Good afternoon,

I am reaching out on behalf of the Waterlife Recovery Trust (WRT) - a registered charity working across England to improve biodiversity on our waterways by removing the invasive American mink from the ecosystem - to ask about deploying mink traps on watercourses owned by the Daglingworth Parish Council. Using a nationwide network of 'Smart Rafts' - rafts floating on watercourses that hold remotely monitored live capture traps - we monitor mink presence across the country and capture migrating mink before they devastate an ecosystem, all without needing to regularly check traps. It would be hugely beneficial to our monitoring efforts, and the health of the local wildlife, if you would allow us to deploy a raft or two on your waters.

As you are likely aware, mink were brought over to England in the early 20th century for fur farming and have been breeding in the wild across the country since the 1950's. They are voracious predators and, since their introduction, have caused untold damage to our local wildlife. Water Voles in particular have been heavily affected, with their population having declined by up to 97% nationwide. Since we started this project, we have successfully eradicated the mink from much of East Anglia (as shown in the attached newsletter), and in turn have seen a huge increase in water voles returning to the area.

All we require from you is landowner permission. In the event a trap is activated, an alert is sent via text message to local responders, who must attend the trap within 24 hours. These responders can be assigned by the landowner or provided by WRT. Mink will be humanely dispatched and any other animal can be released. We are jointly funded by the Environment Agency and the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, created by Defra and delivered locally by the Cotswold National Landscape team, meaning there would be no cost to yourselves. Once the trap is deployed, landowners can be as involved as they wish to be.

The success of our project relies on all waterways, regardless of size, being trapped and monitored for mink. Attached is our most recent newsletter if you would like to know more, and our website is also linked below. I hope to hear back from you soon.

Kind regards,
Joshua Mitchell

Joshua Mitchell BVMS

Waterlife Recovery Trust

Project Officer for Gloucestershire

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