

Work Task D6:	Pratt Agricultural Lease
Partners:	Pratt Farms Bureau of Land Management-Yuma, AZ Bureau of Reclamation
Point of Contact:	Barbara Raulston, LC-2453 (702) 293-8788
Purpose:	The overall project is to demonstrate restoration and management techniques with native riparian vegetation to create habitat for Southwestern Willow Flycatchers (SWFL), and provide vegetation cuttings and seed for use at other restoration sites along the lower Colorado River (LCR). The purpose for this specific request is the payment of costs to provide irrigation of the site during FY04.
Conservation Measure:	Develop techniques in support of all covered species habitat creation requirements.
Long-term Goal:	The research is intended to provide site management criteria which would be applicable on other conservation opportunity areas. For example, the tracking of water diversions necessary to create suitable conditions in cooperation with bird monitoring will provide an estimate of the water requirements of future restoration projects. The payment for irrigation will be a yearly cost into the future.
Location:	12-acre agricultural site adjacent to Laguna Dam in southern Arizona.
FY04 Obligation:	\$5,088 for irrigation services provided by Pratt Farms.
FY04 Accomplishment:	During FY04 the site was irrigated frequently throughout the SWFL breeding season by Pratt Farms to simulate nesting conditions. Bird surveys and banding are being conducted in conjunction with management actions to determine when and if SWFLs use the site.
Project Description:	In 1999, BLM removed 12 acres from a contiguous 58 acre agricultural lease, and BLM and Reclamation restored the area with cottonwood and willow. Five years of growth have produced a healthy stand of riparian habitat and migrating SWFL use the site. However, the willow and cottonwood trees are maturing into a gallery forest that is devoid of an understory, making it largely unsuitable habitat for SWFLs. Random patches of vegetation are now being cut in order to produce different size classes and a dense shrub layer

to encourage nesting by this species. In the near future, other areas adjacent to the site will also be restored to native riparian habitat in partnership with BLM.

The current Management Plan and commitments in the associated Biological Assessment agreed upon by Reclamation, FWS and BLM ensures that the following activities are implemented in a manner that is compatible with management of the site for wildlife. Items addressed in the Management Plan include: (1) monitoring, management, and protection of the site as habitat for the endangered SWFL and other native species; (2) demonstration of irrigation, planting, and vegetation management; (3) research and monitoring of various aspects of riparian vegetation; and (4) harvesting of cuttings, poles and seeds. Costs of the management plan beyond FY04 will be included in the LCR MSCP future budgets