

Work Task E28: Yuma East Wetlands

FY12 Estimate	FY12 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY12	FY13 Approved Estimate	FY14 Proposed Estimate	FY15 Proposed Estimate	FY16 Proposed Estimate
\$400,000	\$75,792.42	\$592,203.75	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$450,000

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Start Date: FY10

Expected Duration: FY55

Long-term Goal: Habitat creation.

Conservation Measures: CLRA1, WIFL1, CRCR2, YHCR2, LEBI1, BLRA1, YBCU1, ELOW1, GIFL1, GIWO1, VEFL1, BEVI1, YWAR1, SUTA1, PTBB2.

Location: Reach 6, Arizona, River Mile 31.

Purpose: To maintain newly created land cover types that benefit LCR MSCP covered species.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future): Vegetation and species monitoring are being addressed under F1-F4.

Project Description: In 2000, the City of Yuma and the Quechan Tribe collaborated to analyze the potential of restoring the local wetlands along the Colorado River by removing over grown non-native species. Approximately 350 acres have been restored to create a mosaic of marsh, mesquite, and cottonwood-willow. YEW has adopted wildlife monitoring standards consistent with the LCR MSCP and has observed numerous LCR MSCP covered species on-site. LCR MSCP covered species and land cover type data sharing between the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA) and Reclamation biologists is ongoing.

The project is located in Yuma, Arizona, on City of Yuma, Quechan Tribal, and Arizona Game and Fish Commission lands. In partnership with the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA), the lead agency establishing the wetlands, the LCR MSCP will maintain existing habitat and support adaptive management activities to improve site conditions, which will benefit the LCR MSCP covered species.

Previous Activities: The LCR MSCP has drafted a long term land use agreement amongst the land owners and interested parties. The YCNHA is the lead agency working with land owners to complete the drafting and signing of a land use agreement by all

entities involved. Funding in the amount of \$350,000 was provided by the LCR MSCP for maintenance of created habitats in FY10 and FY11.

FY12 Accomplishments:

Maintenance/Restoration/Management. Habitat maintenance funding was withheld in FY12 until the land use agreement is signed. All parties agreed to continue negotiations to allow additional time to present the drafted land use agreements to the Quechan Tribe and the City of Yuma.

As negotiations continued in FY12, LCR MSCP staff was made available to discuss upcoming maintenance activities and provide technical expertise for site infrastructure. Pumps, roads, fueling areas, site maintenance yard and the irrigation system continued to be maintained.

Management activities included LCR MSCP coordination meetings among biologists, stakeholder meetings on upcoming habitat maintenance activities, attendance of budget meetings, review of progress and financial reports, and updating the site safety plan.

Maintenance activities conducted by the landowners consisted of invasive weed control, herbicide control, replanting native species, irrigating and irrigation system maintenance, fueling, signage placement, and access road maintenance.

The site hosted a youth conservation crew in April funded by non-cost share dollars. The crew assisted with habitat maintenance activities. Clearing invasive species, planting native grasses, trail maintenance and general site clean-up were all conducted.

During summer 2012, the Yuma area received a heavy rain storm resulting in flooding at the Yuma East Wetlands. After flood waters receded equipment was brought in to re-contour roads, establish new drainage areas and reinforce berms separating the marshes and flooded fields.

Monitoring. At the Yuma East Wetlands surveys were conducted for general birds, small mammals, bats, vegetation, and marsh birds. The portions of the site, which have riparian cover types, were divided into three sections and each was surveyed eight times for birds as intensive surveys following the LCR MSCP double sampling protocol. No MSCP species were detected and a total of 26 breeding pairs comprised of 7 different species were detected. Southwestern willow flycatcher surveys were conducted and no resident or breeding individuals were detected. Yellow-billed cuckoo surveys were conducted and 2 birds were detected on 29 June and one bird was detected on 9 July. No evidence of breeding was found. The LCR MSCP vegetation monitoring protocol was implemented at YEW for the first time. Across the site 40 rapid plots and 14 intensive plots were surveyed. Small mammal trapping was conducted several times through 2012. Monthly bat surveys were conducted at YEW from May to September and western yellow bats were detected on 3 separate surveys and a western red bat was detected on 1 survey.

FY13 Activities:

Maintenance/Restoration/Management. Early in FY13, the Quechan Tribe, Arizona Game and Fish Department, City of Yuma, Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, and Reclamation agreed in principle to the terms and conditions in the multi-party land use agreement. The land use agreement is scheduled for signatory in 2013 after review by the Steering Committee.

Habitat maintenance activities may restart in FY13 and mainly consist of removal of non-native species, application of herbicide, replanting of native species as required, maintenance and repair of irrigation systems, sign placement, fuel delivery, access road maintenance, fertilizer ordering and application, vehicle maintenance, safety meetings, and ensuring the site meets Arizona occupational safety and health work standards.

Management activities in FY13 will consist of administration of the federal agreement, implementing the LCR MSCP vegetation and wildlife monitoring protocols for the habitat, standard operating procedures for the irrigation system, 2013 Safety Plan update, water accounting data submitted to Reclamation, coordination meetings with stakeholders, and ensuring the site is managed for LCR MSCP covered species.

Monitoring. The same monitoring activities that took place in 2012 will again take place in 2013 with some minor modifications. Small mammal surveys were conducted in November 2012 and the first YHCR (two individuals) were captured in native vegetation at the site. Bird surveys will again be conducted but, in order to adequately survey the site for birds, the site will be divided into four survey areas instead of three. This is because as the vegetation matures, it is anticipated that a greater number of birds will be present at the site necessitating smaller survey areas. The number of vegetation survey points will be increased to 60 to increase the sample size at YEW.

Proposed FY14 Activities: Habitat maintenance will continue in FY14, assuming the land use agreement has been signed. Maintenance will primarily consist of removal of non-native species, application of herbicide, replanting of native species as required, maintenance and repair of irrigation systems, sign placement, fuel delivery, access road maintenance, fertilizer ordering and application, vehicle maintenance, safety meetings, and ensuring the site meets Arizona occupational safety and health work standards.

Management activities in FY14 will consist of: administration of the federal agreement, implementing the LCR MSCP vegetation and wildlife monitoring protocols for the habitat, standard operating procedures for the irrigation system, 2014 Safety Plan update, water accounting data submitted to Reclamation; and coordination meetings with stakeholders. Monitoring activities will continue in FY14 as conducted in FY13.

Pertinent Reports: N/A