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California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Letter of Commitment for the “Enhancing Wildfire Prevention through Targeted Defensible Space and Fuels Reduction Projects in Lake County’s High-Risk Clearlake and North Shore Neighborhoods” Project - CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevention Grant (#78873218)

To Whom it May Concern:

The County of Lake is pleased to express its commitment to the Lake County Resource Conservation District’s (LCRCD’s) collaborative grant application to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection’s Wildfire Prevention Grant Program for the “Enhancing Wildfire Prevention through Targeted Defensible Space and Fuels Reduction Projects in Lake County’s High-Risk Clearlake and North Shore Neighborhoods” project.

Nearly 70% of Lake County’s landscape has burned in the last decade. Exacerbated by years of underinvestment and limited local capacity, residents continue to face extremely high wildfire risk around their homes and within their communities. The proposed project brings together Lake County partners to complete significant hazardous fuels reduction work and deliver valuable educational programming to vulnerable Lake County residents.

LCRCD, as administrator of Lake County Fire Safe Council (LCFSC), shall conduct its due diligence in leading the following work: (1) complete defensible space implementation on approximately 100 lots in the City of Clearlake, focusing on the densely vegetated “Avenues” neighborhood; (2) complete defensible space implementation on approximately 100 lots in the North Shore area, including targeted fuels reduction on approximately 45 abandoned/tax default properties and “paper lots” that pose a long-standing and intractable wildfire risk to residents; and (3) serve as CEQA Lead Agency for proposed fuels reduction activities. Treatments will focus on properties located within the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and prioritize connectivity with critical evacuation routes wherever possible. The Lake County Sheriff’s Office of Emergency Services (OES) will deliver “Operation Lake Co Ready,” a bilingual public education campaign featuring open firehouse events across Lake County at which residents can receive preparedness information, hands-on training, and free equipment such as fire extinguishers and McLeod tools. Lastly, North Coast Opportunities, Inc (NCO), which leads one of the most successful home hardening programs in California, will deliver an all-day, community-focused

Wildfire Prevention Summit focused on proactive wildfire risk reduction through home hardening, defensible space, and neighborhood coordination.

LCRCD has administered LCFSC since early 2023 and recently led the development of the “Lake County Fire Safe Council Strategic Plan: 2025-2030”, the organization’s first. The proposed project aligns closely with the goals of that document and reflects close partnerships between LCRCD, the County of Lake, and NCO, all of which actively collaborate through LCFSC. LCRCD managed a pilot defensible space program in 2024, funded by CAL FIRE via the California Fire Safe Council, successfully treating more than 100 homes across Lake County and setting the stage for future programming. LCRCD was also previously awarded and is actively implementing the CAL FIRE-funded “Tree Mortality Mitigation and Public Safety in Lake County” project (Grant Agreement #5GG22117). LCRCD continues to grow the capacity of LCFSC to better serve Lake County, and its work is enabled by a capable team of project managers and technical staff. LCRCD, together with its partners in this multifaceted effort, brings the expertise, resources, and proven track record necessary to ensure this project’s success.

The County of Lake’s Vision 2028 that includes a commitment to enhance public safety in part by developing and maintaining a high standard of disaster prevention, preparedness and recovery, and do so in collaboration with the community. Given this alignment, the County of Lake commits to participating in the “Enhancing Wildfire Prevention through Targeted Defensible Space and Fuels Reduction Projects in Lake County’s High-Risk Clearlake and North Shore Neighborhoods” project alongside LCRCD and NCO. The Community Development Department commits 225 hours of staff time as well as the necessary project materials and supplies as match and will work through its Code Enforcement Program to enable LCRCD to conduct fuels reduction work on tax default parcels in the North Shore area, a value of \$17,813. The County of Lake also commits to implementing OES’ “Operation Lake Co Ready”, the plans for which have already been developed in collaboration with Lake County Fire Chiefs.

The County of Lake fully supports this collaborative project and recognizes its potential to significantly reduce wildfire risk and build enduring community resilience in vulnerable areas of Lake County. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
COUNTY OF LAKE

Chair, Lake County Board of Supervisors