

Work Task E26: Headquarters Lake

| FY08 Estimates | FY08 Actual | Cumulative Accomplishment Through FY08 | FY09 Approved Estimate | FY10 Proposed Estimate | FY11 Proposed Estimate | FY12 Proposed Estimate |
|----------------|-------------|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$265,000 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

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Start Date: FY09

Expected Duration: FY55

Long-term Goal: Habitat Creation.

Conservation Measures: CLRA1, BONY2, RASU2, and LEBI1.

Location: Reach 5, Imperial NWR, AZ, River Mile 59.7.

Purpose: Headquarters Lake is one of the first two backwater sites to have gone through interdisciplinary, interagency conceptual planning (Step 4 of Backwater Site Selection, E-15), resulting in a planned and scoped backwater project, in fulfillment of the LCR MSCP's backwater habitat creation objectives. Backwater Site Selection is expected to output 3 additional sites in Reaches 5 & 6, for a total of 5 planned and scoped potential backwater projects, which can be sequenced into the program based on program objectives, budgets, and other factors.

Headquarters Lake was tentatively chosen in FY 2007 for implementation because of its current designation as "closed to the public", which makes the project more compatible with current public uses in the area, and would eliminate the requirement to close off the backwater to public use. Additionally, the site can be accessed easily by land-based equipment, which is anticipated to decrease construction costs. Closing a site to public use is an uncertain process, requiring additional procedural requirements, and extending the planning period for a site, during which time program funds would be expended with little assurance of project implementation. The land and water resources would be provided by Imperial NWR under their existing entitlement.

At this time, no work will be performed, pending the completion of Step 4 of the backwater site selection process (E15) for three additional sites in reaches 5 and 6, so that selections can be made on the basis of equal information for all five sites. These analyses are scheduled to run through the end of FY10.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future): This work task addresses development of Headquarters Lake, which was identified under Backwater Site Selection (E15). All funding, to date, for backwater site assessments and conceptual planning, has been accounted for under Backwater Site Selection (E15).

Project Description: This project is currently on-hold until additional backwaters throughout the entire LCR MSCP planning area are identified and adequate site specific information is gathered to achieve parity with Headquarters Lake. Headquarters Lake (A59.7) is located in Reach 5 within Imperial National Wildlife Refuge on the Arizona side of the Colorado River, at river mile 59, and was evaluated as one of the initial 25 candidate site evaluations performed in 2007. Headquarters Lake consists of a 7.5-acre backwater connected to the river by a 4,800-foot-long dredged inflow channel. Headquarters Lake received a biological suitability criteria score of 55 during the initial evaluations (LCR MSCP 2008a), giving it a high habitat creation opportunity rating.

Headquarters Lake was included, with Secret Lake (also on INWR, Arizona side) in a one-year backwater site assessment process, to gain a pre-development environmental baseline, and guide conceptual planning efforts towards establishing backwater and marsh habitat, primarily for razorback sucker, bonytail, and Yuma clapper rail. Conceptual planning has involved an interdisciplinary, interagency review group, including representatives from Reclamation, USFWS, and AZGFD.

The proposed conceptual design for Headquarters Lake involves expanding the backwater acreage from its current 7.5 acres, to an integrated mosaic including up to 55 acres of backwater/marsh habitat and 57 acres of mesquite and *Atriplex*.

Previous Activities: This work task is a new start in FY09.

FY09 Activities: At this time, no work will be performed, pending the completion of Step 4 of the backwater site selection process (E15) for all potential backwaters located throughout the entire LCR MSCP planning area. This delay will allow for collection of backwater specific data, agency review, and public participation. It is anticipated that no backwaters will be selected for implementation until FY12.

FY10 Activities: None.

Pertinent Reports: The draft backwater site assessment and conceptual design report is currently under review. The draft final report will be sent to the steering committee for comments.