



May 25, 2022

The Honorable Toni Atkins
 President pro Tempore
 California State Senate

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
 Chair Senate Budget Committee

The Honorable Anthony Rendon
 Speaker California State Assembly

The Honorable Phil Ting Chair
 Assembly Budget Committee

RE: Support for Resource Conservation District Financial Assistance Program and Climate Smart Land Management Program at the Department of Conservation

Dear President pro Tempore Atkins, Speaker Rendon, Chair Skinner, and Chair Ting,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we are writing **in strong support of Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry’s budget request for \$10 million over two years for the Resource Conservation District Financial Assistance Program at the Department of Conservation (DOC)**. This program provides critical funding to RCDs that enables them to expand their programs and services at the local level.

California is home to 95 RCDs that serve rural, urban, and suburban populations throughout the state. RCDs are comprised of conservation professionals and local experts committed to seeing our communities thrive and build resilience to the impacts of climate change, and many RCDs have extensive experience working in communities on a multitude of natural resources issues including but not limited to wildfire protection, forest health, defensible space, soil health, water efficiency, and watershed restoration. Increasing the capacity of RCDs will enable more RCDs to better implement the State’s investments in natural resource protection and climate change.

Additionally, **we support the Administrations’ proposed \$20 million investment in a “Climate Smart Land Management Program” at the DOC**. This program is included in the Administration’s proposed expenditure plan for the \$768 million “multi-benefit and nature based solutions set aside” included in the 2021-22 Climate Resilience Package. The intent of this DOC program is to provide technical assistance and capacity grants to organizations working to achieve the goals outlined in *Pathways to 30x30* and the *Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy*.

We respectfully request the Senate and the Assembly support both programs and include them in the 2022-23 State Budget.

Sincerely,



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Executive Director
California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

Kandi Manhart
Executive Officer
Glen County RCD

Ann Baldrige
Executive Director
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