



Upland Game Bird Account Project Proposal

1. **Project Title:** CWA Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program
2. **Amount Requesting:** \$60,046.50
3. **Organization:** California Waterfowl Association, Tax ID 94-1149574
Name: Jeff Smith, Director Hunting and Education Programs
Phone: (530) 305-9234
Email: jsmith@calwaterfowl.org
Contract Authorization: Jake Messerli, Chief Executive Officer
Phone: (916) 648-1406
Email: jmesserli@calwaterfowl.org
Address: 1346 Blue Oaks Boulevard, Roseville, CA 95678
4. **Project Priority:** Hunting Opportunity and Outreach
5. **Introduction:**

California hunting license sales have declined steadily from 767,149 in 1970 to 260,685 in 2023. A leading cause of this decline is the loss of hunting opportunities and access. To help reverse this trend and to recruit, retain, and reintroduce hunters to the field, CWA developed a program based upon the Department of Fish and Wildlife's lottery system for hunting on public lands. Through CWA's relationship with private landowners, the program has created access to private and public lands and is identified as the California Waterfowl Hunt Program. The program has grown steadily over the past 15 years and now includes almost 40 individual properties encompassing over 60,000 acres. Since its inception in 2009, over 25,000 hunters have participated in the program with hundreds of landowners and volunteers providing in-kind services (donating, hosting, guiding hunts, etc.) and access to high quality hunting opportunities being made available to the public. The program currently hosts waterfowl, pheasant, quail, dove, deer, turkey and pig hunts. Applicants have an extensive variety of hunts to choose from which include access to some of the most prestigious and exclusive hunting properties in the country. Hunt locations range from the Klamath Basin in Northern California to the San Jacinto Valley in Southern California.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife outlined in the **2019 California Hunting and Fishing Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation Action Plan** that access and opportunity were among the eight topics of interest. Specifically: "*Participation in hunting and fishing is*

limited by many types of access barriers. Access barriers include anything that prevents or obstructs participation. Opportunity barriers include circumstances that make it impossible to participate. Having access to fishing and hunting opportunities is contingent on addressing multiple types of barriers within both. For example, some opportunity barriers are physical or related to resources, like having access to land and water, technical equipment and the training or skill required for participation.” CDFW R3 Action Plan

Our objective is to continue offering upland hunts through the California Waterfowl Hunt Program, but we need additional support to make this a reality given the ever-rising costs associated with managing and improving the habitat, stocking pheasants and facilitating public access. This proposal requests funding to assist with managing food plots, pheasant stocking and administrative tasks to provide public upland game bird hunting opportunities on 2,545 acres.

We propose a stocking program of 800 pheasants from October through January at CWA’s 2,175-acre Goose Lake. This would allow us to host 20 hunt days in the fall, allowing us to reach up to 24 hunters per date, totaling up to 480 potential hunters. These hunters will be provided with a hunt map on specific hunt zones and areas of past hunter success. During shoot days, hunters will be allowed to harvest dove (during fall season) and pheasants. In addition to dove and pheasants, we will allow hunters to pursue waterfowl as well. The hunt will be advertised as a sportsman package given that hunters can hunt dove, pheasant and waterfowl in a single hunt day.

Additionally, we would plant safflower food plots totaling 65 acres for mourning doves: Locations Butte County, (Butte Creek Island Ranch and Sanborn Slough, 10 total acres of safflower) and Kern County (Goose Lake, 55 acres of safflower).

Public dove hunting program at CWA’s Butte Creek Island Ranch, Sanborn Slough, and Goose Lake will provide 10 hunt days giving 100 hunters the opportunity to hunt doves during the first dove season September 1-15th.

6. Project Description:

Location:

The proposed project will fund a public upland game hunting program on private lands for mourning dove and pheasants on the following CWA properties:

- Goose Lake (2,175 acres), Kern County
- Butte Creek Island Ranch/Sanborn Slough (370 acres), Butte County.

CWA Personnel

Jeff Smith (Primary Manager), CWA Director Hunting and Education Programs. His experience includes participation in a multitude of different programs with CWA since 2008.

Additional qualifications: California State University Chico, Bachelor of Science Degree in Recreation Administration, Option in Parks and Natural Resources Management, CA Hunter Education Instructor, CPR/First Aid Certified, NRA Range Safety Officer, NRA Shotgun Coach and USA Archery Instructor.

Additionally, Jeff Smith is responsible for supervising the following programs: CWA Hunt Program, Becoming an Outdoors Woman, the Veteran Hunt Program, Camp Sprig, UC Davis College Camp, New Zealand Hunter Exchange, Hunter Development, and education programs including k-12 field trips and classroom programs. Other responsibilities include the management of CWA's Butte Creek Island Ranch and Sanborn Slough located in the Butte Sink, encompassing 370 acres.

Carson Odegard, CWA Hunt Program Coordinator. Carson has been working for CWA for over five years and has hosted numerous hunting and education events. Carson has participated in a multitude of programs within CWA. Involvement includes youth camps, veteran fishing trips, veteran shoots, hunter education instruction, wetlands work. Additional qualifications: California State University Chico, Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology, Pathway in Ecological, Environmental and Organismal Biology, CA Hunter Education Instructor, CPR certified.

Hunt Program Technicians, Seasonal staff members who assist with tasks associated with running a public hunt program. Technicians are onsite Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sunday's checking-in hunters, collecting waiver forms, hunter access fees and answering questions about the hunt including hunting regulations, etc.

Subcontractors:

CWA will hire local subcontractors to plant safflower food plots. Contractors will purchase seed, fertilizer, etc. and plant seed to ensure a successful crop. Other contractors include the licensed bird breeder whom CWA will purchase the pheasants from.

Implementation & Materials:

CWA will coordinate reservations and liability waivers through the well-established CWA Hunt Program. Hunters will be chosen through a random lottery process administered by a third party. CWA provides professional staff, including a Hunt Program Coordinator and the necessary supervisory and support staff to administer all aspects of the Hunt Program, including but not limited to general correspondence, advertising, habitat management, hunting preparation, hosting hunts, accounting, invoicing, reporting, etc. CWA has a well-established track record, fiscal policies and procedures to effectively administer and manage this very successful Hunt Program.

How the Application Process Works:

- All applicants apply via a secured application webpage on calwaterfowl.org.
- Each hunt application has a small processing fee. Applicants are allowed to apply once per hunt opportunity in an effort to ensure equality amongst all applicants to enjoy a unforgettable hunting experience.
- After the hunt winner and guest(s), pay the \$25 hunter access fee and complete the liability forms, CWA then sends the hunt details to the hunting party.
- Hunter access fees are waived for all junior hunters.
- Each hunter must fill out liability forms online and the day of the hunt.
- Applicants are not required to be CWA members.

- CWA supplies liability insurance up to \$1,000,000 Common Cause and \$3,000,000 Aggregate.

CWA will advertise and promote the pheasant and dove hunt program as public hunting opportunities through direct mailers to California hunters, CWA magazine (18,000+ members), outdoor magazines and submitting local press releases to local news outlets.

Hired contractors will provide tractors and necessary equipment to successfully plant safflower food plots totaling 65 acres. CWA owns the required tractors, mowers, discs, and other equipment to help prepare the fields and mow safflower fields before dove season. Additional tractor work will be completed before pheasant season to mow the fields, allowing hunters to pursue pheasants in their natural habitat.

After purchasing pheasants, CWA will house, feed, and water them at Goose Lake, where bird facilities are already in place.

Priorities:

The public upland game hunt program will provide a much-needed hunting opportunity and outreach for public hunters to pursue dove and pheasant hunting on uncrowded lands that are specifically managed for bird hunting. The Goose Lake property is especially important in delivering public hunting opportunities to Southern California hunters. Southern California provides approximately 90% of all hunting license sales but suffers from very limited public hunting access. With this project, we can provide much needed public hunting opportunities in a region with very limited public access. The Goose Lake area is also adjacent to severely disadvantaged communities. Funding could provide for public access to these communities.

Permitting:

This project is exempt from all permitting as it will only consist of minor alterations to the land and there will be no negative impacts to the physical environment that would reduce its ability to produce native or agricultural plants.

7. Expected Management Benefits:

This project will provide 30 public hunt days reaching up to 580 hunters directly and several thousand hunters indirectly through advertisement and educational routes, all to help recruit, retain and reintroduce hunters to the field and reverse the downward trend in hunting license sales. Land enhancements include planting 65 acres of safflower specifically for mourning doves. This public hunt program project will provide additional high quality upland game hunting opportunities to the public hunter to pursue doves and pheasants. Waterfowl hunting will also be permitted when drawn.

8. Schedule and List of Deliverables

Task 1: Preparation and Planting Safflower Food Plots

Task 1.1

Task Title: Preparation and Planting Safflower Food Plots

Task Description: Receive bids to plant safflower

Task 1.2

Task Title: Preparation and Planting Safflower Food Plots

Task Description: Award bids

Task 1.3

Task Title: Preparation and Planting Safflower Food Plots

Task Description: Purchase diesel fuel for tractors

Task 1.4

Task Title: Preparation and Planting Safflower Food Plots

Task Description: Prep fields, plant, and irrigate safflower

Task Summary	Deliverable
<i>1.1</i>	<i>January 1st, 2025</i>
<i>1.2</i>	<i>February 1st, 2025</i>
<i>1.3</i>	<i>March 1st, 2025</i>
<i>1.4</i>	<i>March 1-15th, 2025</i>

Task 2: Pheasants

Task 2.1

Task Title: Pheasants

Task Description: Renew CWA's Upland Game Bird Club License

Task 2.2

Task Title: Pheasants

Task Description: Receive bids from licensed bird breeder to purchase 800 pheasants

Task 2.3

Task Title: Pheasants

Task Description: House, feed, and water purchased pheasants at Goose Lake

Task 2.4

Task Title: Pheasants

Task Description: October-January release pheasants on hunt area the morning of scheduled hunt dates

Task Summary	Deliverable
2.1	<i>February 1st, 2025</i>
2.2	<i>April 1st, 2025</i>
2.3	<i>October 2025-January 2026</i>
2.4	<i>October 2025-January 2026</i>

Task 3: **Public Hunting Access Preparations**

Task 3.1

Task Title: Public Hunting Access Preparations

Task Description: Create hunter handbooks, including directions, hunt maps, etc.

Task 3.2

Task Title: Public Hunting Access Preparations

Task Description: Mow safflower food plots

Task 3.3

Task Title: Public Hunting Access Preparations

Task Description: Install signage in hunt areas, clean parking lots, etc.

Task Summary	Deliverable
3.1	<i>July 1st, 2025</i>
3.2	<i>August 17th, 2025</i>
3.3	<i>August 21st, 2025</i>

Task 4: Public Upland Hunt Program

Task 4.1

Task Title: Public Upland Hunt Program

Task Description: Update CWA website and hunter application software

Task 4

Task Title: Public Upland Hunt Program

Task Description: Promote and launch online hunt applications for public dove and pheasant hunts

Task 4.3

Task Title: Public Upland Hunt Program

Task Description: Conduct random hunter draws and coordination for 1st dove season September 1st-15th at Butte Creek Island Ranch, Sanborn Slough, and Goose Lake

Task 4.4

Task Title: Public Upland Hunt Program

Task Description: Conduct random hunter draws and coordination for fall pheasant and dove hunts at Goose Lake

Task Summary	Deliverable
4.1	<i>June 1st, 2025</i>
4.2	<i>July 8th, 2025</i>
4.3	<i>August 21st, 2025</i>
4.4	<i>October 2025-January 2026</i>

Task 5: Project Management

Task 5.1

Task Title: Project Management

Task Description: Coordinate project, supervise implementation and administer grant

Task Summary	Deliverable
5.1	<i>January 31st, 2026</i>

9. Budget Narrative

Budget Narrative for CWA Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program				
A. PERSONNEL SERVICES				
	Count	Units	Cost/Unit	Total
Director of Hunting and Education Programs (full-time)- Coordination of grant project budget, reporting, scheduling of contractors, purchasing and implementation. Additional duties include field preparation at Butte Creek Island Ranch and Sanborn Slough such as discing and mowing.	40	Hours	\$50.00	\$2,000.00
Subtotal Personnel Services				\$2,000.00
Staff Benefits (full time)			50%	\$1,000.00
B. OPERATING EXPENSES: GENERAL				
Poultry feed supplies for pheasants at Goose Lake.	18	40lb Bags	\$30.00	\$540.00
Travel to site for preparation, coordinate hunt dates, meetings with contractors, etc.	5,000	Miles	\$0.67	\$3,350.00
Irrigation of safflower plots at Goose Lake. Total of 65 acres.	65	acres	\$225.00	\$14,625.00
Diesel fuel for tractors to manage and prepare safflower food plots and mow prior to dove and pheasant season. Butte Creek Island Ranch, Sanborn Slough, and Goose Lake.	200	Gallons	\$6.00	\$1,200.00
C. OPERATING EXPENSES: SUBCONTRACTORS				
Hire contractors to plant safflower plots, which includes purchasing seed, fertilizer, planting seed, fertilizing fields, etc.	65	Acre	\$324	\$21,060.00
Purchase 800 pen raised pheasants from licensed breeder	800	Per	\$17.50	\$14,000.00
D. OPERATING EXPENSES: EQUIPMENT				
N/A				\$0.00
E. TOTAL				
Indirect Charge Rate 10% (Applies to Sections A+B only)				\$2,271.50
Includes the total costs associated with administering grant.				\$60,046.50

10. Itemized Budget

Line-Item Budget Details for CWA Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program	
A. PERSONNEL SERVICES	
Director of Hunting and Education Programs	\$2,000.00
Staff Benefits	\$1,000.00
Total Personnel Services	\$3,000.00
B. OPERATING EXPENSES: GENERAL	
Poultry Feed	\$540.00
Travel	\$3,350.00
Irrigation	\$14,625.00
Diesel	\$1,200.00
Subtotal Operating Expenses: General	\$19,175.00
C. OPERATING EXPENSES: SUBCONTRACTORS	
Subcontractor 1-Farmer/Contractor plant safflower food plots	\$21,060.00
Subcontractor 2-Licensed Bird Breeder	\$14,000.00
Subtotal Operating Expenses Subcontractors	\$35,060.00
D. Operating Expenses: Equipment	
N/A	\$0
Subtotal Operating Expenses: Equipment	\$0
E. SUBTOTALS & INDIRECT COSTS	
SUBTOTAL A+B (Personnel Services + Operating Expenses: General)	\$22,715.00
SUBTOTAL C (Operating Expenses: Subcontractors)	\$35,060.00
SUBTOTAL D (Operating Expenses: Equipment)	\$0
Indirect Charge Rate 10% (Applies to Sections A+B only)	\$2,271.50
F. GRAND TOTAL	\$60,046.50
Total Grant Request	\$60,046.50