Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Balancing Resource Use and Conservation

Mohave Valley Conservation Area

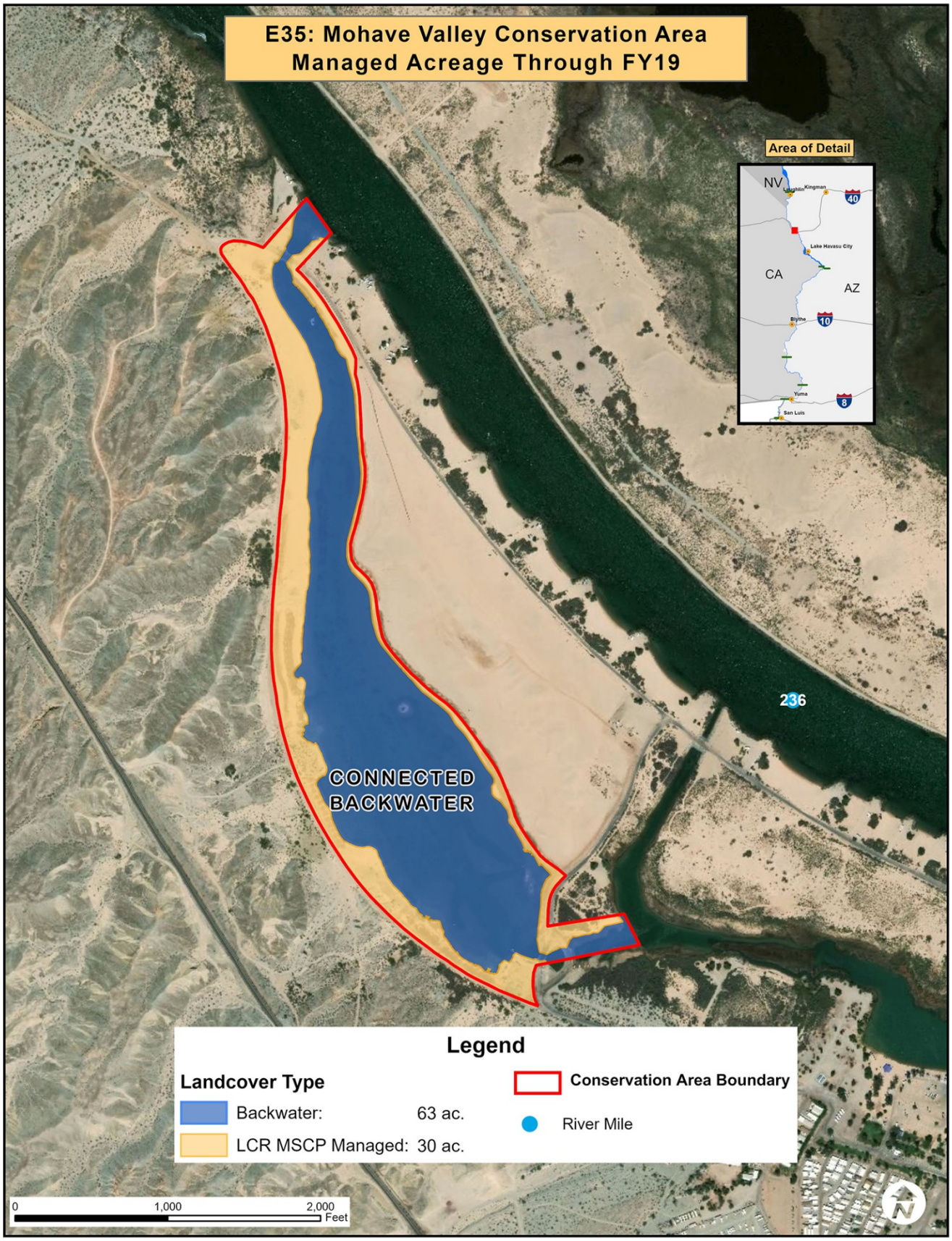
The Mohave Valley Conservation Area is a partnership between the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) and the California State Lands Commission (Commission). The conservation area was established to create a connected backwater habitat within California on State-owned lands located near Needles, California. The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has signed a lease with the Commission to excavate a connected backwater that will be managed for LCR MSCP native fish species.

Backwaters within this reach of the Colorado River must be connected to the main river channel to allow for use by flannelmouth suckers. As part of the lease, Reclamation placed dredged material on acreage adjacent to the backwater. Now that excavation is complete, management of this dredge spoil disposal area will revert back to the Commission or its designee. The LCR MSCP will operate, maintain, and monitor the backwater and associated riparian habitat.

Construction began in January 2017 and was completed in June 2019. The conservation area is open to the public to enjoy wakeless outdoor recreation activities such as wildlife watching, fishing, paddle boarding and kayaking. Fishing is permitted and is subject to all applicable fishing regulations.

Two bridges, one at the inlet of MVCA and one at the outlet, were installed and both include adjustable stoplogs to provide hydraulic control for flows in and out of the backwater channel during moderate to high flows in the Colorado River. The water control structures also limit the amount of Colorado River bed sediment entering the backwater channel. Antennas were placed within the foundations of both bridges to detect Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tags. PIT tags are implanted in native fish and provide unique information, such as sex and age, of any fishes which pass near the scanners.

For more information and documentation about this activity, visit the LCR MSCP website at: www.lcrmscp.gov.



Updated April 2020