition to standing agenda items (DFW updates and future agenda items), four topics are proposed for discussion at the May meeting:

- *Periodic and Annual Rulemakings: Initial vetting for: upland*
 - *Resident upland (resident) game birds;*
 - *Mammal hunting;*
 - *Waterfowl hunting;*
 - *Central Valley sport fishing;*
 - *Klamath River Basin sport fishing.*
- *Take of Nongame Mammals:* Discuss concerns regarding take of nongame mammals;
- *Shotgun Wads:* Continue discussion of plastic pollution caused by shotgun debris from waterfowl hunting;
- *Waterfowl Hunting in Southampton Bay:* Continue exploration and vetting of potential regulation changes to address waterfowl hunting noise concerns specific to Southampton Bay, consistent with Commission direction at its October 2023 meeting.

To view Commission staff summary for agenda item 26(A) regarding the WRC, including full detail on the WRC Work Plan, [click FGC Staff Summary – WRC](#)

CALIFORNIA FISH & GAME COMMISSION – February 2024 Meeting Recap

The February 2024 meeting of the California Fish and Game Commission was a two-day meeting held on February 14th and 15th in Sacramento. All marine related items were considered on the first day, with wildlife and sport fish related topics considered on the second day.

To view the full agenda, click [FGC – February 2024 Mtg Agenda](#)

All agenda items of interest and concern to California Bowman Hunters are highlighted below:

Day 1 – Wednesday, February 14, 2024 – 8:30 AM

The February 14, 2024 meeting of the Commission was gaveled open by Commission President Eric Sklar with Commissioners Erika Zavaleta, Samantha Murray, and Darius Anderson present. Commissioner Jacque Hostler-Carmesin was absent.

Agenda Item 2 – Election of Commission President and Vice-President

Under this agenda item the Commissioners elected their President and Vice-President for 2024. In 2023, Commissioner Eric Sklar served as President and Commissioner Erika Zavaleta served as Vice-President.

Following some very brief discussion, Commissioner Murray was elected President for 2024 and Commissioner Zavaleta was elected to continue as Vice-President.

Among other things, the responsibilities of the Commission President include:

- *Chairing Commission meetings;*
- *Representing the Commission as a voting member of the Wildlife Conservation Board;*
- *Providing guidance to Commission staff;*
- *Serving as primary contact with Department of Fish and Wildlife Director;*
- *May be an ex-officio member of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission created by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act if there are any projects in California under consideration.*

In the absence of the President, the Commission Vice-President fulfills the duties of the President where permitted.

To review the Commission staff summary for agenda item 2 regarding election of Commission President and Vice-President, click [FGC Staff Summary – Elections](#)

Agenda Item 3 – Committee Assignments

The Commission has three standing committees authorized in statute:

- *Marine Resources Committee*
- *Tribal Committee*
- *Wildlife Resources Committee*

No more than two commissioners may serve on each committee, and there are no limits to how long a commissioner may serve on a committee. Each committee meets three times per year.

The Marine Resources Committee is charged with providing recommendations to the Commission regarding marine issues directed to it by the Commission; the Wildlife Resources Committee is similarly charged related to terrestrial and inland fisheries issues; and the Tribal Committee provides recommendations to the Commission relative to matters associated with California's Native American tribes and tribal communities.

Following some discussion on the dais, the committee assignments for 2024 were as follows:

- *Marine Resources Committee: Commissioners Murray and Sklar;*
- *Tribal Committee: Commissioners Hostler-Carmesin and Anderson;*
- *Wildlife Resources Committee: Commissioners Zavaleta and Anderson.*

To review the Commission staff summary for agenda item 3 regarding committee assignments, click [FGC Staff Summary – Committee Assign](#)

Agenda Item 5 – Recreational Take of California Halibut

This item served to provide the Commission with the opportunity to consider adopting proposed amendments to regulations for California halibut recreational daily bag and possession limits.

At their May 2023 meeting, the Commission adopted emergency regulations to reduce the recreational California halibut daily bag and possession limit from three to two fish in the area north of Point Sur. The emergency regulations went into effect June 2, 2023 and expired November 30, 2023. At their October 2023 meeting, the Commission re-adopted the emergency regulations for an additional 90 days.

At their October 2023 meeting, the Commission also authorized publication of a notice for *regular* rulemaking to amend the bag and possession limit for recreational take of California halibut with two options:

- *Option 1: Reduce the halibut bag limit in northern California only (north of Point Sur), consistent with current emergency regulations;*
- *Option 2: Reduce the bag limit in northern California and in southern California.*

This item was opened with some comments by Commission staff Marine Advisor Susan Ashcraft who noted that the Commission staff was recommending the Commission adopt Option 1.

Following Ms. Ashcraft's brief comments, Kristine Lesyna, DFW Environmental Scientist for the Marine Region, gave a detailed presentation which included an update on emergency regulation impact, a thorough overview of the northern California and southern California halibut fishery and management, and information on outreach efforts. Ms. Lesyna concluded her presentation by stating that DFW was recommending Option 2 but would be open to the Commission considering Option 1 and revisiting possible changes for the southern California fishery following completion of a comprehensive California halibut management review that is currently underway.

Following Ms. Lesyna's presentation, two southern California sport fishing organizations provided public comment in opposition to a reduction in the bag limit in southern California.

After completion of public comment, and some brief discussion on the dais, the Commission unanimously voted to adopt Option 1, and to revisit possible changes to the southern California halibut bag limit following completion of the comprehensive California halibut management review.

To review the Commission staff summary on agenda item 5 regarding recreational take of California halibut, including Ms. Lesyna's presentation, click [FGC Staff Summary – California Halibut](#)

Day 2 – Thursday, February 15, 2024 – 8:30 AM

The February 15, 2024 meeting of the Commission was gaveled open by Commission Vice-President Erika Zavaleta with Commissioners Eric Sklar, Jacque Hostler-Carmesin, and Darius Anderson present. Commission President Samantha Murray was absent.

Agenda Item 15 – White Sturgeon (CONSENT)

This item served as an opportunity for the Commission to consider a DFW request for a 30-day extension to review the petition to list white sturgeon as a threatened or endangered species under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA).

On November 29, 2023, the Commission received a petition from San Francisco Baykeeper, the Bay Institute, Restore the Delta, and the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance to list white sturgeon as threatened under CESA. On December 6, 2023, Commission staff transmitted the petition to DFW for review. The California Fish and Game Code requires that DFW evaluate a petition to list and submit a written evaluation with a recommendation to the Commission within 90 days of receiving the petition but allows DFW to request an extension of up to 30 days to complete the evaluation.

Following some very brief discussion, the Commission approved the Consent Item slate, including DFW's request for a 30-day extension under this item – making the new due date for DFW's evaluation and recommendation April 5, 2024.

To review the petition from San Francisco Baykeeper, the Bay Institute, Restore the Delta, and the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance to list white sturgeon as threatened under CESA click [White Sturgeon Petition](#)

To review the Commission staff summary on agenda item 15 regarding the possible listing of white sturgeon under CESA, click [FGC Staff Summary – White Sturgeon](#)

Agenda Item 17 – Exotic Game Mammals and Wild Pig Validation (CONSENT)

This item served as the adoption hearing on DFW's proposed regulations for exotic game mammals and wild pig validations.

In September 2022, Governor Newsom signed SB 856 which made changes to the California Fish and Game Code regarding wild pigs, such as definitions, licensing, take, captive hunting preserves, and the capture, possession, and release of wild pigs. The intent of the law is to give the public and DFW more tools to manage wild pigs and the damage pigs cause to private property and the environment.

At WRC's May and September 2023 meetings, DFW made presentations describing key elements of the statutory changes resulting from SB 856 and highlighting potential changes to regulations necessary to implement the bill.

At its October 2023 meeting, the Commission authorized publication of a notice of its intent to amend regulations related to exotic game mammals and wild pig validations. At their December 2023 meeting, the item was again on the agenda for discussion. Due to general public support and minimal public comment on this item at previous Commission meetings, this item was placed on consent for this meeting.

Consistent with the intent and statutory changes of SB 856, DFW is recommending multiple regulations changes, including:

- *Establishing baseline regulations for exotic game mammals, including definitions, shooting hours, authorized take methods, and prohibitions on feeding;*

- *Reclassifying wild pig as an exotic game mammal;*
- *Striking wild pig from various sections associated with big game mammals;*
- *Adding the exotic game mammal classification to general hunting regulations and establishing a wild pig validation and reporting framework;*
- *Extending the validity of depredation permits for wild pig from one year to five years;*
- *Replacing tags with a validation for the take of wild pigs.*

Due to general public support and minimal public comment on this item at previous Commission meetings, this item was placed on consent for this meeting.

As noted above under agenda item 17, following some very brief discussion, the Commission approved the Consent Item slate, including DFW's proposed regulations for exotic game mammals and wild pig validations.

To review the Commission staff summary for agenda item 17 regarding exotic game mammals and wild pig validation, click [FGC Staff Summary – Wild Pigs](#)

Agenda Item 18 – Central Valley Sport Fishing

This item served as opportunity for the Commission to consider authorizing publication of notice of intent to amend 2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations for the Sacramento, Feather, Mokelumne and Lower American Rivers. The Commission adopts Central Valley sport fishing regulations on an annual basis to align state regulations with federal fishery management goals set by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC).

At this initial meeting, DFW proposed a range of bag and possession limits for Sacramento River fall-run Chinook salmon (SRFC) in the American, Feather, Mokelumne, and Sacramento rivers to encompass possible PFMC 2024 recommendations for SRFC stocks.

For more detail on the process for setting 2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations and DFW's proposed range of 2024 recommendations, see agenda item 18 of the April 18, 2024 Commission meeting above.

DFW Fisheries Branch Program Manager Jonathan Nelson opened this item with a presentation which included: mapping of the four Central Valley rivers in question; mapping of the stretches of those rivers that have special regulations; and a review of the 2023 Central Valley salmon regulations – during which all four rivers were closed to the take and possession of Chinook salmon. Mr. Nelson then closed his presentation by providing the range of regulatory options DFW is considering for Central Valley salmon in 2024.

Following brief public comment, the Commission voted unanimously to authorize publication of a notice of intent to amend 2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations for the Sacramento, Feather, Mokelumne and Lower American Rivers.

DFW will recommend specific changes to 2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations at the Commission's April 2024 meeting, following receiving the PFMC's recommendation in early April. The adoption hearing for 2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations will be held via teleconference on May 15, 2024.

2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations will go into effect July 16, 2024.

To review the Commission staff summary on agenda item 18 regarding 2024 Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations, including Mr. Nelson’s presentation, click [FGC Staff Summary – 2024 Central Valley Salmon](#)

Agenda Item 19 – Klamath River Basin Sport Fishing

This item provided the Commission with an opportunity to consider authorizing publication of notice of intent to amend 2024 Klamath River Basin salmon regulations. As with Central Valley salmon sport fishing regulations, the Commission adopts Klamath River fall-run Chinook salmon (KRFC) sport fishing regulations on an annual basis to align state regulations with federal fishery management goals set by the PFMC.

As with SRFC, at this initial meeting, the DFW proposed a range of bag and possession limits for KRFC to encompass possible PFMC 2024 recommendations for KRFC stocks. Specific bag and possession limits for KRFC will not be adopted by the Commission until after the PFMC has reviewed the status of West Coast salmon stocks and adopted their recommendations in April 2024.

For more detail on the process for setting 2024 Klamath River Basin salmon sport fishing regulations and DFW’s proposed range of 2024 recommendations, see agenda item 19 of the April 18, 2024 Commission meeting above.

This item also opened with a presentation by DFW Fisheries Branch Chief Jonathan Nelson which included: management of KRFC in the Klamath River Basin; mapping of Klamath River Basin sub-quota areas; and a review of 2023 Klamath River Basin salmon regulations – during which the Klamath River Basin was closed to the take and possession of KRFC. Mr. Nelson then closed his presentation by providing the range of regulatory options DFW is considering for Klamath River Basin salmon regulations in 2024.

Following public comment, the Commission voted unanimously to authorize publication of a notice of intent to amend 2024 Klamath River Basin salmon regulations.

DFW will recommend specific changes to 2024 Klamath River fall-run Chinook salmon sport fishing regulations at the Commission’s April 2024 meeting, following receiving the PFMC’s recommendation in early April. The adoption hearing for 2024 Klamath River fall-run Chinook salmon sport fishing regulations will be held via teleconference on May 15, 2024.

2024 Klamath River fall-run Chinook salmon sport fishing regulations will go into effect August 15, 2024.

To review the Commission staff summary on agenda Item 19 regarding 2024 Klamath River Basin sport fishing regulations, including Mr. Nelson’s presentation, click [FGC Staff Summary – 2024 Klamath River Sport Fish](#)

Agenda Item 20 – Waterfowl Hunting

This item served as the second, or “discussion” hearing on changes to waterfowl regulations DFW is recommending for the 2024/2025 waterfowl season.

For full detail on DFW’s recommended waterfowl regulations for 2024/2025, by zone, see agenda item 20 of the April 18, 2024 Commission meeting above.

This item was first brought forward by DFW for consideration of authorization of notice at the Commission’s December 2023 meeting in San Diego. At that meeting, DFW Waterfowl Coordinator Melanie Weaver provided a presentation which began by noting that the proposed federal frameworks for

the 2024/2025 waterfowl season include a liberal package for ducks, 107-day seasons, a seven-bird bag for most species, and no change from the 2023/2024 season for geese. Ms. Weaver then noted that DFW was recommending the below significant changes for the 2024/2025 waterfowl season:

- *Decreasing the duck season length from 103 to 98 days for the Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone, the Southern California Zone, and the Balance of State Zone;*
- *Decreasing the goose season length from 103 to 98 days for the Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone and the Southern California Zone, and from 100 to 98 for the Balance of State Zone;*
- *Allowing up to five days of “falconry-only” season for the San Joaquin Valley, Southern California and Balance of State zones.*

Following Ms. Weaver’s presentation, Commission Vice-President Zavaleta called for public testimony. Our lobbyist was pleased to testify in strong support of the maximum scientifically justifiable waterfowl hunting opportunity during the 2024/2025 season in all five California waterfowl hunting zones. During our testimony, we thanked DFW staff for being accessible and working with us to reach agreement on almost all their recommendations for the 2024/2025 waterfowl season. We then voiced our strong support for moving the late season depredation goose hunt up a week so it could overlap with the Veterans and Active Military Personnel (VAMP) Weekend to allow deserving veterans the ability to take geese in addition to ducks. We closed our testimony by also stating our support for the up to five “falconry-only” days after the close of the general season in most zones.

Following public testimony, Commission Vice-President commented that she supported moving the late goose season up a week to overlap the VAMP Weekend to allow veterans to take both geese. Because this was the “discussion” hearing, no action was required by the Commission.

Final adoption of 2024/2025 waterfowl hunting regulations will take place at the Commission’s April 2024 meeting in San Jose.

To review the Commission staff summary on agenda item 20 regarding 2024/2025 waterfowl regulations, click [FGC Staff Summary – 2024/2025 Waterfowl](#)

Agenda Item 21 – Mammal Hunting

This item served as the second, or “discussion” hearing on changes DFW is proposing to 2024 mammal hunting regulations.

At the Commission’s December 2023 meeting, DFW staff presented proposed regulatory changes for 2024 for bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, elk, deer, elk cooperative hunts, and preference points.

For complete detail on DFW’s recommended changes to 2024 mammal hunting regulations, see agenda item 21 of the April 18, 2024 Commission meeting above.

Following a short introduction of this item by Commission staff Wildlife Advisor Ari Cornman, Commission Vice-President Zavaleta called for public comment. Our partner and lobbyist was pleased to testify on behalf of the *Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, California Deer Association, California Bowmen Hunters/State Archery Association* and the *California Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation*. During our testimony we thanked the DFW staff for making themselves very accessible to us over the past several months to allow us to discuss our concerns and work with them in determining final tag allocations. We then noted that elk are doing very well in California, to the point where we now have four proposed “conflict areas” where elk have become a problem with landowners and a nuisance to the general public. Knowing that elk populations are overly abundant in many areas, we urged the DFW and Commission to increase public hunting opportunity on public lands by adding as many general draw tags as biologically supportable.

Further, recognizing that many of these elk are on private lands, we urge the addition of as many SHARE tags as possible. We then noted that because DFW has struggled with getting private landowners to sign up for SHARE, we were willing to assist DFW with enrolling new landowners into SHARE by partnering on “townhall” meetings and other outreach activities. We closed our testimony by also asking for maximum “archery only” tags, noting that because archers have a lower success rate than rifle hunters, more archery tags can be added – providing more individuals with hunting opportunity – with the same total amount of harvest.

Following the close of public testimony, DFW Deputy Director Chad Dibble noted he had been contacted by Siskiyou County regarding their request to be removed as one of DFW’s newly designated “conflict areas.” In their letter to the Commission, Siskiyou County noted they did not support the fact that, as a conflict area, DFW’s qualifying landowner tag criteria would be reduced from 640 acres to 60 acres in the Siskiyou Elk Management Unit. They stated that the County was in support of using the SHARE program to cull elk populations. But added that, for safety and other reasons, DFW should consider establishing a minimum SHARE acreage of 640 acres, and the ability to combine adjacent properties to increase the size of the property enrolled in the program.

In response, following much discussion, the Commission directed staff to explore ways to ensure that the Commission has the flexibility at its April 2024 meeting to either omit or include Siskiyou County and/or the Siskiyou Hunt Zone in the new section of regulation.

Because this was the “discussion” hearing, no further action was required by the Commission.

Final adoption of the 2024 mammal hunting regulations will take place at the Commission’s meeting in the San Jose on April 18, 2024.

For greater detail, please review the Commission staff summary on agenda item 21 regarding 2024 mammal hunting regulations, click [FGC Staff Summary – 2024 Mammal](#)

Agenda Item 24 – Department Lands

This agenda item served as the adoption hearing on DFW’s proposal to amend several regulations for lands owned or managed by DFW.

At the October 2023 Commission meeting, DFW brought forward for Commission consideration a variety of proposed amendments to regulations which address public use of lands owned or managed by the Department. At that meeting, the Commission approved publication of notice of DFW’s proposed changes, and also granted authority to Commission staff to make modifications to ensure the proposed regulations meet all required legal standards.

Following Commission staff input, the proposed changes to the regulations will:

- *Prohibit DFW use of neonicotinoid pesticides on DFW lands;*
- *Improve the clarity and consistency of the regulations that govern public use of lands owned and/or managed by DFW;*
- *Designate lands DFW has acquired as an ecological reserve or a wildlife area;*
- *Make site-specific regulation changes for certain properties to improve public safety, manage recreational opportunities, provide resource protection, and manage staff resources;*
- *Specify that DFW may issue permits for various public uses and identifies criteria under which the DFW shall determine permit specifications.*

In addition to the above, the recommendations DFW brought forth at the October 2023 Commission meeting included:

- *Setting a 3:00 p.m. deadline for waterfowl and pheasant season hunters to obtain their entry permit;*
- *Prohibiting electric bicycles on all lands except where posted as allowed;*
- *Adding drones and other unmanned aircraft to the list of devices prohibited without a Special Use Permit issued by DFW;*
- *Prohibiting woodcutting on all DFW lands;*
- *Adding El Dorado Wildlife Area, in El Dorado County, acquired to protect the habitat in the Upper Cosumnes River watershed. This property is located a few miles east of Rancho Murieta near the boundaries of Sacramento and Amador counties;*
- *Amending site-specific regulations regarding permitted uses on wildlife areas affecting dog training and dog trials, bicycles, off-highway vehicles, boats, horse and pack stock, camping, fires, closure and restriction, hunt requirements, firearms, species, and reservations;*
- *Adding Peace Valley Ecological Reserve, in Los Angeles County. This property is located in the northwest corner of Los Angeles County, adjacent to Interstate 5, about five miles south of Gorman;*
- *Amending site-specific regulations regarding permitted uses on ecological reserves affecting fishing, swimming, boating, bicycles, horse and pack stock, closures and restrictions, hunting opportunities and restrictions.*

Following Mr. Cornman's opening comments, our lobbyist was pleased to provide testimony on this item, noting that the package was loaded with additional public access and hunting opportunity on Department Lands, that we appreciated DFW's efforts to bring it forward, and we urged the Commission to support its adoption.

Following public comment, the Commission voted unanimously to adopt the package, as brought forward by staff.

To view Commission staff summary for agenda item 24 regarding Department Lands, including some changes made by DFW to their initial proposal and extensive detail on the full package of recommendations, click [FGC Staff Summary – Department Lands](#)

Agenda Item 27 – Regulation Change Petitions (Wildlife and Inland Fisheries)

(A) New Petitions

(B) Previously Received Petitions

Under this item the Commission was to receive new regulation change petitions and act on regulation change petitions received from the public at previous meetings.

(A) Receipt of New Petitions for Regulation Change

Under Item (A) petitions for regulation submitted by the public by the comment deadline or by the supplemental comment deadline were to be received at this Commission meeting. The Commission cannot discuss or act on any petitions being received, other than to schedule them for consideration at a future meetings.

At this meeting, the Commission did not receive any new petitions of interest.

(B) Action on Previously Received Petitions for Regulation Change

Under Item (B) petitions received at the previous meeting were scheduled for Commission consideration. Petitions may be denied, granted, or referred to a committee, staff, or DFW for further evaluation or information-gathering. Petitions that are referred are scheduled for Commission action once the evaluation is completed and a recommendation made.

At this meeting, the Commission acted on two petitions of interest:

- I. *Petition 2018-016(a): Request to remove Hope Valley Wildlife Area from the DFW Lands Pass Program;*
- II. *Petition 2023-13: Request to clarify regulatory language regarding the use of traps for fur bearing mammals, including trap types, and disposition of animals trapped;*

I. Petition 2018-016(a): Submitted to the Commission in November 2018 by the Alpine County Board of Supervisors, Petition 2018-016 requested that the Hope Valley Wildlife Area be removed from the DFW Lands Pass Program to eliminate the need for visitors to purchase a Lands Pass for entry to the property. The petition cited several reasons for the request, including a low population in the region and dependency on tourism for the local economy, limited cell phone service for purchasing passes, confusing property boundaries adjacent to federal lands, and a desire to maintain all access areas for locals and visitors to enjoy free of any charges except for hunting and fishing licenses.

Petition 2018-016(a) was received by the Commission at their December 2018 meeting and referred to DFW for review and recommendation at the February 2019 Commission meeting.

Following ample public testimony, the Commission denied Petition 2018-016(a).

II. Petition 2023-13: Submitted by a private individual, Petition 2023-13 requests that regulatory language be clarified and revised regarding the use of traps including type of traps, and disposition of animals trapped.

Following public testimony, the Commission referred Petition 2023-013 to DFW for review and recommendation.

To view the Commission staff summary on agenda item 27, including full detail on each of the above petitions and rationale behind DFW/Commission staff recommendations, click [FGC Staff Summary – Petitions for Regulatory Change](#)

Agenda Item 29 – Committee and Department Reports

(B) Wildlife Resources Committee

Because the Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC) serves as a subcommittee of the Commission, its topic areas, meeting agendas and Work Plan are subject to Commission approval.

Commission staff Wildlife Advisor Ari Cornman opened this item by providing the Commission with a summary of the WRC meeting held on January 16, 2024, noting that the below topics were discussed:

- *White Sturgeon Regular Rulemaking:* DFW proposed a limited-entry harvest tag system with a set number of tags for regular rulemaking. Guides and sturgeon anglers proposed an alternate tag system with an unlimited number of tags and close monitoring of harvest levels. Discussion considered the status of white sturgeon populations and economic losses from businesses that support the recreational sturgeon fishery. DFW underscored the importance of protecting spawning areas to protect white sturgeon populations in the long-term. Some stakeholders voiced reservations about the reliability of data presented by DFW and whether population declines are real. WRC Chair Commissioner Zavaleta explained the range of options, from closure through catch-and-

release, to the tag system proposals, to the current emergency regulations. Commissioner Zavaleta expressed concerns about the status of white sturgeon and requested that DFW include in the proposal it presents to the Commission an option for catch-and-release fishing only.

- *Wildlife Rehabilitation*: Discussions examined progress to date in developing recommended changes to regulations and the appropriate amount of time for stakeholders to work with DFW to finalize a proposal. The current proposal includes incorporating a new rehabilitation manual specific to California and updating documents, animal care standards, permitting requirements, administrative requirements, and more. General stakeholder sentiment seemed to be that good progress had been made, but more time is needed to work out a few remaining issues. Commissioner Zavaleta stressed the importance of these regulations and the desire for progress, but also wanted to provide some more time both for stakeholder engagement and document production by staff, suggesting that two more months should be sufficient since the wildlife rehabilitation community will be consumed with the upcoming “baby season” by April.
- *Inland Sport Fishing*: DFW presented updates to its proposal for inland sport fishing regulation changes and a petition for regulation change. There was no discussion.
- *Plastic Pollution from Shotgun Wads*: WRC received an introductory presentation. Our lobbyist and some other stakeholders expressed concerns about any future regulations, the problem was acknowledged; it was also suggested there are much more significant contributors of plastic to waterways that also need attention. WRC and some participants expressed a desire to continue discussions.
- *Waterfowl Hunting in Southampton Bay*: The city manager for the city of Benicia offered suggestions for regulatory changes to address noise issues. Our lobbyist and other meeting participants discussed the proposed changes, with the general sentiment being that some showed promise, while others appeared to be impractical. In particular, a maximum gauge shotgun and a later start time seemed to have potential. Commission staff indicated that suggestions regarding law enforcement may be operational decisions on the part of DFW and likely inappropriate for a regulation. We noted that holidays were especially important hunting days, so prohibiting hunting on those days might disproportionately restrict hunters. Commission staff will work with DFW to continue engaging stakeholders in a conversation in preparation for a May WRC meeting discussion about a potential recommendation to the Commission.

Due to a lack of time, a discussion regarding the take of nongame mammals was continued to the next meeting.

Mr. Cornman then stated that WRC developed the three following recommendations for Commission consideration at this meeting:

- 1) *The Commission support a future regular rulemaking regarding white sturgeon, with options for both DFW’s recommendation and catch-and-release;*
- 2) *The Commission support future rulemaking regarding wildlife rehabilitation, and to schedule a notice hearing for the June 2024 Commission meeting;*
- 3) *The Commission support a future rulemaking regarding inland sport fishing, based on DFW’s proposal.*

Mr. Cornman closed by stating that the next meeting of the WRC is scheduled for May 16th and that topics that have been referred from the Commission to WRC are displayed in a Work Plan that is provided in the Commission meeting binder for scheduling and tracking.

Following Mr. Cornman's comments, Vice-President Zavaleta, chair of WRC, added a few comments of her own – noting that the January WRC meeting included some discussion regarding the regular rulemaking for white sturgeon, i.e., not the emergency regulation or the petition to the Commission that they be listed under CESA.

Following some brief public comment, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the three recommendations brought forward from the WRC's January 2024 meeting and the WRC Work Plan as discussed at this meeting.

To view Commission staff summary for agenda item 29(B) regarding the WRC, including full detail on the WRC Work Plan, click [FGC Staff Summary – WRC](https://fgc.ca.gov/Meetings)

PLAN AHEAD!!!

BELOW ARE THE DATES/LOCATIONS OF UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETINGS!

For more information on any of the below Commission related meetings, click

<https://fgc.ca.gov/Meetings>

CALIFORNIA FISH & GAME COMMISSION – May 2024 Meeting

*The May 2024 meeting of the California Fish and Game Commission is scheduled for May 15th and will be held via teleconference originating from
Natural Resources Headquarters Building
Second Floor
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814*

WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMITTEE – May 2024 Meeting

*The May 2024 meeting of the WRC is scheduled for May 16th
Exact location TBD*

CALIFORNIA FISH & GAME COMMISSION – June 2024 Meeting

*The June 2024 meeting of the California Fish and Game Commission is scheduled for June 19th and 20th in the Mammoth Lakes area.
Exact location TBD*

CALIFORNIA FISH & GAME COMMISSION – August 2024 Meeting

*The August 2024 meeting of the California Fish and Game Commission is scheduled for August 14th and 15^h in the Fortuna area.
Exact location TBD*