



# County of Yolo

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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### FY11 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AND APPROPRIATIONS PRIORITIES

*March 16, 2010*

The Board of Supervisors has the following priorities that address specific Yolo County issues, in addition to support for legislation and appropriations of interest to counties nationwide.

#### APPROPRIATIONS PRIORITIES

The following appropriations priorities are based on the following criteria: 1) they are one-time expenditures; 2) the funding is leveraged with funding from other sources; and 3) they are supported by multiple jurisdictions.

**Priority #1: \$900,000 for emergency communications improvements.** This request was also Yolo County's top priority in FY09 and FY10, but was not funded. The funding would help Yolo Emergency Communications Agency (YECA) improve their aged emergency communications system to avoid communications failures and eventually achieve interoperability. YECA is responsible for a primary law and fire VHF radio systems network supporting 21 public safety agencies. Since Yolo County is one of five Delta counties, YECA's system is an integral part of first responder efforts in the event of flooding or other disaster in the Delta or Sacramento region.

**Priority #2: \$2.5 million for technical assistance related to Delta water quality and habitat restoration within the five delta counties.** The Delta Counties Coalition (Yolo, Contra Costa, Solano, Sacramento, and San Joaquin) submitted a joint appropriations request for financial assistance to further local efforts related to Delta water quality and habitat restoration. If awarded, Yolo County will use its share to further locally-initiated habitat restoration projects consistent with state and federal goals, analysis of impacts and benefits to agriculture of habitat restoration proposals, and review of modeling related to inundation of floodplain for fish habitat.

**Priority #3: \$100,000 to continue the Lower Cache Creek Flood Control Feasibility Study.** The Yolo County Flood Control and Conservation District, in partnership with the City of Woodland and the County of Yolo, successfully secured \$400,000 in FY09 and \$48,000 in FY10 for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to continue a feasibility study of alternatives to reduce flooding from Cache Creek that places residents and businesses in the City of Woodland and the unincorporated area at risk. This the USACE's capability number for FY11 to continue the feasibility study.

**Priority #4: \$11 million for construction of the Mid-Valley Levee Improvement Project.** The Knights Landing Drainage District successfully secured \$2 million in FY 10 to advance the Mid-Valley Levee Improvement Project, which would help protect the town of Knights Landing from flooding and includes improvements to a portion of the six miles of levees Yolo County maintains. The Knights Landing Drainage District and Yolo County request \$11 million in FY11 for construction of this important project. This is the USACE's FY11 capability number

**Priority #5: \$40 million increase in nationwide HCP funding.** Four of the five counties represented by the Delta Counties Coalition (Yolo, Contra Costa, Sacramento, and San Joaquin, and Solano) submitted a joint appropriations request to increase funding in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund ("Fund") from \$85 million in FY10 to \$125 million in FY11. The increase will restore the Fund to approximately its FY01 level, adjusted for inflation, and provide needed support to regional Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) nationally, including Yolo County.

**Priority #6: \$1 million to rehabilitate the Clarksburg Japanese Language School.** Improvements to the school are necessary to preserve its historical and cultural significance.

#### **SAFETEA-LU REAUTHORIZATION PRIORITIES**

Congress is working on a six-month extension of SAFETEA-LU, which expired in September 2009. It is uncertain whether Congress will work on the official reauthorization in 2010.

**Priority #1: Construction funding for the I5-113 interchange.** Yolo County supports funding to construct an interchange connecting northbound Interstate 5 and southbound State Route 113 in the City of Woodland. A vehicle or truck must traverse four signalized intersections to access southbound SR 113 from northbound I5 on a congested city street. The project will be ready for construction in 2011 and will improve safety and facilitate goods movement. The project also will complete the only alternate east-west connection in the Sacramento region, providing an important evacuation route in the event of levee failure or other disaster and an alternative to the increasingly congested I-80 corridor between Davis and Sacramento.

**Priority #2: \$4 million for the Road 98 Safety Improvement Project.** Road 98 is a critical commuting corridor and farm-to-market route in Yolo County, benefiting residents in the cities of Woodland and Davis and the agricultural community. It currently has one of the highest rates of accidents in the County because of conflicts between agricultural vehicles and commuters. The project will improve intersections and widen the road to allow agricultural vehicles to move to the shoulder when commuters are passing. The total cost of the project is \$14 million. In addition to seeking \$4 million from SAFETEA-LU reauthorization, Yolo County is seeking \$2 million through the appropriations process. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) has recommended \$6 million in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP) and Yolo County will provide the required federal matching funds. Any funding secured from the federal government prior to construction of the first phase in 2011 and 2012 will accelerate completion of the project and create jobs. Road 98 has federal and state environmental clearance and the County will complete right-of-way acquisition in 2010.

**Priority #3: \$2.6 million for the Davis-Woodland Alternative Transportation Corridor.** The county requests \$2.6 million for design, engineering, and right-of-way acquisition for an off-road

bike path between Davis and Woodland. Yolo County and the cities of Davis and Woodland completed a feasibility study in 2009 and have jointly selected a preferred alternative for the path. This project will provide the first off-road bicycle path between the two cities, therefore encouraging bicycle commuting opportunities (including commuting by electric bike) and helping to address climate change by reducing vehicles miles traveled in the region.

Note: The I5-113 interchange is also Yolo County's top priority for federal economic stimulus funding, followed by Road 98 and the seven transportation projects listed on Yolo County's January 27, 2009 list of economic stimulus infrastructure priorities.

### **LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

These items are not in order of priority.

***Request changes to federal funding formulas that disadvantage counties working to direct growth to cities and protect open space.*** The formulas guide several federal programs (i.e. Byrne formula funding and energy efficiency block grants) benefit counties with large populations in the unincorporated area. This approach hurts counties like Yolo that have directed growth to cities to protect agricultural land and open space and address climate change. Over 88% of Yolo County's population lives in cities because of responsible land use planning principles. Such efforts have resulted in some of the lowest commute times in the six-county Sacramento region and other benefits related to maintaining a low rate of greenhouse gas emissions. Despite Yolo County's success in encouraging smart growth in its cities, it still must provide countywide services to all 200,000 residents in the county. Counties with significant service responsibilities, but low unincorporated area populations, are either not eligible or receive minimal funding from some existing formulas.

***Request FEMA establish Base Flood Elevations for rural areas.*** FEMA has remapped expansive portions of Yolo County, resulting in new designations for higher risk flood zones. Since the County is primarily rural, however, FEMA did not allocate the necessary funding to accomplish the additional engineering to establish the Base Flood Elevations (BFE) that represent an estimate of the depth of flooding and are necessary to determine the appropriate flood mitigation measures or to site new development out of the floodplain. As a result, individuals must bear the significant additional cost to re-engineer the floodplain to determine the BFE. FEMA should expand their existing work to establish BFE's for incorporation into the FEMA floodplain maps for the small rural agricultural communities of Knights Landing, Yolo, and Clarksburg.

***Seek modifications to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) standards for non-residential structures.*** As a result of the new maps in Yolo County, FEMA requires construction of new structures or expansion of existing structures to meet certain standards, including raising the structure above the Base Flood Elevation. FEMA should establish a separate provision for agricultural processing facilities that share similarities to industrial uses given the scale of the structures, seasonal operations, and lower intensity of use. In addition, FEMA should provide flexibility in the construction of agricultural buildings used for storage (i.e., hay barns, horse stalls and various structures for animal housing), farm stands, wineries, and other structures necessary for agricultural economic development.

***Change federal requirement to construct all new bridges with a minimum of two lanes.*** The federal government requires construction of bridges with a minimum of two lanes, even in rural agricultural areas that do not have the traffic volumes to support the additional 35-40% costs. In Yolo County, we are paying high costs for bridge projects in the remote areas of the County (i.e., Guinda, Rumsey, and the Cache Creek low-water bridge) all of which could more practically be replaced with new single lane bridges. Yolo County must replace the Guinda Bridge, for example, which serves 5-7 properties across Cache Creek at a cost of \$3 million because of the two-lane requirement.

***Support \$2.5 million for the Delta Long Term Management Strategy (LTMS).*** The Delta Counties Coalition has sent a letter of support for \$2.5 million from the federal government for this program in FY11. The LTMS is helping to resolve conflicts related to levee rehabilitation, dredging, and placement of dredged sediments. There is an ongoing need to dredge Delta channels for navigation, water conveyance, flood control, and levee maintenance. At the same time, there are increasing regulatory concerns about the potential impacts to water quality and the ecosystem from levee work, dredging activities, and dredge materials placement and reuse.

***Support \$20 million for CalFed Levee Stability Improvement Program.*** The Delta Counties Coalition has sent a letter of support for \$20 million in FY11 to fund the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers capability for this program.

***Secure funding available from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA).*** Yolo County was able to save and create many jobs as a result of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act. The federal government has not distributed all of the funding available from ARRA. The County will continue its aggressive efforts to secure ARRA funding for county programs and priorities.

***Engage in efforts to pass climate change legislation.*** Congress continues to work on climate change legislation. As a leader in local efforts to address climate change, Yolo County will advocate for federal money and other incentives to further our efforts.

***Support passage of "jobs bill."*** The county supports the passage of a "jobs bill" in early 2010 that funds infrastructure projects and helps local government, among other priorities. The House of Representatives passed a "jobs bill" in 2009 and the Senate will consider the bill in early 2010.

***Support passage of surface transportation reauthorization legislation.*** Congress must reauthorize the legislation that funds federal highway and transit programs. The current law, known as SAFETEA-LU, expired on September 30, 2009. Congress is working on a six-month extension. The county supports passage of surface transportation legislation that will provide maximum funding for the state of California and rural areas like Yolo County.

***Secure funding available from the Farm Bill.*** In 2008, Congress reauthorized the Farm Bill and included many programs of benefit to Yolo County, including obesity prevention, senior nutrition, agricultural land conservation, farmers' market promotion, and rural economic development. Staff will work to secure funding available from these programs.

***Support grant programs to encourage energy efficiency and green building.*** Yolo County is seeking to improve the energy efficiency of existing and new buildings, as well as other green building

opportunities. An example includes the recent low-interest financing used to purchase solar panels on the Monroe Detention Center. The savings on electricity will more than compensate for the interest payments. The county will continue to advocate for additional funding for programs that allow the county to further its efforts to address climate change through energy efficiency improvements or other green building efforts.