

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposition 84 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Grant Program Implementation Grant, Round 2, 2013

Applicant	Sequoia Riverlands Trust	Amount Requested	\$ 704,790
Proposal Title	Restoring the Kern and Kings River Watersheds and Improving Project Integration and Design for Disadvantaged Communities in the Southern Sierra	Total Proposal Cost	\$ 958,815

PROJECT SUMMARY

The proposal includes three projects: (1) Springville Disadvantaged Community Phase I Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvement Project, (2) Long Meadow Restoration Project, and (3) Kings River Critical Aquatic Refuge Water Quality Enhancements in Mill Flat Creek Project.

PROPOSAL SCORE

Criteria	Score/ Max. Possible	Criteria	Score/ Max. Possible
Work Plan	6/15	Technical Justification	6/10
Budget	2/5		
Schedule	2/5	Benefits and Cost Analysis	12/30
Monitoring, Assessment, and Performance Measures	3/5	Program Preferences	7/10
Total Score (max. possible = 80)			38

EVALUATION SUMMARY

WORK PLAN

The criterion is marginally addressed and documentation or rationales are incomplete or insufficient. The work plan sections consist largely of descriptions of how the projects help meet the goals and objectives of the IRWMP, but detail of the actual work activities to be performed for the projects is lacking, especially for Projects 1 and 3. Therefore, it is unclear whether the work as described will successfully implement the project goals. Project 1 consists of a series of planning studies, but the applicant provides little more than a list of these studies which is insufficient information to understand the specific work proposed. For Project 3, the applicant provides an incomplete list of tasks, and the work plan tasks have no descriptions of what is involved with decommissioning the roads. The figures provided to explain the work involved for Project 2 (Figures 5 and 6) collectively do not provide a clear understanding of the scope of the work to be performed.

BUDGET

Less than half of the project budgets have detailed costs, and many of the costs cannot be verified as reasonable. In general, many costs are presented as lump sum costs either without sufficient explanation of why lump sum costs are appropriate for the task, or without explanation of how the lump sum cost was derived. Without such information, the reviewers have difficulty concurring with the applicant that the costs are appropriate. Project 1 line item budget does not provide hours or hourly rates for SPUD Administrative staff and Project Manager. The applicant does not state how the document printing and production and reports costs were determined. For Project 2, lump sums for document printing and production are presented without further explanation. A breakdown of the budget for implementation tasks of the project is not provided, i.e., equipment and contractor costs are lumped. Labor compliance costs (\$30,500) have no supporting explanation or documentation provided to substantiate this lump sum. Similar issues are noted for Project 3, the applicant provides no basis of estimate or documentation for “other costs” (\$7,500).

SCHEDULE

The criterion is marginally addressed and documentation or rationales are incomplete or insufficient. The tasks in the schedules are not consistent with the work plan tasks. For example, the schedule shows tasks in very general categories, such as “engineering” (Project 1), or “project monitoring plan” and “evaluation assessment” (Project 2); work plan tasks do not share these titles or there are multiple tasks that make up the general category depicted in the schedule. Administration tasks are not shown on the schedule, but administration is a task within the work plan. The schedule shows public meetings and technical advisory committee meetings for Project 1, but the work plan does not include these meetings. Specific start and end dates are difficult to discern in the schedule. The schedule’s resolution is quite broad, so only approximate dates within an annual cycle are conveyed. For Project 2, the schedule seems unrealistic because implementation is scheduled to begin before obtaining required 401 and 404 permits. The schedule lumps implementation tasks for two projects; for example, there are two projects that include construction-related activity; all construction work for each project is lumped under one “implementation” task in the schedule. The schedule does not show dependencies between tasks for a given project.

MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The criterion is less than fully addressed and documentation or rationales are incomplete or insufficient. Projects 2 and 3 do not identify monitoring targets that are appropriate for the stated project goals, and the measurement tools and methods do not provide sufficient information to determine whether these measures will effectively track project progress in meeting project goals. For instance, for Project 2, the target for the project goal of “restoring 35 acres of meadow,” is identical to the goal, so it provides no indication of what would constitute successful restoration for the project. For Projects 1 and 2, the applicant gives a larger number of targets than stated goals, so it not clear which targets apply to which goals. In some cases the project goals and targets are not logically related. For instance, for Project 1, a goal is “reduce sediment load in creek.” Rather than providing a target that attempts to measure a reduction in sediment load, the corresponding target is “restore at least 0.25 miles of stream in the meadow,” and it is unclear how meeting the target of stream restoration in the meadow would aid in measurement of obtaining the stated goal, reduction in sediment load in the creek.

TECHNICAL JUSTIFICATION

The proposal appears to be technically justified to achieve the claimed benefits but lacks documentation that demonstrates the technical adequacy of the projects and physical benefits are not well described. Project 1 is a series of studies and thus the applicant does not anticipate physical benefits directly derived from the project. For Project 2 the applicant quantifies water quality improvement in terms of reduced sediment loading to Long Meadow Creek, and references a few studies in support of this claim. Although the studies are referenced, specific information from the studies and how it helps technically justify the project is lacking. No technical justification is provided for the other

physical benefits listed in the narrative, such as increased groundwater levels, flood retention, habitat restoration, or storage capacity. For Project 3, the applicant discusses expected benefits of reduced mortality to wildlife species resulting from road decommissioning, but does not adequately summarize relevant supporting studies to bolster the claims the project will provide these benefits. The applicant provides authors and dates in the text for studies that support the project, includes neither the studies in the application, nor provides a summary of these studies that shows they support the claimed physical benefits for the project. In addition, in Table 9, the applicant does not attempt to quantify the wildlife mortality reduction benefits, but instead shows reduced sediment loads, and again without reference to any supporting information.

BENEFITS AND COSTS ANALYSIS

Collectively the proposal is likely to provide a medium level of benefits in relationship to cost, but the quality of the analysis or clear and complete documentation is lacking.

Implementation costs are included in the budget section, but no additional project operation and maintenance costs are shown, and the reviewer could not find the required Attachment 8 tables of Present Value of life cycle costs. The overall comparison table of costs and benefits is also not included in Attachment 8.

DAC is under a RWQCB Cease and Desist order for its discharge into the Tule River, and the proposed project would allow the DAC to meet water quality standards. The proposal shows an alternative that would build the same basic project on a different schedule, yielding an undiscounted savings of \$0.5 million for the study phase and another \$0.8 million claimed savings for construction. Based on the RWQCB order, there may be no real alternative. The non-monetized benefits checklist answered “yes” for social benefits and habitat restoration.

PROGRAM PREFERENCES

Applicant claims that four program preferences and six statewide priorities will be met with project implementation. However, applicant demonstrates high degree of certainty, and adequate documentation for six of the Preferences claimed: (1) Effectively integrate water management programs and projects within hydrologic region identified in the CWP; RWQCB region or subdivision; or other region or sub-region specifically identified by DWR; (2) Address critical water supply or water quality needs of disadvantaged communities within the region; (3) Drought Preparedness; (4) Climate Change Response Actions; (5) Expand Environmental Stewardship; and (6) Protect Surface Water and Groundwater Quality.