**Proposal Draft Peer Review**

***Why are we doing this activity?***

Today’s experience is a critical step in the development of most successful scientific research projects. This rubric for peer review has been taken from NSF instructions to reviewers and modified for the purposes and level of scientific understanding in our class. You are to TAKE YOUR TIME today to carefully review a peer group’s proposal, and to discuss your comments with other members of your team. You should critique the proposal the way you would like others to constructively critique your own, AND use your peer group’s proposal to reflect on your own. Comments you make should be polite, but honest, objective, and specific/detailed, and they should highlight aspects of the proposal that are either in need of improvement, or that are particularly well done.

YOU will be graded in part on the quality of your critique. This is your lab grade today.

Your proposal draft will be graded based on the three different critiques turned in, and with my judgment as a buffer for overly lenient or overly harsh critiques. This will be 10% of your final Project grade.

***Instructions***

1. Carefully read through this handout, and the front-and-back response form below.
2. Carefully read through the proposal.
3. Thoughtfully rate & critique the proposal to the best of your ability. Besides simply evaluating the traditional components (hypothesis, methods, budget, etc.), provide detailed comments in your summary statement on the quality of this proposal with respect tothe Merit Review Criteria below. Specify the proposal's strengths and weaknesses. Potential considerations you *might* use in evaluation follow each criterion. These are suggestions only – not all will apply to any given proposal, so comment only on those that are relevant. You are expected to discuss this process of evaluation, especially how to rate the proposal, with your team (though quietly and discretely, given that the proposal was written by your neighbors).

**Criterion 1. What is the relevance of the proposed activity to the discipline?** *How important is the proposed activity to addressing the environmental problem described? How relevant to this course or to Environmental Science is this study? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity?*

**Criterion 2. What are the broader significance of the proposed activity?** *How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding? Are the benefits of the proposed activity to society addressed in the proposal? Not every project is earth-shattering, but some are vital to local needs.*

Remember, this is meant to be a double-blind process (-ish), so please do NOT write your name anywhere on this form, nor on the proposal. (The cover sheet with your name and ID hand-written in green ink will be removed before I return proposals to their authors). I will give you my critique of your critique as soon as I am able.

**ID # OF PROPOSAL REVIEWED: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**ID # OF REVIEWER: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**I. Please rank** the following aspects of the proposal to the best of your ability. *(Reviewer: discuss these rankings with your teammates before finalizing your decision. Pencil suggested.)*

* Problem Statement, Objective, or Hypothesis

[ ] Excellent [ ] Very Good [ ] Good [ ] Fair [ ] Poor

* Feasibility

[ ] Excellent [ ] Very Good [ ] Good [ ] Fair [ ] Poor

* Background & methodological research (well referenced?)

[ ] Excellent [ ] Very Good [ ] Good [ ] Fair [ ] Poor

* Draft Completeness

[ ] Excellent [ ] Very Good [ ] Good [ ] Fair [ ] Poor

* Writing Quality/Clarity

[ ] Excellent [ ] Very Good [ ] Good [ ] Fair [ ] Poor

**II.** What is your **Overall Rating** of this proposal? Check one:

[ ] **Excellent:** Outstanding proposal in all respects; interesting, clearly important, well-designed, feasible, and deserves highest priority for support.

[ ] **Very Good:** High quality proposal in nearly all respects; should be supported if at all possible.

[ ] **Good:** A quality proposal, worthy of support, but perhaps with room for minor revisions/improvement, or not clearly of highest impact to the field or to society.

[ ] **Fair:** Proposal is lacking in one or more critical aspects; key issues or deficiencies need to be addressed before this proposal can be considered for support.

[ ] **Poor:** Proposal has serious deficiencies (it is incomplete, has faulty assumptions, inadequately researched methodology, or seems unlikely to succeed as a project for various reasons). The proposal should not be considered for support without extensive revisions.

**III. Provide a summary statement** (in the space below) including comments on the relative weight of the criteria in your rating. **Note** that the criteria need *not* be weighted equally. Please write clearly. Your specific comments on the proposal's strengths and weaknesses are essential –these comments will be used to revise the proposal for final submission.