



**Consideration of Amendment to Budget, Scope, and Term of Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Adaptation Grant Program Agreement for the Lower San Joaquin River Riparian Corridor Restoration Planning Project Staff Report**

<b>Grantee</b>	California Department of Water Resources
<b>Project ID</b>	P1-1808
<b>Award Year</b>	2021
<b>County</b>	San Joaquin
<b>Category</b>	Planning
<b>Original Award Amount</b>	\$522,027
<b>Request</b>	Scope, Term, Budget

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the Board approve a change to scope of work to modify the method of estimating the Project’s salmonid benefits and to increase regulatory flexibility by allowing the Grantee to use Cutting the Green Tape (CTGT) tools in lieu of lengthy permitting processes. Staff also recommends the Board approve a term extension of one year and a budget modification to move funds from subcontractor line items to personnel and indirect costs.

**DESCRIPTION**

The Grantee requests to replace the current method of salmonid benefit quantification due to the current tool’s limited ability to detect changes in habitat at the site. The updated tool will more appropriately estimate the Project’s benefits to salmonids by using juvenile habitat suitability criteria and estimated riparian tree cover to determine the amount of habitat created by the Project.

The Grantee is also requesting to increase permitting and environmental compliance flexibility by removing specific permit application requirements and exploring CTGT opportunities. The State’s CTGT initiatives have streamlined environmental compliance and permitting processes to expedite habitat restoration activities that benefit fish and wildlife. The Grantee proposes to leverage the CTGT initiatives by conducting outreach with regulatory agencies to determine the appropriate pathway to permitting and CEQA.

To accommodate design delays and complete the above tasks, the Grantee is requesting a one-year term extension of the grant’s funding end date from November 30, 2024 to November 30, 2025. The extension will allow additional time for permitting, environmental compliance, design, and public engagement and outreach. These tasks were delayed due to new levee planning guidance developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and lengthy negotiations to incorporate the new guidance.

The Grantee also requests to move funding from subcontractors to personnel and indirect costs. This request does not modify the total amount awarded. Coordination with USACE on project design expended more personnel funding than originally anticipated. One subcontractor has completed their tasks, and another subcontractor has partially completed their tasks, so funding for those subcontractors is no longer required. This budget modification would fund the additional costs of grant management for the term extension (if approved) and fund the Grantee's engagement with regulatory agencies and preparation of permitting and environmental compliance documentation.

**BACKGROUND**

Lower San Joaquin Riparian Corridor (Project ID P1-1808) is a planning project designed to restore approximately 2.5 miles along and within the San Joaquin River to provide habitat for native fish and wildlife. This project was awarded \$522,027 of Proposition 1 funds in 2019. This is the Grantee's second amendment request. In October 2023, the Grantee requested a funding term extension to accommodate delays in the Project. This request will have no impact on the availability of current funds as they are not set to expire until June 30, 2027.

**CONTACT**

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