

**STATE OF NEVADA
BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS**

Commission Policy Number 23

Number: P-23
Title: Predation Management
Reference: NRS 501.100, 501.105,
501.181, 502.253
Effective Date: December 7, 2013
Amended Date: May 13, 2016

The Nevada Department of Wildlife (Department) and the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners (Commission) recognize the need to effectively manage predators in Nevada. Predation Management actions are a viable and legitimate wildlife management tool that must be available to wildlife professionals when necessary. The Predation Management Program will incorporate the tools of predation management for the protection of nonpredatory game animals and sensitive wildlife species and conducting research necessary to determine successful techniques for managing and controlling predatory wildlife, including the use of proven and emerging science-based techniques of predator population management.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to inform the public and guide ~~the Nevada the~~ Department of Wildlife (Department) in actions relating to Predation Management. This policy specifically seeks to establish an informed Predation Management Program, primarily governed by the Predator Management Plan, which complies with NRS 502.253 and other applicable laws and incorporates the tools of habitat restoration for protection of nonpredatory game animals and sensitive wildlife species, research necessary to determine successful techniques for managing and controlling predatory wildlife, and the use of proven and emerging, science-based techniques of predator population management and control. Should the Department make the decision to implement predation management actions, the management actions will be directed by the Predation Management Plan.

DEFINITION OF “PREDATION MANAGEMENT”

Predation Management is herein defined as selective reduction (i.e., limited lethal removal) and/or management (i.e., nonlethal actions) of predator or corvid (common raven, American crow and black-billed magpie) populations when and where predation is identified by the Department as a limiting factor negatively affecting another wildlife population. This includes monitoring and modeling of select predator populations, maintaining and/or managing viable predator populations, and studying select predator-prey relationships to better understand ecosystem function. It may also include the enhancement of various wildlife habitats according to the best available science as it relates directly to predator-prey relationships.—

NEED

Where wildlife populations are failing to reach Department population management objectives, public expectations, or where evidence suggests that predation may be a significant factor inhibiting the ability of a prey population to reach expected population levels, the Department may consider implementing predation management actions. The Department will consider acting if declining population trends cannot be explained by habitat conditions, weather or climatic events, disease, or other factors. The Commission is aware of the diverse public opinions concerning predation issues and recognizes the need to increase public education to facilitate a better understanding of predation management, including the effects of not managing predators.

AUTHORITY FOR PREDATION MANAGEMENT

Pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 501.100 the Legislature has declared “wildlife in this State not domesticated and in its natural habitat is part of the natural resources belonging to the people of the State of Nevada. The preservation, protection, management and restoration of wildlife within the State contribute immeasurably to the aesthetic, recreational, and economic aspects of these natural resources.”

In accordance with NRS 501.105 and 501.181, the Board of Wildlife Commissioners (Commission) shall establish policies necessary to the preservation, protection, propagation, restoration, transplanting, introduction, and management of wildlife and its habitat in this state.

Pursuant to NRS 502.253(1) a fee of \$3 is charged for processing each application for a game tag to be used by the Department for costs related to:

- (a) Developing and implementing an annual program for the management and control of predatory wildlife;
- (b) Wildlife management activities relating to the protection of non-predatory game animals and sensitive wildlife species; and
- (c) Conducting research necessary to determine successful techniques for managing and controlling predatory wildlife.

Pursuant to NRS 502.253(2) the Department is hereby authorized to expend a portion of the money collected pursuant to subsection 1 of NRS 502.253 to enable the State Department of Agriculture to develop and carry out programs described in subsection 1 of NRS 502.253.

Pursuant to NRS 502.253(3) any program developed or wildlife management activity or research so conducted must be developed or conducted under the guidance of the Commission pursuant to NRS 501.181(2). Pursuant to NRS 501.181(2) the Commission shall guide the Department in its administration and enforcement of provisions of Title 45, Wildlife (Chapters 501–506) of NRS by establishment of broad policies for the protection, propagation, restoration, transplanting, introduction, and management of wildlife in this State.

Pursuant to NRS 502.253(1) the revenue from the \$3 fee must be accounted for separately and deposited in the Wildlife Fund Account, ~~of which 80% of the revenues from the most~~

~~recent fiscal year for which the Department has complete information must be spent for lethal management and control of predatory wildlife in accordance with NRS 502.253(4)(b).~~

~~Pursuant to NRS 502.253(4)(a), the Department will first consider the recommendations of the Commission and the State Predatory Animal and Rodent Committee (PARC) before adopting any program for the management and control of predatory wildlife.~~

PREDATION MANAGEMENT POLICIES

A. POLICY FOR PROGRAMS FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF PREDATORY WILDLIFE

1. Management decisions will be based on the best available scientific information.
2. Conduct projects~~Projects will be conducted~~ in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible, ~~with clear~~ clear goals, measurable objectives, and limited timelines will be defined at the onset, and with an emphasis on identifying and refining prescriptive measures of Predation Management for use in the future.
- ~~4.3.~~ Lethal and/or nonlethal predator control efforts will be undertaken in a targeted fashion to reduce specific wildlife-related losses to wildlife populations without endangering long-term health, vigor and/or ecological services provided by balanced and viable predator and/or corvid wildlife populations.
- ~~2.~~ Geographical locations for project areas will be determined based on an objective analysis and on the needs of wildlife populations in the area. Priority will be given to act in areas where other efforts are completed, underway, or planned that will also benefit wildlife populations to provide the best data possible.
4. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (Wildlife Services), is the cooperating agency in lethal predatory wildlife control. Contractors may be used for predator population management, habitat management, predator prey research, conservation education and carnivore population monitoring efforts.
- ~~3.5.~~ In terms of lethal control, Wildlife Services personnel or other contractors shall salvage (when practicable) and give the hide and skull of any mountain lion, black bear, and bobcat removed under authority of a contract with the Department within 96 hours of the removal.
6. Control activities will be conducted where game and sensitive wildlife populations are at risk of being disproportionately affected by predation.
7. Priority will be given to act in areas where other conservation efforts are completed, underway, or planned that will also benefit wildlife populations.
- ~~4.8.~~ Geographic locations for Project areas will be determined based on an objective analysis and on the needs of wildlife populations in the area.
- ~~5.9.~~ If needed to assess project viability, statewide and project area estimates of terrestrial or avian predator ~~and corvid~~ populations or densities will be based on an objective analysis.
- ~~6.~~ Statewide and regional projects that allow the Department to engage in predator

~~management programs as needed to protect game and sensitive wildlife populations.~~

~~7. The Commission recognizes the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (Wildlife Services) as a cooperating agency in lethal predatory wildlife control. The Commission also recognizes qualified contractors and cooperators may be available for predator population management, predator-prey research, and predator population monitoring efforts.~~

~~8.1. In terms of lethal control, Wildlife Services personnel or other contractors shall salvage (when practicable) and give the hide and skull of any mountain lion, black bear, and bobcat removed under authority of a contract with the Department within 96 hours of the removal.~~

~~B. POLICY FOR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF NONPREDATORY GAME ANIMALS AND SENSITIVE WILDLIFE SPECIES~~

~~1. Wildlife management activities will be undertaken in a targeted fashion to reduce specific wildlife losses including, but not limited to, enhancing habitat conditions to better provide adequate forage, water, or cover or remove naturally occurring habitat or corvid and raptor perches that increases the susceptibility to predation. Such wildlife management activities will be conducted in accordance with existing land use agreements.~~

~~2. Geographical locations for project areas will be determined based on an objective analysis and on the needs of wildlife populations in the area. Priority will be given to act in areas where other efforts are completed, under way, or planned that will also benefit wildlife populations to provide the best data possible.~~

~~3. Wildlife management activities will be conducted in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible with clear goals, objectives, and timelines defined at the onset, with an emphasis on improving wildlife populations and their habitats.~~

~~4. Statewide and regional projects that allow the Department to engage in wildlife management activities as needed to protect game and sensitive wildlife populations.~~

~~5. If needed to assess project viability, statewide and project area estimates of predator and corvid populations or densities will be based on an objective analysis.~~

~~C.B. POLICY FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH FOR MANAGING AND CONTROLLING PREDATORY WILDLIFE~~

1. Wildlife research activities will be undertaken in a targeted fashion to address questions regarding predator-prey or predator community relationships including improved control techniques, predator-prey responses to habitat restoration activities, and influences of ~~large and medium-sized~~ predators on ecosystems.

2. Geographical locations for project areas will be determined based on an objective analysis and on the needs of wildlife populations and habitats in the area, as well as the need for objective science on subjects related to Predation Management. Priority will be given to act in areas where other efforts are completed, underway, or planned that will also benefit wildlife populations to provide the best data

possible.

3. Wildlife research efforts will be promoted that: a) provide wildlife managers with objective scientific analysis for making sound decisions regarding future wildlife population and habitat management; and b) provide insights into the role predators play in maintaining vigorous and healthy ecosystems.
- ~~4. If needed to assess project viability, statewide and project area estimates of predator and corvid populations or densities will be based on an objective analysis.~~
- ~~5. Statewide and regional projects that allow the Department to engage in wildlife research efforts as needed to identify better techniques for predator control and management.~~

PREDATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND REPORT PROCEDURES

~~Pursuant to the above Commission policies, the The Department, in coordination with and under the guidance of the Wildlife Damage Management Committee (WDMC), shall prepare a Predation Management Plan. The Predation Management Plan shall identify and implement (a) programs-projects for the management and control of predatory wildlife for the benefit of other species of wildlife (“Control Program”), and (b) research projects related to predatory wildlife, successful techniques, and effective programs for managing and/or controlling predatory wildlife and related habitats. ~~wildlife management activities for the protection of non-predatory animals and related wildlife habitat (“Management Activity”), and (c) research relating to predatory wildlife and research to determine successful techniques and effective programs for managing and/or controlling predatory wildlife and related habitats (“Research Program”), all to be conducted for the fiscal period beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of each year (Fiscal Year).~~~~

~~Whenever possible, Control Programs, Management Activities, and Research Programs should be integrated on the landscape to provide the best possible outcome in terms of healthy functioning ecosystems and the furthering of wildlife management science.~~

~~If Habitat or Conservation Education projects are proposed, they should identify wildlife habitat management activities for the protection of non-predatory animals and programs for education of the public concerning the management and control of predatory wildlife and the role predators play in a well-functioning ecosystem.~~

The Predation Management Plan ~~shall be developed each Fiscal Year according to the following~~ procedure:

1. The Department shall prepare a Draft Predation Management Plan (Draft Plan) outlining proposed actions needed for the protection, preservation, management, and restoration of wildlife populations ~~and their habitats~~. Descriptions of Control Programs, Management Activities, and Research Programs, collectively referred to as “project(s),” shall include: ~~specific project goals, a detailed description of anticipated results, predator and prey wildlife species that may be affected, whether or not the project will span more than one Fiscal Year, and if the project is for a Control Program, a statement of why the Department believes that the predatory~~

~~wildlife is a limiting factor in the growth and or maintenance of a target prey population. A description of the project area should be provided, including a map, an assessment of the habitat conditions, and identification if such habitat is a migratory corridor, summer range, winter range, fawning, calving, nesting or brood-rearing habitat, or a combination of any of the above. Regarding all projects proposed to be continued from the prior Fiscal Year, the Draft Plan shall address the Department's comments from the prior Fiscal Year's Status Report.~~

A. Project Number and Title.

B. Justification (detailed description of the proposed project, including a statement of why the Department believes that the predatory wildlife is a limiting factor in the growth and or maintenance of a target prey population).

C. Project Purpose (Wildlife Control, Research Project, Habitat Management, or Education).

D. Project Manager.

E. Project Type (Implementation, Experimental Management, or Experimentation).

F. Monitoring Level (Standard, Intermediate, or Rigorous).

G. Potentially Affected Species.

H. Duration.

I. Project Area (Unit(s), County, or Statewide).

J. Limiting Factor Statement, including why potential non-lethal methods would not be effective.

K. Response Variable (further actions to be taken depending on project success or type).

L. Project Goals and measurable objectives, including the criteria to determine when the project will be discontinued due to either success or failure.

M. Habitat Conditions (whether such habitat is a migratory corridor, summer range, winter range, fawning, calving, nesting or brood-rearing habitat or a combination of any of the above).

N. Comments From Previous Year's Predator Report.

O. Methods and Timing.

P. Prey Population Estimate (if a specific population objective is desired).

Q. Anticipated Results.

R. Staff Comment.

S. Project Direction (Department Recommendation).

T. Project Budget (\$3 Predator Fee, Pittman Robertson monies, private donations, etc.).

U. A status update of the previous year's Plan, by project: cost expenditures, amount left, how many years it has been ongoing, status of project over lifespan

~~4.2. The~~ A Draft Plan shall be submitted to the Commission prior to the January Commission Meeting during its first meeting of the calendar year (typically February). ~~In so doing, T~~ he Draft Plan will be made available to all "Stakeholders," including but not limited to contractors (including Wildlife Services), contractors, County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife (CABMWs), PARC, conservation organizations, and interested publics and the general public. This Draft Plan shall serve as a vehicle to elicit suggestions for changes, adjustments, new ideas, and input from all Stakeholders.

~~2. The Department shall attend a meeting of the PARC between the Commission's first meeting of the year and the Commission's March meeting to present and discuss the Draft Plan.~~

3. The Predatory Animal and Rodent Committee (PARC) and Wildlife Damage Management Committee (WDMC) shall set a meeting in conjunction with the March meeting of the Commission to review all comments received on the Draft Plan. After consideration of findings and recommendations of the Department, and with respect to lethal control projects, recommendations of Wildlife Services and other contractors, PARC, as well as all comments and recommendations received, the Chairman of the WDMC shall make a preliminary report to the Commission on which projects should be funded in the subsequent Fiscal Year. ~~At the March meeting, the Commission shall review the report of the WDMC and may vote to make a recommendation to the Department on the ranking of all projects. If the Commission determines that more projects are proposed than funding is available for the subsequent Fiscal Year, this will factor into their deliberations and recommendations to the Department.~~

~~4.3.~~

~~5.4.~~ The Department shall prepare a Final Draft Predation Management Plan (Final Draft Plan) and present it to the WDMC and ~~or the Commission at their prior to the~~ May Meeting. The Final Draft Plan shall be posted on the Department's website and made available to the public and distributed to CABMWs ~~and PARC. The Commission shall review the Final Draft Plan and shall take further comments from the Department, Stakeholders, PARC, and with respect to lethal Control Programs, from Wildlife Services and other contractors.~~ After consideration of ~~such all the~~ comments, the Commission shall make its final recommendations to the Department on the Final Draft Plan.

~~6.5.~~ On or before June 30, ~~after consideration of all comments,~~ the Department shall ~~finalize the Predation Management Plan for the next Fiscal Year. The the~~ Final Predation Management Plan ~~shall be posted on the Department's website and made available to the public and distributed to members of the Commission and CABMWs and to all contractors and cooperators.~~

~~7.6.~~ If, at any other time of the year, the Department, in consultation with the WDMC and PARC, identifies additional or changing Predation Management needs and determines that money is available to fund additional projects, the Department may approve projects which are urgent in nature or which present unique opportunities.

~~Contracts or grants will be finalized and/or amended as soon as possible after the finalization of the Predation Management Plan.~~

~~7.~~ Any time after June 30 but no later than August 1 ~~In July of each year, each~~ contractors ~~and/or~~ grantees ~~of a~~ projects ~~from the previous Fiscal Year shall submit a report to the Commission on a form prescribed by the Department and which has been developed in consultation with the WDMC. Such reports may should~~ include: a summary of work

completed, including predators removed, habitat work conducted (if applicable), and viability of the project moving forward.

~~8.—~~

~~9.—~~

- ~~(a) For a Control Program, (1) all of the information set forth in Section 1, above; (2) for lethal Control Programs, required quarterly removal reports; (3) for lethal and nonlethal Control Programs, a detailed description of results may include: a) estimated predator and prey population and demographic indices before and after treatment in the Control Program area; b) estimated predator and prey population and demographic indices in treatment and other areas; c) any other data sets pertinent to the analysis and interpretation of the Control Program (e.g., sport harvest data, climate patterns, fire regime, nonnative floral and/or faunal influences on predator and prey populations and their habitats, or other related items); and (4) all itemized costs incurred during previous Fiscal Years;~~
- ~~(b) For a Management Activity, (1) all of the information set forth in Section 1, above; (2) a detailed description of results may include: a) a complete analysis of acreages treated and habitat enhancement responses to date; b) estimated predator and prey population and demographic indices before and after treatment in the Management Activity area; c) estimated predator and prey population and demographic indices in treatment and other areas; d) any other data sets pertinent to the analysis and interpretation of Management Activities (e.g., sport harvest data, climate patterns, fire regime, nonnative floral and/or faunal influences on predator and prey populations and their habitats, or other related items); and (4) all itemized costs incurred during previous Fiscal Years; and~~
- ~~(c) For a Research Program, (1) all of the information set forth in Section 1, above; (2) a detailed description of results may include: a) a complete analysis of research results and conclusions to date; b) estimated predator and prey population and demographic indices before and after treatment (if applicable) in the Research Program area; c) estimated predator and prey population and demographic indices in treatment and other areas within designated project areas (if applicable); d) any other data sets pertinent to the analysis and interpretation of the Research Program (e.g., sport harvest data, climate patterns, fire regime, nonnative floral and/or faunal influences on predator and prey dynamics and their habitats, or other related items); and (4) all itemized costs incurred during previous Fiscal Years.~~

10.8. The Department shall prepare an annual Predation Management Status Report (Status Report) detailing results of the previous Fiscal Year's projects. This report will include a summary of all lethal removal reports, excluding any sensitive data, proprietary information, or time-sensitive locational information. This Status Report shall be presented at the last Commission meeting of each calendar year.

11.9. This Status Report will be used in Department and Commission deliberations in

subsequent years and in future Predation Management planning efforts. a summary of work completed, including predators removed, habitat work conducted (if applicable), and viability of the project moving forward.

This policy shall remain in effect until amended, repealed or superseded by the Commission.

**BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS REGULAR SESSION, -
~~May 13, 2016.~~**

**Chairman ~~Jeremy Drew~~
Board of Wildlife Commissioners**