

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

Date: July 15, 2015

To: The Governing Board Members

From:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FA/CP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

Subject: **Agenda Item XIV: Consideration of resolution authorizing a letter to California Fish and Game Commission in support of Option 2 in the proposed changes to regulations relating to implementation of the Bobcat Protection Act of 2013, AB 1213.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board authorize a letter to California Fish and Game Commission in support of Option 2 in the proposed changes to regulations relating to implementation of the Bobcat Protection Act of 2013, AB 1213.

Background: The Bobcat Protection Act mandates that the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) amend its regulations to prohibit trapping of bobcats (*Lynx rufus*) adjacent to the boundaries of each national or state park and national monument or wildlife refuge in which trapping is prohibited. It states that the Commission shall delineate the boundaries of an area in which bobcat trapping is prohibited such as those delineated for Joshua Tree National Park. The Act does not limit the ability of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or Commission to impose additional requirements, restrictions, or prohibitions related to the taking of bobcats, including a complete prohibition on the trapping of bobcats. The Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority (WCCA) previously submitted a letter in support of the Bobcat Protection Act.

Option 1 (recommended by Department of Fish and Wildlife in the Initial Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action) consists of partial closure of the state to bobcat trapping and establishing closure boundaries around protected areas. See Exhibit D attached.

Option 2 would prohibit bobcat trapping throughout California. This option was requested for consideration by the Commission on December 3, 2014. The take of bobcats with a hunting license and take of bobcats under a depredation permit would continue to be allowed. WCCA staff recommends the Board adopt the attached letter supporting Option 2.

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Bobcats are an irreplaceable part of California's natural heritage, playing an important ecological role not just in the ecosystems they inhabit, but also in the state's recreation, tourism and wildlife viewing industries. The Commission hearing is scheduled for August 5, 2015 in Fontana.