

Individual Review Form

Proposal number: 2001-H201-1

_Upper Trinity Watershed Stewardship Project

1a) Are the objectives and hypotheses clearly stated?

The objective(s) are clearly stated as the reduction of sediment related impacts to Trinity Lake, and therefore to the Central Valley Project. The hypotheses does not appear as a succinct statement in the document, but is instead found in Table 1. Monitoring and Data Collection Information . It is therefore being interpreted as: the reduction of sediment delivery to Trinity Lake by the proposed program will produce water quality/quantity improvements of sufficient magnitude to have positive environmental/water supply benefits to the Sacramento River.

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

The conceptual model seems adequate to explain the structure to be followed in developing a “comprehensive watershed stewardship plan”. The formation of a “coalition” to develop “visions and goals...” and “specific objectives” is not as well defined as it could have been

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

The approach has the potential to meet the objective of “recommending projects” for reducing sediment delivery to Trinity Lake. It is entirely unclear that the unquantified reduction of sediment input to Trinity Lake would have any noticeable (significant) benefits to the aquatic resources of the Sacramento River.

The methodology of the sediment survey is not specified, and could have a great influence on how successful the project will be in meeting the objectives. Only a methodology that produced site specific recommendations for treatments (ready to implement) would be capable of meeting this objective. Without the methodology explained it remains unclear if the recommendations are general or site specific.

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

The applicant has justification to select “Watershed Planning” as the project type. It is assumed that the implementation of the “comprehensive watershed stewardship plan” could later be developed into either a pilot/demonstration project, or a full-scale implementation project.

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

The development of a “comprehensive watershed stewardship plan” could, if done well, provide useful information to inform future land management activities. This could be useful to a larger geographic area than the Upper Trinity River. The land use patterns and physical similarity to some of the Upper Sacramento River tributaries would have to be established for the information to be useful.

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

The monitoring and assessment plans will be developed as a topics in the “Watershed Assessment and Action Plan” as the deliverable for the contract. It is only addressed as something to be developed. All the

expected “buzz words” like “science-based, community involvement, with the assistance of resource professionals”, etc. are there. In essence, there isn’t much to monitor until after the projects to be developed by the plan are actually developed. It does state that they will “collect and analyze pre- and post project data”.

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

The data collection, management, and analysis appear adequate for the aerial photo analysis and forest health status. It is not clear if all of the roads in the watershed are going to undergo an actual inventory through on the ground survey methods. The miles of roads are not quantified in the proposal, nor is the actual acreage to be included in the proposal.

The monitoring of the effect of sediment reduction above Trinity and Whiskeytown Lakes on siltation of spawning gravels in the Sacramento River is clearly not adequate.

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

The proposed work is technically feasible and has been successfully conducted in many other watersheds in Northwestern California, including the South Fork Trinity River by the project proponent.

The inventory of 100% of the roads in the watershed area is dependent on access to private property. With 29% of the watershed in private ownership, and that portion being the most intensively managed for timber harvest, access to those private lands is critical to the feasibility of the project. Nothing in the proposal indicates that access to the private lands has been granted for the project.

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

The proposed team is qualified to effectively implement the project. However, the use of technical consultants through a service contract for the writing of the “Watershed Action Plan” was noted in the budget.

Miscellaneous comments

The \$65,000 in the budget for conducting the sediment inventory may not be adequate to inventory thoroughly all of the watershed area. The miles of roads to be surveyed were not specified.

The connection of this project to actual fisheries habitat improvements in the Sacramento River are remote. Suspended sediment that has passed through two reservoirs is highly unlikely to settle out on spawning riffles in the Sacramento River.

**Overall Evaluation
Summary Rating**

Provide a brief explanation of your summary rating

This project would be a great project if it were in a tributary entering directly into the Sacramento/San Joaquin without a major reservoir. It is a good proposal, its just in the wrong location.



Fair
