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January 11, 2016

Ms. Elizabeth Sablad
US EPA Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street (WTR-5)
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: NEPA Review for Rose Canyon Fisheries Sustainable Aquaculture Project

Dear Ms. Sablad,

As professor and past Director of the Wildlife Health Center and current Executive Director of the UC Davis One Health Institute, I am writing to offer my support for the Rose Canyon Fisheries (RCF) application for permits to operate a commercial aquaculture farm in our nation's Exclusive Economic Zone off the coast of San Diego. Unfortunately, the earth's oceans are not able to meet the growing worldwide demand for seafood. Thus, the majority of today's existing supply of seafood is farmed. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and our own Departments of Commerce and Agriculture recognize that our nation's seafood production will need to drastically increase over the next 20 years and that aquaculture must play a major role in meeting the public's need. Scientific evidence supports the conclusion that aquaculture, conducted properly, is the most sustainable way to produce animal protein for human consumption, especially marine aquaculture, which requires minimal land-based infrastructure, no fresh water, and minimal energy consumption.

The proposers of the RCF project have gone above and beyond the standard of due diligence to scientifically evaluate the risks and benefits of the project ecologically and environmentally. They have committed to take the best of what we collectively know today and to evolve best practices, as new evidence and technologies become available. I truly believe that they constantly strive to set the highest standards for minimal impact and sustainability.

Our nation is known for innovating technologies and fostering breakthrough industries that raise the environmental bar. San Diego, where RCF is proposed to be operated, is a center for biotech, medical research, and ocean technologies that have been employed to make this project a potential model for the world to follow. In addition, a study conducted by the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation predicts that RCF will support hundreds of good paying jobs, help our seafood industry sustain the working waterfront, and provide millions in taxes annually. RCF is likely to be one of our best examples of an enterprise that is economically viable and serves our public's needs, while respecting the environment on which we depend.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jonna A.K. Mazet'.

Jonna A.K. Mazet, DVM, MPVM, PhD
Professor of Epidemiology and Disease Ecology
Executive Director, One Health Institute