

March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

To the Board of Supervisors,

I write to you today to encourage you to SUPPORT and KEEP wildlife services for Mendocino County. I have a winery in Boonville where I have a ranch style building that had a horrible skunk problem. Abby, the Wildlife Specialist came over and before she even agreed to get rid of the problem for me, she gave me extensive detail on skunk biology and why skunks were under my house. She told me it was their breeding season and the females were looking for dens, while the males were looking for mates. She expressed to me that I did not have to use lethal control but gave me options of NON-LETHAL methods to try out. I decided to not only preform non-lethal measures, that do not work if a skunk is persistent, but also had her take the animal. She was kind, helpful, and very knowledgeable about wildlife. She helped me a lot and after I took the measures afterwards, she suggested to fix the holes going under the house, I have not had a problem since.

You cannot have people who are not trained in wildlife management and biology to educate and perform tasks they did not sign up for. Animal control is over worked, understaffed, underpaid and not equipped to do what wildlife services can. I encourage you to work with Wildlife Services themselves, to create more non-lethal control opportunities and education for your constituents. There is a national non-lethal program that WILDLIFE SERVICES is working on, and I suggest you look further into that.

Keep and support wildlife services that are here to provide help for your community.

Thank you,

Douglas Stewart

Boonville, Mendocino County