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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-5400

October 19, 2023

Mr. Jeff Trandahl
Executive Director
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
1133 Fifteenth Street, NW Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Trandahl:

I write in support of three grant proposals for conservation work in Puerto Rico being considered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) for funding through the National Coastal Resilience Fund.

The first project—titled the *Building Capacity for Ridge to Reef Resiliency in Puerto Rico's Moist Forest* (#79379)—was developed by Ahora Inc. to support restoration efforts in Barrio Carite, Guayama and the tropical moist broadleaf forest ecoregion of central eastern Puerto Rico. This initiative would benefit threatened species such as the Puerto Rican broad-winged hawk, the Puerto Rican boa, and the capa rose, while building ridge to reef resiliency. The project would also actively engage community stakeholders and volunteers to produce a coastal resilience implementation plan.

The second proposal—titled the *Developing a Comprehensive Blight Mitigation and Habitat Restoration Plan in Caño Martín Peña* (#80450)—was submitted by Centro para la Reconstrucción del Hábitat to enhance knowledge and skills regarding resilience, blight mitigation, and habitat restoration in eight coastal communities surrounding the Martín Peña Channel in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The project seeks to empower community leaders to actively participate in creating a comprehensive resilience plan that incorporates nature-based solutions in specific scattered sites to ensure a sustainable environment and help mitigate the impact of flooding and other extreme weather events.

The third project—titled the *Assessing Coral Nursey and Restoration to Increase Community Resilience in Puerto Rico* (#80606)—would allow Sail for Reefs, Inc. to conduct reef assessment and viability testing to determine future large-scale coral restoration efforts in the San Juan Metro Reef in northern Puerto Rico. The proposal would also help develop the design for a land-based coral nursery and increase the resilience of coastal communities in the municipalities of Carolina, Lofza, and San Juan, while increasing capacity for training new local restoration practitioners.

I trust these three grant proposals will help advance ongoing efforts to build capacity and resiliency along Puerto Rico's coastal communities. I therefore respectfully ask that the NFWF give due consideration to the projects, in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jennifer González-Colón". The signature is stylized with large, flowing loops and a prominent "J" at the beginning.

Jennifer González-Colón
Member of Congress