

Work Task C49: Investigations of RASU and BONY Movements and Habitat Use Downstream of Parker Dam

FY11 Estimates	FY11 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY11	FY12 Approved Estimate	FY13 Proposed Estimate	FY14 Proposed Estimate	FY15 Proposed Estimate
\$125,000	\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0

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Start Date: FY12

Expected Duration: FY14

Long-term Goal: To maintain an effective fish augmentation program.

Conservation Measures: BONY3, BONY 4, BONY5, RASU3, RASU4, and RASU6.

Location: Reach 4, Colorado River, between Parker and Palo Verde dams.

Purpose: Assess distribution and habitat use of stocked RASU.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future): This work is related to C8 and D8.

Project Description: The upper portions of Reach 4, specifically the area between Headgate Rock and Palo Verde dams, has been considered for years to be some of the best fish habitat along the lower river. This three-year study will evaluate post-stocking survival, movement, and habitat use of RASU and BONY released between Parker and Palo Verde dams. Both species have been stocked into the river below Parker Dam, and both species show low levels of survival. Most of this reach occurs on Colorado River Indian Tribes land and has not previously been examined by LCR MSCP staff.

Previous Activities: This effort is building upon research conducted under C8. RASU and BONY have been stocked below Parker Dam since 2005.

FY10 Accomplishments: This is a new start in FY11.

FY11 Activities: This work task was postponed until FY12. No work was performed in FY11.

FY12 Activities: An agreement is being formalized with USFWS to perform this work, which is broken into two phases. Phase I will start in FY12 and includes a literature review of previous stocking records and RASU monitoring, and RASU surveys (including electrofishing, trammel netting, and remote PIT tag scanners). Captured native fish will be assessed for size, weight, general health, and genetic similarity to other extant lower Colorado River populations. Data from these RASU surveys will be used to create a population estimate for the study area. General

water quality profiles and other habitat observations will be recorded in conjunction with these surveys.

Proposed FY13 Activities: Phase II is expected to start in FY13. This phase expands the study to incorporate stocking up to 6,000 RASU and 4,000 BONY within the study reach and tracking sonic tagged fish to identify post-stocking dispersal patterns and possibly identify the locations used by any RASU present within the study area. This expanded effort would increase the number of fish contacted and further refine our understanding of where these fish go, and what habitats they use within the study area. Stocking native fish on CRIT lands is dependent upon further negotiations with, and concurrence from, the tribes.

Pertinent Reports: N/A