

Proposal Reviews

#94: Lagoon Valley Ecosystem Restoration

National Grants

Research and Restoration Technical Panel Review

Bay Regional Review

External Scientific Review #1
#2

Environmental Compliance

Budget

Research and Restoration Technical Panel Review:

CALFED Bay-Delta 2002 ERP PSP Research and Restoration Technical Panel Review Form

Proposal Number: 94

Applicant Organization: National Grants

Proposal Title: Lagoon Valley Ecosystem Restoration

Review:

Please provide an overall evaluation summary rating:

Superior: outstanding in all respects;

Above Average: Quality proposal, medium or high regional value, and no significant administrative concerns;

Adequate: No serious deficiencies, no significant regional impediments, and no significant administrative concerns;

Not Recommended: Serious deficiencies, significant regional impediments or significant administrative concerns.

Overall Evaluation Summary Rating	Provide a brief explanation of your summary rating
-Superior	
-Above average	Too many issues and questions are raised on this proposal. The primary reviewer believes the applicants lack a fundamental understanding of ecosystem function to implement an effective environmental restoration of this magnitude. The deficiencies described in the various reviews preclude recommendation for funding.
-Adequate	
XNot recommended	

1. **Goals and Justification.** Does the proposal present a clear statement of goals, objectives and hypotheses? Does the proposal present a clear justification and conceptual model for the project?

The applicants present two objectives -- reduction of sediment production and input into Lagoon Valley, and habitat restoration and special species protection/enhancement. This proposal seems to focus on 1st objective. The discussion of the 2nd objective is deficient.

2. **Likelihood of Success (Approach, Feasibility, Capabilities and Performance Measures).** Is the project likely to succeed based on the approach, feasibility and project team capabilities? Are the proposed performance measures adequate for measuring the project's success?

The extensive problems currently associated with sediment loading of the lake justify this project. A monitoring program is proposed, but doesn't appear to be part of the budget. The proposed periodic maintenance via developing and trimming of wetland and upland vegetation will likely prevent their attaining their 2nd objective. Removal of mature stands

of oak may be a mistake.

3. **Outcomes and Products.** Will the project advance the state of scientific knowledge in general and/or make an important contribution to the state of knowledge of the Bay-Delta Watershed? For restoration proposals, is the project likely to contribute to ecosystem restoration or species recoveries in a significant way? Will the project produce products useful to decision-makers and scientists?

The products should provide a good template for similar projects. The reduced sediment loading is the ultimate product. However, the applicants do not address how the hydrologic regime will be altered from their project.

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

No issues were identified in the budget review. However, the budget covers restoration, but lacks a monitoring component. The primary reviewer was confused by a one-year budget requested for a 2-year project. In addition, the monitoring addresses tasks that would be done in years 1, 3, and 5. Some reconciliation is needed for the budget request.

5. **Regional Review.** How did the regional panel(s) rank the proposal (High, Medium, Low)? Did the regional panel(s) identify significant benefits (regional priorities, linkages with other activities, local involvement) or impediments (local constraints, conflicts with other activities, lack of local involvement) to this proposal? What were they?

One regional review -- low rank. The stated goals are not consistent with BMP goals for environmental restoration. The applicants fail to link their work adequately to other projects in the area. The demonstration of local partnerships is weak.

6. **Administrative Review.** Were there significant concerns about the proposal with regard to the prior performance, environmental compliance and budget administrative reviews? What were they?

Environmental compliance issues were raised by the review. The applicants were not clear on the permits needed or obtained for this project. The applicants need to revisit the checklist to clarify their permits required for this project.

Miscellaneous comments:

Bay Regional Review:

Proposal Number: 94

Applicant Organization: National Grants

Proposal Title: Lagoon Valley Ecosystem Restoration

Overall Ranking: Low -Medium -High

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

The regional panel favors stakeholder-supported, action-oriented projects that restore critical habitats in the Bay and Suisun Marsh. This project doesn't hit significantly affect those habitat areas. The tasks as described in the proposal do not reflect current environmental restoration best management practices.

1. Is the project feasible based on local constraints?

Yes -No

How?

Yes, City owns most of the land and has an access agreement with one private entity. Also, DF&G, Public Works, Planning, City Engineers, and Professional Consultants involved, so constraints have been evaluated.

2. Does the project pursue the restoration priorities applicable to the region as outlined in the PSP?

-Yes XNo

How?

No. The proposal states that this project will achieve ecosystem restoration related goals, including: Goal 1 Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4; Goal 2 Objectives 1, 4, 5; Goal 4 Objectives 1; Goal 5 Objectives 3, 4, 7; Goal 6, Objectives 1, 2, 3. The approach & technical feasibility will be the use of current best management practices to achieve the desired results. However, the Ditch Stabilization/Sediment Capture System, Lagoon Drain Rehabilitation, and Bypass Channel Enhancement tasks as described in the proposal do not appear to reflect current environmental restoration best management practices.

3. Is the project adequately linked with other restoration activities in the region, such as ongoing implementation projects and regional planning efforts?

-Yes XNo

How?

Yes this is a proposal for work in a logical sequence. CalFed previously funded upper watershed work, this request is for lower watershed work. No the proposal does not describe any links to the many nearby restoration projects

4. Does the project adequately involve local people and institutions?

-Yes XNo

How?

No National Grants' role in the application and its connections to others are unclear. From the application it appears that the City of Vacaville has not partnered with any local entities (RCDs, local public schools, land owner groups, creek groups, environmental NGOs, etc.) on this project

Other Comments:

A map of the watershed illustrating both the upper and lower project locations would be helpful. Very weak performance measures it is understood that no one can guarantee habitat success rate, but the project metrics should be measurable.

External Scientific: #1

Research and Restoration External Scientific Review Form

Proposal Number: **94**

Applicant Organization: **National Grants**

Proposal Title: **Lagoon Valley Ecosystem Restoration**

Conflict of Interest Statements:

I have no financial interest in this proposal.

Correct

Incorrect

In the blank below please explain any connection to proposal, to applicant, co-applicant or subcontractor or to submitting institution (write "none" if no connection):

None

Review:

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
-Excellent	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	A good rating was given in acknowledgment that this is a continuation of an existing award that apparently deserved merit. However, the proposal was deficient in addressing several of the criteria.
-Poor	

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

Rating: Good. Two objectives: reduction of sediment production and input into Lagoon Valley; habitat restoration and special species protection/enhancement. This proposal seems to focus primarily on the 1st objective. It is deficient in adequately addressing and justifying objective 2.

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?

Rating: Very Good. This project is justified because of the extensive problems currently associated with sediment loading of the lake. A monitoring program is proposed, but doesn't appear to be part of the budget package.

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?

Rating: Good. Good approach to initially addressing both objectives. However, periodic maintenance via developing and trimming of the wetland and riparian vegetation will detract from attaining 2nd objective. Removal of mature stands of oak does not appear to be good move.

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?

Rating: Excellent. Well-documented approach and highly feasible. Permits either obtained or in process.

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?

Rating: Good. Performance measure included and well-documented. However, budget does not cover the implementation of all of these measures, i.e., monitoring.

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?

Rating: Very Good. Useful products that could serve as template for other similar projects.

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?

Rating: Excellent. Not much written up. But, because this is a second phase project, the original award must have reviewed credentials.

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

Rating: Good. Budget covers restoration component, but lacks monitoring component. One year budget given, but initially stated as a 2-year project. Monitoring addresses tasks that would be done in years 1, 3, and 5.

Miscellaneous comments:

I am troubled by the authors lack of understanding of ecosystem function. This proposal basically is a hydrogeomorphological restoration and an attempt at initial habitat restoration. However, habitat fragmentation may occur by continual removal of woody debris, dredging, and cropping of riparian standing crop vegetation.

External Scientific: #2

Research and Restoration External Scientific Review Form

Proposal Number: **94**

Applicant Organization: **National Grants**

Proposal Title: **Lagoon Valley Ecosystem Restoration**

Conflict of Interest Statements:

I have no financial interest in this proposal.

Correct

Incorrect

In the blank below please explain any connection to proposal, to applicant, co-applicant or subcontractor or to submitting institution (write "none" if no connection):

none

Review:

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
-Excellent	The proposal lacks performance measures, a map showing the hydraulic connection of the Lagoon Valley to the Bay Delta. Lacked detail to review the personnel qualifications.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	
-Poor	

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

The project goals, objectives and hypotheses are clearly stated.

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?

If this project will complement the upper watershed restoration work, then why not discuss how that project has been successful?

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?

They cite an extensive list of monitoring efforts that will be conducted, which is good. However, a reference to the use of standard protocols should have been cited.

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 feasibility is sufficient.

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?

How is the ecosystem health being measured and evaluated in this proposal?

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?

The product will be reduced sediment loading to Lagoon Valley and associated waterways. I am not sure of the hydraulic conductivity of the Lagoon Valley to the Bay Delta. A map and discussion of such would be helpful.

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 information was not provided in the proposal to review the personnel qualifications.

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

Fair costs. However, lacks monitoring and its costs.

Miscellaneous comments:

Environmental Compliance:

Proposal Number: 94

Applicant Organization: National Grants

Proposal Title: Lagoon Valley Ecosystem Restoration

1. Are the legal or regulatory issues that affect the proposal identified adequately in the proposal?

-Yes XNo

If no, please explain:

On Environmental Compliance Checklist, #3 states that NEPA will be complied with. Need to change #1b to say "yes"

The applicant has listed "required" or "obtained" next to each item on the checklist. It is not clear if they are actually pursuing all of these permits or not.

From what was described in the project description, applicant needs to obtain: *1603 Agreement *Reclamation Board Approval *Notification of DPC or BCDC

Good idea to obtain: *Scientific Collecting Permit *2081 Permit IF State listed species are present. *Start with a Section 7 consultation and USFWS will then advise whether a Section 10 Take Permit is necessary. *401 Certification and 404 Permit.

Not clear why all of the Local Permits and Approvals have been obtained if there is no land use change.

2. Does the project's timeline and budget reflect adequate planning to address legal and regulatory issues that affect the proposal?

XYes -No

If no, please explain:

Again, it is unclear what permits the applicant is actually pursuing but they have budgeted for permits which seems adequate. Timeline not clear but they anticipate CEQA/NEPA completion in the first quarter of 2002.

3. Do the legal and regulatory issues that affect the proposal significantly impair the project's feasibility?

-Yes XNo

If yes, please explain:

Applicant needs to review the environmental compliance checklist and correctly list permits they will be pursuing and leave all others blank.

Other Comments:

Budget:

Proposal Number: 94

Applicant Organization: National Grants

Proposal Title: Lagoon Valley Ecosystem Restoration

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

Yes -No

If no, please explain:

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

Yes -No

If no, please explain:

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

Yes -No

If no, please explain:

4. Are appropriate project management costs clearly identified?

Yes -No

If no, please explain:

Included under services or consultants.

5. Do the total funds requested (Form I, Question 17A) equal the combined total annual costs in the budget summary?

Yes -No

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

6. Does the budget justification adequately explain major expenses?

Yes -No

If no, please explain:

7. Are there other budget issues that warrant consideration?

-Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Other Comments: