

March 5, 2026

## **Barrett Lake Waterfowl Program Continues Tradition of Stewardship and Community Engagement**

The City of San Diego's long-standing waterfowl hunting program at Barrett Lake continues to thrive thanks to strong partnerships, dedicated volunteers, and a shared commitment to responsible outdoor recreation. This year's sponsored Veterans/Active Military Personnel (V.A.M.P.) Hunt and Youth Hunt, held on January 31 and February 7, showcased the best of community collaboration and mentorship in one of the region's most unique reservoir settings.

Despite a challenging start to the waterfowl season with historically low migration numbers across Southern California, event organizers and volunteers remained committed. As conditions improved heading into 2026, so did the outlook for the annual hunts, which quickly filled to capacity. The V.A.M.P. event reached full registration within a day, and the Youth Hunt filled in just three hours, a testament to the program's popularity and the value it brings to participants.



“These events reflect the best of what our reservoirs offer — stewardship, mentorship, and a deep connection to the outdoors,” said Drew Kleis, Public Utilities Department Assistant Director. “We’re grateful to our partners and volunteers who make this program possible each year.”

The events were made possible through the City's partnership with

long-time program advocates and the support of conservation organizations including the Coastal Conservation Association of California, California Waterfowl Association, and the San Diego County Wildlife Federation. Volunteers played a critical role, with 17 experienced mentors guiding participants through pre-dawn boat transport, blind setup, and safe, ethical hunting practices.

Hunters traveled from across California – from Riverside to Ridgecrest to Half Moon Bay – to take part. Youth participants enjoyed one of the best flights of the season, with opportunities to see and harvest a wide variety of waterfowl species. For many, it was a memorable introduction to outdoor traditions and responsible wildlife stewardship.

The City extends its appreciation to all volunteers, mentors, and partner organizations who make these events possible each year. Special thanks go to the Barrett Reservoir staff for their support and to the veterans, active-duty military personnel, and families who participated. Programs like this help foster a lifelong appreciation for San Diego's natural resources and ensure that outdoor traditions continue for future generations.

For more information about the City's waterfowl hunting program at Barrett Lake, visit [sandiego.gov/reservoirs-lakes/fishing-hunting/waterfowl](https://sandiego.gov/reservoirs-lakes/fishing-hunting/waterfowl).