



Sacramento Legislative Office

April 22, 2019

The Honorable Bob Wieckowski
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #2
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Department of Fish and Wildlife
3600-302-BCP-2019-A1: Nutria Eradication and Control Reimbursement
Grant Funding (March 29, 2019)

SUPPORT

Dear Senator Wieckowski:

On behalf of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, I am pleased to express "support" for the Spring budget change proposal by the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) to eradicate nutria in California.

The Spring proposal item will provide DFW \$9,384,000 in reimbursement authority over three years for grants from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy. The Spring proposal is intended to supplement the Governor's original January budget proposal that provided \$1.949 million in General Fund and 10 positions for the 2019-2020 budget year and \$1.624 million ongoing to eradicate nutria, which the Senate Budget Subcommittee 2 voted to approve on March 7, 2019.

The current program is operated with one dedicated staff and a budget of \$230,000 a year for statewide management. A native of South America, nutria have proven to be a formidable and difficult species to successfully eradicate. One of the most common characteristics that complicate control efforts of nutria is the quick and rapid increase in population within a relatively short window of time. In addition, nutria consume large amounts of vegetation and often dig in soil near water for food. As a result, the safety of

The Honorable Bob Wieckowski
April 22, 2019
Page 2

levees within the Delta are an inevitable concern that can result in irreversible habitat, agricultural, and water supply impacts with significant statewide ramifications.

For these reasons, Metropolitan offers its support for the Spring budget change proposal on nutria eradication and control. If you have any questions or concerns on Metropolitan's position on this item, please feel free to contact me at (916) 650-2614 or via email at kviatella@mwdh2o.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Viatella". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "K".

Kathy Viatella
Executive Legislative Representative

cc: Senate Budget Subcommittee #2
Joanne Roy, Consultant, Senate Budget Committee
Rocel Bettencourt, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus