

Work Task E25: Big Bend Conservation Area

FY07 Estimates	FY07 Actual	Cumulative Accomplishment Through FY07	FY08 Approved Estimate	FY09 Proposed Estimate	FY10 Proposed Estimate	FY11 Proposed Estimate
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$80,000	\$580,000	\$580,000

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Start Date: FY08

Expected Duration: FY55

Long-term Goal: Habitat creation.

Conservation Measures: BONY2, RASU2, and FLSU1.

Location: Reaches 3, NV, River Mile 266.5.

Purpose: Protection of an existing backwater from development. Several life stages of all three LCR MSCP covered native fish species (flannelmouth sucker, razorback sucker, and bonytail) have been contacted in and around the backwater. Due to the limited number of available backwaters within Reach 3 and increasing urban development in the surrounding areas, securing this property for native fishes is a priority of the LCR MSCP.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future): This project was identified under Work Task E16 Conservation Area Site Selection and documented in the *Screening and Evaluation of Potential Conservation Areas: November 2006 Trip Reports*.

Project Description: Reach 3 maintains the only self-sustaining population of flannelmouth sucker and has very few undeveloped backwaters, which make protection of the existing backwater a priority for the LCR MSCP. The Colorado River and Reach 3 in particular are experiencing extensive urban development. The Boy Scout Camp property with its access to the river via the adjacent backwater would make the area a likely candidate for development. Current urban developments along the river include housing, casinos, and marinas. Securing the property for the LCR MSCP ensures the commitment of adjacent land owners, and controls future development in the surrounding areas. Long-term security of the property would also provide protection to the backwater and allow for future restoration activities.

The Boy Scout Camp purchased by the SNWA combined with the adjacent backwater managed by the State of Nevada has collectively been identified as the Big Bend Conservation Area. The conservation area includes approximately 15 acres of backwater within the Nevada portion of the Colorado River that will be protected, and approximately 15 acres of upland area adjacent to the backwater to be enhanced for education and outreach purposes in concert with protection of the

backwater. The properties are adjacent to and buffered by Big Bend State Park, which may also provide an opportunity for restoration in the future.

Past native fish monitoring efforts have indicated the presence of native fishes in and adjacent to the existing backwater. Successfully securing the site will result in 15 acres of backwater habitat credit that benefits flannelmouth sucker, razorback sucker, and bonytail in Reach 3 of the LCR MSCP planning area.

Previous Activities: N/A.

FY07 Accomplishments: This is a new start in FY08.

FY08 Activities: Site visits by Reclamation and SNWA technical staff occurred in January to familiarize stakeholders with the property and potential restoration activities. A federal appraisal is being conducted ascertaining the value of the property. A Steering Committee site visit was conducted to introduce members to the benefits of securing the property for the LCR MSCP. A land and water resolution will be presented at the October Steering Committee meeting. Nevada Parties will collaborate in drafting a long-term Land Use Agreement describing the potential restoration activities and the responsibilities of each party involved.

Proposed FY09 Activities: A finalized Land Use Agreement among NDOW, Nevada State Parks, SNWA, and Reclamation is anticipated, subject to Steering Committee approval. Drafting of a restoration and monitoring plan for the backwater being protected is also scheduled for FY09. Reclamation will be working with SNWA to identify potential funding sources for additional restoration, education, and outreach opportunities.

Pertinent Reports: The *November 2006 Trip Report* is posted on the LCR MSCP Web site.