

Basso Bridge Ecological Reserve Land Acquisition Tuolumne County - 42 Acres

I. Executive Summary

Applicant California Department of Fish and Game (DFG)
Region 4
1234 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, California 93710

Project Description and Primary Biological/Ecological Objectives

This would be a land purchase to consolidate habitat protection along the south bank of the Tuolumne River between La Grange Dam and Basso Bridge. This area contains primarily seasonal wetland and aquatic habitat and instream aquatic habitat as well as some shaded riverine aquatic habitat. The purposes of this purchase are to help protect spawning riffles in the area, enhance riparian habitats and provide protection to some riparian species.

Approach/Tasks/Schedules

This will be a purchase of property. Habitat restoration activities that may occur on the property would be actions taken through participation with the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), Stanislaus County or the Tuolumne River Technical Advisory Committee (TRTAC) and are not planned as part of this project. Purchase should be completed by December 1998 and a management plan completed during 1999.

Justification for Project and Funding by CALFED

This purchase would allow other potential CALFED-FUNDED ecosystem restoration projects in this area to reach more of their full potential. This will also help to protect several habitat types. Both seasonal wetland and aquatic habitats as well as some shaded riverine aquatic habitat occur on these properties. This would occur in part because it will allow more control on some activities (e.g., cattle grazing) in the area since the south bank would be entirely in public ownership.

Budget Costs and Third Party Impacts

A budget of \$172,500 is needed to carry out the purchase which would be performed by the WCB. There will be some improvements in accessibility to the public. It will also enhance ecosystem restoration actions by other parties, planned for this area and is supported by these groups.

Applicants Qualifications

The DFG manages 821.017 acres of land. The DFG Region 4's anadromous fisheries staff has work closely with the various other state, federal and private personnel, to construct chinook salmon spawning, rearing and predator pond isolation projects in the San Joaquin River basin over the past 10 years. The DFG has the clerical, fiscal and contractual personnel necessary to support the biological and technical experts administering this project.

Monitoring and Data Evaluation

This project will not require these activities as it will simply be a land purchase with no further restoration proposed at this time. A management plan will be developed for the area as is required for all DFG properties.

Local Support/Coordination w/ other Projects/Compatibility with CALFED Objectives

There is local support for the purchase from angling groups and agencies. Stanislaus County has indicated support for the purchase. The project will fulfill the objectives of the CALFED program by improving and increasing the aquatic and terrestrial habitats in the San Joaquin Valley. This acquisition is part of a larger ecosystem restoration plan by the DFG and other interested parties on the Tuolumne River. As such, it is an integral part of such restoration plans.