

Policy Issues Related to Example Restoration Actions

The Example Restoration Actions document includes some actions which are highlighted with bold type to flag them as examples we will want to consider carefully in development of the RFP. These fall into the following categories. Staff will present draft recommendations on each of these categories at the Roundtable meeting.

1. Flow Related Actions

Many of the actions identified to address the stressor of Hydrograph Alterations are flow related and so may not be appropriate for Category III funding. The most obvious have been highlighted in bold type but many others also are likely to fall in this category.

Recommendation: Do not include examples such as water acquisition. Retain flexibility to take actions such as ones that could provide flow benefits as ancillary benefits of project (ie. Land acquisition for habitat that also comes with some water rights, Battle Ck power agreements, etc)

2. Water supply actions

There are several example actions that are related to water supply actions such as wastewater reclamation that could be funded by other portions of Prop 204. These types of actions tend to be expensive and are unlikely to be cost-effective at providing flows for fish and wildlife.

Recommendation: Rather than include these as examples in RFP, work with DWR to identify opportunities to coordinate with the other portions of Prop 204.

3. Reintroduction of anadromous fish above existing large reservoirs

The previous Roundtable package included some background on this item. Technical teams only recommended this action as a feasibility study to determine if it is an affordable, technically viable option.

Recommendation:

4. Hatchery expansion

The previous Roundtable package included some background on this item.

Recommendation: Do not include hatchery expansion in example actions but retain flexibility to consider funding proposals if there is consensus.

5. Regulatory actions

There are a number of actions which propose increased regulatory requirements to address problems. These include changes to angling regulations, increased enforcement of ballast water regulation, and regulatory approaches to erosion control.

Recommendation: These types of recommendations can either be limited to funding for research to provide a basis for regulations or can be excluded from the Category III RFP.

6. Changes operations or physical facilities for SWP and CVP delta facilities

These types of actions very likely will not meet the requirement that projects not prejudice the selection of the CALFED alternative or they could be considered flow related. In addition, Prop 204 included funding specifically for some of the proposed physical modifications in the south delta.

Recommendation: Exclude modifications of the SWP and CVP delta facilities or modifications of operations.

7. Land retirement

CALFED has already determined that land retirement is not appropriately considered as a water conservation measure. It is a tool that can address water quality problems. It is also being addressed in other forums.

Recommendation: Do not include land retirement as an example action to address flow related stressors.

8. Coordination between agencies

There are several recommendations under the "Land Use" stressor that call for improved coordination among state and federal land use agencies. Agency coordination can be addressed through development of watershed groups that include all affected interests. CALFED has also recognized the need for better coordination with agencies such as US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. However, encouraging agencies to join in CALFED is likely beyond the scope of what should be included in an RFP.

Recommendation: Include watershed management planning in the example actions. Do not include references to adding agencies to CALFED.

9. Educational projects

General educational projects are included under "Human disturbance". Previously, Roundtable members expressed some reluctance to fully fund these type of proposals but there seemed to be some willingness to consider some level of support. "Classroom" type education projects and educational centers associated with restoration projects are two areas where some additional input would be useful.

Recommendation: Include educational centers associated with habitat restoration areas as example actions.

10. Climate change

There are likely no feasible actions which would address this stressor directly. It is also one of the lowest priorities. However, in evaluating habitat restoration in areas like the Delta that could be vulnerable to sea level rise, it may be a general concern. For example, it would be prudent to ensure that there were habitat corridors moving up in elevation from the Delta.

Recommendation: Indicate that there are no example actions directly addressing this stressor.

11. Actions where there is an on-going regulatory action

There are a number of actions where there is some existing legal requirement such as a Cease and Desist Order from the Regional Board on a water quality violation, a Superfund site which is in the process of cleanup, or a Biological Opinion which requires construction of a fish screen. Some of these types of actions could be good candidates for funding, such as some of the previously approved fish screen projects. However, care should be taken in funding these types of actions. Currently, the criteria exclude actions which are regulatory requirements other than fish screens.

Recommendation: Do not include example actions where there is a regulatory requirement other than fish screens. Consider proposals on a case-by-case basis and seek legal advice prior to funding.