

Project Title and Applicant Name

The Butte Creek Watershed Educational Workshop and Field Tour Series
 The California State University, Chico Research Foundation

Project Description and Primary Biological/Ecological Objectives

The staff of the Butte Creek Watershed Project (BCWP), after two years of experience working with the Watershed Advisory Committee (WAC), members of the Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy (BCWC), and general stakeholders in this complex and controversial watershed, have identified the need for educational workshops focused on watershed issues. In response to this need and direct requests from members of the entities listed above, we are proposing a series of thirteen workshops/field tours to be held over the course of eighteen months. This series is designed to educate the public on a variety of watershed issues, open a new venue for dialogue regarding the future of the watershed, and ultimately reduce the conflict and contention that results from misunderstanding and a lack of a coordinated vision for the future of this watershed.

The workshop and field tours series begins with an overview of the diverse nature of the watershed, its physical terrain, habitat, and land use practices. Subsequent workshops are focused on issues and concerns that have arisen through the BCWP/WAC process. Each workshop/field tour builds from information and knowledge gained in previous presentations. The workshop topics listed in this proposal are flexible and open to revision based on the responses gathered from and needs identified by the participants.

The biological and ecological objectives that can be reached through this educational process are plentiful. In particular, the pending State and Federal listing of Spring- and Fall-Run Chinook Salmon, and the Steelhead Trout has induced a state of panic and frustration on the part of certain landowners and interested parties. In order for the public to understand and support CALFED's objectives on improving and increasing aquatic and terrestrial habitat, they must be comfortable with the restoration efforts as well as comprehend them. An enhanced understanding of the issues surrounding a properly functioning ecosystem will educate participants, and at the same time reduce anxiety by allowing them to become comfortable with restoration efforts.

Approach/Tasks/Schedule

We propose to bring together a group of local and regional technical experts to address various topics related to watershed health. Each workshop will include one to three presentations on various watershed issues. Many of the workshops will be accompanied by field tours led by the specialists to give first hand viewing of representative sites within the watershed. A comprehensive newsletter will be utilized to inform interested parties of the workshop schedule and brief descriptions of the presentations and field tours. Other tasks include securing appropriate meeting locations for workshops and obtaining access to certain field tour sites.

Justification for Project and Funding by CALFED

Each and every vision and/or objective identified by the agencies comprising CALFED relies on local cooperation and public support for implementation measures to be successful. Underlying this assumption is the critical need for public education in the areas of water quality and quantity, floodplain management and habitat restoration, sediment management, fluvial geomorphology, timber harvest, rangeland management, hydroelectric power generation, water rights issues, fire hazards, and fisheries issues.

The Butte Creek drainage is among the last few Sacramento River tributaries that still provides good quality habitat for the production of wild spring-run Chinook Salmon. Many property rights advocates who live along Butte Creek believe that with the listing of the Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Trout as Endangered Species they will lose physical land, property rights, and water rights. This project will provide education to all stakeholders so that they have a better understanding of the actions that will be required to ensure the protection of these species. In addition, the workshops will introduce watershed stewardship practices that can be utilized by residents of the watershed to improve the health of the entire system. Through this Series, stakeholders will gain a clear understanding of the physical and biological processes that occur in the watershed. Local cooperation and public support have been identified by CALFED as integral for implementation measures to be successful.

Budget Costs and Third Party Impacts

The average cost per workshop will be \$2268. There are no foreseeable negative third party impacts.

Applicant Qualifications

The protection and enhancement of local creeks and watersheds by local community groups is a high priority at California State University, Chico. Toward this end, faculty and resources, conservation groups, public agencies, and others as needed are utilized. As part of its community service mission, it is the policy of the CSUC Research Foundation to organize teams for special projects and to provide the kinds of services required for this project. Please refer to CSU, Chico Watershed Capabilities for qualifications for specific personnel.

Monitoring and Data Evaluation (non-biological and ecological)

The monitoring and evaluation of the project will be done by the BCWP staff with input from workshop presenters. After each workshop participants will complete an exit survey which will be evaluated by staff members and the presenters for that specific workshop. The results will be tabulated and used to prepare the following workshops and field tours to better accommodate the participant's desires and CALFED objectives.

Local Support/Coordination with other Programs/Compatibility with CALFED Objectives

NRCS, USFS, Lassen National Forest, Sierra Pacific Industries, Meadowbrook Conservation Associates, PG&E, CDF&G, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and Department of Water Resources (DWR) have recognized the value and compatibility of this project with CALFED. All involved agencies and specialists have agreed to contribute to and support the project. The Executive Committee of the Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy Board of Directors has approved this proposal in concept.