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TREY LAM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LISA KNAUF OWEN
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

March 29, 2024

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

RE: Tulsa MSA Climate Pollution Reduction Implementation Grant Proposal Support

To Whom It May Concern,

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC) commits to partnering with Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG) to achieve the goals outlined in the supports the *Tulsa Metropolitan Statistical Area Climate Pollution Reduction Implementation Grant* proposal. We look forward to working with INCOG to build and expand OCC's existing conservation easement and wetland programs in the Tulsa MSA. Supporting the implementation of greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction strategies included in the *Tulsa Metropolitan Statistical Area Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Priority Climate Action Plan*, aligns with Oklahoma Conservation Commission's statutory authorities, organizational mission and decades long track-record of protecting and conserving Oklahoma's land and water resources.

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission and INCOG's Green Country Stormwater Alliance have been collaborators on initiatives related to water quality protection, reduction of nonpoint source pollution, and citizen education and outreach. We are pleased to build on our cooperative efforts by advancing established voluntary and cost-effective programs that aim to store carbon, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, preserve watershed functions, provide flood control, and enhance resiliency in the face of the changing climate.

If selected for award under this proposal, OCC commits to using sub-awarded funds to operate a conservation easement program and expand wetland projects within the Tulsa MSA. This program will follow a similar pricing model and approach used in other projects around the state. Additional CPRG funding will enable the pursuit of establishing conservation easements not only on pasture or forested lands in rural areas, but also riparian areas near and in municipalities that are being proposed for development. It is our hope that such a demonstration would also encourage the Federal Emergency Management Authority and partnering agencies in Oklahoma to consider such initiatives for future funding through their Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program to help mitigate flooding impacts.

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission is proud to contribute to the proposed initiative, which would allow the Tulsa MSA region to work toward addressing both contributions and vulnerabilities to climate change. We appreciate your consideration of this exciting proposal.

Sincerely,

Shanon Phillips
Water Quality Division Director

