

NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD

This Funding Announcement is not a request for applications. This announcement is to provide public notice of Reclamation's intention to fund the following project activities without full and open competition.

ABSTRACT	
Funding Announcement	Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) Agreement 3FC810873 Notice of Intent to Award No. R10AS20032
Project Title	Factors Affecting The Abundance and Distribution of Largemouth Bass and Splittail In The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta
Recipient	University of California, Davis
Principle Investigator	Swee Teh
Total Anticipated Award Amount	\$529,691.00
Cost Share	None
New Award or Continuation?	New Award
Anticipated Length of Agreement	24 months
Anticipated Period of Performance	Date of execution through June 30, 2012
Award Instrument	Cooperative Agreement
Statutory Authority	Public Law 102-575, Central Valley Project Improvement Act, Section 3406 (b)(1)
CFDA Number	15.512
Single Source Justification Criteria Cited	(2) Continuation and (4) Unique Qualifications
Reclamation Point of Contact	Mary Sims

OVERVIEW

Reclamation operates the Federal Central Valley Project (CVP) in coordination with the State Water Project (SWP), which is operated by the California Department of Water Resources. The diversion of water by the CVP and the SWP from their pumping facilities in the southern portion of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) has been implicated as one of the possible causes of a 'regime shift' in the Bay-Delta ecosystem. This shift in the basic structure and function of the ecosystem (from a system with highly variable salinity to one that is essentially fresh water year round) has contributed to an apparent step-decline in the indices of abundance of a number of native fish populations and the proliferation of non-native predator fish, particularly the large mouth bass. It has been hypothesized that one tool for improving habitat conditions for native fish species would be to restore a more variable salinity regime in the Delta. Moreover, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Operation, Criteria and Plan Biological Opinion prescribes salinity variation as one means of restoring more suitable habitat conditions for delta smelt (*Hypomesus transpacificus*), an endemic species listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA).

This project is directed at testing the hypothesis that salinity variation can be a tool to manage fish populations in the Delta. This objective will be accomplished by studying mechanisms underlying fish recruitment across the existing salinity gradient in the Delta. The work will be conducted under the auspices of the Interagency Ecological Program (IEP), a consortium of nine Federal and three State agencies responsible for monitoring and special studies in the San Francisco Bay-Delta estuary.

RECIPIENT INVOLVEMENT

Department of the Interior (DOI) and the University of California-Davis (UCD) shall:

- (i) continue collection of field data to improve understanding of the effect of flow variability, turbidity, temperature, salinity and submerged aquatic vegetation on age-0 largemouth bass distribution and abundance;
- (ii) determine the growth rate, diet and lipid accumulation of age-0 largemouth bass;
- (iii) conduct laboratory experiments to determine the individual and interactive effects of salinity and food abundance on the growth rate of age-0 largemouth bass;
- (iv) complete the collection of field data to determine splittail abundance and associated habitat characteristics in the lower estuary;
- (v) conduct otolith and stable isotope measurements to determine the growth rate and diet of splittail; and
- (vi) use otolith microchemistry techniques to determine the natal streams and salinity regimes experienced by individual splittail over its lifetime.

The results of this research will be presented in oral presentations at IEP workshops or other forums and in peer reviewed journal articles.

RECLAMATION INVOLVEMENT

Reclamation will ensure that the study design, sampling methods, statistical analyses, and other technical elements of the project are fully implemented.

SINGLE-SOURCE JUSTIFICATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR SINGLE SOURCE POLICY REQUIREMENTS
<p>Department of the Interior Policy (505 DM 2) requires a written justification which explains why competition is not practicable for each single-source award. The justification must address one or more of the following criteria as well as discussion of the program legislative history, unique capabilities of the proposed recipient, and cost-sharing contribution offered by the proposed recipient, as applicable.</p>
<p>In order for an assistance award to be made without competition, the award must satisfy one or more of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) Unsolicited Proposal – The proposed award is the result of an unsolicited assistance application which represents a unique or innovative idea, method, or approach which is not the subject of a current or planned contract or assistance award, but which is deemed advantageous to the program objectives;(2) Continuation – The activity to be funded is necessary to the satisfactory completion of, or is a continuation of an activity presently being funded, and for which competition would have a significant adverse effect on the continuity or completion of the activity;(3) Legislative intent – The language in the applicable authorizing legislation or legislative history

clearly indicates Congress' intent to restrict the award to a particular recipient of purpose;

- (4) Unique Qualifications – The applicant is uniquely qualified to perform the activity based upon a variety of demonstrable factors such as location, property ownership, voluntary support capacity, cost-sharing ability if applicable, technical expertise, or other such unique qualifications;
- (5) Emergencies – Program/award where there is insufficient time available (due to a compelling and unusual urgency, or substantial danger to health or safety) for adequate competitive procedures to be followed.

Reclamation did not solicit full and open competition for this award based on the following criteria:

CONTINUATION/UNIQUE QUALIFICATIONS

UCD will continue participation in studies of largemouth bass and splittail initiated under a competitive grant awarded under the IEP Proposal Solicitation Process. UCD and DOI have assembled a team that is uniquely qualified to continue this research. The leaders of the team have pioneered both the field and laboratory elements of this study and published extensively on this subject in peer reviewed scientific journals. It would not be cost effective to work with another university cooperator on these particular aspects of the program because it would require that most of the work conducted during previous phases of this effort be repeated.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

Central Valley Project Improvement Act, Public Law 102-575, Section 3406 (b)(1):

(b) FISH AND WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACTIVITIES- The Secretary, immediately upon the enactment of this title, shall operate the Central Valley Project to meet all obligations under State and Federal law, including but not limited to the Federal Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1531, et seq., and all decisions of the California State Water Resources Control Board establishing conditions on applicable licenses and permits for the project. The Secretary, in consultation with other State and Federal agencies, Indian tribes, and affected interests, is further authorized and directed to:

(1) develop within three years of enactment and implement a program which makes all reasonable efforts to ensure that, by the year 2002, natural production of anadromous fish in Central Valley rivers and streams will be sustainable, on a long-term basis, at levels not less than twice the average levels attained during the period of 1967-1991; Provided, That this goal shall not apply to the San Joaquin River between Friant Dam and the Mendota Pool, for which a separate program is authorized under subsection 3406(c) of this title; Provided further, That the programs and activities authorized by this section shall, when fully implemented, be deemed to meet the mitigation, protection, restoration, and enhancement purposes established by subsection 3406(a) of this title; And provided further, That in the course of developing and implementing this program the Secretary shall make all reasonable efforts consistent with the requirements of this section to address other identified adverse environmental impacts of the Central Valley Project not specifically enumerated in this section.