Science Evaluation

Bucket 2 – Council Selected Restoration Component

PROPOSAL TITLE

Adaptive Management and Technical Assistance in Support of Gulf Ecosystem and Economic Restoration

LOCATION

TX, LA, MS, AL, FL Defined Gulf Coast Region

SPONSOR(S)

Department of the Interior

TYPE OF FUNDING REQUESTED (Planning, Technical Assistance, Implementation)

Technical Assistance

REVIEWED BY:

DATE: 01/07/15

Best Available Science:

These 6 factors/elements help frame the reviewers answers to A, B and C found in next section:

1. Have the proposal objectives, including methods used, been justified using peer reviewed and/or publicly available information?

- ○ YES
- ○ NO
- ◉ NEED MORE INFORMATION

Comments

For example, develop standard operating procedure library. While that sounds fine, is it necessary and will it be an improvement on current practices? No literature is cited to support the assumption that it would.

2. If information supporting the proposal does not directly pertain to the Gulf Coast region, are applicant's methods reasonably supported and adaptable to that geographic area?

- (●) YES
- ( ) NO
- ( ) NEED MORE INFORMATION

Comments

3. Are the literature sources used to support the proposal accurately and completely cited?

- (●) YES
- ( ) NO
- ( ) NEED MORE INFORMATION

Comments

4. Are the literature sources represented in a fair and unbiased manner?

- ( ) YES
- ( ) NO
- (●) NEED MORE INFORMATION

Comments

Ecological models and adaptive management have many caveats not mentioned. The criticisms should at least be mentioned Assuming there are not high functioning ecological models of all systems in the study area, what is the chance that the necessary models will be generated?

5. Does the proposal evaluate uncertainties and risks in the scientific basis for the proposal, including any identified by the public and Council members?

- ( ) YES
- ( ) NO
- (●) NEED MORE INFORMATION

Comments

They do mention risks but the evaluation is limited. There is no quantification of the risk of project success.

6. Does the proposal evaluate uncertainties and risks in achieving its objectives over time? (e.g., is there an uncertainty or risk that in 5-10 years the project/program will be obsolete or not function as planned given projections of sea level rise?)

- ○ YES
- ○ NO
- ◉ NEED MORE INFORMATION

Comments

Based on the answers to the previous 6 questions, and giving deference to the sponsor to provide within reason the use of best available science the following three questions can be answered:

A. Has the applicant made a reasonable determination that the proposal is based on science that uses peer-reviewed and publicly available data?

- ○ YES
- ○ NO
- ◉ NEED MORE INFORMATION

Information Needed:

Caveats to modeling and adaptive management should be listed and addressed.

B. Has the applicant made a reasonable determination that the proposal is based on science that maximizes the quality, objectivity, and integrity of information (including, as applicable, statistical information)?

- ○ YES
- ○ NO
- ◉ NEED MORE INFORMATION

Information Needed:

The proposal makes sense but there may not be science maximizing the quality or objectivity of information.

C. Has the applicant made a reasonable determination that the proposal is based on science that clearly documents and communicates risks and uncertainties in the scientific basis for such projects?

- ○ YES
- ○ NO
- ◉ NEED MORE INFORMATION

Information Needed:

The risks and uncertainties in the scientific basis for the projects involved are barely mentioned, so have not been addressed.

Science Context Evaluation

A. Have other methods been discussed and reasons provided to why the method is being selected (e.g., scientifically sound; cost-effectiveness)?

No. For example, an alternative method is for the PI's to follow guidelines, use their own expertise and network of colleagues to accomplish similar goals.

B. Has your agency/vendor/project manager conducted a project/program like the one proposed?

No

C. Is there a risk mitigation plan in place for project objectives? (captures risk measures as defined under best available science by the Comprehensive Plan and Act)

No. The word mitigation is not used, but this may not apply and this proposal which is intended to reduce risks for other Council funded projects

D. Does the project/program consider consequences with implementation? (captures risk measures as defined under best available science by the Comprehensive Plan and Act)

No. While this question may not be applicable for this proposal, there are risks of components being unsuccessful and for the benefits to be not worth the costs.

E. Does the project/program have clearly defined goals?

Yes

F. Does the project/program have clearly defined objectives?

Yes

G. Does the project/program have measures of success? (captures statistical information requirement as defined by the Comprehensive Plan and Act)

It proposed making performance measures for other projects, but does not say it will provide measurements of this project's performance

H. Is a monitoring program in place to determine project goals, success and help adaptive management (if applicable)? (captures statistical information requirement as defined by the Comprehensive Plan and Act)

NA

I. Does the project/program consider recent and/or relevant information? (captures statistical information requirement as defined by the Comprehensive Plan and Act)

Yes, as applicable, statistical information may not be applicable

J. Has the project/program evaluated past successes and failures of similar efforts? (captures the communication of risks and uncertainties in the scientific basis for such projects as defined by the Comprehensive Plan and Act)

Only successes as far as I remember

Please summarize any additional information needed below:

Quantification of potential benefits of the planned activities such as the development of the standard operating procedure library. Has there been a similar project of this scale before? What are the contingencies for the possible inadequacies? For example, the criticisms should at least be mentioned Assuming there are not high functioning ecological models of all systems in the study area, what is the chance that the necessary models will be generated? What are the cost breakdowns for the analysis projects (for example $1.02 M for data collection and modeling)? What are the safeguards against influences of political appointees and public relations departments? If this project does not increase the size of government and create