



**California LCC 2015 Ecosystem Processes Projects
Guidelines for Proposal Submissions**
March 2015

A. Background

The California Landscape Conservation Cooperative (CA LCC) has approximately \$300,000 - \$400,000 in FY 2015 (subject to availability of appropriations) to support collaborative ecosystem processes projects that meet the goals and objectives of our 5 year [Strategic Plan](#) and [Science-Management Framework](#) (Framework). The purpose of the Framework is to provide scientific support for natural resource managers to incorporate [Climate-Smart Conservation](#) strategies into their management decisions. Other ongoing work by the CA LCC in FY15 that supports the Framework includes place-based projects, a Central Valley Landscape Conservation Project, science-management workshops, and training courses.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to **fund one or more ecosystem processes projects that increase understanding of the impacts of changing hydrologic regimes and processes** on species, habitats and ecosystems and ultimately lead to place-based projects and development of climate-smart conservation actions by natural resource managers.

Definitions:

"Ecosystem processes projects" increase understanding of a changing process and the impacts to ecosystems and/or biological communities as it relates to a specific management question.

"Place-based" projects demonstrate or advance climate-smart conservation in a specific geographic location such as an [Ecoregion](#) or a landscape within an Ecoregion.

["Climate-Smart Conservation"](#) is defined as the intentional and deliberate consideration of climate change in natural resource management realized through forward-looking goals and linking actions to key climate impacts and vulnerabilities.

"Hydrologic regime" is defined as changes in regimes, processes and water availability that includes but is not limited to freshwater availability, water timing, frequency or temperature, precipitation change, altered snowpack, temporal patterns in flow, drought, and tidal exchange.

B. Award Details

- Total proposal amounts between \$100,000- \$250,000 are suggested.
- Estimated number of awards is one to three proposals.
- Project duration may be one to three years, however, outcomes and products should be clearly identified for each year.
- Subsequent years' funding is subject to successful completion of annual deliverables.
- Any entity capable of entering into an agreement with the Federal government is eligible to apply including, but not limited to, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, tribes, and local, state or federal agencies.
- Previously funded CA LCC projects are eligible for continued funding if they are up to date on their commitments for all deliverables and they can demonstrate that additional funding is necessary to meet the priority of this RFP.

C. RFP 2015 Focus on Ecosystem Processes Projects

The CA LCC is seeking projects that meet Objective 2 of the [Framework](#) that states: *"Implement at least two interdisciplinary projects to assess and address climate change impacts to priority ecosystem processes at a landscape scale."*

The CA LCC Steering Committee has directed the CA LCC to conduct a focused FY15 RFP to fund projects within the CA LCC geographic region (Figure 1) that have a focus on the effects of altered hydrologic regimes on ecological processes, ecosystem function, and/or biological communities. This includes changes in hydrologic processes and water availability such as freshwater availability, water timing, frequency or temperature, precipitation change, altered snowpack, temporal patterns in flow, drought, and tidal exchange.

The [3rd Assessment from the California Climate Change Center](#) notes that as temperatures rise, there will be earlier snowmelt and runoff, affecting timing and amount of water supply and water availability for fish, wildlife and associated ecosystems. There will also be faster-than-historical sea-level rise threatening aging coastal water infrastructure and levees in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Climate change effects on water supplies and stream flows are expected to increase competition among urban and agricultural water users and environmental needs. Finally, increases in extreme precipitation likely due to warmer storms and more extreme "atmospheric rivers" — narrow bands over the Pacific Ocean that carry huge amounts of moisture into the state in

occasional series of winter storms and potential increased risk of flooding ([Our Changing Climate, 2012](#)).

Managers are already challenged by changes in hydrologic regimes and processes and future changes will exacerbate those challenges. We need to better understand how these changes affect the habitats and ecological communities they are managing. Improved understanding of these changes will help natural resource managers identify threats and opportunities posed by changing hydrologic regimes.

Ecosystem process projects should:

- Address the effects of altered hydrologic regimes on ecological processes, ecosystem function, and/or biological communities. Projects that evaluate interactions between changing hydrologic regimes and other ecosystem processes such as fire or sediment, are encouraged.
- Promote cross-sectoral understanding of altered hydrologic regimes to help inform Climate-Smart Conservation planning by resource managers.
- Compile and synthesize existing relevant science information, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and resource manager expertise to identify information gaps, identify priority issues, and understand the status of changing ecosystem processes.
- Inform management decisions. For example, projects should draw upon existing conservation planning documents and regionally identified priorities (e.g. Habitat Conservation Plans or state plans such as the California State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) that identify priority resources in each Ecoregion) and address management issues for priority resources that are affected by altered hydrologic regimes.
- Illustrate potential for high-impact and value-added by the CA LCC and use methodologies and practices that are transferable.

Projects should be clear on how they are addressing each of these components. Projects can include fresh, brackish, and salt water regimes, can be inland or coastal, and may fall within a single jurisdictional unit or extend across multiple jurisdictional boundaries. The CA LCC supports applied science to support management decisions and does not fund actual implementation of on-the-ground actions.

To be eligible for funding, projects must be submitted by co-leads that include at a minimum a scientist and a natural resource manager (defined as someone who is making decisions about conservation actions on the

ground). The intent is to ensure the project is directly linked to a priority management need and has direct manager involvement. One primary lead should be identified for purposes of developing a cooperative agreement. Each lead scientist and manager must identify his/her specific role(s) in the project.

Examples of ongoing ecosystem processes projects:

The CA LCC has funded work in the Central Valley to assess the impact to waterfowl from changing water levels and water availability in wetlands under different climate scenarios. The USGS is working directly with the Central Valley Joint Venture to help managers understand potential impacts to migratory birds within the Pacific Flyway. More information can be found on the [project page](#) at the California Climate Commons.

Another example is work funded by the US Forest Service to evaluate the hydrologic effects of meadow restoration and how restored meadows can contribute to improved water system operation as well as ecosystem functioning. This work directly informs management of meadows within national forests of the Sierra Nevada.

D. Evaluation Criteria

- 1. Relevance to Management** – Project is linked to specific priority management needs and generates climate-smart conservation strategies and actions that address critical stressors to priority resources. The project leads to actions that natural resource managers can feasibly implement on the ground.
- 2. Capacity** – The ability of the project team to accomplish the work including staff capabilities, appropriate experience and range of expertise. Methodology is clear, technically sound, and leads to achievable outcomes. Budget is reasonable, timeline is feasible.
- 3. Partnerships-** Project includes scientists, habitat managers, and/or policy makers from multiple organizations (e.g., conservation and other NGOs, local governments, and state and federal agencies). Project supports existing collaborations or builds new collaborations.
- 4. Leveraging-** Project has secured matching funds and/or in-kind support from multiple partners. **Matching support must relate to specific tasks within this project.**
- 5. Accessibility** –The target audience(s) is clearly identified and products are designed to be accessible and understood. Limitations, uncertainties, assumptions, and applicable scales are described.

6. **Transferable results** – Methods and/or products are applicable to other regions within the CA LCC or are transferable or exportable to other LCCs. Project approaches or outcomes can be replicated in other locations with refinements and/or adaptations as needed.
7. **Value-added by the LCC** – the LCC will greatly enhance existing efforts and/or fill a gap that would not otherwise get filled.

E. Project Selection Schedule

Proposals are due via email to Rebecca Fris at Rebecca_Fris@fws.gov no later than **5PM Pacific Standard Time April 15, 2015**. **Late proposals will not be accepted.**

A CA LCC Project Review Team will evaluate and score full proposals and present funding recommendations to the CA LCC Steering Committee in May or June 2015. Awards will be announced soon thereafter. Agreements for this funding will be finalized in July or August 2015.

An informational webinar will occur **Wednesday March 25th from 11AM to 12:00PM**. This is not mandatory. Call in number is 866-737-4154 Passcode: 287 267 0.

Webex access:

<https://mmancusa.webex.com/mmancusa/j.php?MTID=mb7c7e00bc35532b9f51702a73d84351a>

F. CA LCC PROPOSAL GUIDANCE

Format: The main text should be no longer than 8 pages long including figures and maps (not including the budget form, data form, citations and CVs) with a font size no smaller than 11point and margins of at least ¾ inch. Other than the budget form, data form, citations and CVs, no other attachments or appendices are allowed. Proposal text (including the budget form, data form, citations and CVs) should be submitted in PDF format and be no larger than 10MB.

Project Timeline: Projects may be one to three years in length. However, each year's funding will be evaluated for quarterly progress and annual deliverables using a federal Fiscal Year schedule (Oct-Sept). Project timeline must be included in the 8 page limit.

Project Accomplishments: Outcomes and products should be identified for each federal Fiscal Year (Oct 1-Sept 30). Any tools or products should be designed for public access, and be posted or cataloged on the Climate Commons. Funded projects must develop a data management plan as part of their agreement and must provide a one-page fact sheet annually describing the accomplishments of the project and its contribution to supporting Climate-Smart Conservation. Continuing CA LCC projects must provide a status report of the work funded previously.

Budgets: Budget details should be clearly identified by separate categories of measurable outcomes/products for each year of the project. Cost share should be clearly identified as monetary or in-kind for the duration of the project. A standard form is provided for applicants. LCC project awards may range from \$100,000 - \$250,000.

COVER PAGE:

Project Title:

Project Lead and Co-Lead Contact Information (specify manager):

Project Duration:

Total Requested Funding:

Partners: *Specify the partner and any other stakeholders working together and their respective roles in completing the project. Provide names and phone numbers for a key contact from each partner organization.*

Geographic Scope: *Select the Ecoregion from the list below and describe the specific geography or landscape that the project covers, including a map if possible. See Figure 1 for the CA LCC Ecoregion map.*

North Coast
Bay-Delta
Central Valley
Sierra Nevada
Central Coast
Marine
South Coast
Baja California

Partner Contributions/Leveraging: *Specify the total amount of funding committed by each partner for both direct contributions and in-kind services for the duration of this project and identify their relevance to the stated tasks. **Matching support must relate to specific tasks within this project.***

MAIN PROPOSAL

Project Summary/Management Relevance: *Briefly summarize the goals of the project, the specific management need being addressed by the work, and the ecological outcomes to be achieved. Identify how your work leads to increased understanding of ecosystem processes that supports the specific management needs identified.*

Capacity: *Briefly describe the ability of the project team to accomplish the work including staff capabilities, appropriate experience, and range of expertise to successfully complete the work. Attach **1 page** CVs for the project leaders. Be clear on the roles of the scientist and the manager that are submitting the project.*

Approach and Scope of Work: *Describe the approach you will undertake to meet your project's objectives. Describe how this work meets the Objective 2 of the [Science-Management Framework](#). Include specific information about how the work promotes cross-sectoral understanding of ecosystem processes and can ultimately support management decisions.*

Deliverables/Timeline/Accessibility: *Fill out Tab 2 of the Budget and Deliverable Form (this does not count in the 8 page limit) that identifies the expected outputs of your project. Identify deliverables (e.g. products and data) that will result from project activities, the timing for completion of each deliverable and how and with whom data and/or products of this project will be shared.*

*Note that all data developed with this funding will be delivered to the CA LCC with associated metadata, and will be placed in the public domain. End-products will be made easily accessible to targeted users and will be cataloged or housed on the Climate Commons. **A data management plan will be required of all successful applicants, no later than 3 months after funding has been awarded. Please see the [CA LCC's Policies for Data Management](#).***

Measuring Results: *Identify how the project's successes can be measured in a quantifiable, measurable way especially as it relates to*

meeting identified ecological outcomes. For example, what methodologies, data, or tools will be made available?, and/or who will use those methodologies, data, or tool(s) and for what purpose? (e.g., a web-based interface will be developed where resource managers can find methodologies that they can apply locally).

Value-added and Transferability: *Identify how the LCC will make a unique contribution to the project or greatly enhance existing efforts. How can approaches or outcomes be replicated in other locations with refinements and/or adaptations as needed?*

BUDGET

Budget: Fill out the “Budget” tab on the Budget and Deliverables form. This does not count as part of the 8 page limit. For each measurable outcome/product, budget categories should include: Salaries, Equipment, Supplies, Overhead, Matching funds (and/or in-kind services) from other funding sources. For matching funds, include: sources, amounts, and if already in-hand, awarded, or pending, and describe how those funds will be used.

Identify a budget and distinct outcomes or products for each year. For FY 2015 funding, distinct products should be identified for completion by September 30, 2016.

Be sure to allow funding and time for data management planning, metadata creation, and product delivery. For more information please refer to the [CA LCC Policies for Data Management](#).

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Citations
- 2) A one page resume or curriculum vitae (CV) should be provided for the project leader from each primary organization that will be conducting the work (i.e., scientist and manager).

Proposals are due via email to Rebecca Fris at Rebecca_Fris@fws.gov no later than **5PM Pacific Standard Time April 15, 2015**. Questions about the proposal process contact Rebecca Fris at Rebecca_Fris@fws.gov or 916-278-9415.

REFERENCE

Our Changing Climate 2012 Vulnerability & Adaptation to the Increasing Risks from Climate Change in California - Brochure. Publication # CEC-500-2012-007. Posted: July 31, 2012. (PDF file, 16 pages, 1.8 MB)

Figure 1. CA LCC Ecoregions

