

CALFED Agencies Seek New Grant Requests for Ecosystem Restoration

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**Contact: Jim Nickles
(916) 798-9853**

State and federal agencies may have some money for you.

Agencies carrying out the nation's largest-ever ecosystem restoration invite scientists, conservation groups, water districts and other organizations to apply for funds for projects that improve San Francisco Bay, the Delta, and the Sacramento and San Joaquin river watersheds.

Since 1996, agencies that are part of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program have awarded more than \$335 million in grants for some 323 projects that help achieve ecosystem-restoration goals. The projects have ranged from fish ladders that help salmon bypass dams to habitat and water-quality improvements.

CALFED officials have just released a draft Stage 1 Implementation Plan to guide the first phase of the Ecosystem Restoration Program. Priorities for 2002 include rebuilding populations of salmon and other imperiled wildlife; restoring salt marshes, riverside woodlands, and other habitats, and improving environmental water quality. The full plan is posted on the CALFED Web site, <http://calfed.ca.gov>. Also posted is the 2002 Proposal Solicitation Package, which outlines how to apply for funds.

The objective of the grant program is to solicit and fund projects that carry out the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program and the CALFED Science Program. Some projects may also be funded through the Central Valley Project Improvement Act.

Officials of several state and federal agencies and independent scientists will review and evaluate each grant proposal. This cooperative effort will strengthen the ability of CALFED agencies to carry out an integrated restoration program that is effective and scientifically valid.

New for the 2002 application process is an online system for submitting and reviewing documents. Officials are asking applicants to submit their requests electronically by **3 p.m. PST on Sept. 21. Hard copies of proposals will not be accepted.**

Pre-submittal workshops are scheduled this month in Sacramento, Merced, Fairfield and Chico for potential applicants to ask questions about the implementation plan and learn about the new Web-based system.

The system should save money and time and streamline the review process, says Terry Mills, manager of the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program.

He encourages all potential applicants to attend at least one of the workshops.

"Those are very important," he says. "We really want a lot of people to attend these so people can learn how to submit their documents online."

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California

The Resources Agency
Department of Water Resources
Department of Fish and Game
The Reclamation Board
Delta Protection Commission
Department of Conservation
San Francisco Bay Conservation
and Development Commission

California Environmental Protection Agency
State Water Resources Control Board
Department of Health Services
Department of Food and Agriculture

Federal

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Fish and Wildlife Service
Geological Survey
Bureau of Land Management
Environmental Protection Agency
Army Corps of Engineers

Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Forest Service
Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service
Western Area Power Administration

The first pre-submittal workshop is scheduled for 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Aug. 21 in the Resources Auditorium, 1416 Ninth Street, Sacramento. After the workshop, CALFED staff will provide written responses to common questions and make those available via the Web and e-mail.

Recent habitat improvements throughout the Bay-Delta ecosystem are paying off, Mills says.

For instance, populations of both winter-run and spring-run salmon are on the rebound in the Central Valley after several years of decline. State-of-the-art fish screens, restored spawning gravels and improved water quality – all funded by CALFED agencies – have contributed to those growing salmon numbers, Mills says.

“The recovery trend is there,” he says. “Those projects are all contributing to the positive trend we are seeing with those species.”

For more information on the ecosystem grants, contact Dan Ray of the Ecosystem Restoration Program Grants Office, at (916) 653-0198.

Below is the schedule of other workshops:

- Merced: Monday, Aug. 27, 2001
6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
UC Cooperative Extension
2145 West Wardrobe Ave.
Merced, CA 95340
- Fairfield: Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2001
6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Fairfield Community Center
1000 Kentucky St.
Fairfield, CA 94533
- Chico: Thursday, Aug. 30, 2001
6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Chico Area Recreation and Park District
545 Vallombrosa Ave.
Chico, CA 95926

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is not a government agency. It is a cooperative effort of more than 20 state and federal agencies to improve the quality and reliability of California’s water supplies while restoring the San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary to ecological health. The CALFED Record of Decision, a 30-year strategic plan adopted in August 2000, outlines more than \$8 billion in expenditures in the first seven years for water-supply, water-quality, levee and environmental improvements. The document calls for making at least \$150 million available each year for ecosystem-restoration projects.

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