

Work Task H1: Existing Habitat Maintenance

FY14 Estimate	FY14 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY14	FY15 Approved Estimate	FY16 Proposed Estimate	FY17 Proposed Estimate	FY18 Proposed Estimate
\$6,928,680	\$7,604,720.64	\$26,986,720.64	\$4,848,060	\$0	\$0	\$0

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Start Date: FY06

Expected Duration: FY55

Long-Term Goal: Maintenance of existing habitat

Conservation Measures: CLRA2, BLRA2, WIFL2 and YBCU2

Location: LCR (Reaches 1–7)

Purpose: To maintain existing habitat areas, excluding newly created habitat within conservation areas, by implementing actions that will prevent the further degradation or loss of habitat for LCR MSCP covered species

Connections with Other Work Tasks (Past and Future): These are stand-alone conservation measures as described in the LCR MSCP HCP.

Project Description: A \$25 million interest-bearing fund, to be fully funded by the end of FY15, is being established over a 10-year period to restore habitats suitable for LCR MSCP covered species in the planning areas that have become degraded since the program was initiated. Funding contributions during the initial 5 years of the LCR MSCP were established at \$500,000 per year. Funding contributions in years 6–10 were established at \$5,000,000 per year. Both values are indexed to 2003 dollars and adjusted annually for inflation. The habitat was degraded by past river operations and maintenance that are going to continue. The HMF will be administered by the Program Manager. A process for requesting, reviewing, selecting, disbursing, and tracking dollars from this fund was drafted in consultation with the USFWS and approved by the Steering Committee in April 2012.

The funds required to administer the HMF under the LCR MSCP will be tracked under Work Task A1. The lead agencies and planning participants are expected to use their own funds in the development of proposals and for participation in planning teams. Funding for design, construction, and inspection would be part of the applicant's proposal.

The HMF specifies a priority for projects to be funded. Marsh is the top priority; in the first 10 years of the HMF, the core population areas will be the primary focus, with additional smaller projects that ensure connectivity of source populations. Priority 1 for use of the fund is the protection of marsh, and specifically marsh complexes, occupied by LCR MSCP covered rail species that serve as key source populations. The four key source population areas are Topock Marsh and Topock Gorge within the Havasu NWR, the Imperial Division primarily within the Imperial NWR, and Mittry Lake, which is located on Reclamation withdrawn lands. The focus of the first 10 years of expenditures from the HMF (FY16–25) is: (1) the evaluation of infrastructure changes to manage water levels for rail species at both Topock Marsh and Mittry Lake and (2) the identification of riverine portions of Topock Gorge and the Imperial Divisions, which are becoming degraded, and development of proposals to provide maintenance of these areas.

Previous Activities: Annual contributions were made through FY13.

FY14 Accomplishments: A total of \$7,604,720.64 was deposited into interest-bearing accounts by Arizona, California, and Nevada partners. It consisted of \$5,742,000 of required funding, \$1,186,680 of additional funding, \$654,015 of required underfunding payments from Arizona and Nevada, and \$22,025.64 in overpayments from Arizona and Nevada. Both Arizona and Nevada will use these overpayments to reduce their required contribution in FY15. California will pay its underfunding amount in FY15.

FY15 Activities: A total of \$5,480,049.36 will be deposited into interest-bearing accounts among Arizona, California, and Nevada partners, which will complete the funding requirement for the HMF. It will consist of \$4,826,034.36 in required funding and California's underfunding payment of \$654,015.00

In coordination with the USFWS Ecological Service's Office, planning teams, comprised of representatives of appropriate resource agencies, will be assembled in order to investigate the option of using the HMF to maintain key population centers at both Topock Gorge and Mittry Lake.

Proposed FY16 Activities: In coordination with the USFWS Ecological Service's Office, work will continue with planning teams, comprised of representatives of appropriate resource agencies, to investigate the option of using the HMF to maintain key population centers at both Topock Gorge and Mittry Lake.

In addition, LCR MSCP staff will actively solicit small, specific actions (e.g., burning or other small marsh restoration projects) both in Topock Gorge and within the Imperial Division to restore habitat for rail populations and ensure connectivity of source populations. Fiscal year 2016 will be the first year in

which no contributions to the HMF are made, and no expenditures from the fund are anticipated in FY16. Costs to administer the HMF, participation in the planning teams, and development of proposals will be tracked under Work Task A1.

Pertinent Reports: N/A