

Work Task E16: Conservation Area Site Selection

FY06 Estimates	FY06 Actual	Cumulative Accomplishment Through FY06	FY07 Approved Estimate	FY08 Proposed Estimate	FY09 Proposed Estimate	FY10 Proposed Estimate
\$200,000	\$158,330	\$293,144	\$50,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000

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Start Date: FY05

Expected Duration: FY30

Long-term Goal: Identify and prioritize potential conservation areas to develop under the habitat creation requirements of the LCR MSCP.

Conservation Measures: None

Location: Reaches 1-7, AZ, CA, and NV

Purpose: Develop and utilize guidelines to provide Reclamation with a consistent and transparent method for screening and evaluating the suitability of lands that are made available to the program for use as Conservation Areas.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future): The process developed under this work task will guide the selection of future Conservation Area sites to be developed under Section E work tasks.

Project Description: Guidelines have been developed to describe the process for working with interested parties to identify sites for screening and evaluation as potential Conservation Areas for creating and maintaining habitat over the term of the LCR MSCP. Screening of potential sites will be conducted under this work task.

Reclamation intends to work with land owners to secure an interest in land and water resources sufficient to create and maintain LCR MSCP habitats. It is anticipated that willing landowners will enter into some form of long-term commitment that secures resources for the 50-year term of the LCR MSCP.

FY06 Accomplishments: The *Draft Final Guidelines for the Screening and Evaluation of Potential Conservation Areas* were reviewed and accepted by the Steering Committee and have been posted on the LCR MSCP Web site. Expenditures in FY06 were less than projected and a modification scheduled for FY06 was not completed until FY07. Therefore, expenditures in FY07 are expected to be approximately \$40,000 higher than projected due to the modification being delayed.

FY07 Activities: In November of 2006, the riparian screening criteria were applied to four locations along the LCR. The first area was identified in response to a recent fire on Cibola NWR and targeted honey mesquite land cover type. The second area was also on Cibola NWR and targeted cottonwood-willow land cover type as an expansion of activities already funded by the LCR MSCP. The third area was an existing backwater and adjacent lands near Laughlin, Nevada. The final area included active agricultural lands being assessed by the Metropolitan Water District in the Palo Verde Irrigation District, and if secured, would target cottonwood-willow, honey mesquite, and marsh land cover types. Site-specific information can be found in trip reports.

Proposed FY08 Activities: A request for potential conservation areas is anticipated to be issued in the summer of FY07. A maximum of 10 sites (current estimate) will be evaluated in FY08 using the *Draft Final Guidelines for the Screening and Evaluation of Potential Conservation Areas*.

Pertinent Reports: *Draft Guidelines for the Screening and Evaluation of Potential Conservation Areas* are posted on the LCR MSCP Web site.