

PROJECT TITLE: Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Napa County Resource Conservation District

A Special District under Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code

Napa, Napa County, California

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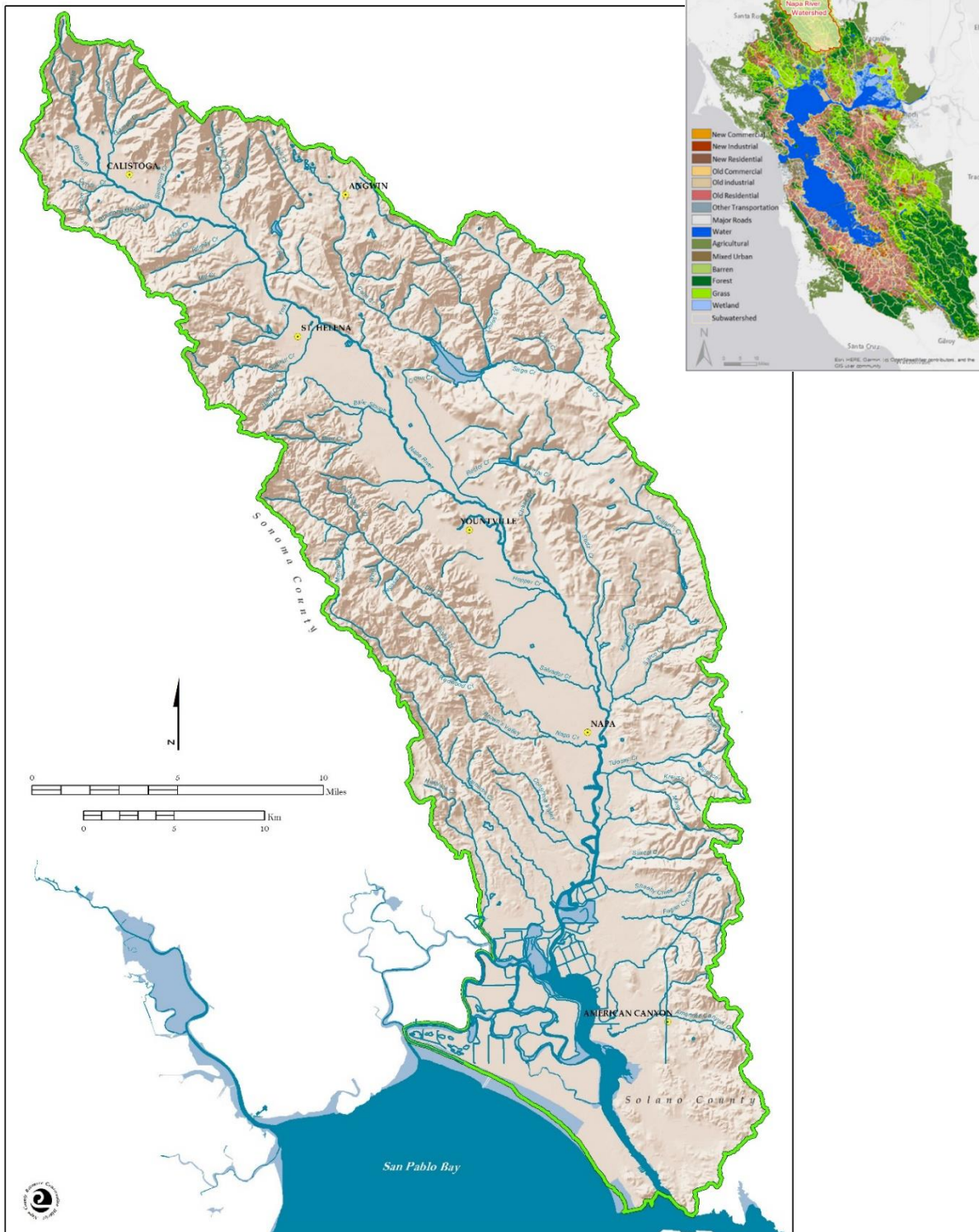
Date of Proposal: August 31, 2024

Napa County Resource Conservation District (NCRCD), a special district of the State of California, in collaboration with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos), aims to establish a New Watershed Group to improve the sustainable management of water resources in the Napa River watershed in Napa County, California. The proposed New Watershed Group will bring together hundreds of diverse stakeholders representing agriculture, forestry and wildfire interests, tribes and indigenous organizations, environmental organizations, as well as public agencies and water managers. Many of these stakeholders have been engaged in exploratory grassroots meetings hosted by Abuelitos over the past year leading up to this proposal. The formalization of a New Watershed Group will provide a valuable forum for these stakeholders to explore watershed issues and potential solutions, and to provide their input to regulators and other decision-makers. A New Watershed Group Coordinator will be hired to lead the development of collaboration structures and processes for the New Watershed Group, as well as the creation of educational materials, and hosting of events to facilitate constructive dialogue and the exploration of issues. The Coordinator will also conduct several pre-planning activities required to outline a Napa River Watershed Restoration and Management Plan for further collaborative development. Pre-planning activities include collecting, organizing, and assessing existing studies, watershed monitoring programs, and restoration projects. Pre-planning will also involve gathering input from stakeholders about needs, opportunities, and priorities. The project will culminate in the development of an outline of a Napa River Watershed Restoration and Management Plan, which will include targeted goals, potential actions, methods of prioritizing actions, and potential funding sources to support planning.

PROJECT LOCATION:

The Napa River watershed (HUC10 1805000202) encompasses about 275,000 acres along the Central Coast Range in Napa County, California (Figure 1). The Napa River, an important freshwater tributary to San Francisco Bay, runs 55 miles in length with numerous tributary subwatersheds entering the main stem from the mountains that rise abruptly on both sides of Napa Valley.

Figure 1: Napa River watershed.



The Napa Valley floor of the watershed is dominated by agriculture and development, which cover approximately 15% and 11% of the total area, respectively. Napa Valley is one of the world's most important winegrowing regions. It is also home to approximately 95% of Napa County's total population and all its incorporated municipalities. Beyond the valley floor, the watershed is predominantly grassland (33%), shrubland (20%), or forest (20%), however hillside vineyards and ranches are also present, as are unincorporated residential areas, a hospital, a private university, and other developments. The Napa River watershed supports a diversity of native fish species and wildlife, including chinook salmon and steelhead, threatened species under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Indigenous people managed the watershed for thousands of years prior to Euro-American settlement, however the function of its surface and ground water systems has been greatly altered over the past two centuries of intensifying and changing land uses. Today, the watershed supplies about 85% of the county's total water demand through its ground and surface water production. This heavy reliance on local water sources is relatively rare for an agriculture-dominated county in California. There are over 1,200 on- and off-stream reservoirs in the watershed. Many are agricultural ponds on the valley floor fed by groundwater or subsurface drainage, and primarily serving irrigation and frost control needs. The larger on-stream Hennessey, Rector, Bell, Kimball, and Milliken Reservoirs serve as major sources of municipal water.

APPLICANT CATEGORY AND ELIGIBILITY:

The applicant Napa County Resource Conservation District (NCRCD) is seeking funding to form a New Watershed Group focused on the Napa River watershed in California. As a special district of the State of California, the NCRCD is eligible to receive an award for the establishment of a New Watershed Group. NCRCD has a successful record of facilitating grassroots creek stewardship initiatives and restoration projects and has supported 11 such groups since 2005, however, no overall Napa River Watershed planning group is active today. NCRCD partners closely with other organizations to develop and deliver mission-aligned projects. In the proposed project, NCRCD will work in collaboration with Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos) to establish and facilitate the New Watershed Group.

Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a range of local residential and government stakeholders to explore issues and needs related to water management and restoration. NCRCD worked closely with Abuelitos on designing and facilitating several of these convenings, including supporting a number of field tours to learn about and discuss critical watershed issues impacting Napa County's farmlands and forests. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a New Watershed Group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

NCRCD is connected to many watershed management related efforts in the Napa River watershed, and will leverage this knowledge and these relationships to ensure the success of the New Watershed Group. For instance, NCRCD has been a member of the Napa County Watershed Information and Conservation Council (WICC) since its formation in 2002. The role of the WICC is to advise the Napa County Board of Supervisors in their decision-making process related to water and watershed resources. NCRCD holds a Joint Powers Agreement with Napa County to support a range of watershed stewardship activities, including organizing the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium, water quality and fish monitoring, and providing technical assistance to landowners to improve water use efficiency and reduce erosion. NCRCD also serves on the Napa County Groundwater Sustainability Agency Technical Advisory Group.

Established in 2022, the Abuelitos focuses on practical, results-oriented actions to support local farming communities and ensure their long-term viability. To cooperatively address critical agricultural sustainability issues, Abuelitos has been working with an ad hoc coalition of interested parties to develop scientifically robust, low-cost, and effective low-tech land management strategies, including cover cropping and nature-based land management practices, that help conserve water resources, improve soil health, revitalize ecosystems, and stabilize local climates. Key focus areas include abating extreme heat, recharging groundwater, and reducing wildfire risk.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposed New Watershed Group will provide a nonregulatory, grassroots forum within the Napa River watershed to convene diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and ultimately develop scientifically based action plans for watershed improvement. The range of stakeholders engaged in discussions leading up to this proposal are described below. Because a watershed group does not currently exist in the watershed, project activities as outlined in Table 1 will focus on New Watershed Group development and pre-planning tasks for outlining a Napa River Watershed Management and Implementation Plan.

Table 1. Description of project tasks and outputs.

Task	Description
1.0	Grant Management and Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCRCD will lead grant management and administrative activities including contracting with the New Watershed Coordinator, monthly invoicing, quarterly and final progress reporting. NCRCD will lead regular team meetings to maintain the project schedule.
2.0	New Watershed Group Development
2.1	Hire a Watershed Group Coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new Napa River Watershed Group Coordinator will be hired for the duration of the project and will coordinate the below-listed activities.
2.2	Establish New Watershed Group

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a mission and vision statement, goals, and governance structure for a New Watershed Group representing diverse constituencies described below. • Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining partner roles, responsibilities, and rules of engagement for outreach and engagement, pre-planning, and other activities.
2.2.1	Identify Constituencies & Recruit Volunteer Representatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory and coalesce constituency representatives at the Napa River watershed scale. • Inventory existing watershed restoration project implementation and interest groups by tributary subwatershed, land management type such as American Viticultural Area (AVA), or other practical management unit. • Inventory water resource management group opportunities by land management type throughout the Napa River watershed.
2.2.2	Build Coalitions & Establish Watershed Stewardship Subgroups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographically segment and map the Napa River watershed into locations for the potential development of groups by tributary subwatershed, land management type such as AVA, or other practical management unit. • Facilitate stakeholder planning meetings to gather information on water resource management and restoration needs.
2.2.3	Draft Cooperative Agreements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a charter for the Watershed Stewardship Subgroups for location specific project planning, design, and implementation. Consider focusing on the creation of 3-4 such Subgroups to test this concept.
2.3	Conduct Outreach & Invite Participation
2.3.1	Write a Communication Outreach Plan to Reach and Recruit Constituents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure general and targeted communication with landowners, watershed and resource management groups, partner organizations, landowners, and scientific experts, government agencies, and other identified constituencies. • Include Napa County volunteer Fire Safe Councils and other established networking venues to reach multiple constituencies. • Promote the formation of watershed restoration and water resource management groups. Articulate the value of investing together in collective solutions. • Leverage the existing resources and outreach platform managed by the Napa Watershed Information and Conservation Council (https://www.napawatersheds.org/).
2.3.2	Develop Website and Social Media Content

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design a new, ,or augment the functionality of an existing outreach website platform to facilitate constituent identification of their location in the Napa River watershed by subwatershed, locations of active volunteer subwatershed management groups, and locations of existing restoration projects and initiatives. • Leverage existing data and outreach platform created by the Napa County Watershed Information and Conservation Council (WICC). • Develop and host webpages for subwatershed and water resource management groups to connect constituents and drive voluntary engagement. • Provide online access to data, maps, and resources gathered. • Create and manage engaging content for consistent outreach presence to guide engagement. • Showcase the work of partners as well as internal initiatives to strengthen collaboration.
2.3.3	Develop Informational Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop informational materials about the overall Napa River watershed and its tributary subwatersheds and constituent location within the context of water resource management (e.g., GIS storymaps for hosting on the web, videos, interactive education tools, brochures, advertisements, technical presentations). • Develop information materials about land management practices that increase soil hydration, improve rainwater infiltration and detention, prolong environmental stream flows, and recharge groundwater and where they can be employed depending upon watershed location and landuse type.
2.3.4	Design and Deliver Educational Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host fieldtrips to showcase existing and planned watershed projects and water resource management best practices across different tributaries and land management types: Agriculture, Forest Management, River Restoration, Wetland Creation. • Table materials at regular NCRCD community events. • Support the planning and delivery of a 2026 Napa County Watershed Symposium.
2.4	Pre-Planning Activities Conduct pre-planning activities to gather information to write a Watershed Restoration and Management Plan outline.
2.4.1	Collect, Organize, and Assess Existing Studies & Initiatives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect, inventory, review and share baseline information on existing studies and initiatives regarding water resource management and watershed restoration in the Napa River Watershed. • Conduct a literature search, including website links, and compile a bibliography. • Survey constituency groups for previous and current studies and initiatives: Landowners, government agencies, universities, partner organizations, etc. • Compile digital files of current and historical geospatial data.
2.4.2	Collect, Organize, and Assess Existing Monitoring Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory existing water resource monitoring activities and data. • Identify data gaps and monitoring needs.
2.4.3	Collect, Organize, and Assess Existing Watershed Restoration Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory existing restoration projects and water resource management studies. • Identify monitoring studies documenting progress towards objectives and verifying proof of concept for existing restoration and water resource management projects.
2.4.4	Hold Watershed Group Meetings & Conduct Surveys to Gather Input from Stakeholders on Needs, Opportunities, and Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize survey and interviews. • Survey diverse stakeholders to identify key constituencies. Document water resource management issues, opportunities for watershed restoration, conservation management, and groundwater recharge. • Maintain engagement with Watershed Groups and Resource Management Constituencies to develop the basis for an overall Watershed Restoration & Water Resource Management Plan. • Organize regular stakeholder coordination meetings to receive input on watershed restoration and water resource management planning, share compiled data and resources, and communicate progress on plan development and needs. • Facilitate dialogue and outreach across constituencies; Create alignment on program priorities and ranking criteria. • Align interests of landowners, regulators, and other stakeholders. • Identify support needs to maintain volunteer watershed group organization, communication, and input.
2.4.5	Presentations and Discussions with the Napa County Watershed Information and Conservation Council and Groundwater Sustainability Agency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide presentations to and engage in dialogue with the Napa County Watershed Information and Conservation Council. • Provide presentations to and engage in dialogue with the Napa County Groundwater Sustainability Agency.

2.4.6	Perform a Gaps Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a data gaps analysis, and identify studies that can be performed within the scope of the grant budget. • Identify the priorities and roles of existing watershed managers, researchers, and others.
2.5	Outline Watershed Restoration Plan <p>This project will establish a robust framework for drafting a Napa River Watershed Management and Restoration Plan outline. Input from Watershed Group and its constituent Subgroups will assist in identifying and prioritizing water resource and ecosystem stewardship issues and potential solutions. The data gaps analysis will identify additional studies needed to inform the planning and implementation process. The framework will provide a methodology for prioritizing restoration projects and resource management actions in specific locations to provide multiple ecological and economic benefits.</p>
2.5.1	Define Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline a Napa River Watershed Management and Restoration Plan defining water resource management and restoration goals for throughout the greater Napa River watershed. • Explore measures of success that work across goals and stakeholder interests and needs. • Explore co-benefits to measure in addition to water resource conservation (e.g., moderating peak temperatures, reducing wildfire risk, decreasing the Vapor Pressure Deficit across the landscape).
2.5.2	Describe Possible Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a suite of water resource management actions that can be adopted and implemented at various scales and locations by different stakeholders. • Develop a suite of watershed restoration project types in preparation for conducting a needs analysis and feasibility study for identifying suitable restoration locations.
2.5.3	Explore Prioritization Frameworks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore prioritization frameworks for watershed restoration project planning and implementation. • Identify where those goals can be met by working with tributary subgroups and land use management groups to implement specific actions.
2.5.4	Explore Potential Funding Sources for Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore a suite of public and private granting funds, match, and long-term durable funding mechanisms to further the development of a Watershed Restoration Plan and to implement and maintain projects.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

A. WATERSHED GROUP DIVERSITY AND GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

A.1 Watershed Group Diversity:

The 24 attached Letters of Support demonstrate the broad support and enthusiasm for the formation of a Napa River New Watershed Group, and most of these supporters will be active group participants. The outsized importance of the wine industry in Napa County, its large impact on the function and condition of the watershed, and its vulnerability in the face of a changing climate necessitate an enhanced focus on agriculture in any voluntary watershed management process. Without agriculture at the table, it will be difficult for the Napa River watershed to achieve climate resiliency. It is also important to bring other constituencies and perspectives to the table, which is why the proposed project is also engaging with forestland owners and rural residents, fire safe councils, environmental organizations, tribes and indigenous organizations, as well as governments and water managers. Historically, Napa County watershed planning activities have focused on the Napa River Valley groundwater subbasin. This initiative will equally engage representative owners of the rural tributary headwaters in the mountains to the east and west of the Napa River where surface and groundwater recharge begins; where extending ecological stream flows is critical to protecting spawning and rearing habitat for endangered steelhead; and where wildfire danger is the greatest.

Agricultural Industry Groups & Farmers:

The economy of Napa County is dominated by the wine industry, which creates 46,000 local jobs and an annual economic impact of more than \$13 billion in Napa County. As a consumer of 80% of the water resources in Napa County, agricultural users have a key role in not only conserving water but in achieving greater surface water infiltration and groundwater recharge. Agricultural industry groups and individual farmers in Napa County have been involved in convenings hosted by Abuelitos over the past year about the establishment of a New Watershed Group, and several have submitted a Letter of Support for this proposal.

Napa Green established the first sustainable winegrowing program in the world in 2021 to redevelop Vineyard certification standards to focus on climate action, regenerative carbon farming, and social equity. In 2022, Napa Green and community partners launched the first of its kind, six-event RISE Climate & Wine Symposium (formerly THRIVES) with over 65 leading speakers and 40 “Sustainable Services & Solutions” partners and sponsors. The keynote speaker at the 2023 RISE Symposium, Mimi Casteel, inspired the stakeholder convenings by Abuelitos in Napa County which led to the conceptualization of this project proposal. Mimi has since joined the Abuelitos Board of Directors and will continue to participate in the watershed group development. Napa Green’s Executive Director Anna Brittain has also participated in the convenings to date, and she will be invited to continue her involvement in the New Watershed Group.

Napa Valley Grapegrowers is a non-profit organization formed in 1975 representing over 600 local grape growers who are invested in cultivating viticultural excellence and environmental stewardship for the Napa Valley, and the organization provides growers with education and serves as an advocacy voice. The organization also established the Napa Valley Farmworker Foundation to support and promote Napa Valley's vineyard workers through education and professional development. Molly Moran Williams, the organization's Industry and Community Relations Director, has participated in meetings leading up to this proposal, and we will invite the organization's leadership to continue their involvement in the New Watershed Group.

Napa Valley Vintners is a nonprofit trade association formed in 1944 which includes 539 members. The organization operates marketing programs, conducts industry advocacy, and provides a range of member resources. In the recent past, the Napa Valley Vintners have been philanthropic supporters of projects focused on wildfire resilience, forest health, and watershed health. The organization's staff have participated in meetings leading up to this proposal, and we will invite them to continue their involvement in the New Watershed Group.

Several farmers committed to sustainable watershed management have participated in the convenings leading up to this proposal and provided letters of support. Cain Vineyard and Winery has been caring for the headwaters of Sulphur Creek and York Creek, two major Napa River tributaries and important salmonid spawning habitats, and their property almost completely burned in the 2020 wildfire season. Opus One Winery was a key participant in the Napa River Restoration Project and is a respected industry leader in climate-smart agroecology practices and habitat restoration. Element 28 Vineyard is actively restoring a tributary creek to Lake Hennessey, a primary municipal water source for the City of Napa. They are establishing over a mile of native habitat through the vineyard property. Richard Mendelson wrote "Common Ground: Charting the Future of Napa Valley" to help decision-makers in the agricultural industry and local government develop collaborative solutions to agricultural resilience in the face of climate change, biodiversity decline, and other pressures.

Fire and Forestry Organizations, and Rural Residents:

The Napa Communities Firewise Foundation (Napa Firewise) was formed in 2007 as a non-profit organization to educate the public and encourage individuals to be proactive in preparing their property for greater wildfire protection. It is made up of 31 neighborhood Fire Safe Councils (FSCs) throughout Napa County. The organization led the effort to complete a comprehensive Countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan, which has been adopted by the Napa County Board of Supervisors and CAL FIRE. Napa Firewise is exploring multiple strategies to decrease long-term fuel management maintenance costs including educating landowners on defensible space and home hardening practices, providing county chipping services, forming goat grazing cooperatives, and performing ecological restoration to historic fire-resistant oak woodlands. Napa Firewise's Executive Director participated in the convenings leading up to this proposal, and we will invite participation from the organization and its constituent FSCs in the New Watershed Group.

Private forestland owners and rural residents in the upland portions of the watershed face major challenges with vegetative fuel management to reduce wildfire risk not only to their own properties, but to the community at large. Their upland locations are also critical for increasing groundwater recharge for downstream agricultural and municipal use, as well for supplying extended ecological stream flows to support critically endangered and threatened anadromous and native fish species. One example, the Moffitt Family, owns a large portion of the headwaters of Hopper Creek, a salmon-bearing tributary to the Napa River, and has participated in a range of forest management projects sponsored by NCRCD and others. David Moffitt participated in the convenings leading up to this proposal and has offered to host demonstrations and education projects on his property in support of watershed and forest health.

Environmental Organizations:

Land Trust of Napa County has permanently protected 94,000 acres of land throughout Napa County over the past 48 years, which is over 17.5% of Napa County's land area. The Land Trust holds 159 conservation agreements with private landowners, many are agricultural operations. It is also one of the largest landowners in the county with 21,000 acres held in Land Trust preserves. The organization is also a respected expert in local ecosystems and conservation practice implementation. Two senior staff from the Land Trust have participated in the convenings leading up to this proposal, and they will be invited to continue to participate in the New Watershed Group.

Save Napa Valley Foundation (SNVF) is a nonprofit organization that was formed to support environmentally informed agriculture while working to protect Napa County's woodlands, watershed and wildlife. The organization has held several Water Forums focused and created the Refugia Project to assess stream obstructions and drying reaches within the watershed. Farmer and SNVF Board Member Lucio Perez is an advisor to NCRCD's Board of Directors. He meets regularly with staff and board members to explore watershed restoration needs.

Napa Climate NOW! is a grassroots, non-partisan group of Napa County residents who advocate for climate change and adaptation policy and support education programs. The group has supported the youth-led Schools for Climate Action and informed the development of the multi-jurisdictional Regional Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. The group's work inspired many local public agencies, including NCRCD, to adopt climate emergency resolutions.

Napa Vision 2050 is a public benefit corporation formed in 2015 to protect Napa County's biodiversity. It has been active in informing policy ideas related to watershed protection, groundwater, limiting development in fire-prone areas, and responsible solar development.

Mennen Environmental Foundation was formed by a local resident in 1995 to protect and restore critically important wild spaces. While it has a national footprint, its local roots have inspired investments in Napa County conservation, and its Executive Director Laurie Claudon participates in local watershed health initiatives.

Tribes and Indigenous Organizations:

Suscol Intertribal Council was founded as a nonprofit organization in 1972 to bring healing between the current population of Napa County and the California Native people who historically inhabited this watershed. The organization purchased a property in the hills above Napa Valley with the vision of creating a land base for Native Americans to perform ceremonies and host gatherings to keep Indigenous culture alive. NCRCD has long partnered with the organization, including on a project to help restore the native forest on its property and support workforce development in the conservation field for Indigenous youth. Suscol Intertribal Council has been an active participant in the Abuelitos led convenings advising the members on sustainable forest and agriculture management practices based on Traditional Ecological Knowledge and will be invited to participate in the New Watershed Group. The organization has already met with landowners and engineers to scope a demonstration watershed stewardship plan for the Hopper Creek tributary to the Napa River.

As described in greater detail below, NCRCD has been developing deeper relationships with the region's tribes and indigenous organizations and intends to invite greater participation in local watershed management processes, including the formation of a New Watershed Group.

Governments and Water Managers:

Several key government bodies having a mandate related to watershed management have been active in the convenings leading up to this proposal, and representatives will be engaged in the formation of a New Watershed Group. As there is no countywide or watershed-wide water agency, the Napa County Planning, Building, and Environmental Services (PBES) Department and the Napa County Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) have a particularly large role in regulating water management. GSA staff and hydrology consultants, overseen by the Director Napa County PBES, have been deeply involved in the conversations that have led to this proposal. The PBES Director Brian Bordona submitted a letter of support for this project.

The Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District has an outsized role in stream restoration and flood management in the watershed and its Watershed and Flood Control Operations Manager Jeremy Sarrow has also advised this burgeoning coalition and submitted a letter of support. All these agencies will be important stakeholders for the New Watershed Group.

The City of Napa is the largest population center in the county and one of its largest water managers as the operator of Lake Hennessey and Milliken Reservoir, critical sources of local municipal water. Deputy Utilities Director Joy Eldredge submitted a letter of support for this project and has advised this burgeoning coalition from the start.

A.2 Geographic Scope:

Why Subwatershed Management Groups?

As a basis for restoration planning and creation of criteria for project prioritization and selection for watershed restoration planning and project design, we propose to organize a New Watershed Group to help compile the information required to outline a comprehensive Napa River Watershed Restoration and Management Plan. To ensure thorough spatial representation of constituents and issues across the overall watershed, we propose to facilitate the formation of several smaller volunteer stewardship groups, and recruit group representatives with expertise to focus on more geographically specific resource management issues. The subdivision of the Napa River New Watershed Group into Subwatershed Groups according to tributary, American Viticultural Area (AVA), or other management unit will facilitate targeted decision-making for watershed restoration on a consensus basis.

The coalescing of stakeholders in Subwatershed Groups allows for the creation of more targeted solutions to address local water management needs. More relevant messaging can be tailored to groups at the tributary scale based on predominant land uses, and the opportunities and constraints unique to a subwatershed. Subwatershed Groups will foster cohesion and voluntary cooperation between stakeholders and provide representation for a smaller part of the whole when addressing complex water issues in a larger watershed.

B. DEVELOPING STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS CRITICAL WATERSHED NEEDS

B.1 Critical Watershed Needs or Issues:

The Napa River watershed suffers many issues related to water quantity and quality. For instance, California enacted the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) under which the Napa Valley Subbasin was categorized as one of 46 high priority groundwater basins statewide requiring the development and implementation of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). Groundwater pumping in the subbasin averaged 17,620 acre-feet over the past seven water years while the annual sustainable yield has been determined to be 15,000 acre-feet. Agriculture is the largest user of local groundwater, and 98% of the sector's total water use comes from local groundwater extraction while the remaining 2% comes from surface water diversions from the local watershed. The watershed is listed under the Clean Water Act 303(d) for impairments to water quality due to nutrients, pathogens, and excessive sedimentation. Studies have linked declines in salmonid populations to an increase in sediment delivery and other factors including high stream temperatures and low dry season flows (Stillwater Sciences and Dietrich 2002).

These challenges have resulted in new regulations and the formation of new governance structures. For instance, the Napa County Groundwater Sustainability Agency was established to comply with SGMA's requirements on the Napa Valley Subbasin, and the agency recently adopted three workplans to guide the implementation of the Napa Valley GSP over the next 20 years. The Napa Valley Subbasin GSP has among its goals a reduction in pumping from the subbasin by 10%. Additionally, a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for sediment was developed in 2009, and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (SFRWQCB) adopted a water quality control permit (General Permit) for vineyard properties in the Napa River watershed. The SFRWQCB's General Permit requires implementation of best management practices to control sediment discharge and storm runoff increases generated from farms and unpaved roads, and actions to control discharge of pesticides and nutrients.

Climate change has only exacerbated the stress on the watershed. Over the past seven years, Napa Valley has experienced three record-breaking temperature spikes (2017: 112°F, 2020: 114°F, 2022: 116°F) and associated increases in Vapor Pressure Deficits (VPD). The growing temperature-induced VPD is at the nexus of increasing climate stress on stream systems, forests, and agricultural lands. Ten years of rapidly intensifying drought and more extreme weather have greatly impacted the ability of salmon to spawn and rear in the Napa River watershed. Increasing VPD "accounted for nearly all the growth in California forest fires from 1972-2018" (Columbia University, American Geophysical Union, Earth's Future Journal, July 2019). Since 2017, 60% of Napa County's area has been touched by wildfire. Crop losses are another unfortunate result. Representative of other Napa Valley growers, in 2022, Dominus lost all its grapes due to extreme heat.

B.2 Project Benefits:

Regulatory bodies and processes are critical, but they are not enough to achieve substantial and durable sustainable water management outcomes under changing climate conditions. Regulatory efforts can be complemented by nonregulatory ones which bolster open and continuous dialogue within the community to explore issues and solutions and accelerate experimentation and adoption of new monitoring and management practices. While Napa County has had successful grassroots watershed groups in the past, including eleven that were coordinated by NCRCD, no such body currently exists.

The New Watershed Group will support the identification key constituent issues, compile, organize, and assess existing restoration projects and water resource management studies, gather current and historical geospatial data, and perform a data gap analysis. This project will culminate in the development of a framework for what a Napa River Watershed Management Plan should include to facilitate improved water resource management actions for multiple ecological and economic benefits focusing on voluntary action. The work of the New Watershed Group will help inform existing governmental bodies and regulatory processes, as there will be touchpoints along the way. With a New Watershed Group in place, Napa County's community will be prepared to develop a Napa River Watershed Management Plan using future funding.

A Focus on Multiple Benefits:

There are diverse stakeholders in the Napa River watershed that rely on sustainably managed water resources. We intend to collaborate with all stakeholders to develop a whole systems approach to hydrate soils, infiltrate surface runoff, and recharge groundwater to create self-regenerating ecological systems. Since agriculture is a dominant land use in the watershed, we will research and promote affordable, effective, nature-based solutions for improving soil structure and health, water holding capacity, organic matter & biological activity. Where forests are being actively managed to reduce wildfire risk, we will work with land managers, environmental organizations, tribes, and others to explore means of increasing soil moisture and recharge, reducing evapotranspiration, restoring habitat, and actively reducing hazardous fuel loads.

C. READINESS TO PROCEED:

NCRCD and Abuelitos have been coordinating for a year prior to this grant opportunity to organize a nascent coalition of interested parties into a New Watershed Group and seek funding for its continued functioning. Abuelitos engaged NCRCD early in this coordination process because NCRCD is regarded as a nonregulatory, trusted broker that follows the best available science and works collaboratively with local residents and partner organizations to deliver watershed protection outcomes.

NCRCD has the organizational infrastructure, experience and staff to manage the grant, and the institutional connections to facilitate stakeholder participation and stewardship actions. Approximately 90% of NCRCD's funding comes from grants and contracts, including federal grants from NOAA Fisheries, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and US Forest Service. NCRCD has a team of 15 conservation scientists, educators, and outreach and administrative professionals, and is co-located with the county field office of the USDA NRCS. NCRCD is adept at working with others, from partnering organizations to specialized consultants, to leverage collective strengths in pursuit of shared goals.

Since 2023, to move the ad hoc stakeholder convenings forward into a more formalized vehicle for facilitating stakeholder and government dialogue, the Abuelitos Foundation has invested private funds to: hire an inaugural Executive Director; raise seed funding; formalize a mission, vision, and charter; establish an online platform to provide an effective means of communicating with stakeholders; conduct and science experiments and collect studies to inform climate smart land management practices; convene land managers to implement voluntary watershed restoration demonstration projects; conduct outreach to share discoveries and offer learning opportunities to private and public partners; and provide resources to facilitate proactive adoption of land management and watershed stewardship actions to restore the watershed ecosystem, manage water resources, and stabilize the climate. Gretchen Hayes, the Executive Director of the Abuelitos Foundation, has 20 years of experience facilitating private-public partnerships in Napa County to manage resources for the benefit of the environment and local economy. Ms. Hayes is bringing to this role the expertise and relationships she developed working as a partner with the NCRCD; representing 30 landowners and hundreds of stakeholders as the Landowner Liaison and Restoration Effectiveness Monitoring Program Manager for the Napa River Rutherford Reach Restoration Project from 2009-2015; as the founder of the Native Northern California Black Walnut Conservation Partnership formed to resolve the conservation status of this venerable species; and as the inaugural Executive Director of the Napa Communities Firewise Foundation where she oversaw the formation of over 20 voluntary neighborhood Fire Safe Councils throughout Napa County and managed a \$20 million annual grant portfolio.

Table 2. Project Schedule & Milestones.

Task	Description	2025	2026				2027				2028		
		Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
1.0	Grant Management and Administration												
1.1	Contracting												
1.2	Invoicing (Monthly)												
1.3	Quarterly Progress Reports												
1.4	Draft and Final Progress Reports												
1.5	Project Team Meetings												
2.0	New Watershed Group Development												
2.1	Hire a Watershed Group Coordinator												
2.2	Establish New Watershed Group												
2.2.1	Identify Constituencies & Recruit Volunteer Representatives												
2.2.2	Build Coalitions & Establish Tributary Watershed Stewardship Subgroups												
2.2.3	Draft Cooperative Agreements												
2.3	Conduct Outreach & Invite Participation												
2.3.1	Write a Communication Outreach Plan to Reach and Recruit Constituents												
2.3.2	Develop Website and Social Media Content												
2.3.3	Develop Informational Materials												
2.3.4	Design and Deliver Educational Events (e.g., 2026 Napa County Watershed Symposium)												
2.4	Pre-Planning Activities												
2.4.1	Collect, Organize, and Assess Existing Studies & Initiatives												
2.4.2	Collect, Organize, and Assess Existing Monitoring Activities												

2.4.3	Collect, Organize, and Assess Existing Watershed Restoration Projects												
2.4.4	Hold Watershed Group Meetings & Conduct Surveys to Gather Input from Stakeholders on Needs, Opportunities, and Priorities												
2.4.5	Presentations and Discussions with the Napa County Watershed Information and Conservation Council and Groundwater Sustainability Agency												
2.4.6	Perform a Gaps Analysis												
2.5	Outline Watershed Restoration Plan												
2.5.1	Define Goals												
2.5.2	Describe Possible Actions												
2.5.3	Explore Prioritization Frameworks												
2.5.4	Explore Potential Funding Sources for Planning												

Table 3. Summary of Non-Federal and Federal Funding Sources.

Funding Sources	Amount
Non-Federal Entities	\$0.00
Requested Reclamation Funding	\$300,000

We will be actively seeking matching funds for this effort, but have none currently committed.

D. PRESIDENTIAL AND DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR PRIORITIES:

D.1 Climate Change

NCRCDD's Board of Directors adopted a climate emergency declaration in 2022 containing five directives which are fully integrated into its newly adopted five-year strategic plan. Two of these directives form a core reason why NCRCDD has an interest in supporting the development of a New Watershed Group in partnership with Abuelitos: (1) support and provide outreach and education to accelerate broad-based adoption and implementation of the regional climate action plan; and (2) secure financial support for climate-related programs, including those that serve communities disproportionately affected by climate change.

NCRCDD has been deeply involved in developing and delivering science-based programming and advisory functions to support greater climate resiliency and will employ this experience in the development of a New Watershed Group. For instance, NCRCDD developed the first carbon farm plan for vineyard property, was a founding member of the North Coast Soil Hub (<https://soilhub.org/>) to build soil health and agricultural resilience across six counties, and through these activities helped to inform the USDA-NRCS and California Department of Food and Agriculture climate-friendly agriculture related financial and technical assistance programs. NCRCDD is also supporting the Napa County Climate Action Committee with developing the first multi-jurisdictional Regional Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.

D.2 Benefits to Disadvantaged, Underserved, and Tribal Communities

NCRCDD has been developing partnerships with tribes and nonprofits that represent tribal members to enhance input by native community members in local restoration efforts on private lands and identify opportunities for development of tribal beneficial uses at project sites. For instance, NCRCDD received design input from tribes on a fish passage improvement project at Sulphur Creek, an important salmon-bearing stream in the Napa River watershed, and is launching a Technical & Cultural Work Group including tribal representation in a NOAA-funded initiative to improve fish passage throughout the Napa River watershed.

Although there are no state or federally recognized tribal lands in Napa County, the Mishewal-Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley, Guidiville Indian Rancheria, Kletsel Dehe Band of Wintun Indians, Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, and Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation all have ancestral territory in the Napa River watershed. NCRCDD staff have been receiving training on how to better engage with local indigenous communities from three nonprofits and will integrate this learning into the watershed group development process: Suscol Intertribal Council, Movimiento Cultural de la Unión Indígena (MCUI), and Redbud Resource Group.

NCRCD has also worked with many socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in Napa County and supports other resource conservation districts in doing so throughout the region. Most farmworkers in Napa County are Hispanic, and NCRCD has provided access to many services targeted to this demographic by offering assistance in Spanish through various platforms such as presentations and one-on-one field assistance. Currently, three technical and outreach NCRCD staff members are fully bilingual in Spanish and English. To reach this demographic NCRCD works closely with the Napa Valley Farmworker Foundation, which has a large contact list of Hispanic farmworkers and owners interested in services. NCRCD also does direct outreach to vineyard management companies.

Spanish-speaking farmworkers are often at the frontline of climate change related challenges. For instance, with larger and more frequent wildfires, farmworkers are more frequently exposed to hazardous conditions associated with wildfire including smoke impacts and needing to continue work in evacuated zones during critical farm management periods like harvest. Excessive heat also disproportionately impacts farmworkers. Farmworkers are also at the frontline of water management, and they are an important demographic to engage to understand changing watershed conditions and identify opportunities for implementing improved management practices. These could include enhanced irrigation water use efficiency, capturing and infiltrating stormwater during the wet season for groundwater recharge, and restoring habitat on farm properties.

Napa County Resource Conservation District (NCRCD) is the Lead Applicant and will contract to hire a New Watershed Coordinator. NCRCD will continue to work closely with Abuelitos to formalize a new Napa River Watershed Group and any applicable Watershed Stewardship Subgroups for site specific restoration project planning, design and implementation projects. The New Watershed Coordinator will facilitate data gathering and communication among a coalition of diverse stakeholders addressing water resource security and management actions throughout the Napa River watershed. This effort will identify key constituent issues, organize and assess existing restoration projects and water resource management studies, gather current and historical geospatial data, and perform a data gap analysis. This New Watershed Group effort will culminate in the development of a framework for what a Napa River Watershed Restoration and Management Plan should include to facilitate improved water resource management actions for multiple ecological and economic benefits. Project outputs will be shared with the Napa Watershed Information and Conservation Council (WICC), an advisory body to the Napa County Board of Supervisors. The WICC's website (<https://www.napawatersheds.org/>) serves as an important clearing house for local watershed information.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Indigenous Tribes

- Suscol Intertribal Council

Private Industry and Residents

- Cain Vineyards and Winery
- Element 28 Vineyard
- Hope Well Vineyards
- Moffit Family
- Opus One Vineyards
- Richard Mendelson
- Ruetd

Non-Profit Organizations

- Abuelitos Foundation
- Land Trust of Napa County
- Mennen Environmental Foundation
- Napa Climate NOW!
- The Napa Communities Firewise Foundation (Napa Firewise)
- Napa Green
- Napa Valley Vintners
- Napa Vision 2050
- Oakville Winegrowers
- Save Napa Valley Foundation

Local Governments

- City of Napa
- Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
- Napa County Planning Department

Elected State and Federal Representatives

- United States Congressman Mike Thompson
- California Senator Bill Dodd
- California Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry



Suscol Intertribal Council
PO Box 5386
Napa, CA 94581 suscol@suscol.net

August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Suscol Intertribal Council to express our support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”**

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County’s residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county’s significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically based action plans for watershed improvement.

The Suscol Intertribal Council supports the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them.

page 1of2

The Vision of Suscol Intertribal Council is preservation of Native American culture. Also, to develop and maintain Native American "Suscol House" in Chiles-Pope Valley and advocate Human Rights for Indigenous peoples.



Suscol Intertribal Council
PO Box 5386
Napa, CA 94581 suscol@suscol.net

Page 2 of 2

As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos). Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium. Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a range of stakeholders to explore issues and needs related to water management and restoration. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California”** Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

Charlie Toledo, Executive Director
Suscol Intertribal Council
P.O. Box 5386 Napa, CA 94558 suscol@suscol.net www.suscolcouncil.org

The Vision of Suscol Intertribal Council is preservation of Native American culture. Also, to develop and maintain Native American "Suscol House" in Chiles-Pope Valley and advocate Human Rights for Indigenous peoples.



29 August 2024

Letter of Support for the Napa Resource Conservation District and Abuelitos Foundation
Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed
Management Program Grant Phase 1

To Whom It May Concern:

We support the ABUELITOS Foundation's application to the 2024 PGE Better Together Nature Positive Innovation Planning Grant for the Hopper Creek Watershed Planning Model for Land and Water Stewardship in Napa Valley.

I am writing on behalf of Cain Vineyard & Winery to express our wholehearted support for the Napa Resource Conservation District application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant.

The Napa Resource Conservation District, in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation, and Napa County, aims to develop a comprehensive multi-benefit Napa River Watershed Ecosystem Restoration Plan. This initiative brings together diverse stakeholders, creates local tributary watershed stewardship groups, and works with a Technical Advisory Group to conduct essential pre-planning activities to lay the groundwork for the creation of a comprehensive Plan to identify, prioritize, and implement projects to manage water resources and enhance long-term ecosystem health throughout the watershed.

Since 1991, now more than three decades, at Cain Vineyard & Winery, we have worked toward caring for our watershed. Cain Vineyard, on the crest of the Mayacamas, sits at the headwaters of both Santa Rosa Creek in Sonoma County and Sulphur Creek in Napa County. It is a place of exquisite ecological diversity and beauty and also highly sensitive to environmental damage and needs constant protection. We believe that the health of the watershed is essential to the health of both our community and our vineyard.

Throughout the years, we have worked on numerous projects directed toward protecting and improving our watershed, including the creation of the Sulphur Creek Task Force to assess, identify problems and remediate conditions in our watershed. We believe that the work done on Sulphur Creek presents an excellent starting point from which to build additional stewardship groups. Also, Cain initiated a Road Improvement project to control and reduce erosion and sediment delivery to the watershed. Both of these projects were accomplished through the active help and collaboration of our Napa County RCD.

Thank you for considering the ABUELITOS Foundation's grant application. We look forward to the positive impact it will undoubtedly have on our shared environmental and social landscapes.

Christopher Howell
Wine-Grower

Element 28
1730 Conn Valley Road
St. Helena California 94574

August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

We are writing on behalf of Element 28 to express our strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”** We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos).

Our organization is deeply invested in this project’s goals, as they align seamlessly with our mission. One of our main objectives at Element 28 is to restore our eroding ephemeral and singular blue line stream by developing water retention structures. By slowing the flow of water, it is our goal to strengthen our watershed. In strengthening the watershed, it will allow us to promote a healthier, self-sustaining and diverse habitat especially throughout the hotter months of the year. Within the next three years, we will have a native habitat reintroduction on Element 28 by planting nearly a mile of over thirty different native plants throughout the property. By creating a sustainable watershed, this collaborative management effort has the potential to harness the collective power and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, in designing a stewardship model that fosters resilience across multiple domains. By contributing our expertise and resources, we are committed to ensuring the success of this cooperative endeavor to steward resources throughout the Napa River watershed.

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County’s residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county’s significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their

watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically-based action plans for watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

Element 28 supports the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium.

Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to identify issues and needs related to watershed ecosystem management and restoration on and around farmlands. Abuelitos is exploring cost effective nature-based land management solutions to more effectively manage water resources and address climate stress on crops and the environment. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California”** Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

Erik Nickel, Michael Loftis and the Element 28 Team

Element 28
PO Box 543
Napa, California 94559
(707) 486-8937



August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Hope Well Wine and Benchgraft Consulting to express my strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”** We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos).

I am a winegrower and a consultant in agroecology and regenerative farming. I work with ranchers, winegrowers, and farmers of all kind to employ holistic ecological frameworks to the lands in their care. I am personally and professionally deeply invested in this project’s goals, as they are fully aligned with a vision for the future that I work towards myself and with clients every day. This collaborative watershed management effort has the potential to harness the collective power and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, in designing a stewardship model that fosters resilience across multiple domains. By contributing our expertise and resources, we are committed to ensuring the success of this cooperative endeavor to steward resources throughout the Napa River watershed.

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County’s residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county’s significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically-based action plans for

watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

Hope Well Wine and Benchgraft Consulting support the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium.

Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to identify issues and needs related to watershed ecosystem management and restoration on and around farmlands. Abuelitos is exploring cost effective nature-based land management solutions to more effectively manage water resources and address climate stress on crops and the environment. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California”** Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

Mimi Casteel
Owner, Hope Well Wine
Agroecology and Regenerative Methodology Mentor, Benchgraft Consulting LLC



August 27, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Land Trust of Napa County to express our support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”**

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County’s residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county’s significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically-based action plans for watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

Land Trust of Napa County supports the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos). Since 1945, Napa RCD has





provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium. Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a range of stakeholders to explore issues and needs related to water management and restoration. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California”** Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

Mike Palladini

box SIGN

4P12Q9YY-13V3Z9JZ

Mike Palladini
Stewardship Director
Land Trust of Napa County



August 30, 2024

Dr. Elizabeth Moffitt, David R. Moffitt
7311 & 7323 St. Helena Highway
Yountville, CA
Dave.moffitt@sbcglobal.net
(707) 339-1152

Subject: Letter of Support for the Napa Resource Conservation District and Abuelitos Foundation Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing on behalf of my sister and myself to express our strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District's (Napa RCD's) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1**.

Our parcels jointly hold approximately 140 acres or watershed near the headwaters of Hopper Creek, a seasonal stream in Napa County.

We believe that this grant opportunity will enable the organization of a coalition of community, state, and federal partners, including ourselves, and equip them with the necessary support and resources to enable an initiative focused on ecological stewardship and water sustainability throughout the Napa Valley.

The Napa Resource Conservation District (NRCD), in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos), and Napa County, aims to develop a comprehensive multi-benefit Napa River Watershed Ecosystem Restoration Plan (Plan). This initiative brings together diverse stakeholders, creates local tributary watershed stewardship groups, and works with a Technical Advisory Group to conduct essential pre-planning activities to lay the groundwork for the creation of a comprehensive Plan to identify, prioritize, and implement projects to manage water resources and enhance long-term ecosystem health throughout the watershed.

The project aims to assess data needs and current planning initiatives; increase public engagement and representation; enhance stakeholder collaboration; develop a framework for creating a detailed restoration plan to address water resource security and ecosystem management challenges; and ensure the long-term vitality of the Napa River Basin. A Watershed Symposium will be held in 2026 as a key means of bringing together the community and galvanizing ongoing collective action.

This initiative will complement ongoing community efforts to combat aridification, enhance soil moisture holding capacity, increase stormwater infiltration, recharge groundwater, and

enhance ecological stream flows, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more resilient Napa River watershed ecosystem. By addressing water resource security and ecosystem management challenges, this project aims to ensure the long-term vitality of the Napa River Basin for both the environment and the local community.

We are invested in this project's goals, as they align with our ongoing efforts within the watershed. By contributing our expertise and resources, we are committed to ensuring the success of this initiative and facilitating the adoption of best management practices beyond the initial project scope.

We stand united with numerous organizations in endorsing this application and are eager to play an active role in its execution, as well as in the outreach and educational endeavors aimed at scaling these practices for broader community engagement.

This collaborative effort has the potential to harness the collective power and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, in designing a stewardship model that fosters resilience across multiple domains. The insights gained from this project will serve as a beacon of inspiration for other landowners and communities seeking to replicate these practices, thereby contributing to the broader goals of sustainable water management and environmental stewardship. Given Napa Valley's esteemed global reputation and visibility, the outcomes of this initiative will not only set a precedent for viticulture but also amplify the reach and impact of sustainable water resource management practices on a global scale, influencing policies and practices far beyond its borders.

Thank you for considering our endorsement of ABUELITOS Foundation's grant application. We are excited about the opportunity to contribute to this transformative endeavor and look forward to the positive impact it will undoubtedly have on our shared environmental and social landscapes.

Sincerely,

Dr. Elizabeth Moffitt, David R. Moffitt



P.O. BOX 6
OAKVILLE
CALIFORNIA 94562
707.948.2405
FAX 707.948.2497
MICHAEL SILACCI
WINEMAKER

August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California" Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee,

On behalf of Opus One Winery, I am writing to express our strong support for Napa County Resource Conservation District's (Napa RCD) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1. The proposed project, "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California," is vital to addressing the region's urgent water management challenges.

This initiative aligns seamlessly with the Globally Responsible pillar of the Opus One "2030 Vision". At the heart of our climate positive efforts lies agroecology & stewardship of the greater ecosystem that surrounds our Oakville vineyards. This presents a unique opportunity to leverage the collective expertise and resources of diverse stakeholders. By uniting the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, this project will foster a stewardship model that enhances resilience across the Napa River watershed. We are fully committed to contributing our expertise and resources to ensure the success of this collaborative effort.

Napa County's recent experiences with drought, high heat events, and floods have underscored the critical need for sustainable water management that balances human and ecological needs. The county's reliance on local surface and groundwater makes it imperative to establish a non-regulatory forum where stakeholders can come together to learn about the watershed, set goals, and develop science-based action plans. Currently, there is no such voluntary, grassroots watershed group in Napa County, despite the success of similar groups in other regions.



P.O. BOX 6
OAKVILLE
CALIFORNIA 94562
707.948.2405
FAX 707.948.2497
MICHAEL SILACCI
WINEMAKER

We believe that establishing this watershed group will significantly enhance public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. Similar groups across the country have demonstrated that such collaborative efforts can lead to an increase in watershed protection activities and attract additional funding to support these initiatives.

Napa RCD's longstanding history of providing voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and conservation support since 1945, along with its successful coordination of over eleven watershed stewardship groups since 2005, makes it the ideal organization to lead this initiative. Their experience, combined with their involvement in numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium, positions them well to coordinate this new watershed group.

Additionally, over the past year, Abuelitos Foundation has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to explore nature-based land management solutions to better manage water resources and address climate-related stress on farmlands. This effort revealed a clear need for the establishment of a watershed group to drive grassroots action and enhance ecosystem management and restoration across the region.

We appreciate the opportunity to support the "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California" project. We have full confidence in Napa RCD and Abuelitos Foundation's ability to successfully carry out this critical initiative in collaboration with other Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

Michael Silacci
Winemaker
Opus One Winery

Mendelson

2995 Silverado Trail, Napa, CA 94558

August 29, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing to express our strong support for the application of Napa County Resource Conservation District (“Napa RCD”) to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1. The proposed project, “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California,” is vital to addressing the region’s urgent water management challenges.

This initiative aligns seamlessly with the proposals that I present in my recently published book, *Common Ground: Charting the Future of Napa Valley* (Val de Grace 2024), and presents a unique opportunity to leverage the collective expertise and resources of diverse stakeholders. By uniting the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, this project will foster a stewardship model that enhances resilience across the Napa River watershed. We are fully committed to contributing our expertise and resources to ensure the success of this collaborative effort.

Napa County’s recent experiences with drought, high heat events, and floods have underscored the critical need for sustainable water management that balances human and ecological needs. The county’s reliance on local surface and groundwater makes it imperative to establish a non-regulatory forum where stakeholders can come together to learn about the watershed, set goals, and develop science-based action plans. Currently, there is no such voluntary, grassroots watershed group in Napa County, despite the success of similar groups in other regions.

Bureau of Reclamation
August 29, 2024
Page Two


I believe that establishing this watershed group will significantly enhance public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. Similar groups across the country have demonstrated that such collaborative efforts can lead to an increase in watershed protection activities and attract additional funding to support these initiatives.

Napa RCD's longstanding history of providing voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and conservation support since 1945, along with its successful coordination of over 11 watershed stewardship groups since 2005, make it the ideal organization to lead this initiative. Their experience, combined with their involvement in numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium, position them well to coordinate this new watershed group.

Additionally, over the past year, Abuelitos Foundation has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to explore nature-based land management solutions to better manage water resources and address climate-related stress on farmlands. This effort revealed a clear need for the establishment of a watershed group to drive grassroots action and enhance ecosystem management and restoration across the region.

I appreciate the opportunity to support the "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California" project. I have full confidence in Napa RCD's and Abuelitos Foundation's ability to successfully carry out this critical initiative in collaboration with other Napa County partners.

Sincerely,



Richard Mendelson



August 29, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Ruetd to express our strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”** We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos).

Our organization is deeply invested in this project’s goals, as they align seamlessly with our mission. Ruetd provides the wine industry with integrated digital tools that support sustainability in Napa Valley.

Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to identify issues and needs related to watershed ecosystem management and restoration on and around farmlands. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

This collaborative watershed management effort has the potential to harness the collective power and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, in designing a stewardship model that fosters resilience across multiple domains. By contributing our expertise and resources, we are committed to ensuring the success of this cooperative endeavor to steward resources throughout the Napa River watershed.

As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.



We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California”** Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

Sarah Ferguson
CEO
Ruetd

August 26, 2024

Abuelitos Foundation
Tod Mostero, President
29 Lynn Drive
Napa, CA 94558
707-266-6433
TodMostero@AbuelitosFoundation.org

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225
Attn: NOFO Team

RE: Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application

Dear Grant Review Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Abuelitos Foundation to express our strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District's (Napa RCD) application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation's **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1**. The project, “**Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California,**” is crucial for our shared vision of sustainable water and resource management in the region.

At Abuelitos, our mission is to restore every farm into a vital ecosystem for the benefit of current and future generations. This project aligns perfectly with our goals, particularly in advancing a whole-of-watershed approach to environmental health. We are committed to contributing our expertise in the agricultural community to ensure the success of this initiative, which will foster the stewardship of resources throughout the Napa River watershed.

Napa County's challenges with drought, high heat events, and floods highlight the urgent need for sustainable water management. The county's reliance on local surface and groundwater makes it essential to establish a non-regulatory forum where diverse stakeholders can collaborate, identify goals, and develop science-based action plans. Currently, there is no voluntary, grassroots watershed group in Napa County, despite the success of similar groups in the past.

We believe that the establishment of this watershed group will invigorate public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. By bringing together stakeholders from the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, this group will create collaborative solutions to the watershed's challenges. Successful examples from other regions demonstrate that such a group can significantly increase the number of protection activities and the funding available to support them.

Napa RCD's longstanding history of providing technical assistance, education, and conservation practices since 1945, along with its coordination of over eleven watershed stewardship groups, positions it well to lead this new initiative. Over the past year, Abuelitos has engaged a diverse range of stakeholders to explore nature-based land management solutions to better manage water resources and address climate-related stress on farmlands. This process underscored the need for a watershed group to catalyze grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to support this important project and have full confidence in Napa RCD's ability, in collaboration with Abuelitos and other Napa County partners, to carry it out successfully.

Sincerely,

Tod Mostero
President
Abuelitos Foundation



August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Mennen Environmental Foundation to express our strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”** We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos).

Our organization is deeply invested in this project’s goals, as they align seamlessly with our mission.

“Saving wildlife and habitats, air to breathe and water to drink.”

This collaborative watershed management effort has the potential to harness the collective power and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, in designing a stewardship model that fosters resilience across multiple domains. By contributing our expertise and resources, we are committed to ensuring the success of this cooperative endeavor to steward resources throughout the Napa River watershed.

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County’s residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county’s significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically based

action plans for watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

The Mennen Environmental Foundation supports the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium.

Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to identify issues and needs related to watershed ecosystem management and restoration on and around farmlands. Abuelitos is exploring cost effective nature-based land management solutions to more effectively manage water resources and address climate stress on crops and the environment. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California”** Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

Laurie Claudon

Laurie Claudon
Executive Director
Mennen Environmental Foundation



August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

We are writing on behalf of Napa Climate NOW!, the 350 Bay Area climate action group in Napa County, to express our strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”** We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos).

As a community-based group focused on climate actions supported by the latest climate science, we understand the importance of restoring our watershed to provide resilience for climate change-exacerbated conditions of both drought and extreme precipitation events. This collaborative watershed management effort has the potential to harness the collective power and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, in designing a stewardship model that fosters resilience across multiple domains. By contributing our expertise and resources, we are committed to ensuring the success of this cooperative endeavor to steward resources throughout the Napa River watershed.

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County’s residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county’s significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically based action plans for watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

Napa Climate NOW! supports the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium.

Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to identify issues and needs related to watershed ecosystem management and restoration on and around farmlands. Abuelitos is exploring cost effective nature-based land management solutions to more effectively manage water resources and address climate stress on crops and the environment. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California”** Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

The Napa Climate NOW! Steering Committee:

Lynne Baker, Co-Chair

Marilyn Knight-Mendelson, Co-Chair

Chris Benz, Treasurer

Jim Wilson

Linda Brown



August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California"
Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management
Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee,

On behalf of The Napa Communities Firewise Foundation I am writing to express our strong support for Napa County Resource Conservation District's (Napa RCD) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1. The proposed project, "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California," is vital to addressing the region's urgent water management challenges.

This initiative aligns seamlessly with our mission to reduce the risk and impacts of wildfires through fire fuel reduction and community education in Napa County, and presents a unique opportunity to leverage the collective expertise and resources of diverse stakeholders. By uniting the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, this project will foster a stewardship model that enhances resilience across the Napa River watershed. We are fully committed to contributing our expertise and resources to ensure the success of this collaborative effort.

Napa County's recent experiences with drought, high heat events, and floods have underscored the critical need for sustainable water management that balances human and ecological needs. The county's reliance on local surface and groundwater makes it imperative to establish a non-regulatory forum where stakeholders can come together to learn about the watershed, set goals, and develop science-based action plans. Currently, there is no such voluntary, grassroots watershed group in Napa County, despite the success of similar groups in other regions.

We believe that establishing this watershed group will significantly enhance public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. Similar groups across the country have demonstrated that such collaborative efforts can lead to an increase in watershed protection activities and attract additional funding to support these initiatives.

Helping Our Communities be Fire Safe and Firewise

napafirewise.org | 707-345-1947 | P.O. Box 440B St. Helena CA 94574 | Tax ID #26-0147748



Napa RCD's longstanding history of providing voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and conservation support since 1945, along with its successful coordination of over eleven watershed stewardship groups since 2005, makes it the ideal organization to lead this initiative. Their experience, combined with their involvement in numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Jo

Additionally, over the past year, Abuelitos Foundation has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to explore nature-based land management solutions to better manage water resources and address climate-related stress on farmlands. This effort revealed a clear need for the establishment of a watershed group to drive grassroots action and enhance ecosystem management and restoration across the region.

We appreciate the opportunity to support the "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California" project. We have full confidence in Napa RCD and Abuelitos Foundation's ability to successfully carry out this critical initiative in collaboration with other Napa County partners.

Thank you,

Joseph Nordlinger, August 29, 2024

Joseph Nordlinger, CEO
jnordlinger@napafirewise.org
415-310-2003



Anna Brittain
Executive Director
Napa Green
952 School St. #403
Napa, CA 94559
Anna@napagreen.org
805.636.3329

August 28, 2024

Dear Grantor:

**Subject: Letter of Support for NRCD & Abuelitos application for
WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program
Grant Phase 1**

I am writing on behalf of Napa Green to express our wholehearted support for the Napa Resource Conservation District application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1.**

This grant opportunity holds immense potential to organize and convene a diverse coalition of community, state, and federal partners, including Napa Green, and equip them with the necessary support and resources to spearhead a pioneering initiative focused on ecological stewardship and water sustainability throughout the Napa Valley.

The Napa Resource Conservation District (NRCD), in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos), and Napa County, aims to develop a comprehensive multi-benefit Napa River Watershed Ecosystem Restoration Plan (Plan). This initiative brings together diverse stakeholders, creates local tributary watershed stewardship groups, and works with a Technical Advisory Group to conduct essential pre-planning activities to lay the groundwork for the creation of a comprehensive Plan to identify, prioritize, and implement projects to preserve and enhance groundwater recharge and long-term ecosystem health throughout the watershed.

The project aims to assess data needs and current planning initiatives; increase public engagement and representation; enhance stakeholder collaboration; develop a framework for creating a detailed restoration plan to address water resource security and ecosystem management challenges; and ensure the long-term vitality of the Napa River

Basin. A Watershed Symposium will be held in 2026 as a key means of bringing together the community and galvanizing ongoing collective action.

This initiative will complement ongoing community efforts to combat aridification, enhance soil moisture holding capacity, increase stormwater infiltration, recharge groundwater, and enhance ecological stream flows, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more resilient Napa River watershed ecosystem. By addressing water resource security and ecosystem management challenges, this project aims to ensure the long-term vitality of the Napa River Basin for both the environment and the local community.

Napa Green already partners with NRCD on water conservation, and has been working with Abuelitos since the inception of this effort to create a watershed coalition. We work with hundreds of Napa County growers and vintners to facilitate sustainability and climate action. Among our Six Pillars of Sustainable Winegrowing Leadership are Water Efficiency; Soil Health & Biodiversity; and Climate Action & Regenerative Agriculture. We will be closely involved in efforts to implement innovative, meaningful projects to slow, spread, and sink water for groundwater and climate resilience.

We stand united with numerous organizations in endorsing this application and are eager to play an active role in its execution, as well as in the outreach and educational endeavors aimed at scaling these practices for broader community engagement.

Thank you for considering our endorsement of ABUELITOS Foundation's grant application. We are excited about the opportunity to contribute to this transformative endeavor and look forward to the positive impact it will undoubtedly have on our shared environmental and social landscapes.

Sincerely,

Anna Brittain

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Anna', followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

Executive Director
Napa Green 501c3



napa valley vintners

August 30, 2024

Michelle Novi
Counsel & Sr. Director of Industry Relations
Napa Valley Vintners
1475 Library Lane
St. Helena, CA 94574
mnovi@napavintners.com

RE: Letter of Support for the Napa Resource Conservation District and Abuelitos Foundation Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grantor:

The Napa Valley Vintners (NVV) nonprofit trade association has been cultivating excellence since 1944 by inspiring its nearly 550 members to promote, protect and enhance the Napa Valley.

I am writing on behalf of NVV to express our support for the Napa Resource Conservation District application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1**.

This grant opportunity holds immense potential to organize and convene a diverse coalition of community, state, and federal partners, including NVV, and equip them with the necessary support and resources to spearhead a pioneering initiative focused on ecological stewardship and water sustainability throughout the Napa Valley.

The Napa Resource Conservation District (RCD), in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos), and Napa County, aims to develop a comprehensive multi-benefit Napa River Watershed Ecosystem Restoration Plan (Plan). This initiative brings together diverse stakeholders, creates local tributary watershed stewardship groups, and works with a Technical Advisory Group to conduct essential pre-planning activities to lay the groundwork for the creation of a comprehensive Plan to identify, prioritize, and implement projects to manage water resources and enhance long-term ecosystem health throughout the watershed.

The project aims to assess data needs and current planning initiatives; increase public engagement and representation; enhance stakeholder collaboration; develop a framework for creating a detailed restoration plan to address water resource security and

ecosystem management challenges; and ensure the long-term vitality of the Napa River Basin. A Watershed Symposium will be held in 2026 as a key means of bringing together the community and galvanizing ongoing collective action.

This initiative will complement ongoing community efforts to combat aridification, enhance soil moisture holding capacity, increase stormwater infiltration, recharge groundwater, and enhance ecological stream flows, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more resilient Napa River watershed ecosystem. By addressing water resource security and ecosystem management challenges, this project aims to ensure the long-term vitality of the Napa River Basin for both the environment and the local community.

Napa Valley Vintners supports this project's goals, as they align seamlessly with our mission to promote, protect and enhance the Napa Valley. NVV recognizes the importance of this plan and endorses it and the groups involved, in playing an active role in its execution, as well as in the outreach and educational endeavors aimed at scaling these practices for broader community engagement.

This collaborative effort has the potential to harness the collective power and influence of diverse stakeholders, including agricultural industry groups, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities in designing a stewardship model that fosters resilience across multiple domains. The insights gained from this project will serve as a beacon of inspiration for other landowners and communities seeking to replicate these practices, thereby contributing to the broader goals of sustainable water management and environmental stewardship.

Thank you for considering our endorsement of Napa RCD and Abuelitos Foundation's grant application. We are excited this transformative endeavor and look forward to the positive impact it will undoubtedly have on our shared environmental and social landscapes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Novi", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michelle Novi
Counsel & Sr. Director of Industry Relations
Napa Valley Vintners



August 28, 2024
Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1.

Dear Grant Review Committee:

We are writing on behalf of Napa Vision 2050 to express our strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1 for the project titled “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.” We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos).

NV2050 is deeply invested in this project’s goals, as they align seamlessly with our mission: to empower the citizens of Napa County to build a brighter future together. Our specific areas of interest include water security, land use policy, climate emergency and government transparency. The collaborative watershed management effort of Napa RCD and the Abuelitos Foundation has the potential to harness the collective power and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, in designing a stewardship model that fosters resilience across multiple domains. By contributing our expertise and resources, we are committed to ensuring the success of this cooperative endeavor to steward resources throughout the Napa River watershed.

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County’s residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county’s significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, a nonregulatory forum must exist for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically based action plans for watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

Napa Vision 2050 supports the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective power of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium.

Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to identify issues and needs related to watershed ecosystem management and restoration on and around farmlands. Abuelitos is exploring cost effective nature-based land management solutions to more effectively manage water resources and address climate stress on crops and the environment. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action. We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the “Developing a New Watershed

Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

Eve Kahn
Gary Margadant
Co-Presidents
Napa Vision 2050



*Dedicated to Exceptional
Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon*

August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Oakville Winegrowers to express our strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”** We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos).

Our organization is deeply invested in this project’s goals, as they align seamlessly with our mission to preserve and protect this very special agricultural region that is renowned throughout the world. This collaborative watershed management effort has the potential to harness the collective power and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, in designing a stewardship model that fosters resilience across multiple domains. By contributing our expertise and resources, we are committed to ensuring the success of this cooperative endeavor to steward resources throughout the Napa River watershed.

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County’s residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to



*Dedicated to Exceptional
Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon*

balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county's significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically-based action plans for watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

Oakville Winegrowers supports the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium.

Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to identify issues and needs related to watershed ecosystem management and restoration on and around farmlands. Abuelitos is exploring cost effective nature-based land management solutions to more effectively manage water resources and address climate stress on crops and the environment. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the **"Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California"** Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.



*Dedicated to Exceptional
Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Joyce Stavert'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Joyce Stavert
Executive Director
Oakville Winegrowers



Mission Statement: Protect the long-term economic and environmental viability of Napa Valley by addressing climate change through the preservation and the restoration of the natural environment and resources upon which the health of our vineyards, wineries and entire community relies.

Save Napa Valley Foundation advocates on behalf of Napa Valley, a national treasure, to assure its agriculturally based community endures into perpetuity.

August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Save Napa Valley Foundation to express our strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”** We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos).

Our organization is deeply invested in this project’s goals, as they align seamlessly with our mission.

“Protect the long-term economic and environmental viability of Napa Valley by addressing climate change through the preservation and the restoration of the natural environment and resources upon which the health of our vineyards, wineries and entire community relies. Save Napa Valley Foundation advocates on behalf of Napa Valley, a national treasure, to assure its agriculturally based community endures into perpetuity.”

This collaborative watershed management effort has the potential to harness the collective power and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, in designing a stewardship model that fosters resilience across multiple domains. By contributing our expertise and resources, we are committed to ensuring the success of this cooperative endeavor to steward resources throughout the Napa River watershed.

Save Napa Valley, 282 South White Cottage, Angwin, CA 94508

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County's residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county's significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically based action plans for watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

Save Napa Valley Foundation supports the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium.

Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a diverse range of stakeholders to identify issues and needs related to watershed ecosystem management and restoration on and around farmlands. Abuelitos is exploring cost effective nature-based land management solutions to more effectively manage water resources and address climate stress on crops and the environment. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the **"Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California"** Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

Laurie Claudon

Laurie Claudon
Board Member
Save Napa Valley Foundation



UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

WATER | ENGINEERING | SOLID WASTE

August 27, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing on behalf of City of Napa Water Division to express our support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”**

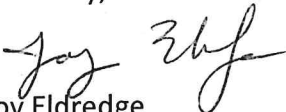
Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County’s residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county’s significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically-based action plans for watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

City of Napa Water Division supports the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos). Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium. Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a range of stakeholders to explore issues and needs related to water management and restoration. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the **“Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California”** Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,


Joy Eldredge
Deputy Utilities Director
City of Napa



Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

**RICHARD M. THOMASSER, PG
DISTRICT MANAGER**

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California" Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) to express support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District's (Napa RCD's) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1 for the "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California" project.

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County's residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county's significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is useful to have a nonregulatory forum for a diverse group of stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify conservation and restoration goals, and develop scientifically-based action plans for watershed improvement.

The District supports the establishment of a new watershed group to help facilitate public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in watersheds across the country, this watershed group could lead to positive change within the Napa River including implementation of restorative actions and the amount of funding committed to supporting these actions.

The Napa RCD has a successful track record forming and coordinate new watershed groups and their partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos) should be no exception. Since 2005, the Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or watershed areas. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium. Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a range of stakeholders to explore issues and needs related to water

management and restoration. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze and organize effective grassroots action.

The District appreciates the opportunity to offer support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Project and task the Napa RCD and Abuelitos to successfully collaborate with interested Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Sarrow
Watershed and Flood Control Operations Manager
Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
jeremy.sarrow@countyofnapa.org
Direct: (707) 259-8204



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Brian D. Bordona
Director

August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California" Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee,

I am writing on behalf of Napa County to express our support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District's (Napa RCD's) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1 for the project titled "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California."

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County's residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county's significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically-based action plans for watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

Napa County supports the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos). Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and

coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium. Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a range of stakeholders to explore issues and needs related to water management and restoration. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California" Project and affirm our faith in Napa RCD and Abuelitos successfully carrying it out in collaboration with many Napa County partners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. B. L.", with a horizontal line extending from the end.

Brian D. Bordona
Director
Planning, Building, and Environmental Services
Napa County

MIKE THOMPSON

4TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TAX POLICY

RANKING MEMBER

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

August 28th, 2024

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NAPA, CA 94558
(707) 226-9898

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(707) 542-7182

622 MAIN STREET
SUITE 106
WOOLAND, CA 95695
(530) 753-5301

CAPITOL OFFICE:
268 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3311

WEB: <http://mikethompson.house.gov>

Bureau of Reclamation

Financial Assistance Operations Section

Attn: NOFO Team

P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133

Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District’s (Napa RCD’s) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation’s WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1 for the project titled “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California.”

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County’s residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county’s significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically based action plans for watershed improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

As the Congressman proudly representing the Napa Resource Conservation District and Napa County, the establishment of a watershed group will facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, I firmly believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

I trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos). Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical

Bureau of Reclamation, Grant Review Committee

August 28th, 2024

Page 2

assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium. Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a range of stakeholders to explore issues and needs related to water management and restoration. A key outcome was the call for the establishment of a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

I respectfully request that the Bureau of Reclamation Grant Review Committee approve full funding of the Napa County Resource Conservation District's 2024 Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1 application.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If I can be of any question regarding this outstanding applicant, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" and last name "Thompson" clearly distinguishable.

MIKE THOMPSON

Member of Congress

CC; plbo

STATE CAPITOL
PO BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249
Ph (916) 651-4003
Fax (916) 651-4903



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CHAIR: SENATE GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

August 27th, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the "Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California" WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

I am writing to express our support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District's (Napa RCD's) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation's **WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1** for the project titled **"Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California."** Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County's residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county's significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, it is important that a nonregulatory forum exists for diverse stakeholders to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically-based action plans for watershed improvement.

I support the establishment of a watershed group to facilitate renewed public involvement in protecting the Napa River watershed. The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and come up with collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, we believe that this watershed group will ultimately have a positive impact on the number of watershed protection activities.

We trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos). Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. An over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a range of stakeholders to explore issues and needs related to water management and restoration. We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support for the **"Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California"**

Sincerely,

BILL DODD
Senator, 3rd District

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0004
(916) 319-2004

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August 28, 2024

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Letter of Support for the “Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California” Grant Application for the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1

Dear Grant Review Committee:

As the State Assemblymember for the fourth district representing the County of Napa, I am writing to express my strong support for the Napa County Resource Conservation District's (Napa RCD) application to the 2024 Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant Phase 1 for the Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California Project.

Having faced the extremes of drought, high heat events, and floods, Napa County's residents understand the importance of long-term sustainable water management to balance human and ecological water needs. Given the county's significant reliance on local surface and groundwater, diverse stakeholders must have a nonregulatory forum to learn about their watershed, identify goals, and develop scientifically-based action plans for improvement. No such voluntary, grassroots watershed group currently exists in Napa County, although there have been successful groups in the past.

The watershed group will harness the collective creativity and influence of diverse stakeholders, including the wine industry, community groups, natural resource agencies, and indigenous communities, to identify problems and develop collaborative plans to address them. As has been demonstrated in many watersheds across the country, this watershed group will ultimately positively impact the

number of watershed protection activities and the amount of funding committed to supporting these activities in the Napa River watershed.

Since 1945, Napa RCD has provided voluntary technical assistance, educational programs, and monitoring programs to assist land managers with implementing conservation practices throughout Napa County. Since 2005, Napa RCD has helped to establish and coordinate over eleven watershed stewardship groups organized around particular streams or areas of the watershed. Napa RCD has also contributed to numerous watershed education programs, including the biennial Napa County Watershed Symposium. Over the past year, Abuelitos has convened a range of stakeholders to explore issues and needs related to water management and restoration. A key outcome was the call for establishing a watershed group to catalyze effective grassroots action.

I trust Napa RCD to successfully form and coordinate this new watershed group in partnership with the nonprofit Abuelitos Foundation (Abuelitos). For the above reasons, I strongly support Napa RCD's request to apply for the Developing a New Watershed Group in the Napa River Watershed of California Project. Thank you in advance for considering this request and supporting this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cecilia Aguiar-Curry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cecilia" being more prominent and the last name "Aguiar-Curry" following in a similar style.

CECILIA AGUIAR-CURRY

Assembly Majority Leader

Assemblymember, Fourth District