

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

**Proposal number: 2001-I202**

**Short Proposal Title: Estuary Action  
Challenge**

**1a) Are the objectives and hypotheses clearly stated?**

*Summary of Reviewers comments:*

Outside reviewers both comment on lack of scientific methods.

*Panel Summary:*

The hypothesis is very weak. It is a statement of opinion rather than a testable theory.

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

*Summary of Reviewers comments:*

No basis of scientific methods or discussion of why species were selected.

*Panel Summary:*

Conceptual model does indicate problems they are addressing.

Some of the statements are strong and broad, yet lack supporting data. While there is truth in what they are saying, some of the comments may be overstated.

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

*Summary of Reviewers comments:*

Well targeted, yet not developed by grade level. No evaluation of long-term impact.

*Panel Summary:*

Teacher training and on multi-class visits are strong aspect of conceptual model.

The approach is good, some parts are excellent, yet there is no hypothesis that this is supporting.

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

*Summary of Reviewers comments:*

No indication of on-going restoration or past success. No indication that species are appropriate to area or being planted at right time of year.

***Panel Summary:***

The applicant indicates they have selected schools, but have not really identified the reasons for selecting these schools and creeks. They do indicate they are looking for low-income schools that service ethnically diverse neighborhoods.

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

***Summary of Reviewers comments:***

No indication of evaluating change in behavior. Evaluation is merely based on numbers of participants, not measuring change in behaviors.

***Panel Summary:***

Parts of the proposal do this very well. The fish cooking can lead to individual decision making with a direct impact on personal health.

Introducing students to creeks in their neighborhoods is desirable.

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

***Summary of Reviewers comments:***

Lacks scientific monitoring or checking long term effects.

***Panel Summary:***

There is no indication of evaluation of the outcomes.

**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:***

Unclear data collection objectives.

***Panel Summary:***

The applicant would be well advised to rethink the necessity of permits required for their work. The assumption they state regarding permits on the bottom of page 8 may not be correct.

Specifically:

The panel has questions regarding the raising of tree frogs.

Why is this species selected?

Have impacts of releasing frogs been evaluated?

Is there a demonstrated need for tree frogs?

Do lessons include ethics and laws relating to movement of animals within habitats? (The concern here is that kids may get the message that is okay to capture wild animals, keep them as pets and then release them where ever they feel is appropriate. This is a particular concern with wildlife agencies)

Raising and releasing live animals (Tree Frogs) requires a Scientific Collection Permit issued by CADFG. The applicant indicates they do not have one.

Applicant needs to check with regulatory agencies for CEQA compliance in their work to “grow native trees and wildflowers and plant them beside creeks, ...and raise and release tree frogs into their native creek habitats”. Even if the work is on public land, the permits are still required.

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

***Summary of Reviewers comments:***

Yes

***Panel Summary:***

Yes.

The budget seems to be poorly constructed and lacks adequate justification. For example, if the Executive Director is compensated at \$52,000 per year, it is unclear why all staff in the budget are billed at \$50 per hour with a 25% overhead? (Equivalent pay rate of \$100,000 per hour)

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

***Summary of Reviewers comments:***

Absolutely

***Panel Summary:***

Agree

### **5) Other comments**

The applicant could have a stronger proposal if they indicated networking and collaborative efforts with other agencies and non-profits. The services offered overlap in scope and geographic area with other programs, yet there is little in the proposal to indicate collaborative efforts.

This program has been in existence for 8 years. They should be able to identify long term effects of this program.

**Overall Evaluation**  
**PANEL SUMMARY COMMENTS**

Overall, the panel rated this proposal very highly. We liked the hands on interaction and service provided to schools. The strongest aspect is the peer teaching on fish consumption (how to cook fish to reduce toxicity)

The environmental justice aspect of this proposal is very strong. The applicant deals with a couple of schools in very high need of services.

Demonstrations of safe food consumption are considered to be very desirable and effective. This is considered to be the strongest point of the proposal.

Your Rating: **VERY GOOD**