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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Photo Contest to Create Dialogue between Hunters and Non-Hunters

(Sacramento, September 15, 2009) California Waterfowl invites hunters and non-hunters to team up for its second annual "Take Your Best Shot" photo contest this waterfowl season. Photos of hunters, dogs, decoys, waterfowl and wetland wildlife, and food and family are sought. **NEW this year**, professional photographers are invited to participate. Great prizes will be awarded in both the amateur and professional categories.

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 politics of animal rights and the occasional account about fringe-element poachers. California Waterfowl consistently encourages dialogue between its members and people who are not familiar with hunting to replace misperceptions with accurate information.

The 2009-10, Take Your Best Shot Photo Contest is an effort to continue that dialog.

"Studies have shown that the best advocates for hunting are hunters themselves. In order to sustain conservation's number one supporter, the hunter, it is critical to communicate with their family, friends, and 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 to share a day of wonder in the wetlands with a non-hunter, and share with the non-hunting public the benefits hunting provides to us all.

“Benelli supports this contest and this important concept of creating a positive buzz around hunting. It is 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.

The contest runs throughout the 2009-10 waterfowl season, including junior hunts, and more, beginning September 26, 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 for non-hunters and hunters who win as a team will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in each category. For complete details, including contest rules and tips for success, visit www.calwaterfowl.org. *Photo must be received no later than March 15th, 2010*, either by mail or upload at www.myhuntingroom.com.

Photo Caption Info

1. 2009 Best of Show Winner “Buttes at Sunset with Flight of Birds” by Jill Fritschi Reese who accompanied hunter Clarissa Reese Denton during last year’s “Take Your Best Shot” photo contest hosted by California Waterfowl.
2. 2009 1st Place Winner “What a Joy to See Your Dog Bring in the Bird!” by Philip Robertson who went out for a day of outdoor adventure with hunter Rodger Benadom.

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.

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