



January 6, 1993

TO: Board of Supervisors and Santa Rosa City Council
FROM: Western Sonoma County Rural Alliance
SUBJECT: Coordinated Resource Management and Planning (CRMP)

The solution to natural resource management problems requires the cooperation of landowners, government agencies, and interested groups and individuals. The CRMP process addresses the dilemma of managing areas with multiple use ownership, conflicting management objectives and requirements, conflicting land use demands, and off-site impacts.

The case in point is the Laguna de Santa Rosa. Over the past 17 years, 5 separate studies have been carried out of the Laguna, with the objective of protecting and enhancing the resources of this unique area. It is significant that most of these studies touched on the problems created by the multiplicity of public agencies and private groups working at cross purposes with each other. The 1988 study by the city of Sebastopol indicated that 40 separate agencies and private groups have a responsibility for, or an interest in, Laguna management. Most of the studies set forth well thought-out recommendations for protection and enhancement of Laguna resources. At this point, January 1993, few of these recommendations have been widely implemented, partly due to the situation pointed out above.

Another major factor in lack of progress in these critical areas is the severe budget restraints imposed on government at almost every level. The situation in the Laguna is cited as an example of similar situations prevailing county-wide, and indeed statewide. Recognizing this wide-spread problem,

local governments throughout California have adopted an approach entitled "Coordinated Resource Management and Planning," or CRMP for short. This approach addresses the dilemma of managing areas with multiple use ownership, conflicting management objectives and requirements, conflicting land use demands, and off-site impacts. Using the best efforts of local people, private landowners, interested federal, state and local agencies and other specialists, CRMP integrates and coordinates resource uses to accomplish specific goals.

The process is designed to achieve compatibility between the land and resource uses, including crops, livestock, soil, water, fish and wildlife, and recreation. All resources are effectively managed for short-term and long-term use. A key element of CRMP is the initiation and control of activity by local groups. Boundaries of CRMP areas are suggested by resource problems, community interests, and recognizable geographic considerations. Size and attainable on-the-ground accomplishments are important factors.

The CRMP approach is practical and workable. Its purpose is to solve problems and achieve objectives. The plan is reviewed and evaluated at regular intervals and, if conditions have changed to warrant it, the plan will be modified.

Landowners benefit from CRMP in several ways. Implementing one plan rather than several, they experience improved working relationships with agencies, while having the opportunity for individual input into the plan, landowners continue to manage their own lands. Local leadership and the cooperation of a wide spectrum of public and private interest working together result in improved resource planning and management.

At this writing, there are seven state of California land-use agencies involved in CRMP programs, as well as six federal agencies, and the California Agricultural Extension Division.

The Western Sonoma County Rural Alliance strongly urges Sonoma County, through the Board of Supervisors, and the city of Santa Rosa, through the City Council, to adopt the CRMP process to address resource issues in the Laguna. We support the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation as an appropriate group to coordinate this process. The Foundation is committed to inviting and listening to the divergent opinions of everyone interested in the Laguna, and to developing a shared vision for the Laguna's future.