SAFE CLEAN WATER PROGRAM SCIENTIFIC STUDY PROPOSAL QUESTIONNAIRE

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

Title: **Gateway Area Pathfinding Analysis (GAP Analysis)**

Proposing Organization: **Gateway Water Management Authority**

Your summary of the Project Goals and Objectives:

All three reviewers are in agreement that the study's overall goal is to help managers in the lower L.A. and San Gabriel River watersheds assemble and prioritize an optimal combination of BMPs and other watershed improvement projects to meet their water-quality goals. Specifically, the study will collect data on various proposed watershed improvement projects – both known projects and projects that the proposing organization is yet not aware of – and then conduct modeling analyses to understand which combinations of projects would provide maximum synergistic benefits. The project will result in the identification of a portfolio of priority projects optimally aligned to the region's regulatory compliance strategy.

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

The reviewers generally agree that the study objectives are clear. Only one reviewer caveated their positive assessment by noting that they would have preferred more clarity around which areas will be targeted in which phases and how the phases will build upon one another.

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?

All three reviewers agree that the project effectively supports the SCWP's goals of increasing stormwater or urban runoff capture and/or reducing stormwater or urban runoff pollution. The reviewers all offered positive comments. One reviewer noted that the project has the potential to "produce useful data, minimize conflicts with other projects and produce value for taxpayers." The second reviewer noted that the study's use of "system modeling" to evaluate various projects was beneficial and has the potential to enhance watershed planning efforts. The third reviewer noted that the study has the potential to help managers identify additional beneficial stormwater control measures to implement.

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 agree that the study's technical approach consists of using geospatial analysis, system-level watershed modeling and multiple evaluation criteria to identify, analyze and prioritize multiple potential watershed improvement projects in the lower L.A./San Gabriel watersheds. One reviewer said they wished there had been more specifics in how certain tasks would be accomplished, such as details about the modeling system itself.

5. Has the proposal provided sufficient information to describe the technical approach for each element? If not, what information is missing?

All three reviewers stated there was insufficient information in the proposal to understand how all of the technical elements would be implemented. For example, one reviewer made a list:

- **Task 1: What criteria will be used to evaluate each project? How does available space for projects factor into the evaluation? Does proximity to a stream matter? (Some specific criteria would be good to show.)**
- **Task 2: What model will be used, and has it already been developed? (It is impossible to judge how realistic the modeling will be without knowing the type of model, the scale of the model, calibrated procedures, and how it handles runoff and conveyances, etc.)**
- **Task 2: How will scores for each project work? How will various aspects of a given potential project be quantified?**
- **Task 3: How will cost estimates be developed?**

6. Is the technical approach sound? If not, what do you recommend should be done to improve the technical approach of the proposed project?

   The reviewers did not all come to the same conclusion about whether the approach is technically sound. One reviewer described the data-driven technical approach as "excellent" and having the potential to serve as a model regionwide, while the other two reviewers said the proposal lacked key details to make this assessment. Of the latter two reviewers, one pointed out that the lack of specifics about how the modeling will be done make the technical approach difficult to assess. The other reviewer pointed out that the approach section reads like a summary that is lacking in technical depth.

7. How achievable are the study's stated technical objectives, especially within the proposed timeframe and budget?

   The reviewers agree it appears the proposing organization can achieve all of the study's objectives in the stated timeframe and budget. One reviewer simply characterized the budget as "reasonable." A second reviewer said they "don't fully understand" how many people will work on the study, but that it appears to be a "bargain" given the proposed budget. The third reviewer said the budget is "plausible," but only assuming the model has been "already developed and calibrated," as this would mean that a large portion of the modeling work would already be done.

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

   The reviewers agree this project faces technical risks, but don't agree which risk is the biggest. One reviewer said the biggest technical risk is the challenge of interacting with a diverse, broad group of stakeholders across the lower L.A./San Gabriel watersheds, although the reviewer believes existing strong relationships and collaborations will minimize this risk. The second reviewer said the biggest technical risk is the system-level modeling – specifically, ensuring the model has sufficient level of detail to accurately predict the benefits of certain projects above others. The third reviewer said the biggest technical risk is whether the model

accurately predicts sources of pollutants, and whether the proposed BMPs will be able to effectively treat the runoff from these sources.

9. Are there clear linkages between the project's technical objectives and the types of decisions that stormwater managers will make based on the project's outcomes? Will the technical achievements provide stormwater managers useful linkages that extend beyond this study?

   All three reviewers agree that the project has linkages to management that could be applicable beyond the project. Two reviewers offered unequivocal praise: One cited the project's "enormous potential" to provide "long-term value" as a regional planning tool, while the other noted the project's potential to prioritize projects in a way that will create "a clearer hierarchy for retrofitting." The third reviewer was more restrained in their praise, noting that they would have preferred to see more detail about how the project's findings will be incorporated into management plans.

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

    Two reviewers had no additional perspectives to share. The other reviewer said that of the three SCWP proposals they were asked to review, "this was by far the most thoughtful proposal."

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. Feel free to add an explanation to accompany your answer choice:

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

       Two of the reviewers rated the proposal's objectives as being "very good" at addressing SCWP goals. The third reviewer gave an "excellent" rating.

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

       Two reviewers provided an "adequate" rating, although one reviewer said their rating is based on the assumption that the details of the study's technical approach are "well-grounded." The third reviewer provided an "excellent" rating.

    c. Technical experience and qualifications of the study team?

       The reviewers disagreed in their assessment of the qualifications of the study team. Two reviewers answered "not applicable" because of insufficient information, with one stating they had no resumes or statement of qualifications to examine. The third reviewer rated the study team "very good" based on similar projects described in the proposal conducted by one of the team members.