



Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Governor
Shea Lewis
Secretary

March 27, 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 Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism's commitment to supporting the climate resiliency goals outlined in the Arkansas Tri-Region Coalition's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) implementation application.

The coalition partners, Metroplan, Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission and the City of Fort Smith have collaborated to develop a strategy to reduce pollutant emissions, create jobs, reduce energy consumption and improve livability in the three largest Metropolitan areas of Arkansas. This is an extraordinary opportunity to demonstrate the value of coordination among regional entities to raise sustainability principles across the entire state of Arkansas.

As an agency deeply committed to preserving our state's natural beauty, promoting outdoor recreation and tourism and fostering environmental stewardship, we recognize the critical importance of initiatives aimed at reducing pollution.

Arkansas boasts an abundance of environmental assets including pristine forests, waterways and diverse ecosystems. However, the conservation of these invaluable resources requires concerted efforts and financial support. The CPRG opportunity presents an exceptional chance to advance environmental conservation efforts in our state, ensuring a sustainable future for generations to come.

Additionally, this grant aligns seamlessly with the objectives of the Natural State Initiative, a comprehensive effort aimed at preserving and enhancing Arkansas's natural beauty, promoting outdoor recreation and fostering environmental stewardship. By supporting the CPRG opportunity, we contribute directly to the goals of the Natural State Initiative, ensuring that our state remains a beacon of natural splendor for generations to come.

Investing in environmental initiatives has a direct impact on enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities in Arkansas. Our state is blessed with breathtaking natural landscapes and outdoor recreational activities ranging from hiking and camping to fishing and hunting. By preserving and protecting our environment through initiatives supported by the CPRG, we ensure that these outdoor spaces remain accessible and enjoyable for all residents and visitors alike.

Additionally, investing in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture and conservation initiatives presents an opportunity to stimulate economic growth and create high-quality jobs in Arkansas. By supporting the CPRG, we can foster innovation, drive economic development and build a more resilient and sustainable future for our state.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse the application for CPRG and urge you to consider providing your support. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in addressing environmental challenges and promoting a healthier, more sustainable Arkansas.

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.

Sincerely,



Shea Lewis
Secretary
Director, Division of Arkansas State Parks

CC: Tim Conklin - NWARPC Executive Director
Joshua Robertson - City of Fort Smith Deputy Director of Business Administration