TO: Professional Colleagues, Bren School Faculty, and Bren School Graduate Students

Request for Group Project Proposals
The Donald Bren School of Environmental Science and Management at the University of California, Santa Barbara seeks Group Project proposals for academic year 2002-2003. The Group Project serves as the “thesis” for all Bren School masters-level graduate students. The 2002-2003 projects will be carried out April 2002 - March 2003.

Group Project Objectives
The goals of the Group Project are to provide students with training and experience in multidisciplinary environmental problem solving in preparation for professional careers; and to provide a mechanism for students to apply their technical expertise to solve complex environmental problems. Group projects most closely correspond to consulting firm projects where the client has a problem that needs solving.

Desirable Group Project Attributes
Appropriate topics are real and current problems in environmental policy or management, problems which require a solution from the group project. Generally, projects involve quantitative analysis and scientific investigation in order to reach a management conclusion and recommendation. It is important to keep the scope realistic: projects should be manageable for a group of 4-5 Master’s-level students (working quarter-time) to address within the time-frame of three academic quarters (9 months), and with a limited budget.

Proposals should involve an interesting environmental problem that needs solving. Proposals designed to investigate or expand knowledge of an environmental issue are appropriate but only if they are multidisciplinary (natural and social science/management) and have a clear client- and problem-oriented objective which students may address, reaching definite conclusions. Proposals that are mainly designed to collect information without a problem-orientation are undesirable. Projects must be justified on their own merits, not as part of a larger project.

Proposals which largely involve the construction of a tool or model (such as a GIS) or development of a data set are less appropriate (though such work may be part of a project). Extensive data collection is generally time-consuming and difficult for a group project to undertake.
Proposals that are real problems from actual clients are particularly encouraged. These may be from or involve partnerships or links with the public sector (e.g., federal, state, regional or local agencies), the business community, or non-profit organizations. Conversely, proposals involving hypothetical clients or clients uninvolved in the proposal generation process are less desirable.

Projects are considerably more attractive, productive, and successful if sponsors are willing to provide minimal financial support, generally agreeing (a) to cover non-labor expenses (e.g., travel) and (b) to hire one or more project participants to work (for pay) on the project during the summer of 2002 ("internships").

Proposers are strongly encouraged to identify and contact a Bren School faculty member as a potential collaborator early in the proposal preparation process. Refer to http://www.bren.ucsb.edu for information on the school and its faculty.

Proposal Format

Proposals for projects are due by January 2, 2002 and are limited to two pages (excluding references). Refer to the attached sample proposal for an example. Proposals must adhere to the following format:

1. Client, including name of contact person, should project be approved.

2. Bren Sponsors (optional but strongly encouraged). Two categories of sponsors should be listed separately (Bren students and Bren faculty). Indicate title, names and affiliations. To view a list of Bren faculty for contact, consult the Bren School website: http://www.bren.ucsb.edu/. (No more than two Bren student sponsors may be listed, without prior permission of the Group Projects Faculty Supervisor.) In some cases there may be non-Bren sponsors (other than the client); these should be indicated.

3. Proposed Project
   
   A. Problem Statement. What is the context for this work?

   B. Project Objectives. Clearly state the objectives of the proposed work. Increasing knowledge, conducting research or developing a data set are less objectives than means to an end.

   C. Project Significance. Why is this work important?

   D. Background information

   E. Study Location
F. Stakeholders, other than the client.

G. Possible approach and available data. This should be concise and not overly restraining. One of the tasks for the group project participants is to decide how best to meet the project objectives. Include a discussion of anticipated data needs and availability.

H. Deliverables. What specific items and recommendations do you expect to receive from the project at its conclusion?

I. References (if any).

4. Anticipated Financial Needs and Sources of Support. Indicate support commitments that exist or are likely. For internships, indicate the number of internships which will be available and the approximate support level for each internship.

**Project Selection**

Up to 10 Group Projects will be undertaken in 2002-2003. Criteria used to select projects include:

- Extent to which project represents a real environmental problem that requires a solution from the group project.

- Extent to which project matches talents and capabilities of Bren School students and faculty. Refer to [http://www.bren.ucsb.edu](http://www.bren.ucsb.edu) for information on the school and its faculty.

- Extent of financial commitment, particularly in terms of availability of paid summer support for one or more students to work on project.

- Extent to which scope of project is limited and feasible, given student experience and time availability.

- Extent to which logistics are practical.

**Selection Process**

All submissions will be reviewed by a selection committee composed of faculty and students. Anonymous reviews of the proposals will be solicited and used as input to the decision process. Proposers with promising projects may be asked to submit revised proposals as part of the selection process. Initial reviews are completed by late January. Final selection is made by late February.
Project Timeline
Group projects occur mostly in three quarters (Spring, Fall, and Winter) spanning part of the students’ first year of their Masters’ program and their entire second year.

Additional Information
Final reports from completed projects are available at http://www.bren.ucsb.edu/research/Default.html.

Questions regarding Group Project goals or proposal preparation can be addressed to the Group Project Faculty Supervisor (Prof. Charles D. Kolstad, 805-893-2108 or kolstad@bren.ucsb.edu).

Submit proposals to:
Donald Bren School of Environmental Science & Management
4670 Physical Sciences North
UC Santa Barbara, CA 93106-5131
Attn: Jill Richardson

Or email jrichardson@bren.ucsb.edu
(Electronic submissions are encouraged.)

*If you would like to update your contact information or add someone to our contact list, please call Jill Richardson at 805-893-7980.

9/18/01