

Geographic Review Panel 1 – Bay Delta

Proposal number: E213

Short Proposal Title: Mandeville Island

1. Applicability to CALFED ERP Goals and Implementation Plan and CVPIA priorities, and relevance to ERP and CVPIA priorities for your region. Applicability to both ERP goals and CVPIA priorities is clearly described.

2. Linkages/coordination with previously funded projects or other restoration activities in your region. Linkages to several Delta island restoration projects are identified. We see no conflicts with other projects.

3. Feasibility, especially the project's ability to move forward in a timely and successful manner. The Panel agrees with the TARP Summary that insufficient documentation exists to determine technical feasibility. For example, the Project Summary states the island will be recovered by restoring a portion of existing levees and constructing setback levees. The Appendix C tasklist describes Subtask 4.2.4. as draining the island, which indicates having 100% functional levees. Is this feasible? The assumption is that between the \$100,000 the landowner has spent to date on the levees, and upgrades with the funding for this proposal, that the levees will be functional, but this was not detailed in the proposal. Feasibility is difficult to assess.

4. Qualifications of the applicants and others involved in implementing the proposed project. The Panel agrees more with the independent Reviewer's comments, and less with the TARP Summary. The organization chart generally identifies a multi-disciplinary team with broad experience to implement general aquatic/terrestrial restoration. Additional experience should be added, however, in the fields of plant restoration ecology, and hydrology.

5. Local involvement (including environmental compliance). This project indicates local support. There is no formal public outreach program, and no known opposition.

6. Cost. Cost for this project is \$17.3 million to convert 300 acres of existing flooded island to shallow water tidal and seasonal wetlands, and to enhance levees for fish and wildlife benefit (presumably through plantings). At over \$57,000 per converted acre (plus an unspecified amount of improved levee habitat), the panel finds the cost investment not commensurate with expected benefits.

7. Cost sharing. The proposal identifies two potential funding sources that may be available in the future.

8. Additional comments. None.

Regional Ranking

Panel Ranking: Low

Provide a brief explanation of your ranking: Overall evaluation from the TARP was Poor, citing lack of proposal interpretation as a fatal flaw. The panel concurs.

One of the expected products is listed as levee enhancement for fish and wildlife benefits. Other than the Task 4 phase that includes an exotic plant eradication program, the panel could find no plan to accomplish this outcome.

The Panel found that the \$17 million project cost and the expected outcomes of this proposal falls short in this region relative to other proposals submitted under the Shallow Water/Tidal Marsh Habitat category.