

# Colusa County Multi-Benefit Groundwater Recharge Program



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## On-Farm, Multi-Benefit Groundwater Recharge Incentive Program

Working in partnership with the Colusa Groundwater Authority, The Nature Conservancy is conducting an on-farm, multi-benefit program, which provides an opportunity for growers to receive financial compensation for recharging groundwater in the course of normal farming operations on a variety of crops (but not on orchards) while also providing critical wetland habitat for waterbirds migrating along the Pacific Flyway. The program requires short-term commitments from growers to irrigate and maintain shallow depths on enrolled fields, and pays for field preparation, irrigation and water costs. We will choose sites with soil types conducive to groundwater recharge, and fields suitable for open ponded or flooded conditions that provide "pop-up" habitat in early fall when water is scarce on the landscape and shorebirds often have nowhere to stop over on long migrations.

## Program Description and Timeline

The set up and implementation dates are somewhat flexible. Water spreading will take place for 4-6 weeks between Aug. 15 -Oct. 15, with set up taking place earlier. Timing will vary based on water availability and crop schedule. **Let us know what will make these practices workable with your crop production schedules!**

### August

*Application:* (1) Contact us about your field location and availability, crop types, and timing by phone or email (2) Fill out 1-page online form and attach a map and 10-year crop history.  
*Selection:* TNC selects fields based on soil and crop type, water sources, and timing.

### August-September 15

*Field Verification:* TNC verifies suitable field conditions.  
*Contracting:* Selected participants sign contracts with TNC.  
*Field Set Up:* (1) Engineers will survey the field and install pressure transducers or flow meters at inlets and outlets and in adjacent wells to measure applied water and groundwater depths. (2) Field prep to remove or incorporate vegetation may be recommended. (3) Soil and water samples collected to monitor impacts on water quality. (4) Installation of wooden stakes to monitor water depths and bird presence.

### August-Mid-October

*Implementation:* (1) Participants spread water on fields for **4-6 weeks**, maintain shallow depth (4" maximum), and record changes in water flow on an irrigation log. (2) TNC records field depth and bird presence. (3) Consulting engineers monitor water delivery and changes in groundwater depth.

### October-December

*Payment:* Contract fees paid after completion of program requirements.

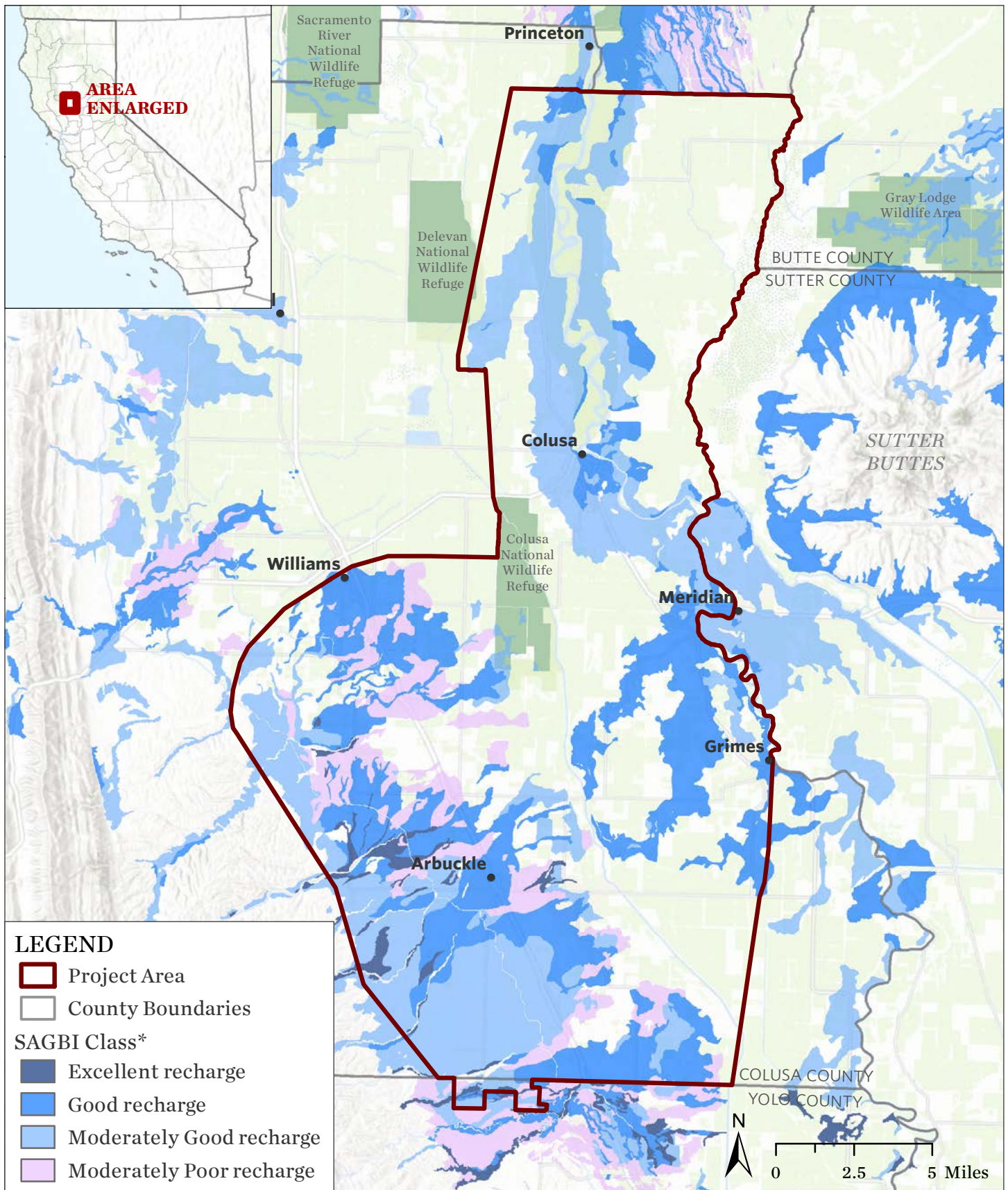
### Questions?

Contact Julia Barfield, TNC Project Manager: 916-449-2852, 415-640-4360, jbarfield@tnc.org or Mary Fahey, CGA Program Manager: 530-383-4625, mfahey@countyofcolusa.com



\*Funding provided in part through DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Grant Program: The SGM Grant Program provides funding for sustainable groundwater planning and implementation projects through a competitive grant solicitation process. Projects may include the development and implementation of Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) and those that provide investments in groundwater recharge with surface water, stormwater, recycled water, the prevention of groundwater contamination.

# Colusa Multi-Benefit Groundwater Recharge: Project Area



\*SAGBI (Soil Agricultural Groundwater Banking Index) represents the suitability for groundwater recharge on agricultural land.

Sources: Project Area - TNC, Basmap - Esri, SAGBI - UC Davis