

## Draft Individual Review Form

**Proposal number: 2001-K208-3**

**Short Proposal Title:**Evaluation of Floodplains

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

The objectives are clearly stated and include a series of hypotheses for each of the main research questions presented by the applicant. The hypotheses do a good job of looking at many of the uncertainties associated with floodplains and their utilization as rearing habitat. Having such clearly defined objectives and hypotheses will help the proposed project attain its goals of furthering our knowledge of floodplains.

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

Each set of hypotheses is qualified by information that clearly explains the basis for each of the proposed tasks. It is clear that the applicant has broad knowledge and understanding of the potentials and uncertainties associated with floodplains and their use as rearing habitats.

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

The overall approach is well designed and appropriate for meeting the objectives of the project, however, this reviewer has one main concern. The field sampling consists of three two-week field surveys spread over six months. Conditions on floodplains can change rapidly potentially altering parameters that affect fish utilization of the floodplain. Limited sampling over these changing conditions may make addressing many of the hypotheses difficult including ones dealing with growth, emigration and stranding. Another issue with limited sampling may include failure to sample over a wide enough range of conditions to make any conclusions.

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

The applicant notes that the many uncertainties surrounding floodplains and their utilization as rearing habitat preclude pilot projects or full-scale implementation of habitat restoration actions. The applicant lists among the uncertainties as what habitats within the floodplain are important and is stranding a problem on floodplains. The applicant states that research of this nature will eventually lead to demonstration and full scale restoration projects.

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

If the applicant is able to address all of the hypotheses stated then the results will unquestionable be useful in making future decisions regarding floodplains. The current trend towards restoration of floodplains is largely based upon antidotal information and limited efforts in Yolo Bypass and the Cosumnes River. Any additional information, particularly from another site, could help advance our knowledge and lead to educated restoration activities such as full scale floodplain restoration and the development of microhabitats within floodplains.

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

As a research project the monitoring and information assessment plan is largely described in the approach and as such is covered in that section.

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

As stated above, this reviewer is concerned that data collection on a limited basis will make proper analysis difficult. The hypotheses are very detailed and will require strong data in order to correlate results to habitat conditions. Aside from this concern, all other aspects of the collection and analysis parts of this project are comprehensive.

Data management and reporting plans are complete and should help meet the objectives of the project as well as keeping stakeholders well informed.

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

The proposed work is technically feasible with the given that conditions on floodplains change quickly and may alter or prevent sampling over variable amounts of time. The applicant has purposely cited adaptive management regarding sampling protocol. I regard this as a positive that reflects the applicant's knowledge that a wide range of habitats and conditions will be encountered during sampling. These changing conditions and associated range of sampling techniques can make comparing efforts difficult.

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

The project management team consists of two senior scientists, who combined bring Delta and fluvial geomorphology experience to the project. Both lead field biologists have experience on floodplains including some on the project area. The combination of this expertise would be important for effectively implementing the project.

**Miscellaneous comments**

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

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**Overall Evaluation  
Summary Rating**

Excellent

- x  Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

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**Provide a brief explanation of your summary rating**

Overall, this reviewer rated the proposal as very good. The proposal was well prepared and researched. The objectives and hypotheses were well defined and detailed and addressed many of the uncertainties associated with floodplains. Information to be gained by this project would unquestionably further our understanding of floodplain rearing and hopefully lead to better habitat conditions on existing and future floodplains. This reviewer's main concern is whether three two-week sampling periods in six months will be adequate to obtain cost effective data that produces good analysis.