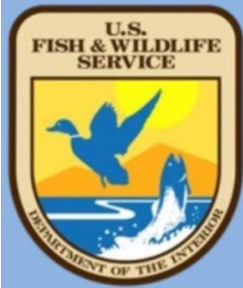




**California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Region 4 Type A Wildlife Area Public Outreach Meeting
August 30, 2023 Microsoft Teams Meeting 4pm-6pm**

- 4:00** Introductions and Meeting Parameters (Sean Allen, Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor CDFW)
- 4:10** An Overview by USFWS of the Federal Hunt programs on San Luis NWR and Merced NWR
Chris Harper-Project Leader, Jack Sparks- Outdoor Recreation Planner, Jonathan Garrison
Refuge Manager - San Luis NWR, Gabriel Sandoval Refuge Manager - Merced NWR
- 4:50** Presentation by DFW Staff on Central Region's Wetland Habitat Conditions and Anticipated
Acreage for Public Use
Mendota WA- Steve Brueggemann, Senior Fish & Wildlife Habitat Supervisor CDFW
Los Banos WA- Sean Allen, Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor, CDFW
North Grasslands- Pat Cotta, Wildlife Habitat Supervisor I, CDFW
- 5:20 *Break**
- 5:30** Public Comments, Recommendations, and Panel Discussion
(CDFW, and USFWS Staff)
- 5:55** Wrap up (Sean Allen, Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor CDFW)
- 6:00 Adjourn**

If we cannot answer all questions during the time allotted, please email them to:
Sean.Allen@wildlife.ca.gov and they will be routed to appropriate staff for answers.



San Luis NWR Complex

7376 S. Wolfsen Road – Los Banos – 209-826-3508



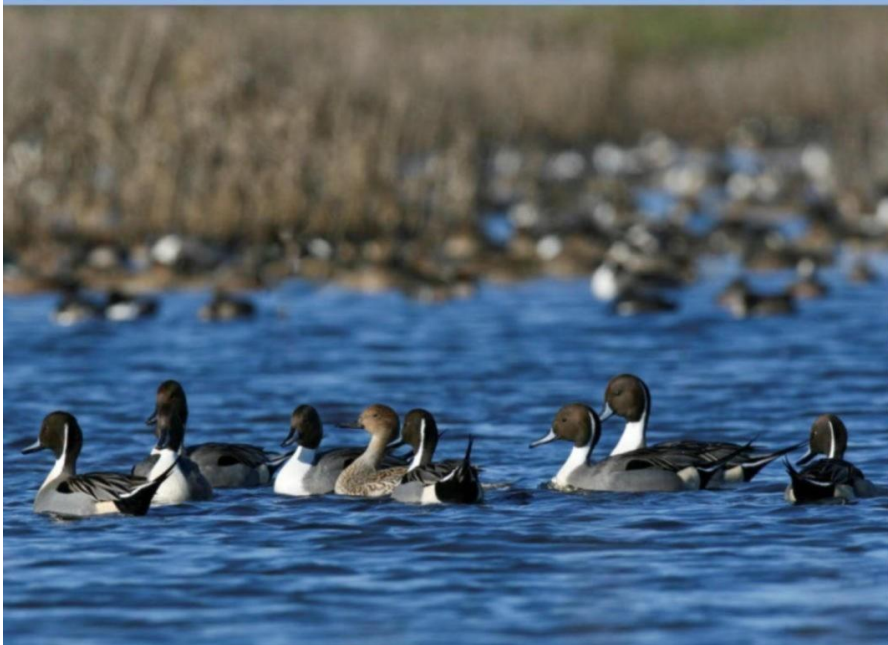
Chris Harper, Project Leader – chris_harper@fws.gov

Sean Brophy, Deputy Project Leader – sean_brophy@fws.gov

Jack Sparks, Outdoor Recreation Planner – jack_sparks@fws.gov

Jonathan Garrison, San Luis Manager – jonathan_garrison@fws.gov

Gabriel Sandoval, Merced Manager – gabriel_sandoval@fws.gov



Seasons of Wildlife, Habitat Management



- Winter: Nov Dec Jan Feb
 - Peak numbers of geese, cranes, ducks
 - Wetlands flooded
 - Waterfowl hunting
 - Vernal pools flooded



- Summer: Jun Jul Aug
 - Irrigations
 - Wetland preparation
 - Mowing, disking
 - Breeding birds
 - Wildfires
 - Weeds



- Spring: March Apr May
 - Rookery nesting
 - Draw-downs
 - Geese, cranes, ducks migrate
 - Peak shorebirds
 - Prescribed burns



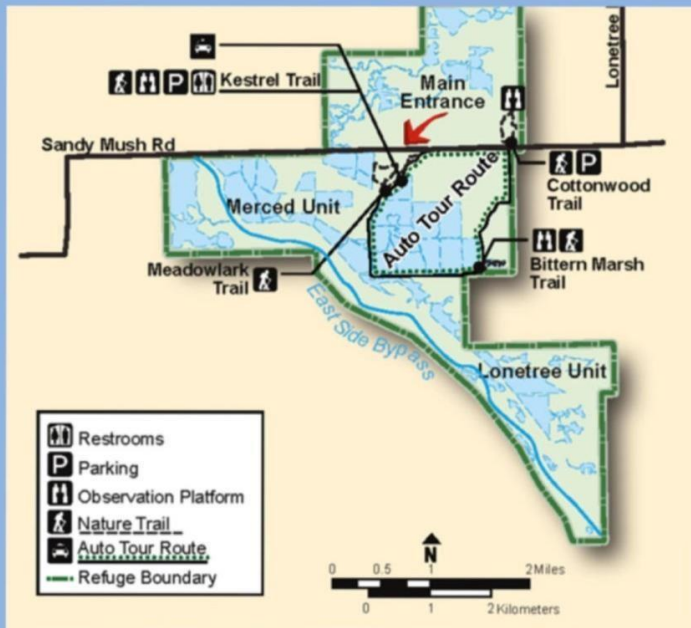
- Fall: Sept October
 - Flood up
 - Tule elk rut
 - Geese, cranes, large numbers of ducks return
 - Waterfowl hunting begins



Waterfowl Hunt Program

San Luis National Wildlife Refuge

San Luis Unit
Blue Goose Unit
West Bear Creek Unit
East Bear Creek Unit
Freitas Unit
Kesterson Unit



Merced National Wildlife Refuge

Merced Unit
Mariposa Unit
Lonetree Unit

Hunting Experiences

Hunting opportunities available:

- Assigned Blind
- Non-Exclusive Free Roam
- Exclusive Free Roam
- Boat Access Only



In a normal season, opportunity for 17,000+ potential hunter-visits per season

The hunt program is usually ~65% subscribed

Challenges

- *Pacific Flyway Conditions*
- *Local Breeding Conditions*
- *Resource Limitations*
- *Infrastructure Constraints*
- *Drought*
- *Flooding*
- *Disease*
- *Contracting*





San Luis NWR Manager Update

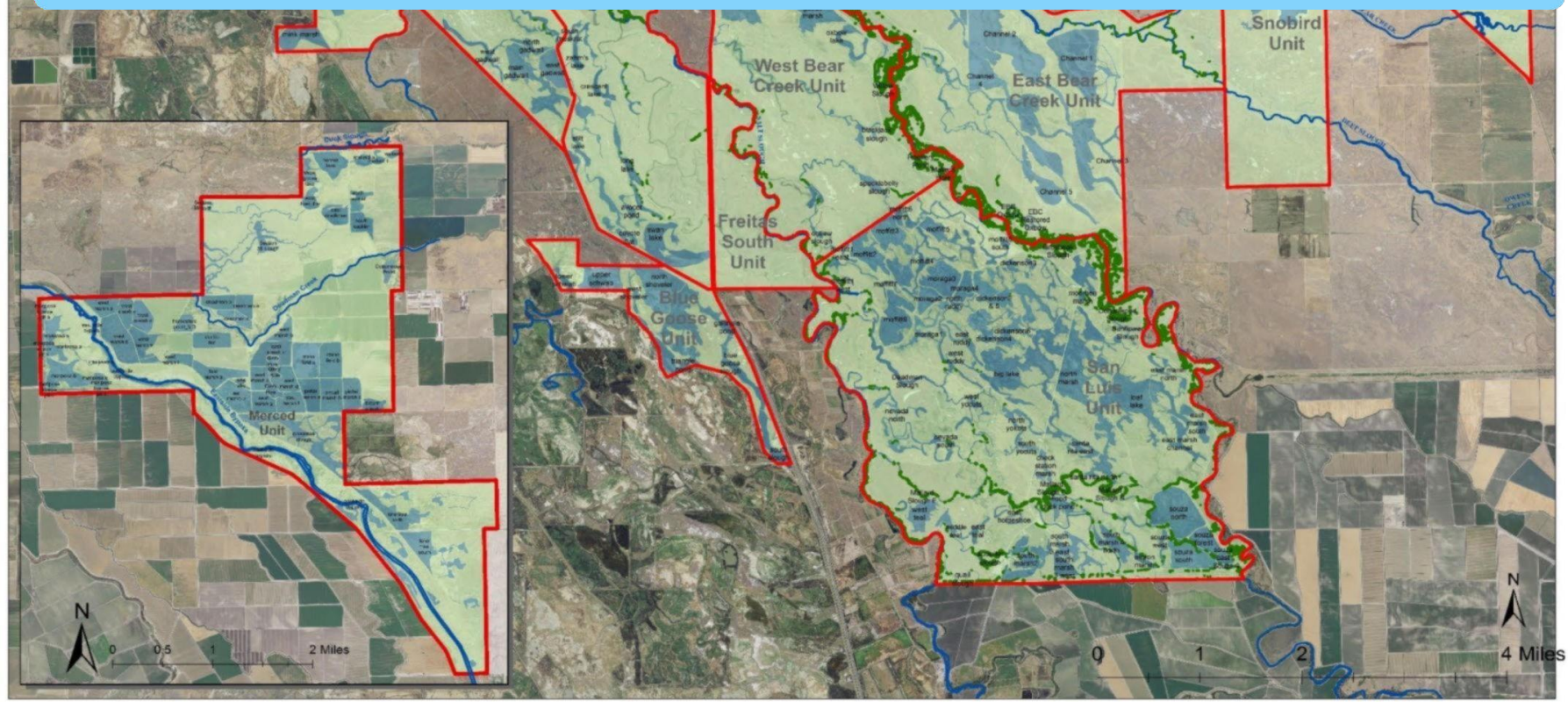
Jonathan Garrison, Refuge Manager, San Luis NWR

Photo Credit: Gary Zahm





L
C
R



San Luis NWR Wetland Management Updates



San Luis NWR Wetland Management Updates

Units Disked

Dickinson 2, 3, & 5

Moffit 2

Blue Goose Slough

Gadwall

N. Shoveler

S. Shoveler



San Luis NWR Wetland Management Updates C-Canal Restoration Project

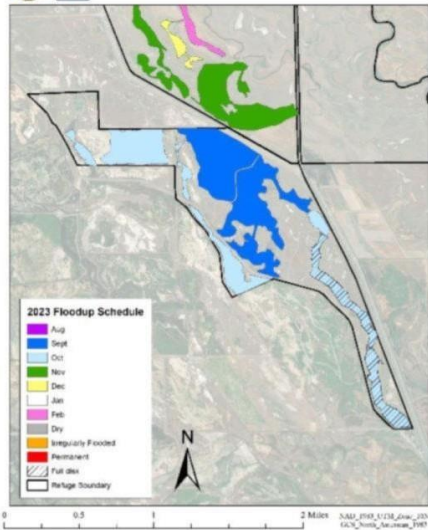
- * Vegetation Removed
- * Re-sloped To Grade
- * Replaced Water Control Structures
- * Increased Efficiency



San Luis NWR Wetland Management Updates

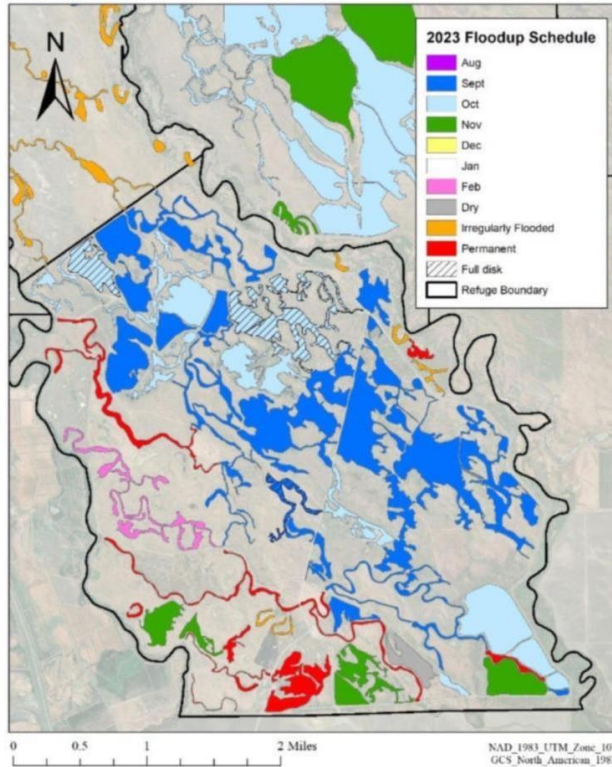


San Luis National Wildlife Refuge- Blue Goose Unit
2023 Floodup Schedule

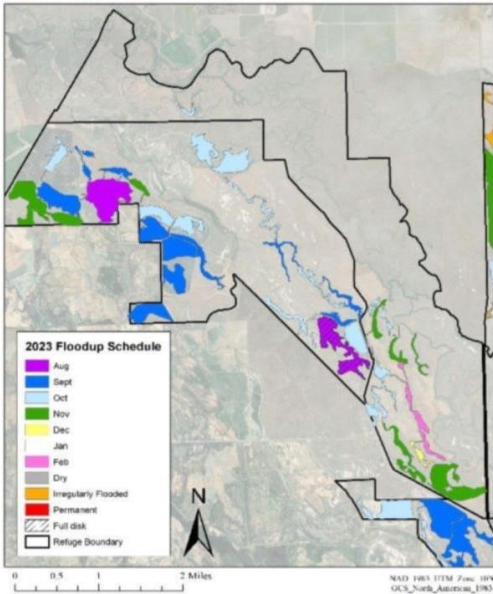


This will be a 100%
water year!

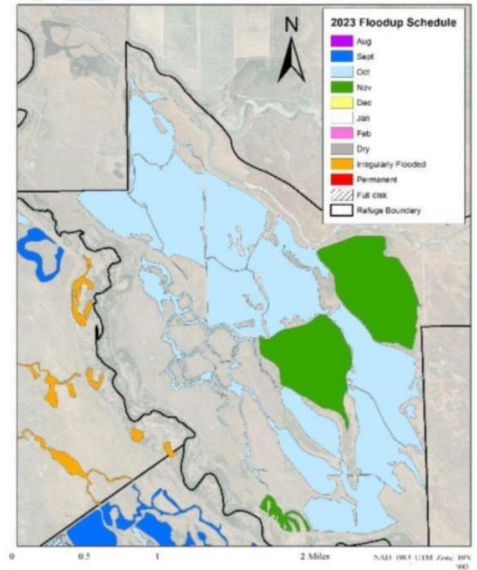
San Luis National Wildlife Refuge- San Luis Unit
2023 Floodup Schedule



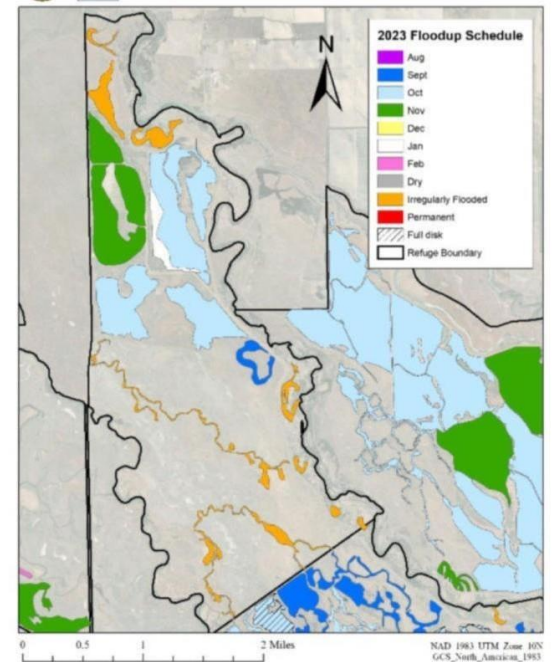
San Luis National Wildlife Refuge- Kesterson and
Freitas Units
2023 Floodup Schedule



San Luis National Wildlife Refuge- East Bear Creek Unit
2023 Floodup Schedule



San Luis National Wildlife Refuge- West Bear Creek Unit
2023 Floodup Schedule




East Bear Creek

The East Bear Creek Units could potentially be delayed for flood-up due to issues with the pumping plant.

<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/san-luis/san-luis-nwr-hunt-program>

Our website has all the information you might need

- Quotas
- Maps
- Unit specific information
- Draw locations and times
- Rules and regulations
- Freitas Hunt Unit Boundary GPS points etc.

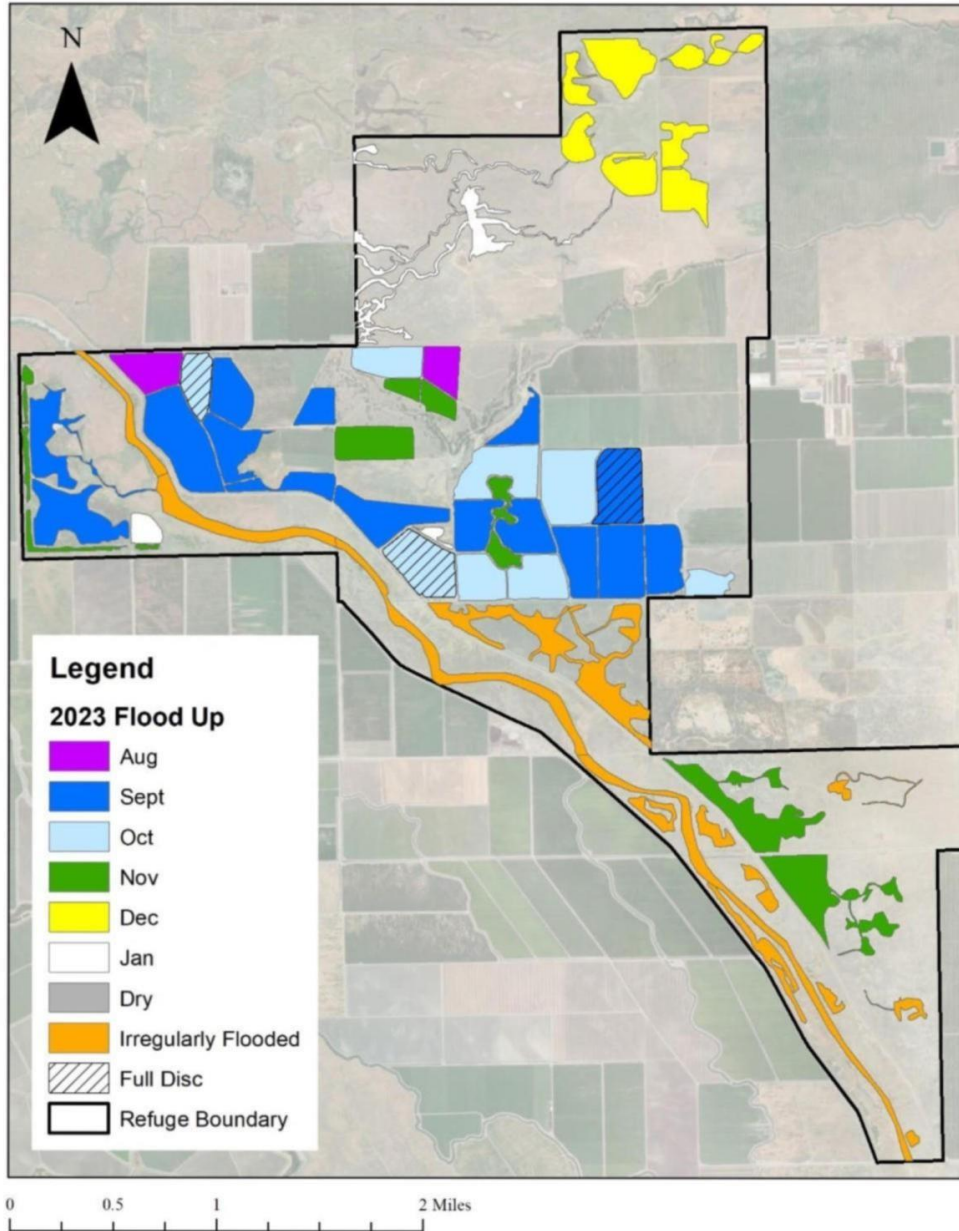


Merced National Wildlife Refuge –
Manager Update
Gabriel Sandoval, Refuge Manger



Merced National Wildlife Refuge- Merced Unit

2023 Floodup Schedule



- Only Disabled Accessible Blind marsh disked

Merced National Wildlife refuge - New blind Replacement

- New blinds for 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
- Dog blinds, 2,3,5
- Great American Outdoor Act Funded

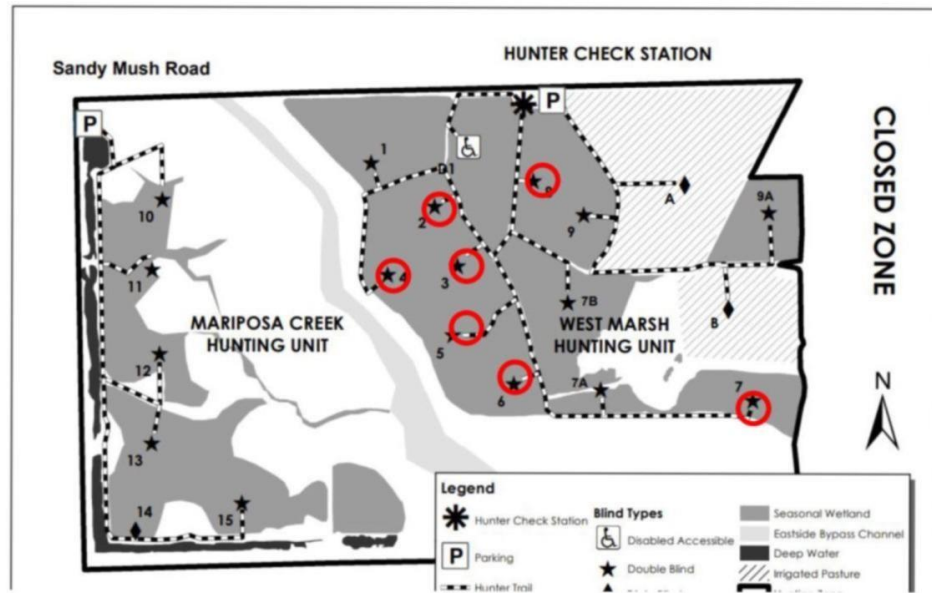


Old Blind



New Blind

MERCED NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE HUNT MAP





San Luis NWR Complex

Jack Sparks

Outdoor Recreation Planner

209/826-3508 x121 or 209/587-0516 cell

jack_sparks@fws.gov

Waterfowl Hunt Program Update 2023-24



Photo © Gary Zahm

2022-23 Waterfowl Season

San Luis NWR – **5,776** (5,569) hunter-visits – **2.57** (1.79) average harvest

Merced NWR – **850** (1,012) hunter-visits – **3.24** (2.86) average harvest

() = 2021-22 season



Photo © Mike Peters

Hunt Opportunities San Luis Unit

	Predicted 2023-24	# Hunter Slots 2023-24
October	100% open	90 of 90
November	100% open	90 of 90
December	100% open	90 of 90
January	100% open	90 of 90

Hunt Opportunities Blue Goose Unit



Photo © Gary Zahm

	Predicted 2023-24	# Blinds 2023-24
October	100% open	9 of 9
November	100% open	9 of 9
December	100% open	9 of 9
January	100% open	9 of 9

We are anticipating all BG blinds open on October 21.



Photo © Mike Peters

Hunt Opportunities Kesterson Unit

	Predicted 2023-24	# Blinds 2023-24
October	100% open	34 of 34
November	100% open	34 of 34
December	100% open	34 of 34
January	100% open	34 of 34

We believe it is achievable to start the season with all blinds open unless an issue arises during flood-up. Flood-up on the unit has just started.

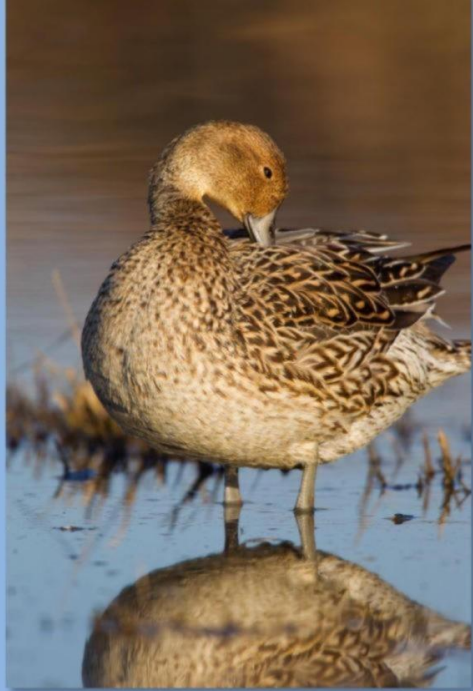


Photo © Mike Peters

Hunt Opportunities West Bear Creek Unit

	Predicted 2023-24	# Hunter Slots 2023-24
October	closed*	--
November	100% open*	36 of 36
December	100% open	36 of 36
January	100% open	36 of 36

* *The normal opening for the WBC Unit occurs the 3rd Saturday in November.*

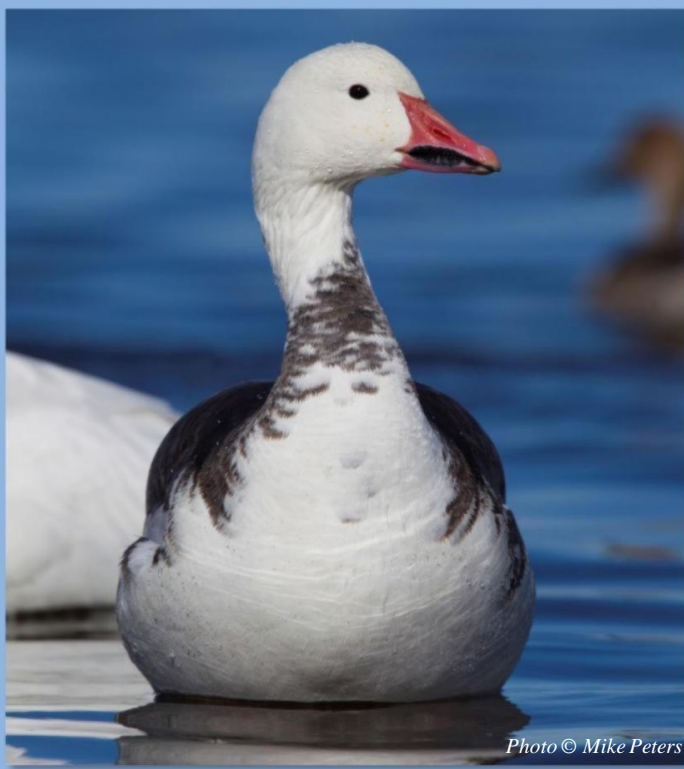


Photo © Mike Peters

Hunt Opportunities East Bear Creek Unit

	Predicted 2023-24	# Hunter Slots
October	closed*	---
November	closed	0 of 9
December	100%	6 of 9
January	100%	9 of 9

Adding a new zone this year by splitting Zone 1.

Hunt opener will likely be delayed into December, assuming water issues are resolved.

**The normal opening for the EBC Unit occurs the 3rd Saturday in November.*

Hunt Opportunities N. and S. Freitas Units

Unmanaged Waterways



Photo © Gary Zahm

	Predicted 2023-24	# Boats (regulated days)
October	100%	30
November	100%	30
December	100%	30
January	100%	30

Quotas might need to be adjusted depending on water levels and hyacinth issues.

Hunt Opportunities Merced NWR



Photo © Gary Zahm

	Predicted 2023-	# Blinds 2023-24
	24	
October	100% open	19 of 19*
November	100% open	21 of 21*
December	100% open	21 of 21
January	100% open	21 of 21

*Goose Pits open 3rd Sat in Nov

This quota forecast represents the best-case scenario at the moment. Mariposa wetlands remain uncertain, but hopeful.

Hunt Opportunities Lonetree Unit

	Predicted 2023-24	# Hunter Slots
October	closed*	---
November	100%	15
December	100%	15
January	100%	15

Zones A & B will open, even if dry.

As in previous years, bypass hunt zones will open if sufficient water in the bypass channel.

**The normal opening for the Lonetree Unit occurs the 3rd Saturday in November.*

Kern NWR Update

Kern NWR is receiving a full water allocation of 25,000 acre-feet.

The refuge began flooding in late July and is expecting to have its waterfowl opener in line with the Southern San Joaquin Zone.

The refuge has experienced some flood-up delays due to a water project off-refuge that is limiting water deliveries.

Kern NWR is projecting to have all wetlands flooded by the end of winter, as long as there are no further water delivery delays or infrastructure failures.

Kern NWR won't be posting hunt results on the refuge website due to staff shortages and policy compliance. Hunt results can be found online at the CDFW website or a paper copy at the check station.

For Kern NWR questions, contact:

Project Leader Miguel Jimenez – [Miguel Jimenez@fws.gov](mailto:Miguel_Jimenez@fws.gov)

Comprehensive Conservation Plan

The Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) with Environmental Assessment (EA) for San Luis NWR, Merced NWR, and Grasslands WMA will soon be available for public review and comment.

www.fws.gov/refuge/san-luis



Thank you!

www.fws.gov/refuge/san-luis



Jack Sparks
Outdoor Recreation Planner
209/826-3508 x121 or 209/587-0516 cell
jack_sparks@fws.gov

2023 PUBLIC MEETING

Mendota WA

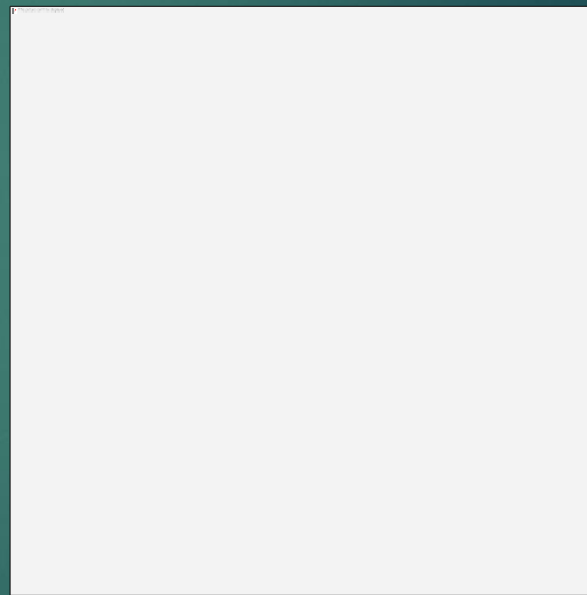


Water Hyacinth

8/29/2022 Red areas in Fresno Slough are water hyacinth



8/4/2023 Flood flows have removed most water hyacinth



Trailer Boat Access

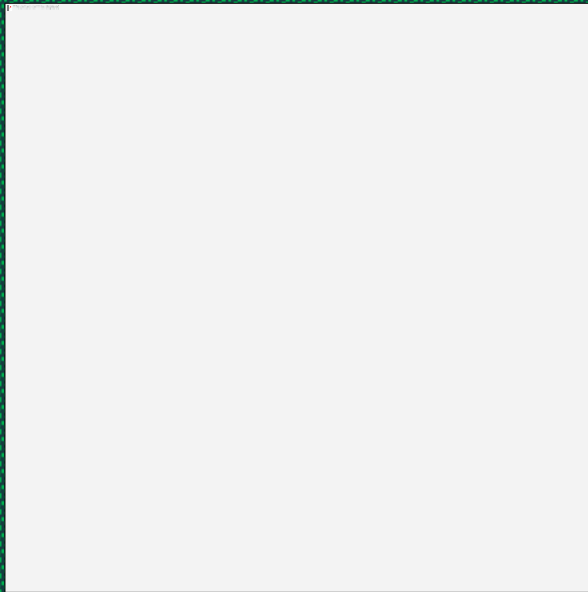
- ▶ As of today, trailer boat access during the 2023 -2024 waterfowl season will be allowed. However, water hyacinth continues to reproduce and be transported from north of Hwy 180 into the MWA and another hyacinth plug could form at the MWA bridge making boat access from the northern boat ramp unavailable.

Waterfowl
Harvest
1955-2023
3.0 or better
annual
waterfowl
average has
happened
three times
1958-59
1960-61 &
2022-23

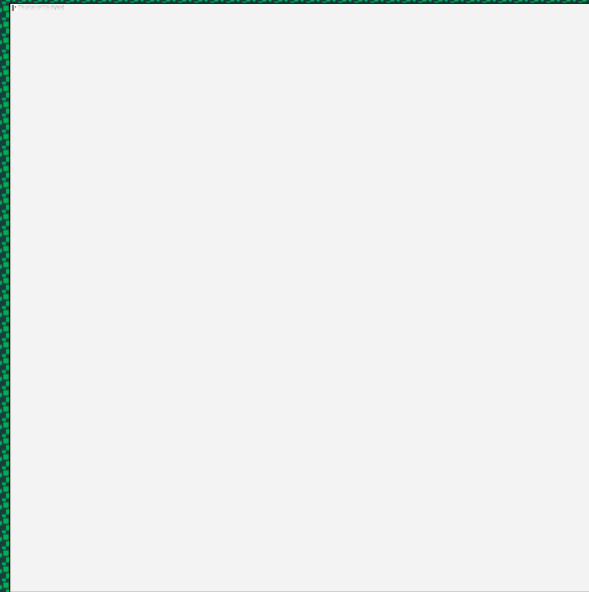
YEAR	HUNTERS	DUCK TAKEN	GESE TAKEN	COOS TAKEN	TOTAL WATERFOWL	AVERAGE	QUOTA	Notes
1955-56	3,146	5,935	26	145	4,106	1.30	125	
1955-57	5,050	9,817	19	72	9,746	1.94	225	
1955-58	7,344	21,199	34	147	21,440	2.94	300	
1958-59	6,141	24,854	36	205	25,117	3.09	300	
1959-60	5,347	10,637	44	115	10,839	2.00	300	
1960-61	8,575	25,348	110	179	25,677	3.00	400	
1961-62	8,427	18,964	79	119	19,199	2.28	400	
1962-63	9,861	14,028	133	185	14,544	1.48	400	
1963-64	11,789	29,870	81	181	30,122	2.56	400	
1964-65	10,333	22,762	37	347	23,246	2.26	400	
1965-66	9,833	25,186	31	282	25,497	2.59	400	
1966-67	10,444	24,049	89	147	24,309	2.31	400	
1967-68	13,427	41,400	48	240	41,715	3.10	400	
1968-69	13,463	24,752	34	285	25,199	1.87	400	
1969-70	12,455	27,851	54	322	28,199	2.27	400	
1970-71	14,199	25,884	54	469	26,407	1.86	400	
1971-72	13,133	27,953	17	824	28,854	2.19	400	
1972-73	13,301	24,764	40	742	25,246	2.07	400	
1973-74	11,824	23,023	102	746	23,949	2.02	400	
1974-75	14,487	45,452	117	1,454	47,225	3.31	400	
1975-76	17,284	48,524	74	1,342	49,756	2.84	400	
1976-77	18,939	51,439	89	932	52,459	2.80	400	
1977-78	11,733	20,894	13	433	21,300	1.80	400	300 Ought
1978-79	17,133	42,642	46	414	43,104	2.51	400	
1979-80	14,843	39,399	83	614	40,099	2.38	400	
1980-81	12,516	39,724	84	405	40,229	2.31	400	
1981-82	11,214	11,091	147	147	11,599	1.04	400	
1982-83	11,404	25,922	74	482	26,482	2.33	400	
1983-84	13,474	31,093	134	511	31,749	2.36	400	
1984-85	11,937	24,432	45	412	24,939	2.08	400	
1985-86	11,899	27,224	125	294	27,646	2.30	400	
1986-87	12,214	24,930	40	330	25,272	2.15	400	
1987-88	13,587	26,481	89	294	26,861	2.48	400	
1988-89	7,232	12,988	35	158	13,144	1.79	400	
1989-90	7,898	15,439	144	54	15,688	2.07	400	
1990-91	8,433	15,399	40	223	15,642	1.86	400	
1991-92	8,324	15,827	30	192	16,029	2.00	400	
1992-93	8,873	14,444	83	88	14,817	1.66	400	400 SPLIT WATERFOWL BEACH
1993-94	9,811	18,917	283	102	19,225	2.14	400	400 SPLIT WATERFOWL BEACH
1994-95	10,914	19,714	13	83	19,932	1.83	400	400 SPLIT WATERFOWL BEACH
1995-96	12,078	25,447	101	141	25,759	2.14	400	
1996-97	11,279	23,985	90	131	24,176	2.15	400	400 Area Flooded
1997-98	13,581	30,771	338	154	31,262	2.40	400	
1998-99	12,238	24,040	304	288	24,722	2.22	400	
1999-00	10,832	19,740	248	119	20,199	2.00	400	
2000-01	10,233	14,344	234	94	14,774	1.43	400	
2001-02	11,223	20,761	204	328	21,562	1.95	400	
2002-03	10,233	17,292	725	74	18,122	1.81	400	400 SPLIT WATERFOWL BEACH
2003-04	10,838	19,627	429	138	20,744	1.87	400	400 Slight down 100- day down work
2004-05	10,744	23,785	478	127	24,330	2.27	400	400 Slight down 120- 2004
2005-06	10,585	24,885	298	220	25,366	2.40	400	350 Slight down 100- 5/12/06
2006-07	10,234	20,752	140	105	21,086	2.07	400	400 Slight down 100- 9/25/06
2007-08	9,974	23,728	110	115	24,027	2.41	400	
2008-09	9,717	22,205	220	44	22,544	2.30	400	
2009-2010	10,444	22,987	249	137	23,359	2.24	400	
2010-2011	11,049	28,894	824	148	29,889	2.70	400	
2011-2012	10,744	25,422	488	286	26,214	2.44	400	400 Slight down 100- 5/12/07
2012-2013	11,140	23,749	140	429	24,428	2.19	400	
2013-2014	7,028	10,322	83	428	10,788	1.54	400	
2014-2015	10,108	26,749	331	431	27,309	2.60	400	400 Slight
2015-2016	11,078	27,458	139	229	27,716	2.51	400	400 Slight
2016-2017	9,715	18,831	95	149	19,095	1.97	400	
2017-2018	8,427	14,443	324	114	15,144	1.99	400	
2018-2019	8,941	14,349	124	220	14,944	1.69	400	
2019-2020	8,730	19,243	140	220	19,638	2.25-400-400	400	300 Slight flooding including opening day of work
2020-2021	9,898	19,787	190	320	20,227	2.05-450-000	400	drought
2021-2022	9,344	20,324	241	341	20,897	2.20-320-000	400	drought
2022-2023	9,897	29,423	243	228	30,125	3.00-300-000	400	Slight down Jan 8th- Feb 3rd 2023 flooding concerns
Total	743,119	1,441,921	11,430	22,078	1,381,470	2.10		

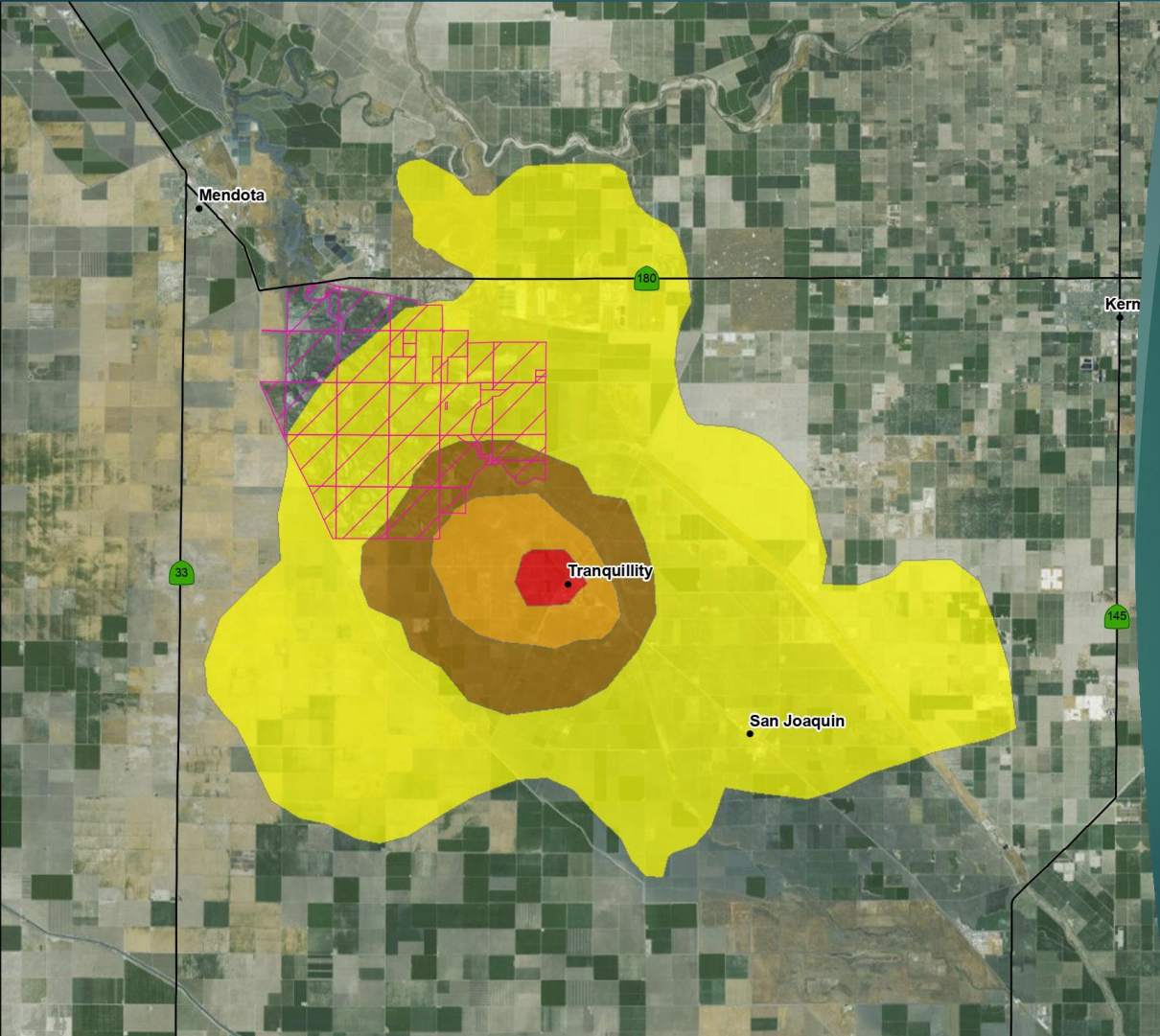
2023 Flooding

MWA Bridge acting as dam



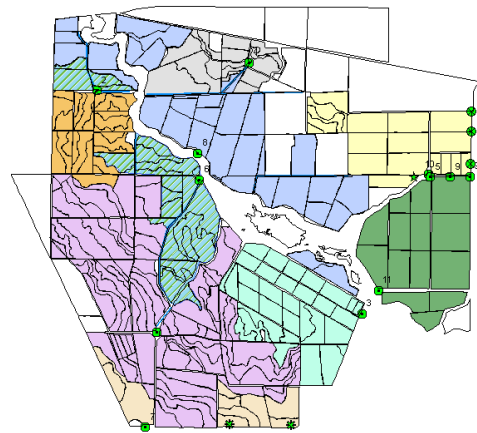
5/26/2023 Dark Blue areas flooded





Subsidence has been a contributing factor in difficulty of transporting James Bypass flood flows through the MWA

MENDOTA WLDLIFE AREA

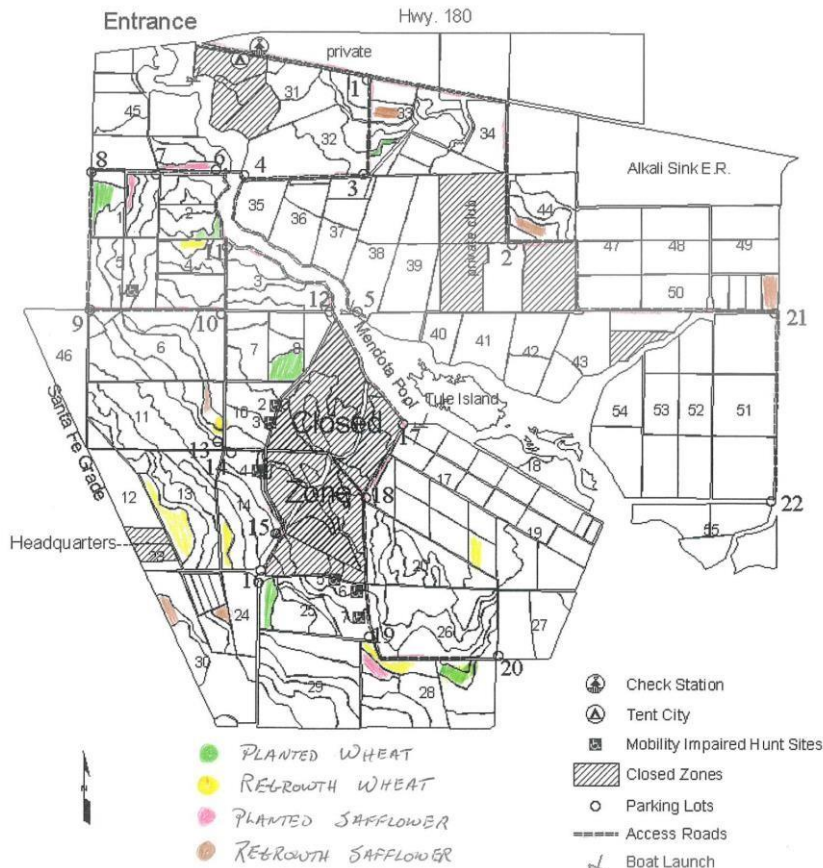


Legend

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| ● PUMPS | Area serviced by Pump#1 |
| ● Traction Wells | Area serviced by pump#2 |
| ★ Beck's Well | Area serviced by pump#3 |
| ✱ 28 Wells | Area serviced by pump#4 |
| — gravity flow intake ditch | Area serviced by pump#5 |
| — area of fluctuating water | Area serviced by pump#7 |
| — gravity flow | Area serviced by pump#10 |

Mendota Wildlife Area

DOVE 2023



Safflower planting was delayed by wet soil conditions. Wheat planting acreage was increased. Wheat planted in fields 51, 52 and 53 drowned but did provide green forage for White-fronts prior to being lost to flooding.

Mendota Wildlife Area



Watergrass planted in 2023 will be flooded late in the season and no manipulation, discing or mowing will take place.

A large flock of birds, likely ducks or geese, is seen flying over a wetland area. The birds are scattered across the sky, with many more on the water in the foreground. The wetland features tall reeds and grasses, and the water is a light blue color. The background shows a line of trees under a clear sky.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND
WILDLIFE CENTRAL REGION'S WILDLIFE AREA
MEETING
08/30/2023

FISH AND GAME CODE

- **FISH AND GAME CODE**
- **DIVISION 2. DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME [700 - 1940]**
- **CHAPTER 7.5. Native Species Conservation and Enhancement [1750 - 1772]**
- **ARTICLE 2.5. Bird Habitat Conservation [1758- 1758.]**

- **1758.**
- The department shall annually provide an opportunity for licensed hunters to comment and make recommendations on the public hunting programs, including anticipated habitat conditions in the hunting areas on Type A and Type B Wildlife Areas, as defined under the commission's regulations, through public meetings or other public outreach. In complying with this section, the department may hold regional meetings on its hunting programs for several different wildlife areas.
- *(Added by Stats.2013, Ch. 387, Sec. 2. Effective January 1, 2014.)*

GENERAL COMMENTS

- Water supply is 100% Level 2 for State wildlife areas in the San Joaquin Valley.
- The Los Banos and North Grasslands Wildlife Areas benefitted from new state funds for fire resiliency and emergency drought funds. The funding enabled the purchase of a new discing tractor, 4 new discs, 3 new mowers and a motor grader. New equipment translates to less down time due to breakdown and more time developing productive habitat.
- It was quite a year, that started with reduced quotas due to a third year of drought and a greatly reduced water supply. Then the floods came closing several areas and hunt locations for weeks due too much water! Through all these challenges our hunters remained patient and adapted to ever changing conditions. We would like to thank all of you for your willingness to be flexible and overcome the many ups and downs of last year and the past few years.
- Recruiting and retaining qualified, passionate people to do the work on these wildlife area continues to be a challenge, not unlike many other industries. Opportunities for better wages with other government resource management agencies, the private sector, and even better paying opportunities outside the wildlife areas in CDFW often make hiring and retaining staff difficult. I would like to take a moment to publicly thank our staff here at Los Banos and North Grasslands for their tireless dedication and commitment to these areas and the highly skilled work they do.

LOS BANOS WILDLIFE AREA COMPLEX

Sean Allen
Manager

Los Banos Wildlife Area

Mud Slough Unit

Volta Wildlife Area

Little Panoche Reservoir Wildlife Area

Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Area

San Luis Reservoir Wildlife Area

O'Neil Forebay Wildlife Area



California Department of
Fish and Wildlife

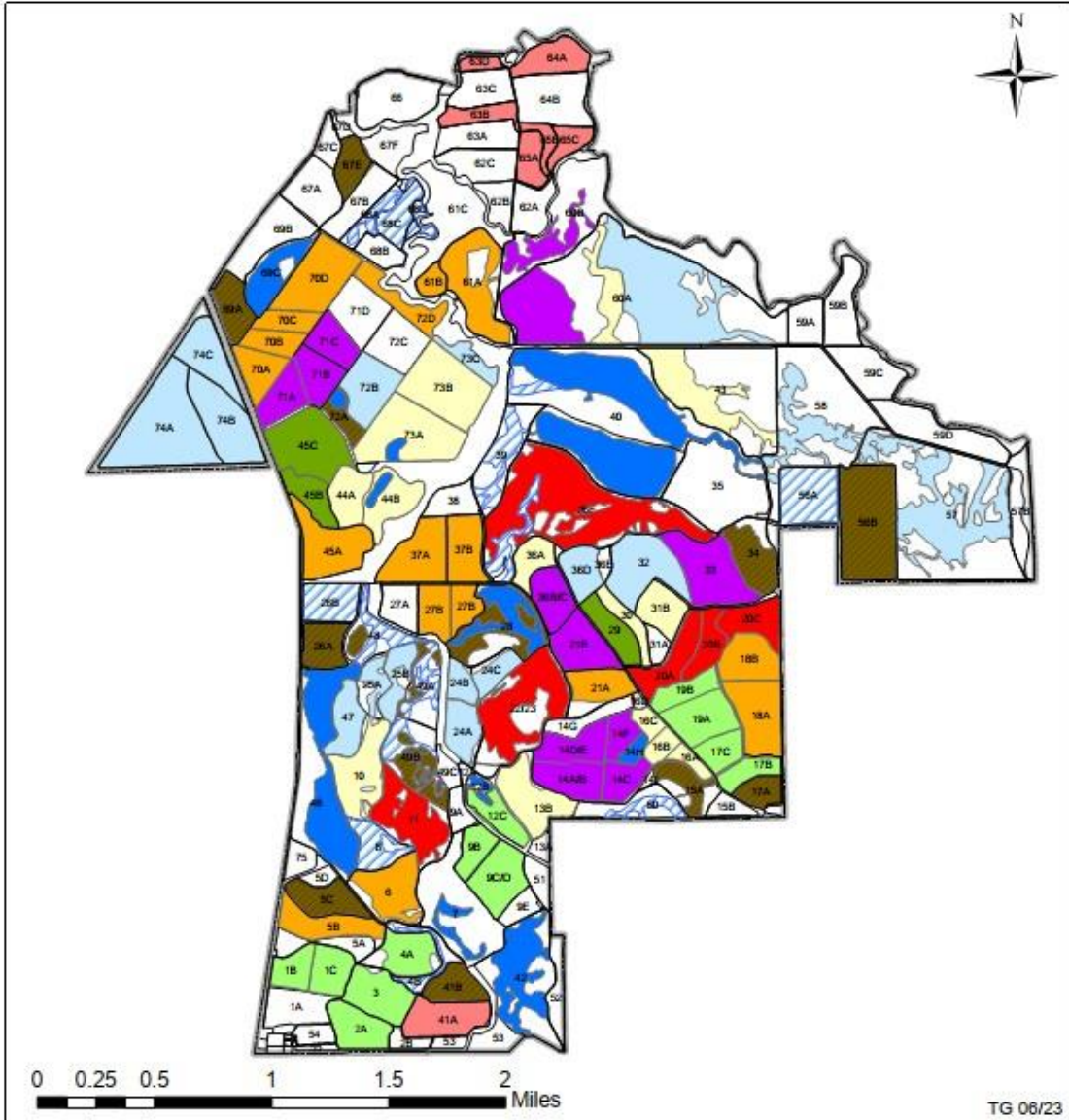
LOS BANOS WA HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES 2022/2023

- Several large-scale infrastructure management actions took place or are in the works on Los Banos WA. The installation of a new pipe at the Boundary Drain crossing at Parking Lot 3. Three miles of delivery ditches were excavated. Field 33 and Field 9 were leveled, and the swales were reshaped. Our thanks to CWA and DU for managing those projects.
- 105 acres of safflower were planted and mowed for dove hunting and 250 additional acres of mature wheat was mowed. A 100 hunter limited reservation hunt with a fill-in lottery draw will happen tomorrow and Friday. Current dove numbers are encouraging.
- 1600 acres of seasonal wetlands were irrigated of which approx. 250 acres of watergrass was reseeded.
- Hunter quotas will be up from previous seasons on the opener. We will still have a small amount of stage flooding of some of the area. Full quotas should be in effect in early December.



Los Banos Wildlife Area 2023 Flood-up Schedule

Flood Date



LOS BANOS WA HUNTER QUOTAS 2023/2024

QUOTAS ARE OUR BEST ESTIMATE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

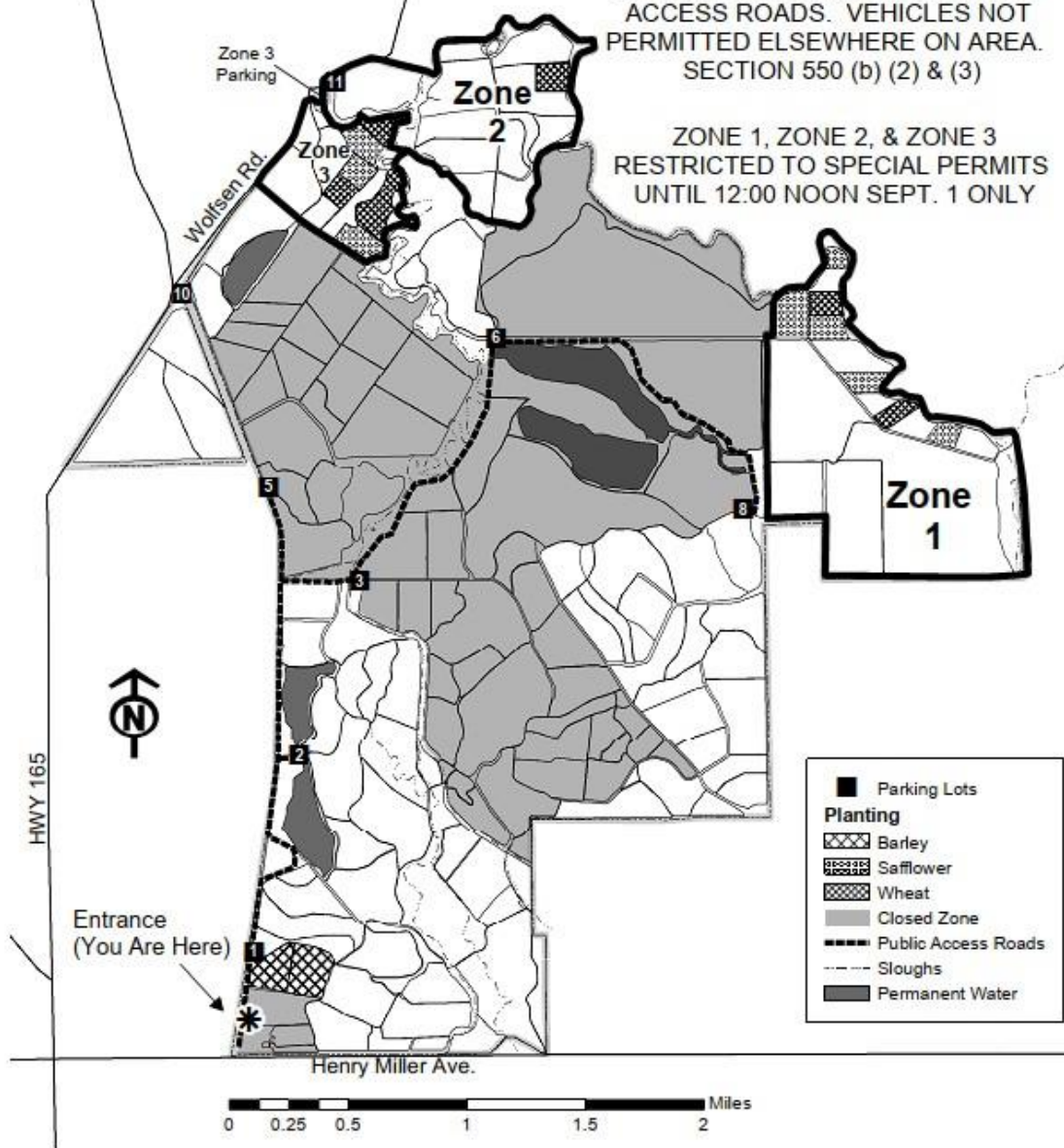
Date	Acres Flooded	2023-24 Hunter Quota	2022-23 Hunter Quota
Opening Day	1601	75	65
November 1	1601	75	65
December 1	2156	100	90
January 1	2415	120	120



Los Banos Wildlife Area 2023 Dove Hunt Map

VEHICLES ARE LIMITED TO PUBLIC ACCESS ROADS. VEHICLES NOT PERMITTED ELSEWHERE ON AREA. SECTION 550 (b) (2) & (3)

ZONE 1, ZONE 2, & ZONE 3 RESTRICTED TO SPECIAL PERMITS UNTIL 12:00 NOON SEPT. 1 ONLY



LBWA F14AB



LBWA F14C



LBWA F17C



LBWA F19A (BIG)



LBWA F21A (SOUTH)



LBWA 21B (NORTH)



LBWA 71A



LBWA 64 (NORTH)



VOLTA WA HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES 2022/2023

- Wetland Acreage should be 100% of a normal year and flooded like the previous years.
- Once again water fluctuations throughout the summer in Field 10 never allowed the area to dry up sufficiently to allow emergent vegetation control. We are working with several entities to see if we can develop a project to re-establish and deepen the main channel and several side channels to increase the overall holding capacity in Field 10. Once the old channels are excavated it will allow down stream irrigations with those channels keeping water off the shallow edges of Field 10 so work can be done throughout the summer.
- This spring the Volta Check station had several attempts to break into it. New window covers and rollup doors on the front windows were installed. The cost was approx. \$6,000.00 and several days of staff time to secure it.



Volta Wildlife Area 2023 Flood-up Schedule

Flood Date

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| July 15 - 30 | September 1 - 15 | November 1 | Semi-Permanent |
| August 1 - 15 | September 15 - October 1 | December 1 - 15 | Permanent |
| August 15 - 30 | October 1 - 15 | Not Flooded | |



VOLTA WA HUNTER QUOTAS 2022/2023

QUOTAS ARE OUR BEST ESTIMATE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Acres Flooded	2023-24 Hunter Quota	2022-23 Hunter Quota
Opening Day	1990	100	90
November 1	2328	115	100
December 1	2499	135	135
January 1	2687	135	135

**UNDISCLOSED LOCATION
MAYBE VOLTA
IF YOU KNOW, YOU KNOW**



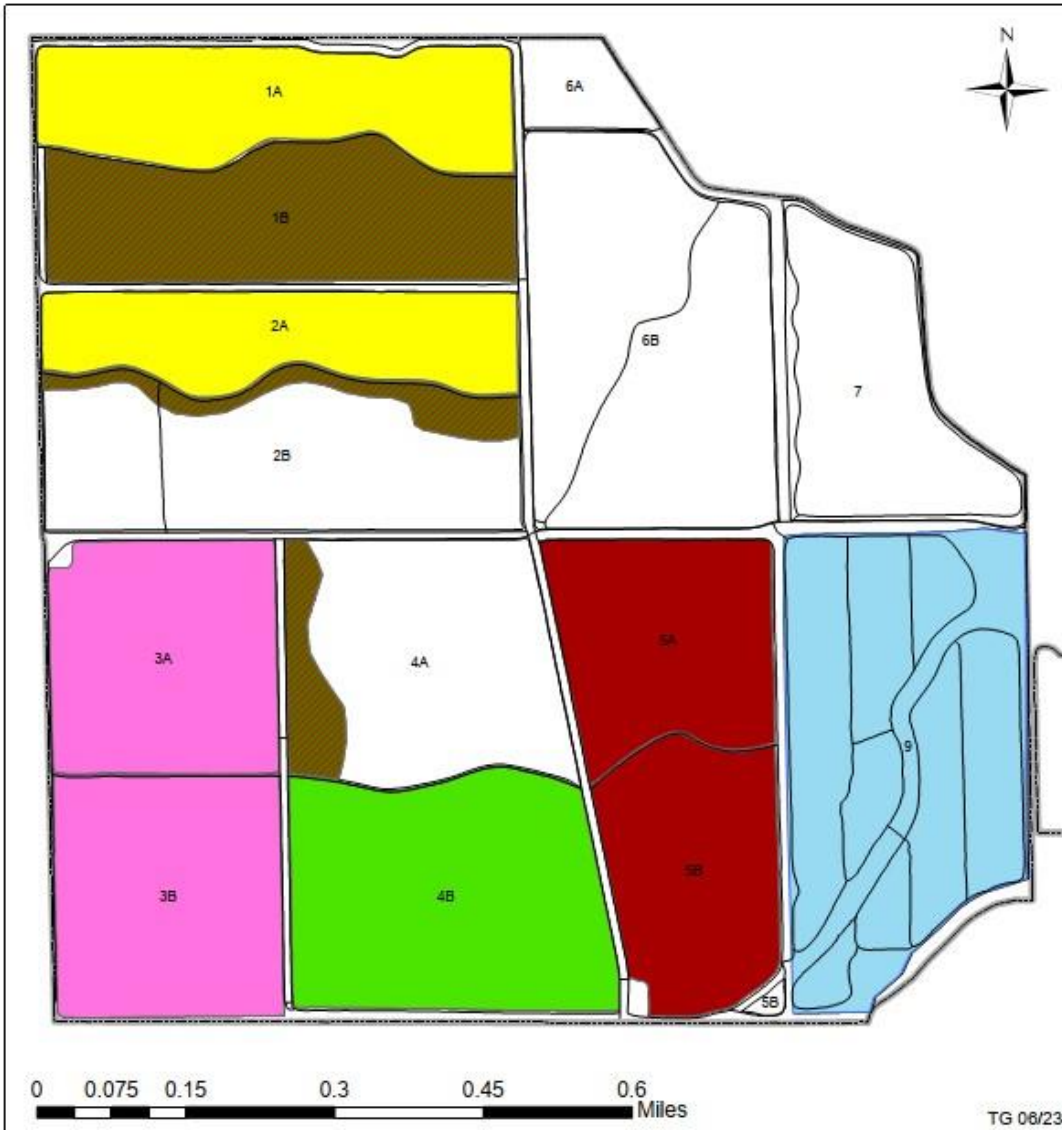
MUD SLOUGH UNIT LOS BANOS WA HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES 2022/2023

- All units received spring irrigations. Watergrass in 5A and 5B received 3 irrigations.
- Some spot discing occurred in Field 1A and 2A.
- Area will not be available on opening day. Scheduled to open Saturday, November 25.
- The area should be completely flooded by early December and all blinds should be available.



Mud Slough Unit 2023 Flood-up Schedule Los Banos Wildlife Area

Flood Date



MUD SLOUGH UNIT LOS BANOS WA HUNTER QUOTAS 2023/2024

QUOTAS ARE OUR BEST ESTIMATE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Acres Flooded	2023-24 Hunter Quota	2022-23 Hunter Quota
Opening Day	0	0	0
November 1	116	Opens Nov.25th 14	14
December 1	176	18	18
January 1	284	18	18

NORTH GRASSLANDS WILDLIFE AREA COMPLEX

Raymond Cotta

Manager, NGWAC

Salt Slough Unit

Gadwall Unit

China Island Unit



California Department of
Fish and Wildlife

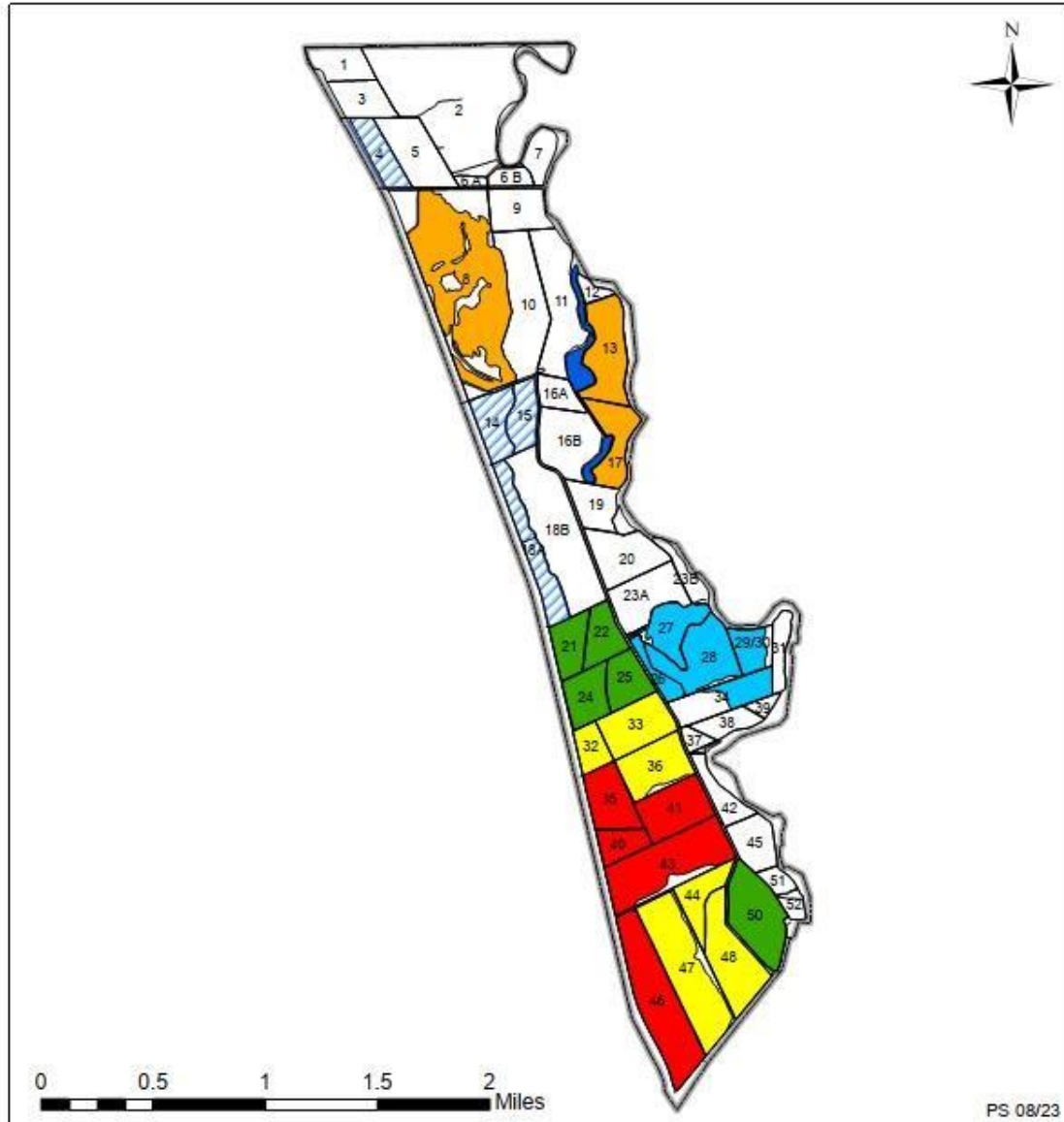
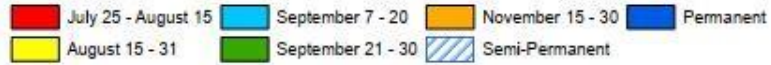
SALT SLOUGH UNIT NORTH GRASSLANDS WA HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES 2022/2023

- Staff irrigated 493 acres of watergrass and 290 acres of swamp timothy.
- Zone 13 - Blinds will be open for hunting the first Saturday in December. Blinds 13-1 and 13-3 are still closed.
- Staff reseeded watergrass in ponds 8, 13, and 17. These ponds may be difficult to wade in due to the heavy discing.



Salt Slough Unit 2023 Flood-up Schedule North Grasslands Wildlife Area

Flood Date



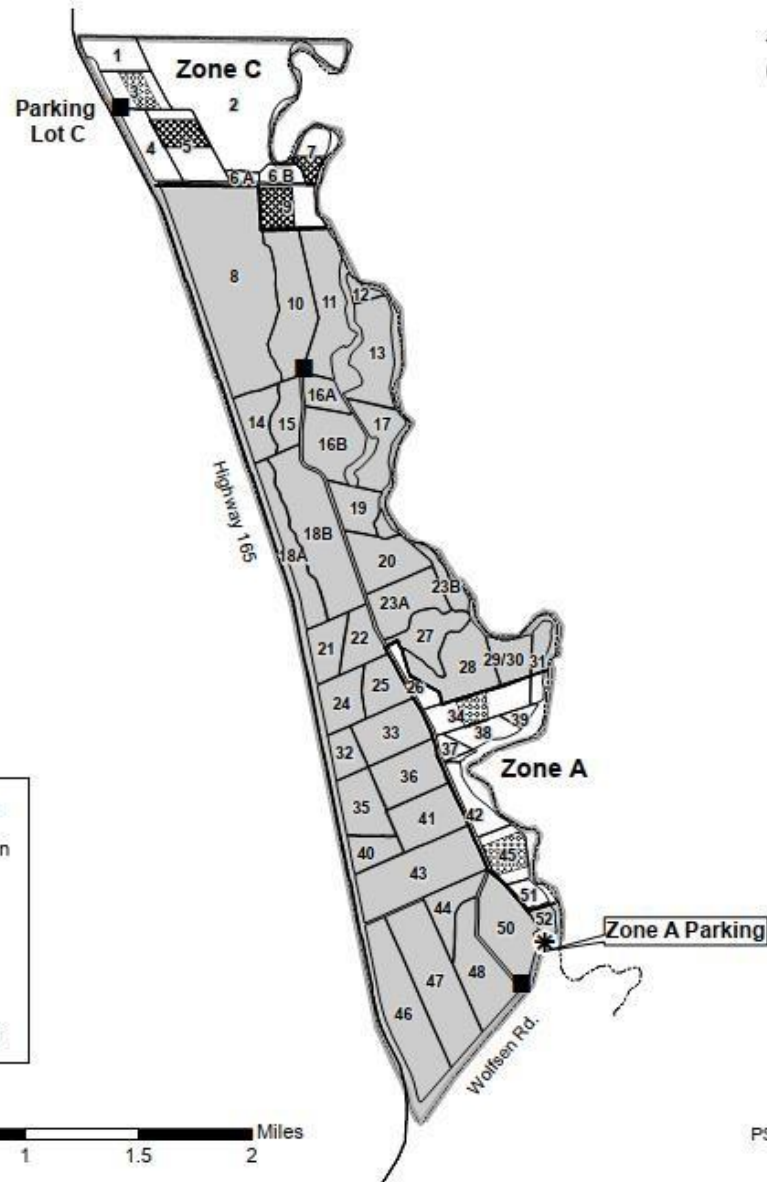
SALT SLOUGH UNIT NORTH GRASSLANDS WA HUNTER QUOTAS 2023/2024

QUOTAS ARE OUR BEST ESTIMATE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Acres Flooded	2023-24 Hunter Quota	2022-23 Hunter Quota
Opening Day	677	40	40
November 1	722	40	40
December 1	948	55	55
January 1	969	55	55



Salt Slough Unit North Grasslands Wildlife Area 2023 Dove Hunt Map



SALT SLOUGH FIELD 13



SALT SLOUGH FIELD 28



CHINA ISLAND UNIT NORTH GRASSLANDS WA HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES 2022/2023

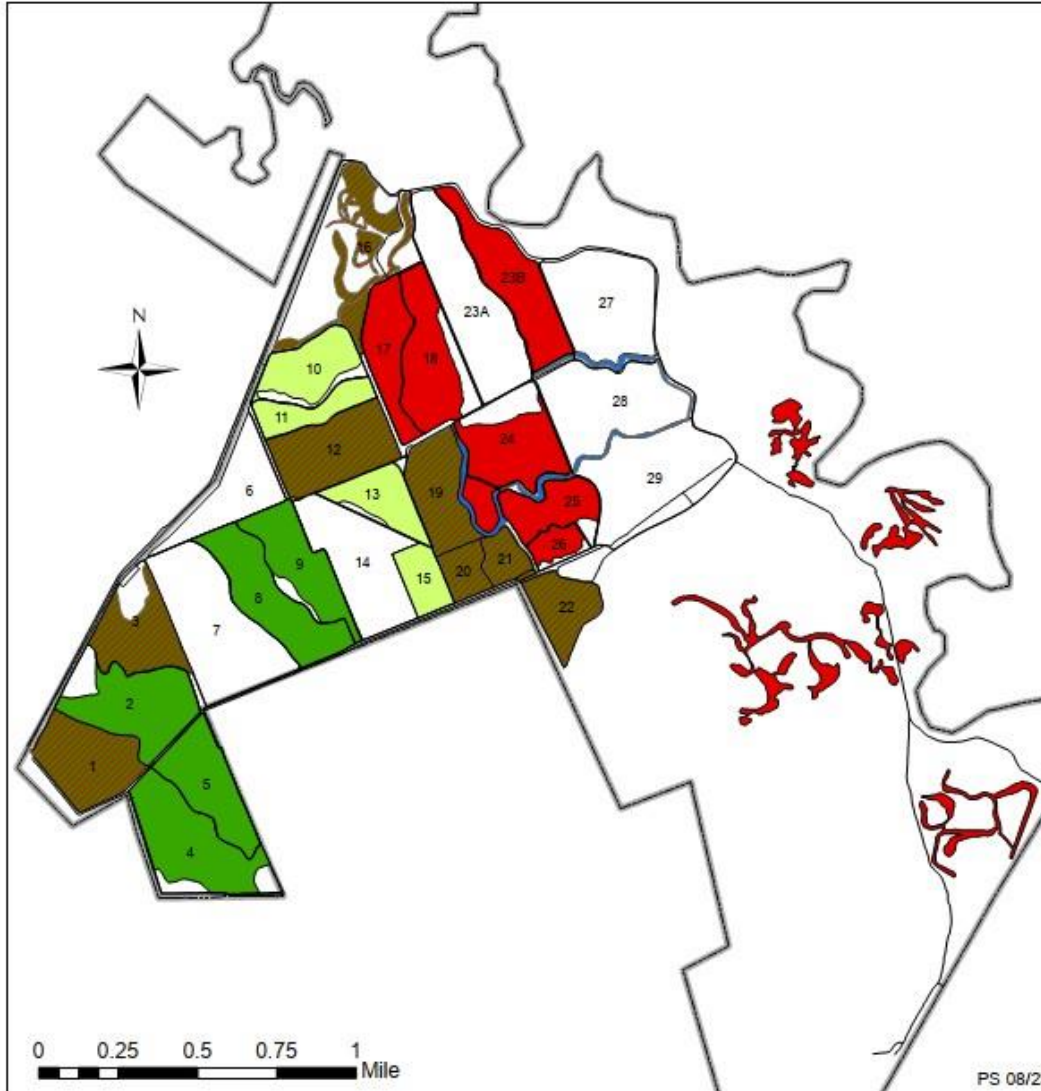
- China Island experience record flooding both for elevation of the flood water as well as the duration. The flooding did not allow for staff to move any heavy equipment into the uplands to do our spring planting or any significant wetland management due to a very high-water table.
- The good news is that no major damage occurred to the flood control levees or internal levees. However, the flood plain is full of cocklebur and sunflower and will be difficult to get around in. Staff plans to mow or disc areas dry enough to get into later this fall.
- China Island will have a delayed opener and will be open to hunting on opening weekend of pheasant season (November 11th).
- Watergrass Fields 5 and 8 received several irrigations and are looking good.



China Island Unit 2023 Flood-up Schedule North Grasslands Wildlife Area

Flood Date

November 1 - 15 November 15 - 30 December 1 - 15 Permanent Not Flooded



CHINA ISLAND UNIT NORTH GRASSLANDS WA HUNTER QUOTAS 2023/2024

QUOTAS ARE OUR BEST ESTIMATE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Acres Flooded	2023-24 Hunter Quota	2022-23 Hunter Quota
Opening Day	146	0	10
November 11	290	40 includes Upland Hunters	10
December 1	488	30	30
January 1	574	40	40

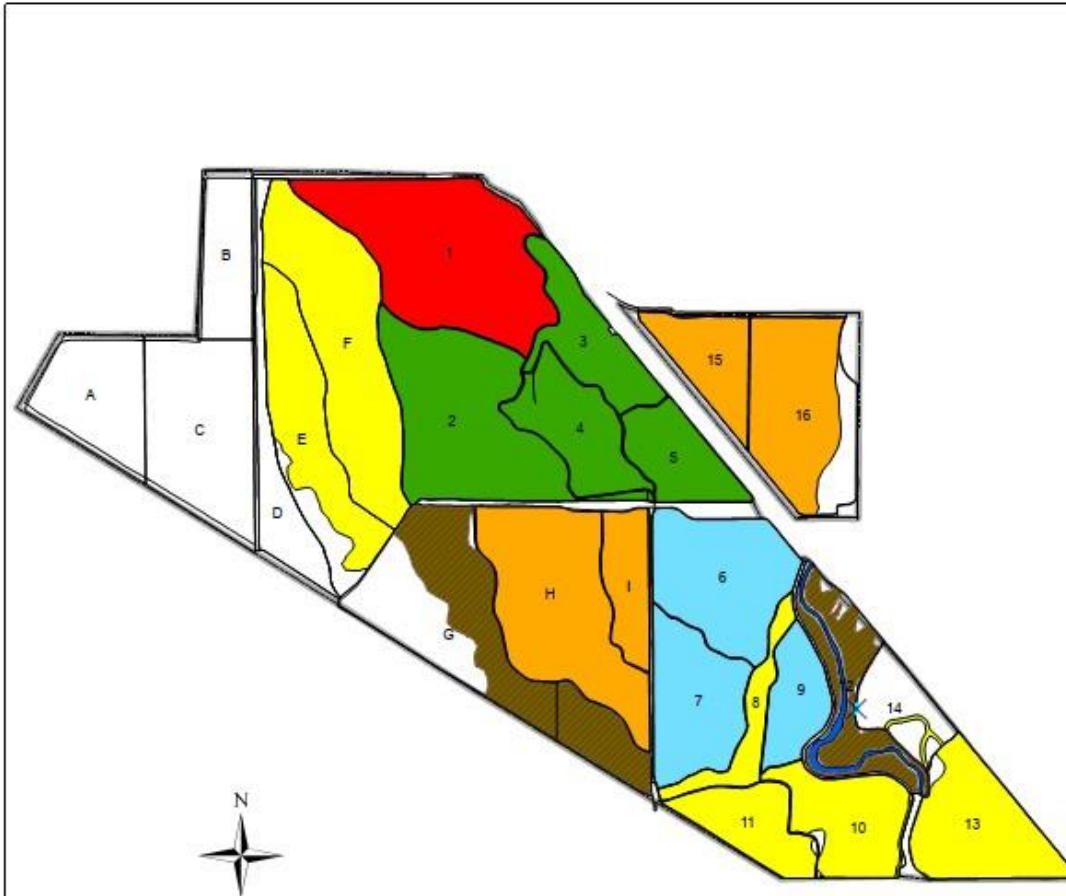
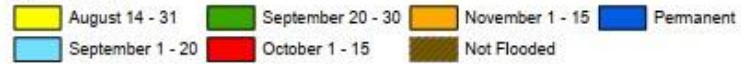
GADWALL UNIT NORTH GRASSLANDS WA HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES 2022/2023

- Seven hundred and ninety acres of swamp timothy was irrigated this year.
 - All swales were reshaped and returned to grade. CWA was the project manager, and the work will greatly improve our water efficiency and ability to do rapid irrigations.
 - The area received water starting on August 14 in field 10. This is much earlier than last season. The area will be flooded for opening day with a full hunter quota.
- * Gadwall Zone F will not open until the first week of December.



Gadwall Unit 2023 Flood-up Schedule North Grasslands Wildlife Area

Flood Date

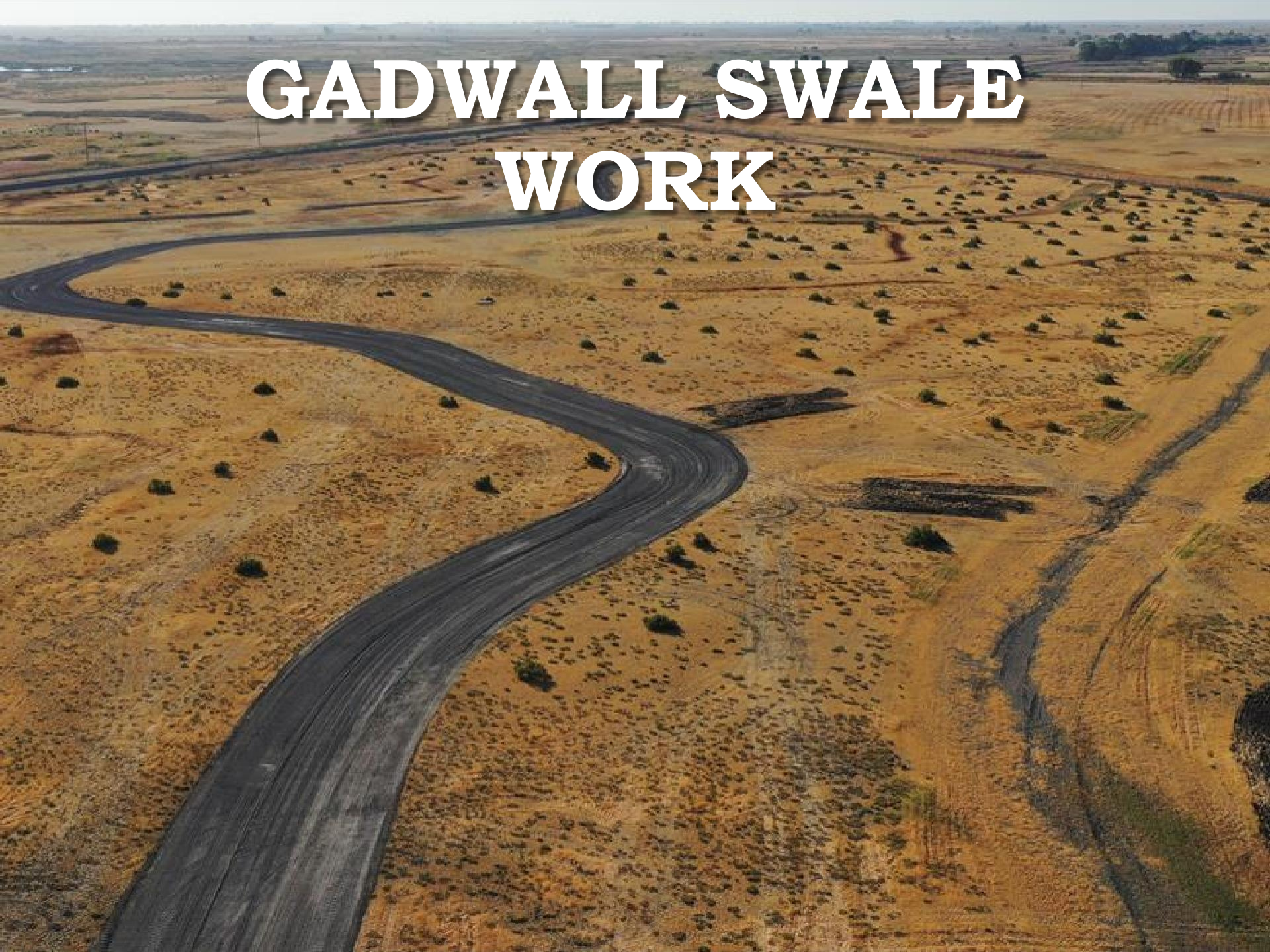


**GADWALL UNIT
NORTH GRASSLANDS WA
HUNTER QUOTAS 2022/2023**

QUOTAS ARE OUR BEST ESTIMATE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

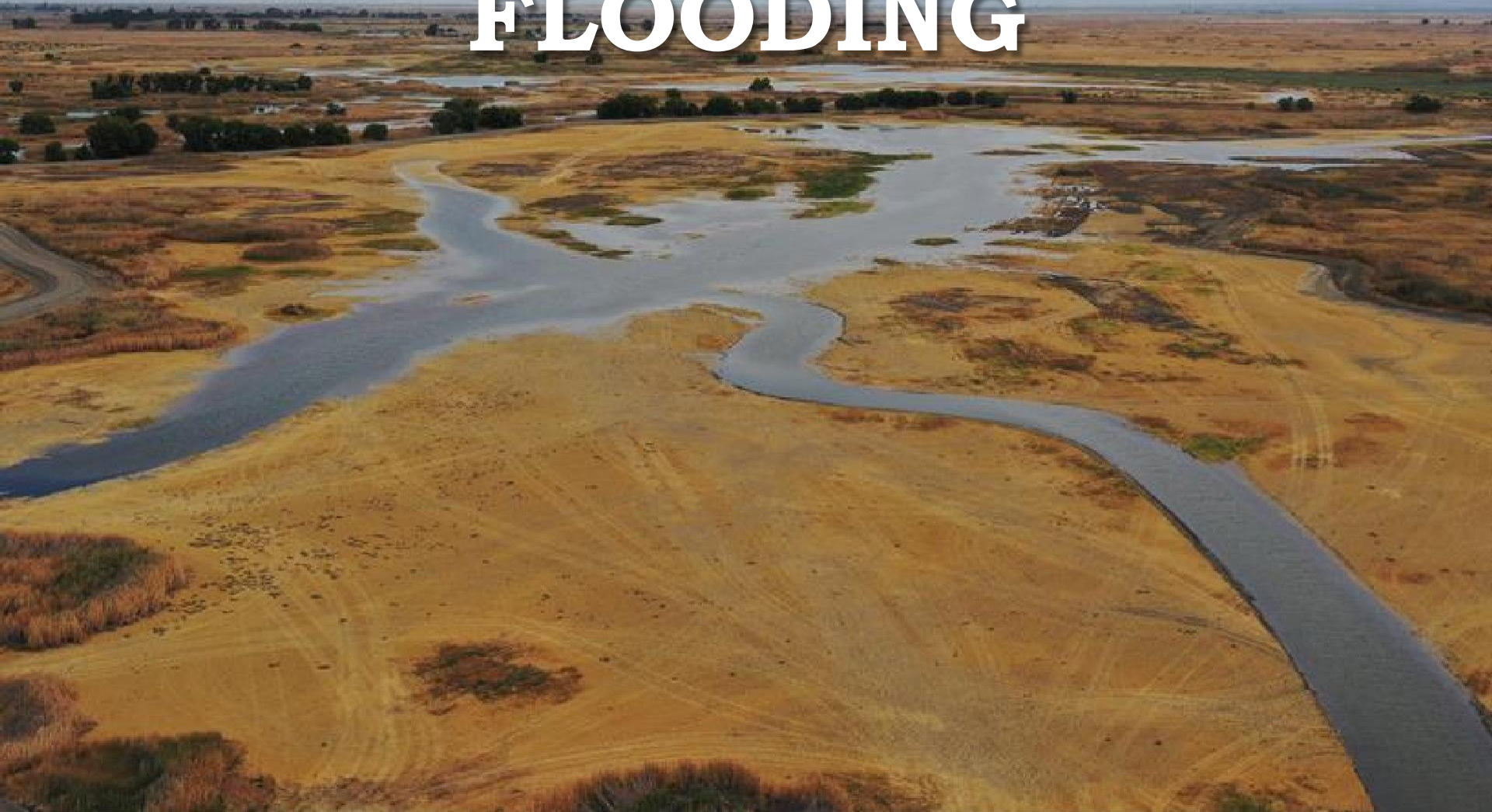
Date	Acres Flooded In Hunt Area	2023-24 Hunter Quota	2022-23 Hunter Quota
Opening Day	457	24	0
November 1	615	24	0
December 1	860	33	27
January 1	860	33	33

GADWALL SWALE WORK





GADWALL SWALES; FLOODING



NEW MOBILITY IMPAIRED BLIND AT THE GADWALL UNIT









Area Name	Season	Hunter Visits	Ducks	Geese	Coots	Total Waterfowl	Avg. Waterfowl	Adult Hunters	Junior Hunters
China Island	2022	956	2,668	68	13	2,749	2.87	902	54
	2021	817	1,111	58	0	1,169	1.43	763	54
Gadwall	2022	1,200	5,418	34	4	5,456	4.55	1,099	101
	2021	1,270	4,240	8	5	4,253	3.34	1,128	142
Kesterson	2022	2,078	5,615	129	25	5,769	2.78	1,958	120
	2021	2,156	3,783	114	30	3,927	1.81	2,024	132
Los Banos	2022	4891	11,204	320	147	11,671	2.39	4,433	458
	2021	4,629	8,063	163	235	8,461	1.78	4,178	451
Merced	2022	777	2,171	433	12	2,616	3.37	750	27
	2021	1,002	2,336	523	1	2,860	2.85	953	49
North Freitas	2022	228	427	11	0	438	1.92	219	9
	2021	409	494	3	0	497	1.22	395	14
South Freitas	2022	258	563	86	0	649	2.52	256	2
	2021	147	103	60	0	163	1.11	142	5
Salt Slough	2022	1,926	5,345	56	30	5,431	2.82	1,808	118
	2021	1,879	4,062	57	50	4,169	2.19	1,751	128
San Luis	2022	2,641	6,695	82	35	6,812	2.58	2,519	122
	2021	2,730	4,805	130	25	4,960	1.81	2,598	132
Volta	2022	3,077	9,851	37	67	9,955	3.24	2,888	189
	2021	3,397	8,832	30	203	9,065	2.61	3,150	247
West Bear Creek	2022	238	700	58	2	760	3.19	220	18
	2021	141	209	137	0	346	2.45	130	11

BE OUR EYES WHILE YOU ARE IN THE FIELD



- Report any dead or sick waterfowl in a group of 5 or more.
- Call our office LBWA (209)826-0463; Mendota (559)655-4645 or report your observations to check station staff as soon as possible.

THANKS

- To the Agencies and organizations for participating.
- Special thanks to Grasslands Water District for their tireless efforts in securing water supplies for the wetlands of the Central Valley and specifically the Grasslands Ecological Area.
- To you, our Public for participating in this information exchange

**CONTENT BELOW IS A COPY OF
THE QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS
IN THE CHAT DURING THE FORUM
AS WELL AS COMMENTS AND
QUESTIONS EMAILED IN ADVANCE
OF THE MEETING**

- Chat**
- Pinned
 - Allen, Sean@Wildlife (You)
 - Recent
 - Northern San Joaquin Valley Wildlife A... 8/30
Preston Brunk (Guest): Thank you Sean and staff!
 - Yang, Xiao@Wildlife 8/29
You: No Type A passes required.
 - CVJV Waterfowl Working Group 8/28
Recording is ready
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Klip, Mario@Wildlife: very cool and thanks for ...
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Bonner, Lawrence: hack hack sneeze sneeze...alle...
 - Johnson, Haya@Wildlife 8/21
Understandable!
 - IRWMT Meeting
 - Hill, Jennifer@Wildlife 8/16
You're welcome
 - Dosanjh, Kaljit@Wil..., +2 8/11
User added
 - Dosanjh, Kaljit@Wildlife 8/11
Sean - when are you available to jump on a quic...
 - SL-JUF Quarterly Meeting
 - Ronalter, Donald@Wildlife 8/2
Haha 100%
 - Equipment Meeting 8/2
 - Selmon, Michelle@Wildlife 8/1
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 - ACTION REQUIRED: Annual State Own... 7/27
Recording is ready

Northern San Joaquin Valley Wildlife Areas Meeting Link a... Chat Files Attendance Meeting Notes Recordings & Transcri... Breakout rooms Q&A

Some people in this chat are outside your org. It's possible they have message-related policies that will apply to the chat. [Learn more](#)

- Jason Marci was invited to the meeting.
- Aaron (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Rick Schussel CWA PublicLandsCommittee (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

UU Unknown User Yesterday 4:00 PM
I hear both of you

- Gordon (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Jeff Melrose was invited to the meeting.
- Matt Birsinger was invited to the meeting.
- Chuck s (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Jay Finley was invited to the meeting.
- Jay Finley left the chat.
- Jay Finley was invited to the meeting.

EG Ed Graveline (Guest) Yesterday 4:01 PM
sean I can hear you.but didn't hear Steve

- Jay Finley left the chat.
- Mark H. (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Mike R. (Guest) left the chat.
- Aaron (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Jay Finley was invited to the meeting.
- Jay Finley left the chat.
- MG (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Steve Baldwin (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Pat Cotta (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Jay Finley was invited to the meeting.

Type a new message

Chat



Some people in this chat are outside your org. It's possible they have message-related policies that will apply to the chat. Learn more

- Calendar
- Chat 10
- Activity 4
- Teams
- Files
- OneNote
- Planner
- Stream
- Calls
- ArcGIS
- ...
- Apps
- Help

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FA Frank Andrade Yesterday 4:08 PM
yes

EG Ed Graveline (Guest) Yesterday 4:08 PM
yes

guest (Guest) left the chat.

Anthony Bompreszi was invited to the meeting.

Mark T (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

Mike Case (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

Matt Kaminski was invited to the meeting.

Richard Valladao (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

MW Wong, Melody S (US 3913) Yesterday 4:16 PM
Does the flood up plans include the KNWR? It would be nice if the whole area is open this next year.

Gary (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

PS Sabol, Patricia Ann@Wildlife Yesterday 4:17 PM
Melody We will contact Kern and try to get a flood up map later on our website

MW Wong, Melody S (US 3913) Yesterday 4:19 PM
Sabol, Patricia Ann@Wildlife 8/30/2023 4:17 PM
Melody We will contact Kern and try to get a flood up map later on our website
What is the your website address? Thanks!

Gary (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

PS Sabol, Patricia Ann@Wildlife Yesterday 4:21 PM

Type a new message



Chat

- Calendar
- Chat (10)
- Activity (4)
- Teams
- Files
- OneNote
- Planner
- Stream
- Calls
- ArcGIS
- ...
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PS Sabol, Patricia Ann@Wildlife Yesterday 4:21 PM
Our website can be found on the CDFW under Los Banos Wildlife Area. We will be posting our state presentations, have a link to the USFWS presentations and a link to the map the for Kern.

M meatlover (Guest) Yesterday 4:23 PM
Did you change the blinds in free roam area of San Luis? (was in last year's plan for this year)

UU Unknown User Yesterday 4:25 PM
Is anyone else experiencing broken up audio on that call?

A ALH (Guest) Yesterday 4:27 PM
Have there been any talks with state parks to avoid closing North Freitas boat launch during high water flood conditions?
❤️ 1

JF Jay Finley Yesterday 4:27 PM
Not me.

FA Frank Andrade Yesterday 4:27 PM
Kevin audio seems to be ok on my end

FB Fred Broad (Guest) Yesterday 4:28 PM
can you turn off the cameras from the guys who have theirs on?
👉 1

JF Jay Finley Yesterday 4:29 PM
🙌🙌

EG Ed Graveline (Guest) Yesterday 4:29 PM
hearing everything

Type a new message

🔗 📎 😊 📺 🗨️

- Calendar
- Chat 10
- Activity 4
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- OneNote
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- ...
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Chat



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- FB** Fred Broad (Guest) Yesterday 4:30 PM
are you going to open the jr blinds to all after 2pm
- Gary (Guest)** left the chat.
- FA** Frank Andrade Yesterday 4:30 PM
Gate was opened after season when the river was higher than it was when they initially closed it
- MC** Mike Case (Guest) Yesterday 4:30 PM
Will we be able to access SJRNWR property this year?
- Larry Williams (Guest)** was invited to the meeting.
- MC** Mike Case (Guest) Yesterday 4:33 PM
Yes, hunting
- Wong, Melody S (US 3913)** left the chat.
- Aaron W Gomes** was invited to the meeting.
- Aaron (Guest)** left the chat.
- Gary (Guest)** left the chat.
- AG** Aaron W Gomes Yesterday 4:34 PM
We met Joshua out in the field last year. He was a great guy and it was a good experience. Keep up the good work!
- MC** Mike Case (Guest) Yesterday 4:34 PM
Well there be, and if so when, a hunt program for the snow goose property?
- MT** Mark T (Guest) Yesterday 4:34 PM
Last year there was quite a bit of flooding along the dirt road going out to the Lone Tree blinds at Merced. Has any work been done to riasse the grade on that road this year?

Type a new message

👉 🗨️ 📷 🗣️ 🗑️

Chat ☰ ✉

Calendar

Chat 10

Activity 4

Teams

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OneNote

Planner

Stream

Calls

ArcGIS

...

Apps

Help

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done to rias the grade on that road this year?

UU Unknown User Yesterday 4:35 PM
I think they mean SnoBird

MC Mike Case (Guest) Yesterday 4:35 PM
Yes, sorry, snow bird

UU Unknown User Yesterday 4:36 PM
We are willing to help alleviate those issues Chris
👍 2

MT Mark T (Guest) Yesterday 4:37 PM
Thanks for reply. Public road.

- Pat Cotta (Guest) left the chat.
- Pat Cotta (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Gary (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Grove, Thomas@Wildlife was invited to the meeting.
- Cason Whitney was invited to the meeting.
- Gary (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Jeeter Carr (Guest) left the chat.
- Jeeter Carr (Guest) left the chat.

AG Aaron W Gomes Yesterday 4:50 PM
Full Quota for opener at Mendota?

Jeeter Carr (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

Fred Broad (Guest) Yesterday 4:50 PM

Type a new message

🔗 📎 😊 🖼️ 🗨️ 🔊

Chat

- CVJV Waterfowl Working Group** 8/28
Recording is ready
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You: Hey Michelle, Looks like you are in a meetin...
- ACTION REQUIRED: Annual State Own...** 7/27
Recording is ready
- Sups & Sandwiches: Recruitment and ...** 7/26
Favro, Anthony: Thanks so much!
- ACTION REQUIRED: Annual State Own...** 7/26
Recording is ready
- IRWMT Meeting
- Sparks, Lara@Wildlife** 7/19
When are the GWD board meetings now?

Northern San Joaquin Valley Wildlife Areas Meeting Link a... Chat Files Attendance Meeting Notes Recordings & Transcri... Breakout rooms Q&A +

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Jeeter Carr (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

FB Fred Broad (Guest) Yesterday 4:50 PM
dynamite works well too haha

Mark H. (Guest) left the chat.

Mark Hennelly was invited to the meeting.

EG Ed Graveline (Guest) Yesterday 4:51 PM
looks great

FA Frank Andrade Yesterday 4:51 PM
Good Sean

Matt Birsinger left the chat.

Gary (Guest) left the chat.

bamaro12@yahoo.com (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

Gary (Guest) left the chat.

UU Jeeter Carr (Guest) Yesterday 4:55 PM
teve give opening quotas

basilio (Guest) left the chat.

Cook, Matthew Joseph was invited to the meeting.

UU Jeeter Carr (Guest) Yesterday 4:57 PM
Did Steve give opener quotas?

B bamaro12@yahoo.com (Guest) Yesterday 4:58 PM
Any info on the access road to Gadwall Unit being repaired? There were holes so deep we could smell Australian feet.

MF (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

Type a new message



Chat ☰ ✉

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You're welcome
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Calendar
Chat 10
Activity 4
Teams
Files
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- Mc (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- Michael Davis (Guest) left the chat.
- JF Yesterday 5:08 PM
When will you approximately post the slides? Flood ups?
- SPENCER, SHANE C left the chat.
- FB Yesterday 5:11 PM
no break keep going
- Mc (Guest) was invited to the meeting.
- J Yesterday 5:12 PM
Thanks guys for all the info and hard work this year. Exciting to have quotas back up and the refuges in such great shape. Just add water!
👍 2
- Mc (Guest) left the chat.
- UU Yesterday 5:15 PM
The State WA's have been cycling in barley into the moist soil units. How is this working in terms of subsequent years moist soil growth? I see barley fields out of Lot 1 at Banos now.
- RP Yesterday 5:15 PM
Rick Schussel CWA PublicLandsCommittee (Guest) they scraped the road, and it is better, They were still working on it a couple weeks ago, But, once it rains, and if hard rain...beware
- UU Yesterday 5:17 PM
Great out of the box thinking folks! Thank you
- B Yesterday 5:17 PM
bamaro12@yahoo.com (Guest) Thanks for the heads up Rick.

Type a new message

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JF Jay Finley Yesterday 5:17 PM
Thank you for all you guys do!!!

Unknown User left the chat.

UU Unknown User Yesterday 5:18 PM
Thank you Jack and team as well for the additional Zone at East Bear. That's a great idea!

Mc (Guest) left the chat.

Rick Schussel CWA PublicLandsCommittee (Guest) left the chat.

MG (Guest) left the chat.

Aaron W Gomes left the chat.

Pat Cotta (Guest) left the chat.

Ed Graveline (Guest) left the chat.

MC Mike Case (Guest) Yesterday 5:19 PM
Thanks all, appreciate the info and all your hard work!

MG (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

Richard Valladao (Guest) left the chat.

Mike Case (Guest) left the chat.

Cason Whitney left the chat.

Cason Whitney was invited to the meeting.

FA Frank Andrade Yesterday 5:22 PM
Thank you guys for all that you do.

If possible, id like to make an announcement on behalf of The Grasslands Delta Waterfowl Chapter

FB Fred Broad (Guest) Yesterday 5:25 PM
jr blinds reminder 😊

Type a new message

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FB Fred Broad (Guest) Yesterday 5:25 PM
jr blinds reminder 😊

A ALH (Guest) Yesterday 5:25 PM
Can the NWR staff elaborate on the issues with developing a hunt program at Arena Plains and Sno Bird?

Cason Whitney left the chat.

Cason Whitney was invited to the meeting.

Mc (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

B bamaro12@yahoo.com (Guest) Yesterday 5:27 PM
Are there any plans in the works to turn current free roam into assigned areas/ponds/blinds?

UU Unknown User Yesterday 5:27 PM
Agree 100%

FB Fred Broad (Guest) Yesterday 5:27 PM
no issue with mud slough staying for kids
👍 2

JF Jay Finley Yesterday 5:28 PM
Agreed

FA Frank Andrade Yesterday 5:28 PM
My name is Frank Andrade, and I am currently the Vice President for Grasslands Delta Waterfowl chapter. Our banquet is January 12th, if anyone is interested in attending or joining our committee, please contact me. Funds that we generate from our banquet are directly contributed back to local areas that we all spend time on. Some of these projects discussed in this meeting can be helped out by funds donated from Grasslands Delta Waterfowl.

UU Unknown User Yesterday 5:29 PM
We should be careful about using the subscription rate as an argument. Reason is not all areas are created equal. That really

Type a new message

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Calendar
Chat (10)
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Teams
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UU Unknown User Yesterday 5:29 PM
We should be careful about using the subscription rate as an argument. Reason is not all areas are created equal. That really should be obvious as some units have much better bird use than others. So how can we address that?

Question for Jack: Any thought about an ADA blind on the San Luis Unit? Asking for a friend lol

FB Fred Broad (Guest) Yesterday 5:33 PM
is there a plan to enhance the goose fields at merced nwr
👍 4

JM Jason Marci Yesterday 5:35 PM
Steve are you still drawing 100 res. this year?

Christopher Nola was invited to the meeting.

MH Mark Hennelly Yesterday 5:36 PM
I have to drop off but just wanted to say thanks Sean et al. for the presentations and all the great info. Really appreciate all you do on your areas.
👍 1

SB Brueggemann, Steve@Wildlife Yesterday 5:36 PM
yes, 100 reservations at Mendota

Mark Hennelly left the chat.

UU Jeeter Carr (Guest) Yesterday 5:37 PM
Steve, when is the deadline for trailer application?

SB Brueggemann, Steve@Wildlife Yesterday 5:38 PM
Sept 7th. Application is available online.

FB Fred Broad (Guest) Yesterday 5:38 PM
fields and pits

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Mike R. (Guest) left the chat.

Jon (Guest) Yesterday 5:40 PM
used to be winter wheat as well at merced

Jeeter Carr (Guest) was invited to the meeting.

Jason Marci Yesterday 5:40 PM
KEEP THE CATTLE GRAZING OFF

Unknown User Yesterday 5:41 PM
Chris....the CWA Public's Hunters Committee is willing to meet with you to discuss if you are open to a discussion
👍 1

Fred Broad (Guest) Yesterday 5:42 PM
Thanks for all the info guys and the work that goes into putting on a hunting season.. I know it isn't easy and hard work but you all do a good job 😊

ALH (Guest) Yesterday 5:42 PM
Hopefully no more assigned ponds and blinds!
👍 4 🙄 1

Sparks, Jack (External) Yesterday 5:42 PM
Chris here - definitely willing to listen to any input, Kevin
👍 1

Frank Andrade Yesterday 5:43 PM
The balance of AP's and Free roam is nice as sean stated. AP's are nice, however it limits opportunities at the same time

Jon (Guest) left the chat.

bamaro12@yahoo.com (Guest) Yesterday 5:44 PM
Great to hear that the state balance will remain

Type a new message



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- Chat 10
- Activity 4
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B bamaro12@yahoo.com (Guest) Yesterday 5:44 PM
Great to hear that the state balance will remain.

Mc (Guest) left the chat.

Fred Broad (Guest) left the chat.

MG (Guest) left the chat.

B bamaro12@yahoo.com (Guest) Yesterday 5:49 PM
Thanks to the entire staff!

MT Mark T (Guest) Yesterday 5:49 PM
Great job Sean and rest of gents!

Larry Williams (Guest) left the chat.

G Gordon (Guest) Yesterday 5:49 PM
Thanks everyone.

UU Unknown User Yesterday 5:49 PM
Good meeting folks! Thanks to all who make these places what they are. Sean thank you for facilitating as usual. Welcome Chris, Jonathan and Gabrie!!

👍 1

Erik (Guest) left the chat.

JM Jason Marci Yesterday 5:50 PM
Thanks Steve for everything you do at Mendota. Jason Marci

Mark T (Guest) left the chat.

JM Jeff Melrose Yesterday 5:50 PM
Thanks all...have a great season!

Type a new message

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JM Jeff Melrose Yesterday 5:50 PM
Thanks all...have a great season!

FA Frank Andrade Yesterday 5:50 PM
Thank you all for the work and dedication, looking forward to another great season.

Jeff Melrose left the chat.

UU Jeeter Carr (Guest) Yesterday 5:51 PM
Thanks to all of the managers and staff for all of your hard work

Cook, Matthew Joseph left the chat.

261 597 293 258 (Guest) left the chat.

Jason Marci left the chat.

Christopher Nola left the chat.

Jeeter Carr (Guest) left the chat.

Ken Johnson (Guest) left the chat.

PB Preston Brunk Yesterday 5:52 PM
Thank you Sean and staff!

Chuck s (Guest) left the chat.

meatlover (Guest) left the chat.

Markus Lang was invited to the meeting.

Cason Whitney left the chat.

ALH (Guest) left the chat.

Preston Brunk left the chat.

Markus Lang left the chat.

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Type a new message



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Hi Sean. Here are question/comments for today's webinar.

-With liberal goose limits, can more be done at NSJV Wildlife areas to provide habitat for attracting geese and providing quality hunting opportunities. Is it possible to improve closed zones to attract more geese, and/or disking/planting of open fields for goose hunting, maybe put in goose pits where appropriate; i.e., Merced Refuge?

-Please continue to educate hunters to refrain from skybusting, and provide more periodic inspection of hunters in the field on shell limits in possession. Announcing this over the speakers at the check station is appreciated.

-There are still a lot of hunters who do not know duck species, so important to provide posters or brochures at check stations for hunter education.

Thanks.

Hello Sean, I hope you and yours are well.

I'd like to join in the upcoming meeting this Wednesday. Can you please send me what I need to do that? I'd appreciate it.

Hopefully you'll be speaking about some of your areas that have not been open to public access.

Thanks in advance, I look forward to joining the meeting.

Cheers,

Sean,

Thanks for the update on the meeting. My main question has to do with the Mendota Slough and whether or not we are going to be able to hunt out of boats this year. Has the water hyacinth been eradicated and if not, why not?

That's it from me. Thanks for all you do for us hunters!!

Sean

Well this gets a little more explanatory than is necessary but I wanted to give some background on this suggestion and then expound on the reasoning behind the concept.

#1 Increase the number of hunters participating by increasing the number of Reservations

- It seems like most of the people that I have talked to about duckhunting over the years are not willing to go to the refuge if they don't have a reservation and they don't want to drive out and apply for a lottery number the night before and then wait around or go home and look online later to see if they're going to go hunting the next day.
- A few that really want to go decide to not enter a lottery and just show up in the morning and hope to get in somewhere but this is not the ideal way for them to go.
- This obviously does not include the hard-core hunter like me and ones I hunt with that don't have a reservation but are willing to go out and sleep in their truck or in a trailer the night before to get in a lottery and hope for somewhere to hunt.
- But most people that I talk to you either don't go unless they get a reservation or they get frustrated because they have sent in 100 applications for reservations and have only gotten a couple all year. We would all agree that the number of applications for Reservations has increased dramatically over the last 10 years.
- If we could ever increase the numbers of reservations for each area except for the opening and closing weekend to 75% of capacity instead of 50% that would give a lot more people a chance at a reservation somewhere and they would be more likely to go. Especially this year because we should have more water and therefore should have the normal number of hunters to be able to get into each refuge and therefore hunters would have increased odds to get a reservation. This should not overload the reservation system at each refuge, because normally at least a number of the reservations don't show up because people have multiple areas that they have sent in for and usually go to their favorite area if they get a reservation for it. I think you would agree that this would increase the number of hunters participating and that is ideally one of the goals of the CDFW.
- So if CDFW would increase the number of reservations, except for open and closing weekend, this would increase the participation exponentially for hunters utilizing the refuge system. I believe this would have a dramatic effect upon the number of hunters getting involved with Duckhunting, which would be good for The Hunting community and CDFW

#2 Mailing reservations to applicants

One more point that I would like to make is that most hunters check their reservations on the day they come out online and then print out a copy for themselves and therefore do not need the CDFW to mail them a copy of the reservation. There could be a place on the reservation website for people to opt out of receiving a mailed copy if they didn't need one and that would save the CDFW a lot of expense!!

Hi Sean,

Would like to send some questions comments ahead of time to hopefully be included in meeting.

My questions/comments all center around the Mendota WLA and the mismanagement of it. This refuge could be the crown jewel of the state instead it is much like the wild wild west.

Some topics for discussion. 1) Dove hunting food plots that say they have been planted. Problem is they have not been planted in over 10 years!! They are all weeds that have been mowed days before the season. 2) Many refuges post water maps for duck hunting and the schedule for which ponds will be flooded. This is very valuable information for hunters. Mendota has only done this once, years ago. 3) The duck hunting part of Mendota is so disorganized. Once you leave the check stand it is a race to get to your spot. I would like to use Los Banos as an example. Each parking lot there is regulate for the amount of hunters it can handle to avoid overcrowding. There are assigned ponds where groups of hunters can set up away from crowds. There are blinds where groups can set up without anyone crowding in on them. At Mendota there is none of this. Parking lots are overcrowded. Often times overflowing onto the road creating hazardous conditions. Fights break out in ponds over competition for the Prime spot. I have seen cars that were driving so fast to get to their spot that they actually lost control and went into the pond!! It is madness. And the refuge manager hates duck hunters!! Something needs to change here.

I am glad to hear about this meeting. I understand that many refuges will be discussed and there might not be time to talk about everything. Mendota is very important to me. I have hunted here for over 35 years. If there is not enough time to discuss Mendota I would love the opportunity to talk to you. I would be available anytime.

Thank you for listening

Los Banos Refuge Disability BLINDS WERE AWFULL NO WATER TO SETUP DECOYS. THIS IS A DISABILITY TO HUNT DUCKS FOR THE DISABLED HUNTER. THERE WAS ENOUGH WATER FOR 20 BLINDS BUT NOT ENOUGH FOR 2 DISABLED BLINDS