



March 13, 2024

Metroplan
Attn: Casey Covington, Executive Director
501 W. Markham St., Ste. B
Little Rock, AR 72201

RE: Letter of Commitment for Arkansas Tri-Region Coalition's CPRG application

Dear Mr. Covington:

This letter is intended to express Beaver Watershed Alliance' (Alliance) strong, long-term commitment to supporting the Northwest Arkansas Green Network goals outlined in the Arkansas Tri-Region Coalition's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) implementation application.

Arkansas, known as the Natural State, faces critical environmental challenges. Air quality is a pressing concern, with pollutants impacting public health and exacerbating respiratory conditions. By curbing greenhouse gas emissions, we can mitigate these adverse effects. Moreover, Arkansas boasts abundant environmental assets, including pristine forests, waterways, and diverse ecosystems. Protecting these natural treasures ensures a sustainable future for generations to come.

However, our efforts must extend beyond environmental conservation. Low-income and disadvantaged communities often bear the brunt of pollution. These vulnerable populations deserve equitable access to clean air, safe water, and green spaces. By prioritizing emission reduction, we uplift these communities and promote environmental justice.

Lastly, the environmental sector offers immense potential for high-quality jobs. Investing in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and conservation initiatives creates employment opportunities while safeguarding our planet. We recognize that reducing greenhouse gas emissions isn't just an environmental goal—it's a commitment to the well-being of Arkansans and the resilience of our state.

The Beaver Watershed Alliance, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, was formed in 2011 to establish programming to maintain high quality drinking water in Beaver Lake and improve water quality on the Beaver Lake Watershed. Since 2011, the Alliance has initiated and completed over \$16 million in federal, state and local grant projects. Through initiatives addressing watershed assessment, outreach and education, technical assistance, land management practice implementation and volunteer stewardship, water quality and conservation improvements have been achieved for the Beaver Lake watershed. The Alliance has an established track record of building partnerships, gaining trust of local landowners and stakeholders, and advancing workforce development in conservation stewardship.

The Alliance will partner with Metroplan and coalition member, Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC), to contribute to the effective implementation of the Northwest Arkansas Green Network project, which will reduce and sequester greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and provide energy and transportation cost savings in Arkansas' second-largest metro area. Project support will be provided through assistance with workforce development strategies and assistance for project implementation.

I appreciate your dedication to implementing greenhouse gas reduction projects across Arkansas' three largest metro areas. We are eager to participate in the coalition's efforts to protect the Natural State and ensure environmental and economic benefits to over one half of Arkansas' population, including some of the state's most vulnerable residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Becky Roark", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Becky Roark
Executive Director
Beaver Watershed Alliance
becky@beaverwatershedalliance.org
479-750-8007