

Upland Game Bird Account Grant Program Proposal

- 1. Project Title:** Sacramento NWR Complex Spring Turkey Hunt Coordinator
- 2. Amount Requested:** \$14,388.51
- 3. Applicant Contact Information:** National Wild Turkey Federation, Tax ID# 57-0564993

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- 4. Project Priority**
Hunting Opportunity and Outreach

5. Introduction

The mission of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) is dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of our hunting heritage. As such, the NWTf recognizes that hunters and anglers are the number one constituency that provides funding for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and in 2017 alone directly contributed more than \$42.4 million to the Department's budget (CDFW, 2018). However, California hunting license sales have seen a 65% decline since 1970 (USFWS, 2016), and as revenue from this group declines, there is a direct and measurable effect on California's ability to conserve its fish and wildlife and other natural resources (CDFW R3 Plan, 2019). To help reverse these trends, CDFW, along with a list of diverse stakeholder groups and state/federal/tribal partners, created the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Hunting and Fishing Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3) Action Plan, which aims to increase statewide hunting and fishing participation. "We need the recreational fishing and hunting communities, our state and federal agency partners and others to continue working with us as we move forward together to address the barriers and opportunities to hunting and fishing in this state." A direct quote from CDFW Director Charlton H. Bonham.

6. Project Description

In recent years, wild turkey populations on the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Complex (the Complex) have been steadily increasing. Wild turkey populations have now increased to the point where wildlife managers on the Complex feel that they can sustain a limited opportunity, limited harvest spring hunt on both the Sacramento and Delevan refuges, as wildlife-dependent public recreation is mandated by and according to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) law and policy. Therefore, in February 2019, the Complex submitted a hunt plan (attached) to the Regional Chief of the National

Wildlife Refuge System in support of a hunt during the spring 2020 California wild turkey season for both the Sacramento and Delevan refuges. The plan outlines that hunts will occur on alternating weekends between the refuges. 4-5 hunters will utilize Sacramento refuge and 2-3 hunters will utilize Delevan refuge. Take limit will be set at one bearded wild turkey per hunter per weekend. Unfortunately, due to COVID, the hunt was cancelled for the 2020 and 2021 seasons and was picked back up for a successful 2022 spring season with every hunter harvesting a bearded turkey.

To help facilitate this spring turkey hunt program, the Complex has entered into a partnership with the NWTF to not only provide volunteer guides as mentors for each successful applicant, but to also seek funding to hire a seasonal staff (GS-7) Biological Technician to serve as the Spring Turkey Hunt Program Coordinator. The Turkey Hunt Program Coordinator will begin the first Monday in March and run through the last Friday in May. The Turkey Hunt Program Coordinator will work a maximum of 40 hours per week, and will coordinate all activities associated with the facilitation of a successful hunt program. Job duties will include: signing/posting all access routes into and out of each hunting zone, contacting successful applicants and notifying them of all rules and regulations specific to the hunt, coordinating and assigning successful applicants with NWTF volunteer mentor guides, assigning each hunter/mentor to their specific hunt zones, and hunter check-station responsibilities throughout each hunt day. The daily supervision of the Turkey Hunt Program Coordinator will be maintained by the Complex’s Visitor Services Specialist (currently David Vela), but the position will be held and administered by the NWTF.

7. Expected Management Benefits

Within CDFW’s R3 Action Plan, the lack of access to open land and water, lack of mentorship, and lack of incentivized opportunities are all identified as barriers to adult onset hunters. This hunt program will help to address all three of those barriers by (1) creating a brand new opportunity for 30 possible new hunters, (2) only “novice” hunters will be able to apply, and (3) each hunter will be paired up with a mentor that the mentee can learn the ropes from and ask questions. It is these types of programs that we need to be working toward if we are going to begin to reverse the decline in licensed hunters in California. For this cause, the National Wild Turkey Federation is committed to helping in any way that we can.

8. Schedule and List of Deliverables

| Date | Tasks/deliverables |
|----------------------|---|
| January 2023 | Turkey Hunt Coordinator job position will be posted for applications |
| March 6, 2023 | Turkey Hunt Program Coordinator would start work and begin to prepare for the upcoming hunting season |

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|--------------------------------|---|
| March 25-April 30, 2023 | Spring Turkey season for 2023. Mentored turkey hunts on weekends would alternate between the Sacramento Refuge (4-5 hunters) and the Delevan Refuge (2-3 hunters) |
| May 26 | Last day of the Turkey Hunt Program Coordinator |

9. Budget Narrative:

The cost of the coordinator on the refuge will be at a GS-7 rate of \$20/hour for a total of 520 hours totaling about \$10,400. Fringe benefits at 35% for the selected employee would be \$3,640. NWTF Staff administrative costs would be \$2,076.51.

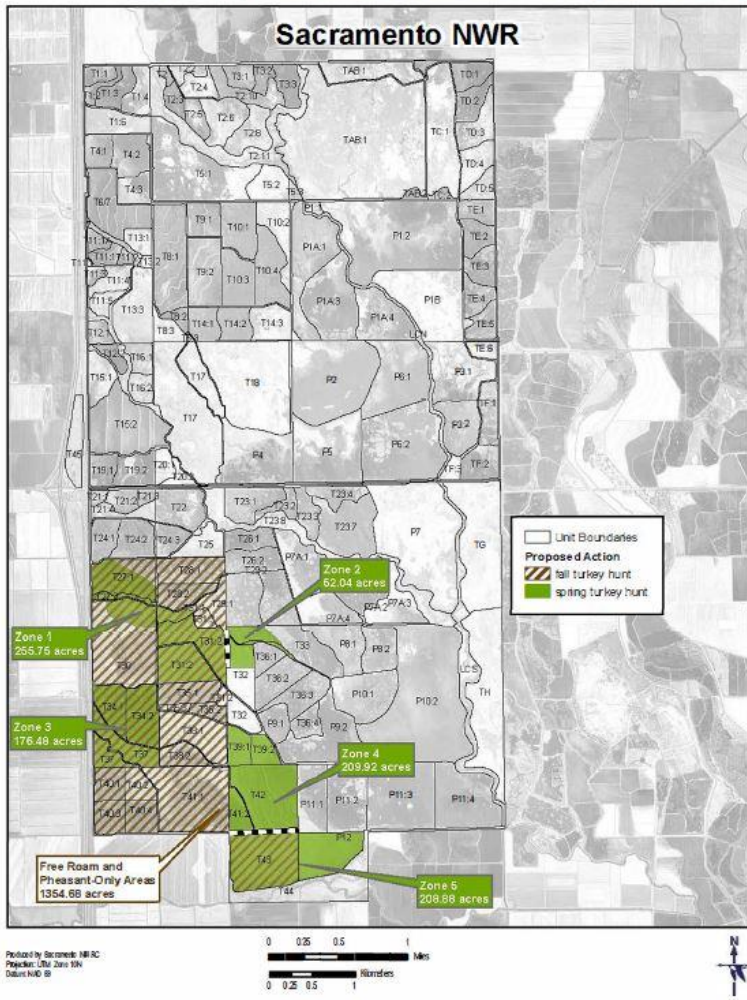
10. Itemized Budget:

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| | | Location | | | Grant Request | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|----------|--------|--------------------|-------------|
| Line Item Budget For: | | Turkey Hunt Program Coordinator | | | Sac Refuge complex | |
| Personnel (Grantee Staff) | | | | | | |
| | Staff Title | Rate | | | Unit | |
| | Turkey Hunt Program Coordinator GS-5 | \$19.00 | Per hour | 1 year | 480 | hours |
| | Fringe Benefits @ 35% | | | | | \$3,192.00 |
| Annual Personnel expenses: | | | | | | \$12,312.00 |
| Grant Administration | | | | | | |
| | Work/Item Description | NWTF's Federally-Approved overhead rate | | | Cost/unit | |
| | Staff Administration 1 year | 14.79% | | @ | \$14,040.00 | \$2,076.51 |
| Total Grant administrative expenses | | | | | | \$2,076.51 |
| Annual Project Cost | | | | | | \$14,388.51 |

Appendix A: Maps

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Figure 1. Proposed Action - Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Figure 2. Proposed Action - Delevan National Wildlife Refuge

