



Yolo Habitat Conservancy

County of Yolo • City of Davis • City of Winters • City of West Sacramento
City of Woodland • University of California, Davis

To: Verna Sulpizio Hull, Vice Chair
Members of the Board

From: Elisa Sabatini
Executive Director

Re: Authorize the Executive Director to sign and submit a letter to the California Fish and Game Commission in support of a petition to list western burrowing owls under the California Endangered Species Act

Date: March 18, 2024

REQUESTED ACTION:

1. Authorize the Executive Director to sign and submit a letter to the California Fish and Game Commission in support of a petition to list western burrowing owls under the California Endangered Species Act

BACKGROUND:

On March 5, 2024, the Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Burrowing Owl Preservation Society, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, Urban Bird Foundation, Central Valley Bird Club, and San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society (Petitioners) jointly submitted a petition to the California Fish and Game Commission to protect five imperiled populations of the western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) under the California Endangered Species Act. Burrowing owl populations have declined significantly throughout California, including the Middle Central Valley population which includes Yolo County and surrounding areas. While the Yolo HCP/NCCP includes commitments for the conservation of burrowing owl habitat and requires that projects covered by the Yolo HCP/NCCP implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce the impact that development projects have on burrowing owls within Yolo County, these protections do not extend to portions of the State where there are no regional plans in place. Conservancy staff request approval to submit a letter to the California Fish and Game Commission that expresses support for the listing of western burrowing owl such that protection measures for this species are extended throughout its range in California.

ATTACHMENT:

Attachment A. Draft letter of support