

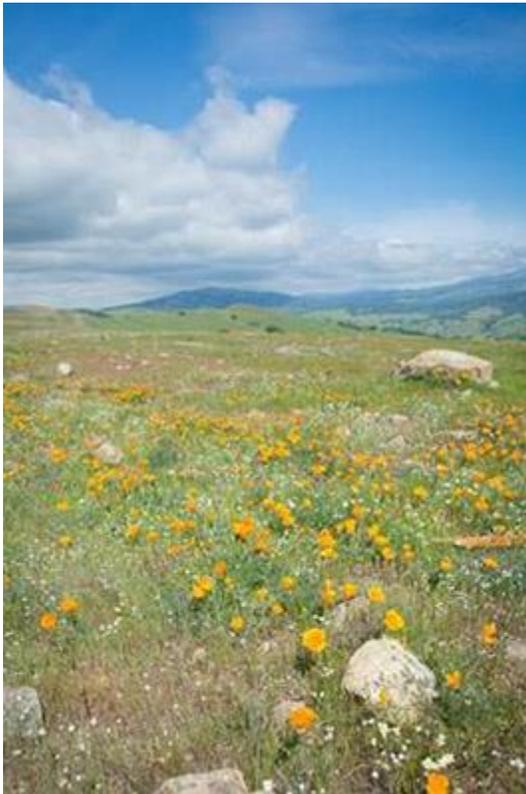
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# *Santa Clara and Yolo Counties Get Big Financial Boost to Save Endangered Species*

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Northern California continues to benefit from the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) (Service) [Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation](#) Fund's Endangered Species Act grants. Nearly \$3 million in funding will go to conservation efforts in Santa Clara and Yolo Counties. Authorized under [Section 6](#) of the [Endangered Species Act](#), the fund enables states to work with private landowners, conservation groups, and other government agencies to develop projects that protect federally-listed species and their habitats. In some areas, it promotes access to outdoor recreation resources for present and future generations by providing funding to federal, state, and local governments to purchase land, water, and wetlands for the benefit of all Americans.



*Coyote Ridge, Santa Clara County--Photo Credit: Bjorn Erickson, USFWS*

"If our children are to inherit a world with something called a leatherback sea turtle, northern long-eared bat or California tiger salamander, we need to commit to conservation at every level," said Service Director Dan Ashe. "By strategically investing in projects that have a proven track record of success, we are putting our limited resources to the most effective use and building a sustainable conservation legacy."

Nationally, the service is committing \$44.8 million in grants from the fund to 20 states. The grants are funded in part by the Land and Water Conservation Fund, established by Congress in 1965. With continued support from Congress and each Administration, for the past 51 years, the fund has supported more than 40,000 conservation and outdoor recreation projects nationwide.

Through the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants Program, the [Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan](#) (Santa Clara Valley HCP) will receive \$2,000,000 to acquire and permanently protect up to 3,286 high-quality acres in Santa Clara County. The sites proposed for acquisition are adjacent to a large network of existing public and private conservation lands, which is value added for biodiversity and watershed integrity. This effort will protect habitat essential to the conservation of several species that are federally listed as threatened or endangered: 1) Bay checkerspot butterfly; 2) California tiger salamander; 3) California red-legged frog; and 4) Metcalf Canyon Jewelflower. In total, 18 species and their habitats will benefit from the Santa Clara Valley HCP, including those that are state—not federally—listed. "The plan was envisioned to be a cost share on implementation and the grants show that the partnership between the federal, state, and local governments is working. It will go a long way to reaching the conservation objectives of our plan and will help us leverage other funding, including our own," said Edmund Sullivan, executive officer, Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency.

The [Yolo County Habitat Conservation Plan](#) will receive an \$820,660 Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grant. The funds will be used to support the planning phase of the Yolo County Habitat Conservation Plan (Yolo County HCP), which requires the coordination of Yolo County and the incorporated cities of Davis, Woodland, Winters, and West Sacramento. The Yolo County HCP will use the funds to protect 32,299 acres of land in Yolo County, enabling the conservation of 12 covered species—6 of which are federally listed as threatened or endangered: 1) palmate-bracted bird's beak; 2) California tiger salamander; 3) western pond turtle; 4) valley elderberry longhorn beetle; 5) giant garter snake; 6) Swainson's hawk; 7) white-tailed kite; 8) western yellow-billed cuckoo; 9) least Bell's vireo; 10) western burrowing owl; 11) bank swallow; and 12) tricolored blackbird. "The idea of this was to do habitat in conjunction with farming because so much of the land can be used for farming," explained Jim Provenza, Yolo County supervisor. "We have a need to protect habitat and a need to protect farm land. Our approach is consistent with agriculture."



*Cache Creek, Yolo County--Photo Credit: Michal Venera,  
Yolo Habitat Conservancy*

Both HCPs support biodiversity, where a variety of species covered by the HCP, as well as other species, can co-exists in their habitats. In Yolo County, there is the added benefit of pollinator species habitat protection, which supports nearby farming communities. The efforts in Santa Clara and Yolo Counties still allow for passive recreation,

which may include: hiking, non-motorized bicycle riding, walking, picnicking, horseback riding, wildlife observation, and photography.

The [Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office](#) (SFWO) collaborates closely with the grantee and other stakeholders committed to ensuring the conservation of species at risk and their habitats. SFWO provides technical assistance throughout the HCP planning and implementation phases. According to Jennifer Norris, Ph.D., field supervisor for the Service's Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office, "this funding is essential to the conservation efforts shared by the Service and the state of California. We are excited about the work that is being done in Santa Clara and Yolo Counties—and throughout the state—to ensure that threatened and endangered species survive and thrive."

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by Veronica Davison / SFWO External Affairs