

Proposal Reviews

#121: Waterbirds and Water Resources in the East Grasslands / Stevinson Water District Watershed

Riviere and Associates

Initial Selection Panel Review

Research and Restoration Technical Panel Review

San Joaquin Regional Review

External Scientific Review #1
#2
#3

Environmental Compliance

Budget #1
#2

Initial Selection Panel Review:

CALFED Bay-Delta 2002 ERP PSP Initial Selection Panel Review

Proposal Number: 121

Applicant Organization: Riviere and Associates

Proposal Title: Waterbirds and Water Resources in the East Grasslands / Stevinson Water District Watershed

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	-
Not Recommended	X

Amount: **\$0**

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

None.

Provide a brief explanation of your rating:

The Selection Panel disagrees with other reviewers about the value of this correlative study of waterfowl habitat use. In contrast, the panel would be favorably disposed to a study that is designed to address through hypothesis testing how specific habitat features contribute to waterfowl distribution and abundance. The current proposal spares readers critical aspects of study system design and application; it is not clear how university scientists will be engaged. The panel recommends not to fund.

Research and Restoration Technical Panel Review:

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

Proposal Number: 121

Applicant Organization: Riviere and Associates

Proposal Title: Waterbirds and Water Resources in the East Grasslands / Stevinson Water District Watershed

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 proposal was well written. The concept and proposed monitoring were well developed. The vague description of the data analyses is a weakness. The project could provide some quantitative descriptions about habitat requirements for various waterbirds. Notwithstanding the reason for the low regional review, the results could be useful to a wide range of resource scientists, managers and decision-makers.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Above average	
-Adequate	
-Not 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 goals, objectives and hypotheses are appropriately and clearly stated. The proposed concept and study are timely and important given the minimal wetland habitat of the East Grasslands and the threatened, dependent wildlife populations. The knowledge and understanding of the landscapes and species to be studied are sufficient to justify the proposed activities. The selected area seems ideal. The study seems well designed and adapted to the subject landscape. The proposed frequency of sampling should be extended from one sample period to at least two. This would afford an analysis of the crucial variation in the hydrologic cycle. The study could establish both design and management criteria for similar wetland habitats.

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 study methods rely on well proven techniques and the sample size seems consistent with the objectives. The only risk to the successful completion of the study is hydrologic in nature. If insufficient or too much water covers the site, the desired data may not be gathered.

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 proposed performance criteria for data collection seem appropriate but they should be described in greater detail. Those for the overall conduct of the study (e.g., reports and other tangible products) are adequately described. The conclusions and their documentation will certainly be of value.

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

The costs are reasonable. However, there are several errors in the proposals relating to the total cost and labor rates.

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?

The San Joaquin Regional Review gave the proposal a low rating. It noted a high degree of landowner support but concluded that the results would not have much value throughout the San Joaquin valley.

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?

No significant administrative issues were raised except for a discrepancy between the funds requested and the total given in the budget summary.

Miscellaneous comments:

None

San Joaquin Regional Review:

Proposal Number: 121

Applicant Organization: Riviere and Associates

Proposal Title: Waterbirds and Water Resources in the East Grasslands / Stevinson Water District Watershed

Overall Ranking: Low -Medium -High

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

Information highly specific and may only benefit a few lanfowners. Not a convincing argument that this project is a high priority.

1. Is the project feasible based on local constraints?

Yes -No

How?

Affected landowners are supportive. Relevant agencies and organizations support. No access problems.

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

Yes -No

How?

Maybe. Listed are MR 1, 2, 3, and SJ 1, 2, and 4. However, many of these are a stretch and the overall project does not seem of the highest priority for the needs of the SJ Valley.

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

Yes -No

How?

Linkages to DU, NAWCA, NRCS, Merced River Restoration Plan are all mentioned

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

Yes -No

How?

Local landowners are highly supportive as will benefit them directly in the management of their lands. Results could be positive for management of their properties at no cost to them.

Other Comments:

Feasible project but not a convincing high priority.

External Scientific: #1

Research and Restoration External Scientific Review Form

Proposal Number: **121**

Applicant Organization: **Riviere and Associates**

Proposal Title: **Waterbirds and Water Resources in the East Grasslands / Stevinson Water District Watershed**

Conflict of Interest Statements:

I have no financial interest in this proposal.

XCorrect

-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
X Excellent	The concept of the proposed monitoring (I would suggest research) program was well laid out. The author(s) clearly understood the problem that was to be addressed and the approach to characterizing the solution. Combined, the science, staff and cost of this study should yield real benefits.
-Good	
-Poor	

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

The goals, objectives and hypotheses are appropriately and clearly stated. The proposed concept and study are timely and important given the minimal wetland habitat of the East Grasslands and the threatened, dependent wildlife populations.

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 knowledge and understanding of the landscapes and species to be studied are sufficient to justify the proposed activities. The selected area seems ideal.

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 study seems well designed and adapted to the subject landscape. The proposed frequency of sampling should be extended from one sample period to at least two. This would afford an analysis of the crucial variation in the hydrologic cycle. The study could establish both design and management criteria for similar wetland habitats.

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 study methods rely on well proven techniques and the sample size seems consistent with the objectives. The only risk to the successful completion of the study is hydrologic in nature. If insufficient or too much water covers the site, the desired data may not be gathered.

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 proposed performance criteria for data collection seem appropriate but they should be described in greater detail. Those for the overall conduct of the study (e.g., reports and other tangible products) are adequately described.

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 conclusions and their documentation will certainly be of value.

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?

The principal investigator seems well qualified both academically and experientially. The supporting organization offers site access and substantial understanding of the stream. The equipment and tools necessary for the proposed work are minimal.

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

The costs are reasonable. However, there are several errors in the proposals relating to the total cost and labor rates.

Miscellaneous comments:

The proposal is well formed and written. The cost table should be comma delimited. The schedule was clear.

External Scientific: #2

Research and Restoration External Scientific Review Form

Proposal Number: **121**

Applicant Organization: **Riviere and Associates**

Proposal Title: **Waterbirds and Water Resources in the East Grasslands / Stevinson Water District Watershed**

Conflict of Interest Statements:

I have no financial interest in this proposal.

XCorrect

-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 project has the potential to provide some quantified descriptions about habitat requirements for various waterbirds, which could be quite useful for improving water management practices that impact wetlands
XGood	
-Poor	

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

yes, goals are clear and consistent

yes, concept seems timely and important

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?

yes, study seems justified relative to existing knowledge (although this reviewer lacks a solid assessment of the state of knowledge)

conceptual model presented in diagram seems reasonable

selection of this self-described monitoring project is justified

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 is probably appropriate for meeting the objectives; the description of the data-analysis procedures is somewhat vague

the results should add to the base of knowledge

this reviewer is not sufficiently aware of the state of knowledge to assess whether this project will generate anything truly novel

the information should be useful to decision-makers (particularly water managers)

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 description of the approach is rather limited in details (although this reviewer is not aware of the constraints on proposal length or detail), particularly with respect to data analysis; based on what is presented, the approach is technically feasible

likelihood of success at meeting the objectives seems high

scale is consistent with 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 listed performance measures appear to be products, which all seem worthwhile, but do not necessarily provide a measure of performance or success

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 expected products all appear to be valuable

if this reviewer understands what is meant by "interpretive outcome", the management plan sounds like a very worthwhile outcome that could become a model for other areas

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?

although the academic track record of the applicant is not extensive, his qualifications seem adequate and appropriate for this project

other support and infrastructure appears adequate for this project

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

although the total budget seems high to this reviewer, I must admit to being a cheap-skate and having a strong bias that all such studies could be done at lower cost, but my views are probably not realistic in today's economy

the budget certainly seems adequate to accomplish the objectives

Miscellaneous comments:

none not covered above

External Scientific: #3

Research and Restoration External Scientific Review Form

Proposal Number: **121**

Applicant Organization: **Riviere and Associates**

Proposal Title: **Waterbirds and Water Resources in the East Grasslands / Stevinson Water District Watershed**

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	This is a well-written project. Some areas could have been more detailed.
<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 objectives and hypotheses are stated clearly.

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?

They have a good conceptual model that is clearly stated and the project is timely. Its a monitoring project and this is justified.

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 is appropriate for meeting the objectives and should provide worthwhile information. It would be helpful to have more details on the vegetation sampling. They mention plant height, but what about species and cover?

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 project is feasible and consistent with 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?

Performance measures could have included more detail. Performance measures are reports, presentations, articles, and a management plan.

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 products will be of value. Products are publications, bulletins, and scientific manuscripts. I was happy to see the latter included.

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?

The applicants have done similar studies and appear qualified.

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

The budget is reasonable.

Miscellaneous comments:

Environmental Compliance:

Proposal Number: 121

Applicant Organization: Riviere and Associates

Proposal Title: Waterbirds and Water Resources in the East Grasslands / Stevinson Water District Watershed

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

Yes No

If no, please explain:

No permits or environmental documentation required for monitoring program.

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:

N/A

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

Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Monitoring program will not have any impacts to the environment and requires no permits.

Other Comments:

Budget: #1

Proposal Number: 121

Applicant Organization: Riviere and Associates

Proposal Title: Waterbirds and Water Resources in the East Grasslands / Stevinson Water District Watershed

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

Yes -No

If no, please explain:

Year 1 & 2.

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:

MAYBE, on the last page of the Budget Justification.

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).

17.a. = \$258,307.20

Grand Total on Budget Summary = \$198,307.20

6. Does the budget justification adequately explain major expenses?

Yes No

If no, please explain:

I think so.

7. Are there other budget issues that warrant consideration?

Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Other Comments:

Budget: #2

Proposal Number: 121

Applicant Organization: Riviere and Associates

Proposal Title: Waterbirds and Water Resources in the East Grasslands / Stevinson Water District Watershed

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).

Question 17A is \$60,000 more than the budget summary sheets.

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: