

## Work Task F7: Marsh Birds Monitoring of Conservation Areas

FY13 Estimates	FY13 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY13	FY14 Approved Estimate	FY15 Proposed Estimate	FY16 Proposed Estimate	FY17 Proposed Estimate
\$30,000	\$4,124.05	\$19,798.62	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000

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**Start Date:** FY11

**Expected Duration:** FY55

**Long-term Goal:** The purpose of this work is to determine whether marsh land cover types created under the LCR MSCP are used by California black rails, Yuma clapper rails, and western least bitterns.

**Conservation Measures:** MRM1 AND MRM2 (CLRA, BLRA, LEBI), LEB11, BLRA1, CLRA1.

**Location:** Presence/absence surveys will be conducted at newly developed marsh habitat sites including Hart Mine Marsh, Cibola NWR, Imperial Ponds Conservation Area (IPCA), and Big Bend Conservation Area, Nevada.

**Purpose:** Monitor the use of created marsh habitat by covered marsh bird species.

**Connections with Other Work Tasks (past and future):** System-wide marsh bird surveys have been conducted by Reclamation on existing marsh habitat since 1996 under D1.

**Project Description:** Surveys for Yuma clapper rail in existing habitat have been conducted in Topock Gorge by Reclamation since 1996 (D1). Since 2006, LCR MSCP has participated in the National Marsh Bird Monitoring Program, which involves surveying for several species, including the LCR MSCP covered marsh species, simultaneously using taped recordings of the species calls. Surveys of marsh habitat created under the LCR MSCP utilize this same protocol. Marsh bird survey data on the LCR is utilized by the USFWS for baseline population estimates and habitat suitability analysis.

**Previous Activities:** Hart Mine Marsh, Big Bend, and IPCA have been surveyed for marsh birds prior to development. Marsh bird surveys were conducted at Big Bend Conservation Area, Beal Lake Conservation Area, Hart Mine Marsh on Cibola NWR, and Field 18 and the Imperial Ponds of IPCA at Imperial NWR in 2011.

**FY13 Accomplishments:** Marsh bird surveys were conducted by the USFWS at Hart Mine Marsh (Cibola NWR), Field 18 and the Imperial Ponds (Imperial NWR) during March, April, and May 2013. At Hart Mine Marsh, 1 least bittern was detected in March, 6 Yuma clapper rails and 9 least bitterns were detected in April and 1 Yuma clapper rail in May. There were no black rails detected. At the IPCA, 1 least bittern was detected in the ponds during March. In April, 3 Yuma clapper rails were detected in Field 18. In May, 2 least bittern were detected in field 18 and 1 least bittern in the ponds. No black rails were detected in Field 18 or the Imperial Ponds. At Beal Lake, surveys were only conducted in March and April. No Yuma clapper rails or black rails were encountered and only 4 least bitterns were detected in April. Surveys were also conducted at Willow Marsh in March and April; there were no detections. At the Big Bend Conservation Area (BBCA) no covered LCR MSCP marsh birds were detected in during March or April.

FY13 obligations were less than approved because personnel from the USFWS conducted surveys on Cibola and Imperial NWRs and only 2 surveys were conducted by LCR MSCP at Havasu NWR and Big Bend Conservation Area.

**FY14 Activities:** Marsh bird surveys will be conducted in cooperation with USFWS on conservation areas. These sites will include Beal Lake and Willow Marsh (Havasu NWR) Hart Mine Marsh (Cibola NWR), Field 18 and the Imperial Ponds (Imperial NWR), Big Bend Conservation Area, Yuma East Wetlands and Hunter's Hole. Data will be inputted into the database and analyzed, comparing pre- and post-development.

**Proposed FY15 Activities:** Marsh bird surveys will be conducted on conservation areas, which have a marsh habitat component in sufficient acreage, vegetation type, and suitability. These sites will include Beal Lake and Willow Marsh (Havasu NWR) Hart Mine Marsh (Cibola NWR), Field 18 and the Imperial Ponds (Imperial NWR), Big Bend Conservation Area, the Yuma East Wetlands, Hunter's Hole and the Laguna Division Conservation Area. Data will be inputted into the database and analyzed, comparing pre and post development.

**Pertinent Reports:** Results of surveys will be reported in the annual reports for each associated restoration site as well as one report for all conservation areas.