

## Work Task E33: Pretty Water Conservation Area

FY15 Estimate	FY15 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY15	FY16 Approved Estimate	FY17 Proposed Estimate	FY18 Proposed Estimate	FY19 Proposed Estimate
\$700,000	\$970,299.11	\$1,268,018.44	\$450,000	\$150,000	\$50,000	\$40,000

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**Start Date:** FY13

**Expected Duration:** FY55

**Long-Term Goal:** Habitat creation

**Conservation Measures:** VEFL1, WRBA2, WYBA3, ELOW1, and BEVI1

**Location:** Reach 4, Cibola National Wildlife Refuge (Cibola NWR), River Miles 95–97, California

**Purpose:** To 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 identified under Work Task E16.

**Project Description:** The Pretty Water Conservation Area (PWCA) (previously referred to as the Shark’s Tooth Conservation Area) consists of approximately 566 acres on the Cibola NWR, located in California between River Miles 95 and 97. On July 17, 2006, lightning ignited a fire on the Cibola NWR that burned approximately 4,600 acres of salt cedar intermixed with mesquite in both California and Arizona. A burned section will be restored primarily with honey mesquite as described in the *Sharks Tooth Conservation Area Restoration, Development, and Monitoring Plan*. The intent is to create a large honey mesquite bosque, which will be managed for LCR MSCP covered species.

The conservation area is fully developed and contains 566 acres of honey mesquite which will be managed for LCR MSCP covered species throughout the life of the program.

**Annual maintenance and management:** The PWCA was fully developed in FY15. It was developed to provide a mesquite land cover type while minimizing long-term operational and maintenance costs. Control of invasive and non-native plant species is anticipated during FY16 and FY17. Starting in FY18, the annual

costs associated with operating the PWCA is reduced to that needed for periodic inspections, coordination efforts with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and addressing any concerns that arise.

**Previous Activities:** The Restoration, Development, and Monitoring Plan was approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in 2012. The Land Use Agreement was signed in 2013. In FY14, compliance and pre-construction activities were completed, and mesquite trees were ordered.

**FY15 Accomplishments:** Clearing of the PWCA, including selective clearing of tamarisk from the existing mesquite bosque, was conducted from January to April. After clearing was completed, 22,500 mesquite trees were planted, and irrigation utilizing water trucks continued until the end of September. Public access was restricted during the planting phase but re-established along the main access road after construction was completed in summer. The parking area and primitive boat ramp were regraded to previous conditions. Expenditures were more than approved due to the addition of a second water truck, which was needed in order to keep up with irrigation demands.

**Monitoring:** No wildlife monitoring was conducted because the trees were not mature enough to provide covered species habitat.

**FY16 Activities:** The PWCA is fully developed, and measures to control invasive and non-native plant species that re-sprouted after planting and during irrigation are aggressively being implemented. Although it is not anticipated at this time, irrigation utilizing water trucks may continue during FY16 if deemed necessary based on the growth status of the trees and climatic conditions.

**Monitoring:** A site visit will occur to determine if there is sufficient habitat to survey for MacNeill's sootywings. Surveys will be conducted if there is potential habitat.

**Proposed FY17 Activities:** The PVCA is fully developed and is being managed for LCR MSCP covered species. Inspections to ensure that the mesquite trees have successfully established and to maintain low numbers of invasive species within this conservation area will continue.

**Monitoring:** General bird surveys will be conducted from April – June. If there is suitable habitat, surveys for MacNeill's sootywings will also be conducted.

**Pertinent Reports:** N/A