



Lower Sherman Island Duck Hunters Association

March 24, 2017

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia, Chair
 Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee
 1020 N Street, Suite 160
 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 718 (Frazier) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Garcia:

Our organizations, which represent hundreds of thousands of wildlife conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts in California, urge you to support AB 718 (Frazier), which would reduce mosquito spraying costs for private landowners who 1) manage wetlands under conservation easements or similar state or federal agreements and 2) agree to implement best management practices (BMPs) to control mosquitoes.

Spraying of insecticides for mosquito abatement purposes, while often necessary to protect public health, costs many wetland owners thousands or even tens of thousands of dollars each year. These costs leave less funding for necessary wetland maintenance activities that optimize food resources and habitat for migratory waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species. They also provide a growing disincentive for private landowners, who currently own two-thirds of California's remaining wetlands, to conserve wetlands in perpetuity.

While BMPs are helpful in reducing mosquitoes, they can be expensive to implement. Some require physical modification of managed wetlands or new water conveyance infrastructure, for example. Others necessitate additional management activities that must be carried out on an annual basis by the landowner.

It should also be noted that BMPs are not always waterfowl friendly. For example, BMPs that result in shorter irrigation periods for the growth of waterfowl food plants can limit desired seed production. Removal of wetland vegetation, another BMP, can also reduce food availability and thermal cover for waterfowl. Thus, there can be a reluctance on the part of the landowner to employ BMPs, especially when they conflict with waterfowl conservation objectives.

BMPs do not always fully remove the need to spray pesticides, and many landowners who employ BMPs still face significant mosquito spraying costs. For these wetland owners who have taken the considerable effort and expense to reduce mosquito production through the implementation of BMPs, AB 718 would provide some much-needed cost relief.

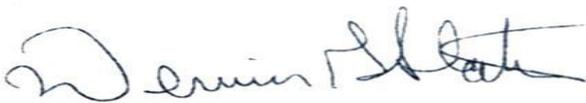
Please also note that AB 718 would only apply to wetlands that have been placed under a state or federal conservation easement or similar agreement, thus limiting the financial benefit to only those private lands that offer the highest quality waterfowl habitat.

For these reasons, please support AB 718 when it is considered by your committee.

Sincerely,



Mark Hennelly, California Waterfowl Association



Dennis Slater, Tulare Basin Wetlands Association



Paul Buttner, California Rice Commission



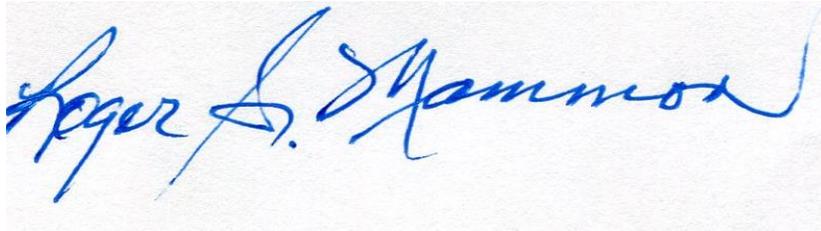
Ric Ortega, Grassland Water District



Don Kirby, Cal-Ore Wetlands and Waterfowl Council



John Devney, Delta Waterfowl



Roger Mammon, Lower Sherman Island Duck Hunters Association



Dan Connelly, Pheasants Forever, Inc./Quail Forever



Todd Manley, Northern California Water Association



Rachael Zwillinger, Defenders of Wildlife



Maddy Folk, The Black Brant Group



Steve Chappell, Suisun Resource Conservation District



Jay Ziegler, The Nature Conservancy