

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

Proposal number: 2001-I211

Short Proposal Title: Bay Delta

1a) Are the objectives and hypotheses clearly stated?

Summary of Reviewers Comments:

The problem and the audiences are clearly defined. The problem statement, hypotheses, and objectives mesh with the target audiences.

The objectives are clearly stated and seem to be quite appropriate.

This proposal includes several different problem statements and audiences. The rationale for the selection of these elements is clearly worded and seems highly appropriate. The different elements include: Non-invasive species posters to help boaters understand their role in reducing harmful species in the Bay/Delta; Journalist Tour to help the media understand key issues when reporting on Bay Delta stories; and Teaching Workshops to assist underserved youth in understanding the complex world of the Bay Delta issues.

Panel Summary:

The objective of this program is to educate and provide unbiased, easily assessable information for three groups - boaters and anglers, the media, and K-12 educators. For each of the groups identified, different strategies were used to help them understand complex watershed issues. For the boaters and anglers, non-native invasive species posters informed them on NIS plants and nuisance pests. For the media, journalists the venue included educational field trips - including presentations by technical specialists- and an Internet briefing website. K-12 Educators in under-served communities were provided with opportunities to participate in the Project WET program.

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

Summary of Reviewers Comments:

Each of the project components including Non-invasive Species Posters, Journalist Tour and Bay-Delta Briefings, and Teaching Tools/Workshops include a carefully crafted model and explains the rationale for each step. The model for the non-invasive species posters included: research into what had been done previously, project completion steps, evaluation, and distribution. Journalist tour includes the need for such a tour, overview of tour, and publicity for tour. The teaching tools section included the need for sharing these tools with a wider audience, organization and how these workshops will be conducted, and cooperative ventures with other organizations and curriculums

Panel Summary:

The component involving journalists is very popular and is widely attended. The one concern however, would be whether such an event would be as popular given that two similar events were held recently.

Project WET is an excellent model and a proven project.

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

Summary of Reviewers Comments:

The approach is well designed and very appropriate for meeting the objectives. Each of the elements has been selected to resolve problems with people's understanding of the need for increased Bay-Delta water quality concerns. The approaches are well designed for meeting each target audience profiles.

Panel Summary:

The journalist's tour and Project WET component are fine. We, however, questioned the effectiveness of the posters. It would be helpful to see further justification of the value of posters as an educational tool. Such visual messages are powerful, but are difficult to measure.

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

Summary of Reviewers Comments:

Yes, the need for this project's "three pronged" approach is clearly stated. The success of similar previous projects is well supported by the attachments.

Panel Summary:

Since the poster project is new, there was no demonstration project cited. Journalist tours have occurred on two other occasions and seem to be quite popular. Tom Philp, the Environmental Reporter for the Sacramento Bee, wrote "I rely on the Water Education Board for balanced, unbiased information on complicated water issues in the West."

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

Summary of Reviewers Comments:

The evaluations of each of these projects is likely to lead to increased awareness by boaters, media, and teachers of the importance of a healthy Bay Delta Watershed and will likely lead to more positive decisions about their role in enhancing the health of the watershed. Both media and teachers have a role in sharing this information with many other recipients, thus it has a multiplier effect.

Panel Summary:

All three aspects seek to educate large audiences of people over a fairly significant period of time. Through the journalist tours, reporters will not only gain a more comprehensive understanding of

complex issues but be able to explain these issue more easily to their readership. The Project WET component enables teachers from under-served communities to have access to quality environmental education programs. This aspect is extremely important as these teachers normally do have access to such programs and outreach to minority populations has largely been a low priority of the environmental movement. In a recent poll, studies show that Hispanics rate the environment a high priority. This shows that non-traditional populations should be considered when making decisions involving the environment.

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

Summary of Reviewers Comments:

A thorough evaluation program is explained and seems quite appropriate for the objectives.

Panel Summary:

There was some, but not enough monitoring and information assessment. Follow-up and tracking articles written by journalists was an excellent aspect. Such information enables the project managers to assess the effectiveness of the tours and the quality of coverage of watershed issues over an extended period of time. Further research on the effectiveness on posters as an education tool would be beneficial.

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:

Although this criteria would be more appropriate for a research project, the evaluation components as mentioned above seem adequate to meet the objectives.

Panel Summary:

The collection of data for the tours and Project WET are fine. Data collection for the posters, however was somewhat lacking. It seems unrealistic that a 50% rate of return can be expected for collection for survey research.

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

Summary of Reviewers Comments:

Yes

Panel Summary:

Yes.

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

Summary of Reviewers Comments:

Yes, the key staff are definitely qualified to continue the activities proposed in this project as well as implement the upgrades for the web-site and produce a new poster for NIS awareness. They do document some of their previous accomplishments.

Panel Summary:

Yes. The team is extremely well qualified to carry out the proposed project. A majority of the participants have a media background and have run journalist education programs in the past.

Additional Comments:

In terms of the website, we had concerns over whether this aspect duplicated CALFED's efforts and whether this source could truly provide unbiased information given that it would be funded by CALFED. Further, this aspect brings into question whether CALFED should make their own website more accessible and easier to use.

**Overall Evaluation
PANEL SUMMARY COMMENTS**

Panel had following suggestions for funding various tasks if funding is limited in order of importance:

- 1) fund only Teaching tools and delete other proposals; or
- 2) fund only Teaching tools and Journalists Tour but delete Internet briefing activity;
- 3) add in posters to suggestion #2

The TARP thought the internet web site might be duplicative of CALFED's site or if not, that CALFED should hire someone to upgrade their website (perhaps WEF) to make it more informative and easy to use. IF the website is funded, the proponent should work closely with CALFED to ensure that CALFED's website is linked to this new site.

Summary Rating

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

Your Rating: VERY GOOD