

Work Task C66: Marsh Bird Water Depth Analysis

FY14 Estimates	FY14 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY14	FY15 Approved Estimate	FY16 Proposed Estimate	FY17 Proposed Estimate	FY18 Proposed Estimate
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$300,000

Contact: Chris Dodge, (702) 293-8115, cdodge@usbr.gov

Start Date: FY16

Expected Duration: FY19

Long-Term Goal: Define marsh water depth requirements for covered marsh birds

Conservation Measures: MRM1 and MRM2 (CLRA, LEBI, and BLRA)

Location: LCR MSCP project area

Purpose: The purpose of this work task is to identify the range of acceptable water depths in California black rail, least bittern, and Yuma clapper rail breeding sites and ranges of acceptable daily, monthly, and annual variability.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (Past and Future): Marsh bird habitat was studied previously under Work Task C24.

Project Description: The HCP requires the creation of a minimum of 512 acres of marsh habitat for three LCR MSCP covered marsh bird species. All 512 marsh acres should have water depths no greater than 12 inches to provide habitat for the Yuma clapper rail and western least bittern, while 130 acres of marsh is required with water depths no greater than 1 inch to provide habitat for the California black rail.

Water depths in California black rail, least bittern, and Yuma clapper rail existing breeding sites along the LCR will be evaluated. Data will be analyzed to identify the range of acceptable water depths in California black rail, least bittern, and Yuma clapper rail breeding sites and ranges of acceptable daily, monthly, and annual variability.

Previous Activities: This is a new start in FY16.

Under Work Task C24: In 2009, vegetation surveys were conducted, water depth data were monitored at wells, and biweekly marsh bird surveys were conducted throughout the breeding season at the Imperial NWR in Fields 16 and 18. The

locations of all black rails, clapper rails, and least bitterns were mapped in both fields. Black rails were first detected in Fields 16 and 18 in April and July 2009. Yuma clapper rails were consistently detected in Field 16 throughout the summer, with a high of 21 birds. In Field 18, clapper rails were also detected in 2009. In 2011, a final report was prepared, giving recommendations on creation of marshes for both clapper and black rails.

FY14 Accomplishments: This is a new start in FY16.

FY15 Activities: This is a new start in FY16.

Proposed FY16 Activities: The study design will be drafted and a schedule prepared. Existing river gauge and marsh bird breeding data will be compiled.

Pertinent Reports: N/A