

Jesse Salinas  
Yolo County - Clerk/Recorder

**57-10132023-098**

10/13/2023  
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Fee: \$ 50.00

By jramirez, Deputy



COUNTY RECORDER  
Filing Requested by:  
Yolo County Resource Conservation District  
Name  
221 West Court Street Suite 1  
Address  
Woodland, CA 95695  
City, State, Zip

**Notice of Exemption**

**To:**

Yolo County Clerk-Recorder  
625 Court Street, Room B-01  
Woodland, CA 95695

Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**From:**

Yolo County Resource Conservation District  
221 West Court Street, Suite 1  
Woodland, CA 95695  
[adams@yolorcd.org](mailto:adams@yolorcd.org)

**Project Title:** City of Davis Open Space Howat Prescribed Burn

**Project Location – Specific:** The Northeast corner of County Road 105 and 32A; Section T08N R3E MDPM, Davis USGS 7.5' Quad

**Project Location – Davis, CA**

**Project Location – County: Yolo**

**Description of nature and purpose of the Project:**

The City of Davis owns Howat Ranch, a 760-acre property maintained by the City of Davis Open Space. The project proposes to apply low-intensity, broadcast agricultural burn within two adjacent plots that border actively productive agricultural fields. The two burn plots are 1.35 acres and 1.7 acres. The goal of the low-intensity agricultural burn is to reduce invasive weed populations and clear dead plant material. The property is part of a large regional planning effort for habitat restoration and carbon sequestration, and is located between the City of Davis and the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area.

Control lines will be existing farm roads and gravel patches bordering the train tracks that run parallel to Road 32A. Additional handline construction may be necessary in places but is expected to be minimal. All burning will be performed in accordance with the terms and conditions of a burn permit issued by the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District.

Low to moderate intensity fire results in levels of disturbance that are beneficial to California native ecosystems and the species that comprise them. Any trees within the project boundary are not expected to be impacted by low-intensity broadcast burning.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Yolo County Resource Conservation District

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Yolo County Resource Conservation District

POSTED 10/13/23 TO \_\_\_\_\_

**Exempt Status:**

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number \_\_\_\_\_
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 4: Minor Alterations to land
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number \_\_\_\_\_

**Reasons why project is exempt:**

The broadcast burn will occur in two plots of unused farm edges that consist of broadleaf invasive weeds and dead plant materials. Future work may be completed to further enhance unused farm edges to create wildlife habitat. Special status species that have been documented to be on or within close proximity to the property include Swainson’s hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*). Currently, the unused farm edges are dominated by non-native noxious weeds and are not prime habitat for native wildlife. Work is expected to occur outside of the nesting season for both species which occurs February 1<sup>st</sup> to September 15<sup>th</sup>. However, burrowing owls in California remain throughout the winter, sometimes staying in their breeding burrows or wandering to other burrows within the region. In grassland ecosystems, burrowing owls prefer habitat characterized by short grasses and forbs and have adapted to live in urban and agricultural areas. The agricultural burn site contains dense, tall non-native vegetation that is not preferable for burrowing owl habitat. Burrowing owls are diurnal and regularly occupy the same burrows year after year. Burrowing owls have not been observed within the project site and are not likely to occur due to the site’s dense and tall vegetation that is not suitable habitat for burrowing owls. After consulting with the City of Davis, their Wildlife Biologist confirmed that there are no population currently present at the site and the project activities are expected to have no negative impacts to wildlife. A Smoke Management Plan will be developed for this project to minimize impacts to communities and air quality.

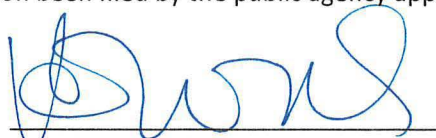
The project meets the requirements of Class 4 Categorical Exemption (minor alterations to land) Section 15304. Project implementation will result in alterations to the land that are best described as minor in scope, that will not significantly impact the aesthetic of the property, or biological and/or cultural resources, and that do not involve the removal of mature, scenic trees for any purpose. No exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a “Notice of Exemption” for this project. It has been concluded that no significant adverse environmental impacts would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forest resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, populations and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, utilities and service systems, or wildfire.

Lead Agency Contact: Heather Nichols Phone: (530) 661-1688 ext. 3

**If filed by Applicant:**

1. Attach a certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

**Signature (Lead Agency)**  
**Name/Title:**

  
Heather Nichols, Executive Director

**Date:** 10/13/23

Possible Burn Locations - Howat

