

## Work Task D1: Marsh Bird Surveys

FY15 Estimate	FY15 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY15	FY16 Approved Estimate	FY17 Proposed Estimate	FY18 Proposed Estimate	FY19 Proposed Estimate
\$25,000	\$38,402.79	\$290,472.87	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000

**Contact:** Joe Kahl, (702) 293-8568, [jkahl@usbr.gov](mailto:jkahl@usbr.gov)

**Start Date:** FY05

**Expected Duration:** FY55

**Long-Term Goal:** System monitoring for marsh birds

**Conservation Measures:** MRM1 and MRM2 (LEBI, CLRA, and BLRA)

**Location:** Reach 3, Havasu National Wildlife Refuge, Arizona and California

**Purpose:** The purpose of this work task is to monitor Yuma clapper rails, California black rails, and western least bitterns along a designated reach of the lower Colorado River as part of the interagency system monitoring program. The information obtained through this task may be used in managing marsh bird habitat creation areas.

**Connections with Other Work Tasks (Past and Future):** Data obtained from Work Task F7 may also be used in the marsh bird system monitoring program described in this work task. The protocol developed for task will also be used for Work Task F7.

**Project Description:** Marsh bird surveys will be conducted in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as part of a multi-agency, system-wide monitoring effort that has been ongoing annually since 1980. LCR MSCP surveys are conducted along the lower Colorado River between the I-40 Bridge, near Needles, California, and Lake Havasu, including Topock Gorge in the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge.

Prior to implementation of the LCR MSCP, a study was conducted to determine whether Yuma clapper rail surveys could be expanded to a multi-species protocol without compromising their detection rates. Information obtained from this study has produced a multi-species protocol for marsh birds, including the LCR MSCP covered species (Yuma clapper rails, California black rails, and western least bitterns). Marsh bird surveys, utilizing the multi-species protocol, will continue at designated survey points to track detections of covered species.

**Previous Activities:** The Bureau of Reclamation has monitored Yuma clapper rails within Topock Gorge since 1996 in coordination with the USFWS as part of a multi-agency, system-wide monitoring effort.

**FY15 Accomplishments:** Marsh bird surveys were conducted between the I-40 Bridge, near Needles, California, and Lake Havasu during March, April, and May 2015 in coordination with the USFWS as part of a multi-agency, system-wide monitoring effort. Only two covered species were encountered: 85 Yuma clapper rail detections in March, 12 in April, and 109 in April – May; 18 western least bittern detections in March, 8 in April, and 45 in April – May. California black rails were not detected in 2015. The April survey was only 1 day due to high winds. The April – May survey was conducted at the end of April and the beginning of May. Data were compiled and entered into the Avian Knowledge Network database.

Survey methods were reviewed, and a second surveyor/operator was added to all surveys conducted by boat, which resulted in additional costs in FY15. The project budget has been increased accordingly beginning in FY16.

**FY16 Activities:** Marsh bird surveys will be conducted in Topock Gorge and the upper reaches of Lake Havasu using the multi-species marsh bird survey protocol in coordination with the USFWS as part of a multi-agency, system-wide monitoring effort. Surveys may also be conducted at the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge as needed. Data will be submitted to the USFWS. Information obtained through this work task may be used in planning future marsh bird habitat creation activities and research projects.

**Proposed FY17 Activities:** Marsh bird surveys will be conducted in Topock Gorge, the upper reaches of Lake Havasu, and other sites using the multi-species marsh bird survey protocol in coordination with the USFWS as part of a multi-agency, system-wide monitoring effort. Data will be submitted to the USFWS. Information obtained through this work task may be used in planning future marsh bird habitat creation activities and research projects.

**Pertinent Reports:** The report titled *Marsh Bird Surveys – 2015* will be posted on the LCR MSCP Web site upon completion.