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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Photo Contest to Create Dialogue between Hunters and Non-Hunters

**(California, October 1, 2008 – January 7, 2009) California Waterfowl invites hunters and non-hunters to team up for its first annual “Take Your Best Shot” photo contest, highlighting the beauty of the state’s migratory bird population and the role of hunting in a balanced and healthy ecosystem. Open to youth and adults, the contest will honor amateur photography in two categories: Hunters, Dogs and/or Decoys, and Waterfowl and/or Wetland Wildlife.**

An unusual contest sponsored by an award-winning California wildlife organization will bring hunters and non-hunters together to capture beautiful images on film and start a dialog about the role of hunting in our ecosystem and in our lives.

The realities of hunting – its role in conservation and in putting natural, sustainable food on families’ tables – are often obscured by the heated rhetoric of politics and the occasional story about fringe-element poachers. California Waterfowl consistently encourages dialogue between its members and people who aren’t familiar with hunting to replace misperceptions with accurate information.

The 2008-09 Take Your Best Shot Photo Contest is a new approach to that dialog.

“Studies have shown that the best advocates for hunting are hunters themselves. In order to save hunting, and correspondingly, conservation’s number one supporter the hunter, hunters must begin to talk once again with their family, friends, and even acquaintances about the benefits they, the land, and our nation as a whole derive from the hunting lifestyle they’ve chosen,” remarked Dr. Robert McLandress, President of California Waterfowl. “This is just one of many tools we are creating for California’s hunters to make it easier, even in our most urbanized areas.”

The contest was designed to encourage hunters share a day of wonder in the wetlands with a non-hunter, and begin the important task of educating the non-hunting public on the benefits hunting provides to us all.

“Benelli’s close ties to the waterfowl hunting community, have always been critical to their success. We are pleased to support to this contest and the important and necessary plan of creating a positive buzz around hunting. It’s essential that we encourage hunters to overcome the barriers created by years of public mistrust of

guns, hunting, and hunters created by the uninformed and misguided,” stated Ken Brown, Benelli Western Representative.

From October 1, 2008 to January 7, 2009, men, women, and youth are encouraged to share what they love about hunting with others who haven't yet experienced the hunt. Their non-hunting friends and family members will take a camera and document the experience, then submit their photos and have a chance to WIN as a team!

Great prizes include a photo session at a premier private duck club with professional wildlife photographer Gary Kramer, Benelli shotguns, waterproof cameras, special youth prizes, and more. For complete details, including contest rules and tips for success, visit [www.calwaterfowl.org](http://www.calwaterfowl.org). *Photo must be received no later than January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009, either by mail or upload at [www.myhuntingroom.com](http://www.myhuntingroom.com).*

**California Waterfowl** is an award winning nonprofit, hunter-supported conservation organization with a mission to conserve the state's waterfowl, wetlands, and hunting heritage. In the last 20 years we've restored, protected or enhanced more than 350,000 acres, providing habitat for millions birds and animals, and introduced more than 250,000 children to the wonders of the great outdoors. Visit us online at [www.calwaterfowl.org](http://www.calwaterfowl.org).

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