

JOSH HARDER
10TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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October 3, 2019

Eric M. Ueland
Director of Legislative Affairs
The White House, West Wing
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC, 20502

Dear Mr. Ueland,

I write today [regarding reports](#) that the administration plans to defund and disband the National Invasive Species Council (NISC). I urge the Administration to reconsider this course of action given the importance of this council for combatting invasive species, including nutria in California and across the country in other nutria-impacted states.

My district in California's Central Valley is facing an invasion by the nutria, an invasive species of rodent originally from South America. Disbanding this important committee may have detrimental effects on the local and national effort to stop the nutria.

Nutria threaten local farmers, water infrastructure, and indigenous wildlife. They can weigh up to forty pounds, eat a quarter of their body weight every day, and reproduce at a shocking rate. One female nutria can result in 200 offspring in a single year. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reports that without aggressive action to contain the species, the population of nutria in California could explode to 250,000 nutria within five years.

The ramifications of undermining or slowing down this effort could be costly for the state and federal government. This is an extreme situation. We require the full force of all federal partners in this fight. Disbanding the NISC when we face such an imminent threat is imprudent.

As you know, over a dozen different agencies and organizations within the federal government are responsible for sharing the fight on invasive species. The NISC unifies all of these disparate efforts and also provides high-level expertise through the NISC's Secretariat. The full-time professional staff at the Secretariat produce high-quality training materials that help partner departments in their efforts to stop invasive species. This is all done at a low-cost to the taxpayer that yields a valuable impact to local communities.

California is in the fight of its life against a giant, invasive swamp rat. This is not the time to disband the federal body charged with leading the charge against invasive species. I respectfully ask you to reconsider this decision without delay.

Sincerely,

Josh Harder

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Josh Harder". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "J" and "H".

Member of Congress
California 10th District