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CLOSING REMARKS FOR THE FIFTEENTH VERTEBRATE PEST CONFERENCE

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Proc. 15th Vertebrate Pest Conf. (J. E. Borrecco & R. E. Marsh, Editors) Published at University of Calif., Davis. 1992

As chair-elect for the 16th Vertebrate Pest Conference it is my responsibility to provide the closing remarks for this conference. In achieving this objective I would like to accomplish three things: summarize the 15th conference, leave you with some thoughts to take home, and provide information and an invitation to the 16th Vertebrate Pest Conference to be held in 1994.

At this conference, over the last three days, eighty-one papers have been presented. There were 327 registered participants representing eleven foreign countries and thirty-two states. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the individuals who have worked very hard to make this conference a reality.

A special thanks to John Borrecco, Chairperson of the 15th Conference for his leadership and guidance in making this conference a success, to Bob Timm and Bob Schmidt who teamed up to provide us with one of the most comprehensive, and well received programs yet, Jerry Clark who did the thankless job of local arrangements and who despite many unfounded concerns was able to pull off a smooth running conference in a fabulous location, Rex Baker for his diligence in providing a great field trip despite the weather, Charlie Crabb and Robin Breckenridge for providing a valuable educational display, and Paul Gorenzel and Dell Clark for handling the publicity and administration of accreditation.

Thanks also go to all the individuals who worked behind the scenes running lights and projectors, and of course, to our invaluable registration staff Sydni Gillette, Dorothy Beadle and Lisa Worland who handled the preregistration, registration of participants at the conference and graciously answered the same questions over and over again.

In closing this conference I would like to remind you of a message that was presented by Robert Bidinotto our keynote speaker and reinforced by many other speakers during the conference, and that is, that much of our time and creative energy is expended in dealing not with vertebrate pest problems, but rather with the perceptions and concerns of the general public and those of adversarial specialty groups. But as Mr. Bidinotto said, "humans are a part of nature too." While it is imperative that we be sensitive and respond to the genuine concerns of the interested public, we cannot forget that the work we do is good, and has value to society, often as a whole.

It has become generally accepted that professionals in this industry have recognized the need to educate and inform the public about our work. Unfortunately, we seem to be spending most of our time talking to each other, or to others who are already fairly well informed. In order to be successful in our educational objectives and our profession, we must be willing to take our message outside of this inner circle of knowledge, and inform people whose only other source of information may be the sensationalism and misrepresentation of the media.

So, as we leave this conference I charge you all with a task., .and that is just talk to people. Tell them what you do and why it is good. Talk to your neighbors and your friends. You would be surprised how many people are uniformed and just need to hear the real story.

I would like to invite you all to join the Vertebrate Pest Council the first week of March in 1994 for the 16th Vertebrate Pest Conference. The conference will be held in the south San Francisco Bay area, at the Double Tree Hotel in Santa Clara right next to the Great America Parkway Amusement Park.

On behalf of the Vertebrate Pest Council I would like to thank you for your participation, and have a safe trip home.