
SOUTHERN REGIONAL AQUACULTURE CENTER



OPERATIONS MANUAL FOR COOPERATIVE REGIONAL AQUACULTURE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

December, 2003



In cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative
State Research, Education & Extension Service

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FOR
COOPERATIVE REGIONAL AQUACULTURE
RESEARCH AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES**

December, 2003

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SELECTED DEFINITIONS

SRAC	Southern Regional Aquaculture Center
CSREES	Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service
CRIS	Current Research Information System
Project Participants	1862 and 1890 Land Grant Colleges and Universities, Sea Grant Colleges, and other state, territorial or federal institutions and private institutions with demonstrated competence in aquaculture research and development are eligible to participate in the Regional Aquaculture Center programs.
Priority Area	A priority area of research and/or extension that addresses a concern of aquaculture in the Southern Region. The need for work in a priority area is determined by the Board of Directors with recommendations from the Technical Committee and Industry Advisory Council.
Problem Statement	A document drafted in a standard format that describes a priority problem in regional aquaculture, the need for conducting a project in the problem area, and the approach to be used in solving the problem.
Call for Statements of Interest	A concise description of the work needed to address a priority problem in regional aquaculture. The Call for Statements of Interest is essentially a “request for proposals” and is sent to institutions and individuals within the Southern Region having demonstrated capabilities to conduct work in the area under consideration.
Statement of Interest	A formal, written response to the Call for Statements of Interest. The Statement of Interest is essentially a “mini-proposal” that describes the work to be conducted and funds requested from SRAC.
Project Proposal	The written document specifying the work to be done, its significance, the procedures for conducting the work, budget requests, and personnel needed to complete the project. This is the document submitted to the SRAC Board of Directors for funding consideration.
Annual Plan of Work	A compilation of all project proposals approved for funding for that year, together with a description of the procedures used to select proposals, and the operational procedures for the Administrative Center. SRAC submits the Annual Plan of Work to CSREES for approval.
Progress Report/ Termination Report	The report of progress and accomplishments for each project receiving funding from SRAC. Progress made on each objective specified in the project proposal must be addressed. Progress reports are prepared annually and cover the duration of the project to date.

SRAC Progress Report

A compilation of progress and termination reports for all regional projects funded for that year. All the reports are compiled at the SRAC office into one overall document for submission to the Board of Directors and to CSREES.

Final Project Summary

A comprehensive summary of the outcome and significance of the project. This report is prepared by the Project Leader 1-3 years after completion of the project to document the full scope and impact of the project and to catalog all publications resulting from the work.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cooperative regional research and extension is a central component of the Federal effort to promote and enhance prosperous agriculture in the United States. The concept was developed to:

- ! Stimulate and facilitate inter-state and inter-institutional cooperation on research and extension activities of regional or national character; and
- ! Plan and coordinate activities to achieve replication but to avoid duplication in research and extension efforts.

Projects that are developed as part of cooperative regional research:

- ! Bring together competent scientific talent from participating universities and other agencies to work on a problem;
- ! Resolve, by team effort, problems too costly in personnel and/or funds for a single institution to attack;
- ! Facilitate the interpretation and application of results for the solution of a problem; and
- ! Bring about stimulation and exchange of ideas and problem solving approaches through research and extension scientists consulting and working together.

Regional research and extension projects supported by SRAC are joint efforts directed toward solving defined problems related to aquaculture in the broad sense, including production, marketing, and consumer concerns. The characteristics that distinguish this work from that of other organizations are:

- ! Projects focus on specific and important problems of concern to the aquaculture industry in two or more states; and
- ! Projects are planned and conducted as concerted efforts in which the participating research and extension scientists are mutually responsible for accomplishing the objectives.

Regionality of a project exists when a cooperative effort fulfills these characteristics and the project activities are shared by a number of participants. A regional research or extension project is not merely a compilation of individual projects that could be completed as effectively at individual locations.

This Manual provides the framework for cooperative regional research and extension activities sponsored by SRAC. The two main sections of this document are "Organization and Administration" and "Regional Project Development and Management." Formats for reports have been placed in the "Appendices" section.

2. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

2.1 REGIONAL CENTERS

Subtitle L is considered by Congress to be the vehicle for the Department of Agriculture to implement the National Aquaculture Development Plan prepared by the Joint Subcommittee on Aquaculture (JSA). The JSA is a statutory committee that operates under the aegis of the Federal Coordinating Council on Science, Engineering, and Technology, in the Office of the Science Advisor to the President. The JSA is permanently chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture.

In 1980, Congress recognized the opportunity for making significant progress in aquaculture development by passing the National Aquaculture Act (P.L. 96-362). The Act established USDA as the

lead agency for aquaculture coordination and called for development of a National Aquaculture Plan. The next year, Congress amended the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-113) by granting, in Title XIV, Subtitle L, Sec. 1475(d) of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (P.L. 97-98), authority to establish aquaculture research, development, and demonstration centers in the United States. It was envisioned that the centers would be used in a national program of cooperative research, extension, and development activities in association with colleges and universities, state Departments of Agriculture, federal facilities, and private research institutions with demonstrated excellence in aquaculture research and development. Eventually, five such centers were established—one in each of the northeastern, north central, southern, western, and tropical/subtropical Pacific regions of the country. Funding for the Centers was reauthorized in subsequent Farm Bills (the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 [P.L. 101-624]; the Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 [P.L. 104-127]; and the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 [P.L. 107-171]).

A regional aquaculture center is an administrative unit and not a physical “brick-and-mortar” facility. Centers provide a mechanism for assessing needs, establishing priorities, and implementing regional research and extension programs in aquaculture. Centers then facilitate administration and implementation of those programs. Centers also serve as focal points for information exchange and foster research and extension linkages at the regional level. Through the programs of the centers, regional aquaculture research needs are identified and addressed, and results made available to users through extension educational programs. Centers also provide for coordination of inter-regional and national programs. Where practical, and as a matter of policy, centers implement their programs by using existing institutional mechanisms and linkages available in the public and private sectors.

2.2 THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL AQUACULTURE CENTER

The Southern Regional Aquaculture Center (SRAC) began organizational activities in 1987, and the first research and extension projects were initiated in 1988. The thirteen states and two territories included in the Southern Region are: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Virginia.

Mississippi State University serves as the Host Institution for SRAC. The Center, which has fiscal responsibilities for the program, is housed at the Delta Research and Extension Center, Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, Stoneville, Mississippi. The functions of the Administrative Center include:

- ! Coordinate projects, and negotiate and enter into one or more Regional Aquaculture Center funding agreements, hereinafter referred to as *the grants*, with the U.S. Department of Agriculture as authorized by Congress;
- ! Serve as fiscal agent in receiving and disbursing monies made available under the grants, utilizing normally accepted accounting practices, and in accordance with the terms and provisions of the grants;
- ! Develop and execute appropriate agreements with the other parties for purposes of transferring funds and for coordinating and implementing all projects approved under the grants; and
- ! Assure legal compliance with terms of the grants and agreements.

The Center Director will also provide executive leadership for the regional program. These responsibilities include:

- ! Serve as ex-officio member and executive secretary to the Board of Directors, responsible for preparing agenda and minutes of Board meetings;

- ! Serve as ex-officio member of the Technical Committee and Industry Advisory Council;
- ! Serve as member of the Executive Committee (see Section 2.7);
- ! Coordinate the development of research and extension plans, budgets and projects;
- ! Coordinate and facilitate interactions among SRAC, the Board of Directors, Industry Advisory Council, Technical Committee, Administrative Advisors, and Work Groups;
- ! Monitor research and extension activities sponsored by SRAC;
- ! Coordinate reviews of project proposals for technical and scientific merit, feasibility, and applicability to priority problems;
- ! Prepare SRAC summary budgets, annual plans of work, and center progress reports as required under the grants;
- ! Recruit other SRAC staff as authorized by the Board of Directors;
- ! Maintain liaison with other Regional Aquaculture Centers; and
- ! Serve as a member of the National Coordinating Council for the Regional Aquaculture Centers in conjunction with Directors of other regional centers and USDA representatives.

2.3 REGIONAL PROGRAMS

The Secretary of Agriculture is responsible for the administration of regional aquaculture funds. This responsibility has been delegated to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES). Responsibility for the preparation, submission, and completion of regional projects and associated use of funds for the southern region lies with the Southern Regional Aquaculture Center Board of Directors. Advisory to the Board of Directors are the Technical Committee and the Industry Advisory Council.

Research and extension problem areas for the southern region are identified each year by the Industry Advisory Council. The Industry Advisory Council and Technical Committee then work jointly to prioritize the problem areas and then develop "Problem Statements" describing objectives of work to solve the problems with highest priority. Using inputs from industry representatives, regional work groups of qualified research and extension scientists are formed. The Work Groups then plan and conduct the work in conjunction with an Administrative Advisor appointed by the Board of Directors. Regional aquaculture funds are allocated to participants in the SRAC projects approved by the Board of Directors and CSREES. Reviews of project proposals, progress reports, and recommendations for continuation, revision, or termination of projects are made jointly by the SRAC Technical Committee and Industry Advisory Council, and approved by the Board of Directors.

2.4 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is the policy-making body for SRAC. Membership of the Board provides an appropriate balance among representatives from State Agricultural Experiment Stations, Cooperative Extension Services, 1890 Institutions, and the Administrative Heads Section (AHS) of the Board on Agriculture Assembly (BAA) of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges.

The structure of the Board is as follows:

- ! Three members of the 1862 Southern Extension Service Directors Association, appointed by that Association;
- ! Three members of the 1862 Southern Experiment Station Directors Association, appointed by that Association;
- ! One member of the 1890 Association of Research Administrators, appointed by that Association;
- ! One member of the 1890 Association of Extension Administrators, appointed by that Association; and

! One AHS administrator from the host institution.

The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- ! Overall administration and management of the regional center program;
- ! Establishment of overall regional aquaculture research and extension goals and allocations of fiscal resources to ensure that SRAC develops strong programs in both research and extension;
- ! Approval of priorities for regional aquaculture research and extension education activities based on inputs from the Technical Committee and Industry Advisory Council and guidance from the National Aquaculture Development Plan;
- ! Review and approval of annual plans of work and accomplishment reports; and
- ! Final selection of proposals for funding by SRAC.

The chair of the Industry Advisory Council and co-chairs of the Technical Committee serve as ex-officio members of the Board.

2.5 INDUSTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Industry Advisory Council (IAC), which meets at least annually, is composed of representatives of state and regional aquaculture associations, aquaculture producers, aquaculture marketing and processing firms, financial institutions, and other interests or organizations as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors. The IAC provides an open forum wherein maximum input from private and public sectors can be gained and incorporated into annual and on-going plans for SRAC. All SRAC research and extension projects originate from priorities identified by the IAC.

2.5.1 Membership of the Industry Advisory Council

The IAC consists of 21 individuals: 15 regular members and 6 at-large members. There is one *regular member* from each of the 13 states and 2 territories in the region. Regular IAC members serve up to 4-year terms, which are staggered so that they overlap for 2-year periods. Individuals may serve for more than one term. At-large IAC members also serve up to 4-year terms that are staggered, and individuals may serve for more than one term. At-large members are recommended by the Executive Committee (Section 2.7) and approved by the Board of Directors, with the goal of achieving an appropriate representation among states and among the aquaculture species represented on the IAC.

Members of the IAC elect a chair and vice-chair from their membership. The terms of the chair and vice chair are staggered so that they overlap for 2-year periods; chairs are limited to two consecutive two-year terms. The chair and vice-chair of the IAC are members of the Executive Committee.

Members of the IAC who miss two consecutive meetings may be dismissed at the discretion of the Executive Committee. IAC members may send a proxy to any IAC meeting provided the person serving as proxy is approved by the SRAC Director prior to the meeting.

2.5.2 Appointment of Industry Advisory Council Members

Terms of IAC members run from 01 September to 31 August. The Director will contact research and extension administrators from 1862 and 1890 Land Grant Institutions in each state to request the appointment of a single person to recommend appointments to vacant positions. In late summer, the Director will request the authorized contact person to submit one recommendation for appointment as a regular member to represent their state. The person submitting the recommendation is expected to solicit

advice for appointments from state Land Grant Administrators, state aquaculture associations, industry advisory groups, administrators from other institutions with interests in aquaculture, state extension specialists, and other groups as deemed appropriate. Recommendations for appointment to vacant regular positions will be subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

If the designated state contact fails to provide a recommendation for filling a vacant regular seat on the IAC by the established deadline for receipt of recommendations, that seat will remain vacant until the next year and the term of that seat will then be 3 years rather than 4.

Nominations for vacant at-large positions also will be solicited from designated contact persons in each state and territory. From the nominations received, the Executive Committee will recommend appointments to fill vacant positions. Recommendations for appointment to vacant at-large positions will be subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

2.5.3 Responsibilities of the Industry Advisory Council

The responsibilities of the Industry Advisory Council are to:

- 1) Identify research and extension needs from an industry perspective;
- 2) Meet annually with the Technical Committee to prioritize research and extension needs;
- 3) Work with the Technical Committee to develop problem statements and recommend funding levels for projects addressing research and extension needs;
- 4) Review project proposals and progress reports; and
- 5) Recommend to the Board, jointly with the Technical Committee, actions regarding new and continuing proposals, proposal modifications, and terminations.

2.6 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Technical Committee (TC) consists of representatives from participating research institutions and state extension services, other state or territorial public agencies as appropriate, and private institutions. Membership of the TC includes research and extension scientists representing all states in the region. The Technical Committee meets as needed, but at least annually, to prioritize project areas and initiate the project-development process.

2.6.1 Membership of the Technical Committee

The TC consists of 30 individuals from participating research institutions and state extension services, other state or territorial public agencies as appropriate, and private institutions. Each state or territory has two seats on the TC—one representing research interests and one representing the extension/outreach interests. Technical Committee members serve up to 4-year appointments, which are staggered. Individuals may serve more than one term on the TC.

The TC has co-chairs for the research and extension subcommittees. Co-chairs are elected by the TC members for 2-year, staggered terms; co-chairs are limited to two consecutive two-year terms. Co-chairs also serve as members of the Executive Committee.

Members of the TC who miss two consecutive meetings may be dismissed at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Technical Committee members may send a proxy to any TC meeting provided the person serving as proxy is approved prior to the meeting by the SRAC Director.

2.6.2 Appointment of Technical Committee Members

The designated contact person (see Section 2.5.2) from states with vacant research or extension positions are requested by the Director to submit recommendations for appointments to fill the vacancy. The designated state contact is expected to solicit recommendations for appointments from appropriate departments at their institution as well as from administrators from other institutions in their state having expertise in aquaculture. Terms run from 01 September to 31 August, and the designated state contacts are asked to provide recommendations in late summer. If the designated contact fails to provide a recommendation for filling a vacant seat on the TC by the established deadline for receipt of recommendations, that seat will remain vacant until the next year and the term of that seat on the TC will then be 3 years rather than 4. Recommendations for appointment to vacant positions will be subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

2.6.3 Responsibilities of the Technical Committee

The responsibilities of the Technical Committee are to:

- 1) Meet annually with the IAC to prioritize research and extension needs;
- 2) Work with the IAC to develop problem statements and recommend funding levels for projects addressing research and extension needs;
- 3) Review proposals, progress reports, and termination reports; and
- 4) Recommend to the Board, jointly with the IAC, actions regarding new and continuing proposals, proposal modifications, and terminations.

2.7 THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee provides a means of obtaining rapid, yet balanced, input on key activities during formation of committees and development of research and extension projects. The Executive Committee consists of five members:

- 1) The SRAC Director;
- 2) The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Industry Advisory Council; and
- 3) The Co-Chairs of the Technical Committee.

The responsibilities of the Executive Committee are to:

- 1) Recommend at-large members of the Industry Advisory Council for consideration by the Board of Directors;
- 2) Dismiss, at their discretion, members of the Industry Advisory Council or Technical Committee who miss two consecutive meetings without justifiable cause;
- 3) Recommend members of project Steering Committees for consideration by the Board of Directors;
- 4) Recommend Project Leaders for consideration by the Board of Directors;
- 5) Recommend Administrative Advisors for consideration by the Board of Directors; and
- 6) Maintain oversight on all programmatic issues to insure that equitable and fair procedures are used to develop and conduct projects.

3. REGIONAL PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

The USDA-CSREES Regional Aquaculture Centers were established to provide a mechanism for assessing regional aquaculture industry needs and establishing research and extension projects to address

those needs. The project-development process differs among the five Regional Aquaculture Centers, but there are three common goals of all Regional Center projects:

- 1) Center projects should be responsive to regional industry needs;
- 2) Projects should resolve, by team effort, problems too vast or too costly in manpower or funds for a single institution to attack; and
- 3) Information should be made quickly available to the industry in an accessible, understandable format.

These goals are met by orchestrating a project development process wherein problems are identified by industry, jointly prioritized and focused by industry and the research community, and then solved by building a team of the best talent in the region.

3.1 CRITERIA FOR REGIONAL PROJECTS

The following criteria will be used in determining whether a proposed cooperative regional research and extension project is appropriate for funding by SRAC:

- 1) The project addresses a problem of fundamental importance to aquaculture in the Southern Region;
- 2) Work on the problem requires more scientific personnel, equipment, and facilities than are generally available at one location; that is, the scientific resources of two or more participating institutions are required;
- 3) The project can be effectively organized and conducted on a regional level, assuring coordinated and complementary contributions by all participants;
- 4) The project involves participation by two or more states or territories in the Southern Region (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Virginia);
- 5) The project can be made sufficiently specific to promise significant accomplishment in a reasonable period of time (usually up to 3 years);
- 6) The proposed work approach is adaptable and particularly suitable for inter-institutional cooperation, resulting in better use of limited resources, an overall saving of funds, and reduced duplication of work;
- 7) Initiation of the project will complement and enhance ongoing extension and research activities by participants, as well as offer potential for expanding these programs; and
- 8) Initiation of the project is likely to attract additional support for work on the problem which is not likely to occur through other programs and mechanisms.

3.2 IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCH AND EXTENSION PRIORITIES

Priority aquaculture research and extension needs for the Southern Region are identified by the IAC. Each year, the IAC meets prior to the annual TC-IAC meeting and develops a list of up to 12 priority problem areas for aquaculture in the southeastern United States. Members of the IAC are expected to solicit input from aquaculture associations, producer organizations, and other individuals involved in aquaculture within their state. Problem areas identified by the IAC should meet the criteria outlined in Section 3.1 (Criteria for Regional Projects). In particular, problems should be sufficiently specific and focused to allow significant progress within a reasonable period of time.

At the annual joint TC-IAC meeting, the TC and IAC work together to rank the problem areas and identify the top 3-6 priorities. Writing teams selected from the TC-IAC membership develop “problem statements” for each of the selected priority areas. Problem statements briefly describe the problem area

and general objectives of the work to be conducted. The problem statement also includes a recommended funding level and project duration. Draft problem statements are discussed and revised by the TC-IAC as a whole. The TC-IAC membership reconsiders the order of priorities and decides which problem statements should be forwarded to the Board of Directors to request approval to release project development funds. The number of priorities recommended for Board action will depend on funding recommendations in the problem statements relative to availability of SRAC funds to support research and extension activities.

3.3 FORMATION OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

For each priority recommended for Board action, the Executive Committee will recommend scientists and industry representatives to serve on the project Steering Committee (Section 3.6.1). One member of the Steering Committee will be recommended by the Executive Committee to serve as *Project Leader* (Section 3.6.3). At the same time, an *Administrative Advisor* (Section 3.6.4) will be recommended by the Executive Committee to serve with the Steering Committee to provide advice and continuous linkage among the Steering Committee, Work Group, and SRAC. The Administrative Advisor will be selected from the Board of Directors or the administrative staff of participating institutions. Recommendations for membership on the Steering Committee, Project Leader, and Administrative Advisor will be subject to approval by the Board of Directors. The Steering Committee has three principal responsibilities:

- 1) Recommend the most effective approach for project development (either the Competitive Proposal Method or Work Group Method; see Section 3.4);
- 2) Develop the “Call for Statements of Interest”; and
- 3) Select project participants.

3.4 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Research and extension activities supported by SRAC will be accomplished by work described in the project proposals. Proposals are developed using one of the following approaches:

Competitive proposal method - When deemed appropriate by the SRAC Board of Directors, the development of research and extension proposals for funding by SRAC utilizing the competitive proposal method will be handled with a Request for Proposals (RFP) distributed to state, territorial or federal institutions and private institutions within the Southern Region with demonstrated competence in aquaculture research and development.

Work Group Method - This is a deliberative process designed to make efficient use of resources during the conduct of the project. This is the process used to develop most of the projects funded by SRAC and is described in detail below.

The Steering Committee will recommend to the Board of Directors which project development process appears to be most appropriate. The Board of Directors will, however, have ultimate authority to determine which method will be used to develop project proposals.

3.5 THE WORK GROUP METHOD

Project development using the Work Group method has two primary goals:

- 1) To be responsive to industry needs; and
- 2) To engage the best scientific talent in the region in planning and conducting projects.

The IAC initiates the project development process by identifying critical problems facing aquaculture in the region. The TC and IAC then jointly prioritize problem areas and recommend the most important research and extension needs to the Board of Directors. Once an area of work has been approved, the Executive Committee appoints a *Steering Committee* to develop the “Call for Statements of Interest” and oversee development of the project proposal and the conduct of the regional project. The “Call for Statements of Interest” is distributed to state, territorial or federal institutions and private institutions within the Southern Region with demonstrated competence in aquaculture research and development. Interested parties respond by submitting a “Statement of Interest” to the SRAC Administrative Office. After careful review of the Statements of Interest, the Steering Committee recommends a *Work Group* consisting of selected project participants and the Steering Committee. The Work Group is responsible for preparing the regional project proposal and conducting the work outlined in the proposal. The project development process is summarized schematically in Appendix A.

3.5.1 Development of the Call for Statements of Interest

After the Board of Directors approves release of project development funds for a specific priority, the Project Leader, Administrative Advisor, and the Director will coordinate a meeting or conference call of the Steering Committee for the purpose of developing the Call for Statements of Interest. The Call for Statements of Interest (Appendix B) is a concise statement of the problem, the specific objectives of the work, the duration of the study, and the estimated budget. The Call for Statements of Interest differs from the problem statement in providing specific, rather than general, objectives and in describing preferred experimental approaches, if any, to accomplish the objectives. Copies of the draft Call for Statements of Interest are sent to members of the TC and IAC for review. After considering comments made by the TC and IAC, the Steering Committee makes appropriate revisions to the Call for Statements of Interest and submits the document to the Director, who will forward it to the Board for review and approval. Upon notification of Board approval, the Director will advise the Project Leader and Administrative Advisor, and these three individuals will coordinate efforts for regional distribution of the Call for Statements of Interest. Calls for Statements of Interest will be sent to (1) institutions and individuals identified by the Steering Committee; (2) extension and research administrators of 1862 and 1890 Land Grant Colleges and Universities within the Southern Region; and (3) other institutions, agencies and organizations within the Southern Region having demonstrated capabilities in the area under consideration.

3.5.2 Formation of the Work Group and Development of the Project Proposal

Persons willing to work cooperatively as a member of the Work Group and having a demonstrated record of expertise and access to facilities are invited to submit a “Statement of Interest” (Appendix C) to the Director’s office. Statements of Interest must be received by the Director’s office on or before a fixed cutoff date to be eligible for further consideration. Copies of all eligible Statements of Interest are then sent to members of the Steering Committee for review and consideration. After sufficient time for deliberation, the Project Leader, Administrative Advisor, and the Director will coordinate a meeting or conference call of the Steering Committee for the purpose of selecting the project participants who, with the Steering Committee, will form the Work Group. The Director informs all who submitted a Statement of Interest of the Steering Committee’s decision regarding their proposed participation in the project.

The Project Leader, Administrative Advisor, and the Director coordinate a meeting of the Work Group (Section 3.6.2) to prepare the proposal. The regional project proposal is the instrument for planning, coordinating, and conducting regional work. It describes the overall procedures for the project, as well as the specific procedures, by objective, for each participant. The project proposal must demonstrate a unified approach to a specific problem. It should not represent a simple compilation of proposals to be conducted by individual groups. The required format for the proposal is shown in Appendix D.

The Work Group also recommends three to six people to serve as external peer reviewers. The reviewers should be experts in the subject area of the project and may be from within or outside the Southern Region. Peer reviewers cannot be current members of the IAC, TC, or Work Group.

3.5.3 Approval of the Regional Project Proposal

The proposal will be reviewed by the Technical Committee, Industry Advisory Council, and designated peer reviewers. After reviewers' comments have been addressed, the proposal will be submitted to the Director.

The process for obtaining final approval of the project is as follows:

- 1) The Director sends copies of the project proposal to Industry Advisory Council and Technical Committee members for review;
- 2) The Project Leader, with help from the Work Group, revises the project proposal to address comments made by the Industry Advisory Council and Technical Committee;
- 3) Using recommendations of the Work Group, the Director obtains external peer reviews for the project proposal from experts within and outside the region;
- 4) The Project Leader, with help from the Work Group, revises the project proposal to address comments made by peer reviewers;
- 5) After reviewers' comments have been addressed, the final proposal is submitted to the Director. The final proposal submitted to the Director must contain the following from each participating institution: appropriate signature pages (Appendix D, page 29); Form CSREES-2004 budget pages (Appendix D, page 30); Estimated Funds from Participating Institution (Exhibit D, page 31); a signed copy of Form CSREES-2008 (Section 3.9 and Appendix E, page 33), and a signed copy of Form CSREES-2006 (Section 3.10 and Appendix F, page 35).
- 6) The Director submits the project proposal and peer reviews to the Board of Directors for review and approval;
- 7) Project proposals not approved by the Board of Directors are returned for revision or are eliminated from consideration;
- 8) The Director prepares an Annual Plan of Work, including all project proposals approved by the Board, and submits the plan to CSREES for approval. Any revision of project proposals resulting from CSREES review is undertaken by the Project Leader, with input from the Work Group, and re-submitted to the Director who forwards the revised project proposal to the Board of Directors for approval;
- 9) The complete SRAC Annual Plan of Work, consisting of all current proposals to be funded by SRAC, is submitted to CSREES by SRAC Director;
- 10) CSREES notifies SRAC of final CSREES approval;
- 11) SRAC notifies the Board of Directors, the Administrative Advisor, and Project Leader of CSREES approval;
- 12) Letters of Agreement (subcontracts) between SRAC and the participating institutions are prepared and forwarded for approval and execution by the authorized institutional official (Appendix G).

3.6 PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

3.6.1 The Steering Committee

Each project has a Steering Committee consisting of a Project Leader, an Administrative Advisor, and research, extension, and industry representatives who have demonstrated interest and capability in specific aspects of aquaculture related to the problem area. Nominations for Project Leader,

Administrative Advisor, and membership on the Steering Committee are submitted to the Board of Directors by the SRAC Executive Committee, who will consider individuals recommended by the TC-IAC, as well as other individuals who have unique qualifications in the area of work identified in the problem statement. Members of the Executive Committee are ex officio members of the Steering Committee.

The responsibilities of the Steering Committee are to:

- 1) Develop the Call for Statements of Interest for the project;
- 2) Review all Statements of Interest and select the project participants; and
- 3) As part of the Work Group, the Steering Committee also has the responsibilities outlined in Section 3.5.

3.6.2 The Work Group

The Work Group is responsible for planning and conducting all work on the project. The Work Group consists of funded project participants and members of the Steering Committee. Members of the Executive Committee are ex-officio members of the Work Group.

Funded project participants are those individuals selected by the Steering Committee who are most qualified to conduct work on the project. Primary considerations for funding include willingness to work cooperatively, a demonstrated record of expertise in the project area, quality of the proposed approach to meeting the project objectives, and access to facilities needed to conduct work on the project. Qualified members of the Steering Committee are eligible to become funded project participants.

The responsibilities of the Work Group are to:

- 1) Prepare the draft project proposal (including budgets);
- 2) Recommend external reviewers for the proposal;
- 3) Assist the Project Leader, as needed, in preparing the final draft of the proposal;
- 4) Conduct the project as outlined in the project proposal;
- 5) Provide annual progress reports to the Project Leader; and
- 6) Provide termination reports to the Project Leader.

3.6.3 The Project Leader

The Project Leader is nominated by the Executive Committee from among members of the Steering Committee for each problem area and is appointed by the Board. The Project Leader should have demonstrated experience and capabilities in the problem area under consideration. The Project Leader plays a critical role in developing the project proposal, overseeing the conduct and reporting of the project, and bringing the project to a successful conclusion.

The responsibilities of the Project Leader are to:

- 1) Organize meetings or conference calls of the Steering Committee and Work Group during the course of development, implementation, conduct, and termination of the project;
- 2) Take appropriate notes and collect written documentation during all meetings or conference calls of the Steering Committee and Work Group; and to prepare and distribute minutes of those meetings or calls;

- 3) Coordinate development of the project proposal, collect all budget information and other documents needed for final submission of the proposal, and prepare the working draft of the proposal (see Section 3.5.3);
- 4) Submit the working draft of the project proposal to the SRAC office;
- 5) Coordinate revisions of the project proposal to address reviewers' comments and prepare the final draft of the proposal, including resumes for each participant and approval signatures by appropriate institutional administrators for all participants;
- 7) Forward the final draft of the project proposal to the SRAC office;
- 8) Following Board and CSREES approval of the project, initiate and coordinate implementation of work as outlined in the project proposal;
- 9) Oversee the conduct of the project and maintain contact with all participants to assure successful completion of all project objectives;
- 10) Review and approve for reimbursement invoices of participating institutions;
- 11) Review and approve requests for no-cost budget revisions and no-cost extensions of time; (see Section 3.13 and Appendix I);
- 12) Oversee arrangements for summarizing results, preparing progress reports and preparing the termination report for projects scheduled for termination (see Sections 3.11 and 3.12), or arrange orderly transition for a revision, replacement, or new project (see Section 3.14), and assure appropriate distribution of these documents;
- 13) Work with the Project Leader for the SRAC Publications, Videos, and Computer Software Project to coordinate development of publications that result from the project (see Section 3.15); and
- 14) Oversee the development and preparation of the Final Project Summary that is prepared 1-3 years after the project termination date when it is ensured that all work is complete and all literature resulting from the project has been published (see Section 3.15.1).

3.6.4 The Administrative Advisor

An Administrative Advisor is recommended for each project by the Executive Committee and appointed by the Board. The Administrative Advisor is selected from the Board of Directors or the administrative staff of participating institutions. It is convenient, though not mandated, to have the Project Leader and Administrative Advisor from the same institution on a given project. The Administrative Advisor plays a crucial role in regional programs, serving the Technical Committee, Industry Advisory Council, and Work Groups in a liaison and advisory function. The Administrative Advisor provides information and advice on administrative and operational procedures and is a voting member of the Steering Committee and Work Group. The Administrative Advisor also works with the Project Leader to oversee development, implementation, and conduct of research and extension projects.

When planning a new regional project, the Administrative Advisor should:

- 1) Assist the Project Leader and the Director of SRAC in identification of institutions, agencies, and organizations with interest in and capability to address the problem statement;
- 2) Maintain a working relationship with the Work Group members and Executive Committee;
- 3) Assist the Project Leader and the Director of SRAC in guiding the Work Group to assure appropriate implementation of research and extension participation in project development; and
- 4) Assure that the project proposal developed is consistent with the "Call for Statements of Interest" approved by the Board of Directors.

While work is in progress, the Administrative Advisor should:

- 1) Confer with the Executive Committee on the adequacy of participation, progress, and support;
- 2) Review and approve for reimbursement invoices of participating institutions;

- 3) Review and approve requests for no-cost budget revisions and no-cost extensions of time (see Section 3.13 and Appendix I); and
- 4) Review and approve details for any proposed project extension, revision or replacement.

3.7 ACTIVATION OF THE REGIONAL PROJECT

Upon approval by the SRAC Board of Directors and CSREES, work described in the research and extension proposal will be implemented. The scientists included in the approved proposal, along with the Steering Committee, will comprise the *Permanent Work Group* for the research and extension effort. This Permanent Work Group is responsible for implementation and conduct of the proposed work.

3.8 FUNDING FOR SELECTED PROJECT PROPOSALS

Final selection of all project proposals for funding and levels of funding will be determined by the SRAC Board of Directors. CSREES must also review and approve all proposals.

Participating institutions will submit to the SRAC Director invoices for reimbursement of expenditures on a quarterly or semi-annual basis. After invoices have been approved by the Project Leader, Administrative Advisor, and SRAC Director, funds will be transferred to the participating institution. Final payment each year will be contingent upon completion of that year's proposed work and the submission and acceptance of an annual or final report to SRAC. Funds will be requested on SRAC invoice forms (Appendix H). *Accountability of expenditures will be the responsibility of each participating institution.*

If a participating institution has more than one department participating and desires to submit invoices on a departmental basis, detailed budgets for each department must be submitted and approved by the Project Leader, Administrative Advisor, and SRAC before submission of invoices.

Funding past the first year of multiple year project proposals will be determined by the Board of Directors and will be contingent upon satisfactory progress of the research/extension activities. The Technical Committee and Industry Advisory Council will review progress reports and make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

Requests for budget revisions (Appendix I) and no-cost extensions (Section 3.13) should be submitted to the SRAC Director for approval by the Project Leader, Administrative Advisor and Director.

3.9 ASSURANCE STATEMENTS

Project activities must be conducted in accordance with applicable laws and guidelines. USDA policy requires formal assurance that appropriate committees at each institution will carry out initial and continuing review of projects with respect to use of recombinant DNA or RNA techniques, humane treatment and care of vertebrate animals, and safeguarding the rights and welfare of human subjects. Form CSREES-2008 (see Appendix E) must be completed by *each* participating institution and attached to the project proposal.

3.10 NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT EXCLUSIONS FORM

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) establishes national policies and goals for the protection of the environment. Under the act, all Federal agencies are directed to consider the environmental consequences of all proposed actions. It is USDA-CSREES policy to comply with the provisions of NEPA and related laws. Accordingly, CSREES requires project participants to furnish environmental data or documentation to assist CSREES in carrying out its responsibilities. For any action deemed to have potential significant environmental effects, a detailed environmental statement

must be prepared by the project participant. The statement may take the form of either an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement, depending on the level of uncertainty regarding potential impacts and the significance of the impact on the environment. Activities that may require an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement include use of genetically altered or non-native animals and field testing of certain vaccines, antibiotics, or other chemicals. On the other hand, certain activities will, by their nature, have little or no effect on the environment and may not require the preparation of an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement. These activities include policy development, administrative functions, educational and informational activities, certain types of laboratory or wet-lab research, and studies conducted in isolated research ponds which involve the use of familiar chemicals or biological materials.

To assist CSREES in carrying out its responsibilities under NEPA, each participating institution must complete Form CSREES-2006 (Appendix F), which is then attached to the project proposal before it is submitted to CSREES for approval. Form CSREES-2006 advises CSREES whether or not the proposed activity falls into one of several categories that may exclude the activity from the requirement of preparing an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement. If the activity does not fall under a categorical exclusion, then an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement may be required. In such instances, CSREES will provide instructions on preparing and submitting the required documents.

Note that the information supplied on form CSREES-2006 is advisory, and is used only to assist CSREES personnel in determining whether further documentation of possible environmental effects will be required. Even if a project participant does not consider their component of a project to have any environmental effect, CSREES will make the final determination of whether or not an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement will be required before the project can be initiated.

3.11 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS

A progress report on each project is required annually. This report serves primarily as an administrative document for progress evaluation, and for budgetary and legislative use. The report is prepared by the Project Leader from reports submitted by each project participant. The report should cover the duration of the project to date and is normally due in the SRAC office by October 1 of each year. The SRAC office will notify the Project Leader of the due date at least two months in advance. The Director of SRAC will combine annual progress reports for all projects funded by the Center and then submit the comprehensive progress report to the Board of Directors and CSREES. Directions for preparing project annual progress reports are provided in Appendix J.

3.12 ANNUAL SUMMARY OF PROJECTS

An annual Summary of Projects is prepared each year, in addition to the Annual Progress Report. This relatively short report serves as a means of communicating the status and significance of active SRAC projects to any interested party. The report is compiled from "popularized" summaries submitted by the Project Leaders of all active projects. The individual project summaries should cover the duration of the project to date and are normally due in the SRAC office by October 1 of each year, at the same time as the Annual Progress Reports. The SRAC office will notify the Project Leader of the due date at least two months in advance. The Director of SRAC will combine the summaries for all projects funded by the Center.

3.13 NO-COST BUDGET REVISIONS AND NO-COST EXTENSIONS OF TIME

3.13.1 No-Cost Budget Revisions

Project participants should prepare accurate budgets that indicate the actual costs that will be incurred during the completion of the project objectives. Once work has begun on the project, participants should also endeavor to conduct work so that annual expenditures within each budget category (Salaries and Wages, Fringe Benefits, and so on) remain within the amount budgeted for that category. At times, however, it may become necessary to transfer funds from one category to another within an annual budget to meet unexpected costs and allow completion of work on project objectives. Requests for no-cost budget revisions should be made as soon as the need for the revision is evident. The request should be made in writing, using the format shown in Appendix I. Note that a full, but concise, explanation of the need for the revision must be part of the request. The request should be forwarded to the SRAC Director for review and approval by the Project Leader, Administrative Advisor and Director. Revisions must not affect the total annual budget for the participating institution and under no circumstances should budget revisions be made to allow work outside the framework of the original project proposal.

3.13.2 No-Cost Extensions of Time

The project participant should strive to complete work on the project within the time frame specified in the project proposal. Circumstances beyond the control of project participants may, however, make it necessary to request additional time to complete project activities. Under such circumstances, SRAC will consider a request for a no-cost extension of time to complete work on the project objective. Such requests must be made in writing at least three months before the expiration date of the subcontract.

The request must contain, as a minimum, the following information:

- ! The length of additional time needed to complete the project objective (normally no more than six months);
- ! A justification for the extension (*Important note: the fact that funds are expected to be unobligated at the expiration of the subcontract is not sufficient justification for extension*);
- ! A concise summary of progress made to date; and
- ! An estimate of the funds expected to remain unobligated on the scheduled expiration date.

The request for a no-cost extension of time should be forwarded to the SRAC Director for review and approval by the Project Leader, Administrative Advisor and Director.

3.14 REVISION, REPLACEMENT, TERMINATION, AND EXTENSION OF REGIONAL PROJECTS

3.14.1 Revision of a Project

The Project Leader, Administrative Advisor, and Steering Committee should periodically assess the progress of the project to ensure that the objectives are being addressed in a timely fashion and as specified in the project proposal. At times, through circumstances beyond the control of the project participants, it may become necessary to modify the project time frame, revise the objectives, substantially alter the procedures, or reassign responsibilities or change participating scientists or institutions. Changes in regional project proposals that provide for progressive development of the work within the general plan and purpose of the undertaking are appropriately classed as revisions. Requests for all project revisions, no matter how slight, should be prepared by the Project Leader and submitted

through the Administrative Advisor to the Director of SRAC. From that point, action on the request will depend upon the nature and significance of the revision.

Requests for minor changes in the procedures or methods that do not alter progress towards completion of an objective should be communicated by the project participant in writing to the Project Leader, who will then forward the request through the Administrative Advisor to the SRAC Director for consideration. Depending upon the nature of the modification, the request may be sent to the Work Group for detailed review.

If the Project Leader and Administrative Advisor feel that major revisions to the project are needed, requests for such revisions should be made after at least one year's work has been completed. Such revisions may involve restatements or additions to objectives and procedures, or significant reassignment of responsibilities and changes in participation (particularly changes in institutional participation). The request for major revision should take the form of a revised project proposal and should include statements of reason for the revision. A critical review, including a summary of accomplishments and publications, the degree to which objectives have been accomplished, and incomplete work and areas needing further investigation, should be attached to the revised project proposal. Revised project proposals are judged by the same criteria and approved in the same manner as new project proposals and must meet requirements set forth in Section 3.5.3.

All changes in project personnel are considered to be significant and require prior approval. If project personnel at a participating institution must be replaced by another qualified individual at the institution, or a person must be removed from the project altogether, the appropriate officer at the participating institution should notify the Project Leader as soon as the change is contemplated. The Project Leader will forward the request through the Administrative Advisor to the SRAC Director for approval by SRAC and CSREES.

3.14.2 Replacement of a Project

If the direction of the project is to be substantially altered, the present project should be closed and a new project proposal submitted (with a new title) for consideration. A critical summary of work and accomplishments under the original project, including a list of publications, should be attached to the new project proposal.

3.14.3 Termination of a Project

At the completion of a project, an annual progress report, which will also include a summary of major accomplishments for the entire duration of the project, must be submitted (see Appendix J). Responsibility for preparation of the termination report rests with the Project Leader.

3.14.4 Extension of a Project

A regional project is proposed for a specified period (usually up to 3 years) subject to annual reviews by the Board of Directors and subsequent approval for continuance. If an extension of the project beyond the final year is required, a justification for the extension must be presented. The statement of justification gives reasons for the requested extension, and indicates the objectives of the project that will be realized. Requests for extension, with justification, are submitted by the Project Leader to the chairs of the Technical Committee and Industry Advisory Council and Director of SRAC in adequate time for review and recommendation to the Board of Directors. Generally, this is one year in advance of the programmed termination date of the project.

3.15 PUBLICATIONS

Publications developed as part of SRAC projects fall into two general categories:

- ! SRAC publications prepared through the Publications, Video, and Computer Software project;
- ! Publications developed external to the SRAC Publications, Video, and Computer Software Project, including such formats as articles in scientific journals and experiment station bulletins and research reports.

3.15.1 SRAC Publications

SRAC publications are developed through the Publications, Video, and Computer Software Project. This is an ongoing project that serves as a means of assessing publication needs and developing publications in an appropriate format. The project operates as follows:

- ! The project has a Project Leader, an Administrative Advisor, and a Steering Committee;
- ! The Steering Committee consists of extension, research, and industry representatives from the Technical Committee, Industry Advisory Council, and other agencies;
- ! Based upon recommendations by the Technical Committee and Industry Advisory Council, the Steering Committee meets annually to develop a project proposal that addresses the priority needs for publications in the Southern Region;
- ! The final project proposal is reviewed within and outside the region as deemed appropriate;
- ! After reviewers' comments have been addressed, the proposal is submitted to the Board of Directors for review and approval.

Publications developed within the Publications, Video, and Computer Software Project generally fall into one of three categories:

- ! Extension fact sheets, videos, or computer software;
- ! Research reports or fact sheets that summarize some aspect of active or recently terminated SRAC projects; or
- ! Final project summaries of SRAC projects.

Extension fact sheets, videos, or computer software provide information or tools of general or specific technical nature having regional applicability for aquaculture. Recommendations for new publications or updates of existing publications are made by the Technical Committee and Industry Advisory Council. The Steering Committee of the Publications, Video, and Computer Software Project then reviews the recommendations and develops a list of priority publication needs. Participation in the project is then solicited from all appropriate institutions.

When appropriate, research reports and fact sheets based upon work conducted in SRAC research projects should be prepared and published during the second and third years of the project to expedite the rapid transfer of information developed in the project to potential users. These publications are developed through the coordinated efforts of the project Work Group and other participants in the research project and the Steering Committee for the Publications, Videos, and Computer Software project.

A detailed Final Project Summary will be prepared for each SRAC research project after completion of the project. The purpose of this publication is to document the full scope and impact of the project and to catalog all publications generated from the work. The summary should be prepared as soon as it is determined that all work on the project is complete and all publications developed from the project have

been published. This will generally be in the 1-3 year period after the project is terminated. The Project Leader oversees the development and preparation of the summary and coordinates publication with the Project Leader of the Publications, Videos, and Computer Software Project.

Specific guidelines and instructions for development of all SRAC publications can be obtained from the Project Leader of the Publications, Video, and Computer Software Project.

3.15.2 Other Publications

Project participants are encouraged to seek publication of SRAC-sponsored research and extension projects in refereed scientific journals and other outlets for research information. Authors should prepare publications in accordance with the publication policy in force at their institution. If the institution does not have a formal publication policy, the author should seek external review of the paper by two or three qualified specialists before submitting the paper for publication. *The author must submit two clean copies of the manuscript, with all tables and figures, to the SRAC Director at the time the paper is submitted for publication.* In a cover letter accompanying the manuscript, the author should indicate that the submission of the article for publication has institutional approval or, if the author's institution does not have a formal publication policy, the author should describe what steps have been taken to have the paper reviewed before submission and the results of that review. The SRAC Director and the Project Leader will then review the manuscript for general content and merit.

The following acknowledgment statement must be prominently included (e.g., as a footnote on the title page) in all publications supported in whole or in part with SRAC funds:

“The work reported in this publication was supported in part by the Southern Regional Aquaculture Center through Grants No(s). _____ from the United States Department of Agriculture Cooperative States Research, Education, and Extension Service.”

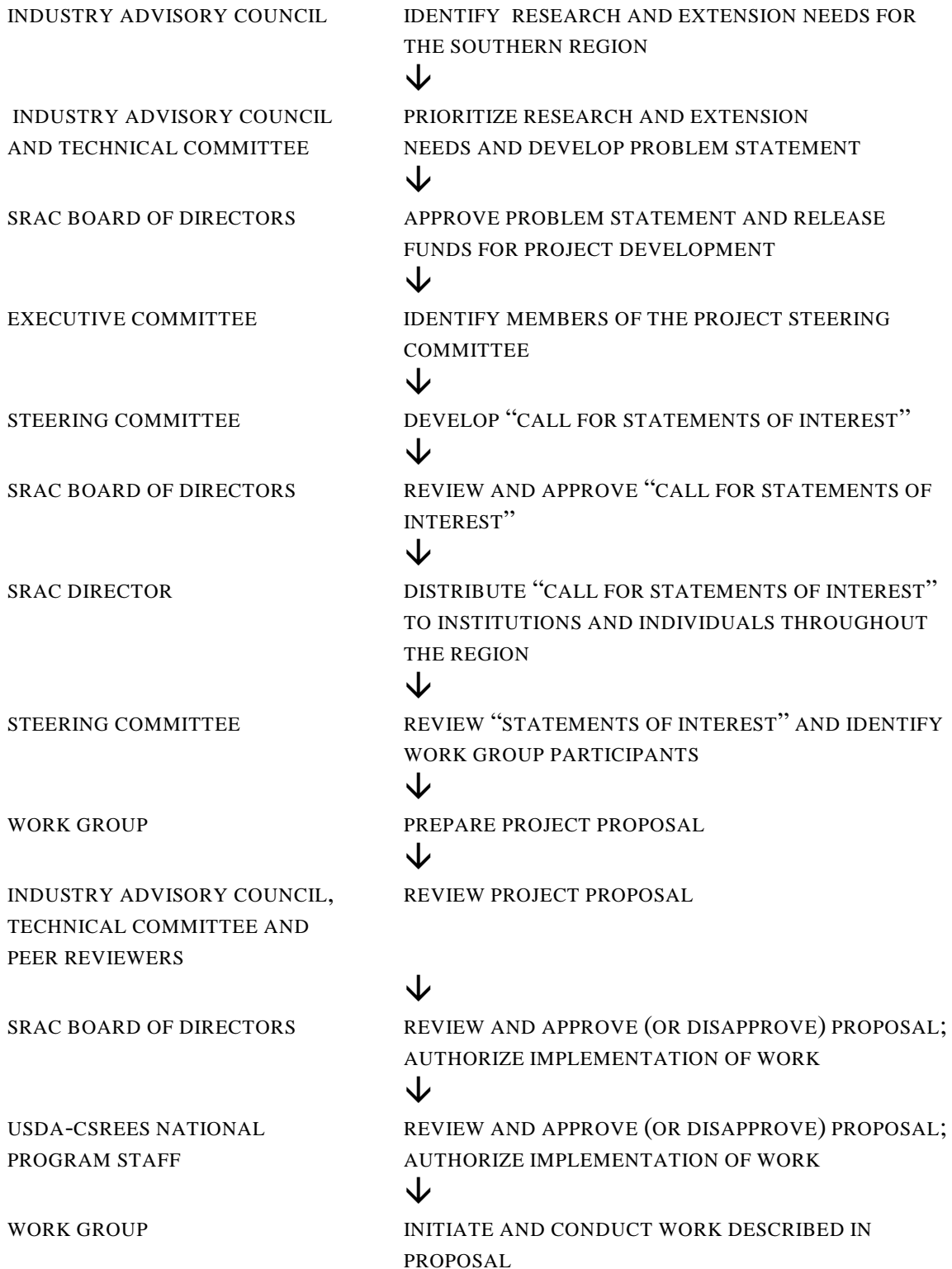
Authors should contact the SRAC administrative office to obtain the correct grant number.

Publications should also indicate that the findings, opinions, and recommendations expressed in the publication are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Southern Regional Aquaculture Center, the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, or the United States Department of Agriculture.

When the paper is published, five (5) reprint copies should be sent to the SRAC Director. Authors are also responsible for notifying the SRAC Director if the paper is not accepted for publication.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - SRAC Project Development



APPENDIX B - Format for SRAC “Call for Statements of Interest”

INSTRUCTIONS: The Call for Statements of Interest is the definitive account of a priority problem in regional aquaculture, the need for conducting a project in the problem area, and the approach to solving the problem. The document should be in the format described below and must be no longer than two (2) pages when typed single-spaced using a standard 12 pt typeface. When the Steering Committee is satisfied with the content of the document, the Project Leader should send the electronic file to:

Director, Southern Regional Aquaculture Center
P.O. Box 197
Stoneville, Mississippi 38776
srac@drec.msstate.edu

CALL FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST

Copy and Distribute to All Interested Parties

The Southern Regional Aquaculture Center solicits response from qualified individuals interested in participating in the collaborative regional project:

TYPE THE PROJECT TITLE HERE IN BOLD UPPERCASE

Background

Briefly define the need for conducting the project. This section is typically 1-3 paragraphs in length, and should describe the nature and extent of the problem and its importance to aquaculture in the region. If possible, provide estimates of the economic impact of the problem and benefits (dollar estimates if available) that could result from the project.

Objectives

Briefly describe the goal of the project (1-4 sentences), followed by clear, concise, numbered, one-sentence statements for each objective. Arrange the objectives in a logical sequence in outline format. Do not specify exchange of information, coordination of work, development of standardized techniques, and joint publication as objectives.

Approach

In general terms, describe the procedures and facilities that will be used to accomplish the objectives. If appropriate, entries in this section can be numbered to correspond to the objectives listed above.

Duration

The time needed, in years, to accomplish the objectives.

Estimated Budget

Estimate the funding in dollars/year needed from SRAC to accomplish the objectives.

APPENDIX C - Format for SRAC “Statement of Interest”

INSTRUCTIONS: Type this form single-spaced using any standard 12 pt typeface. Type each numbered entry and provide a thorough, but concise, response. Leave a one-line space between each item. Use no more than three pages to describe your participation, and append budget page (pages 23) and one-page resume (see page 24). This form must be signed by the participant and the immediate administrator (typically at Department Head level) to signify willingness to participate and commit resources and facilities to the project. Mail fifteen (15) copies of the complete form (including budget page and resume) to the SRAC Director.

STATEMENT OF INTEREST to participate in the regional project

TYPE THE PROJECT TITLE HERE IN BOLD UPPERCASE

Name:
Institution:
Mailing Address:
Telephone:
Fax:
E-Mail:

1. Objective(s) to be addressed:
(list each objective in the “Call for Statements of Interest” that you wish to address)
2. Specific aspect(s) of the objective(s) to be addressed in the proposed work:
(list or describe the specific issue on which you plan to work)
3. Procedures to be used:
(describe the experimental design, methods, and materials that will be used to accomplish the work identified in Item 2)
4. Related and current work:
(briefly describe your past work and the basis for your expertise in this subject area)
5. Available facilities:
(Describe facilities at your disposal and under your control that could be devoted to accomplishing work identified in Item 2)
6. Time needed (in months) and funds requested to accomplish work described in Item 2:

Signed:

Scientist/Participant Title: _____ Date: _____

Administrator (indicate title or position) Title: _____ Date: _____

Completed budget form (page 23) and one-page vita for each participant (page 24) must be included.

APPENDIX C (continued) - Budget Page for "Statement of Interest"

Instructions: A one-page budget proposal should accompany the "Statement of Interest" and must be prepared using the format below.

Salaries of the principal and co-investigators are not allowed and should be considered as institutional contributions. Personnel salary or wage costs should thus reflect only that of technical assistance (research associates, graduate students, etc.) required to accomplish the work. Purchase of nonexpendable equipment is not allowed. Organizations performing work with the support of a SRAC grant are expected to have appropriate facilities, suitably furnished and equipped. SRAC grant funds for research and extension projects may not be used for office equipment and furnishings, air-conditioning, computers, or other "general purpose" equipment.

NOTE: Indirect costs are not allowed. Separate budget(s) must be included for each participating institution. Accountability of expenditures and distribution of funds to participants will be the responsibility of each participating institution.

Proposed Budget for the regional project

TYPE THE PROJECT TITLE HERE IN BOLD UPPERCASE

Name:

Institution:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Salaries and Wages				
Research Associates-Postdoctoral				
Other Professional				
Graduate Students				
Prebaccalaureate Students				
Secretarial-Clerical				
Technical, Shop and Other				
Fringe Benefits (if charged as Direct Costs)				
Total Salaries, Wages and Fringe Benefits				
Materials and Supplies				
Travel within Region				
Publication Costs/Page Charges				
All other Direct Costs (Contractual Services)				
Total (for each year and cumulative)				

APPENDIX C (continued) - Vita for “Statement of Interest”

Instructions: Vitae for “Statements of Interest” and SRAC Project Proposals must be prepared using the format below. Vitae should be in 12 pt typeface and no longer than one page.

VITA (centered at top, bold, all uppercase)

(skip one line)

Name

Address

Phone

Fax

E-mail

(skip one line)

EDUCATION (in bold, all uppercase)

(skip one line)

B.S. (year, major, institution,)

M.S. (year, major, institution,)

Ph.D. (year, major, institution,)

(skip one line)

EMPLOYMENT (in bold, all uppercase)

(skip one line)

List each position held on a separate line from most recent to oldest

(skip one line)

SCIENTIFIC AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (in bold, all uppercase)

(skip one line)

List each organization on a separate line

(skip one line)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS (in bold, all uppercase)

(skip one line)

List several recent publications (from most recent to oldest) relevant to the subject area of the project.

Use the citation format in the Transactions of the American Fisheries Society, including complete spelling of journal names. Skip one line between each entry.

APPENDIX D - Format for SRAC Project Proposals

INSTRUCTIONS: Preparation of the SRAC project proposal is the responsibility of the Project Leader. Final preparation of the proposal is easiest if contributions from each participant are sent to the Project Leader as both hard copy and compatible electronic version in the exact format described below. Text of the final proposal should be single-spaced using a standard 10 or 12 pt typeface. The complete proposal should contain the following components:

- G The body of the proposal, divided into the following major sections: Title, Duration, Funding Requested, Abstract, Justification, Related Current and Previous Work, Objectives, Procedures, Facilities, Project Leader Activities, Publications for Regional and/or National Distribution, and References.
- G List of project participants.
- G One-page resumes for each participant.
- G CSREES Form-2004 "Budget" from each institution (for each year and cumulative).
- G Estimated funds from each participating institution.
- G Signature pages from each participating institution.
- G CSREES Form-2008 "Assurance Statement(s)" from each participating institution.
- G CSREES Form-2006 "National Environmental Policy Act Exclusions Form" from each participating institution.

Detailed instructions for preparing the proposal are provided below.

Send one (1) copy (and diskette), with all appropriate signatures, to:

Director
Southern Regional Aquaculture Center
P.O. Box 197
Stoneville, Mississippi 38776

TITLE:

A brief, clear, specific statement of the subject of the work. Cannot exceed 100 letters and spaces.

DURATION:

Up to three (3) years usually.

FUNDING REQUESTED:

In tabular form list all institutions, the annual and total funding for each institution, and the annual and total funding for the overall project.

ABSTRACT:

A concise statement of no more than 200 words outlining the project objectives, project plan, and application of the results.

JUSTIFICATION:

A brief statement of the problem, its importance to aquaculture and consumer concerns, extent of the problem, the need for and advantages in a cooperative approach, and the benefit (dollar estimates if available) that may be expected to result and the work's importance to the region.

RELATED CURRENT AND PREVIOUS WORK:

A concise, but thorough, literature review (with essential cited references) of related work on the problem, how it falls short of meeting current and future requirements, and how the proposed work will supplement and extend it. Specific reference should be made to related regional projects. Justify the work proposed if there is any apparent duplication.

APPENDIX D (continued) - Format for SRAC Project Proposals

OBJECTIVES:

In an outline format, use a clear, concise, numbered, one sentence statement for each objective. Arrange the objectives in a logical sequence. List in parentheses after each objective the institutions that will be addressing that particular objective. Include only objectives on which significant progress can be made during the life of the project with resources committed. Do not specify exchange of information, coordination of work, development of standardized techniques and joint publications as objectives.

PROCEDURES:

Restate the numbered objective and then follow with a description of the procedure to be used that corresponds to that objective. Describe the working plans (experimental design where appropriate) and methods to be used in attaining each stated objective. *The responsibilities and work assignment of each participant must be stated in the procedure for each objective.* Sufficient information should be included to enable the reader to evaluate the approach and to discern joint planning and coordination by the Work Group, possible pooling of data, regional summarization of findings, and plans for publication and dissemination of results. Indicate milestone dates for major accomplishments.

Repeat for each objective.

FACILITIES:

There should be a numbered statement of facilities to be used to correspond to each numbered objective. Describe the facilities available, the location of each, and specific procedures to be conducted at that location. Sufficient information should be included to enable the reader to assess the suitability of facilities, to discern alternatives considered, and to evaluate the joint planning and coordination by the Work Group.

PROJECT LEADER ACTIVITIES:

(Type the following statement in this section)

The Project Leader for this project is [add name] of [add name of institution]. It is the responsibility of the Project Leader to coordinate development and implementation of the regional project. The Project Leader receives information from the Participating Scientists of the various institutions involved in the project for assembly into a regional project according to the operations manual. As the project is implemented, the Project Leader coordinates orderly planning to complete project objectives in a timely manner, coordinates reimbursement to participating universities, and assembles progress reports with information received from Participating Scientists.

PUBLICATIONS

(Type the following statement in this section)

Extension materials generated as part of this project will be prepared at such times as project participants and the steering committee deem appropriate; i.e., when information is sufficiently well established to recommend use by industry or other users. The Project Leader of this project and the SRAC Publications, Videos, and Computer Software project will meet each year to determine whether production of such materials is appropriate and, if so, to develop the budget and schedule the development and production of materials. Funding for preparation of all Extension materials will be allocated directly to the Publications, Videos, and Computer Software project by SRAC. In all instances, the authors will be chosen by the SRAC Publications, Video, and Computer Software project with the guidance and concurrence of this project's Steering Committee. All manuscripts will go through the usual peer review process and will then be edited, reproduced, and distributed. The distribution process is delineated in the SRAC Publications, Videos, and Computer Software project documents. Maximum

APPENDIX D (continued) - Format for SRAC Project Proposals

efforts will be made to ensure that all interested parties receive the information derived from this project at the earliest possible date.

REFERENCES:

This section must begin on a new page. Only publications cited in the above sections should be listed. Use the citation format in the Transactions of the American Fisheries Society, including complete spelling of journal names. Skip a line between each entry.

PARTICIPANTS:

This one-page section must begin on a new page. Type the project title at the top of the page and then tabulate the project participants, by institution, and list their areas of specialization. Clearly identify the lead institution and project leader. List areas of specialization specific to the project (e.g., crawfish production economics rather than simply aquacultural economics). Use the following format:

Project Title

(skip two lines)

Institution/Participant

Area of Specialization

(skip one line)

Institution Number 1

Name of scientist

Specialization

Name of scientist

Specialization

(skip one line)

Institution Number 2

Name of Scientist

Specialization

Name of Scientist

Specialization

(skip one line)

Continue to list all participants as above

(skip one line)

Name of lead institution (Lead Institution)

Name of project leader (Project Leader)

Specialization

VITAE

A one-page vita must be submitted for each participant. Resumes should be in the format described in Appendix C, page 24.

BUDGET PAGES

Following instructions in the current USDA/CSREES Grant Application Kit, one Form CSREES-2004 (page 30) for each year of support requested and a cumulative budget for the full term of requested support should be completed for each participating institution. A breakdown of costs which are considered contributions from the participating institution should also be provided (page 31). Salaries of the principal and co-investigators are not allowed and should be considered as institutional contributions. Personnel salary or wage costs should thus reflect only that of technical assistance required to accomplish the work and related activities and grant funds should not be considered by the institution as a supplemental source for professional salaries. Purchase of nonexpendable equipment is not allowed. Organizations performing work with the support of a SRAC grant are expected to have appropriate facilities, suitably furnished and equipped. SRAC grant funds for research and extension projects may

APPENDIX D (continued) - Format for SRAC Project Proposals

not be used for office equipment and furnishings, air-conditioning, computers, or other "general purpose" equipment.

PLEASE NOTE: Indirect costs are not allowed. Separate budget(s) must be included for each participating institution. Accountability of expenditures and distribution of funds to participants will be the responsibility of each participating institution.

INSTITUTIONAL APPROVAL

Project Title: _____

Project Submitted to: **Southern Regional Aquaculture Center**

Participating Institution: _____

Principal Investigator: _____
(Name, Title & Department) Date

Co-Investigators(s): _____
(All co-investigators must sign) (Name, Title & Department) Date

Department Head(s): _____
(Name, Title & Department) Date

Research/Extension Director: _____
(As appropriate) (Name, Title & Address) Date

Institution Grants & _____
Contracts Office (as required _____
by the institution): (Name, Title & Address) Date

Official authorized to sign _____
for the institution (as _____
required by the institution) (Name, Title & Address) Date

This is to certify that [name of institution] wishes to participate in the above referenced project as a subcontractor to Mississippi State University. [Name of PI(s)] will serve as the Principal Investigator(s) of the subcontract and he/she/they have access to all necessary equipment, laboratory, and office space to successfully undertake this project. I also approve the budget as submitted for [name of PI(s)] involvement in this project. Upon issuance of approval to the Southern Regional Aquaculture Center for this project, [name of institution] will enter into a formal agreement with Mississippi State University.

OFFICIAL AUTHORIZED TO _____ (Name, Title)
EXECUTE LETTER OF _____ (Address)
AGREEMENT/SUBCONTRACT: _____
_____ (Telephone)

MAIL LETTER OF _____ (Name, Title)
AGREEMENT/SUBCONTRACT _____ (Address)
TO (if different from above): _____
_____ (Telephone)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE

OMB Approved 0524-0039
Expires 03/31/2004

BUDGET

ORGANIZATION AND ADDRESS				USDA AWARD NO.			
PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)				DURATION PROPOSED MONTHS: _____	DURATION PROPOSED MONTHS: _____	Non-Federal Proposed Cost-Sharing/Matching Funds (If required)	Non-federal Cost-Sharing/Matching Funds Approved by CSREES (If Different)
				<i>Funds Requested by Proposer</i>	<i>Funds Approved by CSREES</i> (If different)		
A. Salaries and Wages		CSREES-FUNDED WORK MONTHS					
		Calendar	Academic	Summer			
1. No. Of Senior Personnel							
a. ____ (Co)-PD(s) _____							
b. ____ Senior Associates _____							
2. No. of Other Personnel (Non-Faculty)							
a. ____ Research Associates/Postdoctorates ____							
b. ____ Other Professionals _____							
c. ____ Paraprofessionals _____							
d. ____ Graduate Students _____							
e. ____ Prebaccalaureate Students _____							
f. ____ Secretarial-Clerical _____							
g. ____ Technical, Shop and Other _____							
Total Salaries and Wages _____ →							
B. Fringe Benefits (If charged as Direct Costs)							
C. Total Salaries, Wages, and Fringe Benefits (A plus B) _____ →							
D. Nonexpendable Equipment (Attach supporting data. List items and dollar amounts for each item.)							
E. Materials and Supplies							
F. Travel							
G. Publication Costs/Page Charges							
H. Computer (ADPE) Costs							
I. Student Assistance/Support (Scholarships/fellowships, stipends/tuition, cost of education, etc. Attach list of items and dollar amounts for each item.)							
J. All Other Direct Costs (In budget narrative, list items and dollar amounts, and provide supporting data for each item.)							
K. Total Direct Costs (C through J) _____ →							
L. F&A/Indirect Costs (If applicable, specify rate(s) and base(s) for on/off campus activity. Where both are involved, identify itemized costs included in on/off campus bases.)							
M. Total Direct and F&A/Indirect Costs (K plus L) _____ →							
N. Other _____ →							
O. Total Amount of This Request _____ →							
P. Carryover -- (If Applicable) _____		Federal Funds: \$		Non-Federal funds: \$		Total \$	
Q. Cost-Sharing/Matching (Breakdown of total amounts shown on line O)							
Cash (both Applicant and Third Party) _____ →							
Non-Cash Contributions (both Applicant and Third Party) _____ →							
NAME AND TITLE (Type or print)				SIGNATURE (required for revised budget only)		DATE	
Project Director							
Authorized Organizational Representative							
Signature (for optional use)							

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0524-0039. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1.00 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

APPENDIX D (continued) - Format for SRAC Project Proposals

ESTIMATED FUNDS FROM PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION
SUBMITTED TO
SOUTHERN REGIONAL AQUACULTURE CENTER

Title of Project Proposal					
Organization and Address					
			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Salaries and Wages		Work Months			
1.	No. Of Senior Personnel	Calendar	Academic	Summer	
	a. ___(Co)-PI(s)/PD(s)				
	b. ___Senior Associates				
2.	No. Of Other Personnel (Non-Faculty)				
	a. ___Research Associates-Postdoctorates				
	b. ___Other Professionals				
	c. ___Graduate Students				
	d. ___Prebaccalaureate Students				
	e. ___Secretarial-Clerical				
	f. ___Technical, Shop and Other				
	Total Salaries and Wages				
Fringe Benefits (If charged as Direct Costs)					
Total Salaries, Wages and Fringe Benefits					
Nonexpendable Equipment	Not Allowed.....			
Materials and Supplies					
Travel within Region for Conduct of Work					
Publications Costs/Page Charges					
All Other Direct Costs (Contractual Services)					
TOTAL					

APPENDIX E - Form CSREES-2008

Certain situations encountered in the conduct of projects require special assurances or supporting documentation before funds can be released for the project. In addition to any other situations that may exist with regard to a particular project, some proposals may include the following:

! Recombinant DNA or RNA Research

As stated in 7 CFR Part 3015.205 (b)(3), all key personnel identified in the proposal and all endorsing officials of the participating institution are required to comply with guidelines established by the National Institutes of Health entitled "Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules," as revised. If your part of the SRAC project proposes to use recombinant DNA or RNA techniques, you must indicate that fact by completing Section A of Form CSREES-2008. For applicable proposals, Institutional Biosafety Committee approval is required before SRAC funds will be released.

! Animal Care

Responsibility for the humane care and treatment of live vertebrate animals used in any project supported by SRAC rests with the performing institution. Where a project involves the use of living vertebrate animals for experimental purposes, all project personnel and endorsing officials of the participating institution are required to comply with the Animal Welfare Act (Public Law No. 89-544, as amended by Public Law Nos. 91-579, 94-279, and 99-198) and the regulations promulgated thereunder by the Secretary of Agriculture in 9 CFR Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4 pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of these animals. If your part of the SRAC project will involve these animals, you must indicate that fact by completing Section B of CSREES-2008. For applicable proposals, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee approval is required before SRAC funds will be released.

! Protection of Human Subjects

Responsibility for safeguarding the rights and welfare of human subjects used in any project supported by SRAC rests with the performing institution. Guidance on this issue is contained in Public Law 93-348 and implementing regulations established by the Department of Agriculture under 7 CFR Part 1c. If your part of the SRAC project will use human subjects for experimental purposes, you must indicate so by completing Section C of CSREES-2008. For applicable proposals, approval by the appropriate Institutional Committee is required before SRAC funds will be released.

All participating institutions must complete Form CSREES-2008 as part of the project proposal regardless of the use of recombinant genetic material, vertebrate animals, or human subjects. A copy of this form is located on the next page.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE
ASSURANCE STATEMENT(S)

OMB Approval 0524-0039
 Expires 03/31/2004

STATEMENT OF POLICY - Institutions receiving CSREES funding for research are responsible for protecting human subjects, providing humane treatment of animals, and monitoring use of recombinant DNA. To provide for the adequate discharge of this responsibility, CSREES policy requires an assurance by the institution's Authorized Organizational

Representative (AOR) that appropriate committees in each institution have carried out the initial reviews of protocol and will conduct continuing reviews of supported projects. CSREES also requires AOR certification by citing a timely date that an appropriate committee issued an approval or exemption.

NOTE: Check appropriate statements, supplying additional information when necessary.

1. INSTITUTION	2. CSREES PROJECT NUMBER OR AWARD NUMBER (if known)
	3. PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)

4. TITLE OF PROJECT

A. BIOSAFETY OF RECOMBINANT DNA

- Project does not involve recombinant DNA.
- Project involves recombinant DNA and was either approved () or determined to be exempt () from the NIH Guidelines by an Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) on _____ (Date).

This performing organization agrees to assume primary responsibility for complying with both the intent and procedures of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), DHHS Guidelines for Research Involving Recombinant DNA Molecules, as revised.

B. CARE AND USE OF ANIMALS

- Project does not involve vertebrate animals.
- Project involves vertebrate animals and was approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) on _____ (Date).

This performing organization agrees to assume primary responsibility for complying with the Animal Welfare Act (7 USC, 2131-2156), Public Law 89-544, 1996, as amended, and the regulations promulgated thereunder by the Secretary of Agriculture in 9 CFR Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4. In the case of domesticated farm animals housed under farm conditions, the institution shall adhere to the principles stated in the Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching, Federation of Animal Science Societies, 1999.

C. PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

- Project does not involve human subjects.
- Project involves human subjects and
 - Was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) on _____ (Date). Performing Institution holds a Federalwide assurance number _____; if not, a Single Project Assurance is required.
 - Is exempt based on exemption number _____.
 - Specific plans involving human subjects depend upon completion of survey instruments, prior animal studies, or development of material or procedures. No human subjects will be involved in research until approved by the IRB and a revised Form CSREES-2008 is submitted.

This performing organization agrees to assume primary responsibility for complying with the Federal Policy for Protection of Human Subjects as set forth in 45 CFR Part 46, 1991, as amended, and USDA regulations set forth in 7 CFR 1c, 1992. All nonexempt research involving human subjects must be approved and under continuing review by an IRB. If the performing organization submits a Single Project Assurance, supplemental information describing procedures to protect subjects from risks is required.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE	TITLE	DATE
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According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0524-0039. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average .50 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

CSREES-2008 (12/02/00)

APPENDIX F - Form CSREES-2006

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) establishes national policies and goals for the protection of the environment. Under the act, all Federal agencies are directed to consider the environmental consequences of all proposed actions. To assist CSREES in carrying out its responsibilities under NEPA, each participating institution must complete Form CSREES-2006 (page 35), which is then attached to the project proposal before it is submitted to CSREES for approval. Form CSREES-2006 advises CSREES whether or not the proposed activity falls into one of several categories that may exclude the activity from the requirement of preparing an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement. If the activity does not fall under a categorical exclusion, then an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement may be required. In such instances, CSREES will provide instructions on preparing and submitting the required documents.

All participating institutions must complete Form CSREES-2006 as part of the project proposal regardless of the nature of the proposed activity. A copy of this form is located on the next page.

Note that the information supplied on form CSREES-2006 is advisory, and is used only to assist CSREES personnel in determining whether further documentation of possible environmental effects will be required. Even if a project participant does not consider their component of a project to have any environmental effect, CSREES will make the final determination of whether or not an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement will be required before the project can be initiated.

National Environmental Policy Act Exclusions Form

Project Director Name	Institution
Address	

Under 7 CFR Part 3407 (CSREES's implementing regulations of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)), environmental data or documentation is required in order to assist CSREES in carrying out its responsibilities under NEPA, which includes determining whether the proposed activity requires the preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement, or whether such activity can be excluded from this requirement on the basis of several categories. Therefore, it is necessary for the applicant to advise CSREES whether the proposed activity falls into one of the following Department of Agriculture or CSREES categorical exclusions, or whether the activity does not fall into one of these exclusions (in which case the preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement may be required). Even though the applicant considers that a proposed project may or may not fall within a categorical exclusion, CSREES may determine that an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement is necessary for a proposed project should substantial controversy on environmental grounds exist or if other extraordinary conditions or circumstances are present that may cause such activity to have a significant environmental effect.

Please Read All of the Following and Check All Which Apply

The proposed activity falls under the categorical exclusion(s) indicated below:

Department of Agriculture Categorical Exclusions

(found at 7 CFR 1b.3 and restated at 7 CFR 3407.6 (a)(1)(i) through (vii))

- (i) Policy development, planning and implementation which are related to routine activities such as personnel, organizational changes, or similar administrative functions
- (ii) Activities that deal solely with the functions of programs, such as program budget proposals, disbursements, and transfer or reprogramming of funds
- (iii) Inventories, research activities, and studies such as resource inventories and routine data collection when such actions are clearly limited in context and intensity
- (iv) Educational and informational programs and activities
- (v) Civil and criminal law enforcement and investigative activities
- (vi) Activities that are advisory and consultative to other agencies and public and private entities, such as legal counseling and representation
- (vii) Activities related to trade representation and market development activities abroad

CSREES Categorical Exclusions

(found at 7 CFR 3407.6(a)(2)(i) through (ii))

The following categories of CSREES actions are excluded because they have been found to have limited scope and intensity and to have no significant individual or cumulative impacts on the quality of the human environment:

- (i) The following categories of research programs or projects of limited size and magnitude or with only short-term effects on the environment:
 - (A) Research conducted within any laboratory, greenhouse, or other contained facility where research practices and safeguards prevent environmental impacts
 - (B) Surveys, inventories, and similar studies that have limited context and minimal intensity in terms of changes in the environment
 - (C) Testing outside of the laboratory, such as in small isolated field plots, which involves the routine use of familiar chemicals or biological materials
- (ii) Routine renovation, rehabilitation, or revitalization of physical facilities, including the acquisition and installation of equipment, where such activity is limited in scope and intensity

OR

Proposed activity does not fall into one of the above categorical exclusions

(NOTE: If checked, please attach an explanation of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed activity. May require completion of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement.)

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0524-0039. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average .25 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

APPENDIX G - SRAC Letter of Agreement with Participating Institution

NOTE: After the project is approved by CSREES, Letters of Agreement (subcontracts) between SRAC and the participating institutions are prepared and forwarded for approval and execution by the authorized institutional official. The approved Letter of Agreement must be returned to the SRAC office before invoices for reimbursement of expenditures can be approved and paid. *All project participants should become familiar with their obligations and responsibilities by reading the example Letter of Agreement provided below.*

(DATE)

Dear _____:

This letter records the agreement between the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES), the Southern Regional Aquaculture Center (SRAC), and _____ (Participating Institution), whereby the parties will cooperate in a research/extension project entitled “_____” (Project), funded by SRAC under its USDA/CSREES Grant No. _____ (Prime) incorporated herein by reference. Accordingly, the parties agree as follows:

- A. _____ shall serve as Administrative Advisor for the Project. _____ shall be the Lead Institution, with _____ serving as Project Leader. _____ shall be the Participating Institution with _____ serving as Participating Institutional Leader. Other Participating Scientists will be _____. If any of these cease to serve in their assigned capacity, the decision to continue this agreement will be made by SRAC on the basis of information supplied by the Participating Institution.
- B. The Participating Institution agrees to perform all work assigned to their institution as set forth in the Project as approved by them and submitted to SRAC for funding. The rights and obligations of the parties to this agreement shall be subject to and governed by the Award and the CSREES General Terms and Conditions-A incorporated herein by reference.
- C. The period of performance of the Project shall be _____ unless extended in writing by mutual agreement of the parties or terminated by USDA or MAFES/SRAC as provided in Paragraph J below. Expenditures incurred prior to the beginning date or subsequent to the termination date are not allowed.
- D. For the performance of this agreement, MAFES/SRAC shall pay the Participating Institution the cost thereof determined to be allowable in accordance with the applicable cost principles as amplified by OMB Circular A-21 Cost Principles for Educational Institutions in an amount not to exceed \$_____. Reimbursement shall be made in accordance with the budget attached hereto as Exhibit A. Any modification in the budget requiring prior approval shall be submitted in writing to SRAC for approval by the Project Leader, Administrative Advisor and SRAC Director. Reimbursement for indirect costs and tuition remission will not be allowed. In no event will MAFES/SRAC be liable to the Participating Institution for the payment of any funds not provided by USDA/CSREES. In the event of a reduction of funds by USDA/CSREES, MAFES/SRAC reserves the right to reduce funds under the agreement.

Invoices shall be submitted at three (3) to six (6) month intervals from the beginning of the project performance period of this agreement and mailed to:

Southern Regional Aquaculture Center
P.O. Box 197
Stoneville, MS 38776

APPENDIX G (continued) - SRAC Letter of Agreement with Participating Institution

Invoices shall be submitted in the SRAC "Invoice for Participating Institution" format attached hereto as Exhibit B. The final invoice, marked "Final", shall be submitted no later than thirty (30) days after the end of the performance period of this agreement. The Project Leader, Administrative Advisor and SRAC Director will review all invoices prior to payment. In no event shall the final billing exceed the agreed amount. The final invoice will not be paid until the Project Leader certifies that all reporting requirements have been met.

In the event any payments to the Participating Institution under this agreement are subsequently disallowed by the prime sponsor as items of cost to the agreement, the Participating Institution shall repay MAFES/SRAC on demand the amount of any such disallowed items, or, at the discretion of MAFES/SRAC, MAFES/SRAC may deduct such amount from subsequent payments to be made to the Participating Institution hereunder, without prejudice, however, subject to the Participating Institution's right thereafter to establish the allowability of any such items of cost under the agreement.

If the Participating Institution desires to submit invoices on a departmental basis, detailed budgets for each department must be submitted and approved by the Project Leader, Administrative Advisor, and SRAC before submission of any invoices.

E. The Participating Institution shall submit to the Project Leader, upon request, a progress report to be integrated into a comprehensive annual progress report. A termination report covering the entire life of the Project (including this and all other project performance periods) shall be submitted to the Project Leader within thirty (30) days after the termination date of the final performance period.

F. The Participating Institution agrees to participate in the preparation of Extension materials for regional and/or national distribution generated as part of this Project. These materials will be prepared at such times as the Project participants, the Steering Committee for this Project, and SRAC deem appropriate. These materials will be prepared under the combined guidance of the Steering Committees of this Project and the SRAC "Publications, Videos and Computer Software" project, with funding to be approved by the SRAC Board of Directors and provided through the "Publications, Videos and Computer Software" project.

G. The Participating Institution agrees to participate in the preparation of a "final summary" of this project to be prepared after termination of the Project at such time as final data and conclusions are available for publication. This document will be prepared under the combined guidance of the Steering Committees of this Project and the SRAC "Publications, Videos and Computer Software" project, with funding to be approved by the SRAC Board of Directors and provided through the "Publications, Videos and Computer Software" project.

H. The Participating Institution agrees to perform the work under this effort in compliance with the provisions of the SRAC Operations Manual For Cooperative Regional Aquaculture Research and Extension Activities.

I. The Participating Institution shall maintain documents and other evidence showing and supporting all costs incurred under this agreement. All accounts and records shall be preserved by the Participating Institution for a period of three (3) years after final payment under this agreement. The Participating Institution agrees that duly authorized representatives of USDA, the Comptroller General of the United States, SRAC, and MAFES shall have access to and the right to examine any directly pertinent books, documents, papers, and records involving transactions to this agreement.

J. Either party may terminate this subcontract upon thirty (30) days written notice to the other party.

In the event of default by the Participating Institution, or in the event that USDA/CSREES terminates work performed by MAFES/SRAC on the subject matter, then performance by the Participating Institution may be terminated by MAFES/SRAC at any time by giving ten (10) days written notice. Such notice shall be effective upon receipt of written notice by the Participating Institution. In the event of such termination, the Participating Institution shall be entitled to receive reimbursement for all expenses incurred to the date of termination. Such expenses shall not exceed the maximum amount payable under this subcontract. Should USDA/CSREES terminate or issue a stop

APPENDIX G (continued) - SRAC Letter of Agreement with Participating Institution

work order of any nature to MAFES/SRAC, MAFES/SRAC retains the right to issue a termination or stop work order pursuant to the terms of action issued by USDA/CSREES regardless of the time frame provided.

K. The Subcontractor's financial management and procurement shall meet the requirements of Subpart C to OMB Circular A-110 articulated in full text at the following URL site: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars/>. CSREES General Terms and Conditions-A is incorporated herein by reference (<http://www.reeusda.gov/crgam/oep/awardterms.htm>). The Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations (7 CFR Part 3015, 7 CFR Part 3017, 7 CFR Part 3018, and 7 CFR Part 3019 are hereby incorporated by reference (<http://www.reeusda.gov/crgam/oep/cfr.htm>) and made binding upon the parties with the same force and effect as if set forth in full text. The Participating Institution must comply with provisions set forth in USDA forms CSREES-2008, CSREES-2006, AD-1047, AD-1048, AD-1049, AD-1050, and Certification Regarding Lobbying.

L. Form AD-1048 (Certification Regarding Debarment, Lower Tier), attached hereto as Exhibit C, must be completed and returned to SRAC as a part of this Letter of Agreement.

M. Publication of the results obtained from the Project is encouraged. The following acknowledgment statement must be prominently included in each publication (e.g., as a footnote on the title page of research publications):

“The work reported in this publication was supported in part by the Southern Regional Aquaculture Center through Grant No(s). _____ from the United States Department of Agriculture Cooperative States Research, Education, and Extension Service.”

Publications should also indicate that the findings, opinions, and recommendations expressed therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of MAFES, SRAC, or USDA.

N. This agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties. All amendments and/or changes shall be by written instrument executed by the parties hereto.

Please indicate your acceptance of this agreement on behalf of the Participating Institution by executing both copies. Return one (1) copy and the completed Form AD-1048 to Director, Southern Regional Aquaculture Center, P.O. Box 197, Stoneville, Mississippi, 38776.

APPROVED:

SO. REGIONAL AQUACULTURE CENTER

Director and Principal Investigator Date

MS. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY
EXPERIMENT STATION

Director Date

Vice President, MSU Date

ACCEPTED:

Authorized Representative Date

Name_____

Title_____

Address_____

Telephone_____

APPENDIX H - Invoice of Participating Institution

The SRAC office will mail an “Invoice of Participating Institutions” form to the authorized institutional official when Letters of Agreement (subcontracts) between SRAC and the participating institutions are forwarded for approval and execution. A copy of the form is also included on the next page and can be photocopied for use in preparing invoices.

Copies are also available at <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/srac.edu/manual.htm>

INVOICE

of Participating Institution

Date: _____

TO: Southern Regional Aquaculture Center
 P.O. Box 197
 Stoneville, MS 38776

FROM: _____

SRAC PROJECT TITLE: _____

Contact: _____ Phone: _____ Final Invoice: Yes ___ No ___
 SRAC Invoice# _____ Year _____ of _____ Institution Invoice# _____
 Institution Acct.# _____

	Current Expenditures _____ Thru _____	Cumulative Expenditures _____ Thru _____	Amount Budgeted _____ Thru _____	Balance of Budget as of _____
Salaries & Wages				
Fringe Benefits				
Expend. Materials & Supplies				
* Nonexpendable Equipment				
Travel				
Contractual Services				
Publications				
TOTAL				

* Not allowed.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the billed costs or disbursements are in accordance with the terms and conditions of the above grant and that payment is due and has not previously been requested. I understand that as Participating Scientist I am responsible for accounting of expenditures within each of the above categories.

RECOMMENDED:

APPROVED:

 Participating Scientist Date

 Project Leader, Lead Institution Date

 Institutional Grants/Accounting Officer (as required by participating institution)

 Administrative Advisor Date

 Name, Title Date

 Director, SRAC Date

APPENDIX I - Format for Requests for No-Cost Budget Revisions

INSTRUCTIONS: Written requests for no-cost budget transfers should be made as soon as the need for the revision is evident. The request should be made using the format shown below. Note that a full, but concise, explanation of the need for the revision must be part of the request. The request should be submitted to the SRAC Director for review and approval by the Project Leader, Administrative Advisor and Director. Revisions must not affect the total annual budget for the participating institution and under no circumstances should budget revisions be made to allow work outside the framework of the original project proposal.

(Date)

TO: (Name of SRAC Director)

FROM: _____
(Name of participant)

SUBJECT: Budget Revision of Year X of SRAC Project “(Title of Project)”

I would like to request a budget revision for the (Name of Institution) portion of Year X of the SRAC project “(Title of Project)” as follows:

	<u>Current Budget</u>	<u>Revised Budget</u>
Salaries & Wages	\$	\$
Fringe Benefits	\$	\$
Materials & Supplies	\$	\$
Nonexpendable Equipment	\$	\$
Travel	\$	\$
Contractual Services	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$

This budget revision is necessary because (explain the basis for the request).

APPROVED:

(Name), Project Leader Date

(Name), Administrative Advisor Date

(Name), Director, SRAC Date

APPENDIX J - Format for SRAC Annual Progress Report

INSTRUCTIONS: An annual progress report for each funded project must be provided both as hard copy and computer diskette version to the Director of SRAC by October 1 of each year. These reports are to be 3-5 single-spaced pages, excluding publications (which are to be appended), written in a narrative style. Details may be appended. These reports will be written by the Project Leader in conjunction with the Participating Institutional Leaders. Progress reports are to be cumulative for the life of the project through August 31 of the year of the report. The required format for the report is provided below.

PROJECT TITLE:

PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD (Start date) to **AUGUST 31** (current year)

FUNDING LEVEL:

In a simple table, indicate total SRAC allocations to date (by year)

PARTICIPANTS:

List all cooperating personnel (by institution)

ADMINISTRATIVE ADVISOR:

Name
Title
Institution
City, State

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

List all objectives included in the project proposal.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS:

Briefly state how the project will benefit the aquaculture industry either directly or indirectly. Include specific examples, where possible. Estimates of acceptance and application of results, and of any economic values inherent in or accruing from the results will be helpful in enlisting support for projects. (Statements from this section may be used in budget hearings and news releases.)

PROGRESS AND PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Summarize in concise form the progress toward accomplishment of each objective for the duration of the project, omitting details unless essential to understanding. The work and findings of the participants should be presented concisely as group activities for each distinct line of investigation with credit for specific contributions as needed. Measurement data should be given in both metric and English units. Where the work has not progressed to the stage of accomplishments, give a description of the activities of the Work Group, and the nature of the progress of the work of the participants.

WORK PLANNED:

Any changes in direction or emphasis in the project plan of the Work Group and in the responsibilities or assignments of the participants should be stated. Detailed statements of individual plans of participants should not be included unless essential to understanding.

APPENDIX J (Continued) - Format for SRAC Annual Progress Report

IMPACTS:

In concise statements (possibly a bulleted list) indicate how the project has benefitted the aquaculture industry either directly or indirectly and resulting economic values gained (where appropriate); e.g., how many new commercial operations have begun because of this work; what has been the increase in production and/or revenues; how much have producer costs been reduced; etc.

PUBLICATIONS, MANUSCRIPTS, OR PAPERS PRESENTED:

Use the following subheadings:

- Publications in Print*
- Manuscripts*
- Papers Presented*

For the first two subheadings, include journal articles, popular articles, extension materials, videos, technical reports, theses and dissertations, etc., using the format of the Transactions of the American Fisheries Society, including full names of journal names. Under the *Papers Presented* subheading include the authors, title, conference/workshop, and date(s). Skip one line between each entry.

SUPPORT:

Use the format in the table below to indicate SRAC-USDA funding and additional other support, both federal and non-federal, for the project. Indicate the name of the source(s) of other support as a footnote to the table.

YEAR	SRAC FUNDING	OTHER SUPPORT					TOTAL SRAC + OTHER SUPPORT
		UNIVERSITY	INDUSTRY	OTHER FEDERAL	OTHER	TOTAL OTHER SUPPORT	
1							
2							
3							
TOTAL							