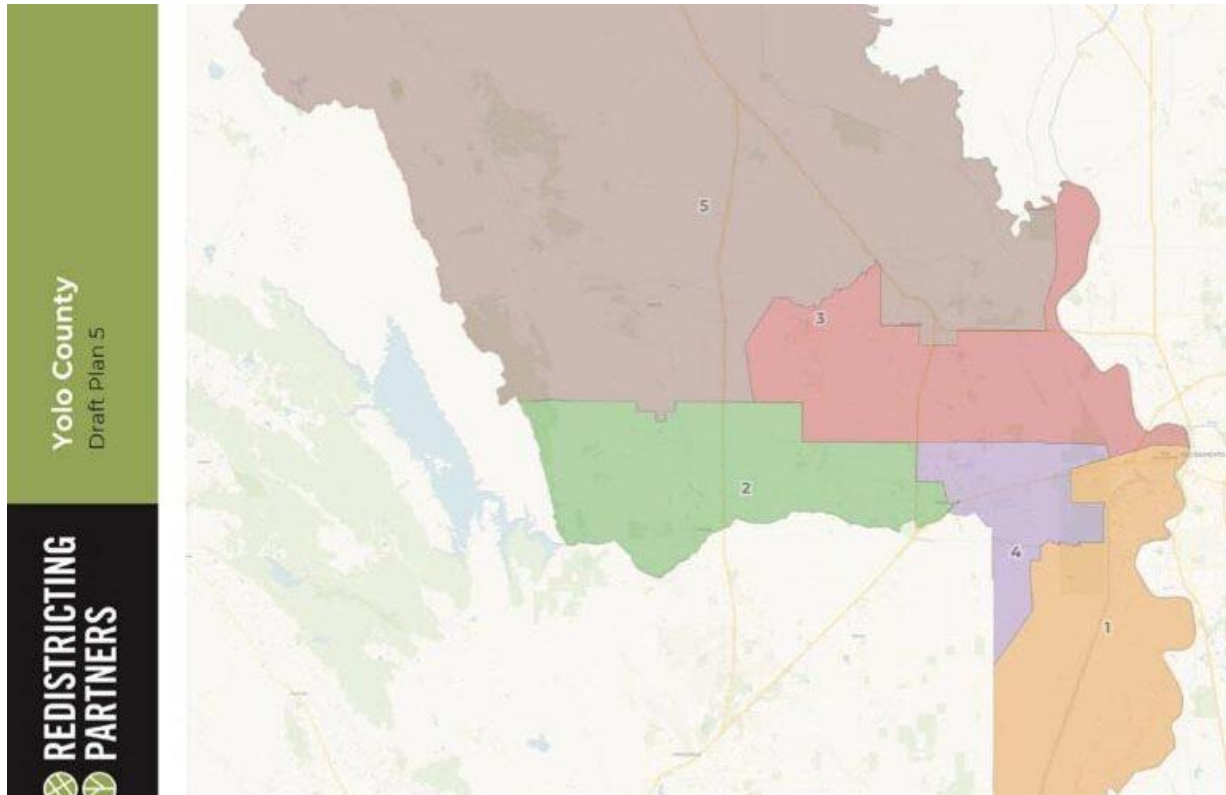


County supervisors approve final redistricting map

BYANNE TERNUS-BELLAMY

NOVEMBER 24, 2021



Courtesy graphic

Yolo County supervisors approved a final district map on Tuesday, one that brings the populations of all five districts to within a 2.5 percent deviation.

Prior to redrawing the lines, District 1 had a significantly larger population than other districts thanks to the growth of West Sacramento between 2010 and 2020.

Under the map approved Tuesday — known as Draft Map 5 — a portion of northeast West Sacramento was shifted to District 3 (home to the city of Woodland) while a northern portion of Woodland in District 3 was moved to District 5, a largely rural district that is also home to Knights Landing, Esparto, Madison and the Capay Valley. The boundary within the city of Davis separating Districts 2 and 4 remained largely unchanged.

The largest district population-wise is now District 2 — currently represented by Supervisor Don Saylor of Davis — with a population of 43,851. District 1, represented

by Supervisor Oscar Villegas of West Sacramento, is now the smallest with a population of 42,774.

In unanimously adopting Draft Map 5 on Tuesday, county supervisors ensured a majority Latino population in District 5, where 55.5 percent of residents are Latino as are 42 percent of the voting-age population.

Supervisors had heard from a number of community members, as well as at least one voting rights organization, that maintaining that Latino voting-age population in District 5 was critical to ensuring Latino representation.

In 2020, Supervisor Angel Barajas was elected as Woodland's first Latino Yolo County supervisor when he defeated longtime incumbent Duane Chamberlain in District 5. In that election, the larger the percentage of Latinos in each precinct, the higher Barajas's vote share, and the lower the percentage of Latinos the higher Chamberlain's vote share.

The result of that 2020 vote, in which Barajas ultimately defeated Chamberlain by 443 votes out of 9,331 cast, marked a changing of the guard, as Barajas, a former Woodland City Council member, Democrat and son of farmworkers defeated the longtime Republican farmer and supervisor.

But during the redistricting process over the last several months, county supervisors also heard from a number of rural residents as well as residents of the city of Winters who wanted District 5 to be an agricultural-centered district that included Winters. A map was devised that did exactly that, but it would have reduced the Latino voting-age population in District 5 to 35.6 percent, something the UCLA Voting Rights Project said would likely violate voting rights law and invite a lawsuit.

While county supervisors did not weigh in on that issue, they voted unanimously two weeks ago not to move forward with that map, supporting instead a map that left Winters in District 2.

Supervisors had previously voiced support for including rural and agricultural land in all five supervisorial districts, rather than concentrating it all in one district. And during the last two redistricting hearings, they voiced their belief that all of them represent all of their constituents regardless of whether they live in urban or rural areas. "We all have a portion of the rural areas in our district," said Supervisor Jim Provenza of Davis, "and I think we are all committed not just to agricultural but to making sure all rural areas of the county are protected.

"Agriculture has been one of my primary concerns since coming on the board," he added.

"I know that Supervisor Barajas has been very involved in bringing additional services, and successful at bringing services, into rural areas, and I've seen that commitment by

all board members,” said Provenza. “So I want to reassure folks that every member of our county will be represented fairly and I think we always do that. We have to make decisions and sometimes decisions don’t go the way you might want. But be sure we will listen to everybody and we consider the needs of all the residents in the decisions we make.”

— Reach Anne Ternus-Bellamy at aternus@davisenterprise.net. Follow her on Twitter at [@ATernusBellamy](https://twitter.com/ATernusBellamy).