

Draft Individual Review Form

Proposal number: 2001-C211-1

Short Proposal Title: Merced River Ranch Restoration

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]

Yes. Unlike most other proposals I reviewed this year, the applicants were highly explicit in stating their objectives. The hypotheses weren't quite as clear as I would have liked. For example, for fish the applicants will determine whether restored habitats will be different from existing sites. This is rather weak and unlikely to be scientifically interesting. Similarly, they do not state exactly what will be tested in each of the different treatments for soil, vegetation and spawning redds.

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]

The conceptual model is adequate, but not especially clear. It is based primarily on Figure 6, which needs a bit of explanation.

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]

The applicants are to be commended for their attention to detail in their approach and for including peer review in their strategy. The Phase II tasks look reasonable to tackle most of the technical issues. My major concern is that they have combined Phase II and III. It seems premature to fund Phase III until the restoration design is completed. I do not understand how the applicants developed an estimate of the amount that will be required for Phase III when the project design has: 1) not been completed; 2) has not yet been integrated into local and regional planning efforts; and 3) the necessary permits have not yet been obtained.

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 property was previously purchased using CALFED funding, making it a logical restoration site.

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. Despite some concerns I have about hypothesis testing, this project is generally being approached in a scientifically sound manner.

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]

The applicants have suggested extensive monitoring, an excellent idea considering the magnitude and potential importance of this project. However, most of the monitoring would be conducted in Phase IV, not part of the present proposal. As such, I cannot determine whether the monitoring would be adequate to evaluate the long-term success of the project.

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]

There are few details about these components of the study.

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]

Yes. The applicants have a good understanding of the major technical obstacles.

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 background of this team is exceptionally good. I was pleased to see several staff with multiple years of experience in this watershed.

Miscellaneous comments

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

This is a very good proposal overall. Again, the major question I have is whether Phase III is somewhat premature.

**Overall Evaluation
Summary Rating**

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

Provide a brief explanation of your summary rating

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