

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: \$1,103,944

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 significant ERP and CVPIA investment. Before funds are awarded, however this work 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.

Specifically for this proposal, the conceptual model (Fig 3) is good but could be better with more detail of vegetation structure, cover, etc. The physical processes in the model ignore local physical parameters (e.g., water table) in favor of fluvial geomorphic processes. The team's record is good based partly because of associations, not personal records. This TNC proposal is the culmination of many horticultural restoration efforts. TNC has been requested to assess its past projects in order to get recent restoration funds. Progress on these evaluation efforts on past restoration projects needs to be part of any new or revised proposal. This requires TNC to fulfill its commitment prior to proceeding with a grander effort of pulling their and other Sacramento River restoration efforts together. Use of remote sensing for channel migration is a good approach. However the proposal appears to forget below ground factors such as water table, which may be as or more important than fluvial processes. In addition there is some question whether the number of sites used for source/sink analysis for birds is adequate. Also there is insufficient documentation to judge whether the scorecard, an important aspect of this study, will live up to its potential. All of these issues need to be addressed in any revised or rewritten proposal.

Technical Panel (Primary) Review

above average

Explanation Of Summary Rating

The project has clearly articulated goals based on a conceptual model that puts restoration activities into a larger landscape context. The team has an excellent track record of producing results that are useful and available to managers and the public. The project has a very high regional value. No significant administrative concerns were raised. The technical panel did not rate it as superior because of concerns about the bird monitoring and modeling plans as outlined above and because of the vague nature of the scorecard as proposed.

Review Form

Goals And Justification

The proposal will consider the relative contribution of horticultural planting to the recovery and viability of bird and beetle species of interest. It clearly identifies the restoration actions (many funded by CALFED) whose outcomes will be monitored, and, more importantly, puts them into a larger landscape context. One external technical review questioned the need for this larger context, but other technical reviews and the panel disagreed with this concern. The strength of this proposal is that it puts individual actions into a broader landscape and temporal perspective and evaluates restoration actions in the context of remnant riparian habitat. The proposed research represents a good mix of remotely sensed data combined with more intensive field studies in selected sites. The research is being conducted in a landscape where Calfed has invested considerable restoration funds, and it builds on previously funded Calfed monitoring efforts. The proposal presents a conceptual model (Figure 3) that explains the basis for the restoration actions. One criticism of the model is that it pays scant attention to the role of factors such as predators or disease in influencing recovery of the species of concern. The restoration actions appear to have been based on a "build it and they will come" attitude. One strength of this proposal is that the proposed monitoring will allow CALFED to judge the success of that approach. Assessment of restoration success will be based on comparison of natural vs. horticulturally restored riparian habits. What is lacking is a discussion of whether natural remnant riparian habitats are an appropriate model for restoration goals since these habitats are also a part of a highly managed fluvial system affected by historic land uses, water projects, and exotic species. This problem of finding appropriate model reference sites is of considerable interest to the broader field of restoration ecology. Reviewers noted that data to be compiled are likely to be useful for addressing these

more general issues in restoration ecology External technical reviews raised concerns that hypotheses could have been more clearly stated.

Approach

The approach is well–designed and appropriate for the project's objectives. One strength of the proposal is its recognition of the role of geomorphic change in creating and destroying riparian habitat. The approach will allow them to assess the relative importance of habitat changes resulting from horticultural planting program in the context of naturally occurring changes (e.g. resulting from channel migration). This is a unique and very worthwhile aspect of this proposal. As one technical reviewer noted: "the data have promise to provide a rich synthesis that will allow links from large to small scale elements that may inform future restoration work across all scales." Another positive aspect is that the LIDAR imagery that is essential for these analyses is funded through another project. Proposed modeling and synthesis is grounded in previously published research. The project is built around 4 interdependent tasks: Tasks 2 &3 depend on Task 1, and Task 4 depends on Tasks 1–3. The proposal was not clear on which avian species will be monitored. In some places it seemed as though the whole avian community was going to be assessed; in others it seemed the focus was on a couple of species. It appears that little attention will be paid to assessing avian food availability, which assumes that food is not a limiting factor; prior monitoring data may support that assumption, but that was not explained. The technical panel felt that the proposed bird monitoring would benefit from a more detailed conceptual model. The current model shows bird diversity to be linked to vegetation structure; but what are the key components of vegetation structure to which birds are assumed to be responding. The technical panel was concerned that prior monitoring data were inadequately presented, and it was not clear that results of prior monitoring were used to inform the conceptual model or monitoring design proposed.

Feasibility And Likelihood Of Success

All external technical reviews found the project to be feasible, although concern was raised about whether the demographic study of birds would proceed long enough at enough sites to be able to assess whether sites are sources or sinks. Other external technical reviews noted that the project is using proven and tested methods, and that "prior work from related projects has already proven useful to resource managers, decision–makers, and scientists." (Although the technical panel noted that it was not clear how prior monitoring results had been incorporated into the design of this project.) The regional panel identified no local circumstances that would impede the project. The environmental compliance review noted that the PIs did not identify all the permits that would be required. However, the reviewer did not think this would impede the project, since adequate time was allowed to get the permits and the reviewer did not foresee problems in getting them.

Performance Measures

A number of performance measures are identified (Table 7), and their rationale demonstrated (Fig. 3). These will be combined into a scorecard that managers seemed to think was a valuable approach. Both external and panel technical reviewers agreed with the potential usefulness of the scorecard, but noted that the proposal did not present enough information on which to judge whether the scorecard will live up to its potential.

Products

Judging from the regional panel review, the scorecard appears to be a product that managers see as being potentially useful (although details are lacking in the proposal). The project is well integrated with other restoration activities in the region and with regional planning groups (Sacramento River Conservation Forum). The team has a plan and an excellent track record for making information available to the public. Reviewers judged the results to be likely to stand up to peer review. The team has a track record of publishing their results in the peer-reviewed literature.

Capabilities

All external and panel technical reviewers judged the research team to have the appropriate skills and familiarity with the ecosystems to carry out the project. An appropriate mix of disciplines is associated with the project. The team has an excellent performance record.

Budget

The budget appeared reasonable and adequate to all reviewers except one external technical reviewer. This technical reviewer noted that the justifications were not adequate to judge whether the budget was reasonable and gave several specific examples of where additional explanation was needed. The technical panel felt that these could be dealt with in the contracting process. Technical reviewers were skeptical of the vague promise of long-term continued funding.

Regional Review

The review noted: "The project monitors restoration in a high-priority ecosystem (Sacramento River) and would assess riparian restoration actions, which are particularly important and common in the region." "Some aspects are essential to the region, particularly quantification of created habitat." Further observations include: the project would fill important data gaps; the data would be stored in a central database; the team has an excellent

record of making their findings available to the public; the region likes the idea of developing a scorecard; the project is likely to provide information that will be valuable in planning future restoration activities. One question raised is whether imagery required for this proposal would overlap with that proposed in another proposal (#106); if so, there is potential for saving some money in image acquisition. The PIs have good working relationships with the appropriate individuals in the region, and clearly have involved them (e.g. Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum) in discussions of this project as it was being planned. The PIs were rated highly by the regional panel because they have built upon established partnerships and have engaged the appropriate partners in this project. In the view of the region, this project is proposing an excellent plan that the region judges to be needed; hence the regional panel gave this proposal the highest rating possible (very high).

Administrative Review

This group has had considerable past funding from CALFED, so the administrative reviews are based on a wealth of experience (4 reviews). Key comments include: "although TNC requested many changes to standard contract templates, once one contract was negotiated, the changes were easily applied to subsequent contracts"; "working with TNC on Amendments goes smoothly as they are responsive, thorough, and submit quality work products"; "negotiations for standard terms have proceeded smoothly." No significant concerns were raised during the reviews. The environmental compliance review noted that the PIs did not identify all the permits that would be required. However, the reviewer did not think this would impede the project, since adequate time was allowed to get the permits and the reviewer did not foresee problems in getting them. The budget review is long and detailed with specific issues that will need to be addressed if the proposal is funded. For example, subcontractors need to be identified and appropriate CA bidding policies followed in getting them, procedure for calculating overhead and indirect costs need to be more completely explained, plans for long term funding need to be more clearly explained, requested exemptions to certain budget procedures will need to be negotiated. Based on reviews from prior-phase funding, it sounds as though TNC has had to deal with similar issues in prior funding and all have been handled in an effective and timely manner.

Additional Comments

If this proposal is selected for funding, consideration needs to be given to overlap between this proposal and two other proposals in this pool of applications. One is #67: there appears to be considerable overlap in personnel and in research goals and design related to VELB occupancy, site age, distance to natural elderberry, and habitat characteristics. The other is #106 which seems to be using some of the same imagery requested for this proposal.

Technical Review Panel's Overall Evaluation Rating:
above average

Sacramento Regional Review

Very High

Review:

1. Applicability to ERP goals and regional priorities.

The project would evaluate how well restoration actions are achieving their objectives by estimating the amount of riparian habitat created and evaluating how songbirds and VELB are responding to multiple restoration actions. This would provide insight into adjustments that could improve effectiveness of restoration.

The project evaluates ERP-funded restoration actions. Quantification of created habitat will provide info on progress toward MSCS milestones. The project would also provide information on how restoration is affecting VELB, a Big R species.

The project monitors restoration in a high-priority ecosystem (Sacramento River) and would assess riparian restoration actions, which are particularly important and common in the region.

2. Links with other restoration actions.

The project will assess how much riparian habitat has been created throughout TNC's Sacramento River Project area, which includes restoration sites implemented by other parties. It evaluates many restoration actions, including multiple TNC actions at a project level and additional restoration at a landscape level.

The project was developed with input from the Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum. Data will be stored in a manner that could be used by people involved in related restoration activities. Bird data would be made publicly available through public access database maintained by UCD. Handling of all data will be coordinated with BDAT, which provides public access. Project reports would be posted on a public website.

The project continues and expands upon previous ERP-funded monitoring and would add to long-term data on restoration activities in the region. It would fill important data gaps, including the success of restoration in relation to VELB and quantification of the amount of riparian habitat created.

Information provided by the proposed project could be very useful in planning and design of other restoration actions. Development of an ecological scorecard framework to track

biodiversity would provide a means of monitoring changes in biodiversity in response to restoration and other conservation strategies over time.

3. Local Circumstances.

There are no apparent local circumstances that could affect the project's feasibility. It is an extension of existing monitoring and should be able to continue in a timely and successful manner. Permission to access private property is not necessary. Special use permits will be obtained from USFWS and DFG, if necessary, and these agencies are supportive of the project.

4. Local involvement.

The project incorporates a variety of local involvement components, including agency coordination, SRCAF input and presentations, landowner meetings, and tours of restoration sites. It includes collaboration with UCD and PRBO researchers. Agency and public outreach, scientific presentations, and publications would disseminate important information to appropriate parties and increase their understanding of restoration action. The project is built on established partnerships that would be further strengthened, increasing the potential to attract future funding from multiple sources.

5. Local Value.

Products generated by the project will evaluate the success of restoration actions in a relatively large area and information generated will be applicable elsewhere in the region. It will provide specific information regarding effects of restoration on songbirds and VELB and will increase understanding of ecosystem processes. It will measure how well multiple restoration actions are attaining their objectives and could identify adjustments for improving success. Results will be useful at various scales, including site-specific information on bird and VELB populations and landscape-level information on amount of created habitat, estimates of songbird and VELB populations and status of biodiversity for the Sacramento River project area as a whole.

6. Other comments:

Applicant needs to consider overlap with CSU Chico Proposal #106. Would vegetation mapping from aerial photography proposed under #106 be adequate for quantifying created riparian habitat as proposed here? If both proposals are funded, there needs to be coordination to ensure efforts are not duplicated.

Overall Ranking:

Very High

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

This project has many strengths and meets all of the regional review criteria. It evaluates multiple restoration projects implemented by various entities. Some aspects are essential to the region, particularly quantification of created habitat, a measurement of which is essential to tracking whether ERP-funded projects are meeting ERP objectives. Other aspects have high regional value, such as evaluation of songbird and VELB response to restoration actions. Information of status of VELB is particularly useful, as relatively little data has been generated for this Big R species.

The project components are complementary in how they combine site-specific field research, landscape-level analysis, and predictive modeling to translate data into an overall assessment of restoration success and biodiversity status. The process of testing effectiveness of extrapolating data to a predictive capacity (population estimates) increases value of this aspect and evaluates potential applicability to other programs.

The high level of collaboration with various research groups, agencies, and other stakeholders and mechanisms for disseminating information is well thought out.

External Technical Review

Goals And Justification

This proposal does not implement new restoration actions, but seeks to monitor the performance of previous actions along a 100-mile length of the Sacramento River.

While this is a valuable and necessary objective, this proposal doesn't adequately justify why remote sensing data are necessary, rather than using field data. I'm unclear whether the investigators from this project have been involved in all of the restoration projects along this length of river or just a subset of such projects. If the former, then the landscape-scale assessment isn't likely to yield new information about restoration, since the area restored is known. This should be clarified. Also, how much new habitat creation is expected relative to that restored? If minimal, the remote-sensing approach doesn't seem useful since the areas of focus will be the restored areas.

The primary objective is to use remote sensing techniques to characterize the riparian vegetation and physical factors. Also, a variety of variables will be measured from the bird and valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB) populations, and these variables will be tested against the vegetation and physical factors to see which of these factors are significant. Thus, all results are correlative.

The hypothesis of the proposal is that "horticultural restoration promotes the recovery of native floodplain riparian habitats and associated indicator species, specifically songbirds and the VELB" (p.3). 'Horticultural restoration' is not defined; does it differ from 'restoration' or 'ecological restoration'? I would have preferred to see additional specific hypotheses, such as which physical factors were most expected to affect habitat. The hypotheses should also be more clearly related to the landscape-level assessment that is the heart of this proposal. How specifically will the "the relative contribution that horticultural restoration projects are making to ecosystem recovery" (p.1) be assessed?

Approach

This study appears to have multi-party support and to build upon and complement similar projects being conducted on this and other riparian areas.

It involves several disparate aspects, and the lead investigator will serve as project manager. Tasks 2-3 depend on task 1, and task 4 depends on tasks 1-3 (cf. p.16).

The ability to predict the occurrence of VELB, etc from remote sensing data would be

helpful.

Technical Feasibility

The project appears to be technically feasible. The width of the riparian area to be included in the analysis area is not noted, but will greatly affect the total project area. Restoration status should be included as an attribute in the GIS data (p.6), as should land use history and the number of years since disturbance. Why use different classification schemes for vegetation height derived from LIDAR and from photogrammetric approaches (p.6)? How will vegetation loss (p.7) be measured?

While the remote-sensing data spans the entire study area, the distribution of the point count plots and VELB sites is not clearly described. Also, the number of plots and sites is not justified beyond noting that these plots were measured before. How will “species composition for the entire avian community” be defined – a diversity index? Multivariate dissimilarity?

Of particular concern to me is the demographic study: While I agree that it is important to assess whether sites are sources or sinks, I suspect that 6 sites are insufficient for this type of data or that data of sufficient quality can be collected in only two years (2006 and 2007).

Task 3 (VELB): will this involve the measurement of 20 or 40 sites (p.12) or 60 sites (p.13)? Why are sites located within National Wildlife Refuge Units (p.11) – is this because there is no elderberry elsewhere? I assume that elderberry was one of the species planted in the restored areas? If so, this should be stated.

This proposal would involve an untold number of regressions and analyses. I’d like to see an acknowledgement of this, and a description of how the error rate will be controlled.

Performance Measures

A number of performance measures are identified (Table 7), and their rationale demonstrated (Fig. 3).

Task 1 involves the use of aerial photos and LIDAR and IKONOS data. I wonder if all of these types of data are really necessary; in my experience, an experienced cartographer could provide reasonable habitat classifications from aerial photos, eliminating the need for the IKONOS data. Also, why do new aerial photos need to be flown – are there no recent ones from public agencies? Will the river character have changed substantially since the 1997 or 1999 photos (p.6)? This justification should be included in the proposal.

The avian focal species are not clearly identified. A number of species are listed at the beginning of the proposal (p.1), but the lists provided for task 2 (p.9–10) and for ERP and CVPIA Priorities (p.16) differ. Also, nests of all species will be monitored anyways (p.10). It appears that the proposal is trying to collect as much data as possible without a clear rationale. I would rather see a proposal that focused either on i) all birds, or ii) 1–2 specific species, rather than trying to do both.

Products

The products of this study will be useful to the resource community. Knowledge of which features are associated with desirable habitat for birds or VELB would enable managers to make more informed decisions. The proposed ecological scorecard framework may be helpful, though it's not clearly described. An example of the draft framework would have been helpful.

Data will be accessible to the public (p.15). The project team has published a number of peer-reviewed publications on the basis of their work on this system.

Capabilities

The team appears well-qualified to conduct this work.

Budget

The budget is insufficiently detailed for me to evaluate its suitability. For example, how is the \$260K for Task 2 allocated among salary, travel, supplies, etc?

Task 1: The budget justification is inadequate: \$102K is described in more detail but the remaining \$150K appears to be for “Larsen and Greco and their students” (p.7) – how many students? Is this all wages?

The budget notes that there are no cost share partners identified, which seems odd given the multi-party support it appears to have.

The mechanism in place for continued funding (p.2 of summary) is “provided it is possible to do so” (p.19), which is no assurance at all.

I note that Benefits were calculated at 40% for all employees. I'm not a budget specialist, but this seems high to me; the other proposal I reviewed had benefits at

Additional Comments

External Technical Review

Goals And Justification

The proposal will conduct an upper level analysis of horticultural restoration on the Sacramento River. The proposed measurements and analyses are clear and internally consistent, and links expected findings to CALFED ERP goals. While the research questions can be inferred from the text, the proposal would benefit from consistent and clear statements of hypotheses and statistical analyses for all proposed tasks. For example, a key theme is to compare restored and natural habitats. Lacking, however, is a discussion of whether the natural habitats are an appropriate model for restoration goals. The "natural" habitats are indeed a component of a highly managed fluvial system affected by historic land uses, water projects, and exotic species. A valuable aspect of this proposal, however, is that data to be compiled appears to be useful for addressing these more theoretical concepts in restoration ecology. In addition, the proposed project will address important knowledge gaps in our understanding of the long-term effectiveness of horticultural restoration, both within and between sites, at large and small extents.

The research proposal will likely augment the valuable quantitative database of avian species diversity and abundance to explicit, quantitative habitat measures. The existing knowledge base, in part developed through fieldwork with the PRBO on riparian habitats in the project area, has already proven to be an exceptionally useful understanding of wildlife-habitat relationships that has informed both internal planting designs but also prioritized the location and type of restoration projects undertaken.

I find Task 3.2 to determine the occupancy of VELB in natural and planted habitats to be highly redundant to elements in another proposal (0067) submitted by River Partners. I would have concerns about funding both this task 3.2 as well as the other proposal unless the lead researchers can sufficiently clarify the separate goals and data to be collected. On the other hand, however, task 3.1 in this proposal appears to be a more robust test of landscape-VELB relationships because of the floodplain mapping conducted in this study.

Approach

The approach appears comprehensive and sound, and well-designed to address the key research questions. The proposal makes explicit and extensive links to other previous and ongoing monitoring and research efforts, and will clearly build on the extensive amount of existing data. The proposal appears to be a good opportunity to expand the temporal and spatial scope of existing work by analyzing the effectiveness of restoration across temporal scales and the natural and restored floodplain landscape. The results have good potential to

greatly augment the existing knowledge base of the value of horticultural restoration. I would expect results from this work to directly inform the establishment of restoration priorities and design principles, for both small and large, isolated and connected, sites, throughout the Central Valley riparian landscape.

Technical Feasibility

The technical feasibility of the project is sound. Importantly, many of the key project members have accomplished many similar tasks on related or similar projects, and so the methods have been proven and tested in previous work. The multiple scales of the work is appropriate and perhaps unique to Central Valley river systems. There is a clear link between field work measuring very small extent habitat characteristics with remote sensing of larger extent landscape-level patterns and processes. In this sense, the data has promise to provide a rich synthesis that will allow links from large to small scale elements that may inform future restoration work across all scales.

Performance Measures

As an explicit monitoring project that will evaluate existing restoration projects, the results will be useful for the setting of appropriate performance measures on individual projects. The avian work, in particular, will provide an explicit test of conceptual models that drive locations, priorities, and designs of riparian restoration projects. I expect that results from this work will serve to either reinforce or modify existing wildlife-habitat relationship models, and will be useful to land managers, regulators, and restoration scientists as we all seek greater assurances and metrics in assessing project impacts and designing and implementing habitat mitigation measures. The results of this work may in fact be useful for modifying or creating new mitigation or restoration performance monitoring tools that more accurately reflect riparian project goals and objectives.

Products

Prior work from related projects has already proven useful to resource managers, decision-makers, and scientists. I have personally used reports produced from earlier studies in the project area to help in the location and design of riparian habitat restoration projects. The project is designed to collect data that will result in several peer-reviewed, scientific articles, as well as guidelines for applied ecologists. The proposal describes the breadth and depth of education, outreach, publications, and database availability from the project. Continuing to build on the existing programs will provide an excellent resource to ecologists and managers, regulators and scientists, to help guide restoration in the Central Valley.

Capabilities

The project team appears to be well-qualified for the task, relying on subject area experts and researchers with extensive local knowledge. The team appears to employ researchers with the appropriate interdisciplinary and complementary expertise and experience to accomplish the tasks, and perform the important roles of synthesizing data from multiple sources and disciplines.

Budget

The budget appears reasonable and adequate, and hourly rates are a good value for the level of experience and expertise among the project staff. As most of the team work within universities or non-profit organizations, their hourly rates are at least 25%–50% less than rates of private environmental consultants. The number of hours allocated for each task seems like reasonable estimates for the tasks at hand.

Additional Comments

I recommend a follow-up with the proposal applicant to achieve clarification of subtask 3.2 in relation to proposal 0067. While presented differently, there appears to be great overlap in research goals and design related to VELB occupancy, site age, distance to natural elderberry, and habitat characteristics.

External Technical Review

Goals And Justification

The proposal clearly identifies the restoration actions being monitored using a clear and consistent statement of goals and objectives. Hypotheses are generally implicit in the measurement objectives and the linkages described in the conceptual model. There seems to be a terrific amount of CALFED funded work ongoing by many of the investigators, and I believe there is sufficient new material here to justify the request for funds.

Approach

This is a well-reasoned and well-planned approach, building on the acquisition of high-resolution remote data/imagery to contextualize field study of vegetation as habitat for both birds and the VELB. Likely contributions include detailed maps of the river reach, characterization of habitat quantity and quality, comparisons of restored to remnant riparian habitat, and greater understanding of the importance of riparian restoration as an worthy management goal in the Sacramento Basin.

Technical Feasibility

This is a very well-documented proposal. Based on the information presented I judge it to be technically feasible and consistent with the objectives.

Performance Measures

Again, this proposal is fairly thorough. The proposed data collection and analysis includes several performance measures to evaluate the effects of riparian restoration and will allow a detailed evaluation of their conceptual model.

Products

The project will likely produce a variety of useful information including a scorecard-based evaluation for riparian sites in the study area. The proposal describes how this information will be shared with stakeholders, and the proposed analyses are likely to withstand peer-review.

Capabilities

The assembled team is fully capable of conducting the proposed work and has an established record in the area.

Budget

Yes, the budget is comparable to studies of similar detail and extent.

Additional Comments

Budget Review

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

Yes.

If no, please explain:

Budget Comments: 1. IDC rates is 25% – Benefits is 40% – rates need to be verified as being acceptable, reasonable, and/or allowable percentages per DGS guidelines. 2. Of the total proposed project budget 92% of the cost is allocated to subcontractors/consultants. Proposers share of the budget is 8% which is dedicated solely to Project Management & Project Close Out tasks. All other tasks are performed by subs. 3. Some work identified in the tasks/subtasks have not identified subcontractor/consultant. Proposers needs to ensure that CA State Contracting Guidelines are followed & that the work is bid in accordance with State Contracting & bidding rules, regulations, & guidelines.

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

Yes.

If no, please explain:

1. If proposal is funded, budget detail for labor charges should follow provide line item detail by labor category, number of hours, & extended labor charges for each year. Presentation & breakdown shown on proposal would be easier to follow if done in a chart/table format as shown provided in Exhibit B – Attachment 1 "Subcontractor Detail".

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.

The Subcontracted work should be identified with a rate and hours and attributed to each task and deliverable for each year. A performance evaluation is also recommended for subcontractors that receive more than 50% of the grant funds. If the subcontractor has not been identified, a position description complete with education level, experience, and abilities be submitted and the rate and hour associated with that position will be attributed to a task, and deliverable. The grantee must also comply with the State competitive bidding process as stated in the PSP.

Task and Deliverables – Grantee must provide detailed information for all work including subcontractor work for each specific task, services, and work to be performed with the appropriate and corresponding deliverable or end product for each task(s) and/or sub-task(s). Costs associated with each task and deliverable should be evaluated based on what is considered to be reasonable costs for performing similar services.

3. Are project management expenses appropriately budgeted?

No.

If no, please explain:

See pg 23 of proposal – If proposal is funded – Project Management hours for Science Specialist II 2/3 of hrs and costs would be more appropriate versus what is indicated in proposal. Balance of hours and work from Science Specialist estimates can be performed by Office Services Administrator billed at a lower rate tasks could include (e.g. billing, coordination, follow up, etc.).

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.

Task and Deliverables – Grantee must provide detailed information for all work including subcontractor work for each specific task, services, and work to be performed with the appropriate and corresponding deliverable or end product for each task(s) and/or sub-task(s). Costs associated with each task and deliverable should be evaluated based on what is considered to be reasonable costs for performing similar services.

Major Expenses – If the grant is awarded a detailed list of equipment purchases should be provided by the grantee so reviewers can better evaluate whether it is more cost effective for the state to purchase large dollar equipment items through the state procurement process. If the equipment list is available within the State inventory or stock, then purchase of some or all of the listed items may be provided, loaned, or leased by the state to the grantee. In the event, that the equipment is purchased by the grantee, the grantee shall maintain an inventory of major equipment for auditing purposes and potential use for future projects. Grantee shall follow State Contracting Manual [SCM] Section 7.61 thru 7.62 rules pertinent to equipment purchase, lease, etc.

Subcontracting – Proposals for work to be performed by subcontractors or other entities in excess of the 25% of the total project dollars the grantee is required to provide a justification for subcontracting services. If subcontractors are pre-selected and identified in the proposals

as part of the project team, the grantee should provide a justification on how each subcontractor was selected. Grantee shall identify labor rates and indirect costs rates paid to each identified subcontractor to ensure that labor rates are comparable to State rates.

Cost Sharing – Grantee shall provide information regarding its financial capability and stability as well as its level of commitment for any proposed cost share funds. A detailed budget of the project's proposed cost share funds should be provided prior to grant funds being awarded. A financial evaluation is recommended for grant agreements that state/claim over 30 % or \$250,000 (which ever is less) of matching funds. The evaluation will avoid likelihood of the grantee requesting an amendment to increase project funding due to lack of or miscalculation of matching funds to complete the project.

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:

If proposal is funded, items included in calculating indirect costs and overhead rates should be clearly identified in greater detail when preparing the Budget prior to signing an agreement.

Information on proposal shows some overlap and duplication in detail charges between Indirect Costs and Overhead. Check and verify.

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.

If proposal is funded, a detailed list of items included in the indirect cost rate should be provided by the grantee. Grantee must provide itemized and detailed information included and charged as part of Indirect Rates (IDC) charges.

The Grantee should charge a reduced indirect cost rate to the state for services that will be subcontracted by the grantee. (Researching SCM Section 3.06 B).

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:

Note that proposal states that contractors for some services have not been identified. If proposal is funded, proposers needs to follow State of CA competitive bidding requirements when selecting contractors/subcontractors to perform the work. State Contracting Manual (SCM) should be used as a reference to meet the competitive bidding requirements. SCM may be accessed through the Dept of General Services website. The funding agency reserves the right to request copies documentation pertinent to bidding process/procedures and awards.

Subcontracting – Proposals for work to be performed by subcontractors or other entities in excess of the 25% of the total project dollars the grantee is required to provide a justification for subcontracting services. If subcontractors are pre–selected and identified in the proposals as part of the project team, the grantee should provide a justification on how each subcontractor was selected. Grantee shall identify labor rates and indirect costs rates paid to each identified subcontractor to ensure that labor rates are comparable to State rates.

The Subcontracted work should be identified with a rate and hours and attributed to each task and deliverable for each year. A performance evaluation is also recommended for subcontractors that receive more than 50% of the grant funds. If the subcontractor has not been identified, a position description complete with education level, experience, and abilities be submitted and the rate and hour associated with that position will be attributed to a task, and deliverable. The grantee must also comply with the State competitive bidding process as stated in the PSP.

6. Are other agencies contributing or likely to contribute a share of the projects costs?
Yes.

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

Proposal's section entitled: "Long –term Funding Strategy" is confusing and somewhat contradictory. Statements made in this section would need some questions answered: 1. What benefits would additional funding add to the project? 2. How will long–term funding strategy impact the project as a whole (and long term success) if the additional funding is not awarded? 3. What level of commitment and priority does TNC place in providing additional funding to continue monitoring at selected restoration sites beyond the term of the grant?

Cost Sharing – Grantee shall provide information regarding its financial capability and

stability as well as it's level of commitment for any proposed cost share funds. A detailed budget of the project's proposed cost share funds should be provided prior to grant funds being awarded. A financial evaluation is recommended for grant agreements that state/claim over 30 % or \$250,000 (which ever is less) of matching funds. The evaluation will avoid likelihood of the grantee requesting an amendment to increase project funding due to lack of or miscalculation of matching funds to complete the project.

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?

Yes.

If no, please explain:

Applicant has extensive comments and exceptions to standard grant agreement's terms and conditions. Recommend that prior to award or funding, detailed and extensive review be completed by contract analysts/unit & legal counsel of funding agency to address applicant's 21+ comments, exceptions, & suggested revisions, & contract language changes requested.

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?

Yes.

If yes, please explain:

Applicant's Budget/Funding related exceptions items to standard grant agreement that need to be resolved prior to awarding and executing agreement: 1. Applicant requests "full credit shall be allowed for Grantee's expenses necessarily incurred under this Grant Agreement up to the date of cancellation." Applicant's exception to accepting Budget Contingency Clause Provisions Ex B Section 3 2. Invoice detail for subcontracts – applicant states pg 39 Ex B–Sec 5.E that subcontractor detailed personnel costs would not be required in Budget Summary or invoice. Need to affirm that detailed information (hourly rates by labor category is necessary to determine "appropriateness" of costs charged). 3. Equipment costs, ownership,

life expectancy, & \$ value will be based on State Contracting rules & regulations at the time agreement is entered into. State funds awarded must adhere to CA's rules. Applicant's threshold of \$50k is not applicable per CA's rules.

Other comments:

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS: 1. If proposal is approved for funding – Approval/Permits to access property to perform work needs to be completed within 60 days of agreement execution. 2. If proposal is approved for funding – applicant must initiate bidding process following State bidding process to identify contractors for activities for which contractors are not identified at the time proposal was submitted. 3. "Feasibility" section of the proposal: identify constraints and issues which may cause the project from being completed in the 3 year time schedule. 4. "Work Schedule" – page 16 Based on the statement in this section – explain how project (if approved and partially funded) can generate meaningful results if Tasks 2, 3, 4 are not funded. 5. Proposal narrative of work as presented can easily be used as the Statement of Work, deliverables, schedule, and most of the budget items are clear.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON APPLICANT'S EXCEPTIONS TO STANDARD GRANT AGREEMENT: 1. A more comprehensive review by analysts and legal counsel will need to be done prior to entering into agreement. 2. If proposal is approved for funding – will require additional time to negotiate contract language acceptable to both parties. 3. Funding agency will need to clarify specific contract provisions that are non-negotiable which have been raised as an "exception" by the applicant. 4. Agreement language provided in 2004 PSP has been updated, revised; therefore, applicant should not assume that previous negotiated language and/or current provisions to active agreements will automatically be accepted or applied to the new agreement.

END OF REVIEW

Environmental Compliance Review

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

YES~~X~~ NO-

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~~X~~ NO- N/A-

Comments:

Due to the potential for take of state listed species of birds, the applicant will need an MOU from CDFG under Section 2081(a). CEQA compliance is triggered by the requirement for the Section 2081(a) MOU. The applicant should qualify for a Class 6 Categorical Exemption under CEQA.

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

YES- NO~~X~~

Comments:

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

YES- NO~~X~~ N/A-

Comments:

The applicant did not identify a need for CEQA, thus they did not identify a document.

6. Has the CEQA/NEPA document been completed?

YES- NO~~X~~ N/A-

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

YES~~X~~ NO- N/A-

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

YES~~X~~ NO- N/A-

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– NOX N/A–

Comments:

The applicant makes a general statement that permits will be obtained, but specific permits are not identified.

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

Scientific Collecting Permit Federal Banding Permit 2081(a) MOU informal consultation with USFWS

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– NO– Project is on public land/water or question is otherwise N/AX

Comments:

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– NOX

Comments:

Prior-Phase Funding Review

Project Title	Floodplain Acquisition, Management and Monitoring on the Sacramento River
CALFED Contract Management Agency	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Amount Funded	1000000
Date Awarded	1999/01/01
Project Number	CALFED 98-F18, FWS Agreement #11420-9-J074
Project Title	Floodplain Acquisition and Sub-Reach/Site Specific Management Planning: Sacramento River (Red Bluff to Colusa)
CALFED Contract Management Agency	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Amount Funded	519000
Date Awarded	2001/01/01
Project Number	CALFED 2000-F03, FWS Agreement #11420-1-J001

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?

Yes.

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.

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?

Yes.

Other comments:

Prior-Phase Funding Review

Project Title	Ecosystem and Natural Process Restoration on the Sacramento River: Floodplain Acquisition and Management
CALFED Contract Management Agency	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Amount Funded	9879800
Date Awarded	1998/01/01
Project Number	CALFED 97-NO2

Project Title	Ecosystem and Natural Process Restoration on the Sacramento River: Active Restoration of Riparian Forest
CALFED Contract Management Agency	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Amount Funded	780000
Date Awarded	1998/01/01
Project Number	CALFED 97-NO3

Project Title	Ecosystem and Natural Process Restoration on the Sacramento River: A Meander Belt Implementation Project
CALFED Contract Management Agency	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Amount Funded	898700
Date Awarded	1998/01/01
Project Number	CALFED 97-NO4

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

No.

Previously funded land acquisition contracts required significant negotiation for special terms and conditions. Negotiations for standard terms have proceeded smoothly.

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

Yes.

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.

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?

Yes.

Other comments:

Prior-Phase Funding Review

Project Title	Restoration of the Confluence Area of the Sacramento River, Big Chico and Mud Creeks
CALFED Contract Management Agency	GCAP Services, Inc.
Amount Funded	2603377
Date Awarded	2004/01/01
Project Number	ERP-02-P16-D
Project Title	Subreach Planning for the Sacramento River: River Mile 144-164
CALFED Contract Management Agency	GCAP Services, Inc.
Amount Funded	1488009
Date Awarded	2004/01/01
Project Number	ERP-02-P27
Project Title	Collaborative Approach to Quantifying Ecosystem Flow Regime Needs for the Sacramento River
CALFED Contract Management Agency	GCAP Services, Inc.
Amount Funded	1500000
Date Awarded	2004/01/01
Project Number	ERP-02D-P61
Project Title	Sacramento River Restoration: Chico Landing Sub-Reach (RM 178-206)
CALFED Contract Management Agency	GCAP Services, Inc.
Amount Funded	693657
Date Awarded	2004/01/01
Project Number	ERP-02D-P65

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

No.

TNC requested changes to std Ts &Cs on most templates in the contract, which required negotiations & legal approval over a period of months. However, once Ts &Cs were negotiated for one contract (incl std. subcontract template), these templates were used to prepare all contracts for current projects. Working with TNC on Amendments goes smoothly as they are responsive, thorough, and submit quality work products.

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

Yes.

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.

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:

Prior-Phase Funding Review

Project Title	Hartley Island Acquisition
CALFED Contract Management Agency	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Amount Funded	1424000
Date Awarded	1997/01/01
Project Number	FWS Agreement #1448-11332-7-G017

Project Title	Singh Walnut Orchard
CALFED Contract Management Agency	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Amount Funded	50000
Date Awarded	2000/01/01
Project Number	FWS Agreement #11332-0-G014

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?

Yes.

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.

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?

Other comments:

