



Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project

WORK PLAN UPDATE

2012 REQUEST FOR PRE-PROPOSALS

INTRODUCTION

The Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project is requesting pre-proposals for acquisition, restoration/enhancement, and planning projects for wetlands in the coastal watersheds of Southern California. Project pre-proposals must be submitted via email by November 30, 2012 (see Attachment 3 for pre-proposal template).

Projects invited to submit full proposals based on pre-proposal submissions and ultimately selected for the WRP Work Plan become eligible for technical assistance from WRP Staff and for funding by WRP partner agencies. Inclusion on the WRP Work Plan **does not** mean the project has been awarded a grant or is guaranteed funding.

The Wetlands Recovery Project (WRP) is a partnership of 18 state and federal agencies working in concert with local government, businesses, and the environmental community to implement a regional wetlands recovery strategy for coastal Southern California stretching from Point Conception to the border with Mexico. The long-term vision of the WRP is to reestablish a mosaic of functioning wetland and riparian systems that supports a diversity of fish and wildlife species. The *WRP Regional Strategy* defines six overarching goals to guide the efforts of the Wetlands Recovery Project towards achieving this vision. The regional goals provide a framework for setting policies and priorities for planning, acquisition and restoration projects. For more information on the WRP including a list of partner agencies, the Regional Strategy and the current Work Plan, see the web site at: www.scwrp.org.

WRP WORK PLAN

The WRP updates its Work Plan in a formal process which identifies regional priorities for acquisition, planning, restoration and enhancement of wetlands in the coastal watersheds of Southern California. In response to a request for pre-proposals, project proponents submit pre-proposals according to guidelines provided. Qualifying pre-proposal project proponents that meet project evaluation criteria are invited to submit a full project proposal following review at one of three regional pre-proposal review meetings and review by WRP staff.

The WRP Wetlands Managers Group (WMG), comprised of senior staff from the 18 member agencies, reviews and ranks the full project proposals based on adopted Project Evaluation Criteria (Attachment 1), best professional judgment, and Guidelines for Project Prioritization (Attachment 2). The WMG takes input from WRP staff and the County Task Forces. The updated Work Plan, which includes updated descriptions of existing Work Plan projects as well

as the newly selected projects, will be presented to the Board of Governors for approval in September 2013.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Projects: Minimum project requirements for consideration to be on the WRP Work Plan are as follows:

- Consistent with the WRP Regional Strategy.
- Acquisition, restoration, or enhancement project (including planning) for a coastal wetland or coastal stream corridor.
- Located in coastal watersheds of the WRP region from Point Conception in Santa Barbara County south to the U.S./Mexico border.
- Acquisition projects must have a verified willing seller.

Eligible Applicants: Entities that may submit proposals are as follows:

- Government agencies (federal, state, local, and special districts)
- Nonprofit organizations qualified under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code

PROJECT SELECTION

Project proposals submitted to the WRP will be reviewed by the WRP Staff of the Coastal Conservancy, the WRP Wetland Managers Group (comprised of senior staff from the member agencies), and the appropriate WRP County Task Force. Projects will be reviewed on the basis of ecological, feasibility, and policy considerations (Attachment 1 - Project Evaluation Criteria). Following submission of the proposals, Coastal Conservancy WRP staff and the County Task Forces may follow up with project proponents to get additional information and clarification about proposed projects.

The WMG selects proposals based on the adopted Project Evaluation Criteria, best professional judgment, and input from WRP staff and the County Task Forces. Projects selected for the WRP Work Plan are divided into three categories, described below.

- *Tier 1 -- high priority projects:* These are projects that protect or restore functioning habitat. They may involve larger acreage or resources at risk of destruction.
- *Tier 2 -- medium priority projects:* These are projects that either involve smaller areas or more general landscape level planning as opposed to project implementation.
- *Project Incubator:* These are projects that require a significant amount of further development before they will be ready to be implemented. This list includes projects meeting criteria for both Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects. Projects in the Project Incubator will be re-evaluated every year and may be removed from the Work Plan based on new developments or lack of progress.

The Tier 1 and Tier 2 categories reflect relative ecological priority of a project. The Guidelines for WRP Work Plan Project Prioritization (Attachment 2) provides more detailed descriptions of the project categories and an overview of the types of priority projects that the WRP is interested in pursuing.

Following the WMG review and selection of recommended project additions to the WRP Work Plan, the WMG will present the recommended Work Plan for approval by the Board of Governors at its meeting in September 2013.

FUNDING REQUESTS

There are no established minimum or maximum amounts for funding requests or matching requirements for WRP Work Plan projects. Significant matching funds or services will improve a project's likelihood of receiving funding. For projects requesting \$30,000 or less, please refer to the WRP Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program (www.scwrp.org).

AVAILABLE RESOURCES: FUNDING and TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Inclusion on the Work Plan **does NOT** mean a project has been awarded a grant or guaranteed funding. The number of projects on the Work Plan exceeds the available funding.

Projects selected for the WRP Work Plan become eligible for funding by WRP partner agencies and for technical assistance from WRP Staff. For example, both the State Coastal Conservancy and the Wildlife Conservation Board will use the WRP Work Plan on an ongoing basis to identify potential projects for their available grant funds. These two agencies will consider a combination of a project's priority (Tier 1 or 2), readiness, and consistency with the agency's enabling legislation and funding programs when selecting projects from the Work Plan for available funds. In addition, WRP Staff will provide technical assistance to proponents of projects on the Work Plan, including help identifying funding from partner agencies and other sources.

PRE-PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

The Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project (WRP) is requesting pre-proposals for acquisition, restoration/enhancement, and planning projects for wetlands in the coastal watersheds of Southern California from Point Conception to the U.S.-Mexico Border. The WRP encourages partners working on wetlands to propose suitable projects for the Work Plan. The pre-proposal and full proposal schedule and process will proceed as follows:

Schedule:

Release Request for Pre-Proposals	October 1, 2012
Pre-proposals due	November 30, 2012
Pre-proposal Review Meetings	January/February 2013
Invitations to submit full proposals	March 4, 2013
Full Proposals due	May 3, 2013
WRP Staff review	May/June 2013
WMG review and selection	July 10, 2013
WRP Board of Governors adoption	September 2013

Pre-proposal Information Meetings (Optional): During January and February 2013, after review of submitted pre-proposals, the Wetlands Managers Group will hold three regional meetings in cooperation with the WRP County Task Forces to hear brief presentations on project proposals and offer suggestions for making proposals stronger. The length of presentation time will depend upon the number of presenters at the meeting. The amount of time available for feedback to each presenter will depend upon the succinctness of their presentation. Applicants are encouraged to present their projects at one of these meetings.

Meeting dates and locations are as follows:

January 17, 2013 1:00pm-4:00pm, Ventura County (location TBD)

January 24, 2013 Los Angeles County (location TBD)

February 6, 2013 Orange & San Diego County (location TBD)

In order to make a presentation you must submit a pre-proposal summary of your project (Attachment 3) by email to ggauthier@scc.ca.gov and skelly@scwrp.org by November 30, 2012.

INQUIRIES

All inquiries should be directed to:

Greg Gauthier
Coastal Conservancy
(760) 832-7365
ggauthier@scc.ca.gov

or

Shawn Kelly
Wetlands Recovery Project
805-984-9531
skelly@scwrp.org

ATTACHMENT 1

Project Evaluation Criteria

Ecological Criteria

Regional Goal 1. Preserve and restore coastal wetland ecosystems

Regional Goal 2. Preserve and restore stream corridors and wetland ecosystems in coastal watersheds.

- Restoration potential/ functional gain – How much potential is there to increase the ecological function and/or value of a site, including the amount and quality of habitat or potential habitat for sensitive and important wetland-dependent species? To what extent will the project restore functioning of natural processes (e.g., hydrology, sediment transport)? Will the project result in an increase in wetland acreage?
- Connection to transitional/upland areas – To what extent is the wetland site physically and ecologically connected to transitional/upland areas?
- Connection to coastal resources – To what extent is the site ecologically or hydrologically connected to coastal resources, including coastal wetlands and near shore waters? To what extent will the project benefit marine and intertidal resources?
- Self-sustainability – Will potential restoration improvements be sustainable through natural wetland functioning? What is the likelihood of future degradation after restoration has occurred? What level of ongoing site management and/or maintenance will be required?

Regional Goal 3. Recover native habitat and species diversity.

- Habitat Diversity – Will the project preserve or restore a diversity of a habitat types on site? Will the project contribute significantly to regional diversity? What species of concern are known to use the site, or would potentially use the site if restored? Will the project remove exotic species and re-establish native species?
- Regional linkage – What is the site's function and value from a regional perspective, including sensitive species habitat, use by migratory birds, fisheries support, and biodiversity? Will the project restore habitat linkages and wildlife corridors?

Project Evaluation Criteria, continued

Policy Criteria

Regional Goals 1-3.

- Threat of future degradation/loss – Could future loss or degradation of the wetland or stream corridor be prevented through Wetlands Recovery Project involvement? How imminent is the threat?

Regional Goal 4. Integrate wetlands recovery with other public objectives.

- Multiple objectives – What additional public objectives will the project achieve? Is wetlands recovery the primary objective of the project or a secondary objective?

Regional Goal 5. Promote education and compatible access related to coastal wetlands and watersheds.

- Education/access value – Does the project include an education/interpretive element? Will the project provide public access that is compatible with the habitat and functional objectives? Are there education or interpretive programs onsite or nearby that will complement the project?

Regional Goal 6. Advance the science of wetlands restoration and management in Southern California.

- Research value – Is wetlands research incorporated into the project? What research questions will the project address?

Feasibility Criteria

- Site availability – Is the owner willing to sell the land or participate in a restoration project?
- Cost/cost effectiveness – What is the total cost and relative cost effectiveness?
- Funding – What funding is available for the project?
- Restoration/enhancement plan – Is there an existing restoration/enhancement plan that is consistent with the Wetlands Project's objectives and science-based criteria? Does it include a monitoring plan? Has the plan undergone environmental review?
- Technical practicability – Are the planned restoration activities technically and biologically feasible and practicable?
- Future management – Is an appropriate future owner and/or manager available for the site? Are sufficient funds available for long-term site management?
- Does the project account for anticipated climate change and sea level rise impacts to the project site?

ATTACHMENT 2

Guidelines for WRP Work Plan Project Prioritization

The following tables provide guidance on the types of projects that are likely to be approved for addition to the WRP Work Plan. However, this is not an exhaustive list of eligible projects. Projects that do not fit within the descriptions below, but that would further goals identified in the WRP's Regional Strategy, will still be considered.

Tidal Wetland Ecosystems (TWE) -- Tidal wetlands, plus the immediately adjacent marine and upland/transitional systems.

High Priority	Medium Priority
Acquisition of TWEs that are primarily in private ownership.	Acquisition of private parcels in TWEs that are primarily publicly owned.
Comprehensive restoration plans.	Restoration plans for a portion of a TWE.
Plan and implement restoration (restoring a system to functioning habitat)	Plan and implement enhancement (increasing the quality of a functioning system)

Stream Corridors/Riparian Areas

High Priority	Medium Priority
Acquisition of large areas of wetland or riparian habitat or floodplain (for example, areas that are greater than 50 acres or longer than 2 miles of stream corridor) or areas which add to an existing preserve of contiguous wetland habitat or stream corridor.	Acquisition of smaller areas of wetland or riparian habitat or floodplain that are not contiguous with an existing preserve.
Focused assessment of watershed functioning, stressors, priorities, and identification of specific projects.	Comprehensive watershed management plans.
Planning and implementation of priority projects to preserve or restore ecological functioning of stream corridors as identified in watershed assessment or planning document. This can include urban stream restoration projects that are a priority in the watershed.	Planning and implementation of restoration projects to restore ecological functioning of stream corridors that are not part of a broader watershed planning/management effort.
Restoration planning and implementation to address watershed impacts on TWEs and coastal resources.	

Proposed project areas will also be evaluated for the following factors:

- Contributes significantly to watershed functioning
- Provides habitat for Threatened and Endangered species
- Is not unduly threatened by upstream impacts
- Faces imminent threat of development

ATTACHMENT 3

PRE-PROPOSAL PROJECT SUMMARY

Due November 30, 2012

email to: ggauthier@scc.ca.gov and skelly@scwrp.org

Project Name:

Type of Project: Acquisition Planning Restoration/Enhancement

Project summary (3-4 sentences -- specify key action(s) to be undertaken):

Location: County:
 Watershed:
 State Senate District (#):
 State Assembly District (#):
 Latitude:
 Longitude:

Acreage: Total acreage of project area: _____ .
 Acres of existing (pre-project) wetland habitat: _____ .
 Acres of post-project wetland habitat: _____ .
 Feet of stream corridor (if applicable): _____ .

Budget Summary: Total project cost: \$
 Funding secured to date: \$
 Funding requests under review: \$
 Funding gap / Work Plan request: \$

Contact Information:
Name:
Organization:
Address:

Telephone:
Email:
Website (if available):

Pre-proposal Meeting You Will Attend (January/February 2013):

_____ January 17, Ventura _____ January 24, Long Beach _____ February 6, San Diego

Site Description (1 paragraph)

Project Description (2 to 3 paragraphs)

- Describe the need for the project.
- Summarize the specific action(s) to be undertaken (e.g., remove exotic species from 1 mile of stream corridor, restore 20 acres of salt marsh)
- Describe the major project elements or tasks to be completed.

Project Outcomes/Benefit to Wetlands (1 paragraph)

Project Partners (1 -2 lines)

Project Funders (1-2 lines)

Project Characterization

Check all that apply, provide a brief description (1-2 sentences) of how the project meets the criteria in the space below.

Ecological Goals

- Preserve and restore coastal wetland ecosystems
- Preserve and restore stream corridors and wetland ecosystems in coastal watersheds.
- Recover native habitat and species diversity.

Comments:

Policy Goals

- Prevent future degradation/loss of wetland resources
- Integrate wetlands recovery with other public objectives.
- Promote education and compatible access related to coastal wetlands and watersheds.
- Advance the science of wetlands restoration and management in Southern California.

Comments:

Feasibility Criteria

- Site availability/willing seller.
- Cost/cost effectiveness.
- Funding available for the project.
- Advance the science of wetlands restoration and management in Southern California.
- Restoration/enhancement plan for project site.

- Technically practicable.
- Future management planned for and funded.
- Project accounts for climate change and sea level rise.

Comments: