

Proposal Reviews

#96: American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

Natomas Mutual Water Company

Final Selection Panel Review

Initial Selection Panel Review

Fish Screen and Passage Technical Review

Land Acquisition

Sacramento Regional Review

Prior Performance/Next Phase Funding #1
#2

Environmental Compliance

Budget

Final Selection Panel Review:

CALFED Bay-Delta 2002 ERP PSP Final Selection Panel Review

Proposal Number: 96

Applicant Organization: Natomas Mutual Water Company

Proposal Title: American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

Please provide an overall evaluation rating.

Fund	
As Is	-
In Part	-
With Conditions	-
Consider as Directed Action	X
Not Recommended	-

Amount: **\$10,175,000.00**

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

None

Provide a brief explanation of your rating:

The applicant provided a letter during the comment period which clarified some of the issues brought up by previous panels, and pledges to continue refining the project with the ASFP.

Initial Selection Panel Review:

CALFED Bay-Delta 2002 ERP PSP Initial Selection Panel Review

Proposal Number: 96

Applicant Organization: Natomas Mutual Water Company

Proposal Title: American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

Please provide an overall evaluation rating.

Explanation of Recommendation Categories: Fund

- **As Is** (a proposal recommended for funding as proposed)
- **In Part** (a proposal for which partial funding is recommended for selected project phases or components)
- **With Conditions** (a proposal for which funds are recommended if the applicant contractually agrees to meet the specified conditions)

Consider as Directed Action in Annual Workplan (a proposal addressing a high priority action that requires some revision followed by additional review prior to being recommended for funding)

Not Recommended (a proposal not currently recommended for funding-after revision may be considered in the future)

Note on "Amount":

For proposals recommended as Fund As Is, Fund In Part or Fund With Conditions, the dollar amount is the amount recommended by the Selection Panel.

For proposals recommended as Consider as Directed Action in Annual Workplan, the dollar amount is the amount requested by the applicant(s).

Fund	
As Is	-
In Part	-
With Conditions	-
Consider as Directed Action	X
Not Recommended	-

Amount: **\$10,175,000.00**

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

None

Provide a brief explanation of your rating:

The proposed project is a priority screening action on the Sacramento River. Previous reviewers expressed that cost-share issues should be clarified, a Value Engineering review should be included in the planning process, and that Technical Advisory Teams should approve final design. The Selection Panel concurs with the technical panel and recommends that the applicant work with the Anadromous Fish Screen Program to finalize the design, establish a reasonable cost for an appropriately screened facility, and submit a revised proposal for consideration as a directed action. The Panel would be more favorably inclined to provide funding if a local cost share was included as part of the project.

Fish Screen and Passage Technical Review:

CALFED Bay-Delta 2002 ERP PSP Fish Screen and Passage Technical Review

Proposal Number: 96

Applicant Organization: Natomas Mutual Water Company

Proposal Title: American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

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	The overall rating is Above Average based on the need to screen this major unscreened diversion and a plan which is fairly well developed. It might be rated higher, i.e.-Superior, if the technical, organizational, and budgetary concerns are satisfactorily addressed. Should be subject to more careful a budget review and Value Engineering Study, if selected for funding. If project proceeds, the proponent and their agent should be fully accountable to a formally sanctioned Technical Advisory Team
XAbove average	
-Adequate	
-Not recommended	

1. **Location in terms of potential impact on fishery.** Is the project located where it will significantly benefit the fishery? Do current fish passage barriers or water diversions there harm large numbers of fish? What species of anadromous fish are present? Is the project located where these species are in their most vulnerable life stages? Will it benefit other species of fish or the waterway's community and ecosystem? Does it restore and protect natural habitats or habitat values? Will its benefits be long-term, or short-lived? Is its biological effectiveness clearly demonstrable?

Project location is lower Sacramento River, just north of the city of Sacramento. All runs of chinook and steelhead migrate past this site. Due to the magnitude of the diversion consolidation, this project constitutes a major benefit to the fishery. It is supposed that these diversions, taken together, cause substantial harm to the fishery via entrainment into the water diversions.

2. **Diversions taking a greater proportion of flow.** If the project is a fish screen, is the size of the diversion to be screened a significant proportion of the waterway's discharge?

At a total consolidated diversion of 630 cfs, this amount of water constitutes a relatively high proportion of flow that must be effectively screened.

3. **Implementability** (minimal legal, regulatory or technical obstacles): Does the project use proven and existing technology, or unproven and experimental technology? Can it be implemented in a timely fashion, or are protracted delays anticipated? Are project partners, including consultants and subcontractors, qualified? Will legal, regulatory, or technical obstacles impede it? Can any adverse effects be reversed or adequately mitigated? Does it enjoy public support? Is it compatible with other programs and projects, which are part of an integrated restoration program for the waterway? Does it have synergistic effects with ongoing programs?

This project was proposed over five years ago and progress has been very slow. Questions remain about land acquisitions, right of way, cooperation of neighboring landowners/water diverters. There may be a question arising with respect to the supposed preferred screen alternative because we have some new evidence about specific screen performance from our monitoring and investigation programs. A Technical Advisory Team needs to carefully evaluate the screen design in light of the new information.

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

Budget raises questions. What is the local cost share contribution? This project has received previous CVPIA support and also may have caused a major redirection other Department of Interior (AFRP) and Prop 204 Restoration Funds The project budget is complicated by the need to segregate funds between that which is necessary for fish protection versus that which involves agricultural improvements.

Recommend a Value Engineering Study, Budget Audit, and full contractual accountability to a recognized technical advisory team with full Resource Agency representation.

5. **Partnerships/Opportunities.** Does the project fully involve appropriate partners? Are the applicants willing participants? Are other cost-sharing funds available, and fully exploited?

Based on reports from the Proponents consulting engineer, this project appears to warrant high marks in this category. However, it is still uncertain whether or not the required amount of agreement, cooperation, and consensus has really been achieved.

6. **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?

The regional panel ranked this HIGH because of its value to salmonids and the significant prior investment in the project.

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

1 of the 2 contracts that support this project extends until 2003. The other expires this year.

Miscellaneous comments:

This project is considered a very high priority in the Sacramento River watershed for the protection of ESA listed anadromous and estuarine fishes. It should go forward with the understanding that the budget should be reviewed with a special attention to the private cost-share component and the cost estimation.

Land Acquisition:

Proposal Number: 96

Applicant Organization: Natomas Mutual Water Company

Proposal Title: American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

1. Is the site's ecological importance documented in the proposal?

Yes -No

If yes, please import relevant text and citations here:

Land acquisition elements of the project purchase of necessary rights of way for a fish screen for this Sacramento River water diversion. According to the applicant, the proposed project will remove a migration barrier, remove diversion facilities from the Natomas Cross Canal, consolidate diversion locations, provide positive barrier fish screens, and assist in restoration of aquatic, riverine, and riparian habitat. Entrainment caused by unscreened diversions, blockage of suitable habitat, lack of quality stream channel and riparian habitats, and excessive predation has been identified as key stressors affecting anadromous fish species in this area. The project attempts to protect anadromous fish species by addressing NMWC's potential impact upon these stressors, and to assure a stable water supply to upland habitat considered critical to other at-risk species such as the Giant Garter Snake and the Swainson's hawk.' 'Purchase of these ROWs is needed so this long-planned project can proceed.'

2. Is the owner's willingness to sell the site documented in the proposal?

-Yes No

If no, please explain:

The proposal states only that negotiations are currently underway to obtain the additional easements for the improvements required to NMWC's internal irrigation system.

3. Is evidence of local government support for the purchase included in the proposal?

Yes -No

If yes, please explain:

According to the proposal, public outreach efforts to secure local approval of the orject are already well underway. They are intended to address the interests of a number of specific communities, namely, the City of Sacramento, the County of Sacramento, Natomas Basin landowners, the County of Sutter, RD1000, and the County of Placer, the member agencies of the Sacramento North Area Groundwater Management Authority (SNAGMA), member agencies of the American River Basin Cooperating Agencies (ARBCA), member agencies of the Sacramento Metropolitan Water Authority (SMWA), the signatures of The Sacramento City/County Office of Metropolitan Water Plannings Water Forums, and the member firms

and interests of the Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS). This project has been discussed regionally since 1994, and reviewed publicly and recommended for completion in the Water Forums Agreement, (April, 2000) which was signed by over fifty (50) local and regional groups, including Federal and State agencies. Virtually ninety-nine percent (99%) of the agencies, organizations, and interest groups listed above are signatures of that agreement. NMWC has met and briefed all of those entities above, and is expecting consensus support for the project. In order to formalize and assure local involvement and support, NMWC will continue its role in the Water Forums Successor Effort, SNAGMA as a governing board member, and maintain regular monthly meetings to which all interest groups are invited.

4. Is the use proposed for the site after its purchase clearly consistent with the site's general plan designation and zoning?

Yes -No

If no, please explain:

The application states the project is consistent with current planning ordinances + zoning regulations, but does not provide information about current zones or plans applicable to the site. Rights of way to be acquired will remain in agricultural use after the project's completion. Because local zoning and planning regulations rarely address utility features like this fish screen, I'm comfortable that the applicants' assertion about its conformance current planning ordinances + zoning regulations is accurate.

5. Is the land mapped as prime farmland, farmland of statewide significance, unique farmland, or farmland of local importance?

Yes -No

If yes, please explain the classification:

The application provides no information about agricultural soils or use of the site, other than noting that it will remain in agriculture after the project's completion.

Is the site under a Williamson Act contract?

-Yes No

Will use of the site change from agriculture after its purchase?

-Yes No -Not Currently in Agriculture

6. Is this a time-sensitive acquisition opportunity, according to the proposal?

Yes -No

If yes, please import relevant text here:

The acquisition of these ROWs is needed for this long-planned project to proceed.

Other Comments:

Because the applicant indicated, I believe incorrectly, that the project would not involve physical changes in land use (how could they build a new consolidated diversion without some physical change of land use?), information about current zoning and land use, including agricultural use, was not collected by the application forms.

Sacramento Regional Review:

Proposal Number: 96

Applicant Organization: Natomas Mutual Water Company

Proposal Title: American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

Overall Ranking: -Low -Medium **XHigh**

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

The potential benefits to this project seem high for anadromous salmonids. There is concern about the cost as there is much invested already. It was mentioned that co-funding had been secured through recent legislation.

1. Is the project feasible based on local constraints?

XYes -No

How?

There is a highly qualified group of individuals involved in this effort. The proposed action is feasible and has been proven to be successful. This is a next phase project that has local public support.

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

XYes -No

How?

This project addresses habitat restoration PSP priorities - Sac Region #1, passage, Sac Region #2, and screening Sac Region #6.

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

XYes -No

How?

This action is being coordinated with the American River entities, (Water Forum) and is coordinated within the local entities (Fish Screen Team).

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

XYes -No

How?

This action is being coordinated with the appropriate stakeholders, Fish Screen Team and Sacramento area entities.

Other Comments:

This is a continuing project and progress on previous phases is unknown.

Prior Performance/Next Phase Funding: #1

New Proposal Number: 96

New Proposal Title: American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

1. Prior CALFED project numbers, titles, and programs: *(list only projects for which you are the contract manager)*

#99FC200165 (CALFED/Prop 204)

2. Prior CVPIA project numbers, titles, and programs: *(list only projects for which you are the contract manager)*

#01FC200046 (Prop 204)

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

Yes -No -N/A

If no, please explain any difficulties:

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

Yes -No -N/A

If no, please explain any inaccuracies:

5. Is the applicant's progress towards these project(s)' milestones and outcomes to date satisfactory?

Yes -No -N/A

If no, please explain deficiencies:

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

Yes -No -N/A

If no, please explain deficiencies:

7. Will the project(s) be ready for next phase funding in 2002, based on its current progress and expenditure rates?

Yes -No -N/A

If no, please explain:

The applicant is completing the feasibility study and will be ready to start design and environmental compliance in 2002.

Other Comments:

Prior Performance/Next Phase Funding: #2

New Proposal Number: 96

New Proposal Title: American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

1. Prior CALFED project numbers, titles, and programs: *(list only projects for which you are the contract manager)*

01-N60 - American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

2. Prior CVPIA project numbers, titles, and programs: *(list only projects for which you are the contract manager)*

N/A

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

XYes -No -N/A

If no, please explain any difficulties:

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

XYes -No -N/A

If no, please explain any inaccuracies:

5. Is the applicant's progress towards these project(s)' milestones and outcomes to date satisfactory?

XYes -No -N/A

If no, please explain deficiencies:

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

XYes -No -N/A

If no, please explain deficiencies:

7. Will the project(s) be ready for next phase funding in 2002, based on its current progress and expenditure rates?

-Yes **X**No -N/A

If no, please explain:

Current phase III is scheduled to end in June of 2003.

Other Comments:

Environmental Compliance:

Proposal Number: 96

Applicant Organization: Natomas Mutual Water Company

Proposal Title: American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

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

-Yes No

If no, please explain:

May need grading permit and State Lands Commission Lease.

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

Yes -No

If no, please explain:

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

-Yes No

If yes, please explain:

If project proponent obtains all necessary permits, project is feasible.

Other Comments:

Project proponent states that environmental documentation was funded under previous grant and document preparation is under way.

Budget:

Proposal Number: 96

Applicant Organization: Natomas Mutual Water Company

Proposal Title: American Basin Fish Screen and Habitat Improvement Project

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:

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: