

Draft Individual Review Form

Proposal number 2001-K207-2

Short Proposal Title: Lower Yuba River Monitoring

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]

Clearly stated objectives and hypotheses. Objectives and hypotheses are understandable although poorly stated. For example, wording such as "unusually high concentrations" and "not contaminated" are ambiguous.

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]

Sound approach (conceptual model, study design, methods, analysis and interpretation). With one exception, the various hypotheses seemingly address the overall purpose of the study, which is to better understand fish passage problems at Daguerre Dam. The exception is the hypothesis dealing with mercury-contaminated sediments sequestered behind the dam; the proposal does not clearly indicate how the mercury data will be used to assess or resolve fish passage problems. In general, a lack of details make it difficult to ascertain if study design, methods, and data analysis/interpretation are adequate for testing the hypotheses. Specifically, the proposal should clearly state assumptions of various methods or approaches used to test specific hypotheses, and also include explanations or justifications as to whether the assumptions are reasonable given evidence in the published literature. For example, are visual counts determined by snorkeling and boat observation surveys suitable for quantifying relative numbers of adult salmon/steelhead and other anadromous fishes in a "big river" such as the proposed study area? In other words, what evidence is available to indicate that such results can be repeatable and sufficiently accurate to detect ecologically relevant differences in fish abundance? Also, when radio-tagging fish, what evidence indicates that the handling procedures of the researchers will not alter "normal fish behavior?"

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]

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]

Adaptive management approach. Not applicable because this is an example of targeted 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]

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]

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]

Adequacy of monitoring, information assessment, and reporting plans. The proposal offers a very superficial description of data handling and storage, and expected products/outcomes. No information on quality assurance and quality control are provided even though the methods include use of sophisticated electronic equipment (radio telemetry) and sensitive chemical procedures (total mercury/methyl mercury determinations).

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]

Technical feasibility. Details are inadequate for assessing the technical feasibility of the proposed study.

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]

Qualifications. With the exception of Dr. Alpers, I am not familiar with the quality of research experiences among identified study participants. Although other study participants may publish gray literature, Dr. Alpers is possibly the only investigator that publishes on a consistent basis in peer-reviewed scientific journals. The proposal does not describe the facilities available for performing the work.

Miscellaneous comments

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

**Overall Evaluation
Summary Rating**

Provide a brief explanation of your summary rating

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

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

Overall Evaluation: In summary, this proposal probably deserves an overall rating of fair. In my opinion, the proposal is still in "rough draft" form and would greatly benefit from additional thought and literature review/synthesis.
