

Draft Individual Review Form

Proposal number: 2001-D202-1 **Short Proposal Title:** NSA at the San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge

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 applicants state the purpose of this proposal is to “model inundation conditions...to improve expected initial floodplain conditions for anadromous fish.” However, under the “Hypotheses being Tested” header, the applicants do not state any hypotheses to be tested. Instead, the applicants mention that this project will be a test case of a model “to predict hypothesized beneficial and detrimental conditions.” The applicants never state what beneficial or detrimental conditions are for anadromous fish. Does beneficial mean improved growth? higher survival? higher survival on the floodplain? Although the applicants mention slope, recession rates, and permanent ponds are important considerations for stranding and predation of anadromous fish in other sections of the proposal, these were not explicitly stated as hypotheses. For example, it would have been helpful if the applicants provided the following, “Stranding of anadromous fish is not different when the breach openings are wider, longer, etc.”

The applicants mention that this proposed project will be used to generate information for a collaborative project already funded by CALFED. The applicants confuses the reader by stating that “this project will improve rearing conditions for juvenile salmonids, etc.” This proposed project **will not** do any action supports to support these claims. Rather, the proposed project will only **model** conditions at levee breaches that are expected to provide benefits or detriments for native anadromous fish.

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 provides a basis for the project, however, once again, the applicants do not explicitly state what beneficial conditions are for anadromous fish and how modeling breach openings will provide benefits for anadromous fish. The applicants state that more information may be available to enlarge upon the “conceptual model of benefits and hazards to anadromous fish from floodplain inundation by the time the work begins.” In other words, the development of clearly defined objectives will be resolved as soon as funding is procured.

If the scope of ERP and CALFED is to fund “ecosystem” restoration, then the applicants should address and justify other reasons and conditions for why breach openings should be modeled. Currently, this proposed project only states that conditions that will influence anadromous fish access to floodplains will be modeled. Other native fish species and aquatic organisms will undoubtedly use the floodplain, and they should be considered for modeling breach conditions.

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]

Modeling levee breaches is a very good approach for predicating habitat conditions. However, without clearly defined objectives, it is unclear if the questions (i.e. habitat conditions) asked in the

model will provide any useful information. In addition, the lack of a detailed monitoring approach suggest this objectives of this study will not 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]

The applicant has adequately justified the selection of research.

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]

This project will more than likely provide good information for future restoration projects, if the following occur:

- 1) appropriate conditions (defined) are modeled
- 2) post-implementation monitoring is sufficiently approached and implemented

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 states that monitoring will occur, however, he does not provide a monitoring approach. Without a monitoring approach it is difficult to assess whether the project will provide useful information.

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]

For the information provided, it appears the model is sufficient for completing the proposed data collection and management objectives.

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]

I do not have the expertise to assess whether the model is technically feasible or whether if it is feasible to input all model parameters.

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]

The primary applicant states he has “experience completing similar projects”, however, he does not list those projects so I don’t know what this means. In addition, the primary applicant does not provide a list of his most recent accomplishments or education level.

Miscellaneous comments

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

The proposed study has the *potential* to be a very good project. However, the applicants will appear to solely rely on an expert panel to guide them in the “formulation of alternatives, assessment of results and development of a post-implementation monitoring plan.” It is implied the expert panel will be doing most of the critical thinking on the project. The formulation of hypotheses and post-implementation plan should have been developed prior to the submission of this proposal. The author attempts to justify this proposed study by making several references to the affiliated Non-Structural Flood Management project. Although modeling actions will likely improve the success of the main project, the lack of clear hypotheses and monitoring plan make it difficult to give this proposal high marks on its own merits.

<p>Overall Evaluation Summary Rating</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>	<p>Provide a brief explanation of your summary rating</p> <p>The author attempts to justify this proposed study by making several references to the affiliated Non-Structural Flood Management project. Although modeling actions will likely improve the success of the main project, the lack of clear hypotheses and monitoring plan make it difficult to give this proposal high marks on its own merits.</p>
---	--