

STAFF SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER 17, 2018

27. BULLFROGS AND NON-NATIVE TURTLES**Today's Item**Information Action

Receive an update on the stakeholder engagement plan and consider approving an updated timeline.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions

- FGC stakeholder engagement plan presented Oct 11-12, 2017; Atascadero
- WRC discussion Sep 20, 2018; Sacramento
- **Today's discussion and potential approval of revised timeline Oct 17, 2018; Fresno**

Background

Approximately two million non-native American bullfrogs and 300,000 non-native turtles (mostly red-eared sliders and softshell turtles) are imported into California annually for food and the pet trade. Even though these species are not imported into California with the intention of being released, they have established significant wild populations that threaten native amphibians, fish, and wildlife by direct predation, competition for resources and habitat, and disease.

In Feb 2015, DFW provided a report regarding the implications of American bullfrog importation, and notified FGC of its decision to stop issuing long-term importation permits and to only issue short-term individual event permits, consistent with subsection 236(c)(6)(I). At its Feb 2015 meeting, FGC directed staff to work with DFW to identify a list of potential actions FGC could take to further address the issues identified in the DFW report.

In Feb 2017, FGC staff presented four possible regulatory options to address impacts on California's native wildlife resulting from the importation of American bullfrogs and non-native turtles, and provided additional information in a joint memorandum prepared by FGC and DFW staff. At the meeting, FGC directed staff to add this topic to its Apr 2017 agenda for further discussion with more information on two of the four options. In Apr 2017, FGC directed FGC and DFW staff to develop a proposal for stakeholder engagement to further evaluate possible solutions to addressing the impacts of American bullfrogs and non-native turtles on native wildlife; the proposal with a timeline was presented at the Oct 2017 FGC meeting. A new timeline was introduced at the Sep 2018 WRC meeting for discussion and comment.

Today, staff will present the proposed plan for stakeholder engagement on American bullfrogs and non-native turtles updated with a revised timeline for FGC consideration.

Significant Public Comments (N/A)**Recommendation**

FGC staff: Approve the stakeholder engagement plan with updated timeline.

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Exhibits

1. [Proposed stakeholder engagement plan and timeline, updated Oct 5, 2018](#)

Motion/Direction

Moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Commission approves the plan for stakeholder engagement on American bullfrogs and non-native turtles, with updated timeline, as proposed.

California Fish and Game Commission

Stakeholder Engagement on American Bullfrogs and Non-native Turtles

Revised October 5, 2018

Purpose

California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staff recommendation on a process and timeline for stakeholder engagement to identify potential regulatory and statutory changes, funding mechanisms, and strategies for existing wild populations of American bullfrogs and non-native turtles to reduce the impacts on California's native wildlife.

Possible Participants

- Environmental / Animal welfare Non-Governmental Organizations
 - Petitioners – Center for Biological Diversity and Save-the-Frogs!
 - Action for Animals
 - Humane Society of the United States
 - Rescue group representative – TBD
- Industry Representatives
 - Live Food Market – TBD
 - Aquaculture – TBD
 - Pet trade – TBD
- Agency Representatives
 - Commission - Executive Director, Wildlife Advisor, and Legal Counsel
 - CDFW - Wildlife Branch, Wildlife Investigations Lab, Fisheries Branch, and Law Enforcement Division
 - California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) - TBD
 - California Department of Public Health (CDPH) - TBD
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – TBD; Region 1 and Region 8
 - Santa Cruz County and/or City - TBD
 - State of Washington and/or Oregon – Fish and Wildlife departments
- Legislature
 - California Asian and Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus staff
 - Natural Resources Committee staff
 - Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture staff

Proposed Process

- Agency Outreach - Commission staff hold several meetings (2-4) with agency staff to discuss implementation, management, enforcement, and regulatory consistency and compatibility.
 - One or two conference calls with implementing agencies CDFW, USFWS, Santa Cruz, Washington, and Oregon to discuss management strategies, implementation, and enforcement

- One or two meetings with state agencies CDFW, CDFA, CDPH to discuss regulatory consistency and compatibility and enforcement of regulations (Sacramento)
- Stakeholder Outreach - Commission staff hold series of small meetings (2-4) with key stakeholders to solicit input on options, including possible statutory and regulatory changes and management strategies.
 - Invitation only
 - Size – limit to 10-12 people each
 - Locations – Sacramento, Bay Area, Southern California
 - Structure
 - One or two meetings with environmental/animal welfare organizations, CDFW staff, and Commission staff (Sacramento)
 - One to two meetings with industry representatives, California Asian and Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus staff, CDFW staff, and FGC staff (Bay Area and Southern California)
- Legislative Outreach – Commission staff meetings (3) with California Asian and Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus, Natural Resources Committee, and Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture staff
- Commission and CDFW staff compile meeting outcomes and draft proposal
- Commission and CDFW staff co-host one-day public workshop to present draft proposal
 - Open to all interested parties
 - Location – Bay Area
 - Facilitated by FGC staff
 - Attendance by 1-2 Commissioners
- Commission and CDFW staff prepare and present final proposal to Commission
- Commission action on final proposal

Proposed Timeline

- ***Oct-Dec 2018***
 - Identify and confirm stakeholders for small group and agencies meetings
 - Commission and CDFW staff preparation for meetings (logistics, materials, format, etc.)
- ***Jan-Apr 2019***
 - Hold stakeholder and agencies meetings
- ***May-Oct 2019***
 - Outreach meetings with legislative caucus/committees
 - CDFW and FGC staff draft proposal
 - CDFW and FGC staff preparation for workshop
- ***Nov 2019***
 - Public workshop

- ***Dec-Feb 2019***
 - CDFW and FGC finalize proposal
- ***May-June 2019***
 - Staff presentation and possible action on proposal by Commission