

The Yolo Natural Heritage Program

The Yolo Natural Heritage Program (YNHP) is a Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) and Local Conservation Strategy for Yolo County, California. When implemented, the YNHP will conserve the natural open space and agricultural landscapes that provide habitat for many special status and at-risk species found within the habitats and natural communities in Yolo County. The habitat conservation goals are supplemented by additional goals related to preservation of the county's agricultural character and promotion of economic development, as well as enhancement of opportunities for recreation in natural areas. When completed and approved, the YNHP plan will incorporate measures to conserve important biological resources, provide streamlined permitting for appropriate urban growth and public infrastructure projects, and support the preservation of Yolo County's rich agricultural heritage. All activities of the YNHP are conducted under the oversight of the **Yolo County Joint Powers Agency (JPA)**.

The JPA is committed to working in cooperative partnerships with local conservation and agricultural groups in fulfilling its goals. Conservation partners include the following:

- Yolo County Resource Conservation District
- Yolo County Farm Bureau
- Yolo Land Trust
- Yolo Basin Foundation
- Cache Creek Conservancy
- Putah Creek Council
- Blue Ridge - Berryessa Partnership
- Tuleyome
- Audubon California
- California Native Plant Society

Plan goals and methods are defined through open processes of stakeholder and public involvement. Upon its inception in 2002, the JPA established an **Advisory Committee**, oversaw preparation of a draft **Ecological Baseline Report**, the development of a **GIS database**, and the completion of a **Report by Independent Science Advisers**, recommending scientific goals and articulating the scope of the HCP/NCCP. The next major phase focused on development of conservation strategies and preserve design alternatives, culminating in the release of the **First Administrative Draft** of the Yolo Natural Heritage Program on July 1, 2013. The Second Administrative Draft is in preparation and is expected to be released in March 2015.