

SAFE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM SCIENTIFIC STUDY PROPOSAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Proposal identification information and summary of the project goals.

Title: **North Santa Monica Bay Dry Weather Storm Drain Diversions**

Proposing Organization: **Undecided (m6 Consulting, LVMWD, and various cities are collaborators)**

Your summary of the Project Goals and Objectives:

All three reviewers agreed that the study aims to develop a dry-weather diversion program for the North Santa Monica Bay (NSMB) watershed. The study seeks to:

- **Quantify typical dry weather flows and pollutant concentrations at MS4 outfalls.**
- **Assess the feasibility of diverting flows to the Tapia Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) to improve water quality and provide an alternative water source.**
- **Conduct a stream gain/loss study to evaluate the impact of reduced flows in receiving waters.**
- **Develop an implementation program for MS4 agencies to facilitate diversion projects in compliance with MS4 permits.**

One reviewer emphasized the need for greater clarity on how program development will be structured, particularly regarding permitting and long-term feasibility.

2. Are the objectives clearly stated? What portion of the objectives need more clarification?

All reviewers found the objectives clearly stated but suggested clarifications in the following areas:

- **Stream Gain/Loss Study: Additional details on how this study will be conducted and its role in project implementation.**
- **Implementation Program: A clearer roadmap for program development, including agency coordination and permitting challenges.**
- **Sample Frequency and Data Collection: Specifics on the number of samples to be collected annually and how the data will be used to refine site selection.**

3. How do the project goals directly support a nexus to increasing stormwater or urban runoff capture and/or reducing stormwater or urban runoff pollution?

The reviewers agreed that the project supports stormwater management by:

- **Redirecting dry-weather runoff to Tapia WRF, reducing pollutant loads to receiving waters.**
- **Identifying diversion opportunities that improve compliance with water quality regulations.**
- **Providing data-driven decision-making tools to prioritize projects that maximize pollutant reduction and water reuse benefits.**

One reviewer noted that the study should also assess potential impacts of reduced stream flows on downstream ecosystems to mitigate unintended consequences.

4. What is (are) the overarching technical approach element(s) of the proposed project as you understand them (not necessarily the same as the elements described in the proposal)?

The reviewers identified the following technical approach elements:

1. **Sampling and Analysis: Measuring dry-weather flows and pollutant concentrations at MS4 outfalls.**
 2. **Feasibility Studies: Evaluating infrastructure requirements for storm drain-to-sewer diversions.**
 3. **Stream Gain/Loss Study: Assessing hydrologic impacts of reduced dry-weather flows.**
 4. **Program Development: Establishing permitting, funding mechanisms, and prioritization criteria for future diversion projects.**
5. Has the proposal provided sufficient information to describe the technical approach for each element? If not, what information is missing?

Two reviewers found the proposal sufficiently detailed, while one suggested additional information in the following areas:

- **Integration with MS4 Permit Requirements: Addressing potential compliance challenges for permittees that are required to eliminate dry-weather flows and POCs reaching downstream waters.**
 - **Assessment of Alternative BMPs: Considering non-diversion alternatives for sites where direct discharge to Tapia WRF is not feasible.**
 - **Stakeholder Coordination Plan: Detailing how municipalities, regulatory agencies, and watershed managers will collaborate on project implementation.**
6. Is the technical approach sound? If not, what do you recommend should be done to improve the technical approach of the proposed project?

All reviewers found the technical approach sound but recommended improvements:

- **Prioritize Data Collection: Collect and analyze flow and pollutant data early in the study to refine project feasibility before investing in implementation planning.**
 - **Clarify Long-Term Program Sustainability: Identify funding sources and responsible agencies for managing diversion projects beyond the study's timeline.**
 - **Assess Potential Treatment Constraints: Evaluate whether pollutant concentrations in diverted flows could pose challenges for Tapia WRF's treatment processes.**
7. How achievable are the study's stated technical objectives, especially within the proposed timeframe and budget?

Two reviewers found the objectives achievable within the \$442,643 budget and phased timeline, while one raised concerns about:

- **Sampling and Lab Costs: Potential budget overruns due to additional sampling requirements.**

- **Stakeholder Involvement: The impact of prolonged agency coordination efforts on project scheduling.**

8. What are the greatest technical risks that you foresee the proposing agency facing when implementing the project?

The reviewers identified several technical risks:

1. **Uncertain Feasibility of Diversions: The potential for diverted flows to contain pollutants that exceed Tapia WRF treatment capacity.**
2. **Data Gaps: Insufficient sampling coverage or variability in dry-weather flows could affect project prioritization.**
3. **Regulatory Challenges: Permitting complexities could delay implementation if requirements are not well-defined early in the study.**

9. Please describe the linkages between the project's technical objectives and the types of decisions that stormwater managers will make based on the project's outcome(s)? Will the technical achievements provide stormwater managers useful linkages that extend beyond this study?

The reviewers agreed that the study will assist stormwater managers by:

- **Identifying high-priority sites for diversion projects based on pollutant reduction potential.**
- **Providing a framework for integrating dry-weather diversion into municipal stormwater compliance strategies.**
- **Informing decisions on alternative BMPs where diversions are not viable.**

One reviewer suggested that the study's findings could be leveraged to support regional collaboration on dry-weather flow management beyond NSMB.

10. Please provide any additional technical perspectives you would like to share.

The reviewers offered the following perspectives:

- **The study should consider phasing data collection and program development separately to refine implementation strategies over time.**
- **Evaluating alternative water reuse applications beyond irrigation could increase project benefits.**
- **A cost-benefit analysis of diversion projects versus alternative BMPs would enhance decision-making.**

11. Please answer each of the following questions by selecting one of the following five answer choices: *Excellent, Very good, Adequate, Inadequate or Not applicable because of insufficient information*. Please add an explanation to accompany your answer choice (or refer to the question number above for appropriate context and rationale):

- a. How well do the proposal objectives address the County's goals of increasing stormwater or urban runoff capture and/or reducing stormwater or urban runoff pollution?

Two reviewers rated the objectives as "very good," emphasizing their alignment with pollutant reduction and water reuse goals. The third reviewer rated them as "adequate," noting that program development details need further refinement.

- b. How well do you think the technical approaches will achieve the study objectives and stated outcomes?

Two reviewers rated the technical approaches as "very good," citing the study's well-structured methodology. The third found them "adequate," highlighting the need for clearer implementation planning.

- c. Technical experience and qualifications of the study team?

One reviewer rated the study team as "very good," noting their experience in stormwater management. Another rated them "adequate," citing a lack of detail on team leadership. The third reviewer marked this section as "not applicable" due to insufficient information provided on specific personnel qualifications.