

NATURE EDUCATION FACILITIES PROGRAM
DRAFT GUIDE #2 (01/11/10)
ALL PUBLIC COMMENTS BY TOPIC
03/01/10

DATE	LOCALE/VENUE	TOPIC	COMMENT	RESPONSE
02/09/10	Bay Area Email	Concept Level Site Plan	<p>We are concerned about the Concept Level Site Plan requirements. The second bullet states: "If the grant scope includes a building(s), include the approximate total square footage. In addition, site plans must clearly delineate, label and measure the approximate square footage and the proposed function of each room. The level of development required to define the program and area required for each room goes far beyond where most groups expect to be without already having contracted the services of a design firm to produce construction documents. We strongly encourage you to consider changing this requirement to include criteria from a product that is developed earlier in the planning and design process.</p> <p>We recommend using program elements with a range of square footage associated with each program element as the minimum criteria. This is common practice in Feasibility Studies we do for clients, to give them a clear idea of the necessary program for a successful facility, the range of areas for the program elements and the probable associated costs.</p> <p>Please see the attached Feasibility Studies done some time ago for the East Bay Regional Parks District. We feel that this level of information can provide the necessary level of specificity to meet the Grant Program needs while being early enough in the development process to be realistically attainable (in both fee and submittal deadline) for someone submitting for Nature Education Facilities Grant funding.</p>	<p>The Guide will not be changed. The concept level site plan helps the reviewer to understand the project and helps to ensure that grant funds are being used primarily for features that provide nature education that meet the intent of the program. It also helps to show that the project is far enough along in the planning phase to be completed within the grant performance period.</p>
02/10/10	Bay Area Letter	Concept Level	Language for site plans should be expanded or	1. Thank your for your comments. However,

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		Site Plan	<p>qualified to allow the applicant more options.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For example we have a proposed facility with three alternative sites pending the outcome of full CEQA review. I recommend alternative sites be mentioned somewhere in the Guide. 2. We would prefer to submit an architectural site evaluation which includes site opportunities and constraints with a rendering or gross schematic with reference to a "range of square footage" with a minimum square footage requirement. 3. It is important that the ratio of admin/support function to exhibit or public programming space is maximized in favor of nature education support space. 4. I do not think a floor plan should be encouraged. Instead a bubble diagram of exhibit and public use function within the envelope of a building footprint with minimum square footage on one of several sites is best. 5. Also, you need interior space development conceptual flexibility because you may not know where or how much permanent exhibit space you will be able to afford and at what level. 	<p>the guide will not be changed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Although the program allows projects with incomplete CEQA to compete for funds, applicants must be far enough along in the planning process to choose which alternative they plan to build. All of the application requirements are specific to a single proposed project. In addition, the criteria responses must be based on a single proposed project. 3. OGALS requires uses the site plan to help determine that grant funds are primarily used for features that provide nature education. 4. The type of floor plan requested in the Guide has been specified in our past grant programs. It helps the reviewer to get a clearer picture of the proposed project. 5. Applicants will need to be far enough along in the planning process to determine both the amount and cost of exhibit space needed for the project. Applicants should This also provides the basis for the responses to all the criteria, especially #2, #3, #5, #6 and #7.
02/10/10	Los Angeles Area Email	Criteria General	<p>I would like to submit two suggestions for the Application Guide for the Nature Education Facilities Program.</p> <p>I believe that there should be additional points awarded in the scoring system for the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having an Advisory Board for the proposed project that is composed of Native Americans. 	<p>Thank you for your comments. However, the Guide has not been changed.</p>

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			<p>2. Having a project that addresses not just one, but two out of the three proposed goals. For example, such a project might:</p> <p>A. Combine the study of natural science with preservation, demonstration and education programs that serve diverse populations, and</p> <p>B. Provide collections and programs related to the relationship of Native American cultures to the environment.</p>	
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Criterion #4	Does the space that the chart uses have to be double space and is it included in the # pages?	The chart does not need to be double spaced. It will be included in the page count.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Criterion #4	We typically expect school groups early in the day, but not every day. We can't guarantee that we'll be open early every day.	Your hours may fluctuate by day, or by the season. If they do, you need to describe the reasons for seasonal variations, or special hours for school or other specific groups, provide information on the days and hours for each season, and provide a weekly total averaged over the entire year.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Criterion #6	Is there a particular format or program for this timeline?	There is no particular format required, however the timeline should include realistic development milestones including project start and a completion date at least six months before the 06/30/17 liquidation date

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01/19/10	Inland empire Email	Eligible Applicants	<p>We are a Resource Conservation District authorized under Division 9 of the Public Resources Code. Would we be eligible to apply for this program?</p> <p>Division 9 of the Public Resource Code (section 9419(a)) specifically allows RCDs to conduct educational programs and educational "activities". In addition, Division 9 is very clear that RCD's can own property. Other provisions of Division 9 say RCD's can undertake and manage projects, but 9419 is the only part that talks about educational projects. We own a 9 1/2 acre property with a Conservation Resource Center housing several various conservation agencies. Additionally, there is a 5 acre Land Use Learning Center demonstrating local native plants and habitats, water conservation gardens and trees and best management practices in agriculture and development. We would still like to build an exhibit/interpretative/nature center as part of the Land Use Learning Center and complete the ADA accessible walkways to the gardens.</p>	<p>The definition of districts has been broadened to include special districts with the authority to develop, operate and maintain a nature education facility. If you meet the definition, you would be eligible under this program. Otherwise, you may be able to partner with an eligible agency depending on the type of project you are considering.</p>
02/01/10	Southern California Email	Eligible Applicants	<p>We are a California Special District formed under the Municipal Water Code of 1911. Our mission is to stabilize the level of our lake for recreation and wildlife. Are we eligible under this program?</p>	<p>See above response.</p>
02/08/10	Inland Empire Email	Eligible Applicants	<p>Request that the definition of a District be changed to include all public utilities that exercise powers authorized under Water Code 31133 and operate parks on their property</p>	<p>See above response.</p>
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Eligible Applicants	<p>As a NPO, in the city of Placerville, do we need to be in a JPA?</p>	<p>No. Non-profit organizations are eligible applicants and are defined in the guide.</p>
1/21/10	Sacramento	Eligible Cost	<p>The changes made in the second draft very</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

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	Public Hearing	Chart	much clarify what are eligible costs.	
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Eligible Costs	If the project involves adding solar panels to a roof, but roof can not support the panels? Is the re-roof eligible?	If the purpose of the project is to provide a nature education facility and the roof costs are part of the project, they would be eligible. A repair of a roof and/or solar panels alone is not eligible.
2/09/10	Bay Area Email	Eligible Costs	I have read through the draft application guide, and I found it clear, thorough, and reasonable. We plan to reuse an existing building to create a new nature and history education center. I recommend clarifying that some uses of grant funds are eligible expenses: viewing platforms, picnic tables, barbecue pits, boat ramps, and fishing amenities. These may already be eligible as features (major or minor support amenity) or as supplemental facilities that provide incidental services for visitors and/or revenue for the operation and maintenance of the project.	Thank you for your comment. The instructions for the Grant Scope/Cost Estimate form have been edited to more clearly define the difference between features and major and minor support amenities. Features would be the elements of a FACILITY that directly provide or help to provide NATURE EDUCATION.
01/27/10	Santa Cruz Area Email	Eligible Costs	We will upgrade an old out-of-code visitor center to be a true interpretive center/museum/visitor center. Would the grant cover a needed upgrade to the old septic system and leech field.	If septic system upgrade is needed and related to the renovation of the building for public use as a nature education facility the costs are eligible if they are within the project site. In general, grant funds may be used for infrastructure support facilities, such as restrooms, incorporated within the building or facility that are considered necessary for its primary function. The septic system upgrade by itself would not be an eligible project.
02/08/10	Los Angeles Area Email	Eligible Costs	Thank you again for designing a high-quality grant program – I know it will be supportive, fair and clear to work with.	Thank you for your comment.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Eligible Costs	Microscopes are scientific equip & should be eligible under the Marine Research facilities.	Unless the microscopes and other lab equipment are fixed equipment, the costs are

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				not eligible under this program.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Eligible Costs	Telescopes are a kind of equipment that should be eligible under the Marine Research facilities.	If the telescope is fixed equipment and is needed to enhance the useful purpose of the facility to provide nature education, it would be an eligible cost.

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2/04/10	Orange County Email	Eligible Projects	<p>Our legal counsel has reviewed both the draft application guide and the original text of Prop 84, and found that the application guide defines research facilities more narrowly than the text of Prop 84. Specifically: bond language clearly provides that funds <i>shall be available</i> for "nature education and research facilities and equipment. and is not exclusive to marine research facilities. The last sentence is simply permissive in saying that grants "may be used . . . for marine wildlife conservation research equipment and facilities."</p> <p>Our legal counsel opined that the language <i>does not limit such grants to research facilities and equipment related only to marine research.</i> We therefore respectfully request the Department of Parks and Recreation to expand the scope of eligible projects under this program to include research facilities other than marine that otherwise meet the statutory requirements. The project we envision would be a combined research and education facility that would meet many of the criteria consistent with Prop 84 including providing some kind of public access and/or interaction and/or provide support to a public nature education facility. Currently only the educational activities would qualify under this program, not the pressing research needs.</p>	<p>The guide will not be changed. The department was given the authority to determine eligible applicants and eligible projects in Proposition 84.. However, as you noted, the project you describe may be at least partially funded by this grant if it provides focused nature education to the general public.</p>
01/29/10	Central Coast Email	Eligible Projects	<p>1. It appears that interpretive signage/information pavilions can be part of the proposal. Our project site for the facility is a starting point for several trail systems that make loops of about 1-2 miles and we'd like to include signage for those trails in our proposal. Will that work? Can we include trail improvements, or</p>	<p>1. Although interpretive signage for a nature trail may be eligible, this is not a recreational trails program. Although a recreational trail project would provide access to nature, it would likely not provide nature education as defined in the guide and meet this objective: * Combine the study of natural science with</p>

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			<p>not?</p> <p>2. I am part of UC campus and we have a set of nature education facilities which focus on different local natural resources. We are trying to decide whether to apply as one applicant with several linked facilities or to submit different applications. In other words - if UCSB is considered "one site location" then UCSB should send one combined application? Or if the different sites on Campus can be considered different site locations... then we would be one applicant submitting different applications for different sites.</p>	<p>preservation, demonstration and education programs that serve diverse populations</p> <p>However, if the nature trails or a trail head to recreational trails are part of a larger nature education facility, than related interpretive signage and nature trail improvements may be an eligible cost. However, a project that consisted entirely of a nature trail and signage would likely be less competitive than other more interactive projects.</p> <p>2. For universities and colleges, the main campus would be equivalent to a large regional park for other agencies. One project would be allowed at that one site location. If there is a second site, separate from the main campus, also owned by the university, then that is two sites. You could apply for one project for each site.</p>
02/10/10	Los Angeles Area Email	Eligible Projects	<p>In regards to the Nature Education Facility Grant, I would like to know if a public Arboretum would fall under the category of qualified projects. Our city has always wished to establish a site to start educating the public about all the different types of trees that grow in our valley and the benefits they offer to the environment.</p>	<p>The city would be an eligible applicant. The arboretum would be an eligible project if it is a facility that provides public nature education and meets at least one of the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine the study of natural science with preservation, demonstration and education programs that serve diverse populations • Provide collections and programs related to the relationship of Native American cultures to the environment • Conduct marine wildlife conservation research
1/21/10	Sacramento	Funding Tier	<p>Can you only apply for one grant? Can it be</p>	<p>The guide has been edited to more clearly show</p>

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	Public Hearing		spelled out more clearly?	that for any one site location, applicants may submit only one project application, in any one tier.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Funding Tiers	Likes the change, institute supports the 7 million grant amount.	Thank you for your comment
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Funding Tiers	Believes the change will accommodate their project	Thank you for your comment.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Funding Tiers	Thinks the smaller facilities could benefit from a decrease of the 7 million.	Although the amount estimated for Tier A projects was increased, the amounts estimated for other tiers did not decrease. The increased amount in Tier A was accomplished through a reduction in the reserve funds. All of the funds listed as reserve will be dispersed across all of the tiers to ensure sufficient funds are available to award quality projects statewide.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Funding Tiers	We are supportive of the change. If we were to apply, would there be an approval of the lesser amount of what applied for?	The guide has been edited to clarify this point. OGALS will not award more or less than the requested grant amount. Applicants should ensure that the grant amount requested is sufficient either by itself, or in combination with other committed funds to complete the proposed project.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Funding tiers.	Can it be clearer if there will be partial funding?	The guide has been edited to clarify this point. OGALS will not award more or less than the requested grant amount.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Grant Administration Workshop	How many of the grantees' team has to go to the required grant administration training?	The grantee should bring whatever staff will be primarily responsible for fulfilling the administrative requirements of the grant funded project.

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02/04/10	Central Coast Email	Grant Scope Cost Estimate	For the cost/estimate page I am not completely sure what is meant by" features". We are involved in trying to renovate/remodel and expand an existing very small and old (not historic) building into a functioning museum/interpretive center as well as a visitor center. In my first draft of the features for the cost/estimate I have listed 9 separate categories such as: renovate the electric system and bring it up to code; construct ADA accessible restrooms; construct an interpretive/museum/exhibit room including all cabinets, cases, and free standing interpretive exhibits; etc. Am I on the right track or is there something else meant by features?	One feature would be the renovation of the museum/interpretive/visitor center. The second would be the construction of the interpretive/museum/exhibit room. The costs for the restroom would be listed separately as a major support amenity. The costs for the electrical system do not need to be listed separately and would be rolled into the costs of the features or major support amenity as applicable.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Ineligible Costs	In our County anything over a specific price level is considered fixed equipment. Maybe you could use this standard?	Thank you for your comment.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Land Tenure	On the 20/30 year terms does that start with the appropriation date?	Yes. OGALS will start counting the 20 or 30 year land tenure requirement from 07/01/09, the date of appropriation. Therefore, all land tenure agreements must extend to at least 06/30/29 or 06/30/39 depending on the grant amount requested.
1/21/10	Sacramento Public Hearing	Non-Profit Requirements	Can you clarify financial review by including it in the definitions?	Agencies may submit either their most recent audit report or financial review. Both the audit report and the financial review need to be completed by someone outside of the NPO. This is only one of the requirements for NPO's. OGALS reserves the right to disqualify organizations that demonstrate the possibility of unreasonable risks if awarded funds under this program.

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02/10/10	Los Angeles Area Letter	Various	<p>We appreciate the department’s clarifications of eligible projects and the inclusion of office space and facilities that provide and support nature education programs.</p> <p>We continue to recommend the inclusion of urban ecosystems in the definition of nature education. Urban ecosystems are natural ecosystems that are located within or adjacent to an urban environment, and likely impacted by urban influences; however they serve a critical role in providing environmental services to the community, perhaps equal to or more so than outside of an urban area.</p>	<p>Support facilities incorporated within the building or facility that provides nature education, and that are considered necessary for its primary function, e.g., restrooms, related offices, storage and equipment space, parking lots. Support facilities alone are not eligible projects.</p> <p>The definition of nature education has not been changed.</p>
02/11/10	Los Angeles Area Letter	Various	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 75063(b) mandates that the NEF reach diverse populations. The most diverse populations resided in or near dense areas. This makes CEQA more challenging. Pleased that program allows up to 1 year after award to complete CEQA. 2. Guide requires this funding to be final funding, and that all funds need to be in place within 4 months of application. Projects near dense diverse populations do not have the resources to develop funding to this level within the next eight to twelve months. We recommend that time frame for additional committed funds should be extended to 12 months after award. 3. Pleased to see change which allows and clearly defines JPA’s. 4. Pleased to see increased amount of largest grant, and restructured tiers. 5. Would like to see reserve/contingency funds 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thank you for your comment. 2. Funds are to be committed at the time of application. However, the competitive review process will take about six months. Therefore, OGALS will allow an additional four months after the application deadline for applicants to confirm all sources of funds and the viability of the project before the final decision making process begins. 3. Thank you for your comments. 4. Thank you for your comments. 5. The entire amount of reserve funds will be dispersed across the tiers to ensure sufficient funds are available to award quality projects statewide. This allows OGALS the flexibility to award funds based on the quantity and quality of projects

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			<p>fully defined as to how they would/could be utilized.</p> <p>6. We appreciate that these applications are not due near the same time as Statewide Park Program.</p>	<p>received in each tier.</p> <p>6. Thank you for your comments.</p>
02/10/10	Los Angeles Area Letter	Various	<p>Additional Point should be given to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Projects in close proximity to resource interpreted. 2. Projects that demonstrate inclusion of targeted groups in the project development process. 3. Projects that feature educational elements that can be accessed when the facility is closed. 4. Criteria #4 Sustainable design. Points should be awarded based on whether the project includes sustainable design features. 5. Criterion #5 Additional points should be given to projects that can demonstrate sustainability in operations. <p>Preference should be given to projects</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The criteria do not allow additional points for projects based only on close proximity. However, in Criterion #2, Educational Opportunities, an applicant may choose to highlight how the proximity of the resource increases understanding and knowledge of the resource. 2. Inclusion of targeted groups in project development will not be separately scored. However, applicants who do use include targeted groups in project planning could discuss their process in support of Criterion #3 Visitor Outreach. 3. Criteria 4C allows extra points for projects that provide alternate means of access to nature education for the public, including but not limited to, outreach programs, online learning, or other educational opportunities. 4. Proposition 84's goals and intent prompted the inclusion of a criterion for sustainable design in this guide. This criterion was originally drafted with a higher point value and an emphasis on LEED standards. We looked for a fair way to score all possible projects from facilities to buildings to exhibit structures, signage, marine equipment. Allotting 10% of the total score is appropriate for this criterion. 5. The Guide will not be changed.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. That feature connections to other public recreational opportunities, such as trail networks, or visitor serving facilities. B. Will result in multiple benefits, such as increased water quality, relieving pressure on strained resources, providing new recreational opportunities and leveraging other resources. C. Are partnerships between multiple public agencies and/or non-profit organizations. 	<p>As noted below, various criteria encourage the kinds of responses you suggest. In some cases, we have clarified or edited the criteria to incorporate specific suggestions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Although applicants will describe the setting and locale of the project within the project summary, this section is not scored. However, applicants may want to address connections with Criterion #4, Project Access. B. Applicants should address the projects positive impact on other resources primarily within the context of Criterion #5, Sustainable Design. C. Descriptions of partnerships and support networks can be used to provide background and depth to the responses to many of the criteria.
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