

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 8, 2019

The Honorable Margaret Everson
Principal Deputy Director Exercising the Authority of the Director
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1849 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Everson,

We write to respectfully request that the US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) expeditiously complete its revision of the northern pintail harvest strategy.

As members of the California congressional delegation, we represent sportsmen and sportswomen across the state who have been frustrated with pintail bag limit restrictions, which have a negative impact on hunting and participation in the outdoors. California's midwinter index of pintails is roughly one million birds, which represents a significant share of the entire pintail population of North America, yet hunters are limited in their opportunities to harvest these highly prized gamebirds. As you are aware, years of restrictive bag limits have not significantly increased pintail populations and there is no evidence that harvest is playing an appreciable role in population dynamics.

While the northern pintail harvest strategy has been noted as a priority in recent years, we understand that it has been elevated recently. We believe that the work on the strategy and its implementation should be a high priority of the Service. A scientifically rigorous process that evaluates opportunities for increased harvest is of great importance to our hunting constituents.

As you know, completing revision of the northern pintail harvest strategy and developing a regulatory framework that allows for an increased bag limit aligns with Secretarial Order 3356: *Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting, and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities and Coordination with States, Tribes, and Territories*, which "gives greater priority to recruiting and retaining sportsmen and women." We believe that if the best available science shows that an increase in the daily bag limit is justifiable, there will be significant opportunities to recruit and retain waterfowl hunters, particularly in California.

Higher hunter recruitment and retention also will generate increased funding for wetland and waterfowl conservation efforts through the purchase of state and federal duck stamps, hunting licenses, and firearms and ammunition, according to the Pittman-Robertson Act.

We appreciate all that the Service is doing to support sportsmen and sportswomen in California and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Doug LaMalfa

Member of Congress



Mike Thompson

Member of Congress




Duncan Hunter

Member of Congress



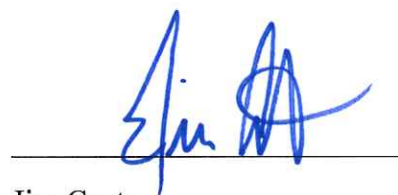
John Garamendi

Member of Congress



Ken Calvert

Member of Congress



Jim Costa

Member of Congress