



*Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515*

*Anna G. Eshoo
Eighteenth District
California*

April 29, 2022

The Honorable Chellie Pingree,
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Joyce, Ranking
Member
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Pingree and Ranking Member Joyce,

As you begin your critical work on the Fiscal Year 2023 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, I strongly urge you to include \$2,000,000 for the County of Santa Cruz for planning, permitting, site acquisition and other services to expand the Boulder Creek Sanitation District to include fire-impacted properties and areas in the downtown commercial district with septic system deficiencies. This Community Project Funding request is associated with the Environmental Protection Agency account for State and Tribal Assistance Grants.

Boulder Creek is an unincorporated community of approximately 5,500 residents in Santa Cruz County, California whose wastewater system is operated by the County Sanitation Division as County Service Area 07 – Boulder Creek Sanitation. Many downtown businesses are not part of this system and instead rely on overtaxed septic systems, which limits development of vacant lots and prevents many businesses from allowing customers to use their restrooms. The expansion of the sanitation district would allow the County to serve over 70 businesses in the economic center of the community.

This project is also critical to helping the community rebuild from the devastating CZU Lightning Complex Fire in August of 2020 which burned over 86,000 acres and destroyed nearly 1,000 homes in Santa Cruz County in my Congressional District. Nearly two years after the horrific fire, survivors face many challenges to rebuilding their homes, including the building of enhanced treatment septic systems required by state environmental regulations that can cost residents \$75,000 each.

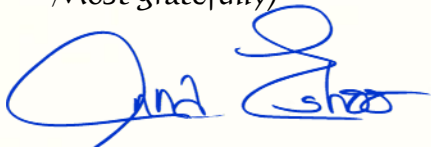
In addition to wildfire recovery, the project has many important environmental benefits. Expanding the sanitation district will limit wastewater pollution from failing septic systems into the San Lorenzo River watershed which provides drinking water to the City of Santa Cruz and is home to endangered and threatened species. It will also allow for treated wastewater to be used to irrigate a local golf course, preserving essential drinking water resources as the region faces a serious drought.

As an indication of community support, I've enclosed letters from the following local elected officials and community leaders:

- The Honorable Jimmy Panetta, Member of Congress
- The Honorable John Laird, Senator, California State Senate
- The Honorable Mark Stone, Assemblymember, California State Assembly
- Ms. Karen Edwards, President, Boulder Creek Business Association
- Ms. Nancy Macy, Environmental Committee Chair, Valley Women's Club of San Lorenzo Valley

If enacted, this request would help wildfire survivors rebuild, promote economic development, and protect habitats for endangered species, and it's why I wholeheartedly support this Community Project Funding request and ask that you do so as well.

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo

Enclosures