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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**SOLANO
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October 25, 2024

The Honorable Josh Harder
U.S. House of Representatives
209 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Garrett Graves
U.S. House of Representatives
2402 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Valadao
U.S. House of Representatives
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Garamendi
U.S. House of Representatives
2004 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta
U.S. House of Representatives
304 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: SUPPORT – H.R. 8308, Nutria Eradication

Dear Representatives Harder, Graves, Valadao, Garamendi and Panetta,

On behalf of the Solano County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to express our acknowledge and thank you for introducing H.R. 8308, to reauthorize the Nutria Eradication and Control Act.

As you know, the invasive species nutria, a semi-aquatic rodent native to South America, had not been found in California since the early 1970s. That changed in March 2017 when a USDA Wildlife Services Specialist detected nutria in Merced County. According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, as of October 3, 2024, a total of 5,171 nutria have been taken in California, with animals confirmed present across Merced, Stanislaus, Fresno, Solano, San Joaquin, Mariposa, Sacramento, Madera, Contra Costa, and Tuolumne Counties. Additionally, in the last two years incipient nutria populations have migrated down the San Joaquin River to its confluence with the Sacramento River and into the Suisun Marsh Grizzly Island State Wildlife Area (Solano County) threatening further spread into nearby San Francisco Bay and the Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area and the San Pablo National Wildlife Refuge.

The existence and spread of nutria in California will result in substantial ecological and economic impacts including loss of wetland and riparian habitat, soil and bank erosion, levee failures, agricultural losses, degraded wildlife and fish habitats, damaged revegetation sites, and exacerbated spread of invasive plants. The damage caused by nutria to Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta levees would have a detrimental statewide effect on human health and safety, water conveyance, the economy, wildlife, and Delta crop production, totaling nearly \$1 billion per year.

We acknowledge and thank the Delta Conservancy, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), USDA California Wildlife Services and the California Department of Food and Agriculture for early detection and eradication efforts. Because of the multi-agency efforts supported with a sustained, collective effort that H.R. 8308 can deliver, we still have a great opportunity to eradicate nutria in California.

Honorable Representatives Harder, Graves, Valadao, Garamendi and Panetta

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We appreciate your leadership and understanding of the need for timely and collective efforts to address biological threats to agriculture and the environment from invasive species such as nutria. When a pest or disease is detected early, rapid responses to eradicate the outbreak before it has a chance to become established or spread to other areas is critical. H.R. 8308 will sustain nutria eradication rapid response efforts increasing the chance of success and will result in significant cost savings as it avoids the higher costs of a long-term management program.

Again, we appreciate your leadership and the introduction of the reauthorization of the Nutria Eradication and Control Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mitch N. Mashburn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mitch" being the most prominent.

Mitch Mashburn, Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

CC:

The Honorable Laphonza Butler, U.S. Senator
The Honorable Mike Thompson, U.S. Representative
The Honorable Bill Dodd, California State Senator
The Honorable Lori D. Wilson, California State Assemblymember
The Honorable Solano County Board of Supervisors
Ed King, Agricultural Commissioner, Solano County
Paragon Government Relations
Karen Lange, SYASL Partners