



WATERSHED CONSERVATION
RESOURCE CENTER

March 16, 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 the Watershed Conservation Resource Center's (WCRC) 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.

The Watershed Conservation Resource Center (WCRC) is a non-profit organization committed to protect and restore natural resources utilizing the watershed approach and provide technical assistance to landowners, communities, and government. The WCRC has successfully implemented stream, riparian, and wetland restoration in Northwest Arkansas (NWA) and conducted watershed and river assessments for over two decades. The WCRC understands the inter-relationship of Ozark Mountain streams and forested riparian environment that supports the diverse ecology and natural services these resources provide to the region. We have established long-term, working partnerships with a multitude of municipalities, landowners, other conservation-based NGOs, water districts, and government entities. The WCRC has successfully managed millions of dollars in federal and other funding sources to restore and protect NWA's natural areas and resources. The most recent example of our grant management, execution, and completion being an 8.7 million dollar project as part of the Natural Resources Conservation Service grant under the Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

The WCRC 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.

The WCRC will use its subaward to provide the following assistance with the design and performance of the following projects included in the Arkansas Tri-Region Coalition's CPRG implementation application:

- Coordinate with the Cities of Fayetteville, Bella Vista, Bentonville, West Fork, and Johnson and University of Arkansas on restoration projects and administer and implement their land and stream restoration projects
- Complete land restoration planning and stream restoration designs
- Obtain landowner access, implementation, and maintenance permission

- Implement land restoration and streamside riparian restoration
- Obtain all floodplain development, Army Corps of Engineers 404, ADEQ Stormwater, and STAA regulatory permits as required for stream channel restoration work
- Competitively bid heavy equipment construction contractors for stream channel restoration work
- Identify sources of and procure restoration materials
- Oversee and direct heavy equipment construction activities
- Provide routine maintenance at restoration sites to establish native vegetation and conduct repairs as needed
- Conduct workforce training workshops on land restoration measures, assist with community engagement events, and assist with development of certification program
- Assist with the development of stream and land restoration guidelines for NWA projects
- Provide semi-annual and final reporting on project activities to NWARPC

The WCRC greatly appreciates our inclusion in the Arkansas Tri-Region Coalition's CPRG application. We are eager to contribute to the success of the coalition's efforts to protect the Natural State and ensure environmental and economic benefits to some of its most vulnerable residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sandi J. Formica". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Sandi J. Formica
Executive Director