SUMMARY | PEST MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESEARCH GRANT REVIEW MEETING

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PESTICIDE REGULATION

February 14, 2019

Produced by the Consensus and Collaboration Program, CSU Sacramento College of Continuing Education

Contents

1. Attendance

Pest Management Advisory Committee (PMAC) Members

1. Brenna Aegerter, University of California Cooperative Extension
2. David Bakke, U.S. Forest Service
3. Steve Blecker, California Department of Food and Agriculture
4. Caroline Cox, Center for Environmental Health
5. Robert Edwards, Californians for Pesticide Reform (alternate)
6. Robert Ehn, Western Plant Health Association
7. Jonathan Evans, Center for Biological Diversity
8. Jim Farrar, University of California Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program
9. Anne Katten, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation
10. Marla Livengood, California Strawberry Commission (via webcast)
11. Nick Lupien, California Association of Pest Control Advisors
12. Margaret Reeves, Pesticide Action Network
13. David Still, California State University Pomona Agricultural Research Institute (via webcast)
14. Sanitation Agencies Dave Tamayo, California Association of
15. Kevin Wright, California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association

California Department of Pesticide Regulation

16. Jesse Cuevas, Assistant Director
17. Joe Damiano
18. John Gerlach
19. Doug Downie
20. Atefeh Nik
21. Rodney Jones

22. Catherine Bilheimer
23. Craig Cassidy
24. Matt Fossen
25. Jill Townzen

Facilitation Support

26. Ariel Ambruster, CSUS

27. Julia Van Horn, CSUS

2. Opening Comments and Background

Introductions and Chair's opening comments

Jesse Cuevas, Assistant Director, filling in for Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) Acting Director Teresa Marks, welcomed everyone and thanked members of the Pest Management Advisory Committee (PMAC), including new members, for joining the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate, rank, and recommend pest management research grant proposals for possible DPR funding.

Background on DPR's Pest Management Research Grant Program, Project Proposal Review, and Basic Procedures

Doug Downie, Senior Environmental Scientist, Pest Management and Licensing Branch, DPR, provided background on the Department's Research Grant Program and other relevant updates. DPR recently released a document titled *Roadmap for Integrated Pest Management* and will hold its second Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Research Symposium on March 26, 2019.

Dr. Downie noted that the solicitation for DPR's Alliance Grant Program was released on January 4, 2019, and the deadline for submission of concepts has been extended to March 4, 2019. The deadline for full proposals is March 18, and proposal review will begin April 23. Due to the extended deadline, the PMAC will not hold its scheduled May meeting to review Alliance Grant Program proposals; instead a special meeting is likely to be called between May and August.

Dr. Downie reviewed funding details and priorities for the current round of Research Grant Program funding. The Department expects to award $1.1 million in grants, and will consider proposals requesting $50,000 to $500,000. Funds will be awarded competitively to projects that develop methods or practices to reduce risks associated with pesticides of high regulatory concern and/or considered high-risk and which can be incorporated into an IPM system.

Dr. Downie reviewed the response to the Research Grant solicitation and key grant program milestones:

- 14 concepts proposals were submitted
- 9 applicants were invited to submit full proposals – 6 agriculture, 2 urban, 1 livestock
- Grants will be awarded by the end of March 2019
- The project start date is July 1, 2019

2019-2020 Research Grant Summary of Submitted Proposals

Proposal Short and Full Title	Principal Investigator	Budget
Williams predict risk to bees Predictive models of pesticide exposure and impacts on bees	**Neal Williams**	$214,452
Trouillas biocontrol fruit and nut crops Develop biological control solutions for the management of canker diseases in the fruit and nut crops	**Florent Trouillas**	$197,202
Del Pozo-Valdivia aphid management in lettuce Efficacy of alternatives to pyrethroids and neonicotinoids for aphid management in lettuce	**Alejandro Del Pozo-Valdivia**	$87,320
Hedley reduce pesticide use in mosquito habitats Increasing *Gambusia affinis* production and stocking rates to reduce pesticide usage in mosquito breeding habitats	**Tony Hedley/Samer Elkashef**	$211,704
Geiger pest prevention SF affordable housing Evaluating the effectiveness of pest preventative design elements incorporated into 3495 affordable housing units in San Francisco	**Chris Geiger**	$160,651
Pitzer House fly IPM Implementing a novel pupal parasitoid release strategy as a biological alternative to insecticide applications used in house fly IPM programs	**Jimmy Pitzer**	$365,686
Michailides IPM to reduce nut and fruit loss Integrated pest management approaches to reduce losses of nut and fruit crops caused by Colletotrichum species and Botryosphaeria family members on pistachio, almond and avocado in California	**Themis J. Michailides**	$284,251
Quinn urban rats Development of best management practices to manage urban rats, protect public health, and reduce rodenticide use	**Niamh Quinn**	$498,672
Mesgaran weedy rice management Development of a decision support tool for enhancing the efficacy of stale seedbed for management of weedy rice and rice fields of California	**Mohsen Mesgaran**	$343,793

Dr. Downie noted an inconsistency in the listed Principal Investigator (PI) for one project, which was incorrectly listed as "Hedley" on the review sheet but properly listed as Samer Elkashef in the proposal summaries packet.

Dr. Downie then reviewed the goals for the meeting:

- Identify proposals PMAC feels are fundable
- Rank those proposals in order of preference
- Record merits and concerns for all proposals, including for those that are unfundable in order to provide feedback to the PIs of those projects

A PMAC member said that the link for the IPM Research Symposium seemed not to be functioning. Dr. Downie said DPR would investigate the issue.

Criteria for Ranking Proposals and Grant Program Procedures

Dr. Downie then introduced the facilitator, Ms. Ariel Ambruster from the Consensus and Collaboration Program at Sacramento State University. Ms. Ambruster reviewed the role and purpose of PMAC in the grant funding process, which is to advise DPR but not to make funding decisions.

Ms. Ambruster affirmed the importance of the diverse perspectives of the PMAC members and noted that the goal is not to reach consensus but rather to get input from all of the PMAC members present.

Ms. Ambruster reviewed the meeting ground rules and ranking criteria:

- How well each proposal meets the solicitation focus for funding priority
- Overall quality of each proposal

3. Rankings Based on Reviewers' Scoring

Ms. Ambruster presented the rankings of the proposals based on pre-meeting scoring. Sixteen PMAC members reviewed and scored the 9 proposals prior to the meeting. The numeric scores were converted to ranks, where 1 was the most highly regarded proposal and 9 was the least. These ranks were averaged, as presented in the following chart:

Initial Ranks

PI & Short Title	Funds Requested	Cumulative funds	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16	Ave	SD
Williams predict risk to bees	$214,452	$214,452	2	5	6	1	2	2	6	1	3	5	2	6	4	2	2	2	3.06	1.82
Touillas biocontrol fruit and nut crops	$197,202	$411,654	3	7	9	2	4	4	5	8	2	6	7	3	4	4	4	2	4.50	2.15
Del Pozo-Valdivia aphid management in lettuce	$87,328	$498,982	1	1	2	6	9	7	1	2	8	1	5	9	7	9	1	ND	4.57	3.24
Hedley reduce pesticide use in mosquito havitats	$211,704	$710,686	6	2	2	4	3	4	9	9	5	5	9	4	4	4	4	8	5.09	2.20
Geiger pest prevention SF affordable housing	$160,651	$871,337	9	9	7	3	1	2	5	6	5	8	2	2	9	2	9	ND	5.10	3.06
Pitzer house fly IPM	$365,686	$1,237,023	8	2	5	5	5	5	3	7	5	3	8	1	6	5	9	9	5.31	2.28
Michailides IPM to reduce nut and fruit loss	$284,251	$1,521,274	5	4	8	7	7	6	2	4	9	2	6	8	2	9	6	5	5.53	2.28
Quinn urban rats	$498,672	$2,019,946	7	8	5	8	6	8	8	5	1	9	3	7	1	7	7	ND	5.93	2.46
Mesgaran weedy rice management tools	$343,793	$2,363,739	4	6	1	9	8	9	7	4	7	7	4	5	8	7	5	6	6.00	2.10

Ms. Ambruster asked whether any of the proposals were considered unfundable. One PMAC member said that none of the proposals were unfundable, but the Quinn – Urban Rats and Mesgaran – Weedy Rice Management Tools proposals were unlikely to be funded given their rankings at the bottom of the group. The member proposed that these two proposals not be discussed further since they were unlikely to be funded.

A PMAC member asked for clarification about the ranked scores. Mr. Downie said that the table presents the proposals sorted according to their average ranks. Members scored each proposal on a scale from 0 to 100; each member's scores were converted into a ranking of their most to least highly regarded proposals, and then the ranking numbers given by all PMAC members were averaged. In the rank chart, the proposals with the lowest average ranking number are considered the highest quality.

A PMAC member noted that even the proposal with the lowest average score received one ranking of "1," indicating that one member of the committee considered it the most high-quality proposal. The member said that therefore all proposals should be discussed.

Ms. Ambruster asked how many members preferred to remove the Quinn and Mesgaran proposals from consideration. Six members were in favor and seven preferred to discuss and consider all nine proposals. Ms. Ambruster said that all proposals would be discussed, and fundability would be revisited later in the meeting.

4. Discussion of Proposals

Ms. Ambruster reviewed the proposals in the order of their initial ranking by PMAC members. PMAC members discussed the merits and concerns for all 9 projects proposals, in the order of their initial ranking. Below is a summary of PMAC members' comments for each of the 9 proposals. Comments reflect individual PMAC member observations, not consensus opinions. Thus, merits and concerns may occasionally appear to be contradictory.

A PMAC member asked whether comments made during the discussion will be provided to the PIs to allow for modifications of the proposals. Mr. Gerlach said that that DPR does share feedback allowing for proposal modification.

Williams – Predict risk to bees

Merits

- ➢ The proposal is strong and seems to be very realistic, collecting data through bee pollen.
- ➢ The proposal has support from both the Almond Board and the Bee Keepers Association.
- ➢ The PI has strong background and experience and most of the charges in the proposal are analytical.
- ➢ Development of a science-based model of landscape-level risks to bees will provide a foundation for future risk-mitigation work.
- ➢ The project will make an important contribution to the body of knowledge about bee exposure to pesticides.
- ➢ The proposal aligns with the solicitation focus on pesticides that are high-risk or of high regulatory concern, focusing on the risk to bees of chlorpyrifos (CPS), pyrethroids (PYR), and neonicotinoids (NEO).

Concerns

- ➢ The project may be more beneficial if conducted in an annual cropping system, rather than with perennial crops.
- ➢ Reduced risk alternatives aren't discussed at all. What would the reduced risk alternatives be?
- ➢ The modeling won't get to risk alternatives and will just identify risks. So this is the first step in a landscape-level analysis.
- ➢ More detail is needed about the reduced-risk alternatives. Evaluation of risk can be important, but is not fundamental to evaluation of reduced risk.

- ➢ The project could be more effective if the data were real-time. As-is, it is not actionable.
- ➢ How will new data be incorporated, beyond the life of this proposal?
- ➢ The project neglects possible synergistic effects of exposure to multiple pesticides.
- ➢ The DPR Pesticide Use Reporting (PUR) data that the project relies on have a two-year lag, so the maps developed may be based on two-year-old data. If crops and/or pesticides are not consistent year to year, it is not clear how applicable this data would be.
- ➢ The DPR PUR data does not include information about how pesticides are applied (soil, foliar, etc.). It may be more effective to get pesticide information directly from growers.
- ➢ Lack of details about crop stage and presence of bees in field make the data less useful for this type of project.
- ➢ Data from County Agricultural Commissioners would be more current – often available within one week to a month.

Trouillas – Biocontrol fruit and nut crops

Merits

- ➢ The proposal is strong and classical, focusing on biocontrols.
- ➢ The fungicides addressed, particularly myclobutanil, are highly chronically toxic, making the project important in terms of worker exposure. Workers report using backpack sprayers to apply the fungicides.
- ➢ The project has many strong letters of support.
- ➢ Incorporates a stepwise process that will test commercially available biocontrol agents in the lab and then in orchards, across multiple crops and multiple years, which will demonstrate whether they will be effective under various conditions.

Concerns

- ➢ It would be better to run the tests in more than one orchard, since plant response will change depending on local conditions, climate, etc.
- ➢ The pesticides do not meet the criteria of being high risk.
- ➢ The proposal does not adequately address the timeline for plants to heal from pruning wounds. Contrary to what the proposal implied, the fungicides used normally last long enough for the wound to heal and do not normally need to be reapplied.
- ➢ The proposal does not incorporate mixtures of biological control agents, which may be more effective than a single agent.
- ➢ The proposal should include collection of economic data for the cost of current practices versus their proposed methods, as this information is highly relevant to growers considering whether to adopt a new method. The proposal assumes that the biological control agents will be economically favorable.
- ➢ The fungicides currently used are normally sprayed on, not hand painted, so workers are not being exposed at a level that would make it high-risk.

Requested Clarification

- ➢ Although the proposal includes hazard statements from the Environmental Protection

Agency (EPA), dosage was not addressed. Additional information about dosage and exposure is necessary to build the case for risk.

Del Pozo-Valdivia – Aphid management in lettuce

Merits

➢ The pesticides addressed by this project meet the criteria of being high risk.
➢ The project is well-rounded, looking at the impact of natural enemies and integrating biological controls, using different locations in different years.
➢ Looks at upward systemicity with seed treatment versus foliar use for pyrethroids and neonicotinoids.
➢ The proposal is economical and well-written.
➢ The project looks at the effects on beneficial insects of both biological and chemical products.

Concerns

➢ Many of the products to be tested are synthetic pesticides.
➢ If sampling is done by bagging plants, sampling will miss flying insects.
➢ The sampling protocol does not seem to fit the proposal.
➢ The proposal does not include a test of all treatments combined, so any potential synergies will be missed.
➢ Treating seeds at high enough concentrations to be effective is very difficult and complicated.
➢ Sample numbers are too low.
➢ The description of Ian Grettenberger's role in the project is vague.
➢ A large portion of the field research is to be carried out by undergraduate field assistants, which brings up concerns about whether they will have the adequate skill and expertise as well as ethical issues relating to their pay, which seems to be below minimum wage.
➢ The proposal does not address the issue of insect exposure to pesticides through flowering weeds. Although it may not be a big issue, it should be addressed.

Requested Clarification

➢ It is unclear whether combinations of treatments will be tested.

Hedley/Elkasheff – reduce pesticide use in mosquito habitats

Merits

➢ The proposal meets the criteria of the pesticides being high risk and of high regulatory concern.
➢ The project's goal is laudable.
➢ The proposal has a good experimental design.

Concerns

- The proposal seems to be more a management effort than an experiment. The goal seems to be to improve rearing facilities for mosquito fish rather than investigating scientific questions, and it is not controlled enough to scientifically test hypotheses. The environment in which the fish are put, not just the stocking rate, will affect outcomes.
- Adult population data from Year One cannot be used in comparison with population data in Years Two and Three, as populations will fluctuate for a multitude of reasons.
- The question of identifying a minimum stocking level does not require the production increase. The project seems to be more a capital improvement effort than research proposal. The research aspect could have been a small, focused study.
- The proposal could be improved by adjusting the objectives so that the primary objective is experimental, focusing on how much pesticide use can be reduced through increased stocking within an acre.
- Lowering pesticide use rates can induce resistance if pesticides are applied below the labeled use rate.
- Some of the pesticides addressed are high risk, but a more thorough elaboration of risk would have been useful.
- The sample size, in terms of numbers of fields, is too low. Unforeseen changes in ecosystems, such as a particular field being drained, would make it no longer comparable to other fields being studied.
- The fish species in the study is introduced and has negative ecosystem repercussions, including on native fauna.
- Larval counts along the edge of a field are not a good measure of mosquito populations in the entire field.

Geiger – Pest prevention SF affordable housing

Merits

- The risks associated with the active ingredients in the study are well-known and any reduction in their use is good.
- Study design for urban-based products is complicated due to the high number of variables, but looking at before and after implementation of IPM efforts is a strong idea.
- The need is high, especially in affordable housing where tenants have limited means and high vulnerability.
- The project builds on a strong dataset based on previous work.
- The need is clear and well laid out.
- This project takes advantage of a unique opportunity to document whether the significant effort undertaken in San Francisco has been successful and in what ways.
- The proposal is a cost-effective way to take advantage of an opportunity that will not be available often.
- The proposal presents a practical way of using data that has been generated.
- The project assesses the effectiveness of an effort that was already carried out.
- Structural changes to the design of housing units provide long-term benefits, so the units can be compared with similar units that have not implemented the structural controls. There are challenges for determining causation versus correlational due to real

world conditions and complications, but this is an important opportunity to look at a public policy mechanism in a real world environment.

➢ The challenge of real-world complications is real, but the dataset is large, with over two thousand units, which provides a good opportunity to conduct significant statistical analysis.

➢ Observational data can be useful, especially when experimental data is not possible. There are some questions that cannot be answered, but it will still be possible to examine some evidence about the effectiveness of the structural changes implemented.

Concerns

➢ The proposal is observational and does not include controls. Additionally, it has been too long since the practices were put in place to be able to directly examine the effects of the treatment. There are likely very different levels of sanitation within apartments, which will affect findings. The findings will not be concrete or generalizable.

➢ The proposal seems like an effort to get funding for pest inspections.

➢ The proposal seems to be a post-hoc attempt to learn whether interventions put in place were effective. Quantitative analysis should have been built in to the project from the beginning.

➢ The project should examine other IPM approaches, in addition to structural changes.

➢ It will be very challenging to go beyond correlation to make definitive conclusions about causation.

Pitzer – House fly IPM

Merits

➢ There is a need for effective methods for eliminating houseflies, as current methods are ineffective.

➢ The approach could be applicable beyond the dairy industry.

➢ There is a need for biological controls due to insecticide resistance.

➢ Although the budget is high overall, it is good that the travel budget includes support for student researchers.

Concerns

➢ The cost of the proposal is high, especially given what it will accomplish.

➢ Although the proposal assumes resistance to insecticides, it includes significant budget to investigate resistance. In addition, improving use of biocontrols is not dependent on the existence of resistance. The study should focus on implementing the biocontrols.

➢ The proposal does not sufficiently address the environmental spread of neonicotinoids from use in dairy operations nor establish the risk to pollinators from this application.

➢ The costs referred to in the justification are from nationwide data, but should be specific to the California dairy industry.

➢ The part of the proposal that focuses on implementation of the biocontrol centers around timing, however there are broadly overlapping generations of house flies in

dairy operations, so it is not clear whether there are opportunities to reduce costs and/or increase effectiveness through timing.

➢ In order to identify positive effects, information is needed about current rates of parasitism as well as how much parasitism is needed in order to see effects on the fly population. The proposal does not address whether this information is already known nor whether the study will answer these questions.

Michailides – IPM to reduce nut and fruit loss

Merits

➢ The proposal presents a strong concept from an IPM perspective, integrating selective pruning of diseased wood, treating wounds, and physical barriers against infections.

➢ The hypothesis and design of the proposal are excellent, and it has an appropriate budget.

➢ The proposal addresses an increasing problem, clearly identifies the issues, and has good focus and scale.

Concerns

➢ The proposal doesn't seem to be looking at significant changes from current practices, looking at new fungicides rather than other solutions. Continuing to use fungicides is not likely to address the issue of resistance.

➢ The proposal looks at 14 chemical products and barely mentions biologicals. It seems more like a study on the efficacy of chemical fungicides than an IPM project.

➢ The fungicides addressed in this project do not meet the criteria of high regulatory concern or high risk. The main risk with regard to these fungicides is resistance, which is not the focus of these grants.

➢ The largest portion of the budget is dedicated to economic analysis, which is likely to be challenging for this project.

Quinn – Urban rats

Merits

➢ The proposal quantifies rat behavior and the effects of management efforts, rather than being purely observational.

➢ The project has an urban justice aspect.

➢ The PI is well qualified.

➢ The subject of the proposal is challenging to study, but the PI seems well qualified to carry out the project and the proposal is well-written.

➢ The issue of secondary poisoning of raptors is important and the study is likely to answer relevant questions.

➢ The project is likely to lead to solid conclusions that can be applicable in other locations.

➢ The team recognizes the limits of the study.

➢ The project has strong industry cooperation.

➢ The study will produce realistic economic analysis.

Concerns

➤ The cost is high for a single study, but there is a possibility that the project could become a long-term program.
➤ The cost is very high and the project does not seem to be accomplishing much more than the lower-budget projects.
➤ The project may not lead to significant changes in pest management practices.
➤ There are already structural and sanitation best management practices for rodent control. Although there is good existing information about this, the proposal did not list the BMPs and the experiment is set up to define BMPs later. This could mean simply using more second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides, rather than structural approaches. There is also some existing research about the behavioral component of rodent control. The project needs to look at how to reduce rodent attraction.
➤ The proposal does not include prevention.

Mesgaran – weedy rice management tools

Merits

➤ Weedy rice is an increasing problem with an economic impact.
➤ The herbicides used against weedy rice have a secondary risk to aquatic invertebrates, and improvement in the timing of application could lead to less herbicide use later in the season. There is also a possibility that cultivation could be used instead of herbicide for control early in the season.
➤ There is a possibility that this approach could work with shallow cultivation and eliminate the use of herbicide in that context.
➤ The focus on stale seedbed and use of modeling are good approaches.

Concerns

➤ The model may not be useful for decision-making.
➤ The focus of the proposal is on timing the germination of weeds and springtime planting of rice, which will be challenging. It is not clear that this will be an effective use of funding.
➤ The proposal seems to suggest that a number of herbicides that affect water quality are used to control weedy rice. They are not, as weedy rice is rice and, like rice, is resistant to those particular herbicides. That is why glyphosate is used to treat it..
➤ If the stale seedbed is treated with glyphosate, this approach may end up increasing glyphosate use.
➤ The project does not seem to include a significant move away from the use of herbicides, which is especially concerning given the high cost of the proposal.
➤ The project would model germination in the lab, but field conditions are less stable, so the model may not be relevant to the field conditions.

5. Revised Rankings and Summary Recommendations

Based on the discussion, PMAC members who had participated in the initial ranking re-ranked the nine proposals. Re-ranking results are shown in the table below:

Revised Ranks

PI & Short Title	Funds Requested	Cumulative funds	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16	Ave	SD
Williams predict risk to bees	$214,452	$214,452	3	3	6	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	4	4				2.62	1.33
Geiger pest prevention SF affordable housing	$160,651	$375,103	8	7	3	3	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	9	7				3.58	2.85
Touillas biocontrol fruit and nut crops	$197,202	$572,305	2	4	2	5	3	7	5	3	3	3	3	4	3				3.62	1.33
Del Pozo-Valdivia aphid management in lettuce	$87,328	$659,633	1	2	1	4	6	3	1	6	6	6	6	7	1				3.85	2.32
Michailides IPM to reduce nut and fruit loss	$284,251	$943,884	4	5	4	8	7	4	6	7	7	7	7	2	2				5.38	1.94
Hedley reduce pesticide use in mosquito havitats	$211,704	$1,155,588	9	9	8	7	4	8	7	4	4	5	4	4	8				6.23	2.01
Quinn urban rats	$498,672	$1,654,260	6	8	7	2	8	5	4	8	8	8	8	1	9				6.31	2.46
Pitzer house fly IPM	$365,686	$2,019,946	7	6	9	9	5	9	8	5	5	4	5	6	7				6.50	1.69
Mesgaran weedy rice management tools	$343,793	$2,363,739	5	9	5	6	9	6	9	9	9	9	9	8	5				4.54	1.74

PMAC members validated the re-rankings. One PMAC member noted that the Geiger – Pest Prevention SF Affordable Housing proposal ranked significantly higher in the re-ranking. The member reiterated strong doubts that the proposal would result in useful conclusions.

A PMAC member noted that in the re-ranked table, there was a clear split in the rankings between the top four proposals, which all had a ranking score of 3.85 or lower, and the last five, which all had ranking scores of 5.38 or higher.

The members discussed the re-ranking process, affirming that only members who participated in the original ranking may participate in the re-ranking, that only those PMAC members who

participated in the meeting and discussion may participate in the re-ranking, and that any changes to the process should be made ahead of a meeting.

Ms. Ambruster asked if PMAC members considered any proposals to be unfundable. PMAC members discussed three options for drawing a line between fundable and unfundable proposals based on total funding available and proposal dollar amounts.

A PMAC member noted that in the past, the Council provided feedback about all of the proposals through written comments and meeting discussion and provided recommendations via the re-ranking of the proposals, and that DPR would make the final decisions about which particular proposals would receive funding. The member asked whether the process had changed.

A member noted that the discussion of fundable versus unfundable proposals referred to a process of identifying any proposals that were unfit to receive funding because they do not meet the parameters of the solicitation, rather than making a decision about which specific proposals DPR should fund.

DPR staff affirmed that the process remains the same, and that the Department will consider PMAC rankings and discussion, as well as other factors, to make the final funding decisions. DPR staff affirmed that the discussion as well as the proposal rankings provided them with the information and feedback they needed.

6. Grant Program Process Feedback

PMAC members were invited to provide feedback to DPR on the Grant Program review process. The following summarizes feedback from PMAC members about the review process:

- Multiple PMAC members said the movement away from the FAAST system was a positive change.
- It was helpful to have PDFs of the cited references available while reviewing the proposals.
- The email attachments were very large and caused difficulty accessing the materials. Consider providing access to the materials through a cloud-based service.
    - DPF staff affirmed that the request was noted and they would try to meet it, but that there are State IT and security concerns, so it may not be possible. In the future, the materials will likely be sent in multiple emails with smaller attachments.
- The Excel scoring spreadsheet was helpful, allowing members to see their own relative rankings and compare projects side-by-side.

7. Closing Remarks

Mr. Cuevas thanked PMAC members for their feedback, affirming that it is very helpful to DPR's funding decisions. He reiterated that the date for the next PMAC meeting is still yet to be determined, due to the extension of the Alliance Grant Program deadlines.