
SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND WATER

Senator Josh Becker, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

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Author: Richardson
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Consultant: Katharine Moore

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SUMMARY

This bill, the California Grizzly Restoration Act (Act), would establish the policy of the state to restore the grizzly bear to the state, require the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (department) to develop and make publicly available a roadmap for the reintroduction of grizzly bears in California, as provided, prohibit any reintroduction of the grizzly bear until certain criteria are met, including the scientific determination that a self-sustaining grizzly population is biologically and ecologically viable, specify that various code sections applicable to bears do not apply to grizzly bears, and state legislative intent to provide sustainable funding to the department and the California Fish and Game Commission (commission) to implement the Act, among other provisions.

BACKGROUND AND EXISTING LAW

The Grizzly bear

The California grizzly bear is the state animal and is a centerpiece of the state's flag and other state symbols. Male grizzly bears may be as heavy as 1,000 pounds (prior to hibernation), and stand 3 – 4 feet at the shoulder and as tall as 8 – 9 feet on their hind legs. It is the largest brown bear, and grizzly bears are omnivores and can prey on large mammals, when available. Around the time of the California Gold Rush, there was an estimated population of approximately 10,000 grizzly bears in California. By 1924, grizzly bears were extirpated in California due to a deliberate effort to do so.¹ As an apex predator and keystone species, the loss of the grizzly bear population caused cascading ecological changes to the many California ecoregions the bears inhabited. These included altered composition of species, reduced resiliency, and diminished biodiversity.

California Native American tribes have a long-standing cultural and spiritual relationship with the grizzly bear. For many tribes, the grizzly bear is a vital and honored relative. The absence of grizzly bears has impacted tribal cultures, ceremonies, and spiritual practices. The importance of the grizzly bear is reflected in oral histories, traditional practices, and tribal stewardship of the land. The extirpation of the grizzly bear caused lasting harm to these practices, according to the Yurok Tribe.

¹ Recent research has revealed that the state's grizzly bears are not a distinct subspecies as once thought. The California grizzly bears are genetically indistinguishable from grizzly bears living in Montana, Idaho, Washington, Wyoming, and western Canada. Due to this new understanding, extirpated is the more appropriate word than extinct.

The Senate proclaimed that 2024 was the Year of the California Grizzly Bear on the 100th anniversary of its extirpation from the state.

The Missions of the Commission and the Department

Existing law establishes the commission and the department in the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA).

The commission's mission includes "We embrace our responsibility to hold California's fish and wildlife and their habitats in the public trust, as well as their cultural and intrinsic value, and therefore work collaboratively with other federal, tribal, state and local government agencies, non-governmental organizations and the people of California to establish scientifically-sound policies and regulations that protect, enhance and restore California's native fish and wildlife in their natural habitats, and to secure a rich and sustainable outdoor heritage for all generations to experience and enjoy through both consumptive and non-consumptive activities."

The department's mission statement is "to manage California's diverse fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and the habitats upon which they depend, for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public." In general, the department implements and enforces the regulations set by the commission, as well as providing biological data and expertise to inform the commission's decision-making process.

Recent Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee informational hearing.

On January 27, 2026, the Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee convened an informational hearing on Human-Wildlife Conflict. The hearing addressed recent increases in and high profile examples of Human-Wildlife Conflict.

California is a biodiversity hotspot. However, increasing habitat fragmentation, climate change (including drought, extreme heat, and wildfire), increasing human population in ideal wildlife habitat, and, in some instances, increasing wildlife populations are factors in the increased conflict, particularly with predators. The department has developed online reporting tools to assist those impacted, but inconsistent and fluctuating funding has impacted its ability to respond and take proactive steps in the community to minimize conflict. Conflict incidents are not limited to rural locations as Los Angeles, San Diego, Contra Costa and Santa Clara counties are among the top 5 counties in reported incidents with El Dorado county in the 2nd spot.

Points raised at the hearing included how relatively simple steps – such as garbage management in Lake Tahoe – can make a big impact. In addition to resource issues, panelists noted how important public and community outreach was in raising awareness and changing (human) behavior. Animals need prey and will seek domestic animals if they are available. Better husbandry is important as is more research into hazing. Social challenges, building trust, and communication are also important factors. Successful conflict prevention needs resources and time.

One specific example of recent human-wildlife conflict repeatedly raised was the reintroduction of gray wolves into the state. Livestock losses attributed to wolves have recently increased substantially. In particular, the department recently killed four members of the Beyem Seyo wolf pack after they had become habituated to livestock.

Estimates are that the department's reactive response cost in excess of \$2M where a more proactive approach could have saved money, livestock, and wolves.

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Bear Flag as the State Flag of California (Government Code (GOV) §420).
- 2) Establishes the California Grizzly bear as the state animal (GOV §425).
- 3) Establishes the department and the commission in CNRA.
 - a) The department's charge includes, among other things, to manage the state's diverse fish, wildlife, and plant resources.
- 4) Authorizes the department to take for scientific, propagation, public health or safety, the prevention or relief of suffering, or law enforcement purposes, fish, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, birds, or any other plant or animal, as specified (Fish and Game Code (FGC) §1001).
- 5) Makes it unlawful to take a bird, mammal, fish, reptile, or amphibian except as provided in the Fish and Game Code or in a regulation adopted pursuant to the code, as provided (FGC §2000).
- 6) Makes it unlawful to pursue any black bear with hounds at any time, as provided (FGC §3960).
- 7) Authorizes the hunting of bear, and provides procedures to obtain a depredation permit for losses due to bear or other species, as provided (FGC §§4750 et seq., 4181, 4181.1)
- 8) Authorizes the department to issue a written permit to import into, possess, or transport within the state any wild animal as included in section 671 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations upon a determination that animal is not detrimental or that no damage or detriment can be cause to agriculture, native wildlife, public health or safety, or the welfare of the animal as a result of the importation, transportation, or possession (FGC §2150).
 - a) These are restricted species permits.

PROPOSED LAW

This bill would:

- 1) Establish the California Grizzly Restoration Act.
- 2) Establish state policy to restore the grizzly bear (*ursus arctos*), as provided.
- 3) Require the department to develop and make publicly available a roadmap for the reintroduction of grizzly bears in California. Require the roadmap to be developed consistent with and to include at least the following:

- a) A scientific assessment based on the best available data, including habitat suitability, population modeling, long-term viability thresholds, and potential ecological impacts.
 - b) Consultation with California Native American tribes with priority given to tribes whose ancestral territories are encompassed by proposed reintroduction areas, and in coordination with stakeholders, as provided.
 - c) Independent peer review by tribal representatives and qualified experts, as provided.
 - d) A framework for incorporating cultural, spiritual, and ecological values of California Native American tribes, including recognition of the grizzly bear's significance, as provided.
 - e) Identification of potential relocation areas, as provided.
 - f) Description of management procedures, including conflict response protocols and standards for human-wildlife coexistence, as provided.
 - g) An estimate of implementation costs, as provided.
 - h) Proposed regulations governing the take and management of grizzly bears consistent with existing law and conservation objectives.
- 4) Require the department by June 30, 2028, to submit the roadmap to relevant legislative budget and policy committees, the Legislative Analyst's Office, and the commission, as provided. Require the roadmap to be publicly available.
 - 5) Prohibit undertaking or authorizing the reintroduction of the grizzly bear in the state unless all of the following occur, as specified:
 - a) Scientific determination of the viability of establishing a self-sustaining grizzly population.
 - b) Consultation with California Native American tribes and engagement with communities, as provided.
 - c) Adoption of procedures that minimize risk of conflict to human life and property.
 - d) Adoption of procedures that promote the welfare of grizzly bears involved in restoration efforts.
 - e) Promulgation of regulations for the take of grizzly bears consistent with species conservation.
 - 6) Specify that code sections related to bear hunting, the use of metal-jawed traps to take bears, the take of bears within the fence surrounding beehives in certain locations, and certain penalties for violations do not apply to the grizzly bear.
 - 7) State legislative intent that the department and commission be provided with sustainable funding sufficient to fully implement reintroduction, as provided.

- 8) Authorize the department to accept, and, subject to appropriation, expend funds from any public or private sources to administer this act, as provided.
- 9) Provide that this Act does not limit the authority of the commission or department pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act.
- 10) Make extensive related findings and declarations, including, among others:
 - a) Grizzly bears inhabited the majority of California's ecoregions, except the hottest and most arid, prior to their extirpation.
 - b) Conservation science recognizes the integral role of grizzly bears in maintaining healthy, functioning ecosystems.
 - c) Grizzly bears coexisted with the ancestors of contemporary California Native American tribes for thousands of years and formed longstanding ecological and cultural relationships.
 - d) The grizzly bear holds enduring cultural, religious, spiritual, and ceremonial significance for many California Native American tribes, and its presence is reflected in oral histories, cosmologies, teachings, and traditional medicine, among others.
 - e) California is a leader in biodiversity science and conservation, and has recovered iconic native species such as the California condor, tule elk, humpback whale, southern sea otter, northern elephant seal, gray wolf, and the North American bear from near or complete extirpation, consistent with the state's public trust.
 - f) The reintroduction of the grizzly bear to California is consistent with the California Endangered Species Act, the State Wildlife Action Plan, the 30x30 conservation goals, and others. The reintroduction aligns with the state's policy to maintain and restore healthy natural ecosystems.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT

According to the author, "Since the Bear Flag Revolt of 1846, the California Grizzly has been synonymous with the Golden State and continues to be our official state animal. Unfortunately, California's subspecies of grizzly was eliminated in 1924."

"The loss of grizzly bears from California marks one of the most significant species losses in the state's history. Once present in nearly every ecosystem, grizzlies were eliminated within a single human lifetime, removing a keystone species whose ecological roles were critical natural processes such as seed dispersal, vegetation management, and balancing the food web. The loss of grizzlies also severed enduring relationships between the species and many California Native American tribes, for whom the grizzly remains a vital and honored relative."

"However, new genomic evidence shows the California Grizzly is genetically indistinguishable from grizzlies living today in Montana, Idaho, Washington, Wyoming, and western Canada, meaning bears from these regions could be reintroduced while still representing a native California species."

“Reintroduction would occur gradually and only in a few ecologically suitable areas – such as the Klamath – Trinity region, parts of the Sierra Nevada, and the Western Transverse Ranges, where conflict potential is low, and community support is strong.”

“Restoring grizzlies would strengthen California’s ecosystems, revive cultural and spiritual connections for Tribal Nations, and reduce long-term land-management costs through the natural processes’ grizzlies help sustain.”

“While biological feasibility established and clear ecological, cultural, and economic benefits, now is the moment for California to reconnect with a defining part of its natural heritage and chart a thoughtful, community-guided path toward the grizzly’s return.”

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION

The California State Association of Counties writing in opposition states, “CSAC generally supports efforts to protect California’s natural ecosystems and species, and to restore our habitats to the maximum extent feasible. We support efforts to do so that appropriately balance the needs of communities as part of these restoration initiatives.”

“However, the potential reintroduction of grizzly bears to the forests of California after an absence of more than a century presents risks to residents in the future, and immediate risks to existing state regulatory efforts.”

They continue that we “currently experience a number of challenges related to apex predators such as mountain lions and gray wolves (recently reintroduced to the environment). There have been increasing instances of attacks on livestock and people related to the presence of these species. And while we appreciate the efforts made by [the department] to administer programs to prevent loss of life and mitigate economic losses due to wildlife conflict, these programs are not currently funded at the required levels, and challenges remain on how to best coordinate local and state response. We would recommend more action from the Legislature and the Administration to fully identify and solve the policy questions that have arisen from the increase and reintroduction of apex predator species in California before another such species is intentionally added into the environment.”

They further note the “significant cutbacks” in the department’s budget and express concern that the mandated roadmap without an identified funding source could diminish the department’s ability to fulfill other obligations.

Additional opponents largely echo CSAC’s concerns with a particular emphasis on multiple challenges experienced with the gray wolf re-introduction in the state, particularly with livestock depredation.

COMMENTS

This bill is a work-in-progress. While the goals of the bill are reasonably clear – to develop a roadmap to assess the feasibility of grizzly bear reintroduction in the state and to ensure that existing bear-specific provisions of the Fish and Game Code do not apply to the grizzly bear – the language is likely to continue to evolve.

The Committee may wish to direct staff to continue working with the author’s office on language as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Of particular note, the author may wish to consider standardizing language when referencing the grizzly bear which appears to be referred to interchangeably as either the “grizzly” or “grizzly bear.” The author may also wish to consider if it is possible to reduce the redundancy between the lists of factors to be included in the roadmap and factors required to be considered in grizzly bear reintroduction.

Additionally, while this may be challenging, the author may wish to review all references to bear and black bear in the Fish and Game Code and consider whether adding, updating or revising the scientific name, if any, or description of the bear is appropriate in order to provide for consistency of nomenclature and to clearly distinguish between grizzly bear and other bear species throughout the Fish and Game Code.

Author amendments taken in Committee. Due to the legislative spring recess, late submittal, and the timing of this hearing, amendments proposed by the author would not have gone back into print until one day before this hearing. Given the timing, the author’s proposed amendments are included in this bill analysis. The Committee has occasionally included author’s amendments in the Committee analysis as a courtesy to the author.

The Committee may wish to amend the bill with the author’s amendments. [Amendment #1]

The author amendments do not change the bill’s goals, but rather add clarity and specificity to multiple provisions, in particular mirroring expanded requirements for the roadmap in the requirements for possible grizzly bear reintroduction. The author amendments respond to concerns raised by the opposition and explicitly acknowledge that it may not be feasible for grizzly bears to be reintroduced in the state. Further, the author amendments also explicitly incorporate many of the considerations – including outreach and public engagement – identified as important to wildlife coexistence at the recent Human-Wildlife Conflict hearing. The author amendments do the following:

- Rename the act as the California Grizzly Recovery Assessment Act.
- Replace the establishment of a state policy to reintroduce the grizzly bear with legislative intent language to:
 - Determine whether reintroduction of the grizzly bear is feasible and what conditions are necessary for long-term coexistence and stewardship.
 - Require the department to determine under what conditions the ecological functions once provided by the grizzly bear may be restored, including by reintroduction of the grizzly bear.
- Revise the required material in the roadmap, including increased emphasis on the grizzly bear’s ecological role, an comparative assessment and evaluation of potential reintroduction areas, an evaluation of source grizzly bears, expanded consultation requirements, including with law enforcement, land managers and others potentially impacted by grizzly bear reintroduction, expanded development of management procedures including conflict prevention and response and

community engagement, and potential impacts to agricultural and ranching operations, among others.

- Extend by two years – to June 30, 2030 – when the roadmap is due.
- Revise the requirements for reintroduction to reflect the changes to the required roadmap elements, including expanded consultation requirements incorporating the cultural, spiritual and ecological values of California Native American tribes into reintroduction planning, management, coexistence, and long-term stewardship.
- Add legislative intent language acknowledging explicitly that reintroduction of grizzly bear may not be ultimately undertaken.
- Revise the sections of code concerning bears that do not apply to the grizzly bear.
- Revise the legislative findings and declarations consistent with changes to the roadmap.

Codified legislative findings and declarations. The proposed new chapter in the Fish and Game Code specific to grizzly bears includes one section of codified legislative findings and declarations, and another section requiring the department to produce the roadmap and the factors to take into consideration in assessing the feasibility of grizzly bear reintroduction, among other provisions. It has been the general practice of this Committee to retain legislative findings and declarations relevant to the bill, but to uncodify them to maintain brevity and clarity in the code.

The Committee may wish to uncodify the section of legislative findings and declarations. [Amendment #2]

The roadmap anticipates possible regulatory changes. The roadmap is required to include recommendations for possible regulatory changes that may facilitate or be necessary for the reintroduction of the grizzly bear to the state. It is possible that there may be necessary or helpful future changes to statute as well.

In view of this, the Committee may wish to incorporate the possibility of statutory changes, as applicable, in the development of the roadmap. [Amendment #3]

Grizzly bears were not considered in the many provisions of the Fish and Game Code pertaining to bears. Proponents make a fair argument that the grizzly bear was extirpated in the state and therefore not explicitly excluded, for example, from the chapter pertaining to the hunting of bears in California. The use of the term “bear” alone could in the future also be interpreted to apply to grizzly bears. This bill seeks to exclude existing code sections that reference “bear.” However, the method chosen to do this – a single subdivision stating that 15 sections do not apply to the grizzly bear – does not provide clarity. For example, the Bear Chapter (FGC §§4750 – 4763) would appear to apply to grizzly bears too unless the reader was aware of this single subdivision in the next chapter. This does not promote statutory clarity.

In view of this, the Committee may wish to promote clarity and specify in the Fish and Game Code sections referenced that they do not apply to the grizzly bear, as specified, and remove the relevant subdivision in the proposed grizzly bear section. [Amendment #4]

It is worth noting that the impact of these exclusions means that, if present in the state, it would be illegal to hunt grizzly bear in the absence of additional regulations to permit it (per FGC §2000). It also remains possible to obtain a restrictive species permit for a grizzly bear (per FGC §§2150 *et seq.*), and the department's ability to take a grizzly bear to protect public health and safety, among other considerations, is unaffected (FGC §1001).

The Grizzly bear and the Endangered Species Acts (ESAs). The grizzly bear is listed as a threatened species under the federal ESA, although its population distribution in the lower 48 states does not include California. If the grizzly bear is reintroduced into California, a federal regulatory process to establish a population in the state could be necessary. The grizzly bear is not listed under the California ESA (CESA). Should the grizzly bear be reintroduced and listed under CESA, depredation permits would be prohibited.

Underfunded and overmandated. The department has longstanding budget concerns which have persisted despite repeated efforts over multiple decades to address them. When the state has significant fiscal concerns – as it does now – ensuring consistent and sustained funding for the department is particularly challenging. Recently, at legislative direction, the department undertook a “service-based” budgeting effort to identify the personnel needed to perform the services required by its mandates. The department's services were separated into eight general programs for analysis. In 2021, the initial results of this effort were released that revealed that the department's funding was inadequate to meet its “mission” service level. The “Species & Habitat Conservation” program – where most of the tasks associated with grizzly bear reintroduction are likely to be located – only had about 1/3 of the mission service level resources. The Newsom Administration proposed, and the Legislature approved, significant one-time General Fund moneys to support the department's activities in the near-term. Some progress in addressing the gaps in service were subsequently made, although this was offset, at least in part, by new duties.

Unfortunately, a recent update (for fiscal year 2024/2025) shows that the Species & Habitat Conservation program resources remain at about 35% overall, with a 5-year average of about 33%, although the trend is positive from fiscal year 2020/2021 (27%).

To the extent any new mandate at the department is unfunded or does not generate revenue, it will contribute to the long-standing and continuing fiscal challenges at the department. There are multiple legislative intent sections in the Fish and Game Code indicating the need to identify or obtain adequate funding sources for the department (see, for example, FGC §§710.5, 710.7, and 711, among others).

Recent related legislation

SB 1397 (Alvarado-Gil, 2026) would require the department to maintain, enhance, and expand its human-mountain lion conflicts program in order to protect public health and safety, among other provisions. (*This bill is pending before this Committee.*)

SB 1135 (Blakespear, 2026), the California Wildlife Coexistence Act, would establish a Wildlife Coexistence Program at the department to manage and promote wildlife coexistence, as provided, among other provisions. (*This bill is pending before this Committee.*)

SR 75 (Laird, 2024) proclaimed 2024 as the Year of the California Grizzly Bear on the 100 year anniversary of its extirpation in the state. (This Senate Resolution was enrolled on April 10, 2024.)

ACR 145 (Patterson, Chapter 32, Resolution of 2024) declared that 2024 as the year to Coexist with Wildlife, California.

SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS

AMENDMENT 1

Revise the bill as shown below:

SECTION 1.

This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the California Grizzly **Recovery Assessment Restoration** Act.

SEC. 2.

Chapter 9.5 (commencing with Section 4775) is added to Part 3 of Division 4 of the Fish and Game Code, to read:

CHAPTER 9.5. Grizzly Bears

4775.

The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos*) is a California keystone species known for its powerful influence on ecosystem structure and function. Through their ecological interactions, grizzly bears promote biodiversity and ecosystem heterogeneity by modifying vegetation composition and structure, regulating trophic dynamics, accelerating geomorphic processes, enriching soils with marine and terrestrial nutrients, dispersing seeds, and initiating secondary ecological processes. Prior to their **deliberate** extirpation **from California** in the 20th century, grizzly bears inhabited the majority of California's ecoregions, except the hottest and most arid portions of the state. Contemporary conservation **and Indigenous** science recognizes the integral role of grizzly bears in maintaining healthy, functioning ecosystems across their range. Their removal from California ecosystems contributed to cascading ecological effects that altered landscape structure, shifted species composition, and contributed to an overall loss of biodiversity in the state.

(b) California grizzly bears coexisted with the ancestors of contemporary California Native American tribes for thousands of years, forming longstanding ecological and cultural relationships. Though extirpated from California more than a century ago, the grizzly bear holds enduring cultural, religious, spiritual, and ceremonial significance for many California Native American tribes. Within the indigenous knowledge systems of California Native American tribes, the grizzly bear is recognized as a vital and honored relative, and its presence is reflected in the oral histories, cosmologies, teachings, traditional medicine, place names, governance structures, and traditional lifeways.

(c) Following the Gold Rush, widespread killing of grizzly bears by settlers, miners, ranchers, and government agents led to the complete extirpation of the species from California by 1924. This deliberate extermination represents **one of the most significant and widespread losses** of a native species in the state's history and continues to have lasting adverse impacts by eliminating key ecological functions, reducing ecosystem resilience, and impacting California Native American tribes' abilities to sustain cultural relationships, uphold traditional practices, and maintain reciprocal stewardship of the land.

(d) California has since become a global leader in biodiversity science and conservation, recovering iconic native species such as the California condor, tule elk, humpback whale, southern sea otter, northern elephant seal, gray wolf, and the North American beaver from near or complete extirpation. The recovery and restoration of extirpated native species is consistent with the state's and state agencies' public trust and statutory obligations to conserve, protect, and restore California's endangered, threatened, and sensitive species. These species hold inherent, ecological, cultural, and social value.

(e) **Historic** California **grizzly populations were grizzlies, *Ursus arctos californicus*, were long believed to represent an extinct previously described as an endemic subspecies, *ursus arctos californicus*. and their** **Their** presumed extinction by 1924 precluded consideration of reintroduction as a wildlife management option. **However, recent** **Recent** genomic research has **established they determined that California grizzlies** were not a distinct subspecies, but part of the broader North American grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos*) population, which is currently distributed across Montana, Wyoming, **Idaho, Washington,** and much of western Canada. This genetic continuity provides a scientifically supported source population from which potential restoration efforts may draw.

(f) **The Evaluating whether** reintroduction of the grizzly bear in particular areas of the state may be feasible and advisable **to California,** as a means of restoring **its** historical ecological functions, is consistent with the objectives of the California Endangered Species Act (Chapter 1.5 (commencing with Section 2050) of Division 3), the State Wildlife Action Plan, and the state's biodiversity and climate resilience strategies, including the 30x30 goal established in Executive Order No. N-82-20.

(g) As a vital relative to many California Native American tribes, the emblem on the California State Flag, and the official state animal of California, the **The** grizzly bear holds enduring cultural, historical, ecological, and symbolic significance **as a vital relative to many California Native American tribes, the emblem on the California State Flag, and the official state animal of California.** **Evaluating whether reintroduction** **Reintroduction may be feasible and advisable in particular areas of the state is also consistent** **aligns** with the state's policy to maintain and restore healthy natural ecosystems that sustain communities, support the economy, provide for recreation, and preserve California's history, culture, and traditions, while **recognizing** **addressing** the historic **and ongoing** harms inflicted on wildlife, natural systems, and **California Native American tribes, indigenous peoples.** **Committing to its return reaffirms the state's natural heritage and strengthens the connection between California's ecological past and its conservation future.**

4776.

(a) It is the intent of the Legislature to determine whether reintroduction of the grizzly bear policy of the state to restore the grizzly bear (Ursus arctos), our the official state animal, to California, is biologically feasible and whether areas of the state exist in which the conditions necessary for long-term coexistence and stewardship can be achieved. It is further the intent of the Legislature that the department evaluate whether, and under what conditions, the ecological functions once provided by the grizzly bear may be restored through human-mediated landscape restoration, including where determined to be feasible and advisable after the assessments, consultations, and review required by subdivision (b), reintroduction of the species.

(b) The department shall develop ~~and make publicly available on its internet website~~ a roadmap that evaluates whether, and under what conditions, for the reintroduction of the grizzly bears is feasible and advisable, and the extent to which the ecological functions once provided by the grizzly bear may be restored through human-mediated landscape restoration, including through reintroduction of the species, in California. The roadmap ~~shall be developed consistent with, and~~ shall include, but is not ~~be~~ limited to, all of the following:

(1) The following scientific assessments and evaluations, based on the best available science and data:

(A) A scientific assessment of the grizzly bear's historical distribution in California, its historical ecology and ecological roles across the state's ecosystems, the principal causes and processes that contributed to its extirpation from the state, and the genetic relationship between California's historical grizzly population and extant grizzly populations that may serve as potential source populations for reintroduction.

(B) An assessment of the native species, ecological communities, and ecosystem functions, and ecological processes that may have been affected, directly or indirectly, by the grizzly bear's extirpation from California, and that may benefit from restoration of the ecological functions once provided b-y the grizzly bear, including through reintroduction of the species.

(C) An evaluation and comparative assessment of potential reintroductions areas based on ecological criteria, land ownership, habitat connectivity, landscape permeability, conflict risk, existing and needed coexistence infrastructure, community support, and any other factors the department determines relevant to long-term grizzly bear reintroduction.

(D) An evaluation of potential source populations and founder population composition, including genetic diversity, sex and age structure, disease screening, animal welfare considerations, and any other considerations necessary to maintain demographic or genetic viability, based on the best available data, including habitat suitability, population modeling, long-term viability thresholds, and potential ecological impacts.

(2) Consultation, review and framework development, including all of the following:

(A) Consultation with California Native American tribes, with priority given to tribes whose ancestral territories ~~overlap are encompassed by~~ proposed reintroduction areas, and in coordination with the University of California, local governments, law enforcement agencies, residents, landowners, land

managers, regional conservation organizations, outdoor recreation organizations, residents, stakeholders, and other experts in wildlife conservation and grizzly bear reintroduction.

(B) (3) Independent peer review of the assessments and evaluations required by this subdivision, drawing on the most qualified individuals and organizations, including tribal representatives, individuals from appropriate institutions within the state, individuals and from within the University of California system, representatives of governmental, scientific, and wildlife management organizations and institutions with expertise in grizzly bear conservation, reintroduction, or management, and other qualified experts.

(C) (4) Development of A framework for incorporating cultural, spiritual, and ecological values of California Native American tribes, including recognition of the grizzly bear's significance to tribal traditions, land relationships, and land stewardship, and consideration of opportunities for tribal participation as partners, cooperating entities, or co-stewards in planning, monitoring, coexistence, and implementation.

~~(5) Identification of potential relocation areas based on ecological criteria, land ownership, habitat connectivity, and the risk of human-wildlife conflict.~~

(3) (6) Management, implementation, cost, and regulatory measures, including all of the following:

(A) Development Description of management procedures, including animal handling, translocation logistics, post-release monitoring, conflict prevention and response protocols, public education, attractant management, community engagement, and standards for human–wildlifegrizzly coexistence.

(B) (7) An estimate of implementation costs and agency capacity needs, including relocation, monitoring, staffing, equipment, community engagement, coexistence infrastructure, tribal stewardship, education, attractant mitigation, and conflict mitigation, along together with an analysis of potential cultural, ecological, and socioeconomic benefits; potential economic impacts to agricultural and ranching operations in and near potential reintroduction areas; potential effects on forest products and outdoor recreation industries; and potential economic opportunities, including wildlife tourism and rural and tribal community development; with the intent to determine sufficiency of funding and agency capacity for long-term stewardship.

(C) (8) Proposed regulations governing the taking and management of grizzly bears, consistent with state and federal wildlife laws and regulations, including any relevant regulations enacted under Section 10(j) of the federal Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1539(j)), and conservation objectives.

(c) By June 30, ~~2030~~ **2028**, the department shall submit the roadmap document developed pursuant to subdivision (b) to the relevant budget and policy committees of the Legislature, the Legislative Analyst's Office, and the commission.

(1) The roadmap ~~document developed pursuant to subdivision (b)~~ shall be made publicly available, and shall be -

~~(2) The roadmap submitted pursuant to this subdivision shall be~~ submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

(d) Any reintroduction of the grizzly bear in the state ~~pursuant to the state's policy to restore grizzly bears to California~~ shall not be undertaken or

authorized until all of the following occur, as carried out by the department or others:

(1) ~~Completion of the roadmap required by subdivision (b). Scientific determinations regarding the biological and ecological viability of establishing a self-sustaining grizzly population in the state.~~

(2) Determinations, based on the best available science, that establishment of a self-sustaining grizzly population in the state is biologically viable.

(3) Identification of the particular areas in which reintroduction may occur, based on the assessments and evaluations required by subdivision (b), including consideration of ecological suitability, land ownership, habitat connectivity, landscape permeability, conflict risk, coexistence infrastructure, and community support.

(4) Consultation with California Native American tribes, with priority given to tribes whose reservations or ancestral territories overlap proposed reintroduction areas, and engagement with communities, including local residents, landowners, and other stakeholders in or near proposed reintroduction areas, through public meetings and other outreach efforts intended to inform the public about the proposed reintroduction and its potential effects, if any, on ongoing human activities.

(5) Adoption of a framework incorporating the cultural, spiritual, and ecological values of California Native American tribes into grizzly bear reintroduction planning, management, coexistence, and long-term stewardship, including recognition of the grizzly bear's significance to tribal traditions, land relationships, tribal stewardship, and consideration of opportunities for tribal participation as partners, cooperating entities, or co-stewards in planning, monitoring, coexistence, and implementation.

(6) Adoption of long-term stewardship standards and procedures for proposed reintroduction areas, including post-release monitoring, conflict prevention and response, public education, attractant management, community engagement, standards for human-grizzly coexistence, livestock loss prevention and response measures, compensation and technical assistance measures for agricultural and ranching operations, and coordination with local governments, local agencies, and law enforcement agencies for implementation, emergency response, and ongoing management.

~~(7) (3)~~ Adoption of procedures that minimize risk of conflict to human life and property.

~~(8) (4)~~ Adoption of procedures that promote the welfare of grizzly bears involved in restoration efforts.

~~(9) (5)~~ Promulgation of regulations that set forth the circumstances ~~in~~ under which the taking of grizzly bears may be authorized consistent with the conservation of the species.

(e) Sections 3011, 3950, ~~4181, 4181.1,~~ 4185, 4750, 4751, 4752, 4753, 4754, 4755, 4757, ~~4758,~~ 4759, 4760, ~~and~~ 4763, ~~and 12157,~~ as they relate to bears, shall not apply to grizzly bears.

(f) (1) It is the intent of the Legislature that the department and the commission be provided with sustainable funding sufficient to fully implement this section and the resulting obligations. The grizzly bear is ~~recognized as~~ an umbrella species whose conservation supports a broad range of ecological and wildlife management ~~objectives~~ goals. Development and implementation of the

roadmap, assessments, consultations, and coexistence and stewardship frameworks required by this section, including assessment of the grizzly bear's historical ecology and ecological roles in California and evaluation of the extent to which the ecological functions once provided by the grizzly bear may be restore through human-mediated landscape restoration may also benefit ~~Budgeting for grizzly bear reintroduction offers an opportunity to align and leverage funding for~~ habitat restoration, species recovery, and human-wildlife coexistence initiatives within and surrounding areas evaluated pursuant to this section, regardless of whether reintroduction is ultimately undertaken ~~reintroduction areas.~~

(2) Notwithstanding any other law, the department may accept and, subject to an appropriation for this purpose, expend funds from any public or private sources to administer this chapter.

(g) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to limit the authority of the commission or department pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act (Chapter 1.5 (commencing with Section 2050) of Division 3).

AMENDMENT 2

Uncodify the Legislative findings and declarations (proposed FGC §4775).
~~4775.~~

AMENDMENT 3

Revise proposed FGC §4776(b)(3)(C) to read:

(C) Proposed statute, if any, and regulations...

AMENDMENT 4

Delete proposed FGC §4776(e):

~~(e) Sections 3011, 3950, 4181, 4181.1, 4185, 4750, 4751, 4752, 4753, 4754, 4755, 4757, 4758, 4759, 4760, and 4763, and 12157, as they relate to bears, shall not apply to grizzly bears.~~

Add to the end of FGC §3011:

This section does not apply to grizzly bear.

Add to the end of FGC §3950(a):

The grizzly bear is not a game mammal.

Add subdivision (e) to FGC §4181:

(e) This section does not apply to grizzly bear.

Add subdivision (f) to FGC §4181.1:

(f) This section does not apply to grizzly bear.

Add at the end of FGC §4185:

This section does not apply to grizzly bear.

Add section FGC §4750.5:

This chapter does not apply to grizzly bear, with the exception of section 4758.

SUPPORT

Yurok tribe (sponsor)
Tejon Indian tribe (sponsor)
Atsapàq
California Grizzly Alliance
California Grizzly Research Network
Center for Biological Diversity
Central Valley Partnership
CleanEarth4Kids.org
Endangered Habitats League
Environmental Protection Information Center
Friends of the Eel River
Keep the Sespe Wild
Klamath Forest Alliance
Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust
Los Padres Forest Watch
Morongo Basin Conservation Association
Mount Shasta Bioregional Ecology Center
Native American Land Conservancy
Oswit Land Trust
Outdoor Bound Adventures
Pelecanus, Inc.
Raptors are the Solution
Resource Renewal Institute
Sierra Club California
SoCal 350 Climate Action
Social Compassion in Legislation
The Escondido Creek Conservancy
The Summer Tree Institute
The Wildlands Conservancy
Voters for Animal Rights
Women for Wolves

OPPOSITION

California Cattlemen's Association
California State Association of Counties
County of Lassen
County of Siskiyou
Rural County Representatives of California

Two individuals

-- END --