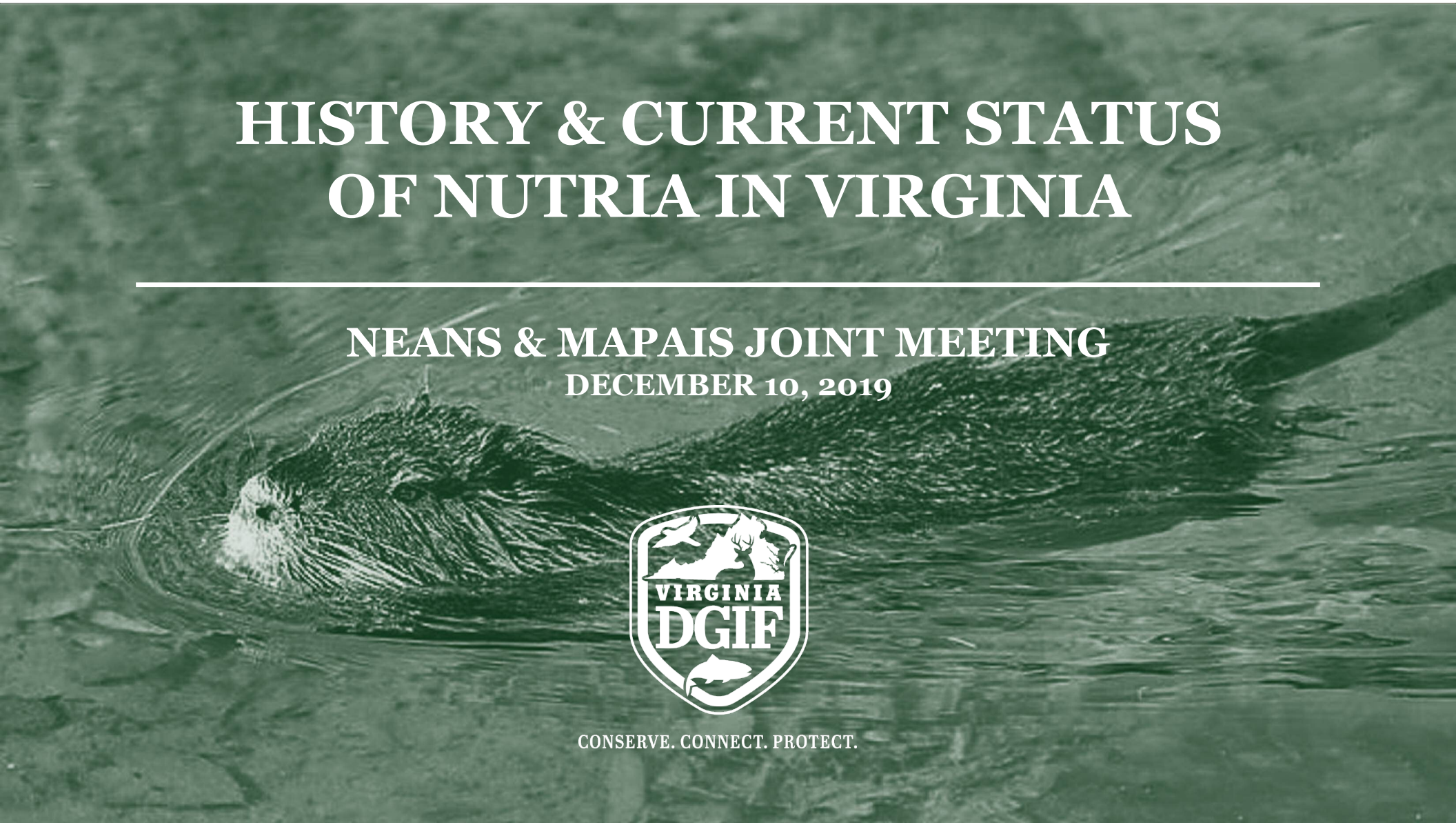

"Rodents of Unusual Size"
"I don't think they really exist"



HISTORY & CURRENT STATUS OF NUTRIA IN VIRGINIA

NEANS & MAPAIS JOINT MEETING

DECEMBER 10, 2019

VIRGINIA DGIF

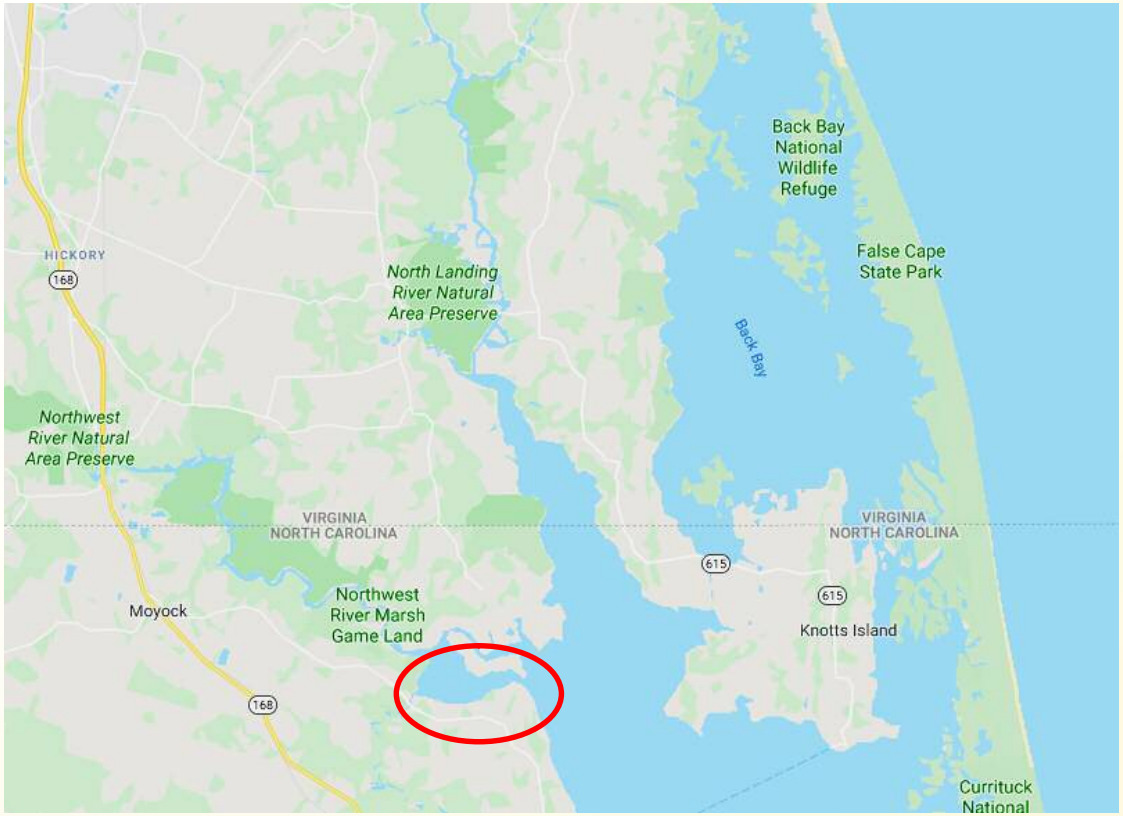
CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

"THE THING"

First nutria documented in Virginia was trapped in Back Bay area in 1956.

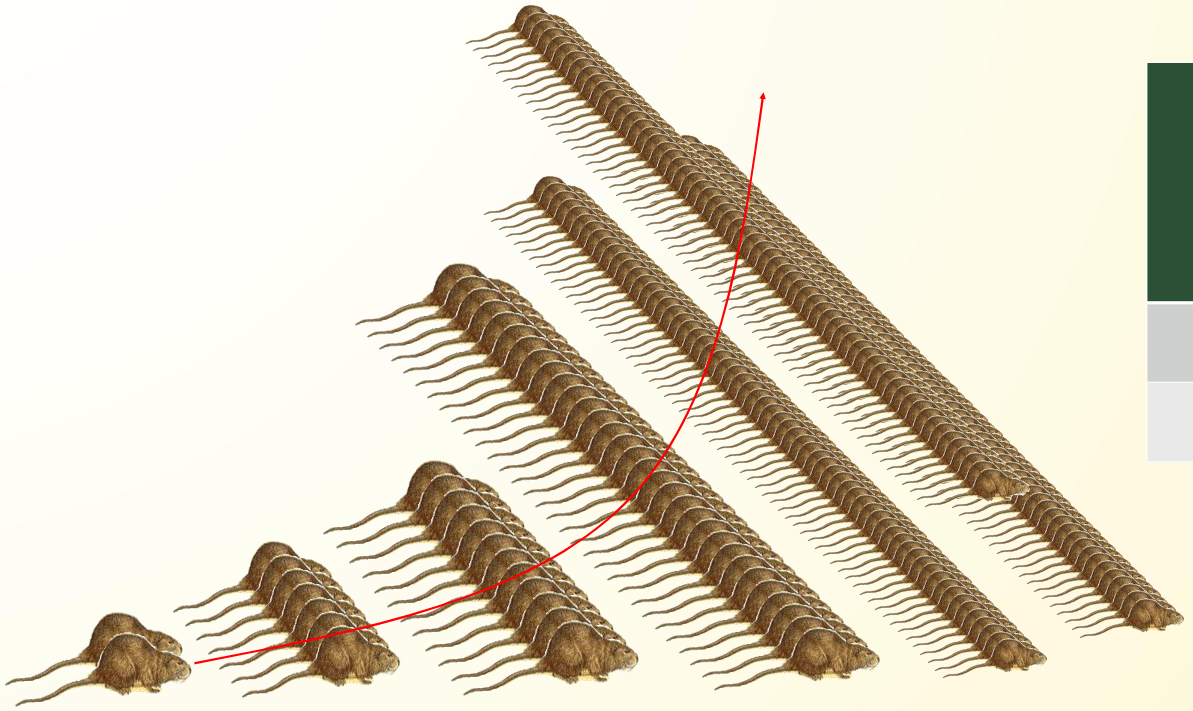
" *The trap was hooked on to the paw of the biggest dern muskrat I ever saw*"

WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?



Nutria were reportedly introduced in the Tull's Creek or Northwest River area in North Carolina during the early 1950's

POPULATIONS GREW AND LIKELY PEAKED IN VIRGINIA DURING THE 1970'S



Season	Nutria Pelts Purchased By Virginia Fur Dealers
1975-76	4,848
1976-77	2,137

Average pelt price in 1976-77 was $3.75 ($11.65 in 2018 dollars)

WINTER OF 1976-77

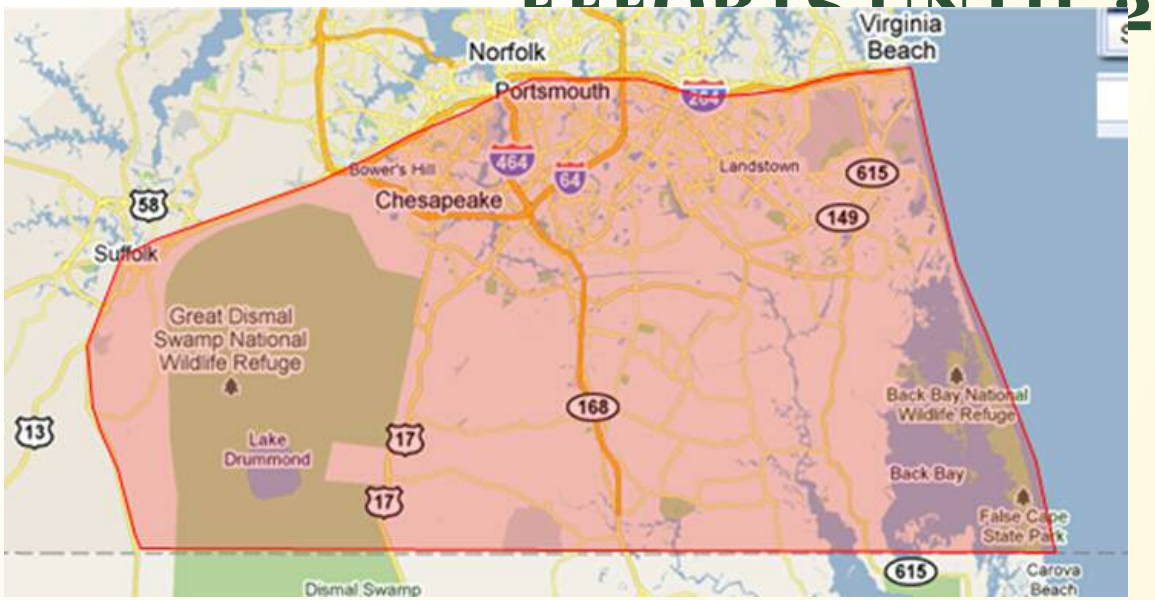
FROZEN CHESAPEAKE BAY - JANUARY 1977

"coldest winter on the East Coast since the founding of the Republic"

Average temperature in Norfolk, VA during January 1977 was 29.2° F

Season	Nutria Pelts Purchased By Virginia Fur Dealers
1977-78	737

NO COORDINATED POPULATION MONITORING EFFORTS UNTIL 2011



Populations were believed to be limited to southeast corner of state with occasional reports on Delmarva Peninsula

VA/NC Nutria Assessment Project (MAPAIS/DGIF/USFWS Funding 2012-2014)

- Design and implement a standard interagency reporting process
- Delineate the current distribution of nutria in VA
- Establish a multiagency panel to guide development of a nutria eradication plan
- Publish a report on the status of nutria in Virginia with options for future control or eradication
- Develop a Mid-Atlantic (NC/VA) Nutria Management Strategic Plan

DEVELOP STANDARDIZED REPORTING SYSTEM

Report a Nutria in Virginia

CMI Home Page | *Report a Nutria* | About the Project | Identification of Nutria | Species Information | Human/Wildlife Conflicts

Report a Nutria in Virginia

Please provide any information regarding sightings of nutria in Virginia or the surrounding states. The collection of this information is important to actively manage this species. In no way will CMI or the partner agencies share or sell the information provided below. We thank you for your time in assisting in the management of this invasive species. NOTE: Required fields are in red.

Required Fields:

Date of Sighting (M/D/YY): State: VA City:

Nearest Address/Intersection: Zip:

Number of Nutria Seen: 1-5

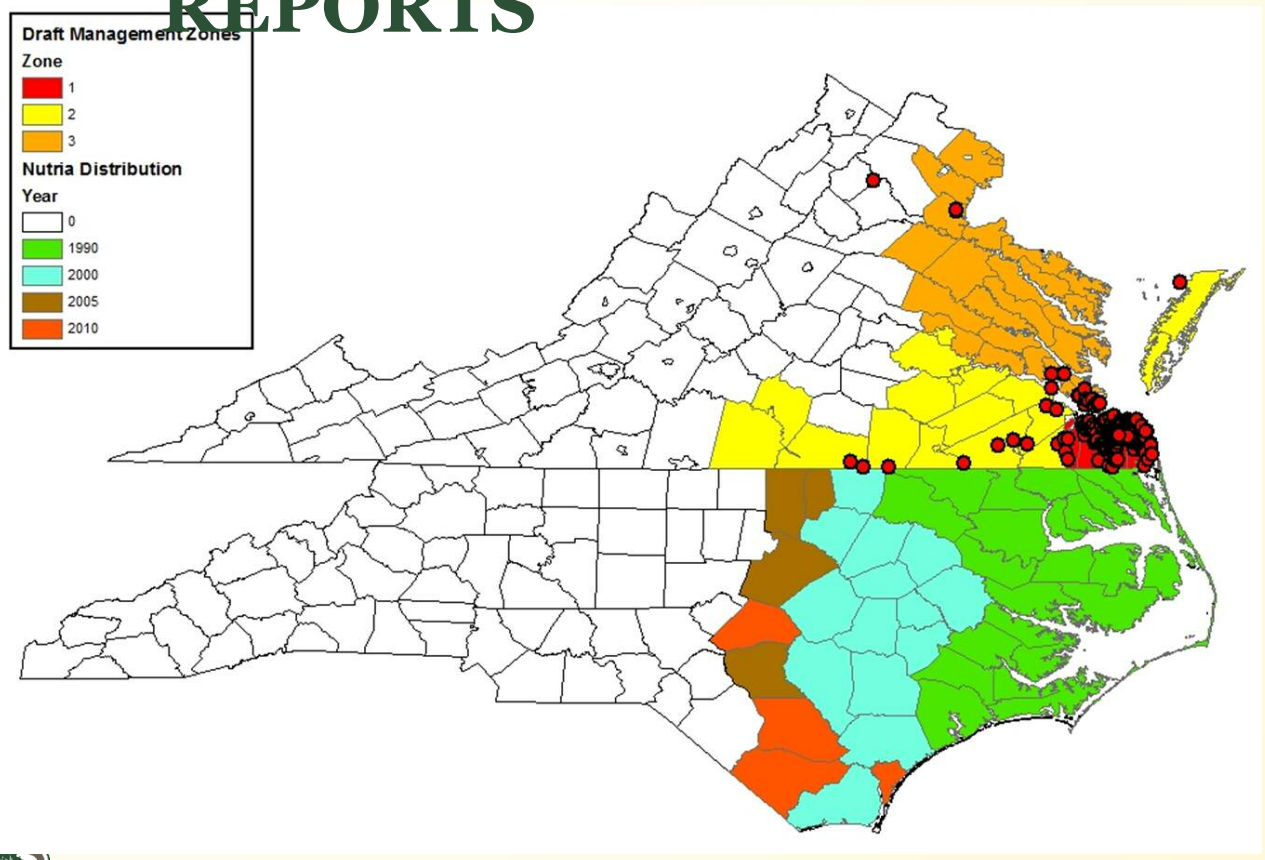
Optional Fields:

First Name: Last Name:

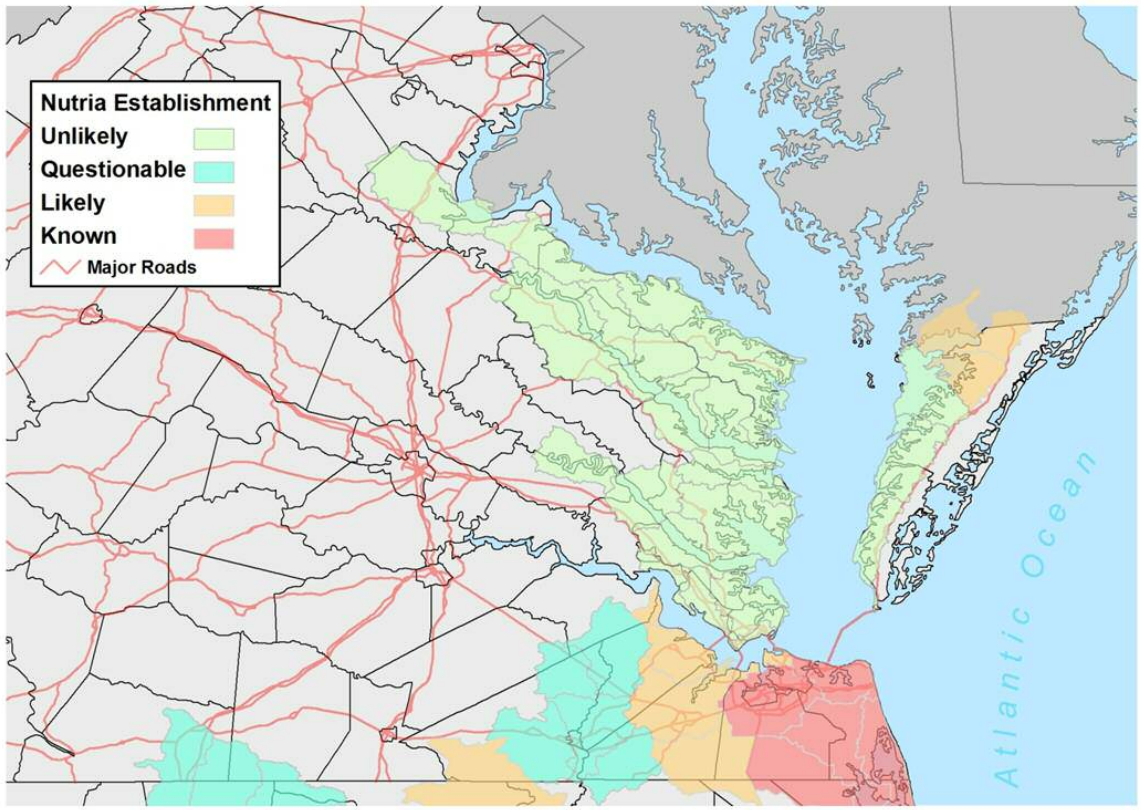
Contact Email (for follow-up):

- Developed a database of historic observation records (1956-2011) and created internet-based reporting system for public to report observations
- Observations also solicited via e-mails to natural resource groups, classified ads in local newspapers, direct mailings to trappers, newspaper articles, and television interviews.

MAPPING AND INVESTIGATING REPORTS



CONTEMPORARY NUTRIA DISTRIBUTION (2013)



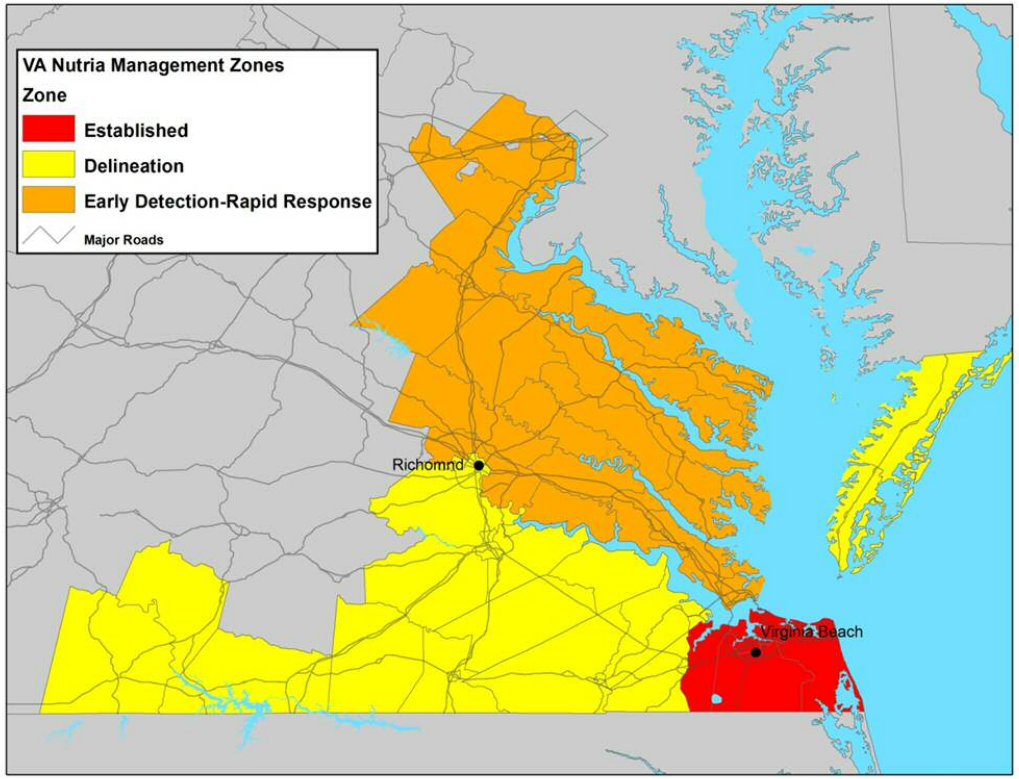
Unlikely - suitable habitat but no credible reports

Questionable - reliable reports but not believed to be established

Likely - confirmed reports, likely established, probably not large numbers

Known - established and widespread in suitable habitats

EDUCATION & TARGETED FIELD INVESTIGATIONS




VIRGINIA
DGIF
NORTH
CAROLINA
Wildlife
RESOURCES
COMMISSION
U.S.
FISH & WILDLIFE
SERVICE
USDA
WILDLIFE SERVICES
CONSERVATION
MANAGEMENT
INSTITUTE

VA Nutria Detector Dog Program (MAPAIS/DGIF/USFWS Funding 2015-2016)

- Train canines to detect range expansions within Virginia's *Early Detection – Rapid Response* management zone
- Examine efficiency of our detector dogs under varying environmental conditions
- Examine effectiveness and efficiency of our detector dogs in presence of non-target furbearers
- Enable DGIF response and investigation of nutria reports outside of known distribution in Virginia

NUTRIA DETECTOR DOG PROGRAM - VIRGINIA Biologist Todd Engelmeyer & "Birdee"

MAPAIS Research Project:

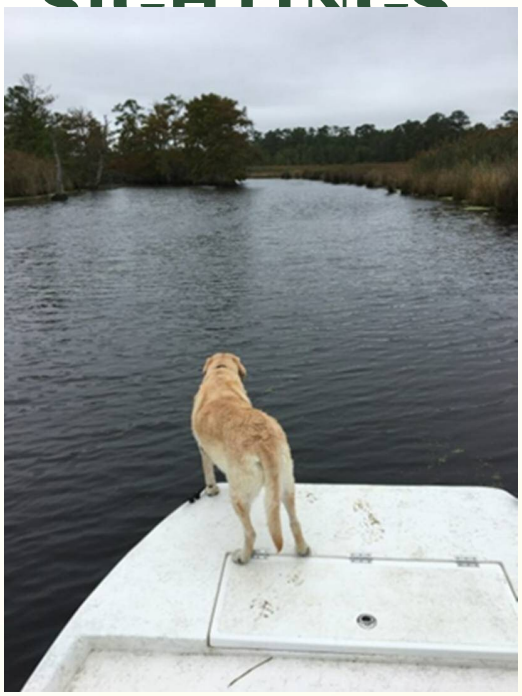
Determine Accuracy & Optimal Environmental Conditions For Canine Detection of Nutria

Results:

99.1% Accurate

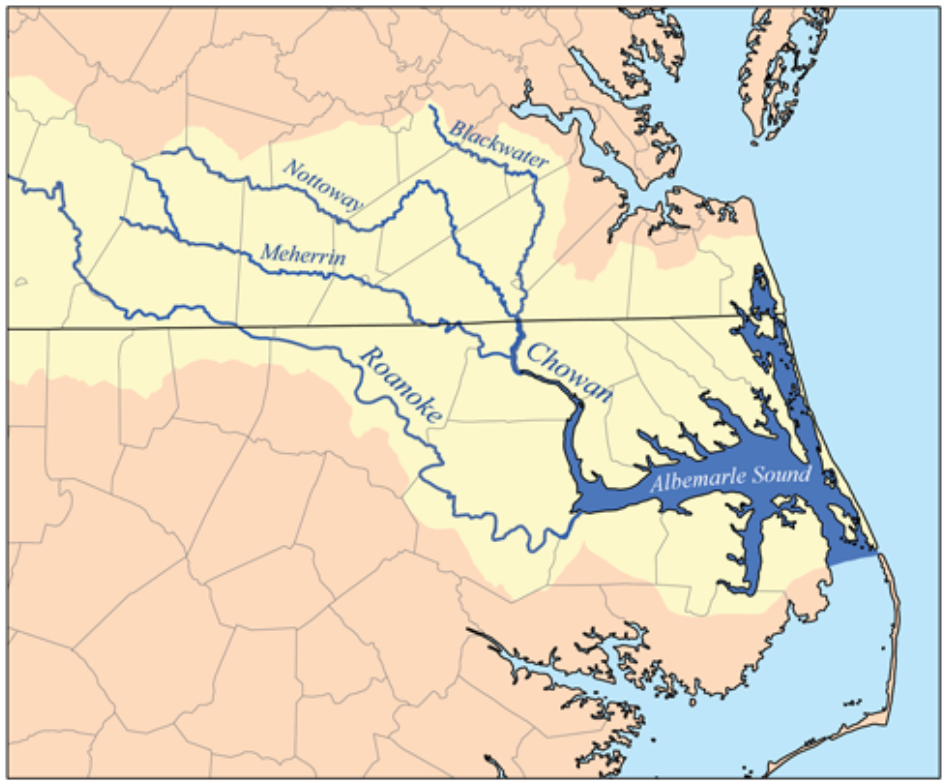
Wind and low temperatures increased efficiency for canine detection

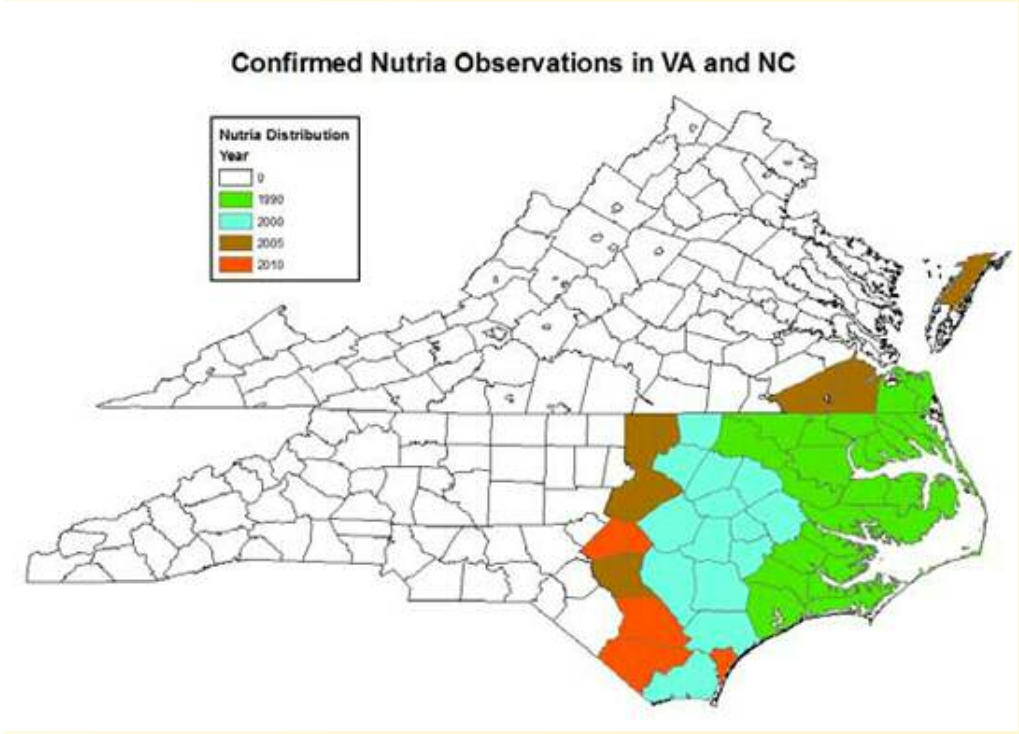
CONTINUE TARGETED INVESTIGATION OF SIGHTINGS



Currently searching for replacement detector dog

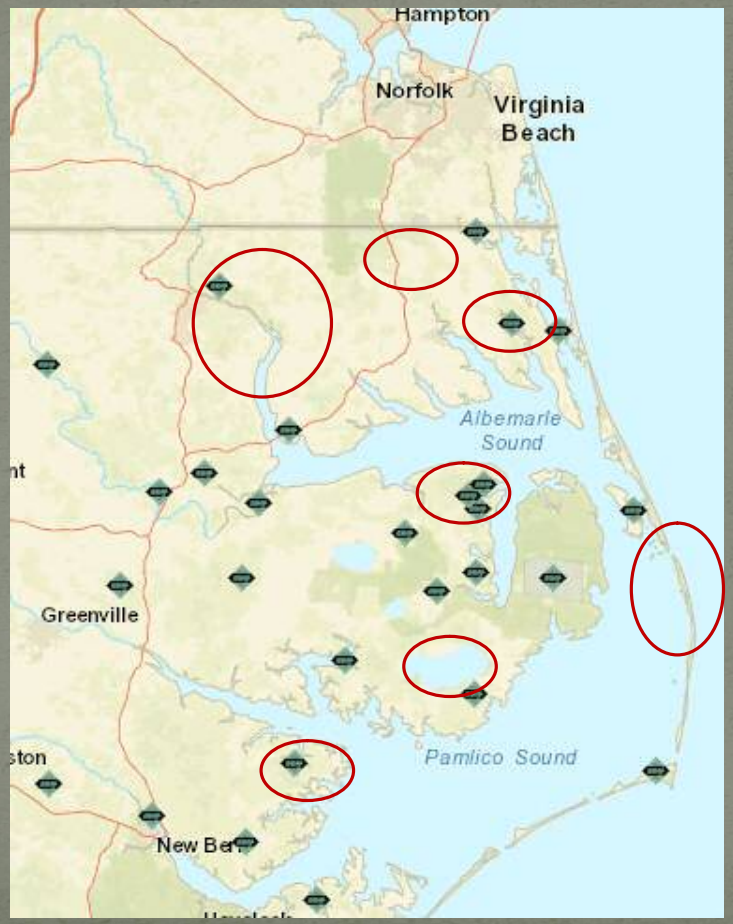
THE NORTH CAROLINA CONNECTION



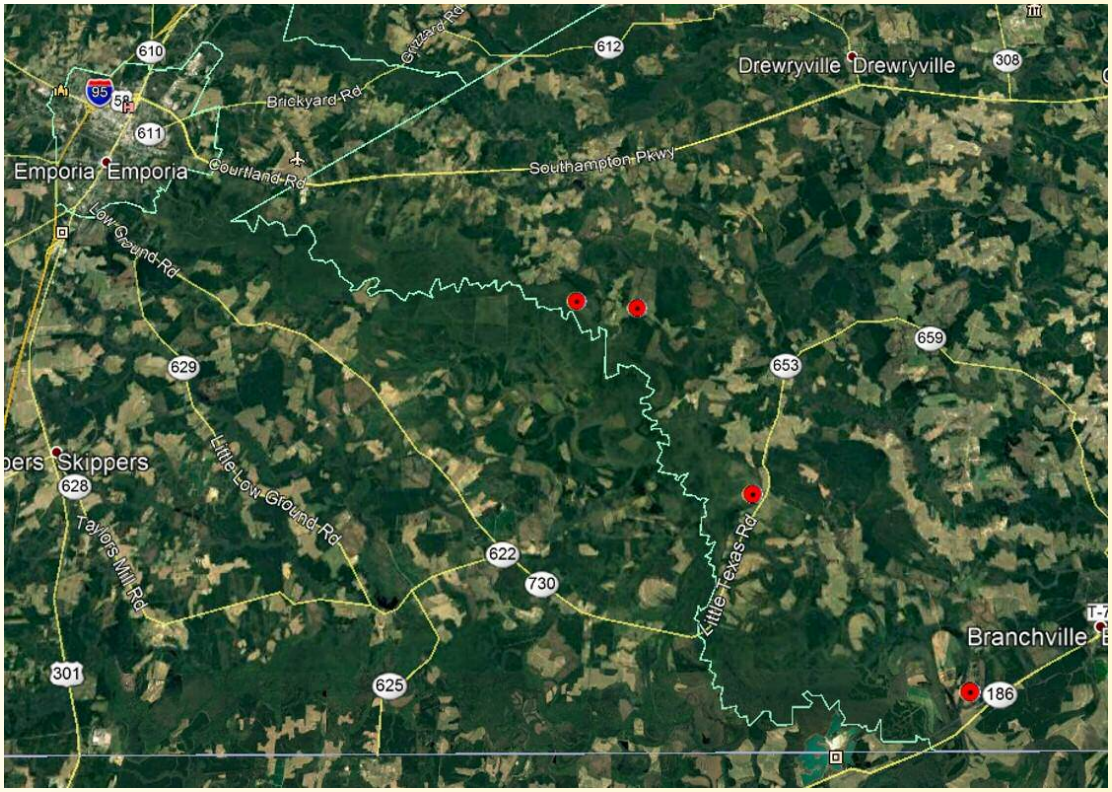


Nutria Impacts

- Waterfowl impoundment infrastructure damage
  - Camden, Currituck, Tyrell
  - Hyde
  - Beaufort, Pamlico
- Predation on shorebird eggs
  - Oregon Inlet
  - Pea Island
- Misc.:
  - Gardens
  - Duck dogs bitten
  - Bank damage in subdivisions



FUTURE CHALLENGES – MEHERRIN RIVER EXAMPLE



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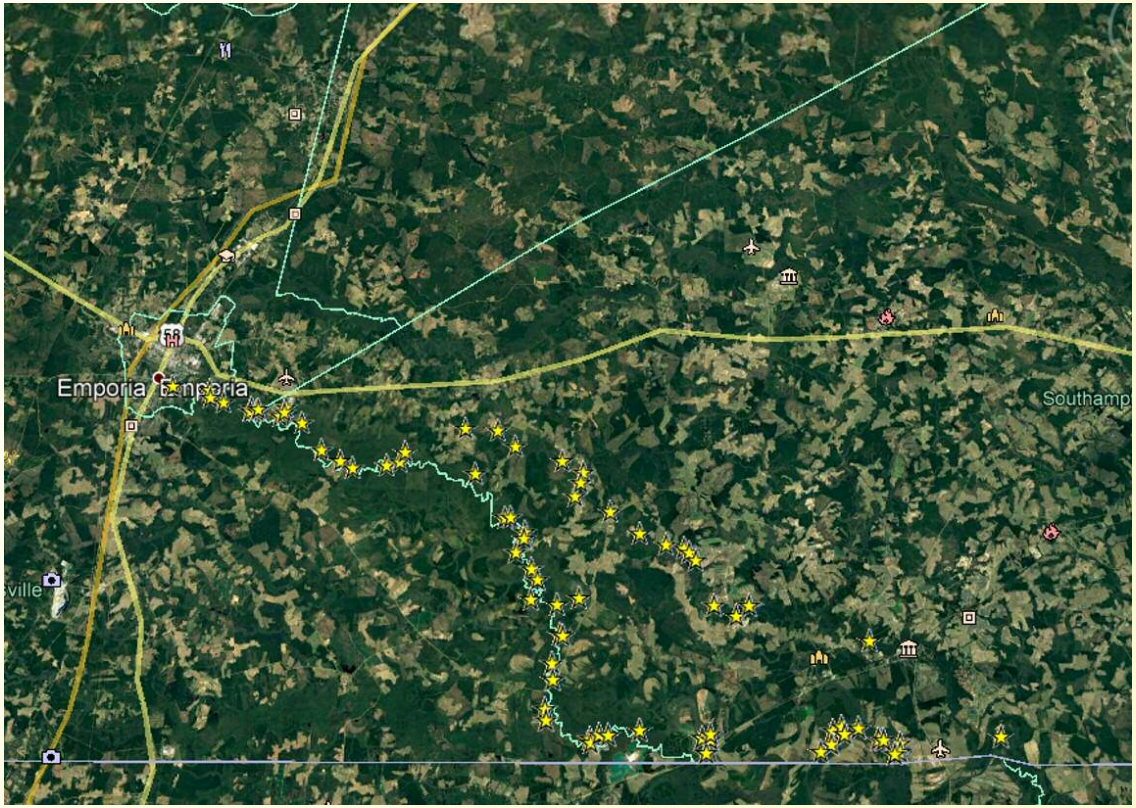
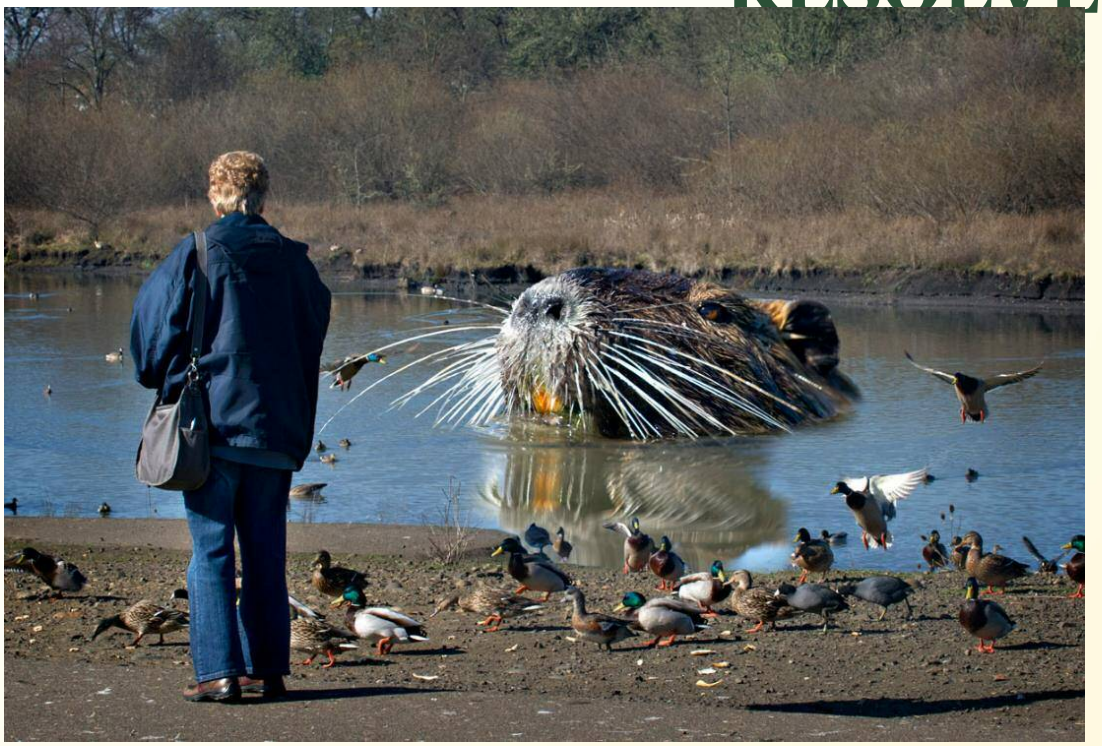


A BIG PROBLEM BUT WORTHY OF RESOLVE



- Over 980,000 acres of coastal wetland habitat in Virginia is considered “at risk” if nutria continue to expand their range