



Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Collaborative

2010 Visitor Services Grant Program

Project Evaluation Process

Updated September 25th, 2009

This guidance document outlines the process for evaluating and ranking projects submitted to the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Collaborative Visitor Serving Task Force (VSTF) and represents the results of multiple discussions by the Dunes Collaborative and Restoration Subcommittee. The intent of this document is to state what criteria are being used by the Dunes Collaborative to assess proposed projects. In addition, this document will be used to streamline the process in an effort to reduce costs to the Dunes Collaborative members and the project proponents. Final Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Restoration Plan (Final Restoration Plan, 2001) and the Dunes Collaborative Final Work Plan (Final Work Plan), Version 6.0, identify criteria for ranking proposed projects, and set meaningful and tangible thresholds for success which have been incorporated into the Project Evaluation Process.

Communication of Evaluation Process to Collaborative Members and Public

All potential project proponents should be made aware of the 2010 schedule for project submission, the required proposal structure as outlined in the template, and the Dunes Collaborative evaluation process. The information is available on the Dunes Collaborative website, www.dunescollaborative.org, and will be disseminated to all Dunes Collaborative members for distribution. Written notification via mail can be provided to those who do not have internet access by contacting the following:

Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center
Attn: 2010 Visitor Services Grant Program
PO Box 339
Guadalupe, CA 93434
Tel: 805.343.2455
Fax: 805.343.0442
collaborative@dunescenter.org

Basic Project Threshold Criteria Applied to Submitted Proposals

The first step in the evaluation process is determine if the proposed project meets the minimum thresholds as outlined in the 2001 Final Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Restoration Plan. Specifically, the project proposal must meet/have completed all of the following:

1. GEOGRAPHIC CRITERIA

The project is located within the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex (in San Luis Obispo County and/or Santa Barbara County, as near as possible to the Guadalupe Oil Field) For Geographical nexus please see attached map.

2. THRESHOLD CRITERIA

- a. **Technical feasibility:** The project must be technically and procedurally sound. Proven track record demonstrating the success of projects utilizing a similar or identical restoration technique can be used to satisfy this evaluation standard. The project should clearly identify standards used to determine project success. Both qualitative and quantitative criteria should be outlined and be meaningful.
- b. **Consistency with the restoration goals:** The main restoration goal is to restore, rehabilitate, replace, or acquire the equivalent of the natural resources, or the services those resources provided, that were injured on the Guadalupe Oil Field from the diluent contamination. In addition, a project could provide compensation for the interim loss of those resources and services.
- c. **Compliance with laws:** The proposed project must comply with all applicable laws.
- d. **Public health and safety:** The proposed project cannot pose a threat to the health and safety of the public.
- e. **Total Cost and Accuracy of Estimate.** The proposal is well developed and clearly identifies real-world project costs, hourly rates, and administrative overhead. Justification for rates/costs should be discussed (e.g. quotes from contractors, examples of recent previous and applicable costs) and inflation rates for multi-year projects addressed. Anticipated permitting needs and associated costs and timeframes, are identified. The total cost estimate should include costs to design, implement, monitor, and manage the project.
- f. **Readiness to Proceed.** A realistic timeframe is provided and the proposal confirms that staffing and resources will be available for the project to proceed and be completed as stated. Likely permit needs are identified. Potential pitfalls and contingencies are considered and addressed.
- g. **Clearly Identifies Standards Used to Determine Project Success.** Both qualitative and quantitative criteria should be outlined and be meaningful.

3. ADDITIONAL CRITERIA: Once a project has been screened and meets the Basic Project Threshold Criteria listed above, the proposal is reviewed using the following additional criteria. Note that both qualitative and quantitative measures need clarification in the proposal for each criterion.

- a. **Relationship to injured resources and services:** Projects that restore, rehabilitate, replace, enhance, or acquire the equivalent of the same or similar resources and services injured by the Guadalupe Oil Spill are preferred to projects that benefit other comparable resources or services.

Frame of Reference: To what degree does the project provide visitor participation or understanding of efforts to “restore, rehabilitate, enhance, acquire” resources injured as part of Guadalupe Oil Spill? To what degree does the project also increase visitor access to, passive use of, understanding of and volunteer contributions toward the injured resources and services associated with the dunes system?

Focus Questions: To what degree will the projects:

- Actively engage in protection/expansion of protection of Dune resources and services (Unit: volunteer (participant) hours/year, acreage/# species involved, # areas involved)
 - Increase/protect public access to the dunes in terms of visitor days/year? (Unit: Participants/year, # communities reached/level expansion to existing communities, # areas involved)
 - Increase the diversity of users who visit the dunes? (Unit: # new individuals/communities reached (need to clarify previous communities reached))
 - Does the project focus public attention on the importance of the injured resources and services within the dunes in relation to environmental education and volunteer recruitment?
 - Project MUST have linkage to injured resources.
- b. **Avoidance of injury:** The proposed alternative should avoid or minimize adverse impacts to the environment and associated natural resources.
- c. **Likelihood and sustainability of success:** Identify the potential for success and the level of expected return of resources and resource services. Identify if the project will include any monitoring to evaluate the success of the project and the ability to correct or adaptively manage a project over time.

Frame of Reference: How does the project define, measure and monitor its success and sustainability of its outcomes? What is the likelihood of success?

Focus Questions:

- What is the desired outcome(s) of project and how will that outcome explicitly impact or induce public involvement in resource protection and restoration, public access and visitor services within the dune system? Qualitative and quantitative measures need to be addressed.
 - To what degree does the project build institutional capacity that can address similar issues within the Dunes Complex?
 - What is the likelihood of success? What are the most credible challenges or risks to the success of the project? How will these challenges be addressed by the project?
- d. **Multiple benefits:** Identify the extent to which the proposed project benefits more than one natural resource or resource service.
- e. **Protection of project:** Identify if the project includes a conservation easement, land acquisition, or other type of resource dedication to protect the project over time.
- f. **Opportunities for collaboration:** Identify the possibility of matching funds, in-kind services, or volunteer assistance. Coordination with other ongoing or proposed projects is also considered here.

Frame of Reference: How well does the project build positive working relationships and leverage financial resources and expertise among multiple

organizations, agencies and institutions for the benefit of dune restoration and visitor services?

Focus Questions:

- To what degree does the project reflect on-going ('start-to-finish') joint decision-making and involvement by two or more entities? (Unit: Identify collaboration partners and specific contributions)
- Is the project part of a broader program that has received matching monies in the past? If so, how will this project build upon past successes? (Want to avoid refunding projects unless significant new contribution or clear streamlining or expansion of past efforts).
- What mechanism will ensure that the results and lessons learned will be passed on (outline specifically). How will the project contribute to the efficiency of or synergy with other organizations undertaking projects in related fields or locations?

- h. **Benefits relative to costs (including time to provide benefits and duration of benefits):** the relationship of expected project cost to the expected resource and service benefits is identified.

Frame of Reference: What is the cost of the project? And what are the specific benefits the project provides, how long will they take to accrue, what is the expected duration of benefits from the proposed project, what are the efficiencies of creating those benefits, and how remarkable or noticeable will they be?

Focus Questions:

- What percentage of current or committed matching funds does the project entail (Unit: % matching funds or in-kind services).
- What is the percentage of administrative costs to the overall project budget?
- Are estimated costs (time, services, and supplies) reasonable given the current market for the type of activity proposed?
- What is the likelihood of the project receiving future commitments of funding from specific funding entities if the proposed project is funded through the Dunes Collaborative Endowment Funds? (List additional likely/secured funding sources).
- How long will it take (in months) from project authorization for the project to generate recognizable and measurable benefits? Identify the unit—are they monetary, non-monetary or intrinsic benefits? Identify/discuss if a delay there are known or potential delays due to permitting and/or other unavoidable time constraints.
- What is the duration of benefits created by the project?

4. OTHER FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. Does the project foster leadership and if so, how does the project foster leadership?
- b. What are the unique aspects or problems of the project that may not have been considered?
- c. What is the role of the project in relation to past or ongoing projects within the Dunes Complex?
- d. How does the project address the current needs of the Dunes Complex resources and services, current Dunes Complex VSTF Needs List available at: <http://dunescollaborative.org/vstf.html>?
- e. How does the project address the needs of the local community?