

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposition 50, Chapter 8 Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Grant

PIN	5016	COUNTY	Fresno
APPLICANT	Kings River Conservation District	AMOUNT REQUESTED	\$500,000
PROJECT TITLE	Kings Basin Integrated Regional Water Management Plan	TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$770,360

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

To define, evaluate, and screen project alternatives for the IRWMP. The results of a technical study conducted earlier will be used to formulate the alternatives. Final product will be the preparation of an IRWM Plan.

WORK PLAN - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has a detailed and specific work plan that adequately documents the proposal. Weighting factor is 3.

Score: 15

Comment: Overall, the work plan contains all appropriate elements and contains sufficient details to implement this IRWMP. The proposal is for Phase II of a five phase regional project. IRWMP development would be complete by the end of Phase II in December 2006. Phase I has been initiated and consists of project planning and model development. Subsequent phases are for IRWMP implementation and project specific environmental compliance and monitoring. The work plan for Phase II consists of detailed tasks and subtasks which are consistent with the proposed project budget and schedule. The task activities follow-up on technical studies and modeling work done in Phase I. The main focus is on evaluation and screening of project alternatives, development of the IRWMP, and laying out its implementation and monitoring. The budget lacks some supporting documents, such as how the cost for in-kind services was determined, but overall meets all other requirements.

DESCRIPTION OF REGION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented a detailed and specific description that adequately documents the region. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 5

Comment: The application offers an extensive description of the region with rationale for the boundaries, agency involvement, and water management issues. Groundwater and surface water quality and quantity issues are discussed. The region is described as the Kings groundwater basin in the Eastern San Joaquin Valley, bounded by the San Joaquin and Kings Rivers and spanning over the counties of Tulare, Kings, and Fresno. The relevant agencies and jurisdictional authorities that make up the RWMG are well described. The region's physical and hydrological condition and its appropriateness for water management is discussed. Maps are provided showing relevant boundaries of the various local agencies as well as basin boundaries. In general the proposal has well presented description of the region, water features, infrastructure, proposed projects, water supplies, etc.

OBJECTIVES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific planning objectives. Weighting factor is 2.

Score: 10

Comment: The objectives section of this proposal fully meets the required criteria. All required elements of regional planning objectives are explained, including how they were determined, and how the IRWMP will address the objectives and conflicts. Surface water, groundwater, ecosystem restoration, and water quality are addressed. The regional goals that guide the planning process are elaborately explained and focus mainly on overdraft mitigation, increasing supply reliability, water quality improvement, flood protection, and protection of ecosystems. The proposal addresses statewide priorities as well as environmental justice issues. It is apparent that the RWMG has a clear picture of which direction the IRWMP is heading and has done a good job of articulating their intentions. The applicant plans to address the minimum major water related objectives or conflicts and has added others. Each objective or conflict is sufficiently linked to the IRWMP's goals.

INTEGRATION OF WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented how water management strategies will be integrated. Weighting factor is 2.

Score: 10

Comment: The proposal describes a technical process for determining water management strategies and does a sufficient job demonstrating synergy between multiple management strategies. Elements of ecosystem restoration, habitat protection, water supply, flood management, and groundwater management are addressed. The ongoing Phase I study is coordinating and inventorying all existing plans, policies, and programs that would be considered part of the IRWMP. The IRWMP will include all the required water management strategies and also will consider several other strategies. The applicant demonstrates detailed understanding of how the various strategies would be integrated within the IRWMP. Multiple sources are cited and a good example of synergistic benefits was provided.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposition 50, Chapter 8 Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Grant

IMPLEMENTATION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately detailed plan implementation. Weighting factor is 2.

Score: 10

Comment: A general schedule is provided. An institutional structure will be implemented to develop the details of governance on the IRWMP. The performance of the IRWMP will be monitored by monthly meeting and progress reports. The proposal contains several descriptions of the five phased approach that includes environmental permitting and implementation and monitoring in phases subsequent to IRWMP development. Generalized schedules and institutional structures for IRWMP implementation are also provided.

IMPACTS AND BENEFITS - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately presented and documented the impacts and benefits of the Plan. Weighting factor is 2.

Score: 10

Comment: The proposed IRWMP clearly addresses impacts and benefits. The proposal has presented a detailed summary of the various benefits of the IRWMP and some discussion on economic analysis. Impacts to ecosystems, third parties, and downstream effects will be analyzed during the selection of implementation plans. The applicant has included discussion on how it plans to comply with CEQA by following its established standard practices.

DATA AND TECHNICAL ANALYSIS - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific data and technical analysis components of the proposal. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 5

Comment: The application does a good job showing how available and new data will support the program and how to implement technical analysis components of the proposal. The proposal includes details of available data from the ongoing Phase I study. The preliminary data inventory contains a wide range of data types. Phase I technical studies include modeling strategy, hydrogeologic investigations, evaluation of supply/demand, and water quality analysis. The development of a hydrological cycle model for the region that will support the planning is also proposed. In all, the applicant provides the current data and a process for identifying and filling data gaps as well as a list of 5 ongoing technical studies that will support the development of the IRWMP. The applicant has included discussion on how it plans to comply with CEQA.

DATA MANAGEMENT - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has presented detailed and specific data management procedures. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 5

Comment: This proposal has a detailed data management process. Development of a DMS and a long-term data management plan are presented in sufficient technical details. A program to allow data managers to post data, announcements, calendars, etc. on the web for the public is being evaluated. In addition, there will be a project web site with secure access for project participants. There is also discussion on integration with statewide data management and dissemination to stakeholders. A database of all data collected for this IRWMP will be created and portions of the data will be available to stakeholders, agencies, and the public. This database will update current state collaboration efforts and link to other State managed databases.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented stakeholder involvement concerns. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 5

Comment: The applicant profiles a process for stakeholder involvement. It also identifies the wide array of agencies that would be involved in the planning process and who are current members of the RWMG which coordinates stakeholders. The proposal includes discussion on environmental justice and appropriateness of stakeholders. Environmental justice concerns will be part of the CEQA process. Public outreach programs started in 2004 have included appropriate stakeholders. Work groups have been formed and a detailed Public Outreach and Community Affairs Plan is part of the IRWMP. At least 28 agencies, societies, districts, associations, and institutes, are currently involved in the planning process.

DISADVANTAGE COMMUNITIES - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented disadvantaged community concerns. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 3

Comment: The proposal identifies some DACs as having critical water quality problems and experiencing groundwater contamination issues. Also, some communities are in need of upgrading their water supply systems and improvements of their water treatment plans. Though the proposal states that the DACs have been invited to participate in the planning process and that they have shown support, there is no indication that the IRWMP allows for direct benefits to the DACs. The proposal doesn't specifically address what benefits this IRWMP will have related to DACs beyond allowing them to participate in the planning process.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposition 50, Chapter 8 Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Grant

RELATION TO LOCAL PLANNING - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented the Plan's relationship to local planning efforts. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 5

Comment: The Phase I study has already compiled a list of local GWMPs, UWMPs, and other local plans/programs prepared by agencies/cities/counties overlying the groundwater basin. The application identifies approximately 40 local plans, the agency names, and the date they were adopted. The IRWMP will evaluate the compatibility and conflicts of the various plans. Part of the ongoing Phase I study is aggregating the supply/demand information from the existing plans and relating it to water management strategies of the proposed IRWMP.

AGENCY COORDINATION - Scoring will be based on whether the applicant has adequately documented agency coordination issues. Weighting factor is 1.

Score: 5

Comment: The proposed IRWMP will be implemented and facilitated by the Kings River Water Forum which includes at least 28 entities including local, regional, and state agencies and others. All relevant agencies are involved, including land-use planning and regulatory agencies. The proposal, in its initial tasks of the work plan, allows for continuing current federal, State, and local coordination by a series of public meetings to seek input from these agencies and local land use planners.

TOTAL SCORE: 88