



California Waterfowl 2020 Annual Report



WHAT WE DO

WATERFOWL



- Banding waterfowl for research
- Rescuing imperiled wild duck nests
- Helping give duck nests in California farm fields more time to hatch
- Providing nest boxes for wood ducks
- Engaging volunteers in hands-on work



WETLANDS

- Restoring and renewing wintering habitat
- Adding breeding habitat
- Managing CWA-owned wetlands
- Grant-writing assistance for duck clubs

HUNTING

- Private-land hunts for the public
- Hunting on CWA properties
- Veteran hunting & fishing trips
- Guided youth hunts
- Women's hunting & fishing opportunities



EDUCATION

- Teaching conservation in public schools
- Leading school field trips to wetlands
- Junior Duck Stamp Program
- Providing augmented hunter education
- Operating mentored hunts for novices

ADVOCACY

- Defending hunting and hunters' gun rights
- Calling for optimal hunting regulations
- Fighting for water for managed wetlands
- Sponsoring conservation-friendly bills



2019-20

Program highlights

9,422 acres

Wetland, riparian and breeding-habitat work completed in California in 2019; of that, 6,686 acres (71%) were public land.

8,522 ducks and geese

Banded by CWA biologists and partners in 2019.

41,540 wood ducks

Hatched from nest boxes in the California Wood Duck Program in 2019.

2,283 duck eggs

Rescued from wildlife-friendly farmers' fields in 2020 – then incubated, hatched, reared and released – through the Egg Salvage Program. This was a new record!

1,645 acres of wheat and triticale

Enrolled in CWA's new Delayed Wheat Harvest Incentive Program in 2020, giving wild duck nests more time to hatch before harvest.

13,400 students

Learned about wetlands and the role hunters play in conservation through field trips, presentations and hands-on projects.

210 youth, 200 women and 500 veterans

Enjoyed CWA camps, mentored hunts and guided hunts in 2019-20.

2,727 hunters

Enjoyed private-land hunts in 2019 with CWA's Hunt Program. That's a medium-sized refuge worth of hunting opportunity!

5 CWA-supported bills

Passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor in 2019.

\$2 million

Raised at 80 grassroots events in 2019 thanks to 1,500 volunteers.

5 companies

Proudly supported our work as CWA Corporate partners in 2019-20: Banded, Benelli, Federal Premium Ammunition, Jack Daniel's and SportDOG® Brand.

21,000 people

Graced our membership rolls – thanks for your support!

Detailed highlights are at calwaterfowl.org/annual-report

THE FIGHT FOR LOWER KLAMATH

You wouldn't know it from this photo, but the **Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge** was once the Pacific Flyway's Grand Central Station – a year-round hub of waterfowl activity.

Tens of thousands of ducks raised broods here each spring and summer. Even more – particularly mallards that breed in the Central Valley – chose this vast wetland as their safe haven during their annual molt, which leaves them flightless for up to 60 days.

Hundreds of thousands of migrants that breed and molt up north, including pintail, used this as their staging area on their journeys south each fall, and back north each spring.

Those numbers, though, are cratering as Lower Klamath's water supply is strangled, increasingly diverted down the Klamath River or held in Upper Klamath Lake to try to help three fish species in danger of extinction – so far in vain.

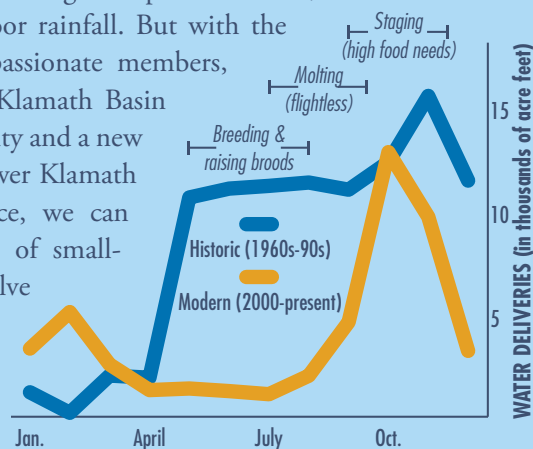
It's a staggering tragedy nearly 20 years in the making, and now approaching a dangerous tipping point as generation after generation of waterfowl arrive here to find no water when they desperately need it. The cost can be measured in dead ducklings, a

shrinking state mallard breeding population, intensified botulism outbreaks – 2020's is the worst anyone can remember – and diminished body condition for birds that do survive.

Saving Lower Klamath is CWA's top priority.

The problem is exceedingly complicated, tied up in matters of water rights, the Endangered Species Act and, in years like this, poor rainfall. But with the support of our passionate members, our allies in the Klamath Basin farming community and a new high-powered Lower Klamath Refuge Task Force, we can build on a series of smaller victories to solve this problem for good.

The ducks are counting on us.



- OUR CHIEF GOALS FOR LKNWR:**
- Secure high-priority water rights for the refuge.
 - Secure an agreement to distribute water equitably in the Klamath Basin.

OUR RECENT VICTORIES

- Worked with farmers to secure surplus ag water in fall 2019, substantially increasing bird counts.
- Worked with farmers and the U.S. Department of Interior to secure water for Unit 2 in summer 2020.
- Helped locate funding to repair pumps that can provide some well water.

Read details, donate: calwaterfowl.org/lower-klamath



PHOTOS 1, 2, 3 & 5: JOHN GEIGER. PHOTO 4: JAKE MESSERLI



'SKIN IN THE GAME'

"In the past, I've always thought of hunting as something to be discouraged at any opportunity; I had viewed it as the ruthless killing of an innocent creature."

"I grew up with family friends that were just as passionate about conservation as they were about hunting, but (I) always felt that they were hypocritical."

"I (used to see) hunting as antithetical to conservation, understanding it only to be diminishing wild populations for recreation."

If you heard those words coming out of the mouth of the manager of your favorite wildlife area, you'd be concerned, and with good reason.

While the non-hunting general public often doesn't understand what drives hunters, we expect more of our wildlife professionals: They should be aware of the value of a constituency with a deep vested interest in maintaining abundant habitat for wildlife.

The words above were written by people who could *become* wildlife managers: UC Davis Wildlife, Fish & Conservation Biology students, two of them featured in photos on the left. In duck blinds, with guns, and ducks they shot.

So how do they get from Point A to Point B?

It starts with professors who are hunters and know that hunting is critically important to conservation: Raveling Waterfowl Chair Dr. John Eadie and Dr.

Bob McLandress, the former president of California Waterfowl. Over a decade ago, Eadie saw a growing problem: Students who might become wildlife managers were no longer coming from hunting backgrounds, and they often lacked any meaningful connection to wildlife.

Inspired by the work of a Wisconsin professor, Eadie dreamed of creating a camp that would introduce his students to hunters and hunting, not necessarily to make them lifelong hunters, but to ensure they had a better understanding of a key conser-

vation constituency.

He found ready partners in hunter-philanthropist Paul R. Bonderson, Jr., whose Bird Haven Ranch was the perfect venue for such a camp, and in CWA, which already had a strong youth hunter education program. College Camp was born.

With the completion of the 2020 camp, 157 UC Davis students have now participated, many of them going on to careers where their insights serve them well.

Georgia Ramos, whose stellar shooting at College Camp was featured in a 2010 You-

Tube video by former CWA board member Jay Goble, was transformed by the camp.

"It was a life-changing experience that expanded my knowledge and comfort zones far beyond my expectations. It was a good reminder to set my mind in sand (instead of stone) so I always have room to change my perspectives," she said.

Alisha Seabert, who shared a blind with CWA board Vice Chair Rik Jimerson in the 2020 camp, was equally transformed. "I have been completely won over by everyone's passion and love for the hunt," she said. "You'd better believe I will be out duck hunting next year."

Eadie has a saying he shares with his students now: *Mud on the boots. Blood on the hands. Skin in the game.* "We won't sustain what we don't care for, he said. "We won't care unless we obtain value from it. And we can't value what we don't know and haven't experienced."

UC DAVIS COLLEGE CAMP

Hosted by Paul and Sandi Bonderson at Bird Haven Ranch, operated by California Waterfowl's expert hunting education staff.

Camp includes hunter ed, shooting instruction, tours that highlight the Bondersons' conservation efforts and a Sunday hunt.

Wildlife professionals whose career paths students may follow — biologists, wardens, refuge managers — guide the hunts.

Up to 15 students participate each year, now totalling 157 over 12 camps to date.

CALIFORNIA MALLARDS

California mallards are different: Studies show that 60% to 70% of mallards harvested in California hatched in California. And they don't stray far from the state: Only 4% of California-hatched mallards are harvested out of state.

Unfortunately, California's breeding population of mallards has declined due to insufficient breeding habitat. CWA is working on many fronts to address this:

WATER FOR LOWER KLAMATH: We're fighting to get water back to a national wildlife refuge that provides critical breeding, brood-rearing and molting habitat – see recent successes and our big goals on page 3.

ADDING BREEDING HABITAT: About 3,300 acres of brood ponds are being added in the Central Valley under the Presley Program. CWA fought to get \$10 million for the program in Proposition 68, allowing it to enroll its first new acreage in 15 years.

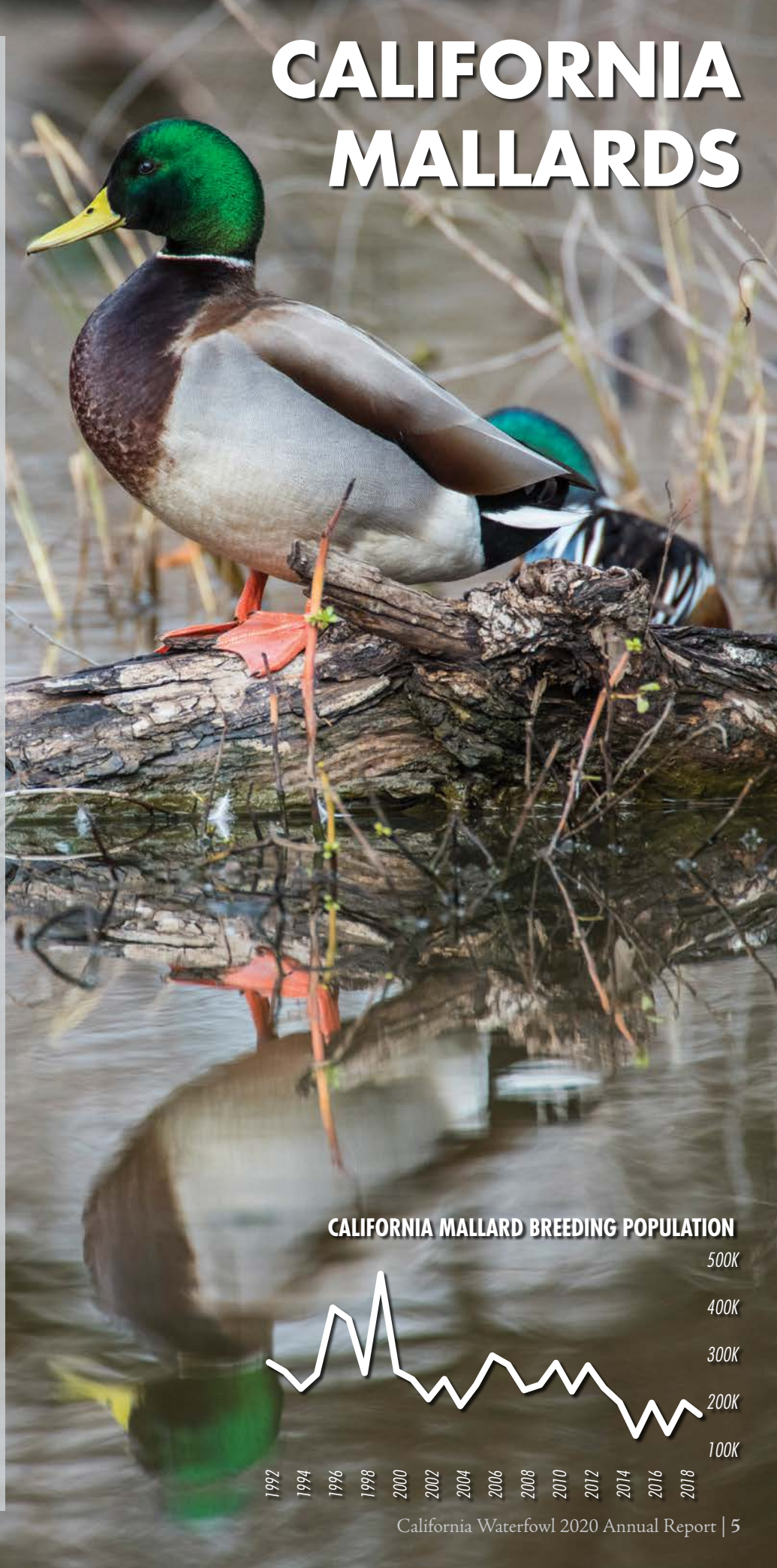
In addition, our regional biologists always endeavor to include breeding habitat projects in the restoration work they do each spring and summer. Their efforts added 247 acres of breeding/brood-rearing habitat in 2019.

GIVE THEM TIME TO HATCH: Mallards love nesting in winter wheat, but sometimes harvesters come before nests can hatch.

Delaying harvest helps, but it can also increase fire risk and degrade the product. So with the help of our generous supporters, California Waterfowl pioneered a Delayed Wheat Harvest Incentive Program in 2020, compensating farmers to delay their harvest on 1,645 acres. Farmer interest exceeded available funds by more than 4 to 1, so we are seeking additional funding to continue and expand the program.

HABITAT FUNDING: CWA sponsored a bill to fund the state's new Nesting Bird Habitat Incentive Program, but it did not pass, a casualty of a legislative session shortened by COVID-19. We'll try again next year.

Learn more at calwaterfowl.org/mallard



CALIFORNIA MALLARD BREEDING POPULATION



SERIOUS DEDICATION

Organizing a California Waterfowl fundraising banquet is a ton of work: It involves months of planning, securing donations, working with the venue and caterer, hustling to secure sponsors and sell event tickets, and making the actual event run as smoothly as possible.

So when Tech Sgt. Josh Dallas learned the Air Force was deploying him to South Korea right when his America's Freedom Fighters Banquet was scheduled to be held in Lincoln, this dinner committee chair did something crazy: He moved up the event date by one month, which took a big bite out of preparation time.

And here's the kicker: In addition to having less time to plan, he and his wife Johanna – the dinner co-chair – would now be doing the bulk of that work during duck season.

He could have just put it off until he returned home in 2021. But this dinner directly supports something really important to him: CWA's Veteran Hunt Program.

An avid duck hunter himself – his entire family hunts – his goal is to help CWA get as many active-duty military and veterans out duck hunting as possible.

"Whether it's their first time or 100th, I want them to have the opportunity to go places that they normally wouldn't be able to go," he said this spring in an email from Osan Air Force Base. "I know active duty members have a hard time trying to get in a club or finding good spots. They have to move every couple years, or deploy throughout the year."



JOSH AND JOHANNA DALLAS

Josh and Johanna took on this annual dinner seven years ago, when the Veteran Hunt Program was just one year old. The program has gone from taking 40 vets on hunting and fishing trips in its first year to more than 500 in 2019-20, thanks in no small part to the dedication of the Dallahs.

"The dinners do take work," Johanna said. "The months coming up to it, I worry. Will there be enough people? Can we raise enough money? But we're helping bring people outdoors, so after every dinner and deployment, we always say, 'Man, that was worth it.'"

Josh, who is crew chief on a U2 Dragon Lady reconnaissance jet in the 9th Reconnaissance Wing, does more than organize this dinner. He volunteers in CWA's California Wood Duck Program. He is the volunteer game warden at Beale Air Force Base. And he and Johanna help with many dinners in the Greater Sacramento area.

Dan Haugh, CWA's field operations representative for this banquet, said Josh is a true hero.

"He's been in the Air Force more than 15 years, has been sent to many places all over the world, and has had to endure and see some things that 99% of the population would never know anything about. Yet, the guy is just always, well, for the most part, happy. He loves his wife and kids more than anything. He's a downright positive person."

"Josh is truly a great dude," Haugh said. "He will literally do anything he can at any time to help someone else out. That is rare these days, but that's Josh."

FUNDRAISING BANQUET FACTS

- CWA holds at least 80 grassroots fundraising events each year all across the state, from San Diego to Mount Shasta.
- 1,500 dedicated volunteers help organize and run these events.
- CWA supports the events with a staff of just three field operations representatives – Tim Davanis, Darren Solaro and Dan Haugh – with the invaluable assistance of Fundraising Coordinator Christine Mesaros.
- While CWA supplies many of the guns and other items offered in raffles and auctions, each banquet is made unique by the items secured by its dinner committee – hand-crafted decor, antiques, guided hunts and more.
- Supporters donate hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of cash, goods and services to make each dinner a success.
- Grassroots fundraising events raised over \$2 million in net revenue in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2019 (most recent audited financials). That's 18% of all CWA revenues!
- Ready to help? Sign up for dinner committees and other volunteer opportunities at calwaterfowl.org/volunteer.



BRINGING SOME CAMO TO THE CAPITOL

California's Capitol is probably as foreign to most waterfowlers as wetlands are to most California lawmakers. But California Waterfowl helps bridge that gap with Lobby Day at the Capitol, bringing CWA members to lawmakers to talk about what we love most.

You might think Lobby Day is about persuading politicians with piles of data to prove hunters' value to conservation. It's not – we leave that to our professional advocates.

At its best, Lobby Day is about sharing stories of the marsh coming to life, the thrill of hard-earned success and the reward when we do everything right: duck for dinner!

When non-waterfowlers hear those stories, they see hunters are not caricatures, and they can see why our passion is a powerful force for good.

"It was so encouraging to get face time with our representatives and share with them what lights us up about the outdoors," said 2019 Lobby Day participant

Shannon Drake, an avid hunter who got her start with CWA's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman. "To answer their questions honestly and feel their attitudes shift in such a short period, I actually feel like I made a difference in our government."

She and the other 20 who participated in 2019 *did* make a difference: The authentic stories of ordinary people have heft that paid lobbyists' words can't match.

"We can't emphasize enough the value of Lobby Day," said CWA Vice President for Legislative Affairs & Public Policy Mark Hennelly.

"Legislators hearing directly from CWA members who are impacted by their votes

is one of the most important educational tools we have."

Participant Andre Fontenot loved meeting fellow waterfowlers and hearing about their passions. But, he said, "what I enjoyed most about the day was meeting the CWA employees who work hard behind the scenes for us."

GET INVOLVED

Can't make it to Lobby Day? There are other ways to support CWA's advocacy:

Action alerts: Sign up for alerts at calwaterfowl.org. We'll make it easy to contact your representatives about key issues.

Join a committee: Help develop recommendations for regulations and public land. Email mhennelly@calwaterfowl.org.

Support the team: You can earmark your donations to CWA for our advocacy efforts. calwaterfowl.org/donate.



PHOTOS: WAYNE TILCOCK

FINANCIALS

INDEPENDENT RATING

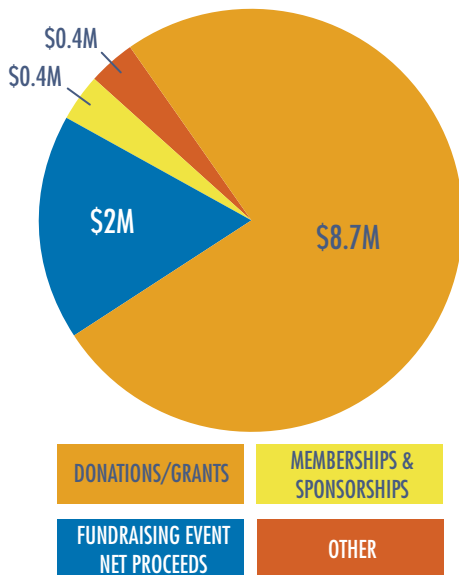
California Waterfowl has earned a three-star rating from Charity Navigator, and it earns the highest transparency and accountability rating among comparable organizations. Learn more at charitynavigator.org.

TRANSPARENCY

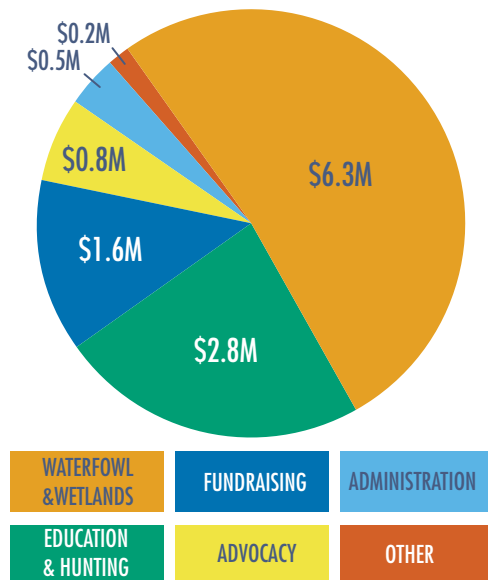
You can find our latest tax return (Form 990) and audited financials at calwaterfowl.org/audits-tax-returns.

AUDITED 2018-19 FINANCIALS (most recent available)

REVENUES



EXPENDITURES



CHOOSING HIS LEGACY

California Waterfowl was always proud to Count the late Chuck Raffety among our Life Members.

An avid waterfowler and member of the Salinas Gun Club in the Grasslands, Raffety had invested \$1,000 in Life Membership to demonstrate a higher level of commitment to waterfowl, wetlands and hunting.

Today, though, we are excited to feature Raffety on the list of CWA's Diamond Benefactors: supporters who have given \$1 million or more to the organization (*see next page*).

What caused that rather dramatic shift? It turns out everyone has their own way of supporting their chosen causes, and Raffety – who owned and operated Carson Valley Electric in Nevada – chose to give through his estate.

The big question for him was, "To whom?" He talked about it extensively with friends like Joe Paper and Eric Paris, who encouraged him to think about where his passions lay.

Well, duck hunting, obviously. But for Raffety, it was *especially* the need to pass hunting on to future generations. He loved the annual CWA-sponsored youth hunt at the Salinas Club. And he loved seeing that CWA spends its supporters' money right here in California, Paris said.

There was his answer, Paper told him. "California Waterfowl is doing what *you* want to do with your money," he said.

When Raffety passed away in 2018, CWA was floored to learn the extent of his generosity: He left a \$1 million gift, which was transferred to CWA in 2020. Its impact will ripple through our work for decades.



Raffety with one of his favorite young hunters, Joe Harney

Raffety's joy will be reflected in the eyes of the next little girl who gets her hunter education certificate at a CWA camp. His excitement will be in the air next time a little boy drops his first duck ever on a CWA youth hunt.

His passion will live in the thousands of acres of wetlands we restore each year, and the thousands of ducks our biologists band. And it will fuel our advocacy team's fight to ensure a strong future for hunting in California.

Thank you, Chuck Raffety, for trusting California Waterfowl to carry out your vision!

Explore *your* choices at calwaterfowl.org/donate/legacy-society

Our Major Donors

The funding that fuels California Waterfowl's incredible programs comes from a variety of sources: membership fees, fundraising banquets, private and public grants and cash gifts.

On these pages, we would like to acknowledge the cumulative giving of all

of CWA's Major Donors. We are grateful for your support in the best of times. But as the Covid-19 pandemic began to wreak havoc on our fundraising events starting at the end of our 2019-20 fiscal year, we were especially humbled by your outpouring of support.

Next year's annual report will reflect a radically changed landscape in which few events of any kind were possible. But CWA will endure, in no small part because of how our major donors stepped up to support CWA in these challenging times. Thank you!

DIAMOND BENEFACTOR – \$1 million and above

Stephen D. Bechtel, Jr.
Ken Hofmann*
The Joseph and Vera Long Foundation
Edmund W. Littlefield, Jr.
The Packard Foundation
Charles E. Raffety*
Saveri & Saveri, Inc.
John M. Simmons
Ellis M. Stephens

Larry R. Gury
The Harvey L. & Maud C. Sorensen Foundation
W. Kurt Hauser
The Herbst Foundation, Inc.
Cory E. Higgins
Frank E. Higgins*
Tyler W. Higgins
William D. Lafayette and Family
Ron Leineke*
Raymond E. Lewis*
Rocque E. Merlo
G. Willard Miller, Jr.

Clifford Howe
Carol Lacina
Kenneth Lester
Cheryl Loring
Tom J. Louderback, Jr.
Michael W. Marshall, DDS
Marvin A. Meyers*
Al Montna
National Shooting Sports Foundation
The NRA Foundation, Inc.
Judy A. Oswald
Mark R. Ottenwalter
Pacific States Environmental Contractors, Inc.
Christopher Peatross
Robert S. Plath
Pro Line Manufacturing
Resources Legacy Fund
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Mr. and Mrs. George W. Saul*

Jeff Dennis*
Christopher M. Dobson, CFP
Douglass M. Eberhardt, Sr.*
Tim and Donna Egan*
John D. Eudy
J.B. Ferrarone
Silvio A. Garaventa, Jr.
Jim Gardner
James D. Goble*
Jay A. Goble, DDS
Robert A. Griffiths
Craig P. Grilione
Frank A. Hall
The Henry Mayo Newhall Foundation
Byron Hisey
Hoblit Motors
Ralph J. Holsclaw
Anthony Iaccarino
John T. Iacopi
Jay A. Kellest
E. Greg Kent

Roderick W. Shepard
Gary W. Sitton
Sohnrey and Son Family Farms
Stanley A. Steindorf, Jr.*
David Warner
Russell & Kathleen Webb
Whiddon Wingshooting
James A. Williams
Yoshio Yamada*
James A. Yost

Kathleen Childress
Chris T. Cholette
David B. Colclough, Jr.
William N. Cullins
Ashley Custodio

Barbara Imbrie
Irwin Belk Educational Foundation

EMERALD BENEFACTOR – \$500,000-\$999,999

Gary H. Bechtel
Paul and Sandi Bonderson
Paul L. Davies, Jr.*
Anthony Marnell II
Dwight L. Merriman, Jr.*
Victor M. Parachini, Jr.
Morgan Read

Joe Murphy
Mzuri Wildlife Foundation
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Mark and Rebecca Pine
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John R. Winther
Bill Wright

Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Peter D. Stent
Teichert Aggregates
Allen E. and Donna J. Thomas
George A. Tillotson
Richard C. Timmer
John Thacher
Tri-Tronics
John F. Wilhelm
Winters Conservancy

♦ The Pintail Legacy Society honors those who have chosen to leave gifts to CWA through their estates. For more information, please go to calwaterfowl.org/donate/legacy-society

MAJOR BENEFACTOR – \$10,000-\$24,999

Malik AboRashid
Agriculture, Inc.
Thomas Aitchison
Douglas Alburger
Don Allard*
Dan Asmus
Stanford H. Atwood, Jr.
Thomas G. Atwood, DDS

D
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Tyler S. Davies
Rod Davison
H. Louis "Bud" Detjen, Jr.
Steve A. Difu
Earle E. Dix*
John "Jack" P. Dolan, Jr.
David A. Drummond
Duck Creek Outfitters
Ruth Dwight-Adams
Lloyd T. Dyer*

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Frank H. Johnson*
Evan B. Johnstone
Ted Jonat
John B. Jones, Jr.
Joseph J. Albanese, Inc.

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George T. Kammerer III
Kenneth Keeler
Klamath Land & Cattle Company
George L. Knoop, Jr.
Robert G. Kocher
A. Michael Koewler*
Lalo Kwiat

RUBY BENEFACTOR – \$250,000-\$499,999

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CJ Berry Foundation – William F. Berry
Derek W. Berry
Dino Cortopassi
Edmund W. Littlefield, Sr.*
Thomas A. Seeno
Henry F. Trione*
Tulare Basin Wetlands Association

SILVER BENEFACTOR – \$50,000-\$99,999

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James R. Burroughs
Charles Schwab Foundation
Paul David Christman
James W. Coddington*
Cortopassi Family Foundation
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Eagle Lakes Ranch Lodge
Jim Ghielmetti
John W. Goddard
Victor O. Gonella
Steven A. Gonsalves
Jay Greenwell
Claude Grillo
Terry H. Holberton III

BRONZE BENEFACTOR – \$25,000-\$49,999

A. Gary Anderson Family Foundation
Banded Holdings, Inc.
Bass Pro Outdoor World, LLC
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Columbia Sportswear
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William D. Pine
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Leonard P. Lawrence
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Lawrence Leidelmeier
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Jacob R. Messerli
Gary J. Miller
Jon D. Moss
James C. Mower
James Mulvihill

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Roger "Corky" Heitz
Allan L. Herzog
Steve Houchin
Dennis B. Hulse

N
Robert Nardi
Cranford D. Newell
North Delta Conservancy

C
Walter F. Caldwell
California Rice Commission
Larry Carter
Roger Casper

* denotes deceased, ♦ denotes member of California Waterfowl Pintail Legacy Society

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Richard J. Pierce
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Q

Thomas P. Quinn

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Gunworks
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Kevin D. Robison
Robert W. Robinson
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Thurmond J. Rosefield*
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Paul E. Tuttle, Jr.
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Williams
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Shoji "Sid" Yamada
Charles R. Yirchott*
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation
Greg Young

MAJOR SPONSOR —
\$5,000-\$9,999

A

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Bruce M. Albini
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Darius Anderson
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Yosh Ashikaga
Andy M. Atkinson

B

Nancy J. Baker
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Alfred Bettman, DVM*
Bruce A. Billings
Rodney E. Bingham
Bingham, Osborn &
Scarborough, LLC
Bob and Jennie Canevari
Foundation
Bob and Marie Gallo
Foundation
William P. Brooks*
Bill Brush*
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Paul Butler
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