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## Closing Remarks—Seventeenth Vertebrate Pest Conference

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## CLOSING REMARKS—SEVENTEENTH VERTEBRATE PEST CONFERENCE

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Proc. 17th Vertebr. Pest Conf. (R.M. Timm & A.C. Crabb, Eds.) Published at Univ. of Calif., Davis. 1996.

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As chair-elect of the council, I would like to thank all of those who participated in this 17th Vertebrate Pest Conference.

We had a total attendance of 340 from 27 states in the U.S., including 27 attendees from 8 countries outside the U.S. The contributions and sacrifices made by foreign speakers is genuinely appreciated and has, as always, added greatly to the diversity of the conference.

As most of you know, the council's primary goal is fostering education and advancement in the field of vertebrate pest management. We have always tried to draw noted experts to present a broad range of information on animals, large and small, from areas around the world. Our program chairpersons, John O'Brian and Gary Simmons, have accomplished this goal by providing a new program with a variety of information regarding development of new materials, techniques and improvements in integrated pest management. In addition, we have also listened to environmental and regulatory issues and have been challenged to consider new and varying public values, attitudes and philosophies covering a very broad spectrum of vertebrate pest control and Animal Rights vs. Animal Welfare issues.

The council also tries to provide a forum for networking between professionals with all levels of expertise. It is for this reason the commercial exhibit and poster presentation area were used to offer refreshments at breaks and the complimentary buffet reception. I feel these changes were successful thanks to Paul Gorenzel, the Commercial Displays Chair, and Lew Davis, who once again did an outstanding job of handling arrangements for us.

Greg Giusti provided us with a field trip with the help of Pierre Gadd that illustrated many of the wildlife problems faced by area producers (including excess moisture) and for introducing participants to the Hopland

Research Station with the help of Bob Timm, the Station Director. Bob Schmidt handled publicity in his usual reliable manner, hence the good attendance, and thanks to Sydni Gillette, who once again handled the massive job of registration. Sydni was assisted by Pat English and on-site by council members Robyn Breckenridge, Art Bischoff, and Wendy Halverson-Martin. John Borrecco handled continuing education and Terry Mansfield spearheaded the poster session. A great "thanks boss" to Bob Timm, the chair of this 17th Vertebrate Pest Conference, who kept us all headed in the right direction. Thanks also to the many other individuals from the Department of Food and Agriculture, U.C. Cooperative Extension, USDA, ADC, and students and retirees who help run projectors and other support functions.

A special thanks from all of us to Walter E. (Howdy) Howard, who was instrumental in forming the council despite resistance from administrators in several agencies, and to other legends in our field in California—Rex Marsh, Richard Dana, Charlie Siebe and others—whose inspirational leadership, research, and teaching has had such a profound impact on our profession and our lives. Without their guidance, the Vertebrate Pest Conference would not be what it is today.

The next conference, in March 1998, will be held at the Red Lion Inn, Costa Mesa, California. Costa Mesa is in Orange County about 10 miles south of Disneyland and close to many other Southern California attractions.

I invite your comments and suggestions for the next and future conferences and ask that you fill out the Conference survey so that we can continue to provide you with a good quality program. For those staying for the post conference tour, enjoy tomorrow.

Thank you for attending this 17th Vertebrate Pest Conference, and I hope to see you at the 18th in 1998.