

Nutria
History in California
March 2018

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Nutria

- Late March 2017 Wildlife Services trapper conducting beaver damage management caught one animal near Gustine, CA
- CDFW Wildlife Investigations Lab determined it was a pregnant female with 7 young.
- CDFW (lead agency), CDFEA, State Parks, US Fish Wildlife Service, private hunting clubs, irrigation districts,
- Trail camera monitoring (lure from Wildlife Services Chesapeake Bay Nutria Eradication)
- Reported sightings on two State Park properties: Merced River near Delhi and Grasslands







Nutria History

- 1948 – Stanislaus County escape from fur farm near Oakdale
- 1959 – Nutria permitting transferred to CDEA (324 licenses)
- 1965 – Los Angeles County, 13 animals from Dominguez Canal
- 1971 – last year with 3 licensed fur farmers



Back Down

A huge South American rodent with an appetite like an incinerator is eating its way into the U.S. The question is—can it be stopped?

By HART STILWELL

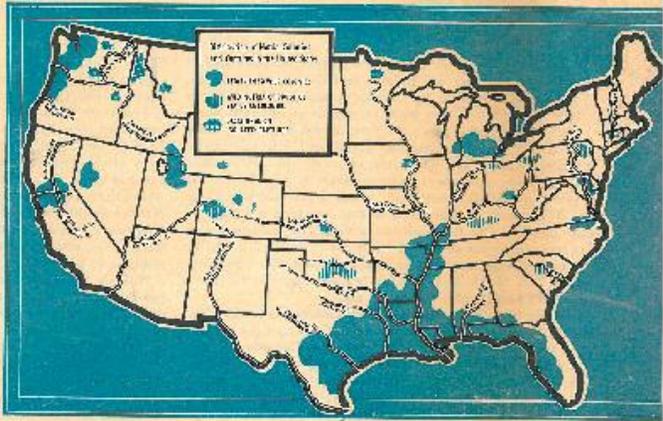
From the way things are shaping up, there's about 1000 something besides ink that is going to be gnawed at the by-roads of our way of life if we don't take some cold hard and swift action. That mouse is a monstrous, hideous-looking swamp rat called the nutria, which is plugging its way north west and southeast from its probable beginning in Louisiana.

You may notice your first contact with the creature under the cute name of "marsh rat," adopted by some people who are trying to induce the American public to eat the beast.

The idea is fine. But, like almost every other idea about dealing with the nutria, it won't work. If everybody began eating nutria as a substitute for chicken and steak, the thicket now swarming might fade.

But I know my fellow American. He can't quite do eat a rat. Neither can I.

So we have the nutria on our minds, eating his way into the heart of the land, leaving behind a trail of devastation. He is gnawing great "rat-ous" in corn fields, rice fields, sugarcane fields, sweet potato patches, beans, gardens. He is clearing the creek and swampland out of millions of acres of marsh and, making dark lakes by eating away everything above the surface.



If you want a more systematic souvenir, there are some. In the wake of the nutria, the wooden duck decoys eaten down to a wooden butt (chewed up when the wood was soft) and buildings beginning to rock on foundations eaten away by rotting just for the price. Somebody had better start standing guard over the White House if it has any soft wood in it.

We must of the people against the same old action are surprisingly uncommon. Louisiana is the state that has

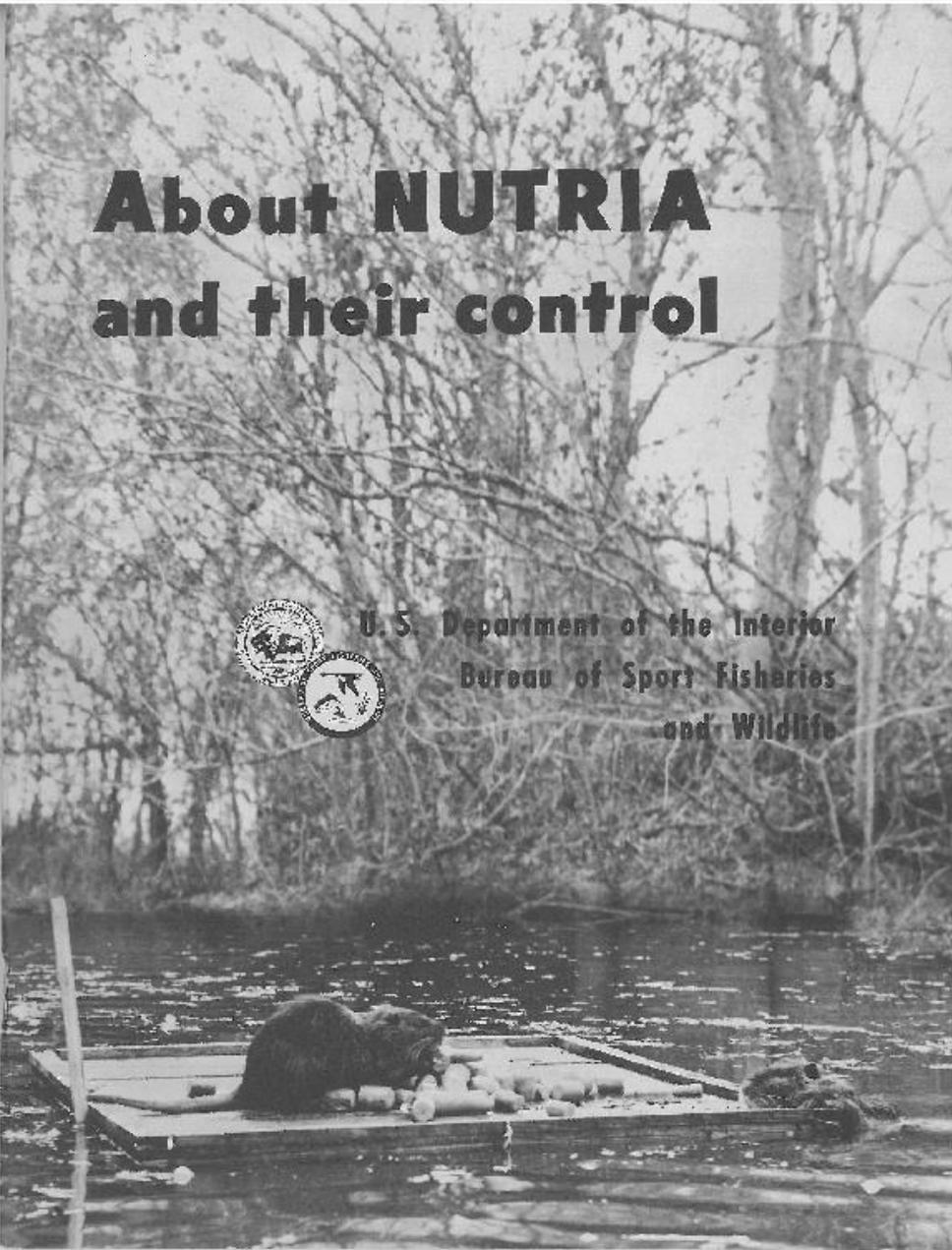
Photograph by H. M. MASON, JR.

Map by GLEN COLTON

About NUTRIA and their control



U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Sport Fisheries
and Wildlife



**TEN REASONS WHY
YOU SHOULD BE
RAISING NUTRIA NOW!**

1. Nutria breeding in this country is just getting under way. So you have a chance to be in on the "ground floor."
2. Raising the animals requires little work—and it's so interesting!
3. Your investment is quite small when compared to the potential profit.
4. Nutria have clean living habits. There's no bother to the neighbors!
5. Nutria are the only fur-bearing animals that are, apparently, immune to disease.
6. The animals are easy-going and placid. They definitely don't destroy one another's pelts or destroy their young.
7. Nutria require a very small space—even a back yard being sufficient as a starter!
8. The Nutria fur, being as luxurious as it is, is in the high price bracket.
9. Nutria breed early—and are prolific!
10. The demand for pelts and breeders is far in excess of the supply!

*Start your Nutria
Farm Today*

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FROM THE -

**ARGENTINE NUTRIA
BREEDING FARM**

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AND YOU RAISE



INFORMATION ON AMERICA'S NEWEST AND
MOST PROFITABLE FUR FARMING INDUSTRY

20/5
5/12

Smart #1

Decline in Nutria Breeders

The decline in the number of nutria holding permits issued is significant to the general trend since only 53 permits were issued for the fiscal year 1963-64.

The decline of nutria breeding is attributed to the low prices received for the pelts, disillusioned breeders who had expectations of selling breeding stock at inflated prices, and a awareness of the public to the limitations of nutria raising as a profitable commercial venture.

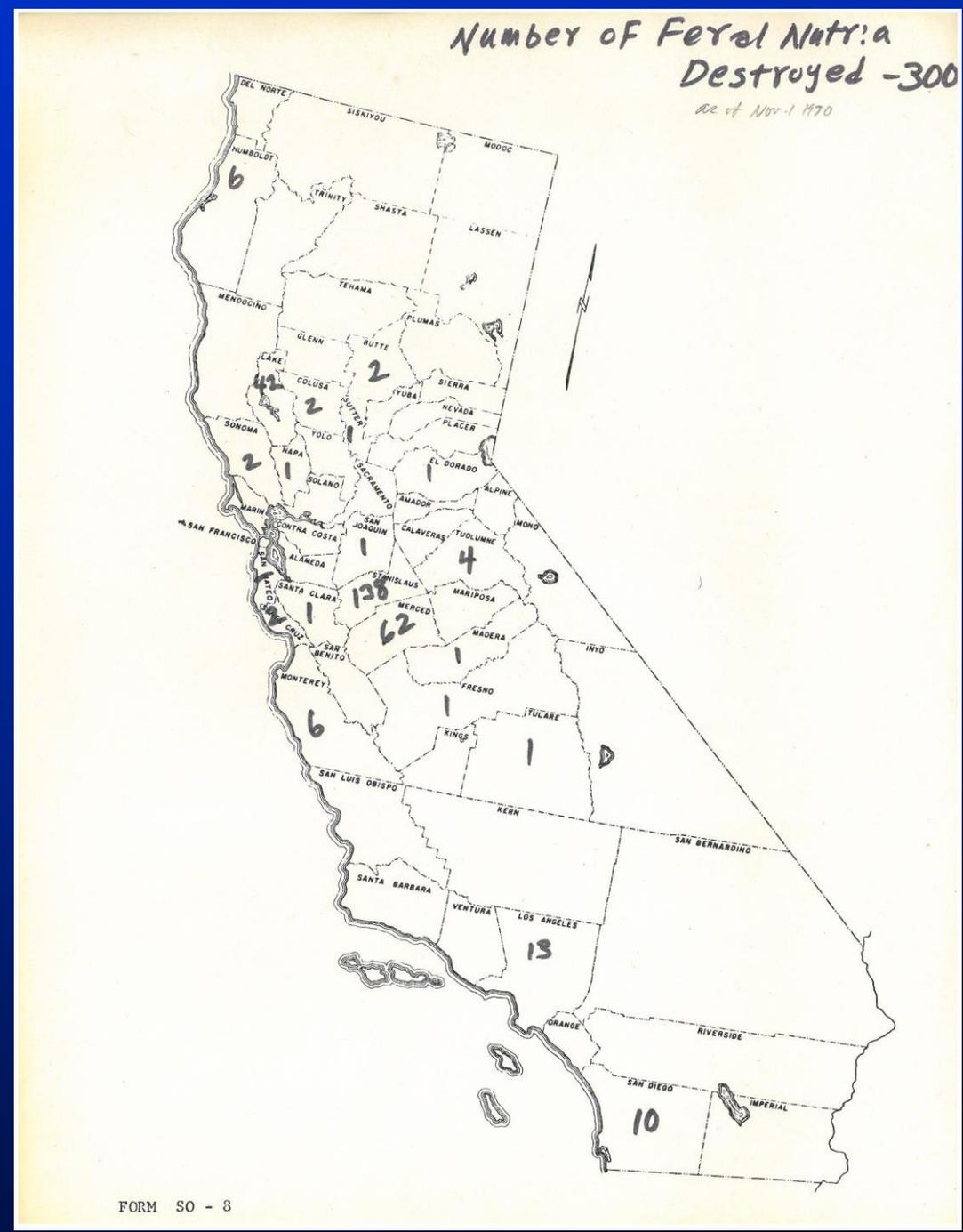
There seems to be few grounds at present to support an optimistic view as to the future of the nutria business in California.

NUTRIA PERMITS ISSUED By Vertebrate Pest Control State Department of Agriculture

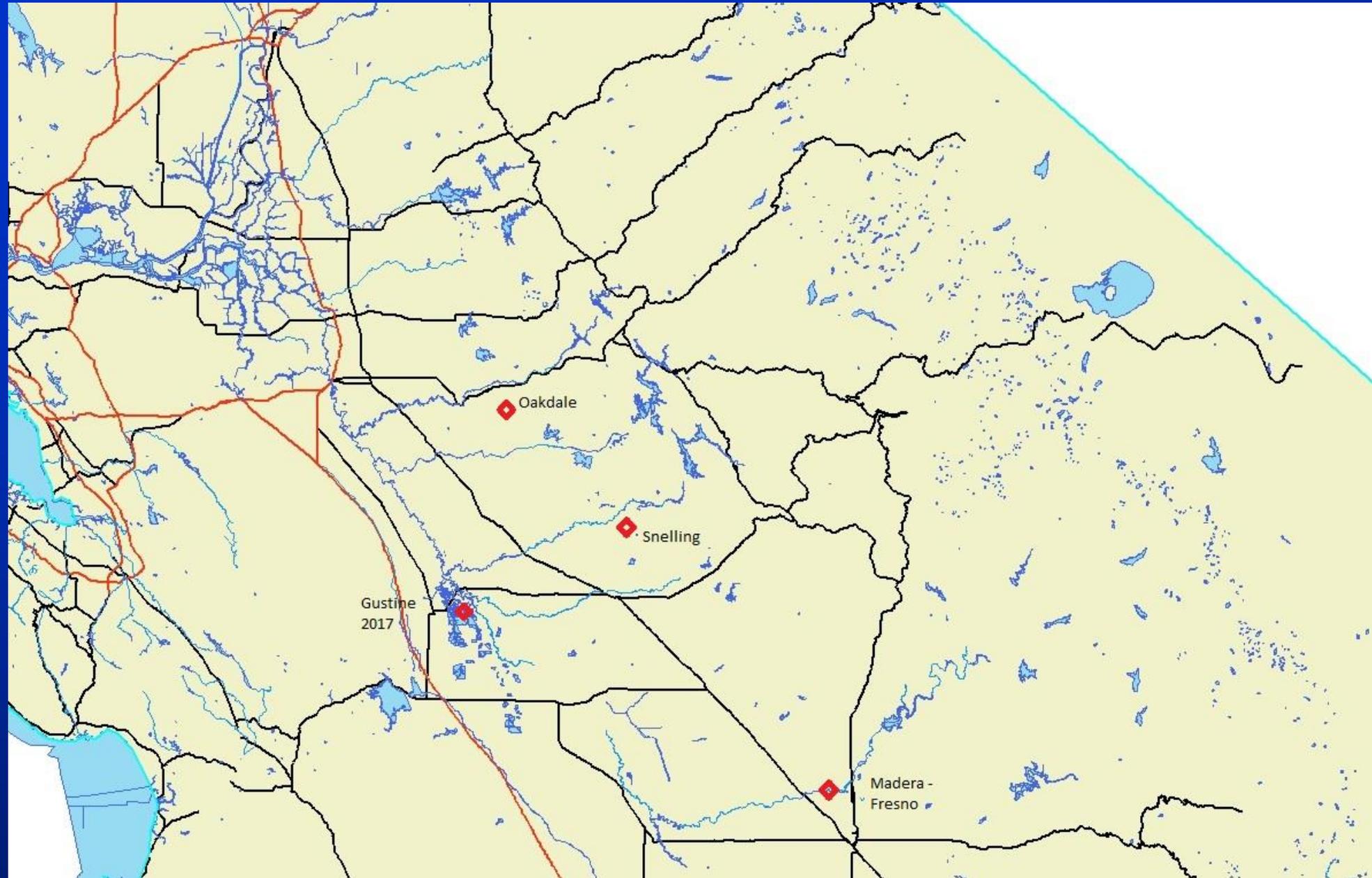
<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>No. of Permits Issued</u>
1958-59	324
1959-60	279
1960-61	223
1961-62	147
1962-63	111
1963-64	53
1964-65	

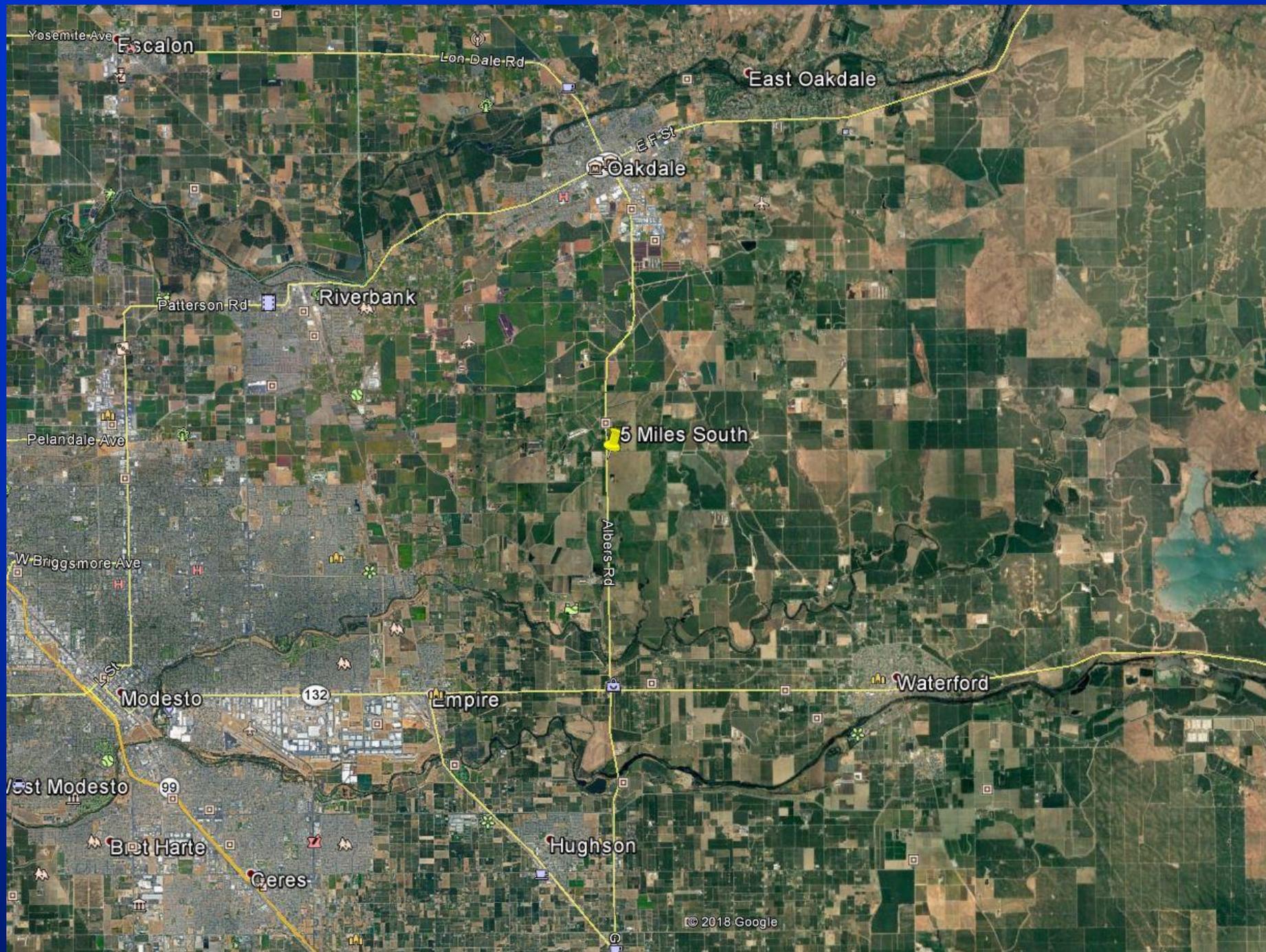
Diels - This report indicates that two nutria were taken by trappers - one from Machera Co - one from San Joaquin Co. Perhaps George Seymour from Fish & Game Code tracks them down from trapper reports to who took them. Then we could follow up.

1965	28	Los Angeles	13 animals Dominguez Channel, Wilmington, CA
1964	54		19
1963	111		Ag Code Sec 165.1 increased Nutria permit fee. 2 animals trapped near Healdsburg, 15 miles river surveyed. Report near Jacksonville, Tuolumne County. Report San Joaquin River between Fresno-Madera east of Hwy 99.
1962	147	Sutter, Eldorado, Butte	1 animal Sutter Basin, 1 animal 8 miles east Placerville, 1 animal Owen's property south of Oroville, Snelling Merced no animals trapped
1961	223	Eldorado, Lake, Los Angeles, Merced, San Diego and Tulare	42 animals captured Lake County mouth of Cole Creek, Tulare one animal trapped, Snelling in Merced none found, San Diego 10 animals trapped (9 Grossmont, 1 from San Diego River gravel pit), Los Angeles 10 animals trapped at Griffith Park Zoo.
1960	280	Merced, Napa, Sonoma, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, Humboldt and Tulare	1 trapped near Snelling Merced County. Escaped animals trapped and destroyed in remaining counties. No numbers given. Report of multiple fur growers being cited for failing to maintain their enclosures. Numerous reports of loose animals turned out to be muskrats.
1959	324	Merced, Fresno, Monterey	Nutria law transferred from CDFG to CDFA/County Ag. July 1, 1958. Merced near Snelling 60 animals, Fresno 1 animal in irrigation ditch near site of overturned truckload, Monterey 6 animals trapped
1958	n/a	n/a	n/a not mentioned in Bulletin
1957	n/a	Sutter, Merced and Sonoma	Mention flooding escape near Yuba City, Merced 1 animal at mouth of Merced River, Sonoma 1 animal Russian River near Cloverdale
1956	n/a	Stanislaus, Sutter	Reports of Nutria tracks in two locations (one a known site of prior trapping) no animals confirmed. Sutter a Yuba City breeders entire population was drowned. No escaped animals found. CDFG permitting for breeders suggested 2300-2400 animals in California.
1955	n/a	n/a	n/a not mentioned in Bulletin
1954	n/a	n/a	mentions numerous farms, need for permits and pen inspection from CA Dept. Fish and Game
1953	n/a	Stanislaus	Stanislaus surveys found only one location infested. Population being left alone to determine pest nature. Comment that Nutria are now being raised for fur across California, it has not been determined whether feral Coypu should be regarded as pests.
1952	n/a	Stanislaus	Survey known areas, no animals found. Comment that Coypu were not found to cause damage in other states where they've escaped.
1951	n/a	Stanislaus	Over 100 animals killed near Oakdale. Survey of 150 square miles Stanislaus and San Joaquin County. Boat survey of Tuolumne, Stanislaus and San Joaquin Rivers.
1950	n/a	Stanislaus	23+ animals trapped in swamps near original fur farm south of Oakdale
1949	n/a	n/a	n/a not mentioned in Bulletin
1948	n/a	Stanislaus	First mention of Nutria. Fur Farm 4 miles south of Oakdale received 5 males, 13 females and 23 young. Many escaped and were inhabiting marshes and canals causing damage. 10 animals had been trapped.



Nutria confirmed in California (historic)





Yosemite Ave
Escalon

Lon Dale Rd

East Oakdale

Oakdale

Riverbank

Patterson Rd

5 Miles South

Pelandale Ave

Albers Rd

W Briggsmore Ave

Modesto

132

Empire

Waterford

West Modesto

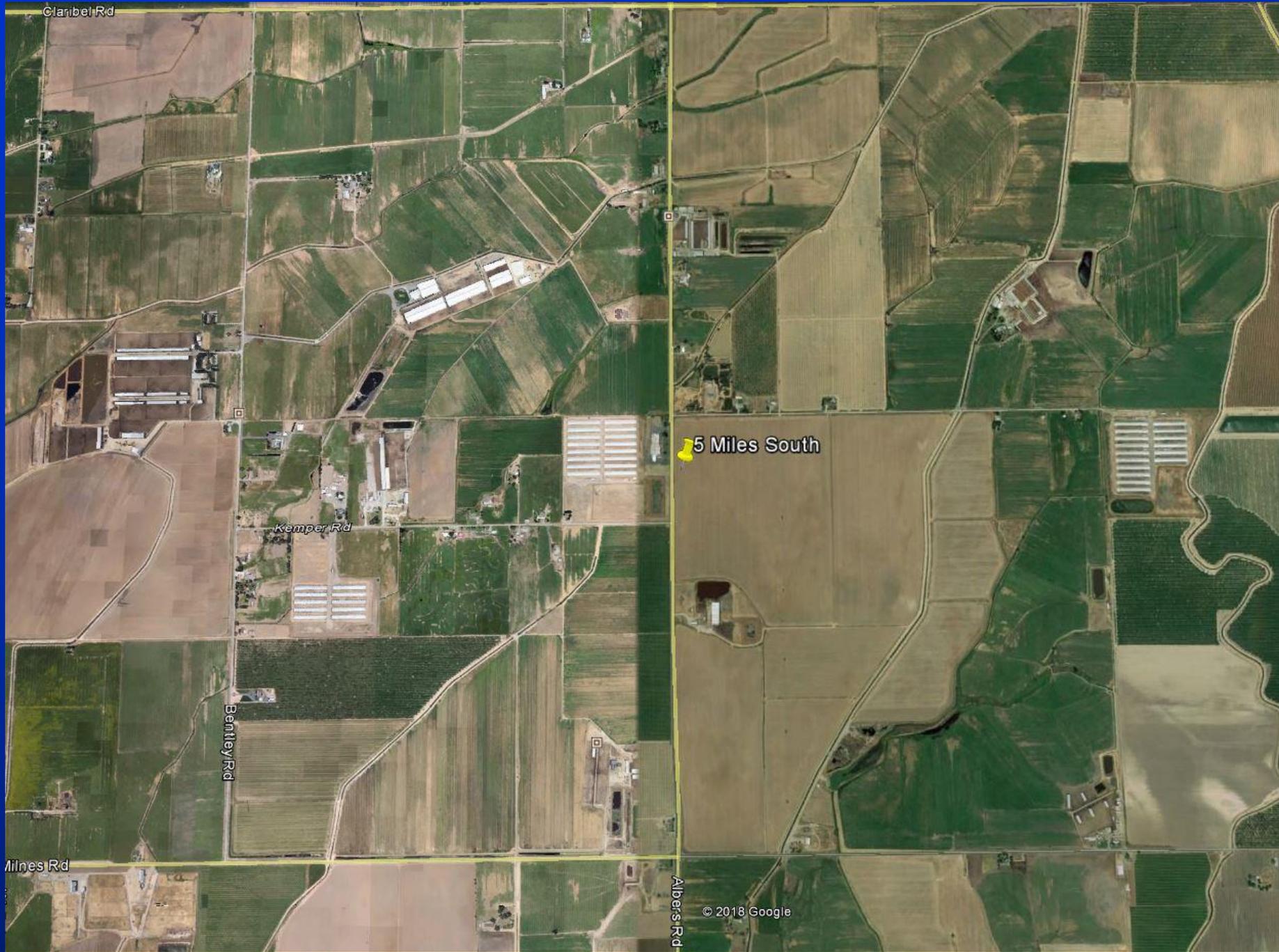
99

East Modesto

Hughson

East Modesto

Geres



Claribel Rd

Kemper Rd

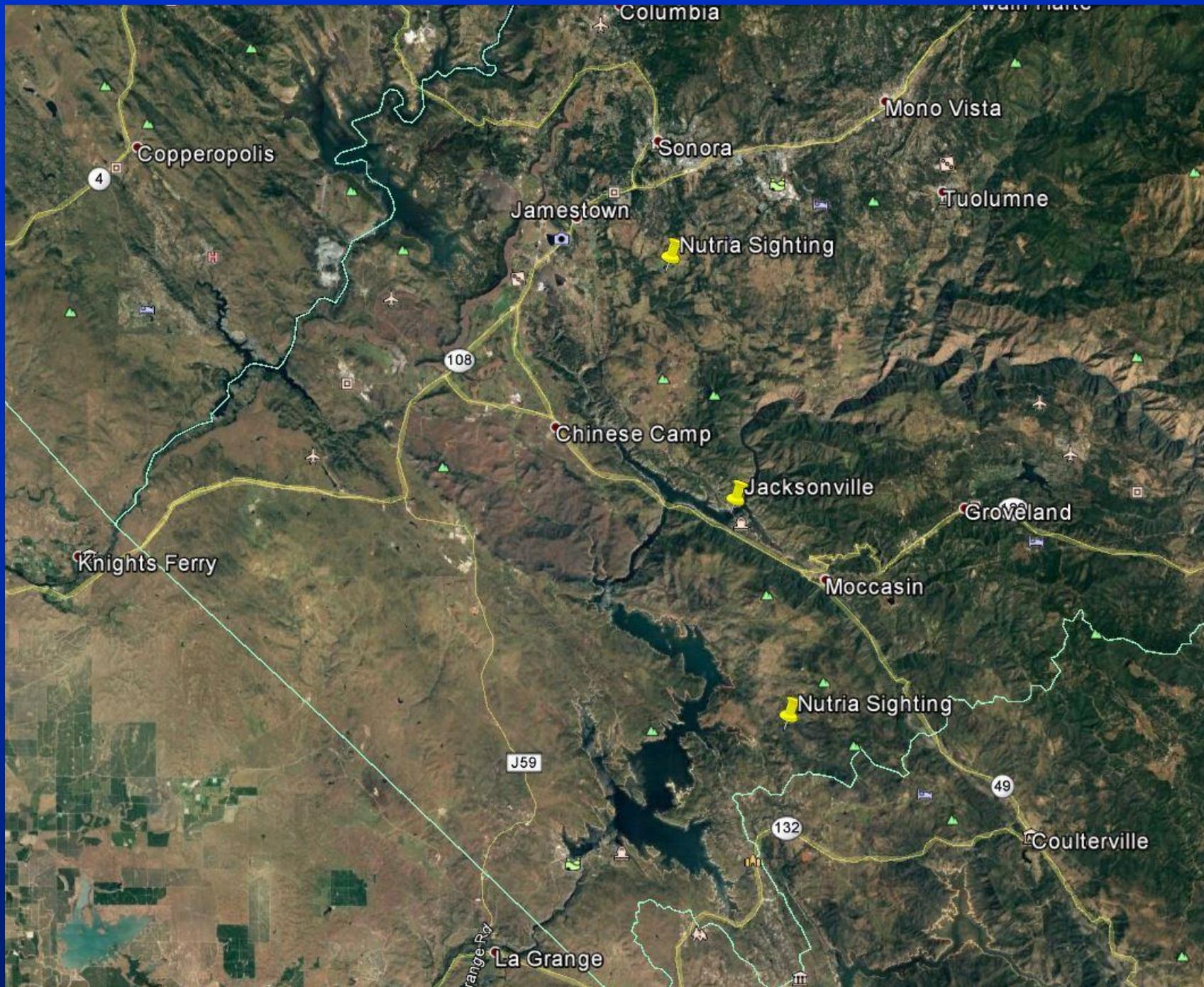
Bentley Rd

Milnes Rd

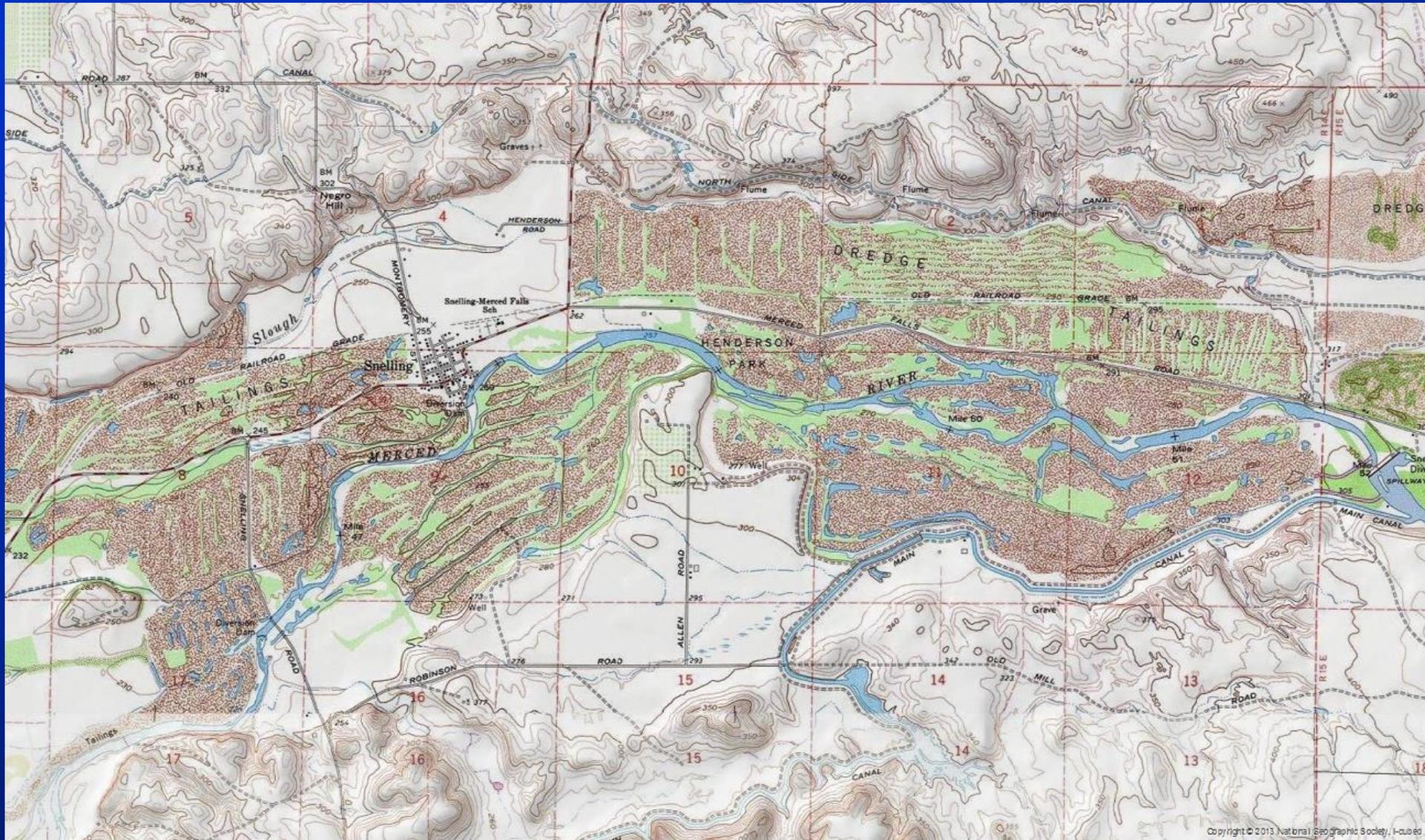
Albers Rd

5 Miles South

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Snelling – dredge tailing ponds on Merced River



Last known Nutria eradication Los Angeles County - 1965

NUTRIA - HABITAT



DOMINGUEZ CHANNEL, L.A.-CO.
5-65



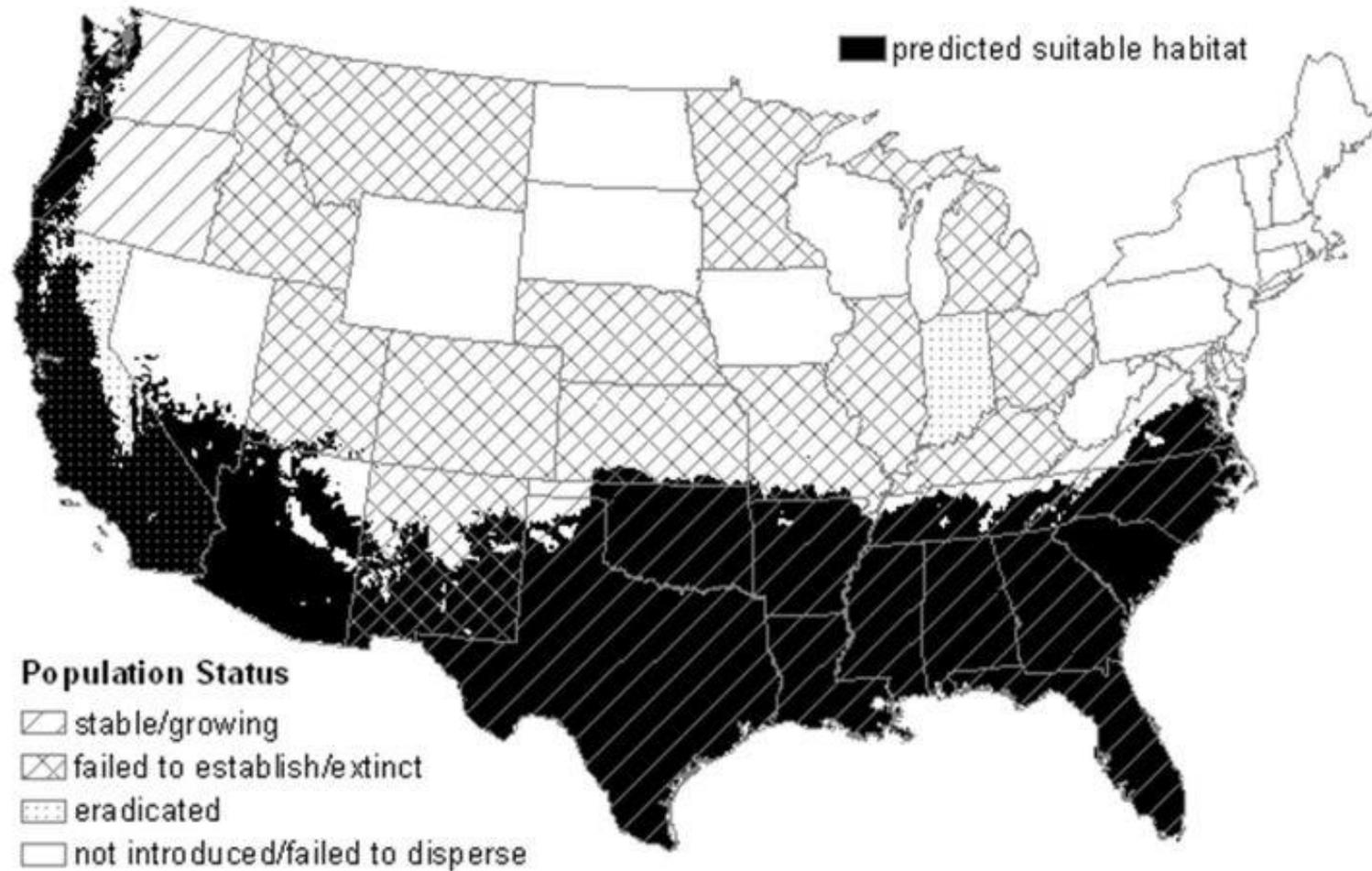


Figure 2.1.4. Geographical extent of predicted suitable nutria habitat (based on 2003-2007 mechanistic model) in the contiguous United States compared to status of nutria populations by state as described by Bounds (2000) and Carter and Leonard (2002)

Sheffels, Trevor Robert, "Status of Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*) Populations in the Pacific Northwest and Development of Associated Control and Management Strategies, with an Emphasis on Metropolitan Habitats" (2013). Dissertations and Theses. Paper 665.

Nutria monitoring board – W.S. Chesapeake Bay Nutria Eradication Project

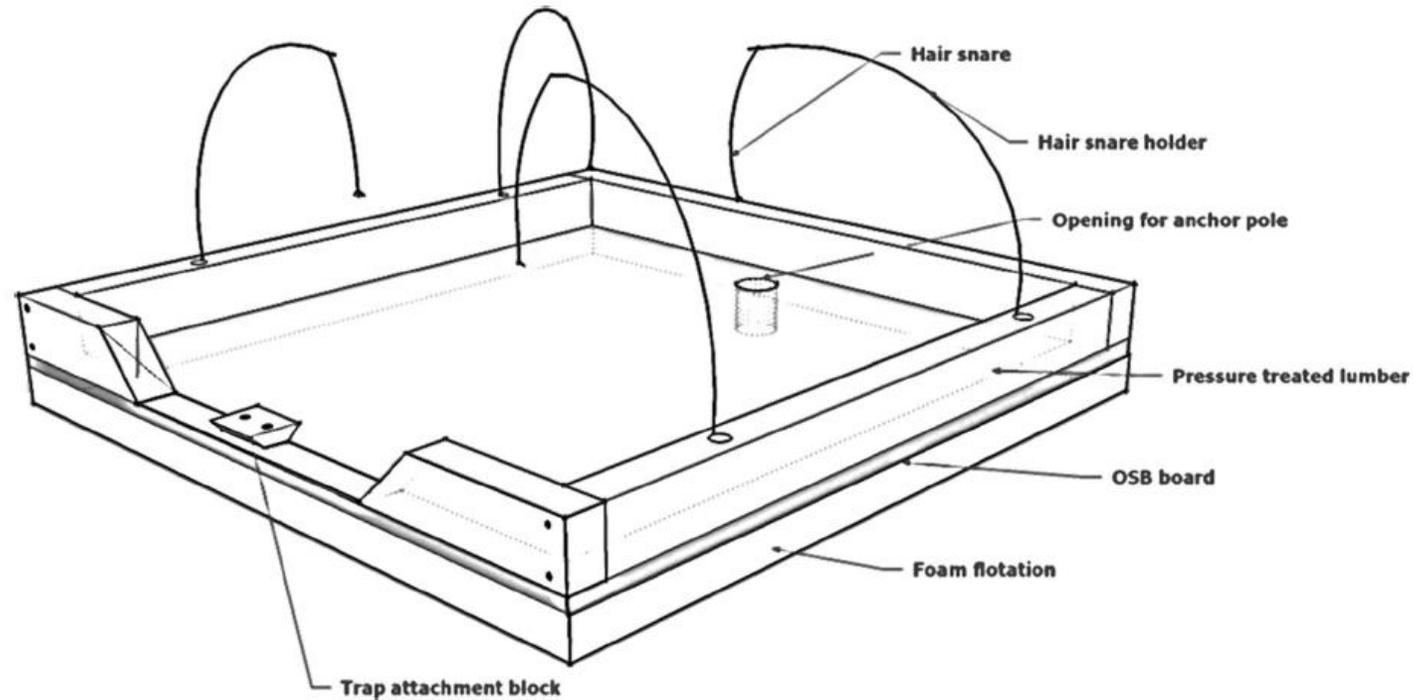


Fig. 2 Diagram of nutria monitoring platform used by the Chesapeake Bay Nutria Eradication Program. Platforms resemble a nutria bed (matted down vegetation) and can be placed on land or in the water







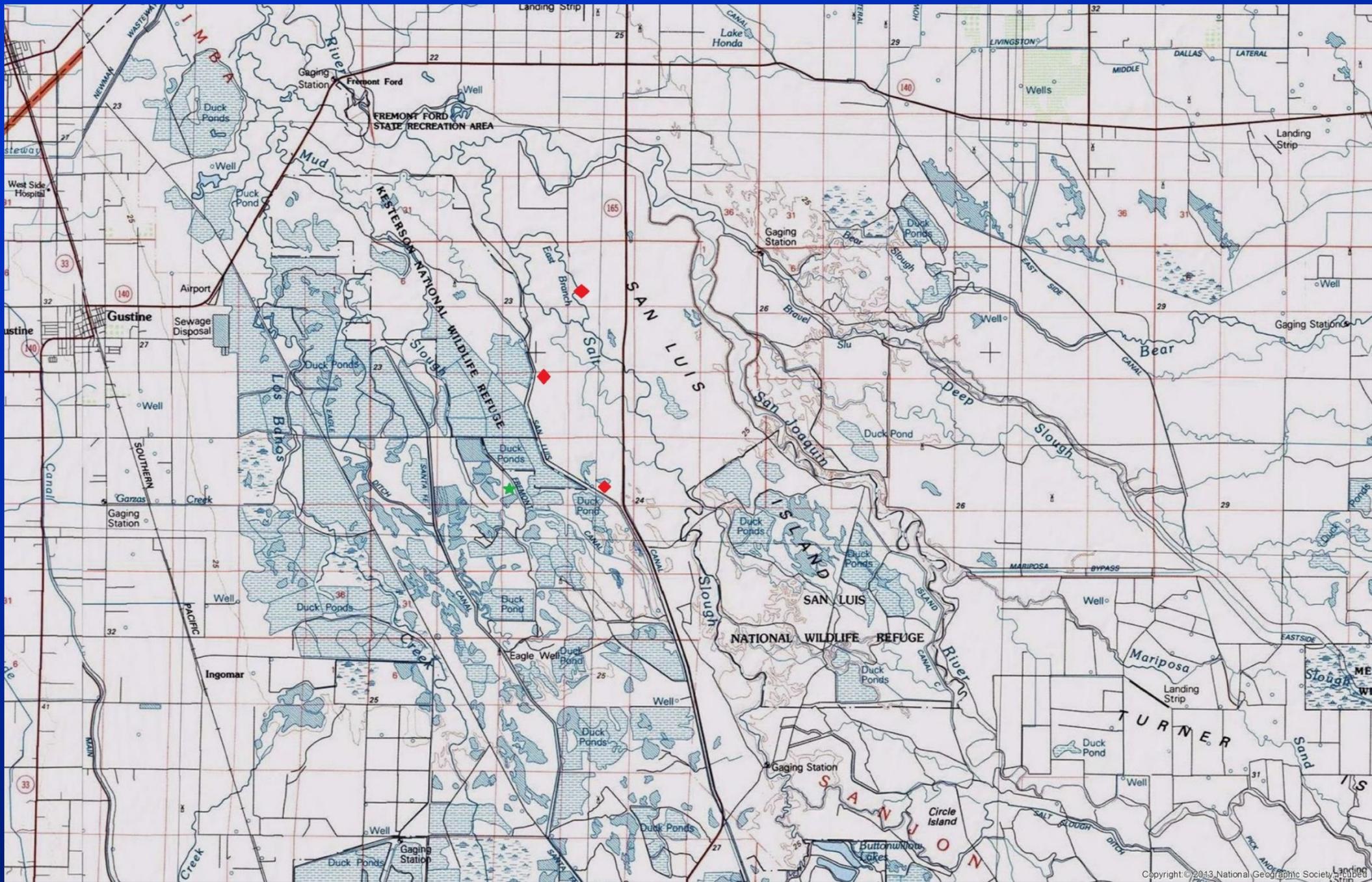
McConnell State Park

McConnell State Park
Merced River near Delhi









Cameras

Trapped animal