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January 20, 2021

Wildlife Conservation Board
1700 9th Street, 4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811.

RE: **Support** for Funding Proposal – San Joaquin River Conservancy Circle V Public Access Plan

To whom it may concern,

The Madera County Transportation Commission supports U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) Central California's application for funding to start planning, public outreach and design for a proposed Native American and Environmental Resource Center at the Circle V property located at Avenue 11 in Madera, CA. USGBC Central California proposes to develop a public access plan that will serve as a guide for future implementation projects on the 20.76 acres owned by the San Joaquin River Conservancy at Circle V. The project partners are looking to engage stakeholders and the general community in a discussion on the public usage of the building and site, including public access to the San Joaquin River, meeting spaces, offices, and landscaping elements. The goal is to adaptively reuse the existing structures and develop highly efficient office and meeting spaces with low operational cost.

This project will provide much needed access to the San Joaquin River and open space on the Madera side of the San Joaquin River. It will allow tribal members and the general public to gain access to a natural part of the river with majestic oak and sycamore trees that enhances access to nature and can serve as a starting point for wildlife exploration if made publicly accessible. By creating access to this property, management of the property will be easier to facilitate and any natural elements will be easier to protect and potential negative impact on the natural habitats can be avoided. The environmental resource center has the potential to demonstrate and provide hands-on opportunities to connect to innovative approaches to reduce GHG emissions.

The project aligns with the mission of the San Joaquin River Conservancy to develop, operate, and manage those lands for public access and recreation; and protecting, enhancing, and restoring riparian and floodplain habitat. The project also supports the Principles of Success outlines in the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) prepared by Madera County Transportation Commission. The project endeavors to achieve vision of the RTP/SCS and improve the overall quality of life in Madera County by creating supportive land use footprint with the potential to complement an integrated multimodal transportation system. The principles seek to achieve the following:

Member Agencies: County of Madera, City of Madera, City of Chowchilla

- *Improved quality of life* by providing effective and meaningful access to affordable housing, educational resources, jobs and open spaces/recreational facilities.
- *Prosperity* by facilitating enhanced and versatile economic viability of the region through increased access to education and new job opportunities.
- *Cultural Diversity* through projects, policies and plans which respect the region's wide variety of cultures and subcultures (each having unique needs and perspectives).
- *Health and Environment* through projects, policies and plans able to enhance economic prosperity in ways that ensure the health of its citizens, maintain and enhance the surrounding environment (cultural and socioeconomic resources).

The Madera County Transportation Commission is eager to see this project advance and supports USGBC Central California's proposal to start planning and public outreach on the San Joaquin River Conservancy Circle V project.

Sincerely,

Patricia Taylor, Executive Director
Madera County Transportation Commission