

COLUSA COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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CALFED BAY-DELTA ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/INQUIRY SUBMITTAL FORMAT

a. PROJECT TITLE & APPLICANT NAME: Sand and Salt Creek Watershed Project,
Colusa Resource Conservation District

b. PROJECT DESCRIPTION & PRIMARY BIOLOGICAL/ECOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES:

The Sand and Salt Creek Watershed project (SSCW) will serve as a watershed management project to assist private landowners address non-point source pollution issues associated with the Clean Water Act, particularly for three agricultural landuses: grazing, almond orchards, and irrigated cropland. The project will consist of 20 selected sites which will implement effective of management practices for the reduction of surface runoff, Diazinon residues, and silt and sedimentation into the Colusa Basin Drain and the Sacramento River. Each cooperating site will have a Resource Management System (RMS) plan developed utilizing an ecosystem based planning approach. Each cooperating site plan will be a three-year contract with the landowner, who receives 75% cost-sharing for practices implemented. A second phase of the SSCW project will be to install grade stabilization structures to control the grade and head cutting in channels of the SSCW. Grade stabilization structures can be used to address the destabilization of grade in channels and gully erosion problems while maintaining or improving for fish and wildlife. This component shall consist of furnishing material and installing grade stabilization structures to the dimensions, lines and grades as designed by the Colusa Public Works Department. The benefits of this project include the improvement of water quality for all beneficial uses, and the improvement and increase of aquatic and terrestrial habitats. Moreover, this project will improve ecological functions in the Bay-Delta to support sustainable populations of diverse and valuable plant and animal species. This project is expected to benefit seasonal wetland and aquatic habitat, instream aquatic habitat and shaded riverine habitat. In addition, priority species expected to benefit from this project include: Winter-run chinook salmon, Spring-run chinook salmon, Late-fall run chinook salmon, Steelhead trout and Green sturgeon. Secondary priority species receiving benefits will include striped bass and migratory birds.

c. APPROACH/TASKS/SCHEDULE:

The Colusa County Resource Conservation District (CRCD) is the lead agency for the proposed Sand and Salt Creek Watershed Project. CRCD has an MOU with the USDA and with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Via the MOUs the NRCS will act as staff to assist with implementation, and will provide part-time staff to assist with all phases of the project. The CRCD will seek other MOUs during the first year with other cooperating agencies and arrange for staff to manage the project. The existing Steering Committee will have the role of overseeing the project and to provide public participation. The project is scheduled to begin November 1, 1997 and end October 31, 2000.

The project tasks include:

- Task 1: Project Management & Administration
- Task 2: Public Participation
- Task 3: Select Cooperating Sites
- Task 4: Establish Monitoring Sites
- Task 5: Baseline Resource Data
- Task 6: Develop RMS Plans

- Task 7: Schedule Workshops and Tours
- Task 8: Implement RMS Plans*
- Task 9: Implement Grade Stabilization Structures**
- Task 10: Conduct Workshops and Tours
- Task 11: Prepare Final Report

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d JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT AND FUNDING BY CALFED:

The Sand and Salt Creek Watershed (SSCW) is considered a sub-watershed within the Colusa Basin. The Colusa Drain has been identified as an impaired water body which conveys water into the Sacramento River. The SSCW contains agricultural land uses which have been identified as contributors to NPS. Particular pollution sources are Diazinon and sedimentation from almond orchards, animal waste/nutrients and sedimentation from grazing lands, and sedimentation from other irrigated cropland. Sand and Salt Creek is flooded out each winter due to concentrated flows from the upper watershed, and runoff from adjacent orchards. The flooding situation contributes to the transport of the above pollutants into the Colusa Basin Drain.

e. BUDGET COSTS AND THIRD PARTY IMPACTS:

- A. Personnel: Project Manager: 67% of salary for 3 years of project: \$109,864
- B. Operating Expenses - Photocopying, telephone, office supplies, mass mailings: \$9,500
- C. Property acquisition: Display Board, camera, over-head projector, flip-charts, slide show presentation, signs, computer rental: \$7,900
- D. Professional & Consulting Services: \$18,500
- E. Monitoring - Lab Analysis: \$20,000
- E. Resource Management System Plans - Implementation \$322,659 (75% of the cost-share rate)
- F. Grade Stabilization Structures - Implementation: \$110,240

f. APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS:

The CRCD consists of 7 volunteer directors and 1 paid staff position, a part-time secretary. In addition to the CRCD providing a full-time project manager, NRCS will provide the RCD with a part-time Planner, a part-time Agricultural Engineer and other staff as needed. The RCD secretary will provide administrative support, and an NRCS Planner will work in the field with the landowners to develop Resource Management System plans, collect baseline data, and monitor implementation. The Colusa Public Works Department will provide a part-time Civil Engineer to assist with the survey and design of grade stabilization structures. Cooperating agencies include: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Colusa Department of Public Works, Colusa Basin Drainage District and Colusa County Board of Supervisors.

g. MONITORING AND DATA EVALUATION:

The monitoring program will compare quantity and/or quality of soil and water that is entering the site, to soil and water leaving the site, with the objective of improving water quality via the installation of specific conservation practices scheduled in an RMS level plan. Baseline water quality and resource data will be gathered during the first year for the cooperating sites. The monitoring parameters to be studied are soil erosion, sedimentation, infiltration, runoff, Diazinon.

h. LOCAL SUPPORT/COORDINATION/COMPATIBILITY WITH CALFED OBJECTIVES:

There has been overwhelming interest by landowners to participate with the SSCW project as cooperating sites that will apply RMS level plans. These requests to participate with the project will require over \$700,000 to implement the associated conservation practices. The implementation RMS plans on these sites will help improve the health of the SSCW, the Colusa Basin and the Sacramento River. A Steering Committee will serve to provide support and guidance for the project. The purpose of the steering committee will be to act as a citizen's monitoring group by making decisions and recommendations regarding progress of the project, results of surveys, sponsor public meetings, sponsor all educational workshops and tours.