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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Proposal for Establishment of an Interagency Ecological Program
Habitat Restoration Evaluation Project Work Team**

Applicant: Interagency Ecological Program for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Estuary (IEP)
Patrick J. Coulston, Program Manager

Project Description/Objectives: Establish a team of technical experts under the auspices of the IEP (i.e. an IEP "Project Work Team") to coordinate and integrate the design, implementation, data analysis, and reporting of Bay-Delta habitat restoration project (aquatic, wetland, and riparian) monitoring. The proposed team will be composed of IEP-affiliated and other investigators directly involved in the ecological monitoring and evaluation of individual restoration projects, and as necessary other experts retained to fill in gaps in the group's collective expertise. The overarching goal of establishing and maintaining this team is to ensure that restoration project (including Category III-supported project) monitoring and evaluation efforts are technically sound and cost effective. The team will achieve this goal by providing an ongoing technical forum to 1) assist CALFED by reviewing monitoring programs associated with habitat restoration projects proposed for Category III funding, 2) develop monitoring approaches that integrate the monitoring efforts of individual restoration projects and other ecosystem monitoring programs, 3) peer review the analysis and reporting of monitoring data from individual restoration projects, 4) collaborate in the implementation of project monitoring, and 5) based on monitoring results, develop recommendations for CALFED regarding the effectiveness of various restoration actions. The team will also work with restoration project monitoring staff and IEP's computer support staff to store and disseminate monitoring data through IEP's file server (this proposal assumes that IEP will be providing monitoring data management and dissemination services for CALFED, with separate funding support). The Category III funding sought through this proposal will be used primarily to support a full-time a senior biologist position at an IEP member agency dedicated solely to leading the proposed team. The requested funding will also be used as necessary to retain technical experts to support the team, and to support the efforts of team members completing significant team products.

Approach/Task/Schedule: The team will be established in the Fall of 1997, perhaps with an interim chairperson, with the goal of assisting CALFED with monitoring proposal review during the next Category III RFP cycle. The IEP envisions that the team and its monitoring coordination and integration efforts will be required for many years, so the proposal requests funding support for the full three years allowed by the RFP.

Justification: Presently, Bay-Delta habitat restoration project monitoring is generally designed, implemented, and evaluated on a project by project basis, and is often an under-funded afterthought in the development of a restoration project. The value of this monitoring could be

greatly enhanced if it was designed as part of a integrated program of restoration project monitoring, and if it was conducted under the auspices of a strong peer forum. The developing coordinated approach to restoration monitoring in the North Bay wetlands is a notable exception to the current project-by-project approach, and should serve as a model for, and be included in, the coordination efforts of the proposed team. We believe our request for funding of a full-time agency senior biologist to lead the proposed team is justified by the technical and time demands of this important task.

Costs/Impacts: The proposal requests funding for the entire three years allowed by the RFP at an annual cost of roughly \$140,000. No third party impacts as defined by the RFP are anticipated. The proposal does suggest that CALFED strongly encourage or require that future recipients of Category III funding for habitat restoration projects commit to involving their appropriate monitoring staff in the activities of the proposed team.

Applicant Qualifications: The IEP is an established interagency program with a long history (since 1970) of managing, coordinating, and integrating Bay-Delta ecosystem monitoring. The IEP has a strong and complete management infrastructure to support and oversee the activities of the proposed team. The team, which will be composed primarily of technical experts conducting restoration monitoring, will provide a diverse peer-review forum. The team leader or chairperson will be an agency senior biologist hired from the State's Senior Biologist (specialist), Environmental Specialist IV (specialist), or an equivalent Federal classification, ensuring that the person will have the technical and leadership skills necessary to effectively lead the proposed group.

Monitoring and Data Evaluation: The proposal provides an approach to improving the monitoring and evaluation of all Bay-Delta habitat restoration projects.

Support/Coordination/Compatibility with CALFED Objectives: This proposal is directly responsive to the RFP in that it provides a specific vehicle for developing and coordinating monitoring efforts associated with Category III-supported habitat restoration projects. We believe that there is strong support within its and CALFED's participating agencies, and among agency stakeholders, for the concept of coordinating and integrating restoration project monitoring.

**Establishment of an Interagency Ecological Program
Habitat Restoration Evaluation Project Work Team**

Title of Project: Establishment of an Interagency Ecological Program Habitat
Restoration Evaluation Project Work Team

Applicant/Investigator: Interagency Ecological Program for the Sacramento-San Joaquin
Estuary (IEP)

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Type of Organization: Interagency (Agency)

Participants/Collaborators: IEP Member Agencies

RFP Project Group Type: Other Services

July 28, 1997

III. Project Description

a. Project Description and Approach: The IEP proposes to establish a team of technical experts under the auspices of the IEP (i.e. an IEP "Project Work Team") to coordinate and integrate the design, implementation, data analysis, and reporting of Bay-Delta habitat restoration project (aquatic, wetland, and riparian) monitoring. Within the structure of the IEP (Figure 1), PWTs are groups of agency, academic, and agency stakeholder ecosystem technical experts conducting subject area-related monitoring and focused research. The IEP currently has about a dozen PWTs addressing a wide variety of important ecological subject areas.

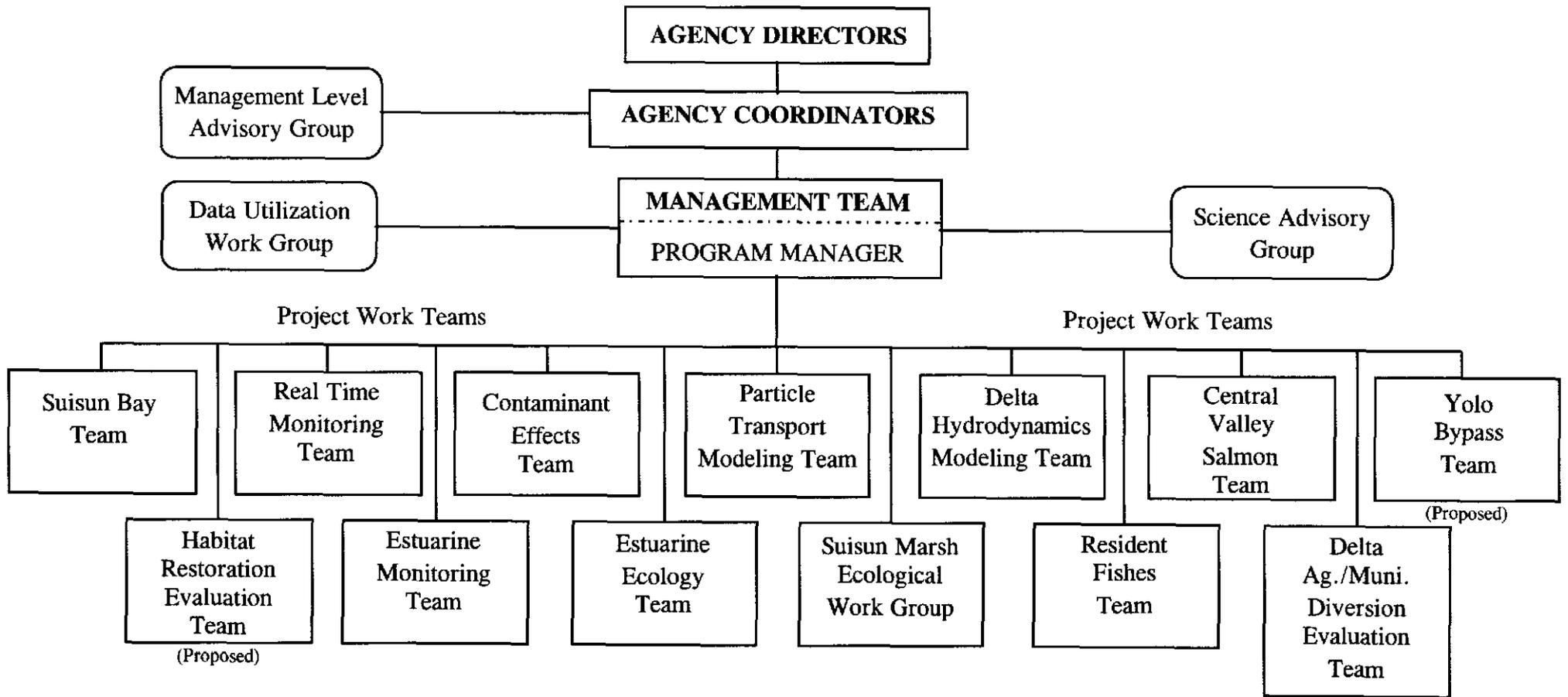
The proposed team will be composed of IEP-affiliated and other investigators directly involved in the ecological monitoring and evaluation of individual restoration projects, and as necessary other experts retained to fill in gaps in the group's collective expertise. The overarching goal of establishing and maintaining this team is to ensure that restoration project (including Category III-supported project) monitoring and evaluation efforts are technically sound and cost effective. The team will achieve this goal by providing an ongoing technical forum to 1) assist CALFED by reviewing monitoring programs associated with habitat restoration projects proposed for Category III funding, 2) develop monitoring approaches that integrate the monitoring efforts of individual restoration projects and other ecosystem monitoring programs, 3) peer review the analysis and reporting of monitoring data from individual restoration projects, 4) collaborate in the implementation of project monitoring, and 5) based on monitoring results, develop and report recommendations for CALFED regarding the effectiveness of various restoration actions. The team will also work with restoration project monitoring staff and IEP's computer support staff to store and disseminate monitoring data through IEP's file server (this proposal assumes that IEP will be providing monitoring data management and dissemination services for CALFED, with separate funding support).

The Category III funding sought through this proposal will be used primarily to support a full-time a senior biologist position at an IEP member agency dedicated solely to leading the proposed team. The requested funding will also be used as necessary to retain technical experts to fill gaps in team expertise, and to support team efforts to produce significant team products.

The duties of the team chairperson will include:

- Convening regular team meetings and reporting meeting results to CALFED and IEP management.
- Facilitating team review of monitoring proposals and reporting review results to CALFED.

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- Facilitating team and peer review of individual restoration project monitoring reports.
- Managing the development of integrated monitoring approaches and production of integrated annual and triennial team restoration monitoring reports.
- Establishing and executing contracts with technical experts, as needed to support team activities and products.

b. Location and/or Geographic Boundaries of Project: As envisioned in this proposal, the task of the proposed Project Work Team is to review, coordinate, and integrate the monitoring and reporting of habitat (aquatic, wetland, and riparian) restoration projects in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Estuary's upper embayments and Delta. Expansion of the teams responsibilities, or creation of a similar team, to address restoration projects in Central Valley streams is possible and could be addressed by IEP proposals in subsequent RFP cycles or could be included during development of an interagency agreement associated with this proposal.

c. Expected Benefits: The IEP believes several important benefits will be realized if the proposed PWT is established with the requested Category III funding support, including:

- More effective and rigorous technical review of habitat restoration monitoring proposals associated with restoration projects supported by Category III and other restoration programs.
- More effective and rigorous technical review of habitat restoration project monitoring reports.
- More efficient use of monitoring resources by integrating project monitoring and sharing monitoring resources (staff, boats, etc.).
- Preparation of team-prepared, peer-reviewed restoration monitoring reports that integrate the results of all restoration monitoring. These integrated reports are more likely to provide the level of data synthesis and recommendations appropriate for guiding adaptive management decision-making than a large number of reports from small, individual monitoring efforts.

d. Background and Biological/Technical Justification: Presently, Bay-Delta habitat restoration project monitoring is generally designed, implemented, and evaluated on a project by project basis, and is often an under-funded afterthought in the development of a restoration project. The value of this monitoring could be greatly enhanced if it was designed as part of a integrated program of restoration project monitoring, and if it was conducted under the auspices of a strong peer forum. The developing coordinated

restoration project. The value of this monitoring could be greatly enhanced if it was designed as part of a integrated program of restoration project monitoring, and if it was conducted under the auspices of a strong peer forum. The developing coordinated approach to restoration monitoring in the North Bay wetlands is a notable exception to the current project-by-project approach, and should serve as a model for, and be included in, the coordination efforts of the proposed team. We believe our request for funding of a full-time agency senior biologist to lead the proposed team is justified by the technical and time demands of this important task.

e. Proposed Scope of Work: See III.a. (above).

f. Monitoring and Data Evaluation: The proposal provides an approach to monitoring and evaluation of all Bay-Delta habitat restoration projects that we believe is a significant improvement over the project-by-project, independent approach typically employed.

g. Implementability: The IEP's infrastructure provides an existing framework for initiating the proposed Habitat Restoration Evaluation Project Work Team and the IEP routinely establishes and dissolves PWTs.

The IEP has been considering for some time establishing the proposed PWT, possibly using the programs existing resources, but existing program monitoring and research responsibilities have prevented us from taking on this additional task. The most significant barrier to IEP initiating the PWT, establishing and funding a senior technical person dedicating to leading and maintaining the team, is addressed by this proposal. A potential hinderance to implementing the functions of the proposed PWT is obtaining adequate participation by appropriate technical experts. We believe that most individuals and entities responsible for conducting monitoring and evaluation of individual habitat restoration projects will welcome the peer review, study collaboration, and potential data management support opportunities afforded by the proposed PWT, and will willingly participate. CALFED could further encourage participation in the PWT by establishing this participation as a term of contracts for restoration and/or monitoring projects receiving Category III funding.

IV. Costs and Schedule to Implement Project

We estimate that the total cost of the "project" for the three State fiscal years covered by this proposal to be approximately \$420,000. Table 1 shows a precise break down of these costs by fiscal year. Since the activities of the proposed team and its chairperson will be continuous and ongoing the estimated costs are not broken down by "task" or "phase". If, as we recommend, CALFED encourages or requires Bay-Delta habitat restoration project proponents to participate in the team, costs of these individual restoration projects may increase slightly to provide for the involvement of project monitoring staff in team activities (meetings, report/proposal review, etc.).

Table 1. Cost Summary for Proposed Establishment of IEP Habitat Restoration Evaluation Project Work Team

	FY 1997-1998	FY 1998-1999	FY 1999-2000
Personnel Services			
Senior Specialist	\$55,884	\$55,884	\$55,884
Staff Benefits @ 31.34%	\$17,514	\$17,514	\$17,514
Total Personnel Services	\$73,398	\$73,398	\$73,398
Operating and Equipment			
General expenses	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500
Minor equipment	\$150	\$150	\$150
Computer and software	\$3,000	\$100	\$100
Out-of-state travel	\$0	\$0	\$500
Consultants and Professional Services	\$35,700	\$35,700	\$35,700
Total, Operating Expenses and Equipment	\$46,350	\$43,450	\$43,950
Total Expenditures (Personnel Services and Operating Expenses)	\$119,748	\$116,848	\$117,348
Indirect Cost Recovery @ 19%	\$22,752	\$22,201	\$22,296
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$142,500	\$139,049	\$139,644

V. Applicant Qualifications

The IEP is an established interagency program with a long history (since 1970) of managing, coordinating, and integrating Bay-Delta ecosystem monitoring. The IEP has a strong and complete management infrastructure (Figure 1) to support and oversee the activities of the proposed team. This infrastructure includes:

- Agency Directors, many of whom (or their delegates) are also principals in CALFED, to ensure that the activities of the IEP are responsive to the broad policy directives and information needs of the nine participating agencies.
- Agency Coordinators, a group of agency managers with significant environmental management, regulation, or protection responsibilities, who work closely with the IEP Management Team and program stakeholders to ensure that the program is operating effectively, is adequately supported, and is producing high quality products that are responsive to changing agency and stakeholder ecosystem information needs.
- A Management Team made up of several senior-level agency technical staff members to ensure that the proposed team (and other PWTs) functions as envisioned and that its activities are appropriately integrated and coordinated with other program monitoring and reporting activities.
- Stakeholder (Management Level Advisory Group) and scientific (Science Advisory Group) advisory groups that can be called upon to evaluate and advise on the relevance and technical merit of program activities and products.
- A newly developed, EPA-patterned QA/OC program that can be employed during the development and implementation of project-specific and integrated habitat restoration monitoring and evaluation efforts.
- An established computer support staff and file server that can be used (assuming funding support is provided) to manage and disseminate monitoring data.

The proposed team, which will be composed primarily of technical experts conducting restoration monitoring, will provide a diverse peer-review forum. Additionally, the proposal provides for funds that can be used to support the involvement, as needed, of IEP-affiliated and independent agency, consultant, and academic experts in the teams activities. The team leader or chairperson will be an agency senior biologist hired from the State's Senior Biologist (specialist), Environmental Specialist IV (specialist), or an equivalent Federal classification, ensuring that the person will have the technical and leadership skills necessary to effectively lead the proposed group.

VI. Compliance with Standard Terms and Conditions

Given that the proposed "project" is in the "Other Services" category, and this is an "agency" proposal, none of the forms identified in Table D-1 of the RFP are required at the time of proposal submission. We do not anticipate any problems meeting the terms and conditions listed in the RFP should the grant be awarded, and believe that the development and execution of an interagency agreement to provide "project" funding should be a routine matter .