



220 Montgomery Street
Suite 1000
San Francisco, CA 94104

415.644.4600
ca.audubon.org

Mr. Scott Gardner
Environmental Scientist Supervisor
Upland Game Program
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Wildlife Branch
1812 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Scott Gardner,

Audubon California writes this letter in support of California Waterfowl Association's (CWA) application to the California State Upland Game Bird Program for trial of an incentive program to support landowners to delay harvest of wheat in Butte, Colusa, Sutter, and Yolo counties to provide critical habitat for breeding birds.

Audubon California has a long history of working with farmers and agricultural partners in the Central Valley to improve farms and ranches for birds. It is our mission to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. We use applied science, outreach and education, demonstration projects, and policy efforts to advance our mission in close partnership with agricultural organizations, public agencies, and other conservation organizations in California, including CWA. The CWA has played an important role in promoting wildlife friendly agricultural practices that compliment Audubon California's goals.

The Egg Salvage Program was re-established in 2014 to do one vital thing: promote a coordinated voluntary effort to rescue duck nests imperiled by normal and necessary farming operations. CWA works to alleviate conflict between wildlife and farming by operating as a facilitator; getting eggs and ducklings out of working agricultural fields and into federally licensed egg salvage hatcheries.

While this program has merit on its own, the potential impact that an incentivized delay of harvest program for wheat growers could be much broader and efficient. It would benefit, not only waterfowl, but other bird groups that utilize these cropland habitats as well.

We fully support the CWA in their efforts to expand the improvement of the human-wildlife relationship on working lands, and their pursuit of support from the California State Upland Game Bird Program to assist with these goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Xerónimo Castañeda".

Xerónimo Castañeda
Conservation Project Associate