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Opening Remarks - Seventeenth Vertebrate Pest Conference

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OPENING 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.

It is my honor and my pleasure to greet you this morning, and to welcome you on behalf of the entire Vertebrate Pest Council.

You have come from throughout California, from across the United States, and from many corners of the world to gather here for the purpose of sharing information, expertise, and wisdom in dealing with vertebrate pest problems. Our common purpose is to find yet better methods for preventing and resolving situations in which wildlife comes into conflict with humans. The Conference's mission remains one of education. We learn from each other, and we strive to find better ways of applying our knowledge to real-world problems.

In recognizing that the value of a conference such as this often lies as much in the informal interaction as in the scheduled presentations, the Council this year has structured the Conference to provide you a number of opportunities to meet your fellow participants. I invite you to the complimentary buffet reception this evening beginning at 6:30 p.m., and also to tomorrow evening's wine tasting at the Wine and Visitors Center, which is adjacent to the Red Lion Hotel. For those of you able to

stay an extra day to enjoy northern California, I am pleased to let you know that there is still space available on the Friday sightseeing tour. Details are available at the VPC registration desk.

The wildlife conflicts which occur in northern California are as diverse as its agriculture and biotic communities. Those of you on yesterday's field trip saw some of our challenges—from blackbirds to mountain lions, from rodents to coyotes. Those of us who live in the north coast area of this state enjoy not only the diversity of our surroundings, but we are also often challenged by the array of conflicts between people and wildlife.

I wish to thank those members of the Council, whose names are listed in your program, who took responsibility for the many aspects of this year's program. The conference is truly a joint effort, and we all benefit from the committee chairpersons' thoughtful and careful planning.

Let us know what we can do to make your experience here more valuable. Again, on behalf of the entire Council, welcome to the Conference.