



# The Yolo Habitat Conservancy is seeking landowners interested in establishing conservation easements

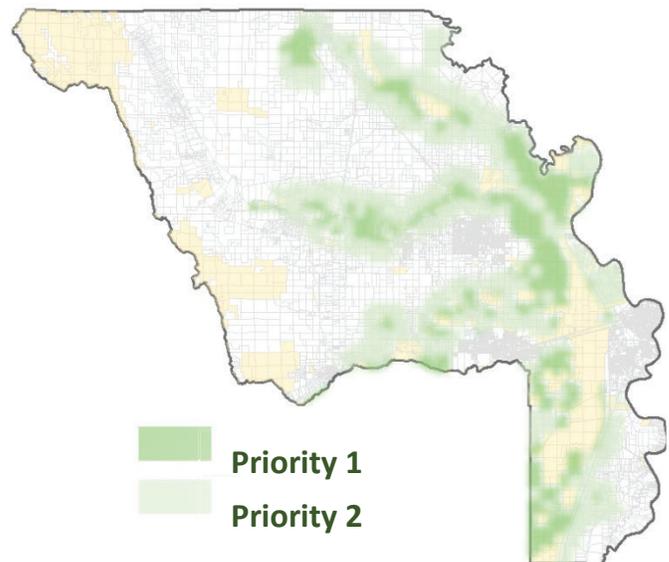
The Yolo Habitat Conservancy (“Conservancy”) is seeking landowners interested in selling or donating a habitat conservation easement on lands located within the Yolo Habitat/Natural Community Conservation Plan (“Yolo HCP/NCCP”) priority areas shown in dark green and light green on the map below. Landowners with actively cultivated agricultural land, rangeland, and/or riparian corridors, wetlands, or oak woodlands are encouraged to apply.

## Establishing a Conservation Easement

A habitat conservation easement is a tool for landowners to protect their land while retaining ownership and the right to continue farming and living on their land. It entails a set of legally binding, permanent deed restrictions placed on a property to preserve and protect high-quality habitat, including cultivated agricultural lands and rangelands. Yolo HCP/NCCP conservation easements restrict most or all future development rights, prohibit permanent crops such as vineyards and orchards, and prohibit the use of rodenticides that harm raptors and other native species. The Conservancy encourages and supports wildlife-friendly farming practices and is committed to conserving the agricultural identity of Yolo County.

All Yolo HCP/NCCP conservation easements are established voluntarily with interested landowners. The landowner has the option to donate or sell the easement at fair market value. Conservation easements are drafted to carefully define the monitoring and enforcement rights of the easement holder. Landowners continue to have complete control over public access to their property; easements do not convey a public right of access.

## Yolo HCP/NCCP Plan Area



The Yolo HCP/NCCP is a countywide conservation plan that preserves habitat for the following species:

- western burrowing owl** ♦ **Swainson’s hawk**
- ♦ **white-tailed kite** ♦ **tricolored blackbird** ♦
- California tiger salamander** ♦ **giant garter snake**
- ♦ **western pond turtle** ♦ **valley elderberry**
- longhorn beetle** ♦ **palmate-bracted bird’s beak**
- ♦ **least Bell’s vireo** ♦ **bank swallow** ♦
- western yellow-billed cuckoo**

The Conservancy accepts applications for properties that provide species habitat for inclusion on the Conservancy’s candidate conservation easement list on an ongoing basis. However, **the Conservancy will immediately review and process applications received by December 15, 2021 for agricultural properties (row crops, field crops, or grazing land) that are at least 160 acres and located within the Yolo HCP/NCCP priority areas.**

## Benefits

Establishing a habitat conservation easement is a means of conserving habitat on agricultural land while also providing income to the landowner. The sale of an easement results in an immediate payment for each acre of land placed under easement. In some cases, the donation or partial donation of an easement may provide a tax benefit to the landowner. Easements also protect the land and its resources for the future, ensuring that future generations have continued opportunities to farm, while providing capital or income to the landowner.



### Time Frame

The Conservancy accepts applications for conservation easements on an ongoing basis to be included on the Yolo HCP/NCCP candidate conservation easement property list. Funding is sought by the Conservancy from various sources and may be restricted to certain categories of species and/or land types. The time frame for completing the transaction after approval is dependent on obtaining funding and varies from months to years. A conservation easement is established in perpetuity and is binding on present and future owners of the property. Due to funding availability and Yolo HCP/NCCP priorities for 2022, the Conservancy is currently prioritizing the acquisition of conservation easements on agricultural properties of 160 acres or more that are located within the Yolo HCP/NCCPs Priority 1 and Priority 2 areas.

### Costs

The Conservancy pays the landowner fair market value for the conservation easement and pays most of the transaction costs. Landowners who intend to proceed with establishment of a conservation easement once their property has been approved as a candidate site are, however, expected to provide a \$10,000 deposit upon signing a letter of intent to proceed, unless they intend to donate the easement. This deposit is used to pay for initial upfront transaction costs, including a property appraisal. Landowners with property less than 40 acres that contains high quality habitat are exempt from the \$10,000 deposit but are expected to pay the cost of the property appraisal. Landowners are expected to also contribute a small portion (~6%) of easement funds to a stewardship fund at the close of escrow.

## Learn More

Please visit the Conservancy's website at [www.yolohabitatconservancy.org/landowners](http://www.yolohabitatconservancy.org/landowners) to find more information and download an application or contact the Conservancy with any questions at [info@yolohabitatconservancy.org](mailto:info@yolohabitatconservancy.org) or (530) 848-6211

