

Work Task E31: Hunters Hole

FY11 Estimate	FY11 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY11	FY12 Approved Estimate	FY13 Proposed Estimate	FY14 Proposed Estimate	FY15 Proposed Estimate
\$20,000	\$21,979.16	\$16,115.11	\$30,000	\$150,000	\$50,000	\$50,000

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Start Date: FY11

Expected Duration: FY55

Long-term Goal: Habitat creation and maintenance.

Conservation Measures: WIFL1, YBCU1, ELOW1, GIFL1, GIWO1, VEFL1, BEVI1, YWAR1, SUTA1, PTBB2.

Location: Reach 7, Arizona, River Mile 2.5

Purpose: To create and maintain land cover types and support site improvements that benefit LCR MSCP covered species.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future): Vegetation and species monitoring are being addressed under F1-F7.

Project Description: In 2010, the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area (YCNHA), in cooperation with the Reclamation, has developed a restoration plan for Hunters Hole located within the State of Arizona and within Reach 7 of the LCR MSCP planning area. The focus of the restoration has changed due to dropping groundwater levels. The open water was eliminated and replaced with wet, dense, cottonwood-willow and honey mesquite. The result is anticipated to achieve 36 acres of cottonwood-willow land cover type, reduce future pumping costs, use less water, and maximize the credit for the LCR MSCP. A supplemental Environmental Assessment has been completed based on the revised restoration plan.

The YCNHA has secured funding from the Arizona Water Protection Fund to design, permit, clear, and restore the Hunters Hole area. At the October 27, 2010 LCR MSCP Steering Committee Meeting, Resolution 11-001 was approved. Once the Conservation Area is established, the LCR MSCP has agreed to provide long-term funding for the operation and maintenance of created land cover types.

Previous Activities: In 2008 YCNHA approached Reclamation with a request to complete the project which would be located on federal lands. In response, the Yuma Area Office completed National Environmental Protection Act compliance after discussions with other federal agencies.

The Environmental Assessment was completed in April 2009, and the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) document was signed in June 2009.

YCNHA invited a number of stakeholders to participate in the project planning effort. These stakeholders include BLM, U.S. Border Patrol, USFWS, U.S. and Mexican Sections of the International Boundary and Water Commission, AGFD, the City of San Luis, the City of Somerton, the City of Yuma, Yuma County Sheriff's Office, Environmental Defense, National Wildlife Federation, ProNatura Noroeste, and private landowners in the area. ProNatura Noroeste has developed a complimentary restoration plan on the Mexico side heralding the project as a bi-national border restoration effort.

FY11 Accomplishments: The YCNHA is providing coordination amongst stakeholders. Multiple stakeholder coordination meetings allowed for input from all parties and address any potential concerns. Safety, fire and law enforcement identification was conducted in preparation of developing a site safety plan in 2012. The YCNHA, using funds provided by the Arizona Water Protection Fund, contracted with a local vendor for the clearing, contouring and installation of irrigation infrastructure.

FY12 Activities: Site contouring and installation of infrastructure was completed in December 2011. Funding is being used for project coordination, electrical costs, groundwater well upgrades, and site maintenance.

A preventative maintenance service and retrofit to the existing groundwater well and pump was performed. While servicing the well it was discovered that the well was not designed to meet the demands of the 36 acre site and additional upgrades would be necessary to ensure a long service life for the project. Upgrades to the ground water well and related apparatuses was completed in early 2012 with additional upgrades scheduled in FY13. The increase in budget for FY12 and FY13 are for the unplanned groundwater well upgrades.

The site was divided into four flood-managed cells and a deep slough cell. The five cells were planted in February-March 2012 with bulrush, cottonwoods, willows, and mesquite.

Proposed FY13 Activities. The site will be maintained and operated by the LCR MSCP, utilizing the YCNHA, to meet covered species habitat requirements and support adaptive management activities to improve site conditions. Maintenance, monitoring and project coordination will be conducted. Groundwater well upgrades, which includes automation of the water control valves are scheduled to be completed in early 2013. The automation is expected to reduce future operational costs. Monitoring of the site will begin.

Pertinent Reports: N/A