

**CALFED Bay-Delta 2002 ERP Directed Actions
Selection Panel Review**

Proposal Number: 167 DA

Applicant Organization: TNC

Proposal Title: Implementing a collaborative approach to quantifying ecosystem flow regime needs for the Sacramento River

Recommendation: Fund With Conditions –

Amount: \$1,500,000

Conditions, if any, of approval (if there are no conditions, please put "None"):

1. It is recommended that the matching funds be in hand prior to the execution of the contract as promised by the applicants.
2. TNC shall coordinate, cooperate, and regularly report about the this study's progress and results to CALFED's North of Delta storage team and to the Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum, and shall notify CALFED's ecosystem restoration program of if significant disagreements arise between TNC and these agencies about the project's implementation. It shall also coordinate its evaluations of relationships between flows and cottonwood recruitment and growth with John Stella, CALFED Science fellow.

Provide a brief explanation of your rating: The consensus of the external reviewers is that this is an improved version of the proposal that has explicit goals that are well reasoned and justified. They also have a team capable of completing the project. The response of the TNC and its collaborators to the directed action process is encouraging and warrants funding of this project. The addition of matching funds to support the project is also seen as a strong commitment to the goals and the value of this project.

During the directed action process TNC and its collaborators did a good job of engaging local and regional support and interacting with other efforts within the basin that relate to the proposed project. The Selection Panel believes this level of engagement needs to continue during project implementation, and should also include coordination with the ERP Independent Science Board, as provided by ERP staff.

Additional details about the project's budget should be provided as its contract is developed, so that costs for various tasks are fully documented.

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Research and Restoration External Scientific Review Form
CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program 2002 Proposal Solicitation Package

Proposal Title: Implementing a Collaborative Approach to Quantifying Ecosystem Flow Regime Needs for the Sacramento River

Review:

1. **Goals.** Are the goals, objectives and hypotheses clearly stated and internally consistent? Is the concept timely and important? **The goals are to apply interdisciplinary workshops to communicate multi-species flow regime recommendations, and evaluate and improve draft results; reduce scientific uncertainties; demonstrate utility of decision analyses tools, develop test scenarios, and evaluate tradeoffs. They also may generate additional hypotheses as a result of workshops, field studies and computer based modeling. This project is timely and important for improving understanding of ecological processes in the Sacramento River.**
- 2.
3. **Justification.** Is the study justified relative to existing knowledge? Is a conceptual model clearly stated in the proposal and does it explain the underlying basis for the proposed work? Is the selection of research, pilot or demonstration project, or a full-scale implementation project justified? **Their conceptual approach to the problem is clear and justified. Conceptual models are given and information is to be gathered to test concepts. This builds upon previous work that identified information gaps by conducting field research and quantitative modeling. In addition to clarifying existing uncertainties new uncertainties will be identified.**
4. **Approach.** Is the approach well designed and appropriate for meeting the objectives of the project? Are results likely to add to the base of knowledge? Is the project likely to generate novel information, methodology or approaches? Will the information ultimately be useful to decision-makers? **The project is well designed to meet the objectives stated and should generate considerable information to increase the base of knowledge for stream corridor dynamics. This will be useful to decision-makers during future restoration efforts.**
5. **Feasibility.** Is the approach fully documented and technically feasible? What is the likelihood of success? Is the scale of the project consistent with the objectives? **The project appears very feasible and likely to have a high degree of success.**
6. **Project-Specific Performance Measures.** Does the project include appropriate performance measures to measure success relative to the project's goals and objectives? Is there enough detail as to how the performance measures will be quantified? For restoration projects, are monitoring plans explicit and detailed enough to determine if performance measures will be adequately assessed? **Performance measures are more clearly stated in the revised proposal and include workshops, models, and data relevant to improved understanding of known uncertainties, reports and analyses of alternatives.**
7. **Products.** Are products of value likely from the project? Specifically for restoration projects, are products of value also likely from the monitoring component? Are interpretative outcomes likely from the project? **The revised proposal is much clearer in identifying products. The most useful product is likely to be increased communications among stakeholders, integrated models, improved information on known uncertainties and analyses of alternative recommendations for ecological flow needs along with hypotheses and information needs for filling scientific information gaps.**
8. **Capabilities.** What is the track record of applicants in terms of past projects? Is the project team qualified to efficiently and effectively implement the proposed project? Do they have available the infrastructure and other aspects of support necessary to accomplish the project? **Project investigators are experts in their fields and are experienced in the work proposed. Highly capable.**

9. **Cost/Benefit Comments.** Is the budget reasonable and adequate for the work proposed? **The proposed budget seems very reasonable for the level of effort proposed. It is laudable that private funding will cover additional tasks in the revised proposal.**

Miscellaneous comments: This is a much improved proposal and illustrates the effort to facilitate communications among the numerous stake holders and the integration of scientific knowledge and information.

Please provide an overall evaluation summary rating: Excellent: outstanding in all respects; Good: quality but some deficiencies; Poor: serious deficiencies.

Overall Evaluation Summary Rating	Provide a brief explanation of your summary rating
X- Excellent	Very good proposal that is likely to generate Sacramento River specific information on known uncertainties, address testable hypotheses and provide models that decision-makers can use for evaluating information needs and alternative flow regimes..
- Good	
- Poor	

Research and Restoration External Review Form
CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program 2002 Proposal Solicitation Package

Proposal Title: “Implementing a Collaborative Approach to Quantifying Ecosystem Flow Regime Needs for the Sacramento River”

Review:

1. **Goals.** Are the goals, objectives and hypotheses clearly stated and internally consistent? Is the concept timely and important?

The authors have done a commendable job in this second draft of addressing and articulating specific goals, objectives, and hypotheses where relevant. The concept is timely and important and uses state of the art approaches for addressing ecosystem questions using both science and social approaches.

2. **Justification.** Is the study justified relative to existing knowledge? Is a conceptual model clearly stated in the proposal and does it explain the underlying basis for the proposed work? Is the selection of research, pilot or demonstration project, or a full-scale implementation project justified?

The authors made an explicit effort to present several conceptual models as they related to the project design. Furthermore, the background for the rationale of this study is presented thereby providing the context that seemed to be missing from the first draft of this proposal.

The authors have posed this project as a research project to lay the groundwork for implementation, which appears to be appropriate.

3. **Approach.** Is the approach well designed and appropriate for meeting the objectives of the project? Are results likely to add to the base of knowledge? Is the project likely to generate novel information, methodology or approaches? Will the information ultimately be useful to decision-makers?

The approach of using workshops to direct questions and task development is one that is more frequently used. I think this approach is highly valid in that it makes the investigators motives and actions “transparent” to the constituent groups. Sometimes this is a tough approach, particularly when workshops are less than cooperative; however, if this approach is used correctly, there can be no accusations of “under the table” approaches to science. Open dialogue also stimulates thought and consideration of multiple perspectives.

The results from the workshops, research tasks, and decision support tools are highly likely to add to the base of knowledge. The material should ultimately be useful to decision makers and resource managers.

Regarding the category of contributing novel information-

One of the previous reviewers commented that this would be of interest to all those (internationally as well) managing complex river/social systems. I would agree with that reviewer and would really like to see this effort conducted in such a way that the final product is a book about the process and approaches. This would require perhaps a different approach in managing the coordination and documentation of events, but it would be extremely valuable to the aquatic resources management profession. I would hate to see the final document become another 800 page “white paper” stored in a file somewhere.

4. **Feasibility.** Is the approach fully documented and technically feasible? What is the likelihood of success? Is the scale of the project consistent with the objectives?

The approaches are fully documented and technically feasible based on past studies that the investigators have been involved with. The likelihood of success is high. The scale of the project is very consistent with the objectives.

5. **Project-Specific Performance Measures.** Does the project include appropriate performance measures to measure success relative to the project's goals and objectives? Is there enough detail as to how the performance measures will be quantified? For restoration projects, are monitoring plans explicit and detailed enough to determine if performance measures will be adequately assessed?

The investigators try to dodge providing project-specific performance measures by saying that this is not an implementation project and therefore they cannot measure ecological response. Table 2, which they refer to for this category outlines the specific tasks that will be done and how they will accomplish them, but does not evaluate performance. Furthermore, simply completing a task is only one indicator of performance.

For instance, the task 1.2, "Hold Stakeholder Workshops" could have performance measures that include a documentation of having achieved stated objectives for the workshop, some evaluation from the workshop participants, and an evaluation from the workshop contributors. It takes time to do this, but the approach provides for a measure of accountability and allows for identification of approaches that don't work as well as documenting the successes.

6. **Products.** Are products of value likely from the project? Specifically for restoration projects, are products of value also likely from the monitoring component? Are interpretative outcomes likely from the project?

Again, the investigators refer to Table 2 where the products and outcomes are listed. Only one peer reviewed manuscript is listed and a series of technical memoranda are listed. This seems a bit inadequate for the cost and scope of the project. There are several products implied and I would recommend that CALFED work to bolster and solidify this list with the investigators at the time of funding.

7. **Capabilities.** What is the track record of applicants in terms of past projects? Is the project team qualified to efficiently and effectively implement the proposed project? Do they have available the infrastructure and other aspects of support necessary to accomplish the project?

This is an extremely highly qualified group of investigators that is more than capable of conducting the work outlined.

8. **Cost/Benefit Comments.** Is the budget reasonable and adequate for the work proposed?

The investigators have further documented and justified their budget. It appears adequate for the work that is proposed. Furthermore they are to be commended for pursuing additional funding from the Packard Foundation.

Miscellaneous comments: The investigators did an excellent job of revising the proposal, conducting the workshop with the regional stakeholders, and casting the proposed work within the context of current science available.

Please provide an overall evaluation summary rating: Excellent: outstanding in all respects; Good: quality but some deficiencies; Poor: serious deficiencies.

Overall Evaluation	Provide a brief explanation of your summary rating
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Summary Rating	
- Excellent XXXXXX	There is a significant need to conduct this type of workshop for the Sacramento River and establish the State of the System. The use of workshops and a decision analysis tool is state of the art in watershed and ecosystem management. If properly documented, the process that results in the product will be highly valuable to aquatic scientists and managers.
- Good	
- Poor	

***CALFED Bay-Delta Directed Action
Administrative Review
Budget Evaluation***

Proposal number: 167

Proposal title: Implementing a Collaborative Approach to Quantifying Flow Regime Needs for the Sacramento River

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

If no, please explain:

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

If no, please explain:

Does the proposal clearly state the type of expenses encompassed in indirect rates or overhead costs? Yes

If no, please explain:

Are appropriate project management costs clearly identified? Yes

If no, please explain:

Do the total funds requested (Form I, Question 17A) equal the combined total annual costs in the budget summary? NO

If no, please explain (for example, are costs to be reimbursed by cost share funds included in budget summary).

TNC is relying on receiving \$380,000 from a private source and thus has reduced the amount of the total budget accordingly and is only asking CALFED for remaining amount. The budget displays the total costs for the entire project. There is a footnote at the end of the detailed 3 year budget that notes that the other cost share funds are included in the budget.

Does the budget justification adequately explain major expenses?

Yes

If no, please explain:

Are there other budget issues that warrant consideration? Yes

If yes, please explain: If TNC does not receive the other funds from the private source or only receives partially funding, they have noted that they would anticipate asking for additional funding via a contract amendment. I received a message from TNC stating that they thought the private funding would not be for the full \$380,000 they had planned for!

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