

September 14, 2007

Shannon Smith  
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RE: CA Fish and Game Duck Banding summer 2007

Shannon Smith,

This letter is to summarize the capture, banding, and avian influenza sampling activities that occurred on the Humboldt Bay NWR this past summer. Activities occurred between June 29<sup>th</sup> and August 9, 2007. Traps were initially set out in the pond associated with blind 14 and the slough associated with blind 11 in the hunting zone. Capture and banding did not start until July 25<sup>th</sup>. A third trap was put into the “duck pond” near the refuge headquarters, because the other two traps were not capturing an adequate number of ducks. During the last week of capture the trap at blind 14 was relocated into the “duck pond”.

A total of 55 mallards were processed, 39 were female mallards with 16 being males, and 47 of the 55 were hatch-year birds, with the remaining 8 being after hatch-year birds. All 55 mallards were fitted with Fish and Wildlife Service metal bands, and sampled following USDA protocol for avian influenza. All samples were sent off for analysis.

Capture was asked to end at the first sight of pintail; a flock of 14 pintail were observed August 8<sup>th</sup>. One additional trapping attempt was attempted August 9<sup>th</sup>, but upon arrival at the “duck pond” a family of four otters (2 adults, 2 pups) was observed eating a recently caught mallard. It appeared that the mallard had been caught by the otters in one of the remaining traps, so all traps were closed for capture. All traps were removed from the refuge by August 23<sup>rd</sup>.

I would like to thank the Humboldt Bay NWR staff for cooperation in banding and sampling activities, as well as time from staff aiding the initial location and set-up of traps. Your help was greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

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