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April 6, 2023

The Honorable Ken Calvert
U.S. House of Representatives
2205 Rayburn
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for H.R. 872, the Federally Integrated Species Health (FISH) Act

Dear Mr. Calvert:

We write to give our appreciation and strongest possible support for H.R. 872, which you introduced earlier this congress.

We believe that by consolidating the management and regulation of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, all stakeholders affected by the ESA will benefit from a unified approach to managing threatened and endangered species. H.R. 872 will reduce conflicting and often irreconcilable agency directives, providing better understanding and policy alignment for all involved.

Too often, the conflicting directives that water districts like ours receive from regulatory agencies cause litigation, paralysis and costly delays. By reducing, and hopefully eliminating, incompatible biological directives taken by competing resource agencies, those of us charged with protecting, preserving, managing and enhancing the endangered species who inhabit our regional waters can take actions to protect ESA listed species. We will be in a vastly superior position to fulfill our preservation mandate, which can only benefit the regional ecosystem.

As many have pointed out, H.R. 872 is an important step in reducing wasted time and money while maintaining sound and responsible resource management decisions. We applaud your legislation as it represents a practical, common-sense approach to enhancing protections for ESA listed species. Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the federal government's approach to species protection through better decision-making is a goal that we should all strive for. Ultimately, we are confident that this legislation would only serve to positively benefit species.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mauricio E. Guardado", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Mauricio Guardado, general manager