



March 25, 2021

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia  
Assembly Member, AD 56  
State Capitol, Room 4140  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1500 (Garcia) – SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

Dear Assembly Member Garcia:

The California Waterfowl Association (CWA) is pleased to notify you of our Support With Amendments position for AB 1500, the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparation, Flood Protection, Extreme Heat Mitigation, and Workforce Development Bond Act of 2022.

We wish to communicate our support for Pacific Flyway investments in the upcoming 2021 climate resilience bond conversations. These investments prioritize Central Valley and coastal wetlands, water conveyance and acquisition for managed wetlands and wildlife areas, funding for CDFW programs related to public and private lands management for breeding and wintering habitat, funding for the Salton Sea, and investments to groundwater sustainability projects that provide wildlife habitat and support implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

Wetlands investments are one of the cornerstones of the State's efforts to support biodiversity across California. They help the State manage its protected areas and provide funding for easements to increase protected areas. These investments help address climate resilience and flood management, and integrally support many elements of the Governor's Water Resilience Portfolio. Investments in the Pacific Flyway improve access to nature for all people in the state, including communities of color and economically disadvantaged communities, and provide for recreational and educational opportunities. Finally, these investments support the Central Valley Joint Venture Implementation Plan, which is used as a roadmap by federal, state, and NGO partners for wetlands and migratory bird priorities.

We respectfully urge you to consider the following policy priorities for inclusion in AB 1500 and the various climate resilience bond vehicles that will be discussed in the Legislature this session.

1. Support investments in a core set of priorities for the Pacific Flyway, including funding for water rights for wildlife refuges, infrastructure and water conveyance for Central Valley wetlands, and the management and enhancement of private and public lands for the benefit of waterfowl and other birds, including for wintering and breeding habitat purposes.

Two hundred fifty million dollars (\$250,000,000) shall be made available to the Department of Fish and Wildlife for investments in the Pacific Flyway, including the acquisition of water and conveyance rights, infrastructure projects to improve conditions on wildlife refuges and wetland habitat areas, funding for existing habitat programs at the Department of Fish and Wildlife for public and privately managed land, funding to support dynamic delivery of habitat at critical times, the creation or protection of permanent wetland habitats, and implementation of the Central Valley Joint Venture Implementation Plan ([Central Valley Joint Venture](#)). Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Funding for the acquisition and delivery of water from willing sellers and water conveyance rights and infrastructure projects to improve conditions on wildlife refuges and wetland habitat areas, to achieve full compliance with the terms of subsection (d) of Section 3406 of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (Title 34 of Public Law 102-575) and for other Pacific Flyway wetlands, and to support the goals of the Central Valley Joint Venture Implementation Plan.
  - b) Funding for existing CDFW programs that make investments in management and enhancement of private and public lands for the benefit of waterfowl and other birds, including for wintering and breeding habitat purposes.
    - a. Fifteen million dollars (\$15,000,000) for the Nesting Bird Habitat Incentive Program, pursuant to Section 3480 of the Fish and Game Code.
    - b. Fifteen million dollars (\$15,000,000) for the California Waterfowl Habitat Program, pursuant to Section 3460 of the Fish and Game Code.
    - c. Ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) for the California Winter Rice Habitat Incentive Program, pursuant to Section 3469 of the Fish and Game Code.
2. Support investments in habitat and funding programs for the Wildlife Conservation Board.

Seven hundred million dollars (\$700,000,000) shall be available to the Wildlife Conservation Board for the protection of California's fish and wildlife resources in response to changing climate conditions and the highly variable habitat needs of fish and wildlife and pollinators, as well as for restoration and stewardship projects that restore or manage the land to improve its resilience to climate impacts and natural disasters.

3. Support investments in funding for the Department of Fish and Wildlife to improve the climate resilience of fish and wildlife and pollinator habitat.

4. Support investments in the Lower Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge on the California-Oregon border.

Forty million dollars (\$60,000,000) shall be available for the acquisition of water rights for the Lower Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge and the construction of local solar projects that would generate power to convey acquired water to the wildlife refuge.

California Waterfowl has long been a leader in wetlands and waterfowl conservation. For these reasons, we are pleased to let you know of our Support With Amendments position on AB 1500, and look forward to working with you as the measure makes its way through the legislative process.

Sincerely,



Mark Hennelly, Vice President of Legislative Affairs and Public Policy  
California Waterfowl Association