

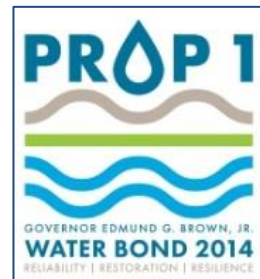
Agenda Item XIV

MRCA

8/3/16

2016 Proposition 1 California Stream Flow Enhancement Program

Proposal Solicitation Notice Wildlife Conservation Board



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FOREWORD

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) is seeking high quality grant proposals that enhance stream flow pursuant to the objectives of Proposition 1 (Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Act of 2014), California Water Action Plan, State Wildlife Action Plan, the fulfillment of WCB's Mission, and meet the priorities in this Proposal Solicitation Notice (Solicitation). This document details eligibility requirements, the proposal process, proposal review procedures, and other pertinent topics. Potential applicants are encouraged to thoroughly read this Solicitation and the [Project Solicitation and Evaluation Guidelines](#) for the Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Program (WCB Stream Flow Enhancement Program Guidelines) prior to deciding to submit a proposal.

Award Information

- Anticipated Total Funding: \$56,643,722. \$18,243,722 of remaining funds from Fiscal Year (FY) 2015/16 is available during FY 2016/17, dependent upon allocation in the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget Act. FY 2015-2016 allocation was \$38.4 million.
- Length of Funding: Average of 3 years. Projects awarded funds in FY 16/17 must be complete before April 30, 2021.

Eligibility Information

Eligible entities are public agencies (including public universities), nonprofit organizations, public utilities, federally recognized Indian tribes, state Indian tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, and mutual water companies (California Water Code §79712[a]).

Deadline

The complete proposal and all supporting documentation must be submitted to wcbstreamflow@wildlife.ca.gov and received by **4:00 p.m., Pacific Daylight Time**, on **August 31, 2016**. WCB strongly recommends applicants submit early to avoid any unforeseen system delays.

Contacts

For questions about this Solicitation please contact WCB's Stream Flow Enhancement Program by e-mail at wcbstreamflow@wildlife.ca.gov. This document, Program notification email subscription information, and information about the Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Program can be found at: <https://wcb.ca.gov/Programs/Stream-Flow-Enhancement>.

Agenda Item XIV
MRCA
8/3/16

1 BACKGROUND

The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 ([Proposition 1](#)), provides funding to implement the three objectives of the [California Water Action Plan](#) (CWAP): 1) more reliable water supplies, 2) the restoration of important species and habitat, and 3) a more resilient, sustainably managed water resources system (e.g., water supply, water quality, flood protection, environment) that can better withstand inevitable and unforeseen pressures in the coming decades.

Proposition 1 amended the California Water Code (CWC) to add among other articles, [Section 79733](#), authorizing the Legislature to appropriate up to \$200,000,000 to WCB, for projects that result in enhanced stream flows (i.e. a change in the amount, timing and/or quality of the water flowing down a stream, or a portion of a stream, to benefit fish and wildlife). WCB will distribute these funds on a competitive basis through the California Stream Flow Enhancement Program (CSFEP). The [Guidelines](#) for this program were finalized in June 2015.

The purpose of this Solicitation is to solicit proposals for multi-benefit ecosystem restoration and protection projects that are consistent with the purposes of Proposition 1 and contribute to the objectives of CWAP, the State Wildlife Action Plan, WCB's Strategic Plan, and other State or federal plans.

1.1 Grant Program Requirements

Proposition 1 includes a number of provisions that govern how WCB may allocate funds authorized by CWC Section 79733, including those identified below.

It is the intent of WCB that these funds will be invested in projects that contribute to or accomplish the following:

- Provide public benefits, addressing critical statewide needs and priorities (CWC §79707(a));
- Advance the purposes articulated in CWC section 79732;
- Leverage private, federal, or local funding or produce the greatest public benefit (CWC §79707(b));
- Use best available science to inform decisions regarding water resources (CWC §79707(d));

8/3/16

- Employ new or innovative technology or practices including decision support tools that support integrated resource management (CWC §79707(e));
- Promote State planning priorities consistent with section 65041.1 of the Government Code and sustainable communities strategies consistent with the provisions of Government Code section 65080(b)(2)(B), to the extent feasible (CWC §79707(i)); and
- Achieve working agricultural and forested landscape preservation wherever possible through voluntary landowner participation (CWC §79707(j)).

Ultimately, proposals must lead to, or result in, actions that enhance flow. Enhanced stream flow is defined as a change in the amount, timing and/or quality of the water flowing down a stream, or a portion of a stream, to benefit fish and wildlife.

1.2 Solicitation Schedule

Table 1 identifies the anticipated program timeline from release of the Solicitation through execution of grant agreements. The events listed in this schedule may be subject to change. Updates may be advertised through e-mail announcements, postings on the [program website](#), and news releases. For parties that are not already on WCB's contact list and wish to receive updates on the program, please visit the website listed in the Foreword to sign up.

Table 1: Proposal Solicitation Process and Anticipated Schedule

Milestone or Activity	Schedule
Public Workshop to solicit input on FY16/17 Proposal Solicitation Notice	May 13, 2016
Public Board Meeting to approve Proposal Solicitation Notice	June 2, 2016
Proposal Consultation by appointment Wildlife Conservation Board 1700 9th Street Sacramento, California 95811	June 3-30, 2016
Release 2016 Proposal Solicitation Notice & Application	July 1, 2016
Proposals must be submitted and received by 4:00 p.m., Pacific Daylight Time (PDT).	August 31, 2016
Proposal Evaluation Process	September-November

The Executive Director of WCB will recommend projects to fund to the voting members of the Wildlife Conservation Board. The Board will make the final funding decisions.	December 2016
WCB staff will work with successful applicants to develop and execute grant agreements. Grant execution is anticipated to occur approximately six months from award.	January 2017-July 2017

2 FOCUS

Under this Solicitation, up to \$56,643,722 million (contingent upon the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget Act appropriation) is anticipated to be available for award through the Proposition 1 CSFEP.

Section 2 of the [WCB Guidelines](#) provides information regarding eligible project types as established through Proposition 1. All Proposition 1 grants funded by WCB under this Solicitation must fall within the list of priorities described below. An applicant must demonstrate that the proposed project is consistent with the eligibility requirements, priorities, project categories, [Guidelines](#), and Proposition 1. WCB is seeking a diversity of projects that encompass the priorities for this Solicitation.

2.1 Funding Priorities

Funds granted by WCB under the Program will be focused on enhancing stream flow in streams that provide one or more of the following:

- support anadromous fish;
- support special status, threatened, endangered or at risk species;
- provide resilience to climate change;

Proposals must demonstrate how flow will be enhanced. For planning and scientific study projects applicants must illustrate how data derived will tie into future implementation projects that enhance flow.

In addition, co-benefits of such actions may contribute toward attaining other CWAP objectives.

The goals of the program are threefold:

- Support projects that lead to meaningful increases in the availability and/or quality of water in streams, particularly by protecting and restoring functional ecological flows for streams identified as priority for fish and wildlife.
- Support those projects that work to remove key barriers to securing enhanced flows for nature (e.g., by making it easier to change the timing of flows as needed, crafting long-term programs that allow for short-term leases/transfers for nature, or streamlining processes for long-term transfers of water for stream flow).
- Support projects that allocate resources for infrastructure (e.g., gauges) for evaluating streamflow conditions and stream responses to enhancement efforts.

WCB will allocate Program funds to projects that enhance stream flows and are consistent with the objectives and actions outlined in the CWAP, with the primary focus of enhancing flow in streams that support anadromous fish, special status, threatened, endangered or at risk species; or provide resilience to climate change. Proposed projects must measurably enhance stream flows at a time and location necessary to provide fisheries or ecosystem benefits and that **improve upon existing flow conditions, are measurable, are significant** (i.e. help alleviate a limiting factor), and are greater than required by applicable environmental mitigation measures or compliance obligations. Proposals must identify the stream(s), reaches of those stream(s), and watershed(s) in which they are found.

Examples of project types that may be eligible in this solicitation are identified below. These examples should not be viewed as exhaustive lists of eligible project types.

- Water Transactions (e.g., changes to a stream's hydrograph through long-term (\geq 20 years) lease, transfer, or seasonal exchange of water)
 - Change of use petitions to benefit fish and wildlife
 - Surface storage to be used to enhance stream flow
 - Forbearance of water right
 - Changes in water management
 - Groundwater storage and conjunctive use
- Acquisition of water from willing sellers – permanent and long-term (not less than 20 years) dedications for the purpose of instream flow
- Acquisition of land or interests in land that provide direct and measurable enhancement to stream flow, that improve upon existing flow conditions

- Habitat restoration projects (e.g., weed eradication, wet meadow restoration, restoration of entrenched streams, upper watershed restoration or forest thinning) that measurably reshape stream hydrograph
- Fans for frost protection that, through forbearance or other agreements, result in a measurable and significant change in a stream's hydrograph
- Studies to evaluate instream flow needs, identify priority streams and watersheds, or evaluate habitat suitability and temperature needs
- Streamflow gauging
- Water efficiency generally – Irrigation efficiency and water infrastructure improvements (e.g., diversion, conveyance, and on-farm projects) that save water and enable a measurable and significant change to a stream's hydrograph
- Reconnecting flood flows with restored flood plains
- Reservoir operations both at existing and new storage sites that result in a measurable and significant change to a stream's hydrograph

Projects that will result in a change in a stream's hydrograph must provide baseline reference data and demonstrate how the changes will be protected for the entire reach of stream within the project limits. The three legal mechanisms by which a landowner can protect instream flow are: Water Code section 1707 dedications, forbearance agreements, and conservation easements. See [A Practitioner's Guide to Instream Flow Transactions in California \(SWIFT\)](#) for guidance specific to helping water right holders understand their options for keeping water instream in California.

2.2 Project Categories

Eligible project categories for this Solicitation are Implementation, Acquisition, and Planning and Scientific Studies. Projects cannot overlap into two categories. Each of these project categories is described below.

Implementation

Implementation grants shall fund final design and construction of restoration and enhancement projects and new or enhanced facilities that will provide a direct and measurable enhancement to stream flow. They are intended to support high priority "shovel ready" projects that have advanced to the stage where planning, land tenure, and engineering design plans have been completed. CEQA/NEPA compliance must be completed by the time of grant execution (anticipated to occur in June 2017). Proposals must, at a minimum, include completed intermediate plans (e.g., design plans at ~65% level of development). Implementation projects may include final engineering design