



**Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District
Board of Directors Meeting - Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 1:00 pm PST**

Remote Attendance Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82922778261>

In Person Meeting Locations:

West Business Development Center - (707) 964-7571
345 N Franklin Street, **Fort Bragg**, CA 95437

and

Black Oak Coffee Roasters - (866) 390-1427
476 North State Street, **Ukiah**, CA 95482

and

Sonoma County Economic Development Board - (707) 565-7170
141 Stony Circle, Suite 110, **Santa Rosa**, CA 95401



AGENDA
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and
Sonoma County Economic Development Board - (707) 565-7170
141 Stony Circle, Suite 110, **Santa Rosa**, CA 95401

CALL TO ORDER by Robin Bartholow, Chairperson

ROLL CALL by Norma Alley

- Chairperson Robin Bartholow
- Vice Chairperson Paul Garza
- Board Member Lisa Badenfort
- Board Member Jon Frech
- Board Member Jeff Kelly
- Board Member Mary Anne Petrillo

AGENDA CHANGES AND DELETIONS - To Current Agenda Only

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

PUBLIC COMMENT - Open time for Public Expression

Time reserved for members of the public to speak on matters not otherwise appearing on the agenda.

CEREMONIAL MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION - Action Item

Presentation

- Item 1** Resolution Recognizing Mary Anne Petrillo for her service as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District during the period October 16, 2021, to June 30, 2023

CONSENT CALENDAR

Matters listed under the Consent Calendar are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion and one vote. Unless otherwise requested by a Board Member, there will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Calendar and will be considered separately.

There will be one opportunity for public comment on all consent items. Comments are limited to 3 minutes each, and the Chairperson may limit this time if reasonable under the circumstances.

Item 2 Approval of Check Register as of August 31, 2023

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION - Action Items

- Item 3** Discussion and Consideration of the SMEDD Board of Directors' Role and Participation in the Recruitment of new SMEDD Board Members from the County of Mendocino and the County of Sonoma, and Consideration of Adoption of a Resolution Making a SMEDD Board Recommendation or Position Known
- Item 4** Consideration of a Sanitary Collection System Improvement in the City of Santa Rosa and Authorization to Engage in a Partnered Grant Application to the U.S. Economic Development Administration's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Program
- Item 5** Authorize Letters of Support for Regenerative Forest Solutions for Several Grant Proposals to Extend Impact of Successfully-Awarded North Coast Resource Partnership Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Project Proposal
- Item 6** Consideration of Scheduling the November Board Meeting on Friday, November 10, 2023, instead of Friday, November 17, 2023

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT UPDATES

Business Friendly Communities Status Report: the Business Friendly Communities Survey Tool for City and County Distribution **Webinar on September 28, 2023**

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office for Coastal Management's Climate Resilience Regional Challenge Grant Program Letter of Intent Submittal and Next Steps

FY 23-24 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update Process Report

Letters of Support

Issued:

- Mendocino Forest Products, CalFire Biomass-to-Hydrogen Grant Application, Submitted 9/15/2023
- West Business Development Center, CalOSBA Blue Economy iHub, Submitted 8/31/2023
- Regenerative Forest Solutions, NCRP Woody FeedStock Pilot Project, Submitted 8/9/2023
- Sonoma County Meat Company, USDA Local Meat Capacity grant, Submitted 6/21/2023

EDA Supplemental Work Plan Status & Budget Update

- Work Plan Almost Complete; Final Report in November; Now Operating on Planning Grant Budget
 - EDA Supplemental Grant extension was granted to June 30, 2024
 - Estimated EDA Planning Grant and Supplemental Grant Funds Remaining

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Blue Economy - NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge
 - Letter of Intent Deadline: August 28, 2023 (Submitted)
 - Full application due: February 13, 2024

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS OR COMMENTS

Time reserved for members of the Board to report on AdHoc Committee activities and to speak on matters not otherwise appearing on the agenda. No Actions.

UPCOMING EVENTS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST - not necessarily SMEDD connected
September 28, 2023 Business Friendly Communities Webinar on September 28, 2023

ADJOURNMENT by Robin Batholow, Chairperson

For a copy of Board Packet materials, please visit smedd.org or email Abigail Scott (abigail@smedd.org).

Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development Board of Directors Resolution
Expressing Appreciation for Mary Anne Petrillo's Service as Board Chair

October 16, 2021 - June 30, 2023

WHEREAS, Mary Anne Petrillo has diligently served as the Chair of the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development Board of Directors from October 16, 2021, through June 30, 2023, demonstrating exceptional leadership, dedication, and unwavering commitment to the betterment of our district;

WHEREAS, during her tenure as Chair, Mary Anne Petrillo has shown exemplary leadership qualities that have greatly contributed to the success and progress of the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development Board, ensuring its continued effectiveness;

WHEREAS, Mary Anne Petrillo has forged productive cross-jurisdictional partnerships that have substantially improved the lives of residents and visitors within our region, fostering collaboration and synergy among stakeholders for the greater good;

WHEREAS, under Mary Anne Petrillo's visionary guidance, the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development Board has successfully completed an EDA-approved 2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, paving the way for strategic growth and sustainable development;

WHEREAS, Mary Anne Petrillo's dedicated efforts with SMEDD Board Members led to the securement of fiscal compliance for the District, thereby ensuring the financial stability and sustainability required for future growth and prosperity;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development Board of Directors hereby expresses its deepest appreciation and gratitude to Mary Anne Petrillo for her outstanding leadership, tireless dedication, and significant contributions during her tenure as Chair;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be presented to Mary Anne Petrillo as a token of our heartfelt appreciation and recognition of her exemplary service;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be permanently recorded in the official records of the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development Board of Directors, and shared with our stakeholders and the broader community to celebrate the achievements and legacy of Mary Anne Petrillo.

DATED this 26th day of September, 2023.

[Signature of Board Chair]

Board Chair, Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development Board

****[Signature of Executive Director]****

District Manager, Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development Board



SONOMA MENDOCINO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
Check Register
Checks Issued Through August 31, 2023

Transmittal on September 26, 2023, to the Board of Directors at their Board Meeting

Check No.	Amount	Check Date	Paid to (Payee)	Description
1300	\$2,956.50	1/4/2023	William Adams; Johnson and Thomas LLC	Legal Services
1301	\$28,280.22	1/4/2023	US Dept of Commerce / NOAA	Reimbursement to Grantor (EDA) of unexpended Partnership Planning grant funds: Grant No. ED17SEA3020055; Period 7/1/2017 - 6/30/2022
1302	\$20.00	3/1/2023	Streamline	Web Service
1303	\$28,303.55	3/17/2023	County of Sonoma	Sonoma County staff reimbursement for services for Partnership Planning grant funds: Grant No. ED17SEA3020055; Period 7/1/2017 - 6/30/2022
1304	\$225.00	3/17/2023	Marie Jones Consulting	Provided CEDS Project Prioritization Services
1305	\$6,786.95	7/12/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA EDA Grant Projects December 2022
1306	\$8,426.75	7/12/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects January 2023
1307	\$10,000.00	8/11/2023	AgInnovations	Ag Innovation Hub Brainstorming Workshop 5.30.2023
1308	\$12,893.95	8/11/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects FEBRUARY 2023 Planning Grant
	\$29,172.25	8/11/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects FEBRUARY 2023 Supplemental Grant
1309	\$4,900.00	8/11/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects MARCH 2023 Planning Grant
	\$38,390.00	8/11/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects MARCH 2023 Supplemental Grant
1310	\$9,302.00	8/11/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects APRIL Planning Grant
	\$28,543.45	8/11/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects APRIL Supplemental Grant
1311	\$9,155.75	8/11/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects MAY Planning Grant
	\$19,027.50	8/11/2023	Regional Government Services	Professional Services - Administration; CEDS; EDA Grant Projects MAY Supplemental Grant



DATE: September 26, 2023

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Brad Johnson, Sonoma County Economic Development Board, Management Analyst
Xuyen Mallela, Mendocino County, Principal Administrative Analyst

SUBJECT: Discussion and Consideration of the SMEDD Board of Directors' Role and Participation in the Recruitment of new SMEDD Board Members from the County of Mendocino and the County of Sonoma, and Consideration of Resolution

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

The purpose of this item is to update the Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) Board of Directors on the status of Board recruitment efforts in Mendocino and Sonoma counties, provide an update on County processes, respective County reviews, and recommendations for prospective applicants to fill the vacant board positions.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

There are no anticipated financial impacts.

BACKGROUND:

Currently there are three vacant Board seats on the Board of the SMEDD. One Board seat is to be appointed by the Mendocino Board of Supervisors, one board seat is to be appointed by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, and the third vacant board seat is to be appointed by the SMEDD Board of Directors. Sonoma County has received two applications. The Sonoma County Economic Development Board has reviewed these applications and is prepared to bring a recommendation to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors on the November 7, 2023, County of Sonoma Board Meeting Agenda. The description of the candidates and the Sonoma County Economic Development Board's recommendation are below.

DISCUSSION:

The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB) has reviewed two applications for the vacant Sonoma County SMEDD board seat. The first application is from a person who is a member of the City of Cloverdale City Council and is currently serving as Mayor of the City of Cloverdale. The second application is from a person who resides in western Sonoma County and is a member of the Lower Russian River Municipal Advisory Council; they have extensive experience in project management and working in the technology industry. After review, it is the Sonoma County EDB's recommendation to the

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to appoint the latter of the aforementioned candidates to the SMEDD Board.

Mendocino County has received four applications for the vacant Mendocino SMEDD Board seat. Initially, the Mendocino County Economic Development Standing Committee planned to interview the candidates and recommend a candidate to the Mendocino Board of Supervisors; however, the Board voted to dissolve the Standing Committee at its September 12, 2023, meeting. Mendocino staff is working with the Clerk of the Board to establish the next steps.

ALTERNATIVES:

1: Approve and support recommendations of the Sonoma County Economic Development Board, and if known and reported at this SMEDD Board meeting, also the Mendocino County staff's recommendations.

2: Consider, *modify*, and approve either or both recommendations from the Sonoma County Economic Development Board and Mendocino County staff.

3: Other approach(s) as may be developed after public comments and Board deliberations.

4: Decline to act.

RECOMMENDATION for Alternative 1:

Move to:

- Approve and support recommendations of the Sonoma County Economic Development Board and Mendocino County staff



DATE: September 26, 2023
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Brad Johnson, Sonoma County EDB, Management Analyst
SUBJECT: Project Funding Opportunity - Santa Rosa Sewer Project

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

The purpose of this item is to consider approval of SMEDD being the applicant for the completion of a sewer infrastructure project in West Santa Rosa.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve staff to explore and agree to a grant administration partnership with the City of Santa Rosa for this funding award in the financial and strategic interest of SMEDD.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

Authorizing this action would increase the need for financial reporting and management. However, those costs will be offset by the award itself, if awarded.

BACKGROUND:

In May of 2021, Malinda Matson, Economic Development Representative from the Economic Development Administration, was given a project tour by representatives of the City of Santa Rosa and in company of the Interim District Manager of SMEDD. One of the project sites visited on the tour was a large commercial lot in Western Santa Rosa adjacent to Dutton Avenue. The parcels adjacent to this stretch of Dutton Avenue are zoned for commercial use and residential use, but currently lack adequate sewer infrastructure. The construction and installation of this infrastructure will allow for increased economic development capacity for the adjacent parcels. The EDA indicated that SMEDD could serve as an administrative and/or fiscal agent if the City of Santa Rosa lacks the staff capacity to do so. A conversation with the City of Santa Rosa is still underway as to if there is a need/want for SMEDD to engage in this type of partnership with the City.

DISCUSSION:

One of the two facilities on the commercial lot was recently acquired by Sonoma County Meat Company, a Sonoma grown woman owned family business that provides meat processing services for regional ranchers and grocery retailers and wholesalers, including those both in Sonoma and Mendocino

Counties. The other facility on the commercial lot was recently vacated by YRC Freight. The residentially zoned lot is currently vacant. The Sewer infrastructure would allow for the expansion of Santa Rosa Meat Company, expanded commercial capacity for the vacant building and be critical infrastructure to the residentially zoned parcel. From preliminary discussions with the City of Santa Rosa, there is an interest in having SMEDD be the applicant for an award to fund this project. The project is supported by all four goals of the 2022 CEDS.

- 1) Developing Value Added Economic Sectors
- 2) Increase Equitable Community Wide Prosperity (Project will increase economic development in EDA designated opportunity Zone)
- 3) Supporting people through the support of entrepreneurs and small business owners
- 4) Increasing resiliency by developing critical water infrastructure.

The award opportunity that will likely be pursued is the [EDA's 2023 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance funding opportunity](#). The City of Santa Rosa would be the lead applicant, with SMEDD serving a role in administering the grant. Construction estimates from 2022 estimated the 600 ft of sewer construction would cost approximately \$600,000. Staff anticipates that the cost of construction is likely higher now due to inflation. If directed by the board to pursue funding in coordination with the City of Santa Rosa, updated estimates will be acquired prior to applying for funding.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1:** Approve staff to explore and agree to a grant administration partnership with the City of Santa Rosa for this funding award in the financial and strategic interest of SMEDD.
- 2:** Consider, *modify*, and Approve approach to partnership/funding acquisition with the City
- 3:** Other approach(s) may be developed after public comments and Board deliberations.
- 4:** Decline to act.

RECOMMENDATION for Alternative 1:

Move to:

- Approve staff to explore and agree to a grant administration partnership with the City of Santa Rosa for this funding award in the financial and strategic interest of SMEDD.



DATE: September 26, 2023 **ITEM:** 5
TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Joshua Metz, RGS Senior Advisor, District Manager
SUBJECT: Discuss and Consider Approving the SMEDD Team to provide Letters of Support to Extent Regenerative Forest Solutions Successfully Awarded, North Coast Resource Partnership, Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Project

STATEMENT OF ISSUE: The purpose of this item is to consider authorizing the SMEDD Team to issue Letters of Support on behalf of Regenerative Forest Solutions (RFS) for additional grant funding programs that would extend the impact of the successfully awarded, North Coast Resource Partnership (NCRP), Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Project (WFSAPP).

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Discuss and Consider Approving the SMEDD Team to Letters of Support on behalf of RFS for additional grant funding programs that would extend the impact of the successfully awarded NCRP, WFSAPP.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

This action would impact the Cares Act Supplemental Grant budget by approving the SMEDD team to issue additional Letters of Support on behalf of RFS for additional grant funding programs that would extend the impact of the successfully awarded NCRP, WFSAPP.

BACKGROUND:

The SMEDD provided a Letter of Support on behalf of RFS proposal to the NCRP Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Project call for proposals on August 9, 2023. The scope of work under the RFS proposal addressed the SMEDD Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Goal 1: Develop Innovative and Value-Added Economic Sectors, and Goal 4: Plan for & Implement Resilience. The SMEDD was notified that the RFS proposal was selected for a \$60k award on September 15, 2023. Background on the scope of work under this award from the Office of Planning and Research is provided in Attachment A.

DISCUSSION:

RFS has identified three (3) additional grant funding opportunities with CalFIRE, the Bay Area Council, and US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Region 5, that will augment funding received for the

following: additional staff time, feedstock mapping support, legal, outreach to engage with neighboring counties (Mendocino, Lake, Napa, and Marin), and permitting and planning.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1:** Discuss and Consider Approving the SMEDD Team to Letters of Support on behalf of RFS for additional grant funding programs that would extend the impact of the successfully awarded NCRP, WFSAPP.
- 2:** Consider, *modify*, and approve the SMEDD Team to Letters of Support on behalf of RFS for additional grant funding programs that would extend the impact of the successfully awarded NCRP, WFSAPP.
- 3:** Other approach(s) may be developed after public comments and Board deliberations.
- 4:** Decline to act.

RECOMMENDATION for Alternative 1:

Move to:

- Discuss and Consider Approving the SMEDD Team to Letters of Support on behalf of RFS for additional grant funding programs that would extend the impact of the successfully awarded NCRP, WFSAPP.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. RFS Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Scope Of Work and OPR Program Summary
- B. DRAFT Letter of Support for [CalFIRE Workforce and Business Development](#) proposal
- C. DRAFT Letter of Support for Bay Area Council, [CA Resilience Challenge](#) proposal
- D. DRAFT Letter of Support for USDA Forest Service, [Small Forest Landowner IRA Funding](#) proposal



Sonoma County Woody Feedstock Pilot Project Overview

Pilot Overview

Regenerative Forest Solutions (RFS), was recently selected to participate in a region-wide cohort under North Coast Resource Partnership's Forest Biomass Strategy, funded under the Office of Planning and Research. In partnership with the Watershed Research and Training Center, RFS will leverage local, regional and state expertise to investigate the opportunities for inter-governmental, cross-sector cooperation to manage fiber flow within the North Bay. In Sonoma's parcelized landscape, bundling contracts will reduce risk for new business creation, provide a reliable market to enable additional fuel reduction projects around the wildland urban interface, and generate place-based, highly-skilled jobs (see page 2).

From October 2023 through December 2024, RFS will lead Working Group members and stakeholders to create a feasibility study and business plan to guide the pilot to implementation. The goals of the study and plan are as follows:

- Feedstock Supply Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis
- Potential Feedstock Demand and Wood Product Market Development
- Establishment of a Draft Ecological Baseline
- Entity Type Recommendation & Governance Structure
- Infrastructure Assessment & Recommendations
- Preliminary Community Outreach, Impact & Engagement Plan
- Financial Modeling

RFS is committed to facilitating and managing the aggregation entity business planning and feasibility planning phase to support a more rapid and ecologically minded restoration regime across the county's ~514,000 acres of forested land. The plan and study will move Sonoma County forward in its ability to create more wildfire and climate resilient landscapes across its forested acreage in collaboration with key agencies and stakeholders. The project team is led by RFS staff members Temra Costa and Jeremy Fisher, and will engage Working Group Members and advisory committee in achieving deliverables.

Working Group Members: Adriana Stagnaro and Brittany Jensen, Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District; Brook Edwards, Sonoma County Regional Parks; Raymond Baltar and David Morell, Sonoma Ecology Center; and Sasha Ponomareva, Sonoma Water.

Advisory Committee Members: Bob Ewing, Registered Professional Forester; Brock Dolman, Occidental Arts and Ecology Center; Clarke Stevenson, Watershed Research and Training Center; Fred Euphrat, Ph.D, Registered Professional Forester (No. 2365); Josh Metz, Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District; Vance Russell, VR Conservation Collective.



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OFFICE of PLANNING AND RESEARCH

Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Program

May 24, 2022

Program Overview

OPR was provided \$3 million from the [Wildfire and Forest Resilience Early Action Package](#). \$2.5 million to support new long-term wood feedstock pilot projects, \$350,000 through an interagency agreement to spur innovation in the wood sector, and \$150,000 to administer the development of the pilot projects.

As stated in the [Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan](#) Objective 3.10, OPR will fund five pilot projects to develop regional strategies to establish reliable access to woody feedstock through a variety of feedstock aggregation mechanisms and organizational innovations. The pilots will develop plans to improve feedstock supply chain logistics within each target region through an institutional arrangement with the structure, authority, and resources to aggregate and initiate long-term feedstock contracts. Each project will explore and assess market opportunities of potential woody biomass businesses in their region and commit to increasing feedstock aggregation on all relevant land types, including private and non-commercial land, especially where opportunity exists to produce community fire resilience benefits. The pilots are distributed across single and multi-county regions in the Central Sierra, the Lake Tahoe Basin, the Shasta and Lassen region, the North Coast and Marin County.

Project Deliverables

Project deliverables include but are not limited to: (1) organizational studies to investigate potential governance structure(s), fire defensible space enforcement capacity, financial sustainability of entity operations, feedstock availability, wood product businesses and market opportunities, and a community analysis of each project region; (2) a feedstock mapping and aggregation tool; (3) a legal structure implementation plan; (4) an entity action plan; (5) community engagement workshops; (6) templates for long-term feedstock contracts; and (7) wood product campus feasibility study.

Timeline

Project proposals were submitted on November 1, 2021. Grant agreements completed on January 31, 2022 and are currently under review with DGS. Grant terms are set to run through March 31, 2025. Funds are available for expenditure or encumbrance until June 30, 2022, and for liquidation until June 30, 2025. In addition to the deliverables stated above, each pilot will participate in bi-monthly learning cohort discussion sessions, submit quarterly progress reports, and complete a final report at the end of the grant term. All resources produced during the grant term, from each pilot and the learning cohort, will be made available on the OPR website.



September 26, 2023

Chief John McCarthy
Wood Products Program Manager
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Re: Support for Sonoma County Woody Feedstock Pilot Project

Honorable Mr McCarthy,

The Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) is pleased to reaffirm support for Regenerative Forest Solutions' Sonoma County Woody Feedstock Pilot Project (Pilot Project).

Regenerative Forest Solutions (RFS), was recently selected to participate in a region-wide cohort under North Coast Resource Partnership's Forest Biomass Strategy, funded under the Office of Planning and Research. In partnership with the Watershed Research and Training Center, RFS will leverage local, regional and state expertise to investigate the opportunities for inter-governmental, cross-sector cooperation to manage fiber flow within the North Bay. In Sonoma's parcelized landscape, bundling contracts will reduce risk for new business creation, provide a reliable market to enable additional fuel reduction projects around the wildland urban interface, and generate place-based, highly-skilled jobs.

Due to severe wildfires and the impacts of climate change, fuel load reduction and forest restoration projects in Sonoma County's 513,000 acres of coniferous forests and oak woodlands are being supported by a robust network of local agencies, professionals and organizations. However, there is little infrastructure for processing and utilization of small-diameter timber and other forest residuals presently left in place, chipped, burned, and/or hauled to local landfills.

The Pilot Project being conducted by RFS, Working Group members and stakeholders will create infrastructure needed for ongoing forest improvement projects. This will increase our rural and urban communities' fire resilience, reduce landfill waste, help achieve the county's climate goals and will create positive economic and ecological outcomes for the benefit of our forests, watersheds and communities. The SMEDD appreciates this opportunity to affirm support of the pilot and planned objectives

Sincerely,

Robin Bartholow, Chair
SMEDD Board of Directors

Joshua Metz
District Manager



September 26, 2023

Adrian Covert
Vice President of Public Policy
Bay Area Council
Pier 9 The Klamath
San Francisco, CA 94111

Re: Support for Sonoma County Woody Feedstock Pilot Project

Dear Mr Covert,

The Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) is pleased to reaffirm support for Regenerative Forest Solutions' Sonoma County Woody Feedstock Pilot Project (Pilot Project).

Regenerative Forest Solutions (RFS), was recently selected to participate in a region-wide cohort under North Coast Resource Partnership's Forest Biomass Strategy, funded under the Office of Planning and Research. In partnership with the Watershed Research and Training Center, RFS will leverage local, regional and state expertise to investigate the opportunities for inter-governmental, cross-sector cooperation to manage fiber flow within the North Bay. In Sonoma's parcelized landscape, bundling contracts will reduce risk for new business creation, provide a reliable market to enable additional fuel reduction projects around the wildland urban interface, and generate place-based, highly-skilled jobs.

Due to severe wildfires and the impacts of climate change, fuel load reduction and forest restoration projects in Sonoma County's 513,000 acres of coniferous forests and oak woodlands are being supported by a robust network of local agencies, professionals and organizations. However, there is little infrastructure for processing and utilization of small-diameter timber and other forest residuals presently left in place, chipped, burned, and/or hauled to local landfills.

The Pilot Project being conducted by RFS, Working Group members and stakeholders will create infrastructure needed for ongoing forest improvement projects. This will increase our rural and urban communities' fire resilience, reduce landfill waste, help achieve the county's climate goals and will create positive economic and ecological outcomes for the benefit of our forests, watersheds and communities. The SMEDD appreciates this opportunity to affirm support of the pilot and planned objectives

Sincerely,

Robin Bartholow, Chair
SMEDD Board of Directors

Joshua Metz
District Manager



September 26, 2023

Helena Murray
Wood & Biomass Utilization Specialist
Region 5 State & Private Forestry

Re: U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, IRA Forest Landowner Support,
USDA-FS-2023-IRA-FLS-01

Dear Ms. Murray,

The Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District (SMEDD) is pleased to reaffirm support for Regenerative Forest Solutions' Sonoma County Woody Feedstock Pilot Project (Pilot Project).

Regenerative Forest Solutions (RFS), was recently selected to participate in a region-wide cohort under North Coast Resource Partnership's Forest Biomass Strategy, funded under the Office of Planning and Research. In partnership with the Watershed Research and Training Center, RFS will leverage local, regional and state expertise to investigate the opportunities for inter-governmental, cross-sector cooperation to manage fiber flow within the North Bay. In Sonoma's parcelized landscape, bundling contracts will reduce risk for new business creation, provide a reliable market to enable additional fuel reduction projects around the wildland urban interface, and generate place-based, highly-skilled jobs.

Due to severe wildfires and the impacts of climate change, fuel load reduction and forest restoration projects in Sonoma County's 513,000 acres of coniferous forests and oak woodlands are being supported by a robust network of local agencies, professionals and organizations. However, there is little infrastructure for processing and utilization of small-diameter timber and other forest residuals presently left in place, chipped, burned, and/or hauled to local landfills.

The Pilot Project being conducted by RFS, Working Group members and stakeholders will create infrastructure needed for ongoing forest improvement projects. This will increase our rural and urban communities' fire resilience, reduce landfill waste, help achieve the county's climate goals and will create positive economic and ecological outcomes for the benefit of our forests, watersheds and communities. The SMEDD appreciates this opportunity to affirm support of the pilot and planned objectives

Sincerely,

Robin Bartholow, Chair
SMEDD Board of Directors

Joshua Metz
District Manager