

**STATE OF NEVADA
BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS**

Commission Policy Number 23

Number: P-23

Title: Management of Predatory Wildlife

Reference: NRS 501.100, 501.105,
501.181, 502.253

Effective Date: December 7, 2013

Amended Date: May 13, 2016 and
November 4, 2023

The Nevada Department of Wildlife (Department) and the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners (Commission) recognize that predator species play a significant ecological role in the environment. The Department and the Commission also recognize that an integral part of wildlife management is finding balance between predator species and those species they prey upon. 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 predation management actions for the protection of game animals and sensitive wildlife species at risk. The use of proven and emerging science-based techniques for predator population management will be employed with the objective of increasing survival rates and positively influencing populations of targeted prey species within the carrying capacity of available habitat for that species.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to inform the public and guide the Department in actions relating to the management of predatory wildlife. The Department's predation management actions towards predatory wildlife will be directed by the Predation Management Plan.

Activities for the improvement of wildlife habitat and research or management activities funded and conducted for the benefit of nonpredatory game species pursuant to NRS 502.253 (1)(b) will be submitted and evaluated through the Heritage Grant Proposal process and considered with similar projects. Proposals must be submitted between January 1 and March 1 of each calendar year to receive consideration for annual allocations. Department applicants should submit projects through the Habitat Conservation Framework Project Portal (HCFPP). For more information, applicants should consult the HCFPP User Manual.

NEED

Wildlife populations can be subject to continued states of decline due to various factors. When evidence suggests that predation may be a significant factor in these declines, the Department may consider predator management actions. The Commission is cognizant of the diverse public opinions concerning predation issues. The Commission also recognizes the need to increase public education, be transparent and report on actions 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, at the direction of the applicant, for costs related to developing and implementing an annual program for the:

- (a) Lethal removal of predatory wildlife; or
- (b) Improvement of wildlife habitat and research or management activities beneficial to nonpredatory game species.

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.

POLICY FOR PROGRAMS FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF PREDATORY WILDLIFE

1. Management decisions will be based on the best available scientific information. The Department will use a decision support matrix to evaluate proposed projects to create a prioritized list for the Predation Management Plan. This matrix and resulting scores will be made available to the Wildlife Damage Management Committee annually.
2. Projects will be conducted in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible. Clear goals, measurable objectives, and timelines will be defined at the

onset, with an emphasis on identifying and refining prescriptive measures of predation management for use in the future.

3. Lethal predator control efforts will be undertaken in a targeted fashion to minimize specific predator-caused losses to wildlife populations.
4. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (Wildlife Services), is the cooperating agency in legal predatory wildlife control. Contractors may be used for lethal predator control, and predator population monitoring efforts.
5. Geographical locations for project areas will be determined based on an objective analysis and on the needs of wildlife populations in the area.
6. 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.
7. Control activities will be conducted where game and sensitive wildlife populations are at risk of being disproportionately affected by predation.
8. If needed to assess project viability, statewide and project area estimates of predator populations or densities will be based on an objective analysis.

PREDATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND REPORT PROCEDURES

The Department shall prepare an annual Predation Management Plan. The Predation Management Plan shall identify and implement programs for the management and control of predatory wildlife for the benefit of other species of wildlife.

The Predation Management Plan Fiscal Year procedure and timeline:

1. The Department shall prepare a Draft Predation Management Plan (Draft Plan) outlining proposed actions needed for the protection of wildlife populations. Descriptions of Control Projects must include:
 - A. Project number and title.
 - B. Justification (detailed description of the proposed project.).
 - C. Project purpose.
 - D. Project manager.
 - E. Project type (implementation, experimental management).
 - F. Potentially affected species.
 - G. Duration.
 - H. Project area (hunt unit(s), county, or statewide).
 - I. Limiting factor statement, including why potential non-lethal methods would not be effective.
 - J. Response variable (if applicable).
 - K. Project goals and measurable objectives, including the criteria to adjust, alter or end a project based off the response variable or other considerations.
 - L. Habitat condition and period of use (if known) (e.g., intact, compromised due to wildfire, migratory corridor, summer range, winter range, fawning, calving, nesting or brood-rearing habitat or a combination of any of the above).
 - M. Methods and timing.
 - N. Department comments from previous year's Predator Report.

- O. Project direction (department recommendation).
 - P. Project budget (\$3 Predator Fee, private donations, etc., cumulative expense and remaining funds).
 - Q. Project summary to include cost expenditures, amount left, how many years it has been ongoing, status of project over lifespan.
2. A Draft Predation Management Plan (PMP) shall be submitted to the Commission prior to the January Commission meeting. The Draft PMP will be made available to all "Stakeholders," including but not limited to contractors (including Wildlife Services), County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife (CABMWs), the Nevada Department of Agriculture's Predatory Animal and Rodent Control Committee (PARC), conservation organizations, and the general public and shall serve as a vehicle to elicit suggestions for changes, adjustments, new ideas, and input from all Stakeholders.
 3. 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 PMP.
 4. The Wildlife Damage Management Committee (WDMC), under the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners, shall set a meeting in conjunction with the March meeting of the Commission to review all comments received on the Draft PMP. After consideration of findings and recommendations of the Department, including review of the decision support matrix 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 or may vote to grant final approval to the Draft PMP.
 5. The Final Draft PMP will be finalized and approved no later than at the Commission's May Meeting. The Final Plan will be posted on the Department's website on or before June 30.
 6. If, at any other time of the year, the Department, in consultation with the WDMC 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.
 7. In August of each year, contractors, or grantees of Projects from the previous Fiscal Year shall submit a report to the Department which should include a summary of work completed, including predators removed, and viability of the project moving forward.
 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.

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 the status report will be included in the following years' Draft Predation Management Plan to make deliberations easier for the Committees and Commission.

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

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF WILDLIFE COMMISSIONERS REGULAR SESSION,
NOVEMBER 4, 2023.



Chairman Tommy Caviglia
Board of Wildlife Commissioners

DEFINITIONS

Experimental Management: The primary objectives are management of predators through lethal means and to learn the effects of a novel management technique. NDOW will collaborate with USDA Wildlife Services, private contractors, and other wildlife professionals to conduct lethal management of predators and will put forethought into project design. Response variables will be identified, and data will be collected to determine project effectiveness. Expected outcomes will include project effectiveness, agency reports, and possible peer-reviewed publications.

Experimentation: The primary objective is for increasing knowledge of predators in Nevada. NDOW may collaborate with other wildlife professionals to study and learn about predators of Nevada. Expected outcomes will include agency reports, peer-reviewed publications, and information on how to better manage Nevada's predators.

Implementation: The primary objective is to implement management of predators through lethal means. NDOW will collaborate with USDA Wildlife Services and private contractors to conduct lethal management of predators. Identifying and monitoring a response variable is not a primary objective for implementation.

Nonpredatory Game Animals: For the purposes of this policy includes mule deer, pronghorn antelope, bighorn sheep, Rocky Mountain elk, mountain goat, moose, upland game birds, upland game mammals, and migratory game birds.

Predation: The act of an individual animal or group of animals killing another live animal.

Predation Management: Selective reduction and/or management of terrestrial, avian, or aquatic predator populations when and where predation is identified by the Department as a limiting factor negatively affecting another wildlife population.

Predator: Any wild animal species subsisting, wholly or in part, on other living animals captured through its own efforts.

Predator Removal: The physical removal of an animal from an area where its presence is undesirable for wildlife management purposes, generally requiring lethal actions.

Prey: Any animal hunted or killed as food by a predator.

Sensitive Wildlife Species: For the purposes of this policy includes nonpredatory reptiles, mammals, birds, fish, and amphibians.