

## Work Task E27: Laguna Division Conservation Area (Revised)

FY08 Estimates	FY08 Actual	Cumulative Accomplishment Through FY08	FY09 Approved Estimate	FY10 Proposed Estimate	FY11 Proposed Estimate	FY12 Proposed Estimate
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$750,000	\$1,400,000	\$5,000,000

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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, SUTA1, PTBB2

**Location:** Reach 6, Federal Lands, River Mile 43-49, CA & AZ.

**Purpose:** Create and manage a mosaic of native land cover types for LCR MSCP covered species.

**Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future):** This is a new start for the LCR MSCP in FY10.

**Project Description:** The Laguna Division, river miles 43-49, has been identified as having potential for large scale riparian and marsh restoration and enhancement (approximately 700 acres). In 2007, the Laguna Division Planning Group was formed to identify potential restoration projects within the division. The intent was to identify potential restoration projects and combine resources to ensure any actions taken in the area would not affect other potential restoration projects or ongoing river operations. Currently, there are three river operational requirements and constraints: water delivery, sediment removal, and power generation.

The Laguna Division Planning Group consists of representatives from the following organizations:

1. Arizona Game and Fish Department
2. California Department of Fish and Game
3. Pacific Institute
4. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
5. Bureau of Land Management
6. Bureau of Reclamation, LCR MSCP

The Laguna Division Conservation Area is a relatively wide, undeveloped area with a series of low linear depressions, which are remnants of former river meanders. The intent of this project is to create marsh and riparian land cover types by shaping and contouring multiple meandering channels. These land cover types would be maintained with a maximum base flow of 100 cubic feet per second (cfs) from the Mittry Lake inlet canal or Gila Sluiceway. Open water areas could be created in the form of linear excavations aligned with historic river meanders east of lands identified as future stockpiling areas for dredged silt removed from the river (Laguna settling basin). To minimize earthwork, cuts and fills would follow the existing topography where feasible. Adjacent terraces would be graded to allow flooding and promote the establishment of native riparian species. Water control structures would be created to manage water levels. Upland vegetation would receive water by either by flooding or drip irrigation.

To support the concept described above, modifications to the point of diversion and/or concrete lined Mittry Lake inlet canal, made to allow for up to 100 cfs capacity, would be required. This diversion ditch/pipe systems would be engineered to allow for maximum management flexibility including diverting the entire flow to Mittry Lake, the Laguna Division Conservation Area, or the old river channel.

**Previous Activities:** In coordination with the Laguna Planning team, several conceptual designs were created with the intent of determining the technical feasibility of implementing a large scale restoration project. In addition, a team was established to determine the availability of water to create and support the new habitat. The combination of technical feasibility, water availability, as well as cost effectiveness will ultimately determine the project's implementation.

**FY08 Accomplishments:** The project is a new start for the LCR MSCP in FY10.

**FY09 Activities:** The project is a new start for the LCR MSCP in FY10. However, using non-LCR MSCP funds, three alternative designs for the Laguna Division are being prepared. These alternatives will be presented and discussed within the Laguna Planning team with the intent of having a preferred alternative to present to the LCR MSCP steering committee in October of 2009.

**Proposed FY10 Activities:** Restoration activities will continue forward assuming the Steering Committee has concurred with the restoration design presented at the October SC meeting. Further analysis/design refinement will occur between the Laguna Planning team, local stakeholders, state and federal agencies, and Reclamation. Permitting (Section 404) and NEPA compliance actions will be initiated for the overall restoration plan in support of the creation of riparian and marsh land cover types. Drafting and signing of land use agreements will be initiated. **The approved budget has been increased in FY10 to allow for selective clearing, road construction and graveling, in preparation for the controlled burn, final design, and to provide access to proposed water control structures.**

**Pertinent Reports:** N/A.