



December 22, 2022

Dear Grassland Hunters and Wetland Enthusiasts:

We hope this email finds everyone hunting, healthy and looking forward to tackling 2023!

**A HUGE THANK YOU** to all that have donated to the Grassland Fund in the past. We have all endured many challenges this past year but rest assured, the FIGHT to protect the Grassland wetlands and YOUR water supply fiercely continues.

The Grassland Fund is devoted to the protection, conservation and legal defense of the Grassland wetlands. In 2022 the Fund retained outside legal counsel and experts to assist in fighting to protect the Grassland wetlands and wildlife from the California High Speed Rail and the Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman's Association attack on your wetlands. The Fund also hired environmental consultants and engineering firms to assist in wetland, pollinator and floodplain restoration efforts.

Recently the Fund assisted in blocking the rezoning of agricultural land to industrial use east of the City of Los Banos, along the Mud Slough corridor and only feet away from wetland habitat. The Fund assisted in securing drought relief funding from the State of California and is working hard to provide additional federal funding for landowners. The Fund also allows for staff to travel to Washington D.C. and Sacramento to pursue long-term water supplies from projects like the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion, and to protect the Central Valley Project Improvement Act and the Restoration Fund, which is critical to securing and delivering Grassland's water supply.

The Grassland Fund is also dedicated to environmental education and the importance of wetlands. It cannot be stressed enough how essential your donations are for the continuation of the Grassland Environmental Education Center (GEECe). GEECe utilizes your donations for a wide range of outdoor educational activities that reach all ages and backgrounds. The Fund assisted in renovating the education center as well as much needed repairs. A new storage container will allow for more space in the classroom for our student visitors. Onsite tours and programs continue to need to purchase new gear and classroom materials. Restoration projects through this program will continue in 2023 at the new GEECe satellite area, the Bird Ranch at San Luis Creek.

Unfortunately, we are still experiencing a sharp decline in donations to the Grassland Fund. **As these critical efforts carry on, we ask that you again consider supporting our efforts by making a tax-deductible donation to the Grassland Fund, by contacting Jessica Wright at 209-826-5188 or [jwright@gwdwater.org](mailto:jwright@gwdwater.org).**

Sincerely,

Ric Ortega  
Executive Director  
Grassland Fund

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*"The Grassland Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to conservation, education and the legal defense of the Grassland Wetlands of Merced County. All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law."*