

# **FISHERIES HABITAT RESTORATION (FHR) REVIEW PROCESS**

## **for proposals submitted under the PROPOSAL SOLICITATION NOTICE**

Each proposal received by the due date goes through a rigorous review process by the Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP) Technical Review Team (TRT), the FRGP Peer Review Committee (PRC), and the Director of California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Through this process, proposals are evaluated and scored based on technical merit, biological soundness, and cost effectiveness, as well as CDFW and NOAA Fisheries goals and objectives. In brief, the review process is as follows:

1. **Administrative Review:** The administrative review will determine if the proposal package is complete and meets all the requirements for submission. If the proposal does not pass the administrative review, the proposal will not be considered further for funding this cycle. This is done by both the computer as part of the online application process and by CDFW staff.
2. **Technical Review**
  - A) The TRT includes CDFW staff (both biological and engineering) and NOAA Fisheries staff. The TRT conducts the administrative review, assigns a local team of appropriate CDFW and NOAA staff as reviewers, and conducts an initial review of all eligible proposals using criteria described in the PSN.
  - B) In depth review (includes field review where appropriate): In depth reviews are conducted by assigned reviewers. Each team of reviewers evaluates the proposals in detail for technical and biological soundness, and cost effectiveness. No unsolicited materials will be accepted after the due date. Reviews are based on what was submitted with the application by the due date. Reviews are compiled and are forwarded to the Program Managers.
  - C) The Program Managers review scores and comments provided by the reviewers for consistency, accuracy, and thoroughness. The final scores and comments are forwarded to the PRC.
3. **Peer Review:** The PRC is composed of members appointed by the Director of Fish and Wildlife who represent the California Advisory Committee on Salmon and Steelhead Trout, the agriculture industry, the timber industry, public water agencies, academia, and county supervisors. The PRC scores each proposal and provides recommendations on priorities for grant funding based on the score each proposal received.

4. The proposals are separated into the three Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) funding priorities. The PCSRF priorities correspond to the FRGP project types. Within each PCSRF priority the proposals are ranked by adding the TRT score and the averaged PRC score together. This draft proposal list is assessed for how proposals meet CDFW and NOAA Fisheries goals and objectives.
5. CEQA Process: The draft proposal list is used to determine which projects will be included in the FRGP Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). All projects that have the potential to be funded and follow the Restoration Manual techniques are included in the MND. The MND is submitted to the State Clearing House and is released for a 30 day public comment period. Once the public comment period has closed, the list is sent to the Director.
6. Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife: The Director reviews the results of the MND and the draft proposal list, which includes the Department, TRT, and PRC recommendations, then makes the final funding decision. This decision usually takes place one year after the PSN is released.