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LAGUNA de SANTA ROSA FOUNDATION

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January 21, 1993

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County of Sonoma
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Initiation of Laguna Planning Process (CRMP)

I am pleased to respond to your request for additional information about a Laguna coordinated resource management and planning project.

Background. As we have discussed, the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation wants to initiate and coordinate a CRMP process for the Laguna. The Foundation Board sees a number of advantages for proceeding.

- It is a locally driven planning process, with local concerns and issues being of primary importance.
- It brings everyone concerned with Laguna management goals together, in one room, to talk face to face.
- It provides a straight-forward approach to effective resources management.
- It allows individuals and private groups to participate, as well as the traditional local, state and federal agencies, so that all viewpoints are represented.
- It stresses commonalties and shared interests; goals are determined by consensus.
- It has worked successfully throughout California, including neighboring Napa County.
- Completing a CRMP plan opens up sources of federal funding that are not available otherwise.

Robert Sharp, President; George Snyder, Vice-President; Miles A. Ferris, Secretary-Treasurer; M. Kim Cordell, Executive Director; Board Members: Robert Beretta, Maria Cipriani, John Cummings, Steve French, William E. Haigwood, Jennifer Joell, Frank Kasimov, Anne Magnie, Robert Muelrath, Suzanne S. Nelson, Richard Nichols and Nichols J. Stewart. Technical Advisors: Harold Appleton, Sarah Brown, Steven Chatham, Lawrence McLaughlin, Joan Vilms and Marco Waaland.

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Task Force. The CRMP process is directed by a task force open to all agencies, groups and individuals concerned with local resource management questions. Local participation and control is what distinguishes CRMP from other planning efforts, and is key to the project's success.

The task force defines the management area based on the types of resource issues, community interests, and recognizable physical boundaries such as ridgelines or vegetation edges. Resources of concern in the Laguna may include:

- biotic
- agricultural
- water
- visual/scenic
- recreational
- open space/community separator
- urban infrastructure
- educational
- archaeological/historic
- future/unrecognized at present.

Management goals for the selected resources are developed among task force members by consensus. Solutions are not imposed by the majority, and the task force has no regulatory authority to enforce the CRMP plan. Thus, the plan must be simple and accessible from the outset.

Product. The CRMP is process oriented, stressing communication and problem solving. The project result is a coordinated resource plan, a five or six-page document that is written to be practical and workable. An example of a plan from San Mateo County is attached for your information.

Schedule. If the Laguna Foundation is selected to coordinate this process, we expect eight weeks of nearly full-time work to identify and contact those who might be interested in participating. We would assemble two lists: one of Task Force members; the other would be those who do not wish to participate directly, but who would like to be kept informed about the process. This latter group would be kept up to date through a newsletter, press releases and two public evening meetings.

The Task Force would include anyone who wishes to participate, and who is able to attend daytime meetings. The Task Force would meet every two weeks in the beginning in order to define goals, develop positive working relationships, and encourage a sense of shared interests. Meetings would be less frequent as the Task Force developed its management goals and implementation strategy. The Laguna Foundation would be responsible for coordinating the Task Force schedule, facilitating meetings, and keeping a complete written record of the process. All Task Force meetings would be fully noticed and open to the public; all documents would be available for public inspection. The entire project is expected to take about nine months, with a plan issued by the Task Force at the end of that time.

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Budget. We have developed a tentative budget, which is attached. The large number of labor hours reflects the *process*--rather than product--orientation of a CRMP project. The Foundation has reduced costs by eliminating charges for mileage and per diem, and by using the cost-effective services of a Sonoma State University intern. The coordinator's pay is also discounted from the \$50 to \$80 hourly rate that would normally be expected at this level of project management.

The Foundation proposes that the cost of the project be shared by the major participants: the cities, through the Subregional Wastewater Reclamation System, and the county, through the Sonoma County Water Agency. The Laguna-Mark West assessment district may be an appropriate source of County funding. The Foundation also plans to request funding from the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, but does not expect a significant amount from that source. We look on local funding as an investment in future projects, because once a CRMP plan is completed, various federal funds become available to our community.

We consider the County and the city of Santa Rosa to be key to this process. This proposal and its cost-sharing budget are currently pending before the Santa Rosa City Council. We have also spent several months talking with other groups and agencies about their interest in this process. If the project is funded by the County and Subregional System, we will be able to begin work immediately with these groups. Attached is a letter of support from the Western Sonoma County Rural Alliance. We will forward additional letters of support as we receive them.

I hope that this letter has answered your immediate questions about the CRMP project. A goal of the Foundation is to encourage the expression of divergent views about the Laguna, as reflected in our own Board membership. We feel comfortable with the proposed planning process, and think that it can benefit all the residents of Sonoma County. If you have additional questions or would like to arrange a meeting, please contact me at 874-0100 (days) or 823-1643 (eves.).

LAGUNA de SANTA ROSA FOUNDATION

M. Kim Cordell
Executive Director

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