



# Yolo Habitat Conservancy

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

## ***Muller Pond Site***

### **Candidate Site Recommendation Summary**

**Recommendation:** Yolo Habitat Conservancy staff recommend approval of the Muller Pond Site as a candidate Yolo HCP/NCCP conservation easement site to expand the corridor of reserve system sites along Cache Creek that contain valley foothill riparian and wetland habitat. Additionally, enrollment of the site would contribute to a variety of HCP/NCCP enrollment objectives, including: acquire newly protected lands for the reserve system adjacent to and between baseline protected lands (L-1.3), support a corridor of patches of woody and herbaceous riparian vegetation in the Cache Creek floodplain within Planning Unit 7 (L-1.4), protect populations of VELB along Lower Cache Creek (VELB 1.1), protect and manage grasslands to provide Swainson's hawk foraging habitat (SH1.2), protect modeled least Bells vireo habitat (LBV1.1), maintain and enhance protected tricolored blackbird nesting habitat (TRBL1.5).

**Site Name:** Muller Pond

**Area being considered for enrollment:** ~100 acres

**Planning Unit:** 7 (Cache Creek) and 13 (Colusa Basin Plains)

**Priority Land Acquisition Area:** Priority 1

**Proposed Enrollment Type:** Newly protected land conservation easement

**Primary Land Cover Types:** valley foothill riparian, seasonal wetland, grassland, open water and oak woodland

#### **Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)**

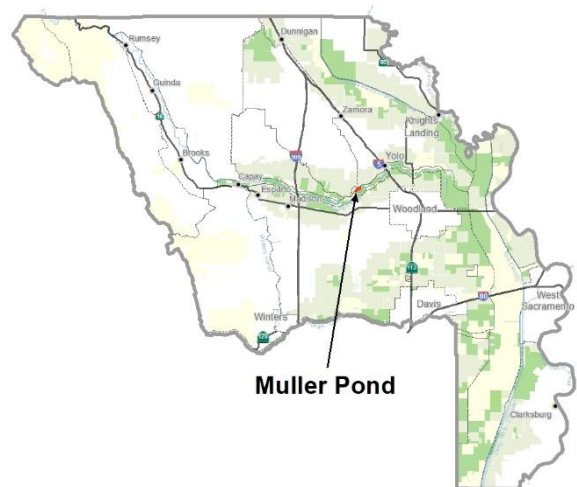
##### **Evaluation Summary:**

HCP/NCCP covered species habitat observed at the time of the STAC site visit conducted on April 22, 2024:

- **Swainson's hawk:** nesting and natural lands foraging habitat
- **White-tailed kite:** nesting and natural lands foraging habitat
- **Tricolored blackbird:** cultivated lands foraging habitat
- **Least Bell's vireo:** riparian habitat
- **Western Pond Turtle:** upland and aquatic habitat
- **Valley elderberry longhorn beetle:** occupied elderberry shrubs

#### **The STAC has made the following recommendation:**

The Muller Pond site is in its entirety, a restored site. During and immediately post-mining, the property was devoid of habitat and any resource value for Covered Species or wildlife in general. With the reclamation plan's implementation, the site has been greatly enhanced with open water, wetland, riparian, and upland habitats and now provides substantial habitat value to a variety of wildlife, including 6 of the 12 Covered Species. Riparian and oak woodland habitats have successfully developed, creating important nesting habitats for Swainson's hawk, white-tailed kite, and possibly least Bell's vireo. Elderberry shrubs have also thrived, creating habitat for valley elderberry longhorn beetle. Aquatic and wetland habitats may



also provide opportunities for western pond turtle and tricolored blackbird. As vegetation on the property continues to mature, those values are expected to be further enhanced.

Full protection of the property can contribute to meeting the Yolo HCP/NCCP's conservation goals for riparian, grassland, oak woodland, and possibly wetlands, and in doing so, creating and preserving important habitat for many wildlife species. In addition, fully protecting this property adds additional protected lands along the Cache Creek corridor and in this way has indirect value to several Covered Species through enhanced connectivity of this important corridor. Because of the contribution to meeting HCP/NCCP objectives for covered species, natural communities, and the opportunity to protect important properties within the High Priority Cache Creek corridor, the STAC recommends enrollment of the Muller Pond site in the Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system.

