

## Work Task E28: Yuma East Wetlands

FY10 Estimates	FY10 Actual	Cumulative Accomplishment Through FY10	FY11 Approved Estimate	FY12 Proposed Estimate	FY13 Proposed Estimate	FY14 Proposed Estimate
\$250,000	\$257,890.16	\$257,890.16	\$250,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000

**Contact:** Jed Blake, (702) 293-8165, [jblake@usbr.gov](mailto:jblake@usbr.gov)

**Start Date:** FY10

**Expected Duration:** FY55

**Long-term Goal:** Habitat creation.

**Conservation Measures:** CLRA1, WIFL1, CRCR2, YHCR2, LEBI1, BLRA1, YBCU1, ELOW1, GIFL1, GIWO1, VEFL1, BEVI1, YWAR1, SUTA1, PTBB2.

**Location:** Reach 6, Arizona, River Mile 31.

**Purpose:** To maintain newly created land cover types that benefit LCR MSCP covered species.

**Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future):** Vegetation and species monitoring are being addressed under F1-F4.

**Project Description:** The LCR MSCP is providing funding to maintain and enhance land cover types, primarily marsh, cottonwood-willow, and mesquite established at the Yuma East Wetlands (YEW). The funding will allow for invasive plant removal and management during this initial establishment period. A decision document summarizing past, present, and future actions was presented to the Steering Committee with the FY11 Work Plan at the April 2010 meeting.

In 2000, the City of Yuma and the Quechan Tribe collaborated to analyze the potential of restoring the local wetlands along the Colorado River by removing non-native plant species, trash dumps, and make-shift hobo camps. Wildlife and wetlands delineations were conducted prior to clearing.

YEW is developing into an integrated mosaic of land cover types, including cottonwood-willow, honey mesquite, and marsh. The project is located in Yuma, Arizona, on City of Yuma, Quechan Tribal, and Arizona Game and Fish Commission lands. Existing habitat created by past revegetation efforts has resulted in land cover types used by LCR MSCP covered species. In partnership with the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA), the lead agency establishing the wetlands, the LCR MSCP will maintain

existing habitat and support adaptive management activities to improve site conditions which will benefit the LCR MSCP covered species.

Approximately 350 acres have been restored to create a mosaic of marsh, mesquite, and cottonwood-willow. YEW has adopted wildlife monitoring standards consistent with the LCR MSCP and has observed numerous LCR MSCP covered species on-site. LCR MSCP covered species and land cover type data sharing between the YCNHA and Reclamation biologists is ongoing.

**Previous Activities:** Since 2000, Reclamation has participated in the development of the Yuma East Wetlands outside the LCR MSCP process. Past activities included attendance at workshops and planning meetings, use of heavy equipment, an irrigation system inventory analysis, and adoption of LCR MSCP species monitoring protocols that are being used on the site.

**FY10 Activities:** Funding was transferred to the YCNHA for maintenance and management activities on the site. Maintenance activities included: removal of non-native species, application of herbicides, re-planting of native species as required, maintenance of irrigation systems, fuel purchase and delivery, access road maintenance, fertilizer purchase and application, and working with local contractors.

Management activities included: LCR MSCP species monitoring, fertilizer regime development, irrigation analysis, signage posted throughout the project, fire and law plan development, safety plan development, installation of vehicle access gates, installation of water control structure gates, water accounting, and site visits with stakeholders.

**FY11 Activities:** Funding was transferred to the YCNHA for maintenance and management activities will continue as necessary to maintain the existing habitat.

The YCNHA is also the lead agency coordinating the land use agreement. An agreement will be drafted and signed by the City of Yuma, Quechan Tribe, YCNHA, Arizona Game and Fish Department Commission, and the Bureau of Reclamation. In the agreement, stakeholders will affirm their commitment to the project for the term of the LCR MSCP. Roles, responsibilities, funding percentages, and a clause of “no reimbursable costs for prior development” will be spelled out. It is envisioned that the Land Use Agreement will be ready for signature in calendar year 2011. However, due to the many organizations involved, oversight from governing bodies, solicitor review and addressing any comments may delay the signing until 2012.

Reclamation staff will also attend planning meetings, habitat and species monitoring activities, and maintenance activity meetings. Additionally, LCR MSCP staff will attend and contribute to the annual bi-national re-vegetation workshops held in the Yuma area, with a focus on the YEW.

**Proposed FY12 Activities:** Based upon the signing or planned signing of the land use agreement funds transferred to the YCNHA will be increased to \$350,000. The 2012

funding commitment was the original budget described in the federal cooperative agreement; however due to the site still developing the Steering Committee recommended a reduced level of funding for the first two years. On-site maintenance activities, such as invasive species removal, irrigation infrastructure upkeep, fertilizer application, equipment upkeep, and replanting when necessary will continue. Installation of flow meters will be incorporated on the site. This will allow for increased water accounting accuracy and reduce staff labor.

**Pertinent Reports:** N/A