



State Enters Phase 2 of Wolf Conservation Plan

California's Gray Wolf population has met milestones needed for it to enter Phase 2 of the Wolf Conservation Plan. Phase 2 includes Initiating a review to evaluate the status of gray wolves in the state, and evaluating legal pathways under the California Endangered Species Act and the Federal Endangered Species Act to potentially issue permits allowing for more aggressive forms of hazing in specific situations, Also known as "less-than-lethal harassment." CDFW's Press Release

https://wildlife.ca.gov/News/Archive/california-enters-next-phase-of-wolf-conservation-plan-as-states-gray-wolf-population-continues-to-expand Staff Contact: Steven Fenaroli; sfenaroli@cfbf.com

Support: SB 223 – Streamlined Reintroduction of Farm Bureau-Sponsored Health Bill Advances

Senate Bill 223, authored by Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil (R–Modesto), passed unanimously and with bipartisan support out of the Senate Health Committee. The bill is a reintroduction of SB 945, which was sponsored by the California Farm Bureau in the previous legislative session.

The Farm Bureau continues to support SB 223, which now heads to the Senate Appropriations Committee with a recommendation to remain on the Consent Calendar—indicating that the bill currently faces no opposition. In the last session, the bill stalled late in the Assembly. Staff Contact: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com

Assembly Labor Committee Advances Problematic Bills

Assembly Bills - 1221 (Bryan) and 1331- (Elhawary) seek to restrict use of various technologies for monitoring the safety of workplaces and public areas in the name of protecting employee privacy. By very broadly defining technologies covered and not carefully defining what an employer can or cannot do with information generated by those technologies, the bills will make employers responsible for limiting use of data created by such devices like key fobs, RFID devices, cellular phones and other web-enabled devices that they may or may not be intentionally using to monitor employee productivity or behavior. At the same time, the bills complicate the use of monitoring technology intended to enhance the safety of employees and the public like closed-circuit cameras to monitor access points like doors and gates or technology to check vehicles for safe use. Both bills passed Assembly Labor 5-0 and were referred to by the Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection. Farm Bureau opposes both bills. (Bryan Little, blittle@cfbf.com)

The Committee also passed on a 5-0 vote AB 1234 (Ortega), which imposes an additional 30% penalty on any award, order or penalty issued by the Labor Commissioner. Styled as an "administrative fee," the fee penalizes employers who seek a Labor Commissioner hearing to adjudicate honest disputes of facts and circumstances of a supposed violation of wage and hour requirements enforced by the Labor Commissioner. Farm Bureau opposes. Staff Contact: Bryan Little; blittle@cfbf.com

Avian Flu Petition Filed with Standards Board

On March 20, Valley Voices and the UC Merced Farm Labor Center presented a proposal to revise the Zoonotic Aerosol Transmissible Disease Standard (Zoonotic ATD) to the monthly meeting of the Cal/OSHA Standards Board and formally submitted Petition 608 to the Board on March 21. The petition calls for employer-paid sick leave (over and above 40 hours/five day paid sick leave already needed in the Labor Code) for the ostensible purpose of removing an ill employee from the workplace and facilitation of isolation for ill employees. There are no known instances of human-to-human transmission of H5N1.

The petition also envisions employer-provided broad-based exposure testing of dairy employees for H5N1 that the California Department of Public Health lacks the resources to support, and tighter occupational safety requirements for dairies and poultry farms where H5N1 may be present. H5N1 infections in dairy farms appears to be waning, with fewer than half as many dairies under quarantine as in January, and no new human cases reported since January. The Board has six months from the filing date to consider whether to grant, deny or grant in part Petition 608. Staff Contact: Bryan Little; blittle@cfbf.com

California Milk Advisory Board Annual Meetings

CMAB is hosting annual meetings around California. These meetings will highlight the many ways the CMAB marketing team has been busy putting nutritious California dairy products into the hands of consumers in California, across the U.S. and around the world. In advance, please RSVP for the meeting you plan to attend. Staff Contact: Steven Fenaroli; sfenaroli@cfbf.com

Oppose: SB 667 – Disruptive Rail Restrictions Would Increase Costs and Delay Goods Movement

The California Farm Bureau opposes SB 667 (Archuleta, D), which would impose arbitrary limits on train lengths—making it more difficult to move goods efficiently throughout the state. The bill risks creating a patchwork of conflicting rules across a national rail system, leading to supply chain delays and increased transportation costs. Staff Contact: Steven Fenaroli; sfenaroli@cfbf.com

CDFW Posts March Depredation Reports

CDFW has posted new depredation determination forms to the CDFW Gray Wolf webpage, under "Potential Conflict and Depredation". Seven new depredation determinations have been added for March 2025. Three of the confirmed depredations are attributed to the Diamond pack in Plumas County.

Any 'Confirmed' or 'Probable' depredations are eligible for CDFW's Wolf Livestock Compensation Program Staff Contact: Steven Fenaroli; sfenaroli@cfbf.com

CDQAP March 2025 Newsletter

The March 2025 edition of the CDQAP newsletter is now available. All previous newsletters can be found at the CDQAP website, collected on the newsletter page. Please feel free to reprint any of these articles in part or in their entirety in your own dairy producer's communications, we ask only that you credit CDQAP for the information. Staff Contact: Steven Fenaroli; sfenaroli@cfbf.com

Oppose: AB 491 – Codifying Climate Targets Threatens Farming Flexibility

AB 491, authored by Assemblymember Damon Connolly (D–San Rafael), passed out of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee last Monday and is now headed to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

The California Farm Bureau currently opposes AB 491, which would codify into law the targets set by the California Natural Resources Agency for natural carbon sequestration and nature-based climate solutions. The bill would require the state to meet each of these targets by specific deadlines.

One provision of particular concern would mandate converting 20% of conventional farming systems to organic by 2045. The Farm Bureau has advocated that such goals should remain aspirational—not statutory—allowing for flexibility and adaptation as technologies and practices evolve. AB 491 has not yet been scheduled for a hearing in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Staff Contact: Richard Filgas; rfilgas@cfbf.com



President Announces Wide-Ranging Tariffs

Last week, President Donald Trump unveiled a series of planned across-the-board tariffs on the majority of countries around the world. These tariffs range anywhere from 10% up to nearly 50%, depending on the existing trade deficit between the US and a given country. As of right now, Canada and Mexico are not included in these, although existing auto and steel tariffs (and others) do remain in place for those countries. As of writing, the major question mark is what the responses will be from other nations. China announced on Friday that they will be implementing a flat 34% tariff on US products in the coming days, while other countries and the European Union are still weighing their responses.

AFBF President Zippy Duvall issued a press release urging the administration to work towards a swift resolution, warning that tariffs threaten the economic sustainability of the agricultural industry. While targeted tariffs can certainly protect specific American commodities, across-the-board tariffs are rarely utilized in this fashion, and there are questions about the levels at which the administration chose to tariff other countries. While some countries' leaders have announced they will be working with the White House to reduce any existing trade deficit, the vast nature of the tariffs makes it difficult to ascertain the direct impacts until retaliatory measures are implemented. California exported over $23 billion in agricultural products in 2023, with international markets being a critical component for many growers around the state. While exports vary by commodity, tree nuts, dairy products, and wine account for a significant portion of them. CAFB is actively working this issue and will continue to provide updates. Staff Contact: Matthew Viohl, mviohl@cfbf.com

CAFB Supports Federal Bill to Delist the Gray Wolf

Last week, CAFB joined with the American Farm Bureau Federation and several other state farm bureaus in a letter of support for H.R. 845, the Pet and Livestock Protection Act. The legislation would delist the gray wolf as an endangered species, highlighting that its population has rebounded significantly in recent years. Its listing under the Endangered Species Act adds a number of regulatory restrictions on entities within and adjacent to their habitats, which have continued to grow as well. Predation has become a significant challenge for those dealing with these issues, and the delisting would offer better protections for those looking to limit their presence as their habitats expand. Staff Contact: Matthew Viohl, mviohl@cfbf.com

CAFB Joins Coalition Letter in Support of USDA's Wildlife Services

Late last month, CAFB joined with hundreds of other organizations in support of the USDA's Wildlife Services program through a letter to key Congressional leaders. Housed under the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), the program works to prevent, minimize, and manage the billions in wildlife damage to both public and private entities each year. Their reach includes all fifty states and three US territories, helping reduce the impacts of predators, working on responses to emerging animal diseases, carrying out tens of thousands of technical assistance projects, and a number of other public-private partnerships. With several agencies looking to cut and reduce their bureaucratic footprint, the letter emphasizes the importance of this program's mission. Staff Contact: Erin Huston, ehuston@cfbf.com

USDA Announces Deadlines for Trade Promotion Programs

Last week, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced several application opportunities for the Market Access Program (MAP), Foreign Market Development Program (FMD), Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Program (TASC), and the Emerging Markets Program (EMP). The application deadline for all four programs is June 6th. All four combine to offer millions in international opportunities for domestic producers—or to assist as producers seek new markets. This includes overseas marketing and other promotional activities, as well as technical assistance. Members are encouraged to review these programs, as several have been oversubscribed due to their popularity in recent years. Staff Contact: Matthew Viohl, mviohl@cfbf.com

Update on the Corporate Transparency Act

Last month, the administration announced that they would be taking steps to eliminate enforcement on the Corporate Transparency Act. While that will still need to go through a formal rulemaking process, we are able to say with more confidence now that domestic employers no longer need to comply with their Beneficial Ownership Information obligations. The CTA originally was going to require over 30 million businesses to submit information to the US Treasury Department, but ongoing legal battles reversed this obligation several times over. You can find more information on the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network's portal. Staff Contact: Matthew Viohl, mviohl@cfbf.com