



Yolo Habitat Conservancy

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

To: Lucas Frerichs, Chair
Members of the Board

From: Chris Alford
Interim Executive Director

Re: Approve the conservation easement for the Lucky Land Site (APNs 033-210-012 and -013), adopt a resolution approving the purchase of a conservation easement on the Lucky Land property for \$1,130,000 with burrowing owl mitigation fee funds and Yolo HCP/NCCP mitigation fee funds for said purchase, and authorize the Interim Executive Director to proceed with steps necessary to enroll the site in the Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system

Date: July 21, 2025

REQUESTED ACTIONS:

1. Approve the conservation easement for the Lucky Land Site (Attachment B)
2. Adopt a resolution approving the purchase of a conservation easement on the Lucky Land property for \$1,130,000 and authorizing the use of burrowing owl mitigation fee funds and Yolo HCP/NCCP mitigation fee funds for said purchase (Attachment C)
3. Authorize the Interim Executive Director to proceed with steps necessary to enroll the site in the Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system

BACKGROUND:

The Lucky Land Site (APNs 033-210-012 and -013) is an approximately 322-acre privately owned property located in Planning Unit 16 within a narrow corridor of pastureland along the western edge of the Yolo Bypass (See Attachment A). This site is a Priority 1 HCP/NCCP acquisition site due to the presence of nesting burrowing owls (*Athene cunicularia*) onsite, high-quality foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), and the proximity of the site to existing protected lands. Approximately 316.9-acres of the property have been identified for a Yolo HCP/NCCP conservation easement. The remaining approximately 5.1-acre area along the western portion of the property is already encumbered by an access easement associated with the Yolo Bypass West Levee and is therefore excluded from the conservation easement area. The site was approved as a candidate Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system site by the Conservancy's Board of Directors on March 18, 2024. California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) staff provided their approval of the site as a candidate Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system site on March 13, 2024 and March 18, 2024.

A qualified appraiser determined the fair market value of the proposed conservation easement as being \$1,130,000. Staff recommend approving the purchase of a conservation easement on the property for

\$1,130,000 using the entirety of the burrowing owl mitigation fee funds currently held in the Mitigation Trust Account (approximately \$158,041¹) and the balance of the purchase being paid with general Yolo HCP/NCCP mitigation funds held in the Mitigation Fee Fund (approximately \$971,959). The funds currently held in the Mitigation Trust Fund are funds that were transferred to the Yolo Habitat Conservancy as mitigation fees paid for two development projects within the City of Davis, commonly referred to as the “Marriot Residence Inn at Fermi Place” and the “Mace and Alhambra Project,” prior to implementation of the Yolo HCP/NCCP along with interest that has accrued over time. These funds were provided to mitigate for impacts to burrowing owl and can only be used for activities that contribute to the protection of burrowing owls within Yolo County. The purchase of the proposed conservation easement on the Lucky Land Site would protect one of the only known recent breeding locations for burrowing owls in Yolo County. The proposed expenditures from both the Mitigation Trust Fund and Mitigation Fee Fund are consistent with anticipated expenditures included in the Conservancy’s FY25/26 budget, which was approved by the Board on May 19, 2025.

The Interim Executive Director recommends that the Board approve the execution of a conservation easement that utilizes the Yolo HCP/NCCP conservation easement template and is generally consistent with the Draft Lucky Land Conservation Easement (Attachment B) once approved by CDFW and USFWS, approve the resolution authorizing the conservation easement purchase (Attachment C), and authorize the Interim Executive Director to take the steps necessary to enroll the site in the Yolo HCP/NCCP reserve system.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A. Lucky Land location map

Attachment B. Draft Lucky Land Conservation Easement

Attachment C. Resolution authorizing Conservation Easement Purchase

¹ The actual balance of the Mitigation Account Fund may vary from the amount stated at the time the easement is purchased due to accrued interest.

