

Selection Panel (Primary) Review

– **Fund** (a proposal recommended for funding at the amount sought or funding in part of selected project tasks or subtasks)

X Reconsider if Revised (a proposal that is a high priority but that requires some revision followed by additional review prior to being recommended for funding)

– **Not Recommended**

Amount Sought: \$638,851

Fund This Amount: \$0

Conditions recommended (Conditions that applicants would need to meet to obtain funds may be recommended for proposals suggested for either full or partial funding. For proposals recommended for partial funding, conditions that identify the funded tasks or subtasks must be recommended.)

Please provide a brief explanation of your rating, including an explanation of the reasons for any conditions that the panel recommends. Revisions required of proposals recommended for reconsideration should be outlined, together with a justification for the suggested revisions:

This proposal addresses monitoring of the effects of a variety of restoration actions in a high priority area where there has been a significant ERP and CVPIA investment. Before funds are awarded, however it needs to be better coordinated with other monitoring proposals for this Sacramento River area. A revised proposal, for a combined amount of approximately \$2,000,000, should be developed cooperatively by the Nature Conservancy, River Partners, and CSU Chico, combining key tasks and personnel from each proposal, to address the goal of assessing riparian restoration, channel and river dynamics, and habitat development for species of concern through: (1) aerial photography, mapping, digitizing, and classifying land cover and ownership, channels, and floodplains, (2) quantifying channel migration, including meander history erosion, and floodplain deposition including LIDAR and IKONOS subtasks (as appropriate and feasible within the funding limits), (3) monitoring of vegetation (including structure, composition, and cottonwood recruitment), birds, valley elderberry long-horn beetle and fish use of floodplain, and (4) producing reports about monitoring results (using the Scorecard approach proposed by TNC), and project management. Tasks addressing Argentine ants, large woody debris and social impact assessment should not be included in the revised proposal. The Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum should be considered for the public outreach component of a revised proposal.

The panel agrees that this proposal could provide significant new information on general biology and ecology of the valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB) that may be highly applicable to recovery efforts. Its relationship to grant #051 is key to a larger landscape understanding of VELB populations. This proposal needs to respond to the specific comments of the technical panel regarding concerns with spatial autocorrelation.

Technical Panel (Primary) Review

above average

Explanation Of Summary Rating

The technical panel viewed this to be a good proposal (with the exception of task 5, which seemed less necessary for assessing restoration success). The proposal was ranked "very high" by the region. No administrative concerns were raised. The technical panel based its ranking on the fact that researchers will study key aspects of the population biology of VELB at several restoration sites; they will examine the recovery of VELB populations and how that recovery is influenced by local site conditions and proximity to natural habitats. The proposal will address a key science knowledge gap in the management and recovery of VELB that should be useful in understanding what is needed for recovery of VELB.

Review Form

Goals And Justification

The proposal will assess the effectiveness of restoration activities for the recovery of Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (VELB), a species of concern. It will examine population biology of this species at 8 restoration sites (2 of which have been funded by CALFED). The project will examine the recovery of VELB populations and how that recovery is influenced by local site conditions and proximity to natural habitats. The proposal clearly identifies the restoration sites to be monitored, but it does not describe the original restoration objectives at each of these sites. It is not clear whether VELB recovery was the primary goal of restoration activities at all of these sites. The proposal presents a conceptual model that identifies the linkage between physical processes, elderberry survival and growth, and VELB populations. The conceptual model and analyses proposed ignore top-down impacts on elderberry or VELB populations such as deer grazing or Argentine ant predation. These influences are mentioned in the text but the conceptual model and study design has paid them inadequate attention. The mechanism of VELB dispersal is never described, so it is not clear whether the research is designed appropriately to measure dispersal. The proposal identifies 9 hypotheses; tests of all 9 are not needed to assess restoration success or to improve future designs of restoration projects. In particular, hypotheses 6–9 (which assess impacts of damming) seem less relevant to assessing restoration practices (see also below).

Approach

The approach is reasonable although inadequate attention is paid to top–down forces, and the technical panel had some concerns that the design may not be adequate to meet the project's objectives because of problems with spatial autocorrelation. There are 31 fields distributed among the 8 units; if each field is considered an independent sample, then there are likely enough sample sites to address the hypotheses effectively. The researchers writing the proposal recognize that autocorrelation may be a problem and may lead to a reduction of independent sites. The final number of independent sites has to be greater than about 24 to justify the statistical analyses proposed. If fields are found to be autocorrelated and not independent, the technical panel suggests that fields that are not true replicates be eliminated from the study and more restoration sites be studied to get true replication. The project builds upon a monitoring protocol well established at two previously studied restoration sites. The restoration sites to be studied vary in size, age of planting (although age of the sites being monitored was not noted), and connectivity to other stands. The proposal will address a key science knowledge gap in the management and recovery of VELB; in particular, there is minimal existing knowledge of VELB distribution, habitat preferences, colonization rates, and dispersal distances. The species–specific information learned in this study could be useful in understanding what is needed for recovery and hence delisting of VELB.

The justification for some aspects of the elderberry sampling were unclear to the technical panel. For example, why are shrubs being remapped and why is a subset being recensused? Relatively few characteristics of elderberry will be measured for subsequent analysis. The proposers should consider including additional measures such as plant chemistry (or provide either data or citations to peer–reviewed publications showing it is not necessary) or micrometeorological measures.

It is not clear how data analyses will disentangle the potentially confounding factors such as different maintenance practices, invasive plants, pathogens, or initial quality of planting stock. This is a correlational study that is limited by the nature of pre–existing restoration projects. An experimental approach would probably provide a clearer picture of VELB population biology.

Evaluation of the impacts of "damming" (Task 5) appear to be less related to restoration practices and hence a less valuable aspect of this proposal. The term is not adequately defined with respect to which aspect(s) of damming is likely to influence VELB populations. Damming is more likely to have impact on riparian species other than elderberry, and there are factors other than damming that would seem more relevant to elderberry.

Feasibility And Likelihood Of Success

The scale of the project is unprecedented for VELB, and potentially will provide a valuable database for researchers, land managers, and regulators. External and panel technical reviewers felt the project was technically feasible. Neither the environmental compliance review nor the the regional panel identified any impeding circumstances.

Performance Measures

External technical reviewers were uncertain of the usefulness of these data to evaluations of performance of previous restoration actions since the purpose and conceptual model underlying previous restoration actions were not provided. However, the project will assess the broader picture of restoration actions that in themselves may be meeting success criteria, but may or may not be contributing towards the eventual recovery of VELB. The data will be useful in learning more about the population biology and ecology of VELB. Development of the habitat quantity index offers promise of being useful for assessing the suitability of different fields for VELB.

Products

This project will provide information on the general population biology of VELB that will be useful in future decisions on the status of this species. The project creates a local partnership between River Partners, USFWS, and UC Davis researchers. The project will produce results suitable for publication in the peer-reviewed literature. It appears that data access will be largely through published reports, scientific papers and presentations to interested groups. Although reports will be available on the internet, the proposal does not state that the data sets will be.

Capabilities

The team appears qualified and the mix of disciplines appropriate. One external technical reviewer noted a very positive aspect of the team is having a quantitative ecologist to sort out statistical problems in what will be a large descriptive data set. The project team appears to be able to complete the project.

Budget

It appears to be a cost-effective budget, although the parts relating to damming effects are not an essential part of the proposed research.

Regional Review

The information on population biology and ecology of VELB is of interest to the region because this is a species for which recovery information is currently lacking. The proposal presents a low-cost, efficient use of labor to collect data for statistically rigorous population and habitat modeling for VELB and its host plant; the project promises to collect the most detailed habitat and demographic data to date on VELB recovery. The region rated it "very high".

Administrative Review

The prior-phase funding review noted that all went smoothly, although there has been some delay in completion of the study. The environmental compliance review noted that a USFWS permit would be needed to do the proposed sampling on the wildlife refuges, but did not anticipate that there would be any difficulty with this. The budget review identified further information needed if the proposal is selected for funding, but did not note any insurmountable problems.

Additional Comments

There is overlap between this proposal and another proposal in this grant pool (#051), which is examining VELB success on a broader landscape scale, whereas the proposal being evaluated here considers more detailed within-site conditions associated with the success of VELB populations. Personnel are shared between the two proposals. If both are funded, clarification of how these data will be linked to studies in the larger scale proposal should be provided.

Technical Review Panel's Overall Evaluation Rating:
above average

Sacramento Regional Review

Very High

Review:

1. Applicability to ERP goals and regional priorities.

Proposes to monitor 8 elderberry restoration sites in the high-priority Sacramento River ecosystem (SRNWR). Restoration at 2 of these sites was previously funded by CALFED. Project addresses ERP and CVPIA restoration goals in that it seeks to provide detailed habitat and population info that will inform determinations of recovery for a MSCS Big R species (Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle); a species for which recovery information is currently lacking in its recovery plan.

2. Links with other restoration actions.

Proposal is tied to a TNC proposal (ERP-2004-#51) that proposes to expand its analysis of regional VELB habitat restoration success using the more detailed data on local site factors supplied by this proposal. Project should benefit future restoration projects because it will lead to better selection of restoration and mitigation sites and will develop improved planting designs and elucidate factors influencing elderberry growth and recruitment that affect VELB colonization. Data and information collected will be summarized in a final report to be made available online at the River Partners website as well as archived at the SRNWR complex, River Partners, and the Sacramento F office. Publications in peer-reviewed journals and articles for local periodicals will also be produced.

3. Local Circumstances.

Project is feasible and no local constraints on the project's ability to move forward are anticipated. Investigators will need to apply for a Special Use Permit through USFWS to work on SRNWR lands; permit was not included in application.

4. Local involvement.

Project involves USFWS restoration action sites and UC Davis researchers, who will perform the majority of the analysis. Project includes an adequate plan for reporting to management agencies, the general public, and the scientific community; however, participation and presentation in local or regional conferences would bring project results more to the fore. In addition, findings and updated planting plans and other restoration guidelines could be made available to other public and private VELB restoration actions in the region. Project creates a

local partnership between River Partners, USFWS, and UC Davis researchers. Ability to apply for other federal and state funding sources are high since action involves a listed species for which substantial economic and human resources are invested annually. Involvement by UC Davis scientists may create opportunities for attracting additional funding (e.g. NSF) since research design incorporates topics in theoretical ecology such as population dynamics, ecosystem modeling, etc.

5. *Local Value.*

Proposal presents a low-cost, efficient use of labor to collect data for statistically rigorous population and habitat modeling for VELB and its host plant; project promises to collect the most detailed habitat and demographic data to date on VELB recovery. Project has high potential to guide restoration of elderberry ecosystems in the region and should help lead to better planting designs and restoration site selection. Project will measure success in obtaining restoration objectives and help determine whether adjustments to adaptive management are needed. Results should be applicable at various scales.

6. *Other comments:*

Experimental design and analysis are rigorous. Investigations will be driven by a conceptual model and testable hypotheses whose analysis has high potential to tease out important mechanisms affecting VELB and elderberry habitat relationships and population dynamics.

Overall Ranking:

Very High

Provide a brief summary explanation of the committee's ranking:

Panel ranks this proposal Very High not only because it meets all PSP criteria, but because it promises to provide detailed habitat and demographic data to feed into the VELB species recovery plan, data which is lacking at this time. This information is especially critical given the substantial economic and human resources devoted to compliance with endangered species regulations and recovery of VELB by various public and private entities.

External Technical Review

Goals And Justification

The goals of this study are clear—to determine recolonization of the endangered VELB in 8 riparian restoration sites. Some information exists on colonization of some locations, but a large scale survey is needed to determine whether the VELB can be delisted. Specific, clear hypotheses are stated.

Approach

The restoration sites vary in size, age of planting, and connectivity to other stands, and hypotheses about connectivity and VELB dispersal range will be tested. Field observations will include observations of exit holes in planted and natural stands of elderberry, and locations will be mapped. The researchers will also take note of the presence of Argentine ants, that could affect VELB survival. To determine the suitability of sites where elderberry has been planted, they will also measure soil characteristics and estimate plant growth rate. VELB recolonization and plant dimensions are two separate goals that are reasonable to assess together in one study. The insects depend upon successful plant establishment and growth for recolonization, and secondly, the investigators will need to visit each of the trees, and can collect vegetation, soil, and insect data more efficiently with one visit. Funding for multiple years of observation is requested to assess the stability of VELB colonization and tree growth.

Technical Feasibility

Because this will depend entirely on observations, the relatively low number of sites (8) may not enable an adequate test of the hypotheses relating to connectivity and dispersal range. However, the study benefits from a large number of observations within large restoration sites. The within-site variability will be measured, and may provide additional evidence of factors that promote VELB colonization, such as tree growth rate or distance to the nearest native tree from an edge. Unfortunately restoration monitoring normally suffers from the limitations of pre-existing experimental designs. Even if the hypotheses are not adequately tested, the study will still fulfill the important goal of learning whether the VELB has colonized across multiple sites along the river, and whether such factors as slow tree growth limit VELB recolonization. The only other approach would be experimental—a funded study to plant trees in an unconfounded, replicated experimental design, and follow tree growth and VELB recolonization over several years. A strength of the research overall is having a quantitative ecologist as a member of the research team, who will be able to help sort out the relationships statistically.

Performance Measures

Yes to all these questions, with the limitation described under Technical capability that understanding relationships from the pre-existing design of actual restoration sites depends upon testing multivariate relationships and will not yield as strong a conclusion as purposely planned restoration experiments.

Products

The researchers will make the information available in a variety of forms that will be accessible by managers, regulators, and scientists.

Capabilities

The group has experience with this system, and appears well-qualified.

Budget

The budget is large, but probably reasonable for the number of observations. One question, is the very high number of observations per site needed? A power analysis could be done to determine the number of observations needed to relate stem size to VELB recolonization. With only 8 sites to determine connectivity, it is not clear to me that having more observations within a site will help test the connectivity hypothesis. It may be more useful to make fewer observations within a site, with more sites—but additional sites may not be available.

Additional Comments

External Technical Review

Goals And Justification

The proposed project addresses a key science knowledge gap in the management and recovery of VELB, an important species for any work affecting riparian habitats in the Central Valley, the heart of the CALFED program area. The goals and justification are clearly stated and relevant to riparian restoration and management in the Central Valley, and the hypotheses are very justified considering our currently minimal existing knowledge of VELB distribution, colonization rates, dispersal distances, and the effectiveness of ubiquitous and mandatory horticultural restoration practices. Overall, the project proposes to conduct a meta-level monitoring program of existing restoration sites and adjacent natural areas. In general, the proposed measurements, use of existing data, and analyses appear well-suited to addressing the key research questions.

The intended meaning of the term “damming” in the proposal should be defined explicitly. At various times the authors suggest it refers to one or more of the following: in-stream discharge, seasonal water management, changes in the frequency and extent of inundation, changes to channel morphology, reduction in floodplain habitat and natural riparian forest recruitment. The researchers should be specific as to which effect(s) associated with damming they are explicitly testing in their studies because it is difficult to disentangle the effects of damming from other potentially confounding factors on their subject measurements (elderberry growth, survival, and recruitment), such as levees, land management, agriculture, vegetation clearance, mining, and the introduction of exotic species.

I find the portion of the project address the effects of "damming" to be the weakest due to the large number of potentially confounding factors and the expected small sample size of natural elderberry seedlings. As a species with seeds distributed by birds, water and floodplain management is expected to have an indirect effect on elderberry extent and regeneration. Rather, land management, vegetation clearance, tree cutting, fence lines and other bird perch availability, competing invasive plants, and the availability of large canopy trees, especially valley oak, would play a larger direct role in governing natural regeneration of elderberry. The proposed research design for the effects of damming is better suited to species directly affected by sedimentation and water management such as willow and cottonwood.

Approach

The overall approach is well-designed, and builds on extensive monitoring already completed by the TNC and River Partners. The monitoring, evaluations, and results proposed here will be exceptionally useful to land and resource managers, restoration ecologists, and

regulatory agencies at work in riparian habitats in the Central Valley. The proposal, however, should be more explicit as to how data analyses will disentangle the potentially confounding factors in hypotheses 4 and 5 (p.9) such as different maintenance practices, invasive plants, pathogens, or initial quality of planting stock. Similarly, in comparisons between natural and restored sites, explicit information on land use history affecting elderberry growth, survival, and regeneration should be described.

Technical Feasibility

The scale of the project is unprecedented for VELB, and potentially will provide a valuable database for researchers, land managers, and regulators. I am skeptical, however, of the feasibility of accomplishing Task 5 due to the general lack of natural elderberry seedlings.

Performance Measures

The data to be collected will provide a "meta level" monitoring that has potential to guide the eventual recovery and delisting of the VELB. Importantly, the project will assess the broader picture of restoration or mitigation actions that in themselves may be meeting success criteria, but collective may or may not be contributing towards the eventual full recovery of the habitat and the species. The results, therefore, should inform a new conceptual model on how to effectively plan and implement a recovery plan for the VELB. The results should inform or even provide new guidelines the future landscape scale location of mitigation/restoration sites, as well as their internal design, maintenance, and management.

Products

The project has great potential to result in exceptionally useful information for regulators, land and resource managers, restoration scientists, and environmentalists alike. The project should result in several (3–5) high-quality peer-reviewed research papers in scientific journals. In addition, the project applicant proposes to make the larger data set available to other researchers and managers via the internet. Both sources are critical to ensuring that key regulators (USFWS) have full access to the data, results, and interpretations in order to develop and implement an effective recovery plan for the VELB. In addition, findings may have great bearing on the development of new, perhaps more effective, Conservation Guidelines for the VELB that will be more effective in the direct recovery and maintenance of VELB populations, as opposed to indirect habitat evaluations.

Capabilities

The proposed project team appears highly capable of completing the project, as it is well-within their range of expertise and direct field research experience.

Budget

The proposed budget appears reasonable and adequate, and a good value considering the very labor intensive yet specialized nature of the work.

Additional Comments

External Technical Review

Goals And Justification

The objective of this proposal is to measure the suitability of restored elderberry savanna habitats for colonization by the listed Valley Elderberry Long-horned Beetle (VELB). Monitoring activities have been proposed at eight restoration sites to meet the program objectives. While there is adequate information regarding the location and extent of monitoring sites the proposal is lacking background on the specific restoration objectives of each restoration site. Variances in restoration objectives should be taken into consideration during the evaluation of the success of each project in relation to the ability of a restored area to support VELB. A statement of the restoration goals for the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge is provided thus, "to protect, enhance, and restore critical habitat and natural communities of native, resident, and migratory wildlife species". Assuming that the monitoring sites are located in a heterogeneous environment made up of numerous habitat types. Natural communities other than the elderberry savanna are likely imperiled and therefore subject to restoration efforts in the proposed study area. No distinctions are made between restoration objectives at each restoration/monitoring site potentially making evaluation of providing habitat for VELB an inappropriate measure of restoration success. The proposal has identified nine separate hypotheses which the program of study will test. There is a general paucity of data measuring the success of habitat restoration projects. Monitoring projects, such as the one proposed, will provide valuable information on the effectiveness of various restoration strategies, especially in relation to creating habitat suitable for specific species of concern.

Approach

The overall study design seems appropriate considering the project objectives. The proposal cites previous VELB monitoring at two locations noting a potential negative correlation between Argentine ants and VELB, however no data were collected to quantify this relationship. The proposed project would seem an appropriate opportunity to investigate the relationship between VELB population dynamics, Argentine ant predation of VELB and VELB habitat quality. The results of the proposed project would be useful in guiding future restoration projects to aid single species recovery. The data generated will also provide valuable information on the general biology and ecology of VELB including; stable population sizes, dispersal characteristics and habitat preference and suitability.

Technical Feasibility

Based on the information provided the project seems well designed and feasible. The project is scaled appropriately to meet it's objectives.

Performance Measures

Uncertain of the usefulness of these data to all evaluation of conceptual models or performance of previous restoration actions. Unfortunately the specific objectives and conceptual models used to guide previous restoration actions (at the proposed monitoring sites) are not provided and are likely to be varied given the spatial scope of the proposed study.

Products

This project will provide valuable information regarding the effectiveness of restoration strategies to land managers, as well as provide information on the general biology of VELB which may be used to eventually de-list this species. Furthermore, the project is likely to produce data publishable in a peer-reviewed journal. The proposal also prescribes disseminating the results in numerous other digital formats.

Capabilities

The project team appears to be well qualified to perform the tasks described in the proposal.

Budget

The proposed budget appears to be adequate for the scope of work described. Supplemental funding should be made available to allow for additional tasks with the objective of quantifying the relationship between Argentine ants and VELB.

Additional Comments

Budget Review

1. Does the proposal include a detailed budget for each year of the requested support?

Yes.

If no, please explain:

2. Does the proposal include a detailed budget for each task identified?

Yes.

If no, please explain:

3. Are project management expenses appropriately budgeted?

Yes.

If no, please explain:

4. Does the proposal clearly state the type of expenses encompassed in indirect rates or overhead costs? Are indirect rates, if used, appropriately applied?

No.

If no, please explain:

The proposer does not explain what makes up the indirect and overhead rates. They state indirect rate of 21%.

Budget Detail/Administrative Overhead Fees – Budget detail combines the labor rates with the direct overhead rate. The labor rate, benefits and indirect rate should be itemized in the format provided by the PSP to enable reviewers to better evaluate and ensure that proposed labor rates are comparable to state rates.

5. Does the budget justification adequately explain major expenses? Are the labor rates and other charges proposed reasonable in relation to current state rates?

Yes.

If no, please explain:

6. Are other agencies contributing or likely to contribute a share of the projects costs?
No.

If yes, when sufficient information is available, please sum the amount of matching funds likely to be provided:

7. Does the applicant take exception to the standard grant agreement's terms and conditions? If yes, are the approaches the applicant proposes to address these issues a reasonable starting point for negotiating a grant agreement?
No.

If no, please explain:

Unknown, this is not addressed in this proposal.

Contract Language Exceptions – Proposals submitted by grantees which identify exceptions to State of California’s standard contract language provisions as provided in the 2004 PSP; and/or submit alternative contract language in lieu of the State’s standard contract language should be carefully reviewed prior to awarding grant funds. Review will initially be conducted by the funding agency’s contract office and referred to the legal department as needed.

8. Are there other budget issues that warrant consideration?
No.

If yes, please explain:

no

Other comments:

Environmental Compliance Review

1. Is compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) required for this project?

YES– NO~~X~~

2. Is compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) required for this project?

YES– NO~~X~~

3. Does this project qualify for an Exemption or Exclusion under CEQA and NEPA, respectively?

YES– NO– N/~~A~~~~X~~

Comments:

4. Did the applicant correctly identify if CEQA/NEPA compliance was required?

YES~~X~~ NO–

Comments:

5. Did the applicant correctly identify the correct CEQA/NEPA document required for the project?

YES– NO– N/~~A~~~~X~~

Comments:

6. Has the CEQA/NEPA document been completed?

YES– NO– N/~~A~~~~X~~

7. If the document has not been completed, did the applicant allot enough time to complete the document before the project start date?

YES– NO– N/~~A~~~~X~~

8. If the document has not been completed, did the applicant allot enough funds to complete it?

YES– NO– N/~~A~~~~X~~

Comments:

9. Did the applicant adequately identify other legal or regulatory compliance issues (Incidental Take permits, Scientific Collecting permits, etc.) that may affect the project?

YES– NO– N/~~A~~~~X~~

Comments:

Identify those additional permits that may be needed by this project:

10. Does the proposal include written permission from the owners of any private property on which project activities are proposed or, if specific locations for project activities are not yet determined, is it likely that permission for access can be obtained?

YES~~X~~ NO– Project is on public land/water or question is otherwise N/A–

Comments:

River Partners will apply for a special use permit to conduct monitoring activities on selected US Fish and Wildlife Service Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge units.

11. Do any of these issues affect the project's feasibility due to significant deficiencies in planning and/or budgeting for legal and regulatory compliance or access to property?

YES– NO~~X~~

Comments:

Prior-Phase Funding Review

Project Title	Riparian Restoration Planning and Feasibility Study for the Riparian Sanctuary
CALFED Contract Management Agency	GCAP
Amount Funded	289,784
Date Awarded	2003/01/01
Project Number	ERP-02-P39

3. Have negotiations about contracts or contract amendments with this organization proceeded smoothly, without persistent difficulties related to standard contract terms and conditions?

Yes.

4. Are the status, progress, and accomplishments of the organization's current CALFED or CVPIA project(s) accurately stated in the proposal?

N/A

5. Has this organization made adequate progress towards these project(s)' milestones and outcomes, without unreasonable divergences from project schedules or poor-quality deliverables?

Yes.

See "Other Comments" below.

6. Is the applicant's reporting, record keeping, and financial management of these projects satisfactory?

Yes.

7. If this application is for a next phase of a project whose contract your agency currently manages, will the project(s) be ready for next-phase funding to monitor and evaluate project outcomes in fiscal year 2005/6, based on its current progress and expenditure rates?

N/A

Other comments:

Feasibility studies and monitoring plan on current Agreement have been delayed due to coordinating reviews and comments through a large TAC and several partners and due to one subcontractor late with a deliverable. Grantee will determine in early May if an Amendment Request is needed to extend the Agreement term by a few months.

