

**California Department of Water Resources
Flood Protection Corridor Program
Proposition 84 Funding Cycle**

**Competitive Application Workshop Questions and Responses
October 5, 2007
Regional Water Quality Control Board Hearing Room
9174 Sky Park Court, San Diego, CA 92123**

Q: I thought the program wanted to acquire easements because it's less money and the money will go farther. I wasn't thinking of the loss of tax revenue, but if we acquire a piece of property the only way we can do the project is from a willing seller. In our case a non profit would take it over and that property tax revenue would be lost from the County. It's only about \$18,000 a year. Would that constitute a ding to the grant?

R: We would want a letter of support from the County. If the County does not support it, the grant might not be approved. If the County writes a letter of support, then it's not a problem. Some of the counties, particularly some of the rural counties in the North carefully guard every tax dollar.

Q: The benefit for flood protection versus the benefit of \$18,000 in tax revenue is infinitesimal.

R: Yes, and there was a study done in California by a professor at Chico State, an Economist named Prof. Gallo that addressed this. The study said the tax revenue foregone is made up by recreational revenue from people who come for bird watching, and fishing and other uses after the land is restored. Over time it equalizes and there is no real net loss. Even so some of the farmers and local people in those areas have trouble believing the report. They think it's some kind of an academic theory that might not really happen.

Q: In this project there is a huge 36 inch main line Water Aqueduct, and the preservation of that pipeline is going to drive how much levee removal can be done and how the project can be done. Make a proposal to what is going to need to happen to this pipeline, going to have to bury deeper and out of the scour zone. Question she asks, could they allude to previous statement in the grant, that if they had some assurances that they could bury the pipeline with future money then we would be able to do much more levee removal and create a much more functional floodplain.

R: We would have to take a look at the cost benefit of proposal. It's nice to have more levee removal and more floodplain, but if it's \$25 million to bury the pipe it might not be worthwhile. There would have to be some numbers associated with that. Is there a potential for moving the pipe horizontally as opposed to burying it deeper?

Q: I don't know, haven't even considered option. From what has been said today, seems the pipe is going to drive the dynamics of what can and cannot be done.

R: Yes, and what we do to the pipe is considered a structural element. Even though it is resulting in a non structural benefit, if it takes 60% of the money to move the pipe or 100% of the money in phase two it is not likely to get funded. The program tries to keep the structural portion under 20%, but in some cases we have stretched that to 30%. There is no threshold defined in the law, it is a case by case determination.

Q: The project that we are looking at is 145 acres and there is a large compliment of riparian that can be restored but there is also about 30-40 acres of upland that needs to be restored as well. Given the cost of this project we didn't think we would get to the uplands with the \$5 million cap. Question: can we come back in a subsequent phase and restore the uplands?

R: Yes you can. We don't fund projects unless 50% is in the floodplain. So if it's less than 50% that's upland it's eligible. The habitat component is supposed to be coupled with some flood benefit so you would have to tie the upland habitat to the initial flood benefit. Then it would theoretically be eligible. You might rely somewhat on natural recruitment and keep out the invasive plant species in order to keep the cost low.

Q: We have a fill pond that is 60 acres and it's 40 to 50 feet deep. The thought was to fill a third of the pond to create emergent wetland and to help with scour issues. I don't know if there is enough money in the grant to import the fill. So the cost saving was to set up a clean fill operation with some of the money if it doesn't go far enough. So we fill it and it doesn't become a burden to the state. But when I start thinking about maybe doing the upland portion and coming up with another flood component of this and really maybe I can think of another way to fund the actual flood component once we get all of the engineering done and can do a clean fill import process. We wouldn't need to come back to you for more money.

R: Let some other grant source pay for the upland part.

Q: When you go through the application there is a section that states please make sure that you answer all section something in the guidelines, section 7, and so what I did was go through and copy all of the guidelines and responded to each and every issue in that section. But as people have been reviewing this grant they are telling me that it's redundant in a lot of ways it is redundant, but my thought is that I would just assume make it easier for you to check off things that follow the guidelines and be redundant.

R: We don't want to generate extra paper needlessly. We know where to look for those elements where they typically occur, and we will have a checklist to make sure all of the elements are there. They don't necessarily have to be in there twice, but they have to be there.

Q: How about the question that talks about trying to have the contract ready tasking documents? Does it help your grant to have a contract ready tasking documents?

R: Yes, it does help you because there is a question as to how ready your project is to proceed and if it's ready to go right now that's helpful. You get a higher score, having

contract documents and CEQA out of the way and a hydrologic study done. All of that speeds your project along and will give you a maximum score on the readiness question.

Q: Is the application similar to the proposition 50 program? Like a status report?

R: There are similarities. Projects that involve public works improvements will have to prepare a labor compliance program similar to what is required under proposition 50. Requirements for such a program are described in subdivision (b) of California Labor Code Section 1771.5. This provides verification that you are paying prevailing wages for work performed.

Q: This question relates to match. The project that I'm working on dovetails into a larger project that is being proposed at the County. We don't have very much independent match because we are just a small non profit. But what we can do as part of our match is to use a lot of the studies that were done for this project that is next door. Will that count as a match?

R: Yes, unless State money was used to develop those studies, their availability would count as a match.

Q: We have a large volunteer component and they do a lot of work and save a lot of money. They are valued at \$19 an hour, which is what the department of labor lists as their rates. The match component is small when compared to the grant request, but still is helpful.

R: Yes, it would be helpful. You can get credit for all of that.

Q: What about, last time we put in a public outreach function. Can we put in public outreach in this proposal as well? Signage?

R: Yes, public meetings, signage, and including letters of support from organizations are all helpful.

Q: In order to widen the floodplain for this project it has this (benching) system that we want to eliminate. What we want to do is put in camping on the floodable camping site so people can use it when it's dry but it's designed to flood to widen the transitory storage basin. Is that a plus or a minus? I did not see anything about recreation in the guidelines.

R: It depends. If you treat it as a multi use, multi objective project and recreation is one of your objectives, then it is a plus. There has to be wildlife benefits. If your recreation is conflicting with and causing impacts on your wildlife then it could be a minus. It depends on whether it's passive recreation that would be compatible with the wildlife, which would be a good thing; if the recreation is noisy and disruptive to nesting birds or other wildlife, it would not be good.

Q: I was looking at the scoring for all of the previous grants from the last grant round and Blackberry Island project scored really high in the wildlife category, and I was trying to figure out why? Was it the sheer size of the project over the course of the river that allowed them to score so high in the wildlife category?

R: I don't recall the circumstances there. I know it is an area that supports verdant dense riparian vegetation and it may have been farmed. So they may have been taking an orchard out and converting the area to riparian forest with cottonwoods and willows. Changing from marginal habitat for the farming situation to very very good riverine riparian habitat is why they scored high.