

Proposal Reviews

#148: From Sierra to Cities: Sierra Water Education Program for Urban Users

Sierra Nevada Alliance

Final Selection Panel Review

Environmental Education Technical Review

Bay Regional Review

Delta Regional Review

San Joaquin Regional Review

Sacramento Regional Review

Environmental Compliance

Budget

Final Selection Panel Review:

CALFED Bay-Delta 2002 ERP PSP Final Selection Panel Review

Proposal Number: 148

Applicant Organization: Sierra Nevada Alliance

Proposal Title: From Sierra to Cities: Sierra Water Education Program for Urban Users

Please provide an overall evaluation rating.

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"):

-

Provide a brief explanation of your rating:

An error by the environmental education panel in describing Sacramento's water source was pointed out in a comment letter. The panel's mistake does not diminish its fundamental conclusion that the project is not sufficiently developed to warrant CALFED funding.

Environmental Education Technical Review:

CALFED Bay-Delta 2002 ERP PSP Environmental Education Technical Review Form

Proposal Number: 148

Applicant Organization: Sierra Nevada Alliance

Proposal Title: From Sierra to Cities: Sierra Water Education Program for Urban Users

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	This proposal focuses on providing educational programs in the urban areas that the Tuolumne and American rivers support in conjunction with reaching the people who use the river sites for recreational purposes. But there is little information about the success of existing educational programs and where the gaps might be that this project could address. An evaluation of existing programs and their successes should be completed first. The audience of this proposal seems mismatched because the Sacramento residents acquire their water from the Sacramento River not the Tuolumne and American rivers, which are the focus in this proposal. Although the proposal is ambitious, it is also doubtful that this project could, in the long run, actually improve anadromous fish habitat as stated.
-Above average	
-Adequate	
XNot recommended	

1. **Clearly stated educational goals, objectives and expected outcomes.** Are the project's educational goals, objectives, and outcomes clearly stated? Is its target audience important because of its size, diversity, location, or influence? Will it broaden understanding about restoring the Bay-Delta ecosystem? Will it change behaviors that affect Bay-Delta restoration?

The project's educational goals, objectives, and outcomes are clearly stated. The target audience is not as important for this project because the Sacramento residents do not get their water from Tuolumne or American rivers. It might broaden understanding about restoring the Bay-Delta ecosystem system when the audience reached is the one visiting the Tuolumne and American river watersheds.

The idea of conducting research, acquiring partners, defining appropriate venues for the message, and outlining a program is a good one. The proposal also clearly states its core themes for information (e.g., the Tuolumne and American river watersheds are beautiful, ecologically important, and complex systems). However, it appears that an evaluation of existing programs and their successes needs to be completed first. It is also doubtful that this project could, in the long run, actually improve anadromous fish habitat as stated.

2. **Justification (including conceptual model, likelihood of success).** Does the conceptual model satisfactorily explain how the project will attain its goals? Is it supported by research or past results?

The conceptual model is simple and satisfactorily explains how the project will attain its goals. However, for the goals to be realized, the project would need much more time and funding to develop productive partnerships, to evaluate the programs that are already in place, and to design a delivery plan that would be effective. The project is somewhat supported by research because of the plan that the Mono Lake Committee has developed. But it is not obvious if the same situation applies to this project.

3. **Approach (including appropriate curriculum for target audience).** Does the project appropriately integrate activities (curricula, equipment, field activities, audiovisual communications, earned coverage in news media, etc)? Are its materials and activities appropriate to its audience? Can it be implemented readily by teachers and other participants?

The project would actually be developing a way to integrate materials. The materials and activities will be proposed as a result of this project, so it is not yet clear what these will be.

4. **Linkages and compatibility to existing school, community and stewardship programs (fits into existing curricula, demonstrated learning value).** Is the project satisfactorily integrated with ecosystem restoration partnerships or community programs? For K-12 projects, is the project adequately aligned with the California state Educational Frameworks or other mandatory teaching standards? Does it make full use of suitable existing curricula and facilities?

The project advisors are connected to community programs and ecosystem restoration. Additional research will be conducted to locate more partnerships. This project appears to be an adult education program, although it is mentioned that K-12 students will be included. The project is not aligned with the California state Educational Frameworks or other mandatory teaching standards. It does not make full use of suitable existing curricula but it does have connections to some facilities and areas of use in the Tuolumne and American river watersheds.

5. **Replicability and dissemination of the program or project.** Can the project be replicated, if successful? Are there satisfactory plans for sharing project materials and results with others?

The project can be replicated, if successful. It is stated that limited copies of the implementation plan will be available upon request. Perhaps placing the plan on a website would provide more accessibility.

6. **Pre- and post-project evaluation component.** Are the evaluation methods effective and appropriate to the project?

Since this first phase deals with developing an implementation plan for an educational program, there are deliverables instead of evaluation components.

7. **Capabilities (qualifications and infrastructure).** Is the project staff, including consultants and subcontractors, qualified? Is the project adequately supported by existing educational infrastructure? Will it develop the leadership, partnerships, and financial support to sustain it over the long term? Does the proposal incorporate adequate steps to assure that the project can be sustained after CALFED's funds are expended?

The project staff seems qualified. The project is adequately supported by existing educational infrastructure. There is plan to incorporate sustainability after the completion of this preliminary proposal

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

The budget seems reasonable and adequate for the work proposed.

9. **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 panels rated this proposal as follows: three lows and one medium. See below for their comments:

Project presumes Bay Area (and Sacramento) has yet to be educated regarding energy and water conservation.

Tasks 1 - 4 are very well thought out and logical, and the parallels to the Mono Lake efforts are relevant. However, the underlying premise, that by conserving water at the household, commercial and industrial level is work which is yet to be undertaken ignores the great strides in the Bay Region that have been made in water conservation. Water usage today is approximately the same as 30 years ago - notwithstanding a significant population increase. Water reclamation projects, which are very costly infrastructure projects, have already been constructed, and more are on the drawing board. We encourage the applicants to re-frame this project in light of the environmental consciousness in the Bay Region, and to make stronger ties to existing Bay Region environmental organizations

While many in the group support education projects, we felt the ERP was not the proper funding source or program. Given the 1-year timeline, the local groups that the proponents planned on working with should have already been identified and preliminary work begun.

The Sierra Nevada Alliance has a network of contacts and experts in various fields including watershed education and management.

It is doubtful if watershed awareness could significantly reduce the consumption of San Francisco water users. That region presently has some of the lowest per capita water consumption in the state.

Public education is an important component of the CALFED program, but public outreach with the goal of influencing voters for political purposes does not mesh with the principles of the CALFED program.

There are no linkages with other local water education programs.

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

There were no significant concerns about the proposal with regard to the prior performance, environmental compliance and budget administrative reviews.

Miscellaneous comments:

Bay Regional Review:

Proposal Number: 148

Applicant Organization: Sierra Nevada Alliance

Proposal Title: From Sierra to Cities: Sierra Water Education Program for Urban Users

Overall Ranking: Low Medium High

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

project presumes Bay Area (and Sacramento) has yet to be educated regarding energy and water conservation; regional panel determined project as low priority for Bay region

1. Is the project feasible based on local constraints?

Yes No

How?

- it is feasible to speak with people in the Sacramento and San Francisco metropolitan areas

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

Yes No

How?

- MR#3 implement environmental education actions throughout the geographic scope Weakly linked to MR5 The other restoration priorities outlined in the proposal (MR5, SR1, SR2, SR4, SJ1) are not applicable to the Bay Region

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?

- the project proponents state in the application that "few residents of [the Sacramento and San Francisco metropolitan areas] understand their vital connections to source watershed in the Sierra." This statement does not reflect previous Bay Region environmental education efforts which have resulted in a current high level of understanding of both the vital connection and the extraordinary resources of the Sierra.

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

Yes No

How?

- the Sierra Nevada Alliance is not a local organization.

Other Comments:

Tasks 1 - 4 are very well thought out and logical, and the parallels to the Mono Lake efforts are relevant. However, the underlying premise, that by conserving water at the household, commercial and industrial level is work which is yet to be undertaken ignores the great strides in the Bay Region that have been made in water conservation. Water usage today is approximately the same as 30 years ago - not withstanding a significant population increase. Water reclamation projects, which are very costly infrastructure projects, have already been constructed, and more are on the drawing board. We encourage the applicants to re-frame this project in light of the environmental consciousness in the Bay Region, and to make stronger ties to existing Bay Region environmental organizations

Delta Regional Review:

Proposal Number: 148

Proposal Title: From Sierra to Cities: Sierra Water Education Program for Urban Users

Overall Ranking: -Low **XMedium** -High

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

A worthy environmental education project, but focus is on American/Tuolumne Rivers and Cities of Sacramento/San Francisco. Only a small part of Sacramento is in the legal Delta.

1. Is the project feasible based on local constraints?

XYes -No

How?

One major focus of this project is to partner with existing environmental education groups and programs, which could be difficult. The applicant states the following:

"The major contingency we can foresee for Phase I of this project is building partnerships with organizations within or associated with our focus cities. We have contacted several of these organizations during the visioning stage of this project and found strong interest in and support for our project concept."

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

XYes -No

How?

From the Restoration Priorities for Multi-Region Bay-Delta Areas:

"3. Implement environmental education actions throughout the geographic scope.

· Education programs. Develop programs affiliated with conservation, restoration and monitoring efforts including curriculum development and hands-on educational activities for adults and K-12. Programs should emphasize methods to build collaborative networks incorporating student driven decision makers and community building project that actually perform research and restoration."

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?

In general, the program plans to build on past or existing environmental education efforts, but will have a specific focus on the American and Tuolumne Rivers and cities of Sacramento and San Francisco. Only a small part of Sacramento is in the legal Delta.

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

XYes -No

How?

The applicant states the following: "A set of Project Advisors will be assembled to provide guidance on this project. Collectively, Advisors will have expertise in environmental education curriculum development and delivery, and knowledge about the American and Tuolumne Rivers and restoration projects on the lower reaches; water and energy conservation and efficiency practices, technology, and policy; water and power usage in Sacramento and San Francisco; and the Mono Lake Committee education programs for urban Southern Californians."

Also

"The Mono Lake Committee (whose program focused on the City of Los Angeles and is to be used as a model) is one of the Alliance's 80 member groups so strong ties exist between the two organizations."

Other Comments:

N/A

San Joaquin Regional Review:

Proposal Number: 148

Applicant Organization: Sierra Nevada Alliance

Proposal Title: From Sierra to Cities: Sierra Water Education Program for Urban Users

Overall Ranking: Low -Medium -High

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

While many in the group support education projects, we felt the ERP was not the proper funding source or program. Given the 1 year timeline, the local groups that the proponents planned on working with should have already been identified and preliminary work begun.

The proponents are modeling this program after the Mono Lakes group and their education program. Some major differences that exist that would make this effort less successful are: 1)LA was being sued at the time over impacts to Mono Lake. No such condition exists with SF or Sacramento. 2) The effects of Mono Lake are obvious while detrimental effects and how they could be improved on the Tuolumne and American are much less clear.

1. Is the project feasible based on local constraints?

Yes -No

How?

The proposed program is modeled after a successful education program by the Mono Lake Committee for education of Urban water users in the Los Angeles area. The staff involved have experience in similar programs, though at a smaller scale. The Sierra Nevada Alliance has a network of contacts and experts in various fields including watershed education and management.

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

Yes -No

How?

It barely addresse prioities. MR-3: Implement environmental education actions throughout the geographic scope. This is the only PSP priority that this proposal directly addresses. The proponents list a number of others that can be included, but they are indirectly addressed in the extreme.

The proponents contend that successful implementation of an educational program that this proposal will design will lead to lower water consumption by urban users and will create opportunities to improve flow regimes in the Tuolumne and American Rivers. This will lead to use of water to restore geomorphic processes in stream and riparian corridors (SR-4) and will continue habitat restoration actions and habitat restoration in collaboration with local

group (SJ-1). It is quite a stretch.

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?

The proponents do talk about building source watershed awareness that will benefit projects, but it is an indirect link at best.

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

Yes -No

How?

Eventually, the first phase of the proposed project will involve building relationships between local groups in San Francisco, Sacramento and the Sierra which dont exist presently and probably should given the short timeline of the project. Local involvement would be used in the designing of the courses. The proponents have had preliminary contact with local sierra groups that are supportive of the idea and have indicated their willingness to participate.

Other Comments:

The ERP is not the venue to present this kind of project, laudable though its aims are. The benefits of such a program to the priorities in the PSP are indirect at best.

It is doubtful if watershed awareness could significantly reduce the consumption of San Francisco water users. That region presently has some of the lowest per capita water consumption in the state. The flows required for real restoration of geomorphic processes would be far more than could be conserved by urban water users without drastic changes in lifestyle and diets. Even the best educational awareness program would have a hard time reaching those goals. As for Sacramento water users, an educational program might have a better chance, but since most of its water comes from the Sacramento River, not sure how thatll benefit the American River. Even if there was significant water conservation, it is questionable that the water would be used for restoration activities.

Sacramento Regional Review:

Proposal Number: 148

Applicant Organization: Sierra Nevada Alliance

Proposal Title: From Sierra to Cities: Sierra Water Education Program for Urban Users

Overall Ranking: Low -Medium -High

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

Public education is an important component of the CALFED program that is discussed both in the Record of Decision and the Ecosystem Restoration Program Draft Stage 1 Implementation Plan. But, public outreach with the goal of influencing voters for political purposes does not mesh with the principles of the CALFED program.

1. Is the project feasible based on local constraints?

-Yes No

How?

It would take considerable outreach to local entities before the program could begin. There are local cultural and political impediments that would be extremely difficult to overcome.

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

-Yes No

How?

Public education is a CALFED priority. But, none of the regional priorities listed would be realized by the program that is outlined.

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?

There are no linkages with other local water education programs.

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

-Yes No

How?

There is no outreach to the upstream communities.

Other Comments:

The expectation that there would be acceptance to the program from upstream communities is questionable based upon the limited description of outreach efforts that would be made in the upstream areas.

Environmental Compliance:

Proposal Number: 148

Applicant Organization: Sierra Nevada Alliance

Proposal Title: From Sierra to Cities: Sierra Water Education Program for Urban Users

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

Yes -No

If no, please explain:

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:

Other Comments:

Budget:

Proposal Number: 148

Applicant Organization: Sierra Nevada Alliance

Proposal Title: From Sierra to Cities: Sierra Water Education Program for Urban Users

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: