



California Upland Game Bird Program

Grant Agreement Number : Q2480106

CWA Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program

California Waterfowl Association (CWA) implemented the Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program with the primary objective of expanding quality hunting opportunities for the public, particularly focused on dove and pheasant hunting across multiple regions of California. Through a structured combination of random-draw and first-come, first-served hunting opportunities, the program ensured equitable access for a diverse group of participants.

Outreach efforts included strategic use of social media, targeted email communications, and direct promotions, effectively engaging a broad audience of hunters. As a result of these efforts, **40** scheduled hunt dates successfully delivered meaningful, well-managed hunting opportunities to a total of **403** hunters.

Program Accomplishments

Task 1 – Project Management and Administration

The project was managed with a high level of professionalism and precision. All grant requirements were met, and appropriate documentation was maintained throughout the grant period. Administrative responsibilities, including contractor coordination, participant communication, recordkeeping, scheduling, and logistical planning were carried out efficiently. Effective oversight ensured that all project components were implemented on time, within scope, and in compliance with grant guidelines.

Task 2 – Preparation and Planting Safflower Food Plots

CWA successfully established **55 acres of safflower** across designated properties to support upland game habitat. These plots were planted according to the project timeline and exhibited strong germination and healthy growth. The safflower fields provided critical food resources and habitat structure for dove and pheasant populations, contributing to ecological sustainability and enhancing the quality of hunting experiences. This habitat work also supported broader conservation objectives by maintaining and improving biodiversity on managed lands.



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Task 3 – Pheasant Procurement, Rearing, and Release

A licensed upland game bird breeder supplied **1,150 pheasants**, which were safely transported and reared on-site to ensure proper care, health, and acclimation. These pheasants were ultimately released across designated hunting areas to support hunt quality, opportunity, and wildlife management objectives.

Task 4 – Public Hunting Access Preparations

CWA conducted thorough site preparation to ensure safe, compliant, and high-quality hunting access for all participants. Preparations included:

- Mowing and vegetation management
- Installation and maintenance of appropriate signage
- Facility and property upkeep
- Development and distribution of hunter handbooks

After hunters registered, they received handbooks that provided essential information, including safety requirements, property maps, access instructions, regulations, and operational guidelines. Collectively, these efforts ensured hunters were well-informed and prepared to participate safely and responsibly.

Task 5 – Public Upland Hunt Program

The Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program was formally launched on **calwaterfowl.org**, providing streamlined online registration and access to program information. The platform facilitated user-friendly application and scheduling processes, contributing to efficient program administration.

A total of **40 hunt dates** were offered, resulting in **403 individual hunters** participating in upland game hunting opportunities made available through this program. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many hunters noting the professionalism, organization, and quality of the hunting experience.



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The successful execution of hunt operations including onsite coordination, compliance oversight, and participant support allowed hunters to fully focus on the recreational and educational aspects of the upland hunting experience.

Program Impact

The CWA Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program provided significant public benefit by:

- Increasing public access to high-quality upland game hunting opportunities
- Enhancing upland game habitat through targeted safflower plantings
- Supporting sustainable pheasant and dove populations
- Delivering safe, well-organized hunting environments
- Engaging both new and experienced hunters across diverse regions of the state

The combination of habitat improvements, operational efficiency, and equitable access mechanisms contributed to a successful program.

Conclusion

The California Waterfowl Association is pleased to report the successful completion of the Public Access Upland Game Hunt Program. The program met all stated objectives, complied fully with grant requirements, and delivered substantial value to the public and to California's upland game bird resources. With 403 hunters served, high-quality habitat established, and sustainable wildlife management practices upheld, the program represents an effective model for expanding equitable public access to upland hunting opportunities.

CWA appreciates the opportunity to deliver this program and remains committed to advancing conservation, habitat stewardship, and accessible outdoor recreation throughout the state.



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

“The overall treatment, first class!”

“Experience was good. Hunt coordinator was knowledgeable and wanted everyone to be successful.”

“Top notch, first time hunting goose lake, very thorough and informative”

“It was really great - well organized and well run. Special shout out to Josh Marshall for his help and patience”

“Amazing. That was my first opening day hunt ever. It was so much fun. Lots of birds.”

“Excellent. Took my friend who had not hunted with CWA yet. He loved it.”

“Great program with great managers that are truly dedicated to providing a memorable experience.”

“Thank you to the whole CWA team. You guys are doing great things for hunters and habitat.”