Racial Equity Analysis of

the County of Sonoma Carbon Stock Inventory & Potential Sequestration Study

How does your Program align with or leverage other Countywide initiatives to advance racial equity?

Alignment with Vital Lands Initiative and the Climate Resilient Lands Strategy, which both embed equity as a core principle in its recommendations and prioritization.

What specific racial and/or economic inequities in Sonoma County does this Program intend to address/reduce?

The Study provides us with an understanding of where, geographically, carbon stocks lie and recommends a suite of carbon sequestration practices. Maintaining healthy, natural, and working lands by protecting carbon stocks and implementing carbons sequestration practices is key to human well-being because these lands are responsible for our agricultural abundance, water supply and quality, air quality, and biodiversity, which in turn influences socioeconomics and social equity. The Study includes a list of recommended sequestration practices compiled with RCD input to ensure recommended practices are financially feasible and locally applicable. RCD carbon farming programs have proven to be an effective at education and outreach and in overcoming financial, technical, and permitting hurdles.

The Study synthesizes goals from stakeholder workshops, which emphasize the importance of prioritizing equity and climate justice approaches that are measurable and clear. The Study proposes actions to be considered to reach this goal. The proposed actions include utilizing equity criteria to evaluate and prioritize County investments on private lands, integrating carbon stock, carbon sequestration and frontline community considerations into annual funding considerations, developing land restoration career pathways for youth, supporting expansion of urban and peri-urban agriculture, and supporting urban forest planning that incorporates key equity considerations.

Will the Program have impacts in specific geographic areas (neighborhoods, areas, or regions)? What are the racial demographics of those living in the area?

No, this Study is a high-level analysis that evaluates carbon stocks and sequestration potential across all of Sonoma County. More work is needed to identify where to prioritize carbon sequestration practices to enhance county carbon stocks as well as whether there are patterns related to which communities tend to live near carbon stocks. An important next step is using the data from this Study with demographic data to prioritize locations based on the co-benefits they could provide to underserved and under resourced communities. This study is one of several studies that inform the upcoming County Master Climate Resiliency Action Plan

(CRMAP), which includes a robust public review process. As part of the CRMAP there will be additional public review, engagement efforts, and multi-criteria analysis. Additionally, the Sonoma -Marin Ag + County Climate Coalition will provide additional funding and local expertise needed to build upon this work for next five years.

Who are the most affected community members who are concerned with or have experience related to this issue/program? How will you involve these community members in the development and implementation of this program?

Land managers, landowners, and community members will be affected by this Study as any future carbon sequestration targets and recommended practices could affect daily operations and regional expectations and the co-benefits of recommended practices, where implemented, will have co-benefit impacts on surrounding communities.

Staff conducted half-day workshops with stakeholders to solicit input on how to design the recommendations in the Study. Staff also solicited input from local land experts on the landcover classification data and recommended practice lists. Urban forest tree canopy was calculated considering major cities and towns in Sonoma County, subdivided into census blocks, and color-coded based on the tree equity score which factors in total canopy cover and demographic factors to rate how equitable access to trees is across cities. This information should inform future planning and implementation efforts.

The maps in the Study showing each set of recommended practices reflect the initial set of biophysical constraints, shows areas that are potentially eligible for implementation of the practice in question, and should be considered as a starting point from which additional analysis wherein funding, equipment, land ownership, incentive programs, presence of wildlife, cultural significance, updated or site-specific data, and alternative practices or uses are considered. A key goal of this study is to inform future planning of carbon sequestration activities across the county. Public input will be a crucial component of planning implementation locations.

Does the estimated Program budget and timeline include sufficient resources and time to ensure accessibility, i.e. translation, interpretation, outreach, etc.?

The contractor ensures all deliverables are ADA compliant. Executive summary and key metrics are translated into Spanish by department staff. The full study is on-file for translation requests.

How will the Program document and evaluate the Program's impact on communities of color and low-income communities?

Staff intend to house the geographic data on carbon sequestration on County GIS platforms and update in the future if capacity allows. This can be overlayed with geographic data on demographics and can demonstrate trends for increasing access to greenspaces.

What additional disaggregated demographic data will your Program need to collect, track, and evaluate to inform future decisions, and/or develop mitigation practices to respond to unintended impacts of the project in communities of color?

- Where/who gets funds to implement projects suggested in the Study.
- How does the patterns of allocated funding compare with socioeconomic status (median household income - as an indicator) and race.
- Where do carbon stocks get reduced or expanded.
- How do areas with losing/winning carbon stocks, compare with socioeconomic status (median household income as an indicator) and race.
- What are the impacts/multiple benefits of implemented carbon sequestering practices and where in the county are those impacts felt.
- Evaluate the carbon stocks and identify the ones that have public access and direct public benefits and those that are private and offer the in-direct co-benefits.