

California Legislature



James Gallagher
Assemblyman, 3rd District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 21, 2018

CONTACT: Curtis Grima
(916) 319-2003

Governor Signs Gallagher Bill Creating Nesting Bird Incentive Program

SACRAMENTO – Governor Brown has signed Assemblyman Gallagher’s Assembly Bill 2697, which would establish an incentive program to encourage landowners to maintain cover crops or natural vegetation on idled lands to provide habitat and nesting cover for waterfowl.

“Vegetative cover provides valuable nesting habitat for waterfowl and makes working lands more wildlife-friendly. This incentive program will help increase the amount of habitat available for these important purposes,” said Assemblyman Gallagher.

If sufficient funding becomes available through the 2018 Water Bond or through federal grants, AB 2697 would require the Department of Fish and Wildlife to establish the Nesting Bird Habitat Incentive Program, which would encourage landowners to voluntarily retain cover crops on idled agricultural lands. The bill is supported by a broad coalition of conservation organizations.

“The voluntary, non-regulatory program created by AB 2697 will help to reverse long-term declines in our local mallard and pheasant populations in the Central Valley,” stated Mark Hennelly with the California Waterfowl Association. “We greatly appreciate Assembly Member Gallagher’s willingness to introduce this much-needed legislation that benefits wildlife, farmers and sportsmen.”

Available nesting cover is a limiting factor for breeding waterfowl and other ground-nesting birds. A previous federal effort to establish nesting cover via the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) demonstrated that incentive-based, voluntary cover crop programs can benefit breeding waterfowl in California. Beyond wildlife benefits, cover crops have been shown to significantly reduce field nutrient runoff and help with carbon sequestration.

For more information on Assemblyman Gallagher, and to track legislation visit
www.assembly.ca.gov/Gallagher

###

Assemblyman James Gallagher represents the 3rd Assembly District, which encompasses all of Glenn, Sutter, Tehama and Yuba counties as well as portions of Butte and Colusa counties.