



# Yolo Habitat Conservancy

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

## **Davis Site**

### **Candidate Site Recommendation Summary**

**Recommendation:** Yolo Habitat Conservancy staff recommend approval of the Davis Site as a candidate Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system site to allow for the protection and management of the grassland prairie and rare alkali vernal pool habitat present on the site. Additionally, enrollment of the site would contribute to a variety of HCP/NCCP enrollment goals and objectives, including: conserving a large, contiguous, patch of grassland to sustain and enhance the distribution and abundance of associated covered and other native species (NC-G1), protect and manage grassland natural community to ensure that it provides Swainson's hawk foraging habitat (SH1.2), protect grassland natural community in modeled western burrowing owl habitat (WBO1.1), protect and manage habitat on lands that have or historically supported burrowing owl populations and are capable of supporting nesting activity through management and enhancement actions. (WBO1.5), and enroll tricolored blackbird foraging habitat on baseline public and easement lands into the reserve system as pre-permit reserve lands (TRBL1.2).

**Site Name:** Davis Preserve Site

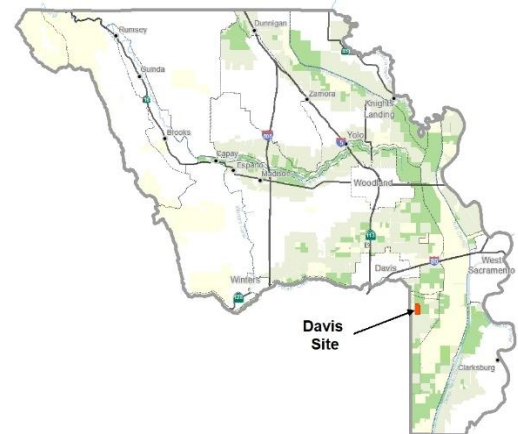
**Area being considered for enrollment:** ~314 acres

**Planning Unit:** 16 (Yolo Basin Plains)

**Priority Land Acquisition Area:** Priority 1

**Proposed Enrollment Type:** Pre-permit land (to be protected with a declaration of covenants and restrictions)

**Primary Land Cover Types:** grassland, alkali prairie, vernal pool



### **Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Evaluation Summary:**

HCP/NCCP covered species habitat observed at the time of the STAC site visit conducted on July 14, 2025:

- **Burrowing owl:** nesting and natural lands foraging habitat
- **Swainson's hawk:** natural lands foraging habitat
- **White-tailed kite:** natural lands foraging habitat
- **Tricolored blackbird:** natural lands foraging habitat

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

The Davis Preserve Site, the former Davis Global Communications Site, consists of approximately 314 acres of open, contiguous land. Land cover includes approximately 270-acres of grassland prairie classified as California Annual Grasslands Alliance, which is interspersed with 40 acres of vernal pools, swales, and related seasonal wetlands classified as Vernal Pool Complex and a small portion of the site ~4 acres that includes an entry road and a former building pad area. The property is adjacent to the 323-acre Grasslands Regional Park on its western boundary, which also consists of grassland prairie/vernal pool complex land cover. Together, these properties represent one of the largest intact examples of uncultivated or minimally

cultivated land on the valley floor within Yolo County and one of the few places where vernal pools occur in Yolo County. The property is surrounded to the north, east, and south by cultivated fields. The riparian corridor along the South Fork Putah Creek is approximately 1 mile north of the site.

The property provides habitat for four covered species. Nesting Swainson's hawks occur on the adjacent Grassland Regional Park, along the south fork Putah Creek to the north, and in several locations within the surrounding agricultural landscape. Although there are only two suitable nest trees, the property provides important grassland and seasonal wetland foraging habitat. White-tailed kite is also known to nest in the eucalyptus grove on the adjacent Grassland Regional Park. The property also provides important grassland and seasonal wetland foraging habitat for this species. Although the site does not support breeding habitat for tricolored blackbirds, this species is known to forage in the area and relies on grassland foraging habitat during the breeding and nonbreeding seasons. Probably most importantly, burrowing owls are known to occur on the adjacent Grassland Regional Park and have been observed on the Davis Preserve Site in the past, although the current use of the site by this species is unknown. This grassland complex is considered one of the few remaining natural habitats for burrowing owl in the county. Although not a covered species, the property also represents one of the key remaining breeding habitats in Yolo County for northern harriers, a state Species of Concern. The vernal pools also potentially support essential habitat for a variety of special-status plants and animals.

Because of its importance to several covered species, its overall ecological importance, and because it provides the opportunity to preserve the entire remaining uncultivated grassland prairie/vernal pool landscape of more than 600 contiguous acres, the STAC recommends approval of the Davis Site as a candidate Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system property.

