

Central Valley Flood Protection Board Meeting

INFORMATIONAL BRIEFING

Nutria Eradication Effort

(Valerie Cook-Fletcher, CDFW, and Gina Darin and Leslie Pierce, DWR)

BRIEFING SUMMARY

The Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will provide an informational briefing on the Nutria Eradication Effort and Department of Water Resources (DWR) staff will provide a brief update on DWR's contribution to the effort and their Infrastructure Protection Plan for Nutria.

Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*) are a large (20+ lbs.) semi-aquatic rodent native to South America that prefer wetland habitat. Nutria were discovered in California in March 2017; in March 2018, CDFW instituted an Incident Command System (ICS), redirecting resources and approximately 40 staff. To date, nutria have been confirmed in 140 sites and over 500 animals have been taken, with additional animals confirmed, in San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Fresno, Mariposa, and Tuolumne counties. In May 2019, CDFW confirmed nutria at Rough and Ready Island near Stockton; 16 river miles north of the nearest known population. Nutria have the potential to impact levees and tidal wetland restoration sites from their extensive burrowing and herbivory behavior.

CDFW is preparing an eradication plan, has applied for and secured funding, and anticipates transitioning from an ICS of redirected staff to a long-term, expanded program that includes dedicated surveyors and trappers and integrates Judas nutria and nutria-detection dog teams. DWR continues assessing resources to commit to the eradication effort.