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March 29, 2022

County of Mendocino
Board of Supervisors
501 Low Gap Road
Ukiah, CA 95482

RE: Operational Funding Request for FY 22-23

Dear Board of Supervisors:

The Mendocino County Resource Conservation District (MCRCDD) has partnered successfully with the County on a wide variety of projects over the last twelve years and we are looking forward to continuing this relationship to further our shared goals. The MCRCDD efficiently responds to climate change needs within the County to address post-fire reforestation/recovery, fire preparedness, drought resiliency, sustainable agriculture, water conservation, and water quality protection. MCRCDD holds a distinct role as a trusted non-regulatory agency that partners with the County, landowners, resource managers, Tribes and the general public to provide vital services and information to assist with natural resource issues and challenges.

The MCRCDD continuously works to secure grant funding for our Forest Health, Sustainable Agriculture, and Water Resource programs. We are pleased to report that, to date, in Fiscal Year 2021-2022, MCRCDD secured over **\$9M** in competitive grant funds that will benefit the County's economy and environment. Most of this funding will go to on-the-ground implementation of projects that support local contractors and address environmental challenges. You may wonder why we need scarce County funds given our success rate in raising grant dollars. Please be aware that grant funding does not fund the time and effort the MCRCDD must spend to apply for competitive grant funds. Our success in securing grants is only possible through your support in supplying a source of funding for our grant development work. Your small investment last year leveraged \$9M for crucial environmental action work in this county, a return of over 1:200, or a **20.000%** **R.O.I.** By any measure this is an extraordinary return on investment for the people of Mendocino County.

The upcoming fiscal year will present unique challenges and opportunities due to the ongoing drought, expanded wildfire season, and enduring effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The MCRCDD is well situated to secure funding opportunities to meet these challenges. The MCRCDD is requesting \$90,000 from the County for fiscal year 2022/2023 to build capacity to continue our work with landowners and other stakeholders. We have shown that we have the expertise and staffing resources to develop highly competitive applications to secure grant funding. We have proven that we can assist residents with conservation projects and can support the County of Mendocino in its work to steward our natural resources. The table on the next page describes our alignment with the County's goals. We look forward to our continued partnership with the County to conserve, protect, and restore wild and working landscapes to enhance the health of the water, soils, and forests in Mendocino County.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephanie Garrabrant-Sierra".

Stephanie Garrabrant-Sierra
Executive Director

Conserving Wild and Working Landscapes Since 1945

Program & Objective	County Planning Goals	County Funding	Projects / Deliverables
<p><u>Forest Health</u> Improve forestland and oak woodland health through informing landowners about climate resilient active management and conservation practices to implement on their lands.</p>	<p>Ukiah Valley Area Plan: OC2.3a General Plan: AI RM-2, 4, 25-27, 71, 82, 82, 111, 112, 116, 117, 120, 121; AL RM-102.1; AI DE-1.1; AI DE-64.2; 64.3</p>	<p>\$25,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue partnerships with CAL FIRE, NRCS, BLM, Climate Action Reserve, & others • Develop cost-share funding programs & projects • Build the Forest Carbon Accounting Tool, and support the Climate Action Plan for Mendocino County • Reduce hazardous fuel loads, support landowners in wildfire resilience and forest health improvements • Provide forestry education and outreach
<p><u>Sustainable Agriculture</u> Improve soil health and reduce erosion by informing landowners about climate and environmental beneficial conservation practices to implement on their agricultural and range lands.</p>	<p>Ukiah Valley Area Plan: OC1.3a General Plan: AI CP-AV-18.1, 18.2, AI RM 4.1, 7.1, 27.1, 34.1, 41.1. 50.2, 79.1, 79.2, 79.3, 102.1, 127.1, AL DE 64.3, 210.2, Housing Element Action 5.1c</p>	<p>\$25,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform, educate, and collaborate using Soilhub.org, e-newsletters, and social media with ag landowners on soil health and climate beneficial soil management • Submit at least two grant applications to support soil health and climate resiliency. • Collect samples and complete soil health assessments for vineyards • Develop Carbon Farm Plans for landowners and assist managers in applying for private, state, and federal funding to support climate beneficial practices • Assist cannabis farmers with sustainable agriculture practices
<p><u>Water Resources</u> Increase and improve the County's water resilience, climate adaptivity and fisheries health.</p>	<p>Ukiah Valley Area Plan: OC1.1c, 1.3a General Plan: AL CP-AV-18.1, AL RM-7.1,79.2, 127.1, AL DE-201.2, 210.2, 214.1, 220.2, Housing Element Action 5.1c</p>	<p>\$25,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide resources for drought resiliency and education to the public, water suppliers, Tribes, and landowners. • Submit grant applications to leverage County funds for long-term improvements to water quality, water security and regional water planning. • Attend, present, and/or co-host regional watershed and restoration workshops and meetings to represent Mendocino County's water resource interests. • Conduct road, riparian and/or streambank evaluations and connect landowners to resources.
<p><u>Program Management</u> Effective & professional management for efficient and seamless operations.</p>		<p>\$25,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCRCD Leadership provides support to the County, partners, and MCRCD's Project Managers to develop projects and execute grants that benefit the County. • Continue strategic planning with County and partners to expand grants and fee-for-service opportunities.
Total		\$100,000	