

## STAFF SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER 9-10, 2019

**9. WILDLIFE AND INLAND FISHERIES PETITIONS FOR REGULATION CHANGE****Today's Item**Information Action 

This is a standing agenda item for FGC to act on regulation petitions from the public that are related to wildlife and inland fisheries issues. For this meeting:

- (A) Action on petitions for regulation change received at the Aug 2019 meeting
- (B) Pending regulation petitions referred to FGC staff and DFW for review – *none scheduled*

**Summary of Previous/Future Actions**

(A)

- Receive petitions
- **Today's actions on petitions**

Aug 7-8, 2019; Sacramento  
**Oct 9-10, 2019; Valley Center**

(B)

N/A

**Background**

Pursuant to Section 662, any request for FGC to adopt, amend, or repeal a regulation must be submitted on form FGC 1, "Petition to the California Fish and Game Commission for Regulation Change" (Section 662, Title 14). Petitions received at an FGC meeting are scheduled for consideration at the next business meeting under (A), unless the petition is rejected under 10-day staff review as prescribed in subsection 662(b). A petition may be (1) denied, (2) granted, or (3) referred to committee, staff or DFW for further evaluation or information-gathering. Referred petitions are scheduled for action under (B) once the evaluation is completed and a recommendation made.

**(A) *Petitions for regulation change***

Four petitions received at the Aug meeting are scheduled for action:

- I. *Petition #2019-013: Authorize falconers and raptor propagators to receive non-releasable raptors from rehabilitation facilities (Exhibit A2)*
- II. *Petition #2019-016 AM 1: Authorize spring bear hunting (Exhibit A3)*
- III. *Petition #2019-017 AM 1: Establish an open archery season for bear and deer hunting in Marble Mountain and Trinity Alps wilderness areas (Exhibit A4)*
- IV. *Petition #2019-018: Exempt ferrets from the list of restricted species (Exhibit A5)*

Staff recommendations and rationales are provided in Exhibit A1. See Exhibit A6 for background on the staff recommendation for Petition #2019-018.

**(B) *Pending regulation petitions.*** This is an opportunity for staff to provide a recommendation on petitions previously referred by FGC to staff, DFW, or a committee for review.

No pending regulation petitions are scheduled for action at this meeting.

## STAFF SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER 9-10, 2019

**Significant Public Comments**

1. One comment on Petition #2019-016 (spring bear hunting) was received, in support of a spring bear hunt as proposed in the petition (Exhibit A7).
2. Several comments on Petition #2019-018 (ferrets) were received with the following perspectives:
  - a. The executive director of United California Ferret Alliance states that Petition #2019-018 comes from a separate, independent organization. She recounts her organization's efforts to pursue legislation to legalize ferrets as pets (Exhibit A8).
  - b. Several ferret organizations and individual commenters in support of the petition state that ferrets are domesticated and provide substantiating information, links to websites, and journal articles in support of that view (exhibits A9-A14); dispute that ferrets cause environmental damage (Exhibit A15); and urge FGC to base its decisions on sound science (Exhibit A16).
  - c. Commenters sent 199 additional emails in support of the petition, stating that domestic ferrets are not wild animals (see Exhibit A17 for a sample email).

**Recommendation**

(A) **FGC staff:** Adopt staff recommendations as reflected in Exhibit A1.

**Exhibits**

- A1. [Table of petitions and staff recommendations received at Aug 2019 FGC meeting, revised Sep 27, 2019](#)
- A2. [Petition #2019- 013](#), received Jun 10, 2019
- A3. [Petition #2019-016 AM 1](#), received Jul 31, 2019
- A4. [Petition #2019-017 AM 1](#), received Jul 31, 2019
- A5. [Petition #2019-018](#), received Jul 10, 2019
- A6. [FGC memo regarding considerations for ferret legalization](#), associated with Petition #2016-008, dated Oct 10, 2016 (provided for background purposes)
- A7. [Email from Gary Ward](#), received Sep 24, 2019
- A8. [Email from Megan Mitchell, United California Ferret Alliance](#), received Jul 11, 2019
- A9. [Email from the World Ferret Union and the World Ferret Information Centre](#), received Sep 16, 2019
- A10. [Email from Karl A. Swartz](#), received Sep 8, 2019
- A11. [Email from Kathleen Dodson](#), received Sep 9, 2019
- A12. [Email from Josh Hall](#), received Sep 6, 2019
- A13. [Email from Donna Ferreira](#), received Sep 23, 2019
- A14. [Email from Mishele Barker](#), received Sep 25, 2019
- A15. [Email from Monica Hail](#), received Sep 17, 2019
- A16. [Email from Rene Gandolfi](#), received Sep 23, 2019
- A17. [Sample email, from Juliana Lenny](#), received Sep 8, 2019

STAFF SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER 9-10, 2019

**Motion/Direction**

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ that the Commission adopts the staff recommendations as reflected in Exhibit A1.

**OR**

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ that the Commission adopts the staff recommendations as reflected in Exhibit A1, except for Petition # \_\_\_\_\_ for which the action is \_\_\_\_\_.

**CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME COMMISSION PETITIONS FOR REGULATION CHANGE - ACTION**

Revised 9/27/2019

FGC - California Fish and Game Commission DFW - California Department of Fish and Wildlife WRC - Wildlife Resources Committee MRC - Marine Resources Committee

Grant: FGC is willing to consider the petitioned action through a process Deny: FGC is not willing to consider the petitioned action Refer: FGC needs more information before deciding whether to grant or deny

General Petition Information					FGC Action			Additional Information
Tracking No.	Date Received	Name of Petitioner	Subject of Request	Short Description	FGC Receipt Scheduled	FGC Action Scheduled	Staff Recommendation	Marine or Wildlife?
2019-013	6/10/2019	Douglas R. Alton	Allow falcons and raptor propagators to receive non-releasable raptors	Add licensed falcons and federally permitted raptor propagators to the list of legal recipients for non-releasable raptors from licensed rehabilitation facilities.	8/7-8/2019	10/9-10/2019	DENY: This petition is substantively the same as petition #2016-14, which was referred to DFW and is still under consideration.	Wildlife
2019-016 AM 1	7/31/2019	Preston Taylor	Establish spring bear hunting	Institute a spring bear hunting season, which could be limited to wilderness areas or zones with high bear densities.	8/7-8/2019	10/9-10/2019	DENY: Management complexities would lead to enforcement problems and public confusion. There is also a risk of harming sows with cubs during that season, resulting in orphaned cubs.	Wildlife
2019-017 AM 1	7/31/2019	Preston Taylor	Open an archery season for take of bear and deer in Marble Mountain and Trinity Alps	Institute a traditional archery equipment season for deer and bear in the Marble Mountain Wilderness Area and Trinity Alps Wilderness Area.	8/7-8/2019	10/9-10/2019	DENY: This would require redistribution of permits from existing season, and traditional archery gear is already authorized during regular season.	Wildlife
2019-018	7/10/2019	Pat Wright	Exempt ferrets from list of restricted species	Add domestic ferrets under family Mustelidae as an exception to the list of restricted species.	8/7-8/2019	10/9-10/2019	DENY: This item was the subject of petition 2016-008, denied by FGC in Oct 2016. The rationale for that denial is the same here. A copy of the previous memo is provided as Exhibit A6.	Wildlife

To request a change to regulations under the authority of the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission), you are required to submit this completed form to: California Fish and Game Commission, 1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1320, Sacramento, CA 95814 or via email to [FGC@fgc.ca.gov](mailto:FGC@fgc.ca.gov). Note: This form is not intended for listing petitions for threatened or endangered species (see Section 670.1 of Title 14).

Incomplete forms will not be accepted. A petition is incomplete if it is not submitted on this form or fails to contain necessary information in each of the required categories listed on this form (Section I). A petition will be rejected if it does not pertain to issues under the Commission's authority. A petition may be denied if any petition requesting a functionally equivalent regulation change was considered within the previous 12 months and no information or data is being submitted beyond what was previously submitted. If you need help with this form, please contact Commission staff at (916) 6534899 or [FGC@fgc.ca.gov](mailto:FGC@fgc.ca.gov).

#### SECTION I: Required Information.

Please be succinct Responses for Section I should not exceed five pages

##### 1. Person or organization requesting the change (Required)

Name of primary contact person: Douglas R Alton

Address: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Telephone number: [REDACTED]

Email address: [REDACTED]

2. Rulemaking Authority (Required) - Reference to the statutory or constitutional authority of the Commission to take the action requested: Fish and Game Code Section 200
3. Overview (Required) - Summarize the proposed changes to regulations: Add licensed falconers and federally permitted raptor propagators to the list of legal recipients for non-releasable raptors from licensed rehabilitation facilities.
4. Rationale (Required) - Describe the problem and the reason for the proposed change: Non-releasable raptors are often euthanized if not placed, which is a waste of a public resource. Non-releasable raptors will be given a second chance at life with a licensed falconer or federally permitted raptor propagator.

## SECTION II: Optional Information

5. Date of Petition: 06/10/19

6. **Ca** Category of Proposed Change
- Sport Fishing
  - C] Commercial Fishing
  - Hunting
  - Other, please specify: Falconry / Rehab. .

Coo State of California — Fish and Game Commission

PETITION TO THE CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME COMMISSION FOR REGULATION CHANGE

FCC 1 (NEW 06/10/19) Page 2 of 2

7. The proposal is to: (To determine section number(s), see current year regulation booklet or <https://govt.west/aw.com/calreas>)  
Amend Title 14 Section(s):679.(f) (4) Possession of Wildlife and Wildlife Rehabilitation  
Add New Title 14 Section(s): Click here to enter text.  
Repeal Title 14 Section(s): Click here to enter text.
8. If the proposal is related to a previously submitted petition that was rejected, specify the tracking number of the previously submitted petition Click here to enter text. Or Not applicable.
9. Effective date: If applicable, identify the desired effective date of the regulation. If the proposed change requires immediate implementation, explain the nature of the emergency: Within reason 01/01/2020
10. Supporting documentation: Identify and attach to the petition any information supporting the proposal including data, reports and other documents: Click here to enter text.
11. Economic or Fiscal Impacts: Identify any known impacts of the proposed regulation change on revenues to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, individuals, businesses, jobs, other state agencies, local agencies, schools, or housing: None
12. Forms: If applicable, list any forms to be created, amended or repealed:  
Click here to enter text.

## SECTION 3: FCC Staff only

Date received: [Received by email on Monday, June 10, 2019 at 9:01 AM.](#)

FGC staff action:

- Accept - complete
- Reject - incomplete
- Reject - outside scope of FGC authority
- Denied by FGC
- Denied - same as petition
  
- Granted for consideration of regulation change

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**From:** FGC  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 31, 2019 9:19 AM  
**To:** Kinchak, Sergey@FGC; Cornman, Ari@FGC  
**Subject:** Fw: Traditional Archery (2019-17) and Spring Bear Hunting (2019-16) Seasons Petitions  
**Attachments:** Spring bear hunting petition..docx; Traditional Archery equipment season petition.docx

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**From:** Preston Taylor [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 31, 2019 09:11 AM  
**To:** FGC <FGC@fgc.ca.gov>  
**Subject:** Traditional Archery (2019-17) and Spring Bear Hunting (2019-16) Seasons Petitions

Hello FGC,

I would like to submit an amendment with new authority codes to my two petitions: Traditional Archery Season 2019-17 and Spring Bear Hunting 2019-16 (both are attached). Also, I'd like to request a waiver of the 10-day response period please.

Let me know if you need any more information, and thank you for taking the time to review my requests. I look forward to speaking with you about these petitions.

Preston Taylor



Tracking Number: (2019-16 AM 1)

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Incomplete forms will not be accepted. A petition is incomplete if it is not submitted on this form or fails to contain necessary information in each of the required categories listed on this form (Section I). A petition will be rejected if it does not pertain to issues under the Commission's authority. A petition may be denied if any petition requesting a functionally equivalent regulation change was considered within the previous 12 months and no information or data is being submitted beyond what was previously submitted. If you need help with this form, please contact Commission staff at (916) 653-4899 or FGC@fgc.ca.gov.

### **SECTION I: Required Information.**

*Please be succinct. Responses for Section I should not exceed five pages*

**1. Person or organization requesting the change (Required)**

Name of primary contact person: Preston Taylor

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address: [REDACTED]

**2. Rulemaking Authority (Required)** - Reference to the statutory or constitutional authority of the Commission to take the action requested: CCR T14-365 (bear). Authority cited: Sections 86, 200, 202 and 203, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 200, 202, 203, 203.1 and 207, Fish and Game Code.

**3. Overview (Required)** - Summarize the proposed changes to regulations: Institute a spring bear hunting season. It could be limited to existing Wilderness Areas, or zones with high bear densities.

**4. Rationale (Required)** - Describe the problem and the reason for the proposed change: Hunting is a healthy and productive activity, which contrasts this age of electronics and sedentary lifestyles. Bear hunting provides great meat, lard, and hides. Spring bear hunting would provide a new outdoor recreational opportunity for California hunters. Lots of hunters travel out of this state to hunt bears elsewhere in the west in the spring.

### **SECTION II: Optional Information**

**5. Date of Petition:** July 10, 2019

**6. Category of Proposed Change**

Sport Fishing

Commercial Fishing



- Hunting
- Other, please specify: spring bear hunting

**7. The proposal is to:** *(To determine section number(s), see current year regulation booklet or <https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs>)*

- Amend Title 14 Section(s): 365 bear hunting
- Add New Title 14 Section(s):
- Repeal Title 14 Section(s):

**8. If the proposal is related to a previously submitted petition that was rejected, specify the tracking number of the previously submitted petition** Not applicable.

Or  Not applicable.

**9. Effective date:** If applicable, identify the desired effective date of the regulation. If the proposed change requires immediate implementation, explain the nature of the emergency:

**10. Supporting documentation:** Identify and attach to the petition any information supporting the proposal including data, reports and other documents:

**11. Economic or Fiscal Impacts:** Identify any known impacts of the proposed regulation change on revenues to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, individuals, businesses, jobs, other state agencies, local agencies, schools, or housing: Increased bear tag sales. Increased economic impact in the spring time.

**12. Forms:** If applicable, list any forms to be created, amended or repealed:

**SECTION 3: FGC Staff Only**

Date received: [Received by email on Wednesday, July 31, 2019 at 9:19 AM](#)

FGC staff action:

- Accept - complete
- Reject - incomplete
- Reject - outside scope of FGC authority

Tracking Number 2019-16 AM 1

Date petitioner was notified of receipt of petition and pending action: August 1, 2019

Meeting date for FGC consideration: October 9-10, 2019

FGC action:

- Denied by FGC
- Denied - same as petition \_\_\_\_\_  
Tracking Number
- Granted for consideration of regulation change

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**From:** FGC  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 31, 2019 9:19 AM  
**To:** Kinchak, Sergey@FGC; Cornman, Ari@FGC  
**Subject:** Fw: Traditional Archery (2019-17) and Spring Bear Hunting (2019-16) Seasons Petitions  
**Attachments:** Spring bear hunting petition..docx; Traditional Archery equipment season petition.docx

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**From:** Preston Taylor [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 31, 2019 09:11 AM  
**To:** FGC <FGC@fgc.ca.gov>  
**Subject:** Traditional Archery (2019-17) and Spring Bear Hunting (2019-16) Seasons Petitions

Hello FGC,

I would like to submit an amendment with new authority codes to my two petitions: Traditional Archery Season 2019-17 and Spring Bear Hunting 2019-16 (both are attached). Also, I'd like to request a waiver of the 10-day response period please.

Let me know if you need any more information, and thank you for taking the time to review my requests. I look forward to speaking with you about these petitions.

Preston Taylor



Tracking Number: (2019-17 AM 1)

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### **SECTION I: Required Information.**

*Please be succinct. Responses for Section I should not exceed five pages*

**1. Person or organization requesting the change (Required)**

Name of primary contact person: Preston Taylor

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address:

**2. Rulemaking Authority (Required)** - Reference to the statutory or constitutional authority of the Commission to take the action requested: CCR T14-354 (archery equipment regulations); CCR T14-361 (archery deer hunting); CCR T14-366 (archery bear hunting). Authority cited: Sections 200, 203, 240 and 265, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 200, 203, 203.1, 265, 2005 and 4370, Fish and Game Code; Authority cited: Sections 200, 203, 265 and 4370, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 200, 203, 203.1, 255, 265 and 4370, Fish and Game Code.; Authority cited: Sections 200, 202 and 203, Fish and Game Code. Reference: Sections 200, 202, 203, 203.1 and 207, Fish and Game Code.

**3. Overview (Required)** - Summarize the proposed changes to regulations: Institute a Traditional Archery equipment season for deer and bear in the Marble Mountain Wilderness and Trinity Alps Wilderness. Traditional Archery equipment includes: selfbows (bows carved from trees), laminated longbows and recurves, and wood arrows. Proposed dates for the season, either: 1) Two weeks prior to the start of the regular archery season in the B-zones, or; 2) Two weeks after the close of the general B-zone season.

**4. Rationale (Required)** - Describe the problem and the reason for the proposed change: The archery season was originally intended to provide hunters with a time for greater challenge and to hunt with less people in the woods. The advent of modern archery gear has made the learning curve much faster, thus the woods during the "primitive" weapons season is getting more crowded. The origins of sport-archery hunting is rooted right here in northern California: Ishi, Dr. Saxton Pope, and Art Young proved that hunting with homemade archery tackle was effective on all North American big game, and started an awakening in the world of archery, which eventually spread to Howard Hill and Fred Bear and



led to the creation of a primitive weapons hunt: the Archery Only season. Those of us who craft selfbows and wood arrows, who hunt with longbows and recurves, and who spend countless days in the field trying to get within 10 yards of a wary buck, we find ourselves overwhelmed and overpowered by the modern archery industry. The romance and difficulty of bow-hunting has become watered down thanks to rangefinders, GPS sights, Bluetooth arrow nocks, etc. I propose the Traditional Archery season be limited to two wilderness areas: the Marble Mountains and Trinity Alps Wilderness. These are already considered primitive areas; therefore, hunting with traditional tackle fits well with the intentions of the Wilderness Act. Hunting with Traditional Archery tackle is no less ethical than other hunting methods. I have killed a number of big game animals with my longbow and watched them die in less than 5 seconds, which is quicker than some rifle killed animals. The new season could be held prior to the current archery season or after the close of the general season in the B-zones.

## **SECTION II: Optional Information**

5. **Date of Petition:** July 10, 2019
6. **Category of Proposed Change**
  - Sport Fishing
  - Commercial Fishing
  - Hunting
  - Other, please specify: Archery hunting
7. **The proposal is to:** *(To determine section number(s), see current year regulation booklet or <https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs>)*
  - Amend Title 14 Section(s):
  - Add New Title 14 Section(s): 354, 361, 366. Create a new Traditional Archery equipment season.
  - Repeal Title 14 Section(s):
8. **If the proposal is related to a previously submitted petition that was rejected, specify the tracking number of the previously submitted petition** Not applicable.  
Or  Not applicable.
9. **Effective date:** If applicable, identify the desired effective date of the regulation.  
If the proposed change requires immediate implementation, explain the nature of the emergency:
10. **Supporting documentation:** Identify and attach to the petition any information supporting the proposal including data, reports and other documents: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has instituted 2 Traditional Archery equipment seasons, and is considering more opportunities.
11. **Economic or Fiscal Impacts:** Identify any known impacts of the proposed regulation change on revenues to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, individuals, businesses, jobs, other state agencies, local agencies, schools, or housing: There has been a resurgence of interest in traditional archery since the advent of movies with archers in them. The new traditional equipment



season could attract new hunters, which could raise license sales. A longer season will result in economic growth for small towns and businesses around the hunting unit.

**12. Forms:** If applicable, list any forms to be created, amended or repealed:

**SECTION 3: FGC Staff Only**

Date received: [Received by email on Wednesday, July 31, 2019 at 9:19 AM](#)

FGC staff action:

- Accept - complete
- Reject - incomplete
- Reject - outside scope of FGC authority

Tracking Number 2019-017 AM 1

Date petitioner was notified of receipt of petition and pending action: August 1, 2019

Meeting date for FGC consideration: October 9-10, 2019

FGC action:

- Denied by FGC
- Denied - same as petition \_\_\_\_\_  
Tracking Number
- Granted for consideration of regulation change



Tracking Number: (2019-018)

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Incomplete forms will not be accepted. A petition is incomplete if it is not submitted on this form or fails to contain necessary information in each of the required categories listed on this form (Section I). A petition will be rejected if it does not pertain to issues under the Commission's authority. A petition may be denied if any petition requesting a functionally equivalent regulation change was considered within the previous 12 months and no information or data is being submitted beyond what was previously submitted. If you need help with this form, please contact Commission staff at (916) 653-4899 or FGC@fgc.ca.gov.

### **SECTION I: Required Information.**

*Please be succinct. Responses for Section I should not exceed five pages*

**1. Person or organization requesting the change (Required)**

Name of primary contact person: Pat Wright

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone number: [REDACTED]

Email address: [REDACTED]

**2. Rulemaking Authority (Required)** - Reference to the statutory or constitutional authority of the Commission to take the action requested: **2118**. It is unlawful to import, transport, possess, or release alive into this state, except under a revocable, nontransferable permit as provided in this chapter and the regulations pertaining thereto, **any wild animal** of the following species: Mammals of the orders Primates, Edentata, Dermoptera, Monotremata, Pholidota, Tubulidentata, Proboscidea, Perissodactyla, Hyracoidea, Sirenia and Carnivora are restricted for the welfare of the animals, except animals of the families Viverridae and **Mustelidae** in the order Carnivora are restricted because such animals are undesirable and a menace to native wildlife, the agricultural interests of the state, or to the public health or safety.

**3. Overview (Required)** - Summarize the proposed changes to regulations: Domestic ferrets do not belong on a list of **Wild Animals**. It is 100% inaccurate and makes any chance at legislation unlikely.

**4. Rationale (Required)** - Describe the problem and the reason for the proposed change: Ferrets are domestic. Other organizations and elected officials are using this classification: that the California Fish and Game Commission (The "Experts") classify domestic ferrets as wild animals as their justification to support a continued ban on a domestic animals. The Fish and Game Commission is using objections by "environmentalists" as a reason not to act on reclassification, but the Sierra Club is using Fish and Game's classification of domestic ferrets as being wild to continue their opposition to ferret legalization.



## SECTION II: Optional Information

5. **Date of Petition: July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019**
6. **Category of Proposed Change**
- Sport Fishing
  - Commercial Fishing
  - Hunting
  - Other, please specify: non marine animals
7. **The proposal is to:** (*To determine section number(s), see current year regulation booklet or <https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs>*)
- Amend Title 14 Section(s):
  - Add New Title 14 Section(s):
  - Repeal Title 14 Section(s):
8. **If the proposal is related to a previously submitted petition that was rejected, specify the tracking number of the previously submitted petition 2016-008**  
Or  Not applicable.
9. **Effective date:** If applicable, identify the desired effective date of the regulation.  
If the proposed change requires immediate implementation, explain the nature of the emergency:
10. **Supporting documentation:** Identify and attach to the petition any information supporting the proposal including data, reports and other documents: Attached with this email are articles from Wikipedia, PETA and ADW all claiming domestic ferrets are domestic animals.
11. **Economic or Fiscal Impacts:** Identify any known impacts of the proposed regulation change on revenues to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, individuals, businesses, jobs, other state agencies, local agencies, schools, or housing: Charge a fee necessary to cover the cost of issuing permits.
12. **Forms:** If applicable, list any forms to be created, amended or repealed:

## SECTION 3: FGC Staff Only

Date received: [Received by email on Wednesday, July 10, 2019 at 9:58 AM.](#)

FGC staff action:

- Accept - complete
- Reject - incomplete
- Reject - outside scope of FGC authority

Tracking Number 2019-018



Date petitioner was notified of receipt of petition and pending action: August 6, 2019

Meeting date for FGC consideration: October 9-10, 2019

FGC action:

- Denied by FGC
- Denied - same as petition \_\_\_\_\_  
Tracking Number
- Granted for consideration of regulation change

**Kinchak, Sergey@FGC**

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**From:** FGC  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 10, 2019 9:58 AM  
**To:** Cornman, Ari@FGC  
**Cc:** Kinchak, Sergey@FGC  
**Subject:** Fw: Petition for Regulation Change  
**Attachments:** 07-10-9 Petition asking DFG to issue permits.docx; 071019-ADW\_ Mustela putorius furo\_ INFORMATION.pdf; 071019-Wikipedia.pdf; 071019-Facts on Ferrets \_ PETA.pdf

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 10, 2019 08:28 AM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Petition for Regulation Change

LegalizeFerrets.org  
PO Box 1480  
La Mesa, CA 91944  
619-303-0645 [REDACTED]  
California Fish and Game Commission  
P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

July 10, 2019  
Re: Petition To The California Fish and Game Commission for Regulation Change

Dear Fish and Game Mangers,

Please consider this supporting letter to the also attached petition.

We are asking you to not refer to domestic ferrets as wild animals.

When we previously asked the commission to remove ferrets from the list of prohibited wildlife I was told by Mr. Sklar that it was more complicated than I realized. That "environmentalists" would sue the Commission if they acted upon it. He advised me to get the support of a legislator because legislation is not subject to CEQA.

We have tried on many fronts to gain the support of a legislator. Support for ferret legalization is hampered by opposition from the Sierra Club among other groups. Here is one comment:

*"Sierra Club has long opposed holding wild animals as pets, but particularly when those animals could present a problem if they accidentally or intentionally are introduced into the state's natural areas. There are many, many examples of exotic critters that have become problems in California after being introduced into the wild. One that I am very familiar with is the bull frog, which has helped push out other amphibian species in certain habitats since its introduction in the 19th century."*

Kathryn Phillips kathryn.phillips@sierraclub.org

We are asking the Sierra Club to reevaluate their position, but they have not yet responded to us. However, an out of state member received this response:

*I have checked with the chairman of the Sierra Club California conservation committee and he reports that our position is to follow the lead of the California Fish and Wildlife Department, which is concerned that if pet ferrets were to escape, they would threaten native wildlife. The Sierra Club position is to support the state wildlife professionals. If the agency changes its position and finds that ferrets pose no threat the Sierra Club will consider changing its position at that time. I'm very sorry that you feel you must resign your membership over this issue when there is so much else we agree upon.*

*Bruce Hamilton <bruce.hamilton@sierraclub.org>*

We thus have a circular reference. You, the Fish and Game Commission, have told us you won't move on ferrets for fear of being sued by "the environmentalists." The Sierra Club, the nation's premier environmental organization, will not move on the issue until the California Fish and Game Commission alters the classification of domestic ferrets as wild animals.

This isn't fair to us, ferret enthusiasts. There are no studies or reports that show the domestic ferret as wild. The domestication process is quite objective – by every measure ferrets are domestic.

We are chipping away at this slowly. This is a request for your agency to quit referring to domestic ferrets as wild animals which will help us find a legislative sponsor.

Sincerely,

Pat Wright

Received by email on Wednesday, July 10, 2019 at 9:58 AM as attachment 1 to petition 2019-018

# Animal Diversity Web

[University of Michigan Museum of Zoology.](#)

## *Mustela putorius furo* domestic ferret

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By Jessica Duda

Geographic Range	Communication and Perception	Conservation Status
Habitat	Food Habits	Other Comments
Physical Description	Predation	Contributors
Reproduction	Ecosystem Roles	References
Lifespan/Longevity	Economic Importance for Humans: Positive	
Behavior	Economic Importance for Humans: Negative	

### Geographic Range

Currently almost no progress has been made in determining the center of the domestication of ferrets. It is thought that ferrets may have been domesticated from native European polecats (*Mustela putorius*). There is evidence of domestic ferrets in Europe over 2500 years ago. Currently domestic ferrets are found around the world in homes as pets. In Europe, people sometimes use ferrets for hunting, which is known as ferreting. (Davidson 1999, Schilling 2000)

**Biogeographic Regions:** [nearctic \( introduced \)](#) ; [palearctic \( native \)](#) ; [oriental \( introduced \)](#) ; [ethiopian \( introduced \)](#) ; [neotropical \( introduced \)](#) ; [australian \( introduced \)](#)

### Habitat

The native habitat of domestic ferrets were forested and semi-forested habitats near water sources. Domestic ferrets are kept as pets or as working animals in human habitations.

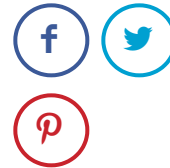
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### Classification

Kingdom  
Animalia  
animals

Phylum

**Other Habitat Features:** urban ; suburban ; agricultural

## Physical Description

Domestic ferrets reach their adult size at one year old. A typical female domestic ferret weighs from 0.3 to 1.1 kg. Domestic ferrets exhibit sexual dimorphism. Male domestic ferrets can weigh from 0.9 to 2.7 kg, neutered males often weigh less than unaltered males. Domestic ferrets have a long and slender body. Females are typically 33 to 35.5 cm long and males are 38 to 40.6 cm long. Average tail length is 7.6 to 10 cm. Domestic ferrets have large canine teeth and 34 teeth total. Each paw has a set of five, non-retractable claws.

Domestic ferrets have been bred for a large variety of fur colors and patterns. The seven common fur colors are called: sable, silver, black sable, albino, dark-eyed white, cinnamon, and chocolate. The most common of these colors is sable. Examples of pattern types are: Siamese or pointed patterned, panda, Shetlands, badgers, and blazes.

Aside from selection towards particular fur colors, domestic ferrets closely resemble their wild ancestors, European polecats (*Mustela putorius*).

(Schilling 2000)

**Other Physical Features:** endothermic ; homoiothermic ; bilateral symmetry

**Sexual Dimorphism:** male larger

### Range mass

0.3 to 2.7 kg  
0.66 to 5.95 lb

### Range length

33.0 to 40.6 cm  
12.99 to 15.98 in

## Reproduction

Male domestic ferrets will mate with as many females as they have access to.

**Mating System:** polygynous

Male ferrets have a hooked penis. After penetration of the female, they can't be separated until the male releases. Males will also bite the back of the female's neck while mating. Domestic

Chordata  
chordates

Subphylum  
Vertebrata  
vertebrates

Class  
Mammalia  
mammals

Order  
Carnivora  
carnivores

Family  
Mustelidae  
badgers, otters,  
weasels, and  
relatives

Genus  
Mustela  
ermine, ferrets,  
minks, and  
weasels

Species  
*Mustela putorius*  
European polecat

Subspecies  
***Mustela putorius furo***  
domestic ferret

ferrets have a seasonal polyestrous cycle. Male domestic ferrets go into rut between December and July. Females go into heat between March and August. Males are ready to breed when they develop a discolored, yellowish undercoat. An increase in the oil production of the skin glands is what causes the discolored undercoat.

A female in estrous is identifiable by a swollen pink vulva due to an increase in estrogen. Females can go into lactational estrous on some occasions. Lactational estrus occurs if the litter size is less than 5 kits. Lactational estrus is when the female will go back into estrous while lactating the litter that she just had. Healthy domestic ferrets can have up to three successful litters per year, and up to 15 kits. Gestation length is about 42 days. Young domestic ferrets are altricial at birth, and need about 8 weeks of parental care. Kits are born deaf and have their eyes closed. Newborns typically weigh about 6 to 12 grams. Baby incisors appear about 10 days after birth. The kits eyes and ears open when they are 5 weeks old. Weaning of the kits is done while they are 3-6 weeks old. At 8 weeks, kits have 4 permanent canine teeth and are capable of eating hard food. This is often the time that breeders let the kits go to new owners. Female kits will then reach sexual maturity at 6 months old. (Kaytee 2001, Schilling 2000)

**Key Reproductive Features:** iteroparous ; seasonal breeding ; gonochoric/gonochoristic/dioecious (sexes separate) ; sexual ; fertilization ( internal ) ; viviparous

<b>Breeding season</b>	<b>Range number of offspring</b>	<b>Average gestation period</b>
Breeding occurs between March and August.	15 (high)	42 days

<b>Range weaning age</b>	<b>Average age at sexual or reproductive maturity (female)</b>	<b>Average age at sexual or reproductive maturity (male)</b>
3 to 6 weeks	6 months	6 months

Young domestic ferrets are cared for by their mothers until they are about 8 weeks of age.

⋮ **Parental Investment:** altricial ; female parental care

## Lifespan/Longevity

Domestic ferrets will not survive long in the wild. As pets, they can live from 6-10 years. There are a few diseases and disorders that can shorten the life of domestic ferrets if not treated. Some of these diseases and disorders include: canine distemper, feline distemper, rabies, parasites, bone marrow suppression, insulinoma, adrenal gland disease, diarrhea, colds, flus, ringworm, heat stroke, urinary stones, and cardiomyopathy. (Kaytee 2001, MNAALAS date unknown, Schilling 2001)

### Typical lifespan

**Status:** captivity

6 to 10 years

## Behavior

A healthy domestic ferret will often sleep 18-20 hours per day. Domestic ferrets are naturally crepuscular, having activity periods during dawn and dusk. They will often change this activity period depending on when their owner is around to give them attention. Domestic ferrets are playful and fastidious. They will often interact with other pet ferrets, cats, and dogs in a friendly manner. Domestic ferrets will seek attention. They are naturally inquisitive and will tunnel into or under anything. They can be taught tricks and will respond to discipline. Domestic ferrets have an instinct to habitually urinate and defecate in the same places, and therefore can be trained to use a litter box.

Domestic ferrets use a variety of body language. Some of these behaviors are dancing, wrestling, and stalking. They will 'dance' when they are happy and excited, hopping in every direction. Wrestling is a behavior that includes two or more ferrets. They will roll around with each other, biting and kicking, usually in a playful manner. Stalking is sneaking up on a toy or other animal in a low crouched position. (MNAALAS date unknown, Schilling 2000)

⋮ **Key Behaviors:** crepuscular ; motile ; sedentary ; social

## Communication and Perception

Domestic ferrets have many forms of verbal communication. They will ‘dock’ or ‘cluck’ as sounds of giddiness or excitement. They will ‘screech’ as a sign of terror, pain, or anger. They will ‘bark’ if they are very excited. Finally, a domestic ferret will ‘hiss’ if it is annoyed or very angry at another ferret or animal. (Schilling 2000)

**Communication Channels:** visual ; tactile ; acoustic ; chemical

**Other Communication Modes:** scent marks

**Perception Channels:** tactile ; chemical

## Food Habits

Domestic ferrets are natural carnivores, and require a meat-like diet. Food for domestic ferrets should contain taurine and be composed of at least 20% fat and 34% animal protein. Most domestic ferrets are fed manufactured ferret, cat, or dog food. They can also be fed raw meat, but that alone is not sufficient. If they were in the wild, they would get nutrients from eating all parts of an animal, such as the liver, heart, and other organs. Sometimes domestic ferrets are fed supplements (like vitamins) to make up for nutritional requirements that commercial foods don’t meet.

The metabolism of a domestic ferret is very high and food will travel through the digestive tract in 3-5 hours. Therefore, a domestic ferret will need to eat about 10 times each day. Domestic ferrets also have olfactory imprinting. What ever is fed to them for the first 6 months of their life is what they will recognize as food in the future. (Schilling 2000)

**Primary Diet:** carnivore ( eats terrestrial vertebrates )

## Predation

Domestic ferrets don’t have any natural predators since they are domesticated. Predators such as hawks, owls, or larger carnivorous mammals would hunt them given the opportunity. Domestic ferrets on the other hand can be predators to certain animals. They have been known to kill pet birds. Domestic ferrets will also hunt rabbits and other small game when their owners use them for ferreting. There is also record of ferrets being used to control rodent populations on ships during the American revolutionary war. (Schilling 2000)

## Ecosystem Roles

Because domestic ferrets do not inhabit natural ecosystems, they have no ecosystem roles.

### Economic Importance for Humans: Positive

Domestic ferrets are popular pets. There are ferret breeders and ferret farms that raise ferrets for the pet trade, and many pet shops carry ferrets to sell. There are many other products that go along with a pet ferret including ferret food, ferret toys, ferret cages, ferret beds, and other commercial items designed specifically for ferrets. Ferrets have also been used in research. (Schilling, 2000)

Positive Impacts: pet trade ; research and education

### Economic Importance for Humans: Negative

Domestic ferrets, if not properly vaccinated or cared for, can harbor certain diseases that are transmissible to humans. Domestic ferrets have formed feral populations in some parts of the world and can be a serious pest of native birds and other wildlife.

Negative Impacts: injures humans ( carries human disease ) ; causes or carries domestic animal disease

### Conservation Status

Domestic ferrets are not listed on any conservation lists, because their populations are far from low. On the other hand, domestic ferrets have been used in efforts to build the populations of endangered species such as the black-footed ferret. Scientists have recently successfully completed a non-surgical embryo collection and transfer in domestic ferrets. This means that they took the embryo from one female and transferred it to another female with out using surgical procedures. This procedure resulted in live young with the domestic ferrets. This is significant because it can be modified to be used in black-footed ferrets. (Segelken 1996)

#### IUCN Red List

No special status

#### US Migratory Bird

Act

No special status

#### US Federal List

No special status

#### CITES

No special status

## Other Comments

Ferrets were likely domesticated from European polecats (*M. putorius furo*) over 2000 years ago. At this time it is likely that captive and wild ferrets/polecats continued to interbreed. Learn more about the wild relatives of domestic ferrets in our ADW account for *Mustela putorius* at: [http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/accounts/mustela/m.\\_putorius\\$narrative.html](http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/accounts/mustela/m._putorius$narrative.html) .

## Contributors

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## References

## External links

# Etymology

The name "ferret" is derived from the Latin *furittus*, meaning "little thief", a likely reference to the common ferret penchant for secreting away small items.<sup>[4]</sup> The Greek word *ictis* occurs in a play written by Aristophanes, *The Acharnians*, in 425 BC. Whether this was a reference to ferrets, polecats, or the similar Egyptian mongoose is uncertain.<sup>[5]</sup>

A male ferret is called a hob; a female ferret is a jill. A spayed female is a sprite, a neutered male is a gib, and a vasectomised male is known as a hoblet. Ferrets under one year old are known as kits. A group of ferrets is known as a "business",<sup>[6]</sup> or historically as a "busyness". Other purported collective nouns, including "besyness", "fesynes", "fesnyng", and "feamyng", appear in some dictionaries, but are almost certainly ghost words.<sup>[7]</sup>

# Biology

## Characteristics

Ferrets have a typical mustelid body-shape, being long and slender. Their average length is about 50 cm (20 in) including a 13 cm (5.1 in) tail. Their pelage has various colorations including brown, black, white or mixed. They weigh between 0.7 and 2.0 kg (1.5 and 4.4 lb) and are sexually dimorphic as the males are substantially larger than females. The average gestation period is 42 days and females may have two or three litters each year. The litter size is usually between three and seven kits which are weaned after three to six weeks and become independent at three months. They become sexually mature at approximately six months and the average life span is seven to 10 years.<sup>[8][9]</sup> Ferrets are induced ovulators.<sup>[10]</sup>

## Behavior

Ferrets spend 14–18 hours a day asleep and are most active around the hours of dawn and dusk, meaning they are crepuscular.<sup>[11]</sup> Unlike their polecat ancestors, which are solitary animals, most ferrets will live happily in social groups. A group of ferrets is commonly referred to as a "business".<sup>[12]</sup> They are territorial, like to burrow, and prefer to sleep in an enclosed area.<sup>[13]</sup>

Like many other mustelids, ferrets have scent glands near their anus, the secretions from which are used in scent marking. Ferrets can recognize individuals from these anal gland secretions, as well as the sex of unfamiliar individuals.<sup>[14]</sup> Ferrets may also use urine marking for sex and individual recognition.<sup>[15]</sup>

As with skunks, ferrets can release their anal gland secretions when startled or scared, but the smell is much less potent and dissipates rapidly. Most pet ferrets in the US are sold descended (anal glands removed).<sup>[16]</sup> In many other parts of the world, including the UK and other European countries, de-scenting is considered an unnecessary mutilation.



Skull of a ferret



Ferret profile

If excited, they may perform a behavior called the "weasel war dance", characterized by frenzied sideways hops, leaps and bumping into nearby objects. Despite its common name, it is not aggressive but is a joyful invitation to play. It is often accompanied by a unique soft clucking noise, commonly referred to as "dooking".<sup>[17]</sup> When scared, ferrets will hiss; when upset, they squeak softly.<sup>[18]</sup>

## Diet

Ferrets are obligate carnivores.<sup>[19]</sup> The natural diet of their wild ancestors consisted of whole small prey, including meat, organs, bones, skin, feathers, and fur.<sup>[20]</sup> Ferrets have short digestive systems and quick metabolism, so they need to eat frequently. Prepared dry foods consisting almost entirely of meat (including high-grade cat food, although specialized ferret food is increasingly available and preferable)<sup>[21]</sup> provide the most nutritional value and are the most convenient,<sup>[22]</sup> though some ferret owners feed pre-killed or live prey (such as mice and rabbits) to their ferrets to more closely mimic their natural diet.<sup>[23][24]</sup> Ferret digestive tracts lack a cecum and the animal is largely unable to digest plant matter.<sup>[25]</sup> Before much was known about ferret physiology, many breeders and pet stores recommended food like fruit in the ferret diet, but it is now known that such foods are inappropriate, and may in fact have negative ramifications on ferret health. Ferrets imprint on their food at around six months old. This can make introducing new foods to an older ferret a challenge, and even simply changing brands of kibble may meet with resistance from a ferret that has never eaten the food as a kit. It is therefore advisable to expose young ferrets to as many different types and flavors of appropriate food as possible.<sup>[26]</sup>

## Dentition

Ferrets have four types of teeth (the number includes maxillary (upper) and mandibular (lower) teeth) with a dental formula of  $\frac{3.1.4.1}{3.1.4.2}$ :

- Twelve small incisor teeth (only 2–3 mm [ $\frac{3}{32}$ – $\frac{1}{8}$  in] long) located between the canines in the front of the mouth. These are used for grooming.
- Four canines used for killing prey.
- Twelve premolar teeth that the ferret uses to chew food—located at the sides of the mouth, directly behind the canines. The ferret uses these teeth to cut through flesh, using them in a scissors action to cut the meat into digestible chunks.
- Six molars (two on top and four on the bottom) at the far back of the mouth are used to crush food.



Ferret dentition

## Health

Ferrets are known to suffer from several distinct health problems. Among the most common are cancers affecting the adrenal glands, pancreas, and lymphatic system. Viral diseases include canine distemper and influenza. Health problems can occur in unspayed females when not being used for breeding.<sup>[27]</sup> Certain health problems have also been linked to ferrets being neutered before reaching sexual maturity. Certain colors of ferret may also carry a genetic defect known as Waardenburg syndrome. Similar to domestic cats, ferrets can also suffer from hairballs and dental problems. Ferrets will also often chew on and swallow foreign objects which can lead to bowel obstruction.<sup>[28]</sup>



Male ferret

# History of domestication

In common with most domestic animals, the original reason for ferrets being domesticated by human beings is uncertain, but it may have involved hunting. According to phylogenetic studies, the ferret was domesticated from the European polecat (*Mustela putorius*), and likely descends from a North African lineage of the species.<sup>[29]</sup> Analysis of mitochondrial DNA suggests that ferrets were domesticated around 2,500 years ago. It has been claimed that the ancient Egyptians were the first to domesticate ferrets, but as no mummified remains of a ferret have yet been found, nor any hieroglyph of a ferret, and no polecat now occurs wild in the area, that idea seems unlikely.<sup>[30]</sup>

Ferrets were probably used by the Romans for hunting.<sup>[31][32]</sup>

Colonies of feral ferrets have established themselves in areas where there is no competition from similarly sized predators, such as in the Shetland Islands and in remote regions in New Zealand. Where ferrets coexist with polecats, hybridization is common. It has been claimed that New Zealand has the world's largest feral population of ferret-polecat hybrids.<sup>[33]</sup> In 1877, farmers in New Zealand demanded that ferrets be introduced into the country to control the rabbit population, which was also introduced by humans. Five ferrets were imported in 1879, and in 1882–1883, 32 shipments of ferrets were made from London, totaling 1,217 animals. Only 678 landed, and 198 were sent from Melbourne, Australia. On the voyage, the ferrets were mated with the European polecat, creating a number of hybrids that were capable of surviving in the wild. In 1884 and 1886, close to 4,000 ferrets and ferret hybrids, 3,099 weasels and 137 stoats were turned loose.<sup>[34]</sup> Concern was raised that these animals would eventually prey on indigenous wildlife once rabbit populations dropped, and this is exactly what happened to New Zealand's bird species which previously had had no mammalian predators.

## Ferreting

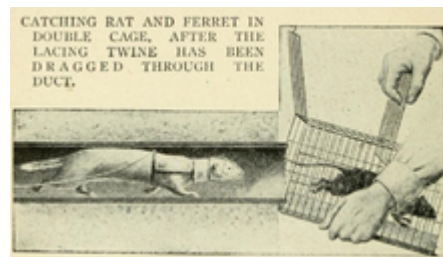
For millennia, the main use of ferrets was for hunting, or *ferreting*. With their long, lean build, and inquisitive nature, ferrets are very well equipped for getting down holes and chasing rodents, rabbits and moles out of their burrows. Caesar Augustus sent ferrets or mongooses (named *viverrae* by Plinius) to the Balearic Islands to control the rabbit plagues in 6 BC.<sup>[35][36]</sup> In England, in 1390, a law was enacted restricting the use of ferrets for hunting to the relatively wealthy:

it is ordained that no manner of layman which hath not lands to the value of forty shillings a year shall from henceforth keep any greyhound or other dog to hunt, nor shall he use ferrets, nets, heys, harepipes nor cords, nor other engines for to take or destroy deer, hares, nor conies, nor other gentlemen's game, under pain of twelve months' imprisonment.<sup>[37]</sup>

Ferrets were first introduced into the New World in the 17th century, and were used extensively from 1860 until the start of World War II to protect grain stores in the American West from rodents. They are still used for hunting in some countries, including the United Kingdom, where rabbits are considered a plague species by farmers.<sup>[38]</sup> The practice is illegal in several countries where it is feared that ferrets could unbalance the ecology. In 2009 in Finland, where ferreting



Women hunting rabbits with a ferret in the Queen Mary Psalter



Muzzled ferret flushing a rat, as illustrated in Harding's *Ferret Facts and Fancies* (1915)

was previously unknown, the city of Helsinki began to use ferrets to restrict the city's rabbit population to a manageable level. Ferreting was chosen because in populated areas it is considered to be safer and less ecologically damaging than shooting the rabbits.

## As pets

In the United States, ferrets were relatively rare pets until the 1980s. A government study by the California State Bird and Mammal Conservation Program estimated that by 1996 about 800,000 domestic ferrets were being kept as pets in the United States.<sup>[39]</sup>

Like many household pets, ferrets require a cage. For ferrets, a wire cage at least 18 inches long and deep and 30 inches wide or longer is needed. Ferrets cannot be housed in environments such as an aquarium because of the poor ventilation.<sup>[40]</sup> It is preferable that the cage have more than one level but this is not crucial. Usually two to three different shelves are used.



A ferret in a war dance jump.

## Regulation

- **Australia:** It is illegal to keep ferrets as pets in **Queensland** or the **Northern Territory**; in the **Australian Capital Territory** a licence is required.
- **Brazil:** They are allowed only if they are given a microchip identification tag and sterilized.
- **New Zealand:** It has been illegal to sell, distribute or breed ferrets in New Zealand since 2002 unless certain conditions are met.<sup>[41]</sup>
- **United States:** Ferrets were once banned in many US states, but most of these laws were rescinded in the 1980s and 1990s as they became popular pets.
  - Ferrets are still illegal in **California** under Fish and Game Code Section 2118;<sup>[42]</sup> and the California Code of Regulations,<sup>[43]</sup> although it is not illegal for veterinarians in the state to treat ferrets kept as pets.
  - Additionally, "Ferrets are strictly prohibited as pets under **Hawaii** law because they are potential carriers of the rabies virus";<sup>[44]</sup> the territory of **Puerto Rico** has a similar law.<sup>[45]</sup>
  - Ferrets are restricted by individual cities, such as **Washington, D.C.**, and **New York City**,<sup>[45]</sup> which renewed its ban in 2015.<sup>[46][47]</sup> They are also prohibited on many military bases.<sup>[45]</sup> A permit to own a ferret is needed in other areas, including Rhode Island.<sup>[48]</sup> Illinois and Georgia do not require a permit to merely possess a ferret, but a permit is required to breed ferrets.<sup>[49][50]</sup> It was once illegal to own ferrets in Dallas, Texas,<sup>[51]</sup> but the current Dallas City Code for Animals includes regulations for the vaccination of ferrets.<sup>[52]</sup> Pet ferrets are legal in Wisconsin, however legality varies by municipality. The city of **Oshkosh**, for example, classifies ferrets as a wild animal and subsequently prohibits them from being kept within the city limits. Also, an import permit from the state department of agriculture is required to bring one into the state.<sup>[53]</sup> Under common law, ferrets are deemed "wild animals" subject to strict liability for injuries they cause, but in several states statutory law has overruled the common law, deeming ferrets "domestic".<sup>[54]</sup>
- **Japan:** In **Hokkaido** prefecture, ferrets must be registered with the local government.<sup>[55]</sup> In other prefectures, no restrictions apply.

## Other uses

Ferrets are an important experimental animal model for human influenza,<sup>[56][57]</sup> and have been used to study the 2009 H1N1 (swine flu) virus.<sup>[58]</sup> Smith, Andrews, Laidlaw (1933) inoculated ferrets intra-nasally with human naso-pharyngeal washes, which produced a form of influenza that spread to other cage mates. The human influenza virus (Influenza type A) was transmitted from an infected ferret to a junior investigator, from whom it was subsequently re-isolated.

- Ferrets have been used in many broad areas of research, such as the study of pathogenesis and treatment in a variety of human disease, these including studies into cardiovascular disease, nutrition, respiratory diseases such as SARS and human influenza, airway physiology,<sup>[59]</sup> cystic fibrosis and gastrointestinal disease.
- Because they share many anatomical and physiological features with humans, ferrets are extensively used as experimental subjects in biomedical research, in fields such as virology, reproductive physiology, anatomy, endocrinology, and neuroscience.<sup>[60]</sup>
- In the UK, ferret racing is often a feature of rural fairs or festivals, with people placing small bets on ferrets that run set routes through pipes and wire mesh. Although financial bets are placed, the event is primarily for entertainment purposes as opposed to 'serious' betting sports such as horse or greyhound racing.<sup>[61][62]</sup>

## Terminology and coloring

Most ferrets are either albinos, with white fur and pink eyes, or display the typical dark masked sable coloration of their wild polecat ancestors. In recent years fancy breeders have produced a wide variety of colors and patterns. Color refers to the color of the ferret's guard hairs, undercoat, eyes, and nose; pattern refers to the concentration and distribution of color on the body, mask, and nose, as well as white markings on the head or feet when present. Some national organizations, such as the American Ferret Association, have attempted to classify these variations in their showing standards.<sup>[63]</sup>

There are four basic colors. The sable (including chocolate and dark brown), albino, dark eyed white (DEW) (also known as black eyed white or BEW), and the silver. All the other colors of a ferret are variations on one of these four categories.

### Waardenburg-like coloring

Ferrets with a white stripe on their face or a fully white head, primarily blazes, badgers, and pandas, almost certainly carry a congenital defect which shares some similarities to Waardenburg syndrome. This causes, among other things, a cranial deformation in the womb which broadens the skull, white face markings, and also partial or total deafness. It is estimated as many as 75 percent of ferrets with these Waardenburg-like colorings are deaf.

White ferrets were favored in the Middle Ages for the ease in seeing them in thick undergrowth. Leonardo da Vinci's painting *Lady with an Ermine* is likely mislabelled; the animal is probably a ferret, not a stoat, (for which "ermine" is an alternative name for the animal in its white winter coat). Similarly, the ermine portrait of Queen Elizabeth the First shows her with her pet ferret, which has been decorated with painted-on heraldic ermine spots.

"The Ferreter's Tapestry" is a 15th-century tapestry from Burgundy, France, now part of the Burrell Collection housed in the Glasgow Museum and Art Galleries. It shows a group of peasants hunting rabbits with nets and white ferrets. This image was reproduced in *Renaissance Dress in Italy 1400–1500*, by Jacqueline Herald, Bell & Hyman.<sup>[a]</sup>

*Gaston Phoebus' Book of the Hunt* was written in approximately 1389 to explain how to hunt different kinds of animals, including how to use ferrets to hunt rabbits. Illustrations show how multicolored ferrets that were fitted with muzzles were used to chase rabbits out of their warrens and into waiting nets.



Typical ferret coloration, known as a sable or polecat-colored ferret



White or albino ferret

# Import restrictions

- **Australia** – Ferrets cannot be imported into Australia. A report drafted in August 2000 seems to be the only effort made to date to change the situation.<sup>[64]</sup>
- **Canada** – Ferrets brought from anywhere except the US require a Permit to Import from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency Animal Health Office. Ferrets from the US require only a vaccination certificate signed by a veterinarian. Ferrets under three months old are not subject to any import restrictions.<sup>[65]</sup>
- **European Union** – As of July 2004, dogs, cats, and ferrets can travel freely within the European Union under the pet passport scheme. To cross a border within the EU, ferrets require at minimum an EU PETS passport and an identification microchip (though some countries will accept a tattoo instead). Vaccinations are required; most countries require a rabies vaccine, and some require a distemper vaccine and treatment for ticks and fleas 24 to 48 hours before entry. Ferrets occasionally need to be quarantined before entering the country. PETS travel information is available from any EU veterinarian or on government websites.
- **United Kingdom** – The UK accepts ferrets under the EU's PETS travel scheme. Ferrets must be microchipped, vaccinated against rabies, and documented. They must be treated for ticks and tapeworms 24 to 48 hours before entry. They must also arrive via an authorized route. Ferrets arriving from outside the EU may be subject to a six-month quarantine.<sup>[66]</sup>

## See also

- Ferret-legging
- Sredni Vashtar

## Notes

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66. "PETS: How to bring your ferret into or back into the UK under the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS)" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20060901095759/http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/pets/ferretpets.htm>). *Animal health & welfare*. Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (defra) Crown copyright 2006. Archived from the original (<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/pets/ferretpets.htm>) on 2006-09-01. Retrieved 2006-09-12.

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  - Isaacsen, Adolph (1886) *All about ferrets and rats* (<https://archive.org/details/allaboutferretsr00isaa>)
  - View the ferret genome ([http://www.ensembl.org/Mustela\\_putorius\\_furo/Info/Index/](http://www.ensembl.org/Mustela_putorius_furo/Info/Index/)) on Ensembl
  - Movies with ferrets in them as a character (<https://fluffyplanet.com/movies-with-ferrets-in-them/>)
  - View the *musFur1* (<https://genome.ucsc.edu/cgi-bin/hgTracks?db=musFur1>) genome assembly in the UCSC Genome Browser.
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ANIMALS ARE  
NOT OURS

to experiment on, eat, wear,  
use for entertainment, or abuse  
in any other way.

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## Facts on Ferrets

The ferret is a domesticated animal whose ancestors are believed to be native European polecats (*Mustela putorius*). Inquisitive, smart, and playful, ferrets have become popular companion animals, but they require a special diet and care.<sup>1</sup> Often, after the novelty of an impulse purchase wears off, ferrets are abandoned to certain death in the wild or to severely crowded animal shelters.

### Adoption

If you're willing to open your home to a ferret, first make sure that you don't live in an area that prohibits it: California and Hawaii both ban keeping ferrets as companion animals, and some local communities, such as New York City, also either restrict or ban the keeping of ferrets in homes.<sup>2,3</sup> Ask your local wildlife department, fish and game department, humane society, or veterinarian about the legality of keeping a ferret where you live and whether you will need to obtain a permit if you adopt one.

Please adopt from an animal shelter or rescue group. Search the Internet or ask your local humane society for a group near you. Never buy ferrets—or any other animal—from pet stores, which sell ferrets raised in disease-ridden, factory farm–like conditions. Please read our factsheet “Pet Shops: No Bargain for Animals (<https://www.peta.org/issues/companion-animals-5/pet-shops-bargain-animals/>)” for more information.

Ferrets can usually coexist peacefully and even amicably with cats and dogs. However ferrets should not be allowed free access to smaller pets such as birds or rodents. Supervision is a must, for the safety of the ferret and other animals. If you have young children, be sure to monitor their interaction with the ferret as closely as you would with a dog. Ferrets can and will bite in self-defense.

### Ferret-Proofing

Maintaining a ferret-proof home is essential for the animal's safety and well-being.

Exercise caution, especially with the following tempting but potentially dangerous items in your home:

- Cabinets and drawers (Ferrets can open them.)
- Heaters (Ferrets might knock them over.)
- Furnace ducts (Ferrets can get inside them.)
- Recliners and sofa beds (Ferrets have been crushed in their levers and springs.)
- Anything spongy or springy, such as kitchen sponges, erasers, shoe insoles, foam earplugs, Silly Putty, foam rubber (including inside a cushion or mattress), Styrofoam, insulation, and rubber door stoppers (Swallowing pieces of these items will often result in an intestinal blockage.)

- Filled bathtubs, toilets, and water and paint buckets (Ferrets can drown in them.)
- Plastic bags (Ferrets can suffocate in them.)
- Holes behind refrigerators and other appliances with exposed wires, fans, and insulation (Ferrets love to chew on wires and eat insulation.)
- Dishwashers, refrigerators, washers and dryers (Ferrets can get trapped inside them.)
- Houseplants (Some are poisonous.)
- Box springs (Ferrets love to rip the cloth covering the underside of box springs and climb inside, where they may become trapped or crushed. To prevent this, attach wire mesh or a thin piece of wood to the underside of the box springs.)

## **Housing**

Even if you plan to give your ferret the run of the house, it's best when you're not home to enclose him or her in a ferret-proof room or in a roomy, metal mesh cage—one that is at the very least 24 inches long, 24 inches deep, and 18 inches high, although larger enclosures are certainly preferable. If you have two or more ferrets living together, you will need a much larger cage and preferably multiple levels and sleeping areas. Whatever you decide, your ferret will appreciate ramps, tunnels made from dryer hose or black drainage pipe, a “bedroom” made out of an upside-down box with a cut-out doorway, and hammocks made from old jeans or shirts. Line the cage bottom with linoleum squares or cloth cage pads, and use old T-shirts and sweatshirts for bedding—never use cedar or pine shavings, which are toxic to small animals.

Don't let the temperature in their living quarters climb too high, and monitor the humidity. In the winter, when the heat is on and humidity can get too low, ferrets' skin can get dry and itchy, so use a humidifier. And if the humidity is allowed to get too high during the hot summer and the temperature rises above 85 degrees, ferrets can succumb to heatstroke. Keep in mind that ferrets' wild cousins live in underground burrows where the temperature is 55 degrees with 50 percent humidity.<sup>4</sup>

## **Litter Training**

Ferrets can easily be trained to use a litterbox. They tend to choose their own toilet area in a corner, so start by putting a litterbox with paper pulp litter (NEVER clay or clumping litter) in that area. Gradually move the litterbox closer and closer to the area that you would like it to be in. Ferrets do love corners for their bathroom areas, so if you can put the litterbox in a corner, you will likely have greater success.

## **Diet**

Ferrets are predators and strict carnivores and therefore require highly digestible, meat-based proteins. They cannot survive on vegetarian diets or most dog foods, as there is too much vegetable matter in those products, and too much carbohydrate in the diet can create health problems in ferrets.

If feeding dry kibble, be sure that the food contains at least 30 to 40 percent crude protein (of animal origin) and 15 to 20 percent fat. A thorough reading of the label is crucial—the first three ingredients should be meat-based.<sup>5</sup> Avoid processed treats marketed for ferrets, as they tend to be carbohydrate- or grain-based. Supplements should not be necessary if the optimal diet is being fed. For more details, please read “The Ferret Diet (<https://beta.vin.com/doc/?id=4951366&pid=17256>)” by Dr. Susan Brown.

## Keeping Your Ferret Healthy

Ferrets require routine veterinary visits, just as dogs and cats do. If you live in an area that requires rabies shots for dogs and cats, then your ferret will need one too. Ferrets can also get heartworms, fleas, and canine distemper. Please consult your veterinarian about preventive measures. Do NOT use dips, sprays, or collars to combat fleas.

At 4 months, ferrets can be spayed or neutered. This procedure is necessary not only to prevent reproduction but also for the well-being of your animal companion. Neutering greatly decreases a male's body and urine odor once he matures and prevents him from urine-marking his territory in your home. Spaying also reduces a female's scent and prevents her from dying of severe anemia, which can develop in intact females who go into heat but do not breed.<sup>6</sup>

Ferrets kept mostly indoors will likely need nail-trimming every six to eight weeks. A veterinarian can show you the proper way to trim nails.

Exercise is important! You can simulate your ferret's need for burrowing and hunting with toys like large cardboard mailing tubes, dryer hoses, paper bags, PVC pipe, ping-pong balls, golf balls, and small cloth baby toys or feather cat toys that hang from springs. Please give your ferret time to play outside his or her cage for at least several hours every day.

## Resources

American Ferret Association (<http://www.ferret.org/index.html>)

Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarians (<http://www.aemv.org/>)

## References

<sup>1</sup> J. Duda, "*Mustela putorius furo*," Animal Diversity Web

([http://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Mustela\\_putorius\\_furo/](http://animaldiversity.org/accounts/Mustela_putorius_furo/)), accessed 10 May 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Alex Distefano, "Culver City Woman Leads Fight to Make Ferrets Legal Pets in California," *LA Weekly* (<http://www.laweekly.com/news/artists-out-chinese-capital-in-for-proposed-200-million-arts-district-center-9371354>), 2 April 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Aaron Short, "NYC Fails to Overturn Ferret Ban," *NY Post* (<https://nypost.com/2015/03/10/nyc-fails-to-overturn-ferret-ban/>), 10 March 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Susan Brown, D.V.M., "Ferret Grooming," (<https://www.vin.com/doc/?id=4951543&pid=17256>) Small Mammal Health Series, 5 December 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Susan Brown, D.V.M., "The Ferret Diet," (<https://beta.vin.com/doc/?id=4951366&pid=17256>) Small Mammal Health Series, 14 March 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Natalie Antinoff, DVM, DABVP, "Anemia in ferrets: Clinical case challenges (Proceedings)" (<http://veterinarycalendar.dvm360.com/anemia-ferrets-clinical-case-challenges-proceedings>) CVC in Kansas City Proceedings, 1 August 2009.

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[Facts on Guinea Pigs](https://www.peta.org/issues/animal-companion-issues/animal-companion-factsheets/facts-guinea-pigs/) (<https://www.peta.org/issues/animal-companion-issues/animal-companion-factsheets/facts-guinea-pigs/>)

[Turkeys: Torture on the Holiday Table](https://www.peta.org/issues/animals-used-for-food/animals-used-food-factsheets/turkeys-factory-farmed-torture-holiday-table/) (<https://www.peta.org/issues/animals-used-for-food/animals-used-food-factsheets/turkeys-factory-farmed-torture-holiday-table/>)

**Cornman, Ari@FGC**

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 2, 2019 7:54 AM  
**To:** Cornman, Ari@FGC  
**Subject:** RE: Ferret Petition

Hello Ari –

Thanks for the email. I understand this is probably a hassle for you. But it has turned out to be important.

When we got to a legislative body they tell us “if Fish and Game calls ferrets wild, they are the experts and that is good enough for us.” At which point we are dead.

**Rulemaking Authority (Required)** - Reference to the statutory or constitutional authority of the Commission to take the action requested: **2118**. It is unlawful to import, transport, possess, or release alive into this state, except under a revocable, nontransferable permit as provided in this chapter and the regulations pertaining thereto, **any wild animal** of the following species: Mammals of the orders Primates, Edentata, Dermoptera, Monotremata, Pholidota, Tubulidentata, Proboscidea, Perissodactyla, Hyracoidea, Sirenia and Carnivora are restricted for the welfare of the animals, except animals of the families Viverridae and **Mustelidae** in the order Carnivora are restricted because such animals are undesirable and a menace to native wildlife, the agricultural interests of the state, or to the public health or safety.

We have gone through this petition process twice before. Our requests to have ferrets removed from the prohibited species list was rejected. Then we asked that Fish and Game issue permits and that was also denied.

But ferrets aren't wild animals. I understand, and I could be wrong, Fish and Game has the authority to regulate wild and exotic animals. While ferrets certainly are not wild, they could be considered exotic.

Perhaps the code should list domestic animals that are also prohibited.

Again, thank you for the time to understand this.

Pat Wright  
[LegalizeFerrets.org](http://LegalizeFerrets.org)  
(619) 303-0645 [REDACTED]

---

**From:** Cornman, Ari@FGC <Ari.Cornman@FGC.ca.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 1, 2019 2:54 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Ferret Petition

Dear Pat Wright:

The California Fish and Game Commission has received your petition regarding ferrets. The petition is a bit unclear, so we are contacting you so we can understand exactly what it is you are requesting. We think you are asking that domestic

ferrets be added under family Mustelidae as an exception to the list of restricted species. Could you let us know if that is what you mean? Or if not, please explain your intent?

Thank You,

Ari

Ari Cornman, Wildlife Advisor  
California Fish and Game Commission  
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1320  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: 916-653-1595

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
**FISH AND GAME COMMISSION**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** October 10, 2016

**TO:** Members of Fish and Game Commission

**FROM:** Mike Yaun (Legal Counsel) and  
Erin Chappell (Wildlife Advisor)

**SUBJECT:** Considerations for Ferret Legalization Associated with Petition #2016-008

Commission staff has drafted this memo to provide a detailed explanation for the staff recommendation regarding regulatory petition #2016-008 scheduled for Commission action under Agenda Item 32, Non-Marine Regulatory Petitions at its October 19-20, 2016 meeting.

### **Regulatory Overview**

Petition #2016-008 requests the Commission amend Title 14 CCR Section 671(c)(2)(K) by removing any reference to domestic ferrets. Section 671 (Importation, Transportation and Possession of Live Restricted Animals) states that it is unlawful to import, transport, or possess live animals, restricted in subsection (c) except under a permit issued by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). The regulation specifically states in Section 671(b) that "the commission has determined the [animals listed in subsection (c)] are not normally domesticated in this state." Currently, all species in the Family Mustelidae, including ferrets are listed in subsection (c). Within Section 671, ferrets are further designated as "detrimental animals" because they pose a threat to native wildlife, the agricultural interests of the State, or to public health and safety.

Applicable Fish and Game Code sections include:

- Section 2 - Unless the provisions or the context otherwise requires, the definitions in this chapter [Div .5, Ch 1 of the Fish and Game Code] govern the construction of this code and all regulations adopted under this code.
- Section 54 – "Mammal" means a wild or **feral mammal** or part of a wild or feral animal, but not a wild, feral, or undomesticated burro.
- Section 89.5 – "Wildlife" means and includes all **wild** animals, birds, plants, fish, amphibians, reptiles, and related ecological communities, including the habitat upon which the wildlife depends for its continued viability.
- Section 2116 – As used in this chapter [Div. 3, Ch. 2 of the Fish and Game Code], "wild animal" means any animal of the class ... Mammalia (mammals ...

which is **not normally domesticated in this state as determined by the commission.**

- Section 2118 – Prohibited importation or release into state of live wild animals of listed species, except under revocable, nontransferable permit.
- Section 2120(a) – The commission, in cooperation with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), shall adopt regulations governing both (1) entry, importation, possession, transportation, keeping, confinement, or release of any and all wild animals imported pursuant to Chapter; and (2) the possession of all other wild animals. Regulations shall be designed to prevent damage to native wildlife and agriculture and to provide for welfare of the animal and safety of the public

Any change to the regulation would require coordination with CDFA and the proposed action would effectively eliminate the Commission's authority to regulate ferrets, with the exception of escaped individuals to the extent those individuals could be shown to have reverted to a wild state.

### **Supporting Documentation**

Submitted with the petition were two pieces of supporting documentation: A report published by Dr. G.O. Graening (California State University, Sacramento) in 2010 and a CEQA checklist. The report, *Analysis of the Potential Impacts of Domesticated Ferrets Upon Wildlife, Agriculture, and Human Health in North America, with a Focus Upon California, Based Upon Literature Review and Survey of North American Governmental Agencies*, provides an accurate summarization of much of the existing information on domestic ferrets. The purpose of the report was to fully summarize the body of knowledge on the domesticated ferret (*Mustela putorius furo*) for potential impacts and an analysis to identify potentially significant issues so that Commission could proceed with the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The report identified three items that may need further analysis in an EIR: 1) the potential for the establishment of feral breeding populations; 2) potential impacts of ferrets on wildlife, either from an established population or from intentionally or inadvertently released ferrets; and 3) the potential economic impacts both beneficial and adverse of ferret legalization. The report also identified three items that may not need further analysis in an EIR: 1) the potential impacts to agriculture since there is no indication of impacts found in the literature or from a questionnaire of agricultural departments; 2) the potential impacts to human health from rabies, noting that impacts could be mitigated to a less than significant impact with required vaccination; and 3) the potential impacts to human safety from biting, noting that with effective mitigation measures this could be reduced to a less than significant impact.

Regarding potential impacts to wildlife populations, the report finds that while the establishment of feral colonies is improbable, there is a possibility that escaped ferrets might do significant damage to wildlife, such as ground-nesting birds or listed species, during a period up to a few weeks of survival (see Chapter 8, Section 2.2). It further notes that ongoing intentional releases or inadvertent escapes might replenish the population in the wild which could pose a continued hazard to wildlife. In addition, the

report states that while pet-store ferrets do not possess the necessary traits to become invasive, pole-cat-ferret hybrids and polecats may possess the necessary traits. The report notes that both fertile ferrets and polecat-ferret hybrids are advertised for sale online. Therefore, some risk of them establishing a breeding population remains. How great a risk that poses to California's unique biodiversity remains unclear.

The CEQA Checklist provided identified biological resources, land use planning, and mandatory finding of significance as environmental factors potentially affected by the proposed change in regulation. For all three, the determination was that those impacts may be less than significant with mitigation. While the checklist did not identify any potentially significant impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions, the discussion section was not included in the materials provided. More broadly, the document does not include discussions about some of the conclusions found in the report - notably, the need to further analyze the potentially significant impacts to wildlife from the establishment of a feral breeding population of ferrets in an EIR or a discussion of the full breadth of the potential ramifications of legalization, such as the increased potential for polecat and polecat-ferret hybrids.

Even ignoring the omissions in the checklist outlined above, the findings require at a minimum, that the Commission develop a mitigated negative declaration before adopting the regulation. However, the Commission would not have authority to ensure that the proposed mitigation measures are implemented because the Commission does not have authority over domestic animals. Based on the inability to implement that mitigation, a full EIR is needed, even if founded on the existing checklist. It is important to note that if potentially significantly impacts are found in the EIR the adoption of that EIR would require a statement of overriding concern due to authority issues associated with mitigation.

### **Process for Preparing an EIR**

As the Lead Agency under CEQA, the Commission would be responsible for preparing the EIR. Previously, the Commission directed that any new petitioner would need to fund the preparation of an environmental document, in this case an EIR, before considering any changes in the current regulation. Project proponent-funded environmental documents have been used by other agencies. For example, DFW has contract mechanism in place for this type of CEQA analysis. DFW adopted regulations (see Title 14 CCR sections 789.0-789.6) to allow for a special contract selection process. Through this process a project proponent contracts with DFW to pay for the contractor's work and DFW directs a previously-approved consultant to prepare the environmental document through the retainer contracts authorized in the regulations. The Commission would need to establish a similar process through regulations to pursue the development of a petitioner-funded EIR.

### **FGC Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends denying the petition. Given that the proposed action would effectively eliminate the Commission's authority to regulate ferrets, the potentially

significant impacts to wildlife identified in the report, and the inability of the Commission to implement any identified mitigation measures, staff does not recommend removing ferrets from the list of restricted species at this time. However, if the Commission would like to move forward with the preparation of an EIR to further evaluate the potential impacts, staff recommends developing regulations to establish a contract selection process similar to the DFW regulations and proceed with a petitioner-funded EIR.

Finally, it is important to note that this issue is not specific to ferrets. Other species that are sometimes kept as domestic pets, such as hedgehogs and sugar gliders (species of possum), are also included in the list of restricted species. Any requests to remove them from the list would require similar considerations.

**Cornman, Ari@FGC**

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**From:** Gary Ward [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 24, 2019 10:20 AM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Spring Bear Hunt

Hello, I recently heard of an upcoming proposal to establish a Spring Black Bear Hunt in California. I fully support this, as the bear population is exploding and fewer bears will increase the deer/elk fawn survival rate. Thank you.

Sent from AOL Mobile Mail  
Get the new AOL app: [mail.mobile.aol.com](mailto:mail.mobile.aol.com)

**From:** Megan Mitchell <californiaferrets@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 11, 2019 4:23 PM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Regarding New Petition Request for Ferrets

Dear President, Vice President, Commissioners and staff members:

I am the Executive Director of the United California Ferret Alliance, a new organization working within the system to decriminalize domestic ferrets. We've been made aware of a petition request you received earlier this week regarding ferrets that did not come from us or our affiliates. It comes from an independent organization. It requests that the Fish and Game Commission no longer refer to ferrets as wild but domesticated. As the petitioner pointed out, many well known organizations do use this term when referring to this animal. However we do not feel it is necessary to attract a legislator.

We know that over the years there have been numerous petitions for policy change in front of the Commission regarding ferrets. We respect the amount of time and resources that have to be used to address items that make it onto the Commission's agenda.

Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting with a few of your staff members and we extensively discussed policy and procedures that affect the status of ferrets in California. After meeting with your staff I feel I have a new understanding of some of the constraints that fall not only on the Commission but the hard working staff members.

We are working tirelessly to build support for a bill to address removing the criminal aspect of ferret ownership. We're hoping to work with the Department of Wildlife to find agreeable regulations so that responsible ferret owners no longer have to worry about their pets being confiscated and euthanized by the state. We've even established communication with the Sierra Club and they are interested in our approach to the issue.

We want to reassure the Commission that no matter if the new petition request makes it on the agenda or not, the United California Ferret Alliance and its affiliates, will not negatively or publicly criticize your agency. We hope to be able to continue to work with your staff to find a policy that can help us succeed and keep ferrets off your agenda for many years to come.

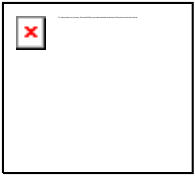
Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Megan Mitchell

--

**Executive Director, United California Ferret Alliance**

*"An umbrella organization bringing together like-minded ferret clubs & enthusiasts to decriminalize domestic ferrets in California."*



(310) 425-3851  
P.O. Box 47507  
Los Angeles, CA 90047  
#CaliforniaFerrets

**Cornman, Ari@FGC**

---

**From:** W.F.U. & W.F.I.C. <WFU@telfort.nl>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 16, 2019 10:33 AM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Domestic ferrets are not wild animals

We of the World Ferret Union and World Ferret Information Centre would like to inform you about the ferret which is a domestic animal and isn't legal in your state. Other states in the United States of America have dealt with the issue regarding ferrets and legalized them. Only Hawaii, California and a part of New York don't allow keeping ferrets as pets. But only California showing pure unwillingness and your state doesn't have a reasonable argument to ban them.

Ferrets have always been domestic animals. Tracing their relationship to humans as far back as possible - that is: 200 BC - proves so. They cannot survive in the wild and are totally dependent on their caretakers. All arguments are well known to the insiders of this matter.

Please read information on our Website about ferrets on the page <http://www.wfu-wfic.org/ferret.html>

Sincerely,

World Ferret Union and World Ferret Information Centre

<http://www.wfu-wfic.org/>

**From:** Karl L. Swartz [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 8, 2019 10:10 PM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Petition 2019-018

Dear commissioners,

Please support petition 2019-018. Domestic ferrets (*Mustela putorius furo*, not to be confused with *Mustela nigripes*, the black-footed ferret) are no more wild animals than dogs (*Canis familiaris* or *Canis lupus familiaris*, depending upon which taxonomy you follow) or cats (*Felis catus*). Ferrets were domesticated approximately 2,500 years ago. Several papers and articles on or mentioning the domestication history of ferrets including comparisons to dogs:

- Man's Underground Best Friend: Domestic Ferrets, Unlike the Wild Forms, Show Evidence of Dog-Like Social-Cognitive Skills (<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0043267>)
- History of the Ferret (<https://weaselwords.com/ferret-articles/history-of-the-ferret/>)
- Ferrets: Man's Other Best Friend (<https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/thoughtful-animal/ferrets-mans-other-best-friend/>)

--

Karl L. Swartz  
Mountain View, California

**From:** Kathleen Dodson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 9, 2019 2:50 PM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Petition 2019-018

Please support petition 2019-018. Domestic ferrets aren't wild animals.

Please note I have had ferrets for 25 years and in all of those years I have only ever been able to purchase 1 ferret that was not fixed before I brought it home. Ferrets who are decented and fixed by the pet industry do not survive on their own. They have been domesticated for so long that they do not know how to survive if they escape. Once a ferret reaches maturity they do not willingly change their food source and will starve. I have rescued ferrets for years, several which were dying from starvation because the owners did not understand the proper way to change their diet. ferrets are affectionate loving animals that can be taught appropriate behavior like any dog or cat. Ferrets have been domesticated for thousands of years. The ferrets we call pets are not the same animals as they were years ago. It is very odd that California calls our ferrets wild. If that were they case, then why do most states allow them to be pets?

Kathleen D. Dodson, M.Ed., CRC  
Sequim, WA

**Cornman, Ari@FGC**

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**From:** Josh Hall [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 6, 2019 3:23 PM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Petition 2019-18

I'd like to voice my support of this petition. The domesticated ferret wouldn't be called the DOMESTICATED ferret, if it was a wild animal.

The Domesticated ferret is a domesticated version of the European polecat much like our dogs are often domesticated versions of wolves.

To make this false categorization of an animal that is clearly domesticated basically calls in to question the credibility of the fish and game commission. How can an organization that's supposed to be experts on animals be considered credible when this type of misinformation is allowed to be considered fact?

How many ferrets would have to die to satisfy some sort of scientific evidence that they cannot survive in California as escapees? Is that what we really want to strive for, or can we agree with the REST OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY and properly categorize them as domesticated pets?

Ferrets are not polecats just as your dog is not a wolf. Hence ferrets are not WILD animals, they're domesticated.

If the domesticated ferret is so invasive, why hasn't there been any reports of it happening in any of the 48 states where they're completely legal? Do they know something we don't? Clearly they do. It's that they're not a threat to the environment.

Citing the Sierra club as a concern for being sued? They don't even think cats and dogs should be pets, so let them make their mistakes and die on that hill alone. The Fish and Game commission shouldn't be lending itself to political agendas such as that.

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Regards,  
Josh Hall

"I like to know what I'm talking about, before I open my mouth." - President Barack Obama  
"Don't be evil." - Google

**From:** Donna Ferreira [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 23, 2019 10:39 AM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Petition 2019-018

Please support petition 2019-018. Domestic ferrets aren't wild animals.

Dear Members of the Fish and Game Commission,

As a former ferret owner I would kindly ask that you revise your language and Not refer to ferrets as wild animals, they are Not. They are as domestic as a dog or cat. And I have owned both for over 50 yrs. These cute, comical, intelligent, and lovable pets depend on us for survival. They would be lucky to survive in the wild more than a day. They are not born or raised in the wild.

The bond they have with humans can be as compassionate (towards us) as any domestic pet. It is definitely a relationship like no other. If you read stories about ferrets and their owners you would have to agree. My ferret would lay at my feet every day as I put on my make-up to go to work. This was our routine and she knew I would be leaving soon. This is just one example. My ferret,, Keela, was in No Way a wild animal. I implore you to read more stories and educate yourselves with Ferrets Anonymous literature and the years of research they have done.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Donna Ferreira

**Cornman, Ari@FGC**

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**From:** Mishele Barker [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 25, 2019 3:49 PM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** "Petition 2019-18"

Please Support Petition 2019-018, domestic ferrets are not wild animals!

They are legal in every continental state and there are no instances of domestic ferrets forming feral colonies. The majority of ferrets are spayed/neutered before being sold, so they cannot reproduce. Even if an unaltered ferret was to escape, the odds of it locating another unaltered ferret to mate with is astronomical. And the likelihood that it will figure out how to find food and water (having been raised on kibble) is practically nil. Not to mention, **if female ferrets** go into heat and do not **mate** or are not spayed, **they** can develop a severe, and even life threatening anemia. This is because estrogen can cause **the** bone marrow to stop producing red blood cells.

Continuing this absurd ban on ferrets is ridiculous. They impact the environment much, much less than any other domestic animal, including dogs and cats.

Michelle Barker

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

**Cornman, Ari@FGC**

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**From:** Monica Hail [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 17, 2019 10:31 PM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Petition 2019-18

Hello to whom it concerns,

Ferrets need to be welcomed in California. Domesticated Ferrets are pets not wild animals. I have always wanted a ferret since I was a child, but sadly I have been born and raised in good old California and unfortunately they are banned here. As a teenager I got curious and looked into why they are banned here in California. Since I think there are other creatures people are allowed to have here which are far worse than a ferret ever was.

When I looked into it I had found out that they are banned because they "can" escape and cause damage to the ecosystem here. Well, there are far worse creatures that are not banned here that are far worse than a ferret ever thought of being. Snakes, cats, aquarium fish, lizards... just to name a few. I also remember something about them can escape and breed with their wild cousins the black footed ferret, who since has gone extinct here in California.

They are fun pets that give their owners joy every day with their funny antics. Do you know that they have what's called a war dance? If you don't you should go and look up a few of YouTube videos. It's the funniest thing you would ever see.

Californians are missing a pet who is a true pleasure to own. They are curious like a cat and silly like dogs. They can have shots just like dogs so to not carry "rabies" as some say. They can be spayed and neutered so to not breed. Most human ferret parents have their fixed as they got a sac back there that stinks (think of a skunk). The only way to get rid of the smell is to have it fixed, so most are fixed by the breeders before they ever even leave their mothers. Well what I'm trying to say is please let California enjoy these amazing little creatures. This law is as old as a dinosaur and needs to be changed, let us enjoy these amazing pets!!!!

Thank you,  
Monica Hail

[REDACTED]

**From:** Rene Gandolfi [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 23, 2019 10:51 AM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Petition 2019-018

Please support petition 2019-018. Domestic ferrets aren't wild animals.

An important function of any governmental agency that has any involvement with science is to apply scientific knowledge in its decision making processes.

Biology is a science and the domestication of animals is governed by scientific principles.

Ferrets are a domesticated species. Legislation or regulation does not change the underlying science of that classification any more than would a regulation stating that the sun in California rises in the west or that the Earth is the center of the universe and all the stars and planets revolve around it

Rene Charles Gandolfi, DVM, Dipl. ABVP, CVA

**Cornman, Ari@FGC**

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**From:** Juliana Lenny [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 8, 2019 6:51 PM  
**To:** FGC  
**Subject:** Petition 2019-018

Please support petition 2019-018. Domestic ferrets aren't wild animals.