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County Executive Chris Ronayne  
Cuyahoga County Administrative Headquarters  
2079 E 9th St.  
Cleveland, OH 44115

RE Letter of Commitment for Cuyahoga County CPRG Implementation Grant Submission

Dear Executive Ronayne,

I am writing on behalf of West Creek Conservancy to demonstrate our organization's commitment to supporting the Climate Pollution Reduction Implementation Grant submitted by Cuyahoga County, the City of Cleveland, and the City of Painesville for the deployment of clean electricity and nature-based solutions, in alignment with the PCAP measures submitted by the Northeastern Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) for the Cleveland-Elyria Metropolitan Statistical Area.

The CPRG Implementation Grant submitted by Cuyahoga County, in coalition with the City of Cleveland and the City of Painesville, is an innovative and transformative project that will generate clean and renewable energy through brownfield development and municipal utility clean energy deployment, as well as other nature-based solutions that will dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve low-income energy burden, and improve outdoor air quality.

As a land conservation non-profit organization in Northeast Ohio, we are committed to supporting this project through facilitating acquisition of the 1,100-acre former brownfield site in the city of Painesville, on which the proposed 277-acre Painesville solar site will be located. West Creek Conservancy's ownership and stewardship of the land, combined with a lease agreement to be established with the city of Painesville, will enable the Painesville Electric Department to develop up to 277 acres of solar, generating lower-cost, clean energy for city of Painesville residents and enabling permanent closure of the city's coal-powered peaking plant. An MOU and lease agreement with the City of Painesville will be developed upon transfer of ownership of the land to West Creek Conservancy (see also MOU between West Creek Conservancy and the current landowner).

Concurrently, West Creek Conservancy will work in partnership with Lake Metroparks to develop the balance of the remediated brownfield as a publicly accessible lakefront nature preserve, including a 2.25-mile ADA-accessible lakefront trail and a series of connector trails establishing public access for the communities of Painesville Township, Fairport Harbor and the City of Painesville. West Creek Conservancy is committed to implementing the proposed ecological restoration components on the site included in the CPRG project, including establishing hundreds of acres of native pollinator habitat and reforesting 80 acres of riparian area along the Grand River. West Creek Conservancy is also committed to participating in the coalition's community engagement process, including working with the City of Painesville and the facilitation consultant engaged by the coalition to host public meetings and solicit resident input throughout the redevelopment of the site.

West Creek Conservancy's participation in this project will help enable the coalition to achieve success in developing the proposed solar site in the city of Painesville, as well as to establish unprecedented lakefront access by owning and managing the site as a public lakefront preserve. West Creek Conservancy has been involved in land protection and stewardship in Northeast Ohio for over 25 years, and is responsible for the maintenance, monitoring and long-term stewardship of thousands of acres across numerous counties in the region. West Creek staff have the proven technical expertise, experience and willingness to undertake complex land projects such as this one to catalyze transformational projects in support of our partner organizations and the communities we serve.

We are committed to supporting the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions throughout our region through strong, sustainable partnerships and innovative solutions that are inclusive of the values of all Northeastern Ohioans.

Cheers,

Derek Schafer, Executive Director