

Panel Scientific and Technical Review Form
(Note: Review comments will be anonymous, but public.)

Proposal number: 2001-G201

**Short Proposal Title: Wildlife Friendly
Farming Practices**

1a) Are the objectives and hypotheses clearly stated?

Summary of Reviewers comments:

The hypotheses and objectives are clearly stated. Information is included to clearly identify the data required to test each hypothesis.

Panel Summary:

Generally, yes. However, the hypotheses are general. They could be more refined, e.g. the direction of the expected changes. The objectives are general.

1b1) Does the conceptual model clearly explain the underlying basis for the proposed work?

Summary of Reviewers comments:

The consensus of the reviewers is that the model is clearly written, even going beyond what is necessary, giving a broader view of the actions effects on wildlife.

Panel Summary:

The model is very helpful, though there should have been a legend to help interpret the meaning of the dashed line in the model.

1b2) Is the approach well designed and appropriate for meeting the objectives of the project?

Summary of Reviewers comments:

There is disagreement among the reviewers. Two members said yes, the approach is well designed and will meet the objectives of the proposal. The project is “doable”. One reviewer showed concern that a large expense would go towards the project without a contractual agreement or some other means of assuring that the landowner would fulfill their obligation.

Panel Summary:

Yes. Improved water control will allow objectives to be met. The description of the mapping effort listed under Task 3 could more clearly state the purpose of the use of maps and how the information derived from the maps will be analyzed.

1c1) Has the applicant justified the selection of research, pilot or demonstration project, or a full-scale implementation project?

Summary of Reviewers comments:

There was general agreement that the selection of a pilot/demonstration project is justified.

Panel Summary:

Selection of a demonstration project is justified. It's on a realistic project scale for waterfowl use and water quality testing.

1c2) Is the project likely to generate information that can be used to inform future decision making?

Summary of Reviewers comments:

Yes. Landowners interested in the economic viability of wildlife-friendly farming practices will benefit from the information derived from the study. The adaptive management plan will allow other species to be taken into consideration, allowing additional information to be learned.

Panel Summary:

Yes. The waterfowl use and water quality information will be useful for future decision makers.

2a) Are the monitoring and information assessment plans adequate to assess the outcome of the project?

Summary of Reviewers comments:

The overall monitoring protocol is adequate, but there is no mention of the need to measure pesticide levels, which should be done.

Panel Summary:

The plan for monitoring waterfowl use is good, but the water quality monitoring plan should include measuring for pesticide levels. Is it "wildlife-friendly farming" if there are significant pesticide residues in the soil and drain-water associated with the crops?

2b) Are data collection, data management, data analysis, and reporting plans well-described, scientifically sound and adequate to meet the proposed objectives?

Summary of Reviewers comments:

Yes and no. The data collection methodology is well defined in the proposal, however no details were given as to how the data would be managed. The proposal is missing an opportunity to compare actual Pesticide Use Reports (Known types, amounts, date

applied, and method of application) filed with the county agricultural commissioner's office with detectable pesticide levels in the water samples.

Panel Summary:

How discussion of how the data is to be handled is very general. This is a demonstration project, therefore accurate data and analysis is needed. A control or baseline of pre-project water quality needs to be established. How will it be determined that 30 days more of water on the fields will yield significant differences?

3) Is the proposed work likely to be technically feasible?

Summary of Reviewers comments:

Yes. The technology is available to install pumps, levees, and water control structures. The applicant has adequately listed the materials and technological needs of the project.

Panel Summary:

Yes. The panel concurs with the reviewers.

4) Is the proposed project team qualified to efficiently and effectively implement the proposed project?

Summary of Reviewers comments:

Yes. The applicants are all well qualified to complete their portions of the project.

Panel Summary:

In general the team is well qualified, though there is a need for a statistical expert.

5)Other comments

- The time line does not coincide with the funding cycle.
- Need a commitment from the landowner that monitoring can be done for 2 farming cycles (at least! 5 years would be better), and new management strategies based on weather extremes, etc. can be incorporated into the study.

**Overall Evaluation
PANEL SUMMARY COMMENTS**

The panel felt that the concept of the project is good, but that the emphasis should be placed on studying and monitoring changes in water quality as a result of the farming-friendly wildlife practices, particularly regarding pesticide levels. It is already well known that winter flooding of grain crops benefits waterfowl.

Summary Rating

Excellent

Very Good

Good

Fair

Poor

Your Rating: GOOD