



SONOMA ECOLOGY CENTER

Protecting the beauty and biodiversity of Sonoma Valley

September 6, 2014

Paul Favaro, Board President
Sonoma Valley Health and Recreation Association
P.O. Box 1544
Sonoma, CA 95476

Dear Paul:

Sonoma Ecology Center was asked to review a proposal for a multi-use aquatic center at the Paul's Resort property on Verano Avenue. After visiting the site and hearing the conceptual plan proposed there, we support this effort and encourage the Association to proceed.

The proposed property includes a reach of Agua Caliente Creek, and includes important passage to spawning habitat upstream for threatened steelhead trout. It also serves as a movement corridor for many other animals to access extensive habitat upstream to the east and Sonoma Creek nearby to the west. We are pleased with the care proposed to help preserve the corridor and to enhance that area for native wildlife and plants, and to provide educational opportunities for the community as they visit that part of the site. We would be happy to help the Association toward these goals and think it will add value to the project.

The proposed project site is central to the population of the Valley, proximate to the Community Health Center and Sonoma Valley Boys and Girls Club, and is on the main transit line and the Sonoma bike path. The location is ideal for limiting traffic impacts and encouraging use of alternative transportation.

While not our area of expertise, it is clear that a publicly accessible aquatic center would also provide foundational health opportunities for hundreds in our community, including for many who would otherwise be unable to participate in them. We know that in the long term, only a healthy community has the capacity to care for the natural systems that it relies on.

For all these reasons, we support the proposal and look forward to the further collaboration and input as it proceeds.

Richard Dale,
Executive Director