



**Request for Proposal (RFP) for
Agricultural Survey Design, Economic Analysis, and Mapping Project**
Funded by the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC)

Lake County Resource Conservation District (LCRCD) is seeking a qualified consultant or team of consultants familiar with survey design, economic analysis, and/or GIS-based mapping to submit a proposal to: (A) develop a survey; (B) complete an economic analysis; and/or (C) produce a mapping tool focused on Lake County's agricultural sector. Proposals for individual project components will be accepted, but complete proposals encompassing all three are preferred. Proposals that include partnerships between two or more entities are welcome. For a selected proposal that includes multiple partners, each entity will contract directly with LCRCD.

1. Project Background and Objectives

LCRCD, in close collaboration with the Lake County Community Development Department (CDD) and a team of core partners, is pleased to be leading *Revitalizing Lake County Agriculture: Phase 1*. This project was recently awarded funding through the Department of Conservation's Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALC). The overarching goal of this project is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of Lake County's agricultural sector and assess tools that can better support farmers and farmland preservation. Subsequent project phases will seek to direct funding and implementation efforts informed by the findings of this phase.

Our core project partners include:

- Lake County Department of Agriculture
- Lake County Farm Bureau
- Lake County Land Trust
- Lake County Winegrape Commission
- Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians
- North Coast Opportunities

LCRCD is leading both the community engagement and economic analysis components of this collaborative project, which aim to better understand the resilience and viability of Lake County's agricultural sector in the face of mounting economic, climate, and operational pressures. Toward that end, LCRCD will oversee consultant-led implementation of following tasks over the course of this project:

- A. The development and distribution of a targeted agricultural stakeholder survey, amplified by other community engagement strategies;
- B. A comprehensive economic analysis of Lake County's agricultural sector; and
- C. The production of a mapping tool of Lake County's agricultural lands.

Lake County agriculture is characterized by a combination of high-value perennial crops; small to mid-sized operations; an aging producer population; and increasing exposure to market volatility, rising production cost, and climate-related risks. While agriculture remains a central component of Lake County's cultural identity, landscape, and economy, recent market contractions, price declines, and cost increases have called into question the viability of existing agricultural activities and the future of the sector.

This project was designed in an effort to meaningfully engage agricultural producers and businesses, Tribes, farm workers, conservation organizations, and the broader agricultural community. A targeted survey or series of surveys will be developed to collect input on baseline economic conditions, risks,

conservation priorities, and opportunities for agricultural stakeholders. Survey findings will be instrumental in ground-truthing the other components of this project phase as well as subsequent phases.

LCRCD and CDD are collaborating with a core project team of local partners to gather information regarding the economic conditions, challenges, gaps, and opportunities facing agricultural stakeholders in Lake County. This core project team will work with the selected consultant to develop and distribute the survey and gather additional data from stakeholders via an ambitious engagement strategy, including community meetings held in a variety of accessible locations and formats and potentially offered in both English and Spanish. LCRCD intends to offer modest compensation to survey respondents and meeting participants to the extent possible.

The economic analysis at the heart of this project is intended to go beyond the scope of traditional economic impact studies to explore baseline economic concerns for producers, evaluate market and climate-related pressures, and preliminarily identify strategies to enhance the resilience and viability of Lake County's agricultural sector through potential incentive programs and alignment with County policy. The selected consultant will work with the project team to generate actionable, locally grounded economic insights that can inform agricultural land conservation priorities, incentive programs, and County planning efforts through traditional, e.g., report review and synthesis, and non-traditional methods, e.g., individual farmer interviews. These findings will eventually contribute to the creation of a standalone "State of the Agriculture" report and accompanying action plan.

Lastly, the mapping component of this project will culminate in a county-scale agricultural land mapping and analysis tool designed to support strategic decision-making for agricultural land conservation prioritization. The selected consultant will produce an accessible, open-source tool that integrates multiple spatial datasets and allows users to explore key indicators relevant to agricultural land conservation. As an example, consultants may reference the [Alameda County Agricultural Resiliency Project \(ACARP\) Planning Map](#).

2. Scope of Services

The selected consultant will be responsible for the following tasks:

- **Regular coordination and communication** with LCRCD, the core project team, and other project consultants, starting in May 2026 through July 2028 or until tasks are completed:
 - Regular participation in monthly one-hour core project team meetings (26) via Zoom;
 - Up to 26 half-hour check-in meetings with LCRCD staff via Zoom as necessary to assess progress; and
 - Quarterly (8) progress reports and (1) final summary of work performed submitted to LCRCD staff to demonstrate alignment with funding and stated project objectives;
- **Reviewing project materials and relevant resources** shared by LCRCD and the core project team, including (but not limited to) the following: working list of potential survey respondents; draft engagement strategy, including proposed topics for community meetings; recent publications such as the County of Lake's *Economic Contributions of Lake County Agriculture*; area maps; and/or other relevant sources of demographic and economic data;
- **Community engagement**
 - Developing a survey design and distribution strategy, including collaboratively designing the survey content, structure, and roll-out, e.g., determining whether a single or multiple survey rounds are most appropriate, taking agricultural seasonality into consideration; aligning with other planned and anticipated engagement activities; and developing and refining survey instruments with input from the core project team as necessary prior to December 2027. Surveys may be produced in both English and Spanish.
 - Providing logistical and/or facilitation support for engagement activities, e.g., focus groups, community meetings, etc., as necessary depending on LCRCD staff capacity.

- **Economic analysis**
 - Conducting a producer-focused economic analysis evaluating the current state of the agricultural economy in Lake County. This work will combine quantitative data from the agricultural sector with qualitative input from producers and stakeholders in order to identify key challenges and opportunities present in the current agricultural economy, including economic and climate stressors, changing markets across agricultural sectors, operational challenges, and opportunities for growth and adaptation. The findings from this analysis will be used to support agricultural policy development, agricultural incentive programming, and conservation strategies.
- **Mapping tool**
 - Use stakeholder input and survey data to develop an interactive, county-scale mapping tool to compare, communicate, and visualize priorities for agricultural land conservation. This includes designing a map-based input process that allows users to identify high-value areas in Lake County for conservation using collectively determined criteria.

The total available budget for the above tasks is \$160,000. Proposals should clearly indicate the budget allocation for each proposed task.

3. Consultant Qualifications and Experience

Required

Consultants must demonstrate experience in at least one of the following areas; proposals demonstrating experience across multiple areas are preferred.

- **Experience in social science methods and/or community engagement work**, including developing and administering surveys and/or needs assessments and/or facilitating community meetings, workshops, etc.; **and/or**
- **Experience conducting economic analyses; and/or**
- **Experience developing high-quality map products.**

Desired

- **Familiarity with the region**, including prior work experience in Lake County and/or neighboring counties;
- **Familiarity with the topic**, including prior experience with or understanding of agriculture, community food systems, Tribal food sovereignty, local cropping systems (pears, walnuts, winegrapes, etc.), land preservation, land use planning, community economic development, and/or related fields;
- **Experience conducting outreach with Tribes and Tribal communities** or willingness to learn and apply best practices for Tribal engagement; and
- **Fluency in written and spoken Spanish**, including the ability to develop and deliver survey materials and analyze responses in Spanish.

4. Submission Requirements

Interested consultants are requested to submit qualifications and a quote that includes the following:

- **Resume or CV** including a detailed description of the consultant or consultant team's experience, particularly with similar projects;
- **Cover letter** expressing interest and highlighting the consultant or consultant team's suitability for the project;
- **Proposed methods** demonstrating a clear understanding of the project objectives, including a clear outline of the proposed approach to survey design, data collection, analysis, and reporting and/or economic and mapping analysis.
- **Project timeline**, including a realistic and achievable project schedule featuring key milestones and deliverables;
- **Representative sample** of prior work;

- **Detailed budget proposal**, including an itemized breakdown of costs, including personnel, materials, and other expenses; and
- Name and contact information (phone number and/or email) of at least **three (3) references** from recent projects (conducted within the last five years). Please also provide a list of similar clients if possible.

Submission deadline: April 1, 2026 at 5:00PM PST

Please submit all application materials and direct all questions to Noah Cornell, Sustainable Agriculture Program Manager, at noah.cornell@lakercd.org.