

Work Task E32: Bureau Bay

FY12 Estimates	FY12 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY12	FY13 Approved Estimate	FY14 Proposed Estimate	FY15 Proposed Estimate	FY16 Proposed Estimate
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0

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Start Date: FY13

Expected Duration: Closed in FY13

Long-term Goal: Habitat protection

Conservation Measures: BONY2, RASU2, and FLSU1.

Location: Reach 3, CA, River Mile 244.

Purpose: Excavation and maintenance of an existing connected 6 acre backwater.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future): The backwater was identified under Work Task E15: Backwater Site Selection. Marsh bird surveys are conducted under D1 while fish surveys have been conducted under multiple Work Tasks in section C and F5.

Project Description: Bureau Bay is a backwater directly connected to the lower Colorado River on the California side within Reach 3. Formerly the launch site for Reclamation's dredge equipment, the backwater and majority of the adjacent lands are currently leased to the City of Needles, California. Reclamation maintains a small acreage to the west, a private landowner has title to lands to the south, and the Colorado River is to the east. The City of Needles has leased the property from the Federal Government since 1973 as a community recreational facility known as Jack Smith Park. The City's lease was renewed in 2007 for a 25-year term.

Little maintenance has been performed on the backwater in the past few decades and subsequently the mouth of the backwater is filling with sediment. If no action is taken Bureau Bay will eventually be disconnected from the main stem of the river and 6 acres of connected backwater habitat will be lost. LCR MSCP monitoring efforts have contacted native fishes in and adjacent to Bureau Bay. Additionally, Reach 3 maintains the only self-sustaining population of flannelmouth sucker and has very few undeveloped backwaters, which make protection and maintenance of existing backwaters a priority for the LCR MSCP. Discussions with the USFWS and the CDFW indicate that maintaining a connection to the main stem of the Colorado River to allow passage of native fishes is consistent with habitat creation requirements of both the LCR MSCP HCP and the CESA 2081 permit.

Previous Activities: This is a new start in FY13.

FY12 Accomplishments: Bureau Bay was investigated as a potential project to help the LCR MSCP work toward its connected backwater acreage goal within Reach 3. The objective of the project was to maintain Bureau Bay's connection to the river during periods of low flow so it would remain accessible to native fish. The project was evaluated by developing three potential cost scenarios: excavate a small channel (14 feet wide, 6 feet deep, 600 feet long); excavate a large channel (80 feet wide, 10 feet deep, 600 feet long); excavate a large channel and construct a culvert system at the inlet of the backwater to prevent the channel from filling back in and reduce maintenance costs. Expenditures in FY12 were charged to E15: Backwater Site Selection, which typical for projects being evaluated for inclusion into the program.

All scenarios were evaluated over a 50-year period. Multiple Reclamation Offices were contacted to provide construction cost estimates, and the City of Needles provided the information necessary to accurately estimate costs associated with the disposal of excavated material. Based on the long-term per acre costs associated with Bureau Bay, Reclamation decided not to move forward with the project at this time. If site conditions change, such as Reclamation's Yuma Area Office re-opens the dredge yard, the project would be revisited. Re-opening the dredge yard could provide a potential cost sharing partner and make the project more cost effective. The City of Needles was notified of Reclamation's decision during a meeting in August 2012. The meeting was followed by official correspondence.

FY13 Activities: This work task was closed in FY13.

Pertinent Reports: N/A