



COUNTY OF YOLO

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Williamson Act Contract Letter of Interest Period Open

(Woodland, CA) – Yolo County has opened a 90 day letter of interest period for new Williams Act contracts and will be accepting letters until May 23, 2016.

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments which are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value.

The Open Space Subvention Act of 1971 provided local governments an annual subvention of forgone property tax revenues from the state through 2009. These payments (historically \$1.3 million to Yolo County) have been suspended in recent years due to revenue shortfalls. As a result, Yolo County has maintained a moratorium on new Williamson Act contracts. Currently, over 400,000 acres in Yolo County are in Williamson Act contracts.

The intent of the letter of interest period is to gauge landowner interest in new Williamson Act contracts, which subsequently will inform relevant future policy discussions before the Board of Supervisors. While a letter of interest does not guarantee the county will enter into a Williamson Act contract with a property owner, it will assist the Board in determining interest in the program, location of parcels, the potential financial implications of allowing new parcels to enter into Williamson Act contracts, and can inform the Board's policy decision on the status of the current Williams Act moratorium.

For more information and to access the letter of interest, visit: www.yolocounty.org.

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