



July 1, 2019

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

Subject: Incentivized Program for the Delayed Harvest of California Winter Wheat for Nesting Game Birds

Dear Scott,

On behalf of the California Rice Commission (CRC), I am writing in support of California Waterfowl Association's (CWA) proposal to the California State Upland Game Bird Program for the development of a program that incentivizes wheat growers to delay their harvest.

The California Rice Commission represents all of the rice farmers in the Sacramento Valley of California. Based on this, CRC is uniquely positioned to obtain grower support and feedback which will ensure that this program is developed and implemented in a way that is feasible and practical for farmers. Specifically, we are interested in this program as it will increase the value of agricultural working lands for wildlife value in the Sacramento Valley.

Waterfowl and other upland nesting birds have been known to nest in agricultural fields particularly in the absence of natural nesting habitat. While cereal grains can provide excellent nesting habitat they can also act as an ecological trap when the crops are harvested before nesting is complete. This proposed incentive program will use a simple and cost effective approach to enhance the nesting value of this crop by delaying the harvest of wheat until mid-July.

We fully support CWA in their efforts to further improve the human-wildlife relationship on working lands, and their pursuit of support from the California State Upland Game Bird Program to assist with this goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luke Matthews", is enclosed in a white rectangular box.

Luke Matthews
Wildlife Programs Manager