



## California Upland Game Bird Program

Grant Agreement Number : Q2280113

### CWA Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program

California Waterfowl (CWA) instituted the CWA Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program with the primary goal to expand hunting opportunities for the public, emphasizing hunting opportunities for dove and pheasant hunting in different regions of California.

The program was executed through a thoroughly planned combination of random draw and first-come, first-serve opportunities, ensuring fair access to hunting experiences for a diverse range of participants. Extensive promotional efforts were undertaken, leveraging social media platforms and direct Enews promotions to effectively reach and engage with potential hunters.

A total of 420 hunters made their way to the field courtesy of the CWA Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program.

#### Accomplishments

**Task 1) Safflower Planting:** One of the notable achievements of the program was the successful cultivation of 65 acres of safflower at Goose Lake and Butte Creek Island Ranch/Sanborn Slough. This initiative significantly contributed to habitat enhancement for game birds and non-game species.

**Task 2) Project Management and Administration:** The project was overseen with meticulous attention to detail, ensuring adherence to grant guidelines and effective utilization of resources. Administrative tasks, including documentation, coordination of logistics, and communication with participants and contractors, were executed with precision, fostering smooth operations throughout the project lifecycle.

**Task 3) Preparation and Planting of Safflower Plots:** Safflower plots were established and maintained according to schedule, experiencing successful germination and growth. The cultivation of 65 acres of safflower across three properties provided crucial habitat for game bird populations, promoting biodiversity and ecological sustainability.



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Task 4) Pheasant Management: Pheasant management was carried out thoughtfully, focusing on ensuring the well-being of the birds and enhancing the hunting experience for participants. A licensed breeder provided 800 pheasants, which were transported to designated locations with care. On-site rearing guaranteed the birds' health, contributing to successful hunting opportunities. A total of 769 pheasants were released across the designated hunting areas, enriching the landscape, and supporting game bird population. This effort not only added excitement to the hunting experience but also promoted sustainable wildlife management practices.

Taks 5) Public Hunting Access Preparations: Preparations were made to facilitate safe and enjoyable hunting experiences for participants. Thorough handbooks containing essential information such as safety procedures, directions, and regulations were distributed to hunters upon registration. Additionally, site preparations including mowing, signage installation, and facility maintenance were undertaken to create a safe environment for all users.

Task 6) Public Upland Hunt Program: The launch of the hunt program on [calwaterfowl.org](http://calwaterfowl.org) was met with enthusiasm, providing opportunity to 420 hunters across 37 hunt dates. The online application process streamlined participant registration and facilitated efficient management of hunting activities, enhancing the overall experience for hunters.

The launch of the upland hunt program on [calwaterfowl.org](http://calwaterfowl.org) sparked enthusiasm among local hunters, resulting in an impressive reach of 420 hunters. The online application system played a pivotal role in this success by simplifying participant registration and streamlining the management of hunting activities.

Furthermore, the management of hunting activities enhanced the overall experience for hunters, allowing hunters to focus on enjoying the adventure of the hunt without logistical concerns. With the program's success evident in the high participation rates and positive feedback from hunters, the online platform proved to be a valuable tool in promoting engagement and accessibility within the hunting community.



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Feedback from participants highlighted the success of the program, with hunters expressing satisfaction with the hunting opportunities provided:

When hunters were asked how was your recent hunting experience?

- "Great program and the pheasant hunt was good."
- "Amazing. We shot ducks in the morning and pheasant's midday."
- "Great hunting conditions and lots of birds."
- "Great, beautiful safflower field and a great hunt."

Additional comments from participants included:

- "It was awesome! I absolutely love your guys badger almond unit! Can't wait for next year."
- "It was good; the preparation that was done by CWA to the hunt location was outstanding."
- "Great experience for a first timer."
- "We had an excellent hunt and looking forward to another."
- "Very fun! The terrain was easy to walk. For once I had a pheasant hunt close to home."

#### Conclusion

The CWA Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program achieved its objectives of expanding hunting opportunities for the public while contributing to habitat enhancement efforts across California. Through planning, execution, and participant engagement, the program successfully fulfilled the requirements of the grant and garnered positive feedback from participants. Moving forward, California Waterfowl remains committed to promoting conservation and providing accessible outdoor experiences for all.