

99E-118

▪ Executive Summary |

Team *Arundo del Norte* (TAdN) was formed in response to the urgent threat that *Arundo donax* (giant reed or giant cane) presents to the riparian and stream ecosystems of northern and central California. There are two pressing needs regarding *Arundo*: prompt on-the-ground eradication, and coordination of a region-wide effort. Sonoma Ecology Center (SEC), as a member of TAdN, proposes a three year umbrella project that would carry out CALFED's work with regard to the eradication and control of *Arundo*, the state's most invasive riparian weed. This project will direct funds to eradication partners in six watersheds that are prepared to immediately carry out *Arundo* eradication. These sites are on Putah Creek, Big Chico Creek, Sonoma Creek, Walnut Creek, Napa River, and San Francisquito Creek. The project will also provide much needed information exchange and coordination to other groups in the CALFED region, so that many more potential *Arundo* eradication and prevention efforts can proceed. We have strong interest already from several watersheds including Stony Creek, Petaluma River, and San Joaquin tributaries, as well as land management agencies wrestling with *Arundo* infestations.

This proposal will create an umbrella that will reduce the need for CALFED to administer numerous individual projects while providing a structure for long term eradication and monitoring of this NIS throughout the CALFED solution area. This approach is more efficient than funding many separate uncoordinated eradication efforts. It will prevent small infestations from ballooning into disasters, will consolidate project funding applications to reduce agency workloads, and will focus *Arundo* related efforts where they will be most effective. Through TAdN's close links to watershed groups, agencies, and universities, information gathered by this project on *Arundo*'s distribution patterns, ecological impacts, and eradication methods will be widely and immediately useful. TAdN members have collectively spent years addressing the *Arundo* threat, and are highly qualified to provide guidance and to carry out project objectives.

Through region-wide coordination and an acceleration of new project start-up using the best information available, Team *Arundo del Norte* seeks to address what we believe to be the single most damaging process for many CALFED streams. The objectives are to reduce *Arundo*'s negative impacts to valuable riparian and aquatic habitats, water supply, natural stream geomorphology, fire risk, and flood risk.

The cost for three years of funding for immediate eradication and monitoring, technical coordination and planning of future eradication work, and organization and dissemination of *Arundo*-related information is \$818,045. This cost is matched by \$305,036 in in-kind contributions.

Minimum requirements of the PSP have been met. Besides a short-term spike in downstream fine sediment supply, there are no adverse effects of *Arundo donax* eradication.

Friends are a signatory to the 1995 FERC Settlement Agreement and participate in the Tuolumne River Technical Advisory Committee. The Friends have strong ties and good working relationships with the agencies in the area, and will be able to draw on these agencies and consultants to bring this project to its full realization.

Monitoring will be designed as part of the restoration plan. Recommendations from California Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the Tuolumne River Technical Advisory Committee will be considered in plan development. The extent and nature of the restoration will determine the nature and duration of monitoring.

The project is broadly supported locally and by the agencies working on the Tuolumne River through the Technical Advisory Committee. (See attached letter of support A2 and B1 -B10.) Because of its habitat complexity, those interested include fishery, bird, and other wildlife groups.

The project is compatible with CALFED objectives and directly addresses Stream Meander and Natural Sediment Recruitment, Preserves Coarse Sediment Supplies, Natural Floodplain Ecological Processes, Contributes to lowering river water Temperatures, Provides Conditions for Self Sustaining Riparian Vegetation, assists with Species Recovery and Avoidance of future listings, -----all within the Chinook salmon spawning reach.