Science Evaluation

Bucket 2 – Council Selected Restoration Component

PROPOSAL TITLE

Strategic Land Protection, Conservation, and Enhancement of Priority Gulf Coast Landscapes

LOCATION

Gulf Coast Region

SPONSOR(S)

Mississippi

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

Planning, Implementation

REVIEWED BY:

DATE:

Jan 5, 2015

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

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

It does directly pertain to the Gulf Coast Region

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

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

Objective 4 describes a monitoring plan developed to understand effects of conservation plans once implemented, which includes an adaptive management component that allows for change. This approach acknowledges there are uncertainties, and allows for detection of unexpected outcomes, and change in management when needed.

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

As part of objective 3, assessing future land acquisition prioritization, climate change models are included in the process of identifying and prioritizing conservation lands. Further input will be solicited from research institutions and (other) stakeholders during the prioritization process as part of the program.

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:

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:

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:

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)?

Other methods have not been discussed, but reasons have been provided why the method is being selected, supported with references, economic evaluation of benefits, and mention of similar method used in a comparative case.

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)

Not explicitly, although the objective that proposes monitoring and adaptive management could be seen as a risk mitigation plan. Economically, risk of increased property values and interest is mitigated by adhering to the priority criteria for acquisition as well as only being able to pay fair market value.

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

Not explicitly, however, the monitoring program and adaptive management would be used as a measure to consider consequences with implementation.

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)

These are not clearly stated in the proposal.

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)

Yes.

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

Yes.

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)

While the use of similar efforts has been discussed (e.g. the Exxon Valdez oil spill Trustee Council opted to allocate 55% of their available funds to habitat conservation), the past successes and failures of these approaches are not discussed in the proposal.

Please summarize any additional information needed below: