

Work Task E28: Yuma East Wetlands

| FY14 Estimate | FY14 Actual Obligations | Cumulative Expenditures Through FY14 | FY15 Approved Estimate | FY16 Proposed Estimate | FY17 Proposed Estimate | FY18 Proposed Estimate |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| \$450,000 | \$492,318.96 | \$1,231,981.21 | \$600,000 | \$1,200,000 | \$700,000 | \$700,000 |

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Start Date: FY10

Expected Duration: FY55

Long-Term Goal: Habitat creation

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

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 Work Tasks F1–F4.

Project Description: In the year 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 overgrown non-native species. Approximately 373 acres have been restored to create a mosaic of marsh, mesquite, and cottonwood-willow. The project is located in Yuma, Arizona, on city of Yuma, Quechan Tribal, and AGFD Commission lands. In partnership with the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA), the lead agency establishing the wetlands, funding will be provided under the LCR MSCP for the maintenance of existing habitat and to support adaptive management activities to improve site conditions, which will benefit the LCR MSCP covered species.

Previous Activities: Funding in the amount of \$350,000 was provided under the LCR MSCP for maintenance of created habitats in FY10 and FY11. In FY13, the Quechan Tribe, AGFD, city of Yuma, YCNHA, and Reclamation agreed to the terms and conditions in the multi-party Land Use Agreement. The agreement was signed in late FY13 after review by the Steering Committee.

FY14 Accomplishments:

Maintenance/Restoration/Management: 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, vehicle maintenance, safety meetings, and ensuring the site meets Arizona occupational safety and health work standards.

Management activities in FY14 consisted of planning and developing the FY15 Cooperative Agreement, the FY15 Annual Work Plan and Budget, and the FY15 Standard Operations and Maintenance Plan (developed under the LCR MSCP); developing standard operating procedures for the irrigation system; submitting water accounting data to Reclamation's Boulder Canyon Operations Office; and coordinating meetings with stakeholders.

Other management activities in FY14 consisted of implementing the LCR MSCP vegetation and wildlife monitoring protocols for the habitat and ensuring the site was managed for LCR MSCP covered species.

To modify the agreement with the YCNHA to coincide with the fiscal year, an additional \$106,438.36 was added to the agreement, which increased expenditures. The funding allowed maintenance to continue until the end of the fiscal year.

Monitoring: Vegetation monitoring was conducted in cottonwood-willow habitat at 15 locations throughout the site. Monitoring was conducted at Yuma East Wetlands for birds, small mammals, and bats. For the first time, all surveys were conducted by LCR MSCP personnel or contractors using the same methods and protocol as used at all other habitat creation sites.

Marsh bird surveys were conducted on three occasions at the wetland portions of the site. Four least bitterns were detected in March and two in April. Five Yuma clapper rails were detected during the first April survey and four during the second April survey.

The entire site was surveyed for riparian birds using the LCR MSCP double sampling protocol. No breeding LCR MSCP species were detected. A total of 222 breeding territories comprised of 26 different species were detected. Yellow warbler 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 on four occasions. There were no detections of yellow-billed cuckoos at the site in 2014.

Small mammal trapping was conducted in the fall and spring; Yuma hispid cotton rats continue to be detected at the site. Four rats were captured in the spring, and 23 were captured in the fall. This is currently the only population of the Yuma hispid cotton rat at a LCR MSCP conservation area.

Monthly bat capture surveys were conducted at Yuma East Wetlands from May to September. Western yellow bats were captured on two separate occasions, and a California leaf-nosed bat was captured on one occasion. In conjunction with the bat capture surveys, the established long-term acoustic bat station was used to continuously collect acoustic bat data. Western red bats, western yellow bats, California leaf-nosed bats, and Townsend's big-eared bats were detected during acoustic surveys.

FY15 Activities:

Maintenance/Restoration/Management: Habitat maintenance is continuing 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, vehicle maintenance, safety meetings, and ensuring the site meets Arizona occupational safety and health work standards.

Management activities in FY15 will consist of implementing the FY15 Cooperative Agreement, the FY15 Annual Work Plan and Budget, and the FY15 Standard Operations and Maintenance Plan (developed under the LCR MSCP) as well as the planning and development of the FY16 Cooperative Agreement, the FY16 Annual Work Plan and Budget, and the FY16 Standard Operations and Maintenance Plan. Other activities will include conducting an operations and maintenance review in order to improve the efficiency of the site, developing standard operating procedures for the irrigation system, updating a 2015 Safety Plan, submitting water accounting data to Reclamation's Boulder Canyon Operations Office, and coordinating meetings with stakeholders. Finalization of the conservation area's law enforcement and fire suppression plan is anticipated.

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

Monitoring: Vegetation monitoring continues to be conducted. Small mammal monitoring will be conducted in the fall and spring. Bat capture surveys will be conducted from May to September. An established long-term bat monitoring station will be used to collect acoustic data. General bird surveys will be conducted from mid-April to mid-June. Single species surveys for the southwestern willow flycatcher and yellow-billed cuckoo will be conducted during their respective breeding seasons. Marsh bird surveys will be conducted in March and April. MacNeill's sootywing surveys will be conducted in spring and summer.

Proposed FY16 Activities: Habitat maintenance will continue in FY16 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, vehicle maintenance, safety meetings, and ensuring the site meets Arizona occupational safety and health work standards.

Management activities in FY16 will consist of implementing the FY16 Cooperative Agreement, the FY16 Annual Work Plan and Budget, and the FY16 Standard Operations and Maintenance Plan (developed under the LCR MSCP) as well as the planning and development of the FY17 Cooperative Agreement, the FY17 Annual Work Plan and Budget, and the FY17 Standard Operations and Maintenance Plan. Other activities will include conducting an operations and maintenance review in order to improve the efficiency of the site, developing standard operating procedures for the irrigation system, submitting water accounting data to Reclamation's Boulder Canyon Operations Office, and coordinating meetings with stakeholders.

Replacement of the north channel pump and redesign of the intake structure are anticipated to be continued from FY15 and are reflected in the increased budget for FY16. A review of all operations and maintenance activities will be conducted to ensure the sustainability of the habitat and evaluate options to secure a consistent source of water for the south channel.

Monitoring: Vegetation monitoring will continue. Small mammal monitoring will be conducted in the fall and spring. Bat capture surveys will be conducted from May to September. An established long-term bat monitoring station will be used to collect acoustic data. General bird surveys will be conducted from mid-April to mid-June. Single species surveys for the southwestern willow flycatcher and yellow-billed cuckoo will be conducted during their respective breeding seasons. Marsh bird surveys will be conducted in March and April. MacNeill's sootywing surveys will be conducted in the spring and summer.

Pertinent Reports: N/A