

NATIONAL  
**Aquaculture**  
ASSOCIATION

July 7, 2017

The Honorable Louie Gohmert, Vice Chairman  
Natural Resources Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

RE: HR 2603, Saving America's Endangered Species Act

Dear Rep. Gohmert:

The National Aquaculture Association (NAA) strongly supports passage of HR 2603, the Saving America's Endangered Species Act. The listing of nonnative species on the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is not only duplicative, it hampers commerce and oppresses conservation.

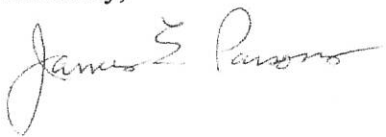
The NAA is a non-profit trade association representing U.S. aquaculture that is composed of approximately 5,500 farms with a farm-gate income of \$1.6 billion annually. Our members culture native and nonnative fish, shellfish, reptiles, corals, crustaceans, and aquatic plants for consumption as seafood, use as bait or for stocking for recreational fishing, biological control of nuisance aquatic weeds, and aesthetic enjoyment in garden ponds or aquariums.

Just last week, the National Marine Fisheries Service posted a notice seeking public comment on a proposed listing for nonnative giant clams. Several giant clam species are in the marine aquarium trade and U.S.-owned farms in the Pacific are successfully producing these animals. To be sure, these giant clams are not endangered in captivity and should not be listed! If listed, the farms producing them will surely decline as interstate movement and commerce will be catastrophically impacted. They may not become priceless, but they are sure to become worthless.

Within the aquaculture community there is significant experience, knowledge, and applied science that has been cultivated over generations and could be leveraged to assist in the recovery of at-risk species. Unfortunately, the history of species listings indicates that there is little flexibility within the Endangered Species Act that would recognize this conservation benefit and allow farms to continue to operate successfully. As a consequence, these invaluable resources are lost.

Quite frankly, the listing of nonnative species on the ESA is not beneficial to conservation, commerce or aquaculture and should be stopped – HR 2603 will do this and the NAA strongly supports this bill.

Sincerely,



Jim Parsons  
President