

## Work Task E21: Planet Ranch, Bill Williams River

FY13 Estimate	FY13 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY13	FY14 Approved Estimate	FY15 Proposed Estimate	FY16 Proposed Estimate	FY17 Proposed Estimate
\$40,000	\$21,118.37	\$228,878.23	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000

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**Start Date:** FY05

**Expected Duration:** FY55

**Long-term Goal:** Habitat creation.

**Conservation Measures:** CLRA1, WIFL1, WIFL2, WRBA2, WYBA3, CRCR2, LEB1, YBCU1, YBCU2, ELOW1, GIFL1, GIWO1, VEFL1, BEVI1, YWAR1, SUTA1, MNSW2, CLNB2, PTBB2.

**Location:** Reach 3, Bill Williams River, 11 miles east of River Mile 190, Arizona.

**Purpose:** Create and manage a mosaic of native land cover types for LCR MSCP covered species.

**Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future):** This work task was previously included in the Draft FY05 Work Tasks as Planet Ranch, Bill Williams River (E4). Costs associated with a federal land and water appraisal conducted in FY08 were captured under work task Conservation Area Site Selection (E16). E21 was closed at the end of FY05, but was reopened in FY09 to track expenditures during negotiations.

**Project Description:** Planet Ranch (owned by Freeport-McMoRan Corporation), encompasses approximately 8,400 acres, of which approximately 2,400 acres had previously been farmed for alfalfa. In 2008, the LCR MSCP Steering Committee approved a land and water resolution, which authorized Reclamation to enter into negotiations to secure approximately 3,418 acres of land and 4,668 acre-feet of water per year. The sum of \$8,300,000 to secure this land and water was determined through the federal appraisal process. Negotiations are also underway to allow the Bureau of Land Management to secure the remaining acreage, which has no water entitlement from the Bill Williams River. Once finalized, the terms and conditions to secure the land and water resources will be brought back to the Steering Committee.

An estimated 550 acres of cottonwood-willow trees is anticipated to be developed on Planet Ranch, another 396 acres of cottonwood-willow trees downstream on the Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge will also be afforded protection by securing the Planet Ranch property. Additionally, there may be opportunity to incorporate disconnected backwaters into the restoration.

**Previous Activities:** Reclamation evaluated Planet Ranch and developed a conceptual design, assuming the entire ranch and water entitlement were secured for the program. This information is posted on the LCR MSCP website as *Planet Ranch: Potential Restoration Site, Preliminary Site Analysis and Conceptual Design*.

Regulatory compliance activities required under the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act are complete, but may be updated at the time of property purchase. Native American consultation and a Class I Cultural Survey as prescribed in section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act was completed in FY11.

**FY13 Accomplishments:** Negotiations to secure the land and water resources for the project continued; specifically, final details of the lease, donation, and water agreements.

**FY14 Activities:** Negotiations to secure the land and water resources for the project will continue with Freeport McMoRan. NEPA compliance will be initiated. The budget continues at \$40,000 to allow for continued involvement and negotiations. Once an agreement is reached, a land and water resolution will be presented to the Steering Committee.

**Proposed FY15 Activities:** Because the timeline of reaching a final agreement is unknown, the budget continues at \$40,000 to allow for continued MSCP involvement throughout the negotiation process. Once an agreement is reached, a land and water resolution will be presented to the Steering Committee. Following a finalized agreement, restoration planning will begin.

**Pertinent Reports:** N/A