Upland Game Bird Account Project Proposal

1. Project Title: UBBWA Llano Seco Unit Upland Restoration, Free Roam Phase I

2. Amount Requested: $52,116.60

3. Organization: California Waterfowl Association
Name: Chadd Santerre, Wetland Programs Supervisor
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Email: csanterre@calwaterfowl.org
Contract Authorization: John Carlson, 1346 Blue Oaks Blvd, Roseville Ca 95678 (916) 648-1406

4. Introduction: The proposed restoration effort will improve 92 acres of upland nesting cover on the Upper Butte Basin Wildlife Area's, Llano Seco Unit. The restoration effort will develop a robust stand of dependable perennial grasses associated with the remaining historic sloughs which are inundated throughout the year. The area is dominated by star thistle and short stature annual grasses, which provide limited cover and resources for upland nesting and foraging bird species. The ability to develop a complex of perennial grasses establishing desirable year-round cover will increase the nesting potential and production of desired upland bird species. The perennial grasses will also provide improved fall and winter thermal cover thus helping elevate survival.

This identified free roam area provides roughly 60% of the upland game bird hunting opportunities for the public on the Llano Seco Unit. The last four seasons averaged ±2,400 public hunters at the Llano Seco Unit. The hunters who only selected to hunt upland bird species numbered ±74, with an estimated +300 hunting both waterfowl and upland game species at the same time. Dove hunters during this same time averaged 183 participants. Improvements to habitat conditions will help to improve hunting conditions for the general public on this acreage.

5. Project Description: The 92 acres of proposed perennial grasses will be associated with the wildlife area's historic sloughs that offer a year round upland/wetland interface, providing a source of invertebrate rich habitat, ideal for rearing several bird species. We have budgeted for mowing and then multiple diskings which will only be undertaken if a prescribed burn is not accomplished. Burning is the preferred method of preparing the field since it saves significant cost by reducing tractor time and also helps to remove a portion of the existing weed seeds. The project would also work on the removal of thick stands of Himalayan blackberry and fig trees which are a problem along the sloughs. Minor earthwork is projected to help clean up any debris or residual piles of dirt that are fostering the growth of undesirable plants. In some cases filling in holes and smoothing out old ridges will help to make the area safer for the public and allow maintenance equipment to travel over the landscape more efficiently.

The uplands will be prepared prior to the first rains of fall. Approximately two/three weeks following the first rain and once the annual rye grass and other annual plants have germinated an all spectrum herbicide will be sprayed to kill these competing species. Following (±2 weeks) the spraying a no-till drill will be used to plant the DFW approved perennial grass mix. Part of the establishment will include the spraying of undesirable weeds such as thistles, blackberry and mustard as needed during the first two years. Controlling weeds will help establishment progress more rapidly.

The restoration of manageable units has been a priority for the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) and California Waterfowl (CWA) staff. Similar projects have proven to help increase waterfowl and upland game bird production on the UBBWA Little Dry Creek Unit and Gray Lodge Wildlife Areas, which have undergone substantial planting efforts. DFW and CWA found a total of 49 nests in the (planted) perennial grass uplands within Field 117 (107 acres, planted in 2014) and 118 (82 acres, planted in 2010) in the spring of 2015 at the Little Dry Creek Unit. This was the first year of nest searching as part of a multi-year effort looking at perennial grasses and nesting success. DFW and CWA nest searching crews will be surveying these and other sites over the next several years to collect data on success of both pheasant and waterfowl.

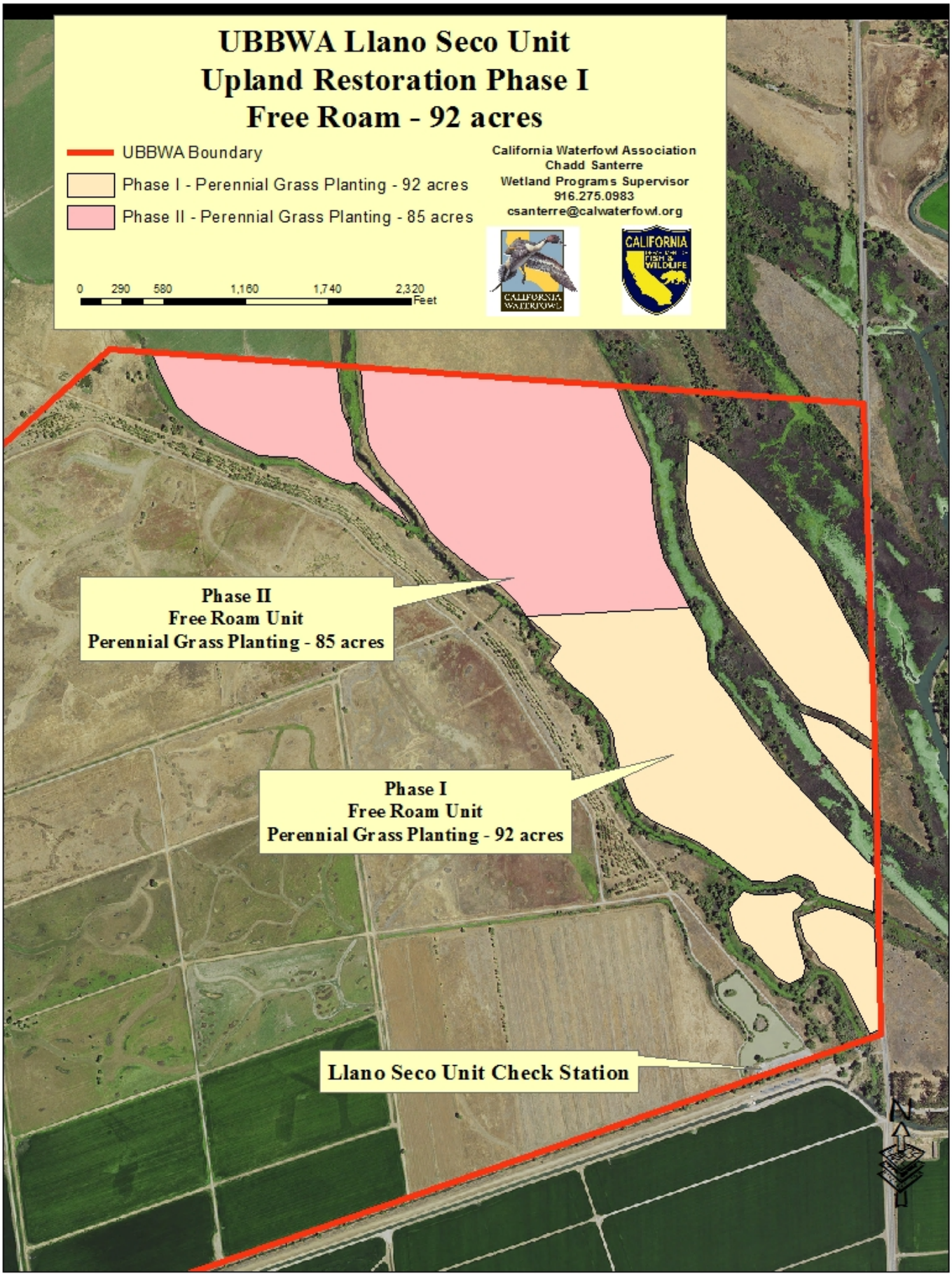
The development of this proposed project was completed by DFW and CWA staff working closely together to identify the site specific needs and the development of solutions to improving these fields. The implementation of this project would be coordinated by CWA with approval of DFW staff on the final design and at the completion of the implemented project. California Waterfowl successfully undertakes between 65-85 projects a year with a construction budget of $5.5-$7.5M on public and private lands throughout the California.

6. Expected Benefits: Benefits will include an increase in structure and thickness of cover which will translate into improved nesting conditions and an anticipated increase in production. Dominating weed species will be replaced by grasses that are managed to maximize upland game bird benefits. Project results will ultimately improve nesting cover, foraging, juvenile rearing and overall wintering habitat, which should result in higher pheasant and possibly turkey populations and ultimately more hunter opportunities. The fields will also have a life expectancy of at least 20 years and possibly longer if managed correctly with periodic mowing or burning to enhance growth and remove thatch. All of the fields are within the hunt zone of the wildlife area and will provide enhanced hunting opportunity for the public.

Upland Game Bird Stamp Proposal 2016
UBBWA Llano Seco Unit Upland Restoration, Free Roam Phase I

Project Title:	**UBBWA Llano Seco Unit Free Roam Restoration**	**Location** **Llano Seco Unit**			**Field #(s)** **Free Roam**	
Budget Line Item #	**Work/Item Description**	**Count**	**Units**		**Cost/Unit**	
CONSTRUCTION:						
1	Field Contouring/Earthwork	2,000	cyds	@	$2.00	$4,000.00
2	Field Prep and Seeding	92	ac	@	$150.00	$13,800.00
3	Perennial Grass Mix - 20 lbs/ac	1,840	lbs	@	$6.00	$11,040.00
4	Spraying for Broadleaf Control (3 Times)	276	ac	@	$55.00	$15,180.00
	Construction Subtotal					**$44,020.00**
PERSONNEL SERVICES:						
5	Senior Biologist	40	hours	@	$32.00	$1,280.00
6	Associate Biologist	80	hours	@	$25.00	$2,000.00
7	Benefits Salaried Staff			@	34%	$1,115.20
	Personnel Subtotal					**$4,395.20**
OPERATING EXPENSES:						
8	Mileage	1,160	miles	@	$0.540	$626.40
9	Miscellaneous (materials, supplies, etc.)					$125.00
	Operating Subtotal					**$751.40**
OVERHEAD:						
10	DFG Paid Overhead (6%)					$2,950.00
11	CWA Paid Overhead (8%)					$3,933.33
	Overhead Subtotal					**$6,883.32**
PROJECT COST:						**$56,049.92**
PARTNERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS:						
12	*CWA Paid Overhead (8%)*					*$3,933.33*

TOTAL UPLAND GAME BIRD STAMP GRANT REQUEST **$52,116.60**


UBBWA Llano Seco Unit
Upland Restoration Phase I
Free Roam - 92 acres
UBBWA Boundary
Phase I - Perennial Grass Planting - 92 acres
Phase II - Perennial Grass Planting - 85 acres
0 290 580 1,160 1,740 2,320
Feet
California Waterfowl Association
Chadd Santerre
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916.275.0983
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Phase II
Free Roam Unit
Perennial Grass Planting - 85 acres
Phase I
Free Roam Unit
Perennial Grass Planting - 92 acres
Llano Seco Unit Check Station
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