

Work Task E28: Yuma East Wetlands

| FY13 Estimate | FY13 Actual Obligations | Cumulative Expenditures Through FY13 | FY14 Approved Estimate | FY15 Proposed Estimate | FY16 Proposed Estimate | FY17 Proposed Estimate |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| \$450,000 | \$407,557.78 | \$649,761.53 | \$450,000 | \$600,000 | \$450,000 | \$450,000 |

Contact: Darrin Miller, (702) 293-8166, dmiller@usbr.gov

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.

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.

FY13 Accomplishments:

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 to the terms and conditions in the multi-party land use agreement. The land use agreement was signed in late FY13 after review by the Steering Committee, which resulted in fewer obligations.

Habitat maintenance activities mainly consisted 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 consisted of 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.

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.

Monitoring. Monitoring was conducted at the Yuma East Wetlands for general birds, small mammals, bats, and vegetation.

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 breeding MSCP species were detected and a total of 51 breeding pairs comprised of 8 different species were detected. Yellow warblers were detected at the site but were considered to be migratory.

Southwestern willow flycatcher surveys were conducted and no resident or breeding individuals were detected.

Yellow-billed cuckoo surveys were conducted from late June to early August. Six detections of yellow-billed cuckoo were made and it was determined that one possible breeding bird and no probable or confirmed breeding birds were present at the site. Vegetation was monitored at Yuma East Wetlands using the LCR MSCP protocol. A total of sixty plots were surveyed.

Small mammal trapping was conducted several times through 2013 and a substantial population of the Yuma hispid cotton rat was found to have colonized the site. In 2012, this species was not captured for most of the year, but in 2013 is now the dominant species of small mammal captured at the site. If this population persists at the site it

would become the first large population of this species to have been found by the LCR MSCP small mammal monitoring program.

Monthly bat capture surveys were conducted at YEW from May to September and western yellow bats were captured on two separate occasions.

FY14 Activities:

Maintenance/Restoration/Management. Habitat maintenance will continue in FY14, in accordance with the signed land use agreement. 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 implementing the LCR MSCP vegetation and wildlife monitoring protocols for the habitat, standard operating procedures for the irrigation system, a 2014 Safety Plan update, water accounting data submitted to Reclamation, and coordination meetings with stakeholders. A Conservation Area Law Enforcement and Fire Suppression plan, which includes access, will be drafted.

To modify the agreement with the Heritage to coincide with the fiscal year, an additional \$87,000 will be added to the agreement, which will increase expenditures.

Damage to the north channel pump, attributed to sedimentation in the river, has occurred over the last couple of years and will need to be addressed in FY15. A review of the existing infrastructure including pumps and canals will be undertaken and a budget for replacement, as necessary, will be prepared.

Monitoring. Starting in FY14 the site will be monitored by LCR MSCP in the same manner as other LCR MSCP conservation areas. Monitoring will include yellow-billed cuckoos, southwestern willow flycatchers, riparian obligate birds, vegetation, marsh birds, small mammals and bats.

Proposed FY15 Activities: Habitat maintenance will continue in FY15, in accordance with the signed land use agreement. 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 FY15 will consist of implementing standard operating procedures for the irrigation system, a 2014 Safety Plan update, water accounting data submitted to Reclamation, and coordination meetings with stakeholders. Finalization and posting of the Conservation Area's Law Enforcement and Fire Suppression Plan is anticipated.

Replacement of the north channel pump and redesign of the intake structure are anticipated and are reflected in the increase budget for FY15.

Monitoring. Monitoring activities will continue in FY15 as conducted in FY14. Monitoring will include yellow-billed cuckoos, southwestern willow flycatchers, riparian obligate birds, vegetation, marsh birds, small mammals and bats.

Pertinent Reports: N/A