

Work Task C3: **Development of Backwater Rating Criteria**

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Purpose: Develop criteria for classifying backwaters for fish and wildlife habitat values.

Conservation Measures: MRM 1, MRM2, CLRA1, CLRA2, BONY2, RASU2, BLRA1, and FLSU1

Long-term Goal: Backwater rating criteria will be used to evaluate existing backwaters for fish and wildlife habitat value and will enable Reclamation to incorporate necessary habitat components into future backwater restoration projects.

FY05 Estimate: Creation of covered species profiles and development of rating criteria will be done in FY05 using a contract currently being utilized to update LCR vegetation type maps. Contract costs will be approximately \$40,000. Reclamation staff costs for administering this contract will be approximately \$10,000.

Project Description: In the mid-1980's, BIO-WEST conducted a study for Reclamation on backwaters along the LCR between Davis Dam and the Southerly International Boundary. Existing backwaters were mapped and a model was developed to classify general wildlife and fish habitat values for these backwaters. These maps were updated in 2000. The mapping and classification system developed during these studies have allowed Reclamation to determine the extent of backwaters, to assess existing backwaters for habitat value, and to determine factors necessary for constructing backwaters for fish and wildlife. This project will update the backwater maps and develop rating criteria for fish and wildlife, especially LCR MSCP covered species. These data and models will be used to prioritize backwater restoration projects.