

Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Project Summary: The Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP) is a multi-stakeholder, federal and non-federal partnership which seeks to balance the use of Colorado River water resources with the conservation of native species and their habitats in compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In April, 2005, then Secretary Gail Norton signed the Record of Decision for this fifty year program, with implementation beginning in FY2006. The LCR MSCP area extends over 400 miles of the lower Colorado River from the lower end of the Grand Canyon to the Southerly International Boundary with Mexico. The LCR MSCP incorporates many aspects of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative, including riparian, marsh, and aquatic habitat protection and restoration; conservation of native species; and engagement of youth in the conservation of the environment.



Map of Multi-Species Conservation Program area

Strategic Value: LCR MSCP funding is based on a 50/50 cost share between the federal government, through the Bureau of Reclamation, and non-federal partners within Arizona, California, and Nevada. Reclamation is the implementing agency for the LCR MSCP. Partnership involvement occurs primarily through the LCR MSCP Steering Committee, currently representing 56 entities including state and federal agencies, water and power users, and other interested parties, which provides input and oversight functions in support of LCR MSCP implementation. The LCR MSCP provides ESA compliance for covered actions undertaken by Federal agencies and non-federal partners. Covered actions include operations and maintenance activities on the lower Colorado River; the delivery of up to 9 million acre-feet of water to Arizona, California, Nevada, and Mexico; and power produced by six dams located on the lower Colorado River. ESA compliance is obtained through the implementation of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that describes conservation measures for 31 native species, including six currently listed under the ESA as endangered.

Benefits: The goals of the LCR MSCP include conserving habitat and working towards the recovery of native species currently listed under the ESA while reducing the likelihood of additional listings. At the same time, the program accommodates current water diversions and power production and optimizes opportunities for future water and power development. Implementation of the LCR MSCP will benefit currently threatened and endangered species, reduce the likelihood of other species native to the Colorado River ecosystem from becoming listed, benefit other species that utilize the Colorado River including migratory species, and provide benefits to the Southwest by insuring water and power supplies for agricultural, municipal, environmental, recreational and other uses.



Created Cottonwood-Willow Habitat