

Salton Sea Science Subcommittee

Request for Proposals #3

to Provide

Baseline Environmental Data

for a

Salton Sea Monitoring Program

Month Day, 1998

Study Site

see RFP #1

Background

see RFP #1

Description of Needs

There is surprisingly little recent biological research on the Salton Sea. Much of our knowledge of the Sea's ecology is dependent upon research dating back to 1961. This predates the introduction of tilapia, arguably the dominant fish species in the Salton Sea. Since 1961, there has been additional work on salinity tolerances of the sportfish species, productivity of the sportfishery (creel surveys), and selenium concentrations in water, sediment, and biota. Many aspects of the Salton Sea's ecology however, remain largely unknown.

This RFP is intended to elicit proposals to address specific aspects of this problem with the intent of establishing a solid biological baseline against which to measure future changes in the Salton Sea ecosystem as part of a long-term monitoring program. Development of innovative, cost-effective techniques for monitoring Salton Sea environmental parameters will also be an important part of the contracted work.

Because of the recent intense interest in the Sea rapid authorization of a remediation project is anticipated. Therefore these baseline studies will be conducted under close supervision and stringent guidelines. Briefly:

- All contractors will be required to submit data to the SS as it is collected. The SS reserves the right to redistribute data to other contractors for use in their studies before final reports are prepared by contractors originating the data.
- All data must be submitted in GIS-compatible format including GPS coordinates for all sampling sites.

Areas of Study

The SS has identified the following areas as foci of study. The SS recognizes that delineation of some of these areas is arbitrary and will consider alternative organizations of study.

Biological & Physical Limnology

- algal toxins
- special collecting trips may be required in response to unusual physical (e.g. low oxygen or high sulfide) or biotic (wildlife mortality) events.
- Interactions between the planktonic and benthic communities are of particular interest.

Nutrient Cycling

- carbon budget

Fish Community

- actual population estimates
- include evaluation of fish species as potential candidates for introduction into the Sea.

Avian Community

Wetland Enhancement

- nutrient removal
- wildlife habitat

Contaminants

- Experiments to estimate rates of selenium volatilization may also be appropriate.

Wildlife Mortality

- this study may be driven largely by the occurrence of wildlife mortality events.

Human Health

- Epidemiological studies of the local human population may be appropriate.

Air Quality

Submission of Proposals

see RFP #1

Evaluation Process

The SS will perform an initial screening of each proposal for completeness and relevance. Relevance shall be evaluated using the following criteria:

1) is the proposal responsive to the RFP, i.e. does it show understanding of the needs identified in the RFP? and

2) will the proposed products provide lasting input for management and restoration of the Sea? Suitable proposals will then be reviewed in depth by a review committee at least half of whose members will be outside (non-SS member) reviewers. The results of the in-depth reviews will then be considered by the SS and funding recommendations made to the RMC.

The SS reserves the right to recommend to the RMC approval of portions of proposals by individual areas of study. Final decisions on science research funding will be made by the RMC.

Contract Obligations

see RFP #1