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October 21, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in strong support of efforts to encourage the State of California to ban the importation of American Bullfrogs (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) into the City of Santa Cruz and the entire state. Bullfrogs are not native to any part of California and have a notorious reputation for becoming a major predator on native vertebrates, including endangered species. They also have the potential for spreading parasites and diseases to native amphibians as well as competing with them for prey animals.

Bullfrogs are prolific breeders when any water is available, with females laying more than 2,000 eggs. The tadpoles are typically resistant to predation by most fish, in contrast to most other frogs, so that large numbers of juveniles are produced successfully from a single mating. Hence, a single pair of introduced bullfrogs is capable of creating an enormous population of an invasive predator for which native species have no defenses. The voracious predatory nature of bullfrogs is well known, but their population sizes are adequately constrained in the eastern United States where a diversity of natural predators on bullfrogs abounds.

The introduction of bullfrogs into other states, such as California, outside their native range and even into other countries has proven to be an ecological disaster in many situations. I urge that citizens and elected officials in California consider effective controls that will limit the introduction of eggs, tadpoles, juveniles, and adults of American Bullfrogs and prevent this invasive species from occupying natural ecosystems in a manner that will have a negative impact on native species.

Sincerely,

J. Whitfield Gibbons  
Professor Emeritus of Ecology  
and  
Co-founder of Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC)

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