

Proposal Reviews

#161: Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans

Suisun Resource Conservation District

Final Selection Panel Review

Initial Selection Panel Review

Research and Restoration Technical Panel Review

Bay Regional Review

#1

External Scientific Review

#2

#3

#4

Environmental Compliance

Budget

Final Selection Panel Review:

CALFED Bay-Delta 2002 ERP PSP Final Selection Panel Review

Proposal Number: 161

Applicant Organization: Suisun Resource Conservation District

Proposal Title: Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans

Please provide an overall evaluation rating.

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

Amount: **\$214,943**

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

None.

Provide a brief explanation of your rating:

The applicant's error in its Budget Summary Form, pointed out in its letter on the panel's initial recommendation, is duly noted. The project is recommended for funding at the corrected amount of \$214,943. Endorsements for the project from the Clean Estuary Project and the ABAG-CALFED Task Force and San Francisco Estuary Project were also received, underscoring the regional importance of this effort.

Initial Selection Panel Review:

CALFED Bay-Delta 2002 ERP PSP Initial Selection Panel Review

Proposal Number: 161

Applicant Organization: Suisun Resource Conservation District

Proposal Title: Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans

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

Amount: **\$136,243.50**

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

None.

Provide a brief explanation of your rating:

The Selection Panel concurs with the Technical Panel reviewers that this project is a very cost-effective means of updating 20-year-old information and land management plans for private landowners who manage three quarters of the Suisun Marsh land. The use of the new wetlands template for wetlands management will also benefit the landowners. This effort should lead to more successful management efforts in the marsh in the future.

Research and Restoration Technical Panel Review:

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

Proposal Number: 161

Applicant Organization: Suisun Resource Conservation District

Proposal Title: Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans

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 panel feels that the updated individual management plans will greatly increase the ability to effectively manage the valuable marsh habitat of the 140 properties. A sample questionnaire would have been helpful to the reviewers for evaluating the potential success of the project. The template and outreach portion should be reviewed by CALFED as the project proceeds. The \$136,000 budget is very reasonable. The panel suggested that these should be put into a database that would be easily accessible to more than just the SRCD.
XAbove 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?

Goals. The goals and objectives of this project are stated clearly. They propose to update the management plans for 140 privately owned properties in the Suisun Marsh. Earlier plans were developed in 1981 and 1982 and included maps, soil information, intake/drainage structures and ditches, (size and location), and water management/vegetation management plans. Laws and regulations have changed since then, as have the water management capabilities. Alterations to the water control structures have taken place (size, location, pumps) and vegetation may have changed as well. Currently, these plans are in file boxes at the Suisun Resource Conservation District (SRDC). The SRDC wrote a wetland management plan template in 1998 that outlines specific water management schedules. Since fresh and tidal waters are provided via water control structures and ditches to flood and drain ponds, salinity and submergence time can be controlled to provide wetland habitat diversity for various waterfowl and wildlife. Funding this project will allow them to update

the individual management plans and thereby provide for more effective management of these habitats. We think it is timely and important because it hasn't been done for 20 years and would be useful in determining management strategies.

A reviewer states that it is unclear how this will lead to adaptive management plans.

A second reviewer states that the project is timely and important.

A third reviewer states that the plan may result in improved management for large areas with respect to increased connectivity to the Delta waterways and increased tidal or seasonal flooding.

Justification. Since 75% (43,700 of 58,000 acres) of the Suisun Marsh is privately owned it seems reasonable to update 20-year old plans when the management of these areas is important to the marsh system as a whole. They say that updated plans are important for managing water flow in and out of ditches and ponds, etc. to provide a diversity of wetland habitats for waterbirds and wildlife. The drawdown schedule, depth, and salinity regimes are important for waterfowl food plants and salt marsh harvest mouse habitat.

A reviewer asks what are the specific management objectives increasing harvested resources and biodiversity are rather general.

Reviewer: There is no way for the reviewer to be assured that the information supplied to landowners will fit with regional goals and plans. This section should include conceptual plans and indicate how they support the management goals and options found in the template (not provided).

- 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?**

Approach. They will send out questionnaires to land owners to indicate changes in the infrastructure and management strategies. The information will be verified in the field and include location and sizes of levees, pumps, ditches, and water control structures (including elevation, composition, and flow direction). Vegetation and soil maps will be included and all this information will be put on a CD for each property which will be maintained as a living documents that can be revised periodically.

A reviewer says it will add knowledge about the state of the marsh but don't know that it will add much understanding on how to improve management.

A second reviewer says it's a bit deficient in describing how the plan will be developed (e.g. what GIS layers are anticipated, source of vegetation cover maps, types of field sampling involved).

A good practical plan.

Feasibility. The project is certainly feasible. SRCD apparently has a good relationship with the landowners and is familiar with most of the properties. They have a detailed work schedule and have taken into account the rainy season, etc.

A reviewer says the likelihood of success depends on the cooperation of the landowners. The workshops will be key to communicate the benefits that will be realized by providing accurate and detailed information.

Its a sensible plan that has a high likelihood of success.

Capabilities. They appear to have a well qualified team.

Performance Measures. They have listed appropriate performance measures including number of questionnaires filled out, number of maps reviewed and revised, number of infrastructure items surveyed, number of projects placed on CD, total number of updated plans, six workshop presentations, etc. The target is 140 properties.

A reviewer says that the performance measures are related to process rather than outcome. How will it improve management? Concepts of adaptive management may not be fully understood.

Performance measures are largely administrative and are appropriate for this type of project.

- 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 are the updated individual management plans for each parcel which will be available on CD and on the web to the landowners, the public, researchers, and decision-makers. Each CD will be maintained as a living document and revised periodically. The panel suggested that these should be put into a database that would be easily accessible to more than just the SRCD.

A reviewer says interpretative outcomes are scant.

A second reviewer states that the Internet access is a great improvement to the current paper files.

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

The budget in the Budget Summary seems reasonable. It differs significantly however from the one in Item 17A. They say each plan on CD will be revised periodically. How will this be paid for?

Reviewer: The project appears to be under-funded and the reviewer wonders if the District will provide the level of oversight and organization required to support the staff.

- 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?

Rank = Medium

Committee considers it of moderate benefit compared to other proposals in the bay region for addressing PSP priorities. Later they say it pursues PSP priorities Bay Region Goal 1 (updating individual ownership management plans), ERP Pro. Action 1A and 1B (improving management of seasonal wetland), and ERP Goals 3 and 4 (maintaining species numbers for harvest and production). It is specifically identified in the PSP and supported by BCDC and other agencies and organizations. It enhances seasonal wetlands. It will provide information for decision making on the part of landowners, restoration agencies, regulators, and policy makers. It involves local landowners.

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?

Prior Performance no review no previous CalFed project, but previous CVPIA projects

Environmental Compliance no problems

Budget 17A indicates \$214,943.33, Budget Summary shows \$136,243.50.

Miscellaneous comments:

External Scientific Review. 1 Excellent, 3 - Good

Bay Regional Review:

Proposal Number: 161

Applicant Organization: Suisun Resource Conservation District

Proposal Title: Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans

Overall Ranking: -Low Medium -High

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

committee considered this activity of moderate benefit compared to other proposals within the bay region for addressing PSP priorities.

1. Is the project feasible based on local constraints?

Yes -No

How?

project updates plans originally prepared by the SRCD 20 years ago to reflect changed conditions, management, and requirements in the Marsh.

project is supported by the affected landowners and the SRCD has close working relationship.

affected landowners support, they are required by the Suisun Marsh Plan of Protection to implement plans.

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

Yes -No

How?

Specifically identified Bay Region Goal 1 -- Restore critical Suisun Marsh tidal marshes. Its bullets call for an update of existing outdated Individual Ownership Management Plans to enhance wildlife values on managed seasonal wetlands.

ERP Prog. Action 1A and !B, improve management of 25k acres of degraded and 32K acres of existing seasonal wetland in Suisun Marsh.

ERP Goal 3 & 4, maintain species in #s for harvest and production of species economically important wild species.

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?

project specifically identified in PSP

project specified in PSP, supported by BCDC who administers SMPP, and other agencies and organizations interested in enhancing managed seasonal wetlands.

Yes meets objectives of providing for enhanced management of Seasonal wetlands for species at risk and waterfowl.

management plans will be posted on the web and available to evaluate management actions in the marsh and to provide information that will inform impending decisions by landowners, ecosystem restoration agencies, environmental regulators, or other policymakers.

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

XYes -No

How?

SRCD, working with local landowners and appropriate management and regulatory agencies in the marsh. Involvement appropriate for type of project

sthe proposal include an adequate plan for public outreach to the Groups or individuals that may be affected by the project by providing landowner workshops which are regularly held by the SRCD and posting of all updated plans on the web.

Other Comments:

none

External Scientific: #1

Research and Restoration External Scientific Review Form

Proposal Number: **161**

Applicant Organization: **Suisun Resource Conservation District**

Proposal Title: **Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans**

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 useful and needed service work, but it is not clear how this will add greatly to either the understanding of ecosystem or to its effective adaptive management.
<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 goals of the project are vague and not well integrated. The goal of placing management plans in digital files, updating them, and providing information on infrastructure is fine. However, it is unclear how this will lead to adaptive management plans, which should be based on outcome criteria and commitment to modification of the plans through ongoing monitoring of performance.

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 Suisan Marsh is an important resource within the region and, because it is largely in private ownership, active participation of land owners is essential. To accomplish the collection and updating of management plans and provide technical assistance are indeed laudible. What are the specific management objectives? Increasing harvested resources and biodiversity are mentioned, but this is rather general. What outcome metrics, as opposed to output metrics, will be used. To what degree are they compatible and how does one manage conflicts (between harvestability and biodiversity, for example)? How will the updated plans be made adaptive?

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 to the process of collecting and updating plans and providing associated geospatial information on soils, vegetation, devices and structures is fine. This will undoubtedly add knowledge, for example about the state of the Marsh and its management units and the activities the landowners intend to carry out. I don't know that it will add much understanding on how to improve management and integrate it with the management of the rest of the system.

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?

Again, the work as outlined is needed, feasible, and will likely be accomplished. These updates will need to continue into the future, however, and how will this ongoing service be supported?

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 project specific performance measures seem all related to process rather than outcome. The relate to questionnaires, interviews, maps, CDs, plans and workshops. But, how will this improve management and how will this be measured? This is difficult to judge because of the lack of specificity of outcome criteria and how the management plans will become adaptive. I think the word "adaptive" is used only one time other than in the title, by stating that this approach is adaptive in that it will improve management. This shows a rather shallow understanding of the concepts of adaptive environmental management.

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 mainly valuable to the landowners themselves, but should also see use by regulatory and resource agencies. The interpretative outcomes seem scant.

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 SRCD group certainly has the experience and ability (maybe even uniquely) to collect and update the plans and work with the landowners. It appears, but it is not completely clear, that they have the equipment and know-how to prepare the geospatial products.

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

The budget is reasonable for the work proposed.

Miscellaneous comments:

External Scientific: #2

Research and Restoration External Scientific Review Form

Proposal Number: **161**

Applicant Organization: **Suisun Resource Conservation District**

Proposal Title: **Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans**

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 benefits from this project appear to be many fold (educate landowners, improve knowledge base regarding present infrastructure and management of private lands, potential to improve management to complement CALFEDs ERP goals) and costs are minimal. The 'good' rating reflects the uncertainties described above in section #2 Justification and misc. comments (otherwise it would have received a higher rating).
<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 goal of the project is to update knowledge and improve management of private lands in the region. The objectives include updating information on conditions and infrastructure available to manage all the private landholdings (approximately 140 covering 44,000 acres), and work with landowners to update management plans for their lands to reflect current knowledge and regulations. Hypotheses may not be appropriate for this type of work. The plan may result in improved management for large areas with respect to increased connectivity to the Delta waterways and increased tidal or seasonal flooding.

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?

Twenty years has passed since the current management plans were filed. Greater knowledge about ecosystem function and new regulations will encourage landowners to change their plans, perhaps in ways that will support some of the CALFED goals. The template is not available, and there is no way for the reviewer to be assured that the information supplied to landowners will fit with regional goals and plans. This section should include conceptual plans and indicate how they support the management goals and options found in the template.

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?

An updated management template has already been created. Mailings, workshops and visits appear to be a good practical way to learn about changes to the systems, educate the public, and develop management plans that reflect current knowledge and regulations regarding wetlands management.

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 applicant works with landowners and has presented a sensible plan that has a high likelihood of success.

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 measures presented here are largely administrative, and this appears completely appropriate for this type of project.

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?

Products will include 140 updated management plans as individual CDs that include previous plans and new information on infrastructure, vegetation and photos of each site. Quarterly newsletters will be created and distributed to landowners.

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 applicant appears to be fully capable of all aspects of the proposed work.

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

Although no cost share is indicated, the project appears to be under-funded and the reviewer wonders if the District will provide the level of oversight and organization required to support the staff.

Miscellaneous comments:

Peer review of the conceptual models that drive management choices on the template (i.e., what staff will use to explain choices to landowners) and an opportunity to improve the template is suggested.

External Scientific: #3

Research and Restoration External Scientific Review Form

Proposal Number: **161**

Applicant Organization: **Suisun Resource Conservation District**

Proposal Title: **Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans**

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 work proposed is certainly important in managing the habitat values of the Suisun Marsh. The basis for the need to update the management plans is clearly stated (several times). Rather than a research project, this proposal is more for the funding of a service that the agency desires to perform - and is clearly justified. The proposal is a bit deficient in describing how the plans will be developed (i.e., what GIS layers are anticipated, source of vegetation cover maps, types of field sampling involved).
<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?

Yes, the goals, objectives and hypotheses are clearly stated. It is clear that there is a need to update the management plans for the 140 privately owned properties that represent 75% of the largest remaining coastal wetland in California. Given the changes that have occurred since the initial plans were developed in the early 1980, this project is 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?

The project is certainly justified as explained above. I do not really consider this to be research, but rather full-scale implementation of the development of management plans and the dissemination of this information in order to promote greater awareness of the needs and approaches for water management in the SRCD. Implementation of the project will certainly identify numerous opportunities for additional research relating to the effectiveness of the management plans for the properties.

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 to utilize public-derived information to better understand the water management opportunities that exist in the SRCD and to evaluate the results of past practices (as reflected by current vegetation patterns). Obtaining information from the public can be a long process and is subject to a high degree of verification in order to maintain a consistent database. The information obtained will certainly be useful to updating the management plans for these properties.

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 likelihood of success will largely be dependent upon the willingness of the private owners to provide accurate information regarding their water management systems. Communicating the benefits that they will realize by providing accurate and detailed information will be key to the process. The workshops will be important in this regard.

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?

There is a quantitative measure of updating the 140 management plans over the three year period of the project. This seems like a reasonable time period to achieve this goal.

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 plan to make the management plans available to the public via the Internet and to be able to update these electronically is a great improvement over the current situation - where these plans are largely paper maps, etc. in file folders.

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?

From the information provided, the individuals assigned to the project are certainly qualified to perform the tasks that are involved.

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

There is obviously a lot of field and public interaction involved in the development of the desired electronic maps and database to support the management plans for the 140 properties. On this basis, the budget seems reasonable for the three year period that the project covers. Does the cost include the production and distribution of the CDs for the management plans?

Miscellaneous comments:

External Scientific: #4

Research and Restoration External Scientific Review Form

Proposal Number: **161**

Applicant Organization: **Suisun Resource Conservation District**

Proposal Title: **Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans**

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
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	The updated individual management plans will greatly increase the ability to effectively manage the valuable marsh habitat of the 140 properties. The \$136,000 budget is very reasonable.
<input type="checkbox"/> -Good	
<input type="checkbox"/> -Poor	

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

The goals and objectives of this project are stated clearly. They propose to update the management plans for 140 privately owned properties in the Suisun Marsh. Earlier plans were developed in 1981 and 1982 and included maps, soil information, intake/drainage structures and ditches, (size and location), and water management/vegetation management plans. Laws and regulations have changed since then, as have the water management capabilities. Alterations to the water control structures have taken place (size, location, pumps) and vegetation may have changed as well. Currently, these plans are in file boxes at the Suisun Resource Conservation District (SRDC). The SRDC wrote a wetland management plan template in 1998 that outlines specific water management schedules. Since fresh and tidal waters are provided via water control structures and ditches to flood and drain ponds, salinity and submergence time can be controlled to provide wetland habitat

diversity for various waterfowl and wildlife. Funding this project will allow them to update the individual management plans and thereby provide for more effective management of these habitats. I think it is timely and important because it hasn't been done for 20 years and would be useful in determining management strategies.

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?

Since 75% (43,700 of 58,000 acres) of the Suisun Marsh is privately owned it seems reasonable to update 20-year old plans when the management of these areas is important to the marsh system as a whole. They say that updated plans are important for managing water flow in and out of ditches and ponds, etc. to provide a diversity of wetland habitats for waterbirds and wildlife. The drawdown schedule, depth, and salinity regimes are important for waterfowl food plants and salt marsh harvest mouse habitat.

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 will send out questionnaires to land owners to indicate changes in the infrastructure and management strategies. The information will be verified in the field and include location and sizes of levees, pumps, ditches, and water control structures (including elevation, composition, and flow direction). Vegetation and soil maps will be included and all this information will be put on a CD for each property which will be maintained as a "living" documents that can be revised periodically.

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 certainly feasible. SRCD apparently has a good relationship with the landowners and is familiar with most of the properties. They have a detailed work schedule and have taken into account the rainy season, etc.

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?

They have listed appropriate performance measures including number of questionnaires filled out, number of maps reviewed and revised, number of infrastructure items surveyed, number of projects placed on CD, total number of updated plans, six workshop presentations, etc. The target is 140 properties.

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 are the updated individual management plans for each parcel which will be available on CD and on the web to the landowners, the public, researchers, and decision-makers. Each CD will be maintained as a "living document" and revised periodically.

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?

They appear to have a well qualified team.

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

The budget in the Budget Summary seems reasonable. It differs significantly however from the one in Item 17A. They say each plan on CD will be revised periodically. How will this be paid for?

Miscellaneous comments:

Environmental Compliance:

Proposal Number: 161

Applicant Organization: Suisun Resource Conservation District

Proposal Title: Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans

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: 161

Applicant Organization: Suisun Resource Conservation District

Proposal Title: Update Individual Ownership Adaptive Management Habitat Plans

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).

17a indicates total funding of \$214,943.33, and the budget summary shows a grand total of \$136,243.50, a difference of \$78,699.83

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:

there are no consultant service fees, it all labor hours

Other Comments: