

WILDLIFE POLICY, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

The following statement concerning wildlife within the State Parks of California was unanimously adopted by the State Park Commission. It was first reported in News and Views in May, 1958.

A policy decision regarding wildlife within State Parks was requested by John Michael, Supervisor Natural History and Conservation at the Park Commission meeting. The Commission was unanimous in its approval. The policy reads: "In recognizing the value of the importance of adequately protecting and preserving wildlife in the State Park System, the Commission calls attention to the fact that the fauna of any area constitutes an integral part of the total natural scene which State parks are designed to preserve; and that the total preservation intended by general park policy does not necessarily constitute wildlife management in the usual meaning of that term. The entire animal and plant community of a state park is protected, and not managed as individual species for productive purposes or to increase the number of a particular species at the possible peril of others natural to the environment. All species of the ecological community shall be protected and preserved in as near a natural balance as possible.

The Commission recognizes that damage resulting from over-population of certain animals in state parks may be due to the disruption of the biological interrelationships brought about by the elimination of predators or by other interference with natural conditions, usually before the parks were established.

The Commission further recognizes that in some cases certain wildlife management practices must therefore be instituted, to preserve wildlife populations, to reduce mechanical damage, or to prevent public health hazards. The preservation of wildlife in its natural habitat also established in effect a natural outdoor exhibit for the enjoyment of the general public and a study area for wildlife ecology.

The Commission resolved that it shall be the policy to grant careful consideration to each proposal involving the control of any form of wildlife within a state park, after studies and recommendations by the staff of the Division. When appropriate, the staff will cooperate in their studies with other interested governmental agencies. All proposed control programs involving wildlife must be full consistent with state park policies and objectives as determined by the Commission; and it must be shown that the control of such animals would result in an overall benefit to the California State Park System."

