Draft Individual Review Form

Proposal number: 2001-C207-1   **Short Proposal Title:___Spawning Habitat and Floodplain Restoration in the Stanislaus River**

1a) Are the objectives and hypotheses clearly stated?
Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion [Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]

The objectives of the study are not stated overtly, but are nonetheless reasonably clear in the project description. The hypotheses are well written and testable.

1b1) Does the conceptual model clearly explain the underlying basis for the proposed work?
Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion [Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]

From a biological perspective (my area of expertise), the conceptual model provides a good basis for the proposed project. Based on the available information, the conceptual model is also ecologically defensible.

1b2) Is the approach well designed and appropriate for meeting the objectives of the project?
Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion [Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]

I am not qualified to comment on the engineering feasibility of this project. However, the project includes a diverse and experienced team, as well as input from outside experts such as Drs. Kondolf and Mount. This high level of peer review suggests that the objective of the project will be met.

1c1) Has the applicant justified the selection of research, pilot or demonstration project, or a full-scale implementation project?
Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion [Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]

Yes. The conceptual model provides a good argument that the Stanislaus River has insufficient high quality gravel for salmon spawning and floodplain habitat for rearing. I cannot comment on the relative merits of the sites selected versus other potential projects on this river. Ideally, the Stanislaus River deserves to have a comprehensive review of and ranking of sites for restoration. I do not believe that this is sufficient reason to downgrade the proposal—the applicants have at least demonstrated that the proposed sites have a potential for restoration.

1c2) Is the project likely to generate information that can be used to inform future decision making?
Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion [Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]

Yes. The proposed restoration techniques are innovative and deserve to be tested. The monitoring techniques are comprehensive enough to allow testing of the major hypotheses. As a result, decision-makers should benefit for the experiences of this project.

2a) Are the monitoring and information assessment plans adequate to assess the outcome of the project?
Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion [Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]

On the whole, yes. I was impressed by the breadth of information that will be collected. There are many additional variables that could be included part of the monitoring (eg primary production, zooplankton and non-salmonid fish). Moreover, projects of this type should ideally be collected over relatively long time scales (eg 10-20 years). However, this would add substantially to the project cost. One minor comment. I question the basis for the salmon rearing monitoring (Task 9). The stated hypothesis is that densities of fish should be higher on the restored floodplain that in the reference channel sites. In fact, the opposite may be true. The DWR (1999) study cited by the applicants found that densities of juvenile salmon were substantially lower in the Yolo Bypass floodplain than adjacent river channels. They concluded that this was likely a result of more rearing habitat on the floodplain, which diluted densities in that reach. The applicants should still proceed with monitoring of juvenile salmon abundance, but should be cautious about the interpretation of the results.

2b) Are data collection, data management, data analysis, and reporting plans well-described, scientifically sound and adequate to meet the proposed objectives?
Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion [Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]

The methods for data collection are well described and scientifically sound. Details on the remaining factors were skimpy, but I do not believe this is a significant problem considering the proposal page limits set by CALFED.

3) Is the proposed work likely to be technically feasible?
Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion [Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]

Again, I am not qualified to comment on the engineering or economic feasibility of this project. Nonetheless, the applicants appear to have correctly identified the major engineering and permitting obstacles that must be overcome in order to make the project a success. The tasks also appear appropriate to the design of the project.

4) Is the proposed project team qualified to efficiently and effectively implement the proposed project?
Provide detailed comments in support of your conclusion [Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]

Yes. The project team appears exceptionally qualified at all levels. They have good project managers, engineers, biologists and land use staff with extensive "track records".

Miscellaneous comments
[Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]

Overall Evaluation Summary Rating	Provide a brief explanation of your summary rating
■ Excellent ☐ Very Good ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor	[Note: in the electronic version, this will be an expandable field]