Jefferson Parish nutria may face firing squad

By JANET McCONNAGHY
Associated Press writer

NEW ORLEANS—They're ugly. They're stupid. They've done $8 million worth of damage to the canals that drain the suburb. And every attempt to get rid of them brings howls of protest.

They are nutria—15-pound rodents just as dumb and almost as honestly as poisonous, and far more destructive. Possessing webbed feet and bony claws, they eat roots and plants, and mud and roots. Nutria can be found in the canals around the city. They dig around the banks, and then create a mess with their digging. The nutria have become a problem in suburban New Orleans.

Peggy Poches, Parish spokeswoman

"Nutria like to burrow against a hard object. If they're going after all the pipes, the sewers might fall into a water pipe. They're going after the canals, and that's undermining the streets."

"If they're going to use his professionalism in this situation to get our nutria out of the city, we would be foolish to do otherwise."

"It won't happen immediately, but it's a start because Lee was heading out to town for two weeks. The council had to put off acting on a contract to poison the nutria until Wednesday."

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