



San Luis Obispo Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)
1042 Pacific St #A
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

RE: Letter of Support for the Upper Salinas–Las Tablas Resource Conservation District

Dear Commissioners,

The San Luis Obispo County Fire Safe Council (SLO FSC) is comprised of a cross section of wildfire stakeholders across the entire county. The SLO FSC Board of Directors represents 34 agencies, organizations, landowners, and citizens that are focused on making San Luis Obispo County safer from wildfire. The Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resource Conservation District (US LT RCD) is a valuable member of the SLO FSC and the US LT RCD Executive Director serves as a member of the board of directors.

In 2021 the US LT RCD led efforts for a cutting edge permitting process in the Coastal Zone through the creation of a Coastal Zone Public Works Plan (PWP) that was unanimously approved by the California Coastal Commission. The PWP provides a more appropriate coastal zone permitting process for wildfire and forest health projects than the standard Coastal Development Permit. This is the only Coastal Zone PWP in the county and demonstrates forward thinking solutions for operations in the coastal zone. Using the PWP process, US LT RCD, SLO FSC, and other partners have developed and implemented nine projects to reduce wildfire risk in the communities of Cambria and San Simeon. Due to the cumbersome and expensive Coastal Development Permit process, these projects would likely not have happened without the PWP.

Additionally, with the US LT RCD serving as the lead agency, the partners have also received unanimous approval from the Coastal Commission for an 88,000 acre blanket permit (SLO-RESIL) for wildfire hazard and risk reduction in the portion of the coastal zone in the US LT RCD boundaries. This cost saving process is serving as a model for other RCDs in the state to follow.

The US LT RCD has also assisted the SLO FSC by serving as lead agency for CEQA permitting requirements required for grant funded projects in areas outside the coastal zone.

US LT RCD directors and staff have strong relationships with landowners, agencies, and nonprofits which are a critical component of implementing strategic landscape scale wildfire resilience projects.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Dan Turner

Dan Turner, Executive Director