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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 1997 CATEGORY III
ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

I. Executive Summary

- A. **Project Title:** Watershed Management Strategy for the Big Chico Creek Watershed Phases I, II and III
- Applicant Name:** Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance
- B. **Project Description:** Development of a Watershed Management Strategy for the Big Chico Creek Watershed

Primary Biological/Ecological Objectives: Rivers link forests to the seas - and the interconnectedness between forests, rivers and seas is a source of life for all of us living on the earth. A major priority to help reinforce and strengthen this inter-connectedness is the restoration, preservation and protection of important spawning habitat for Spring Run Salmon and Steelhead Trout and non-natal rearing habitat for Spring, Fall and Winter Run Salmon, Splittail and Steelhead in the watershed through the development of an adaptive management plan.

C. **Approach:** Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance (BCCWA), comprised of private and public landowners, state and federal resource managers, city and county government, conservation groups, educational institutions and other interested parties will develop and implement an integrated Watershed Management Strategy (WMS). The WMS will enhance and maintain the watershed landscape ecosystem processes such that economic and ecological productivity in the watershed can be sustained indefinitely. The WMS will proceed in three phases: *Phase I* will begin in Spring 1998 developing the Existing Conditions Report (ECR) and will include the research, needs assessment, projects and documentation. A Stakeholders Survey of Issues and Concerns will also be developed in during Phase I. This survey will provide a forum for land owners and other interested parties to express their views regarding what is best for the watershed.

Phase II begins in Fall 1998 and will create the stakeholder's WMS using adaptive management techniques based on Phase I results. Watershed management and usage methods will be determined based on thorough consultations with those living in the watershed, technicians and engineers serving as their advisors, and flexible implementation systems will be utilize monitoring to determine success, as well as for the progressive correction of deficiencies in watershed management. Phase II will be completed by Late Summer 1999. *Phase III* includes implementation and monitoring of the WMS recommended projects and programs beginning in Fall 1999. This phase produces yearly reports related to identified projects and will create flexible management tools for future actions based on monitoring data. Phase III will be on-going as projects are identified and funding becomes available.

- **Tasks:** This grant application requests funding for Phases I and II only. Funding for Phase III will be solicited at a later date. (Please see Attachment A - Proposed Scope of Work).

Schedule: The preliminary schedule for the completion of the tasks and deliverables will be in phases. Phase I, will take about 7 months, Phase II about 10 months and Phase III will be completed as implementation and funding is available. Out-reach to stakeholders will be an on-going process and, in fact, stakeholders (i.e. landowners) may change and could be more or less active as their personal or agency needs are met during the process.

D. **Justification for Project and Funding by CALFED:** The development and implementation of a WMS will provide tools to lessen the negative impacts to the watershed that have contributed to the serious decline of many species, especially the remaining native anadromous fish. Unsound land and water use practices would likely have adverse impacts on the resources within the watershed. Poor management could result in further decline or even loss of anadromous salmonids and other at-risk species including those listed under the Endangered Species Act that are identified by the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. The BCCW is recognized as a priority watershed for restoration by CALFED in their *Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan*, by U.S.F. & W.S. in the *Revised Draft Restoration Plan for the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program (AFRP)* and by the C.D.F. & G. in the *Restoring Central Valley Streams*. BCCW is one of only four streams that still provides habitat for both Spring Run Salmon and

Deerhead Trout, Big Chico Creek and its tributary watersheds also serve as spawning habitat for Fall and Late Run Chinook Salmon, rearing habitat for both runs, the endangered Winter Run Chinook Salmon, Solitair and hatch for other native species.

E. Budget Costs and Third Party Impacts:

Phase	Phase I	Phase II
\$276,500	\$146,299	Funding will be solicited at a later date.

All impacts from this project are beneficial. There are no third party impacts in this proposal.

F. Applicant Qualifications: The BCCWA has been the advocate for restoration and protection of the watershed since 1991 and has been successful in compelling private landowners and public concern to complete important projects identified in documents and plans by CALFED, U. S. F. & W. S. and C. D. F. & G's. This dedication to the Goals and Objectives created by BCCWA also identified in the above documents, indicates strong support for watershed protection utilizing local and regional technical expertise. In 1997 BCCWA formed a partnership with California State University, Chico (CSUC) borrowing on the broad-based knowledge and experience of the faculty, staff and graduate students. The successful completion of all three phases of the WMS process will be administered by Dr. Donald Holtgrieve as Project Director. Dr. Holtgrieve has served as project director for the Deer Creek and Upper Butte Creek projects locally. The Director will administer all contracts and grants related to the project and programs for student internships and research, as needed.

The CSU, Chico The Research Foundation will provide fiscal management of funding through the Office of Sponsored Programs.

Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance (BCCWA) is a citizen based group and is responsible for hiring the Project Manager. BCCWA currently has a 3/4 time funded Watershed Coordinator responsible to the BCCWA for administration services such as the coordination of meetings, task activities, distribution of pertinent information and reports, preparing fiscal and planning reports, supervising and reviewing all work performed and all other administrative services needed for contract completion.

BCCWA will be the lead entity that contributes landowner and citizen cooperation to the process -- the single most important component to the success of implementing the actions identified by CALFED. BCCWA will also coordinate public and private educational programs linked to watershed planning through local workshops, school districts and CSUC. BCCWA will also develop and implement a community outreach program to ensure public involvement and education in all phases of the planning, implementation, and monitoring process.

G. Monitoring and Data Evaluation: The BCCWA will be responsible for the development of project implementation and technical monitoring plans as identified in Phase II of the WMS process. Repair of flood control structures for fish passage, gravel recruitment and management plans and riparian restoration plans will have monitoring protocols included in each plan or project. An important component of Phase I will be the establishment of permanent cross sections for replicable data collection and monitoring in all drainages. BCCWA will rely on a team of technical experts from public and private agencies and CSUC in the development of data evaluation and monitoring during Phase I and II of the WMS. During Phase III funding will be sought to implement those plans and projects and institute the monitoring protocols.

H. Local Support/Coordination with other Programs/Compatibility with CALFED objectives:

- Department of Water Resources/U. S. Geological Survey/Environmental Protection Agency/City of Chico water quality monitoring programs
- Streamrivers Adopt-Creek Program (storm drain identification education program)
- California Department of Fish & Game Bio-Assessment Training
- The Chico Creek Nature Center, Programs for Public Environmental Education and K-12 School Children
- Chico Unified School District, Environmental Education with hands-on field training in the watershed
- Little Chico Creek Educational Consortium, Specialized Environmental Education Programs for children K-6