

Work Task E21: Planet Ranch, Bill Williams River

FY10 Estimates	FY10 Actual	Cumulative Accomplishment Through FY10	FY11 Approved Estimate	FY12 Proposed Estimate	FY13 Proposed Estimate	FY13 Proposed Estimate
\$100,000	\$26,129.72	\$129,196.40	\$8,900,000	\$1,500,000	\$750,000	\$500,000

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Start Date: FY05

Expected Duration: FY55

Long-term Goal: Habitat creation.

Conservation Measures: CLRA1, WIFL1, WIFL2, WRBA2, WYBA3, CRCR2, LEB1, YBCU1, YBCU2, ELOW1, GIFL1, GIWO1, VEFL1, BEVI1, YWAR1, SUTA1, MNSW2, CLNB2, PTBB2.

Location: Reach 3, Bill Williams River, 11 miles east of River Mile 190, Arizona.

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 work task was previously included in the Draft FY05 Work Tasks as Planet Ranch, Bill Williams River (E4). Costs associated with a federal land and water appraisal conducted in FY08 were captured under work task Conservation Area Site Selection (E16). E21 was closed at the end of FY05, but was reopened in FY09.

Project Description: Planet Ranch (currently owned by the City of Scottsdale), encompasses approximately 8,400 acres, of which approximately 2,400 acres had previously been farmed for alfalfa. In 2008, the LCR MSCP Steering Committee approved a land and water resolution, which authorizes Reclamation to enter into negotiations to secure approximately 3,418 acres of land and 4,668 acre-feet of water per year. The sum of \$8,300,000 to secure this land and water was determined through the federal appraisal process. Negotiations are also underway to allow the Bureau of Land Management to secure the remaining acreage, which has no water entitlement from the Bill Williams River. Once finalized, the terms and conditions to secure the land and water resources will be brought back to the Steering Committee.

An estimated 550 acres of primarily cottonwood-willow land cover type is anticipated to be developed on Planet Ranch. In addition, another 396 acres of cottonwood-willow land cover type on the Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge is afforded protection by securing the Planet Ranch property.

Previous Activities: Reclamation evaluated Planet Ranch and developed a conceptual design, assuming the entire ranch and water entitlement were secured for the program. This information is posted on the LCR MSCP website as *Planet Ranch: Potential Restoration Site, Preliminary Site Analysis and Conceptual Design*.

FY10 Accomplishments: Negotiations to secure the land and water resources for the project continued. A lease with Freeport MacMoran was drafted, which included the donation of the land and water resources to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission for on-site activities, and included discussing the transition of property ownership from the City of Scottsdale to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission.

Because the final details of the lease, donation, and water agreements are still being negotiated, regulatory compliance activities required under the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act were continued into FY11. Expenditures were below the projected budget in FY10 which reflects the ongoing negotiation. These activities are expected to include an Environmental Assessment with a public comment period, Native American consultation, and a class I cultural survey. In addition, state regulatory compliance from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality ADEQ is being coordinated by the City of Scottsdale.

Proposed FY11 Activities: Negotiations to secure the land and water resources for the project will continue. Once an agreement has been reached, a land and water resolution will be presented to the Steering Committee. A transition plan will be drafted to address the need for on-site staff and appurtenances such as vehicles and farming equipment. Given the property's remote location, the city of Scottsdale currently employs a caretaker, living year-round on the property, for maintenance and security purposes. Draft land use agreements with Arizona Game and Fish Commission as well as the Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge will be finalized. The land use agreements will address the roles and commitments of all parties. Issues and high priority items identified in the transition plan would be addressed in anticipation of the securing and transition of property ownership in FY12.

Proposed FY12 Activities: Assuming the property and its resources have been secured, the AGFD will provide on-site staffing. Activities to be conducted include maintenance of existing roads and river crossings, evaluation and repair of existing irrigation infrastructure, repair and maintenance of resident housing, procurement and deployment of vehicles and equipment necessary to maintain the ranch, and continued monitoring and research being conducted under other work tasks.

Pertinent Reports: N/A