

ecosystem (not FACA)

attachment 70  
Lower Colorado River  
Multi-Species Conservation Program  
Fact Sheet



It's long been said that the Colorado River is the lifeblood of the West. Today, the Colorado River supplies vital water and power resources for more than 20 million people in Arizona, California and Nevada.

Recently, concerns have been raised about the reliability of these water and power resources following the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 1994 designation of critical habitat for four endangered fish species in the Colorado River Basin.

In response, representatives of the three states, along with various stakeholders and water and power agencies along the lower Colorado, have formed a regional partnership, which is

program aimed at protecting sensitive, threatened and endangered species of fish, wildlife and their habitat.

The partnership has formed a 26-member steering committee, which has been designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as an Ecosystem Conservation and Recovery Implementation Team under the federal Endangered Species Act. The steering committee has retained a facilitator and technical consultants to help develop the conservation plan.

**Description**

The multi-species conservation program will work toward the recovery of listed species through habitat and species conservation, and attempt to reduce the likelihood of additional species listings under the Endangered Species Act.

The proposed long-term program will also accommodate current water diversions and power production and optimize opportunities for future water and power development.

Planned to be implemented over a 50-year period, the comprehensive program will address future federal agency consultation needs under the Endangered Species Act's Section 7, and non-federal agency needs for endangered species incidental take authorization approval under the Act's Section 10.

Over a three- to five-year planning period for the development of a comprehensive program, interim conservation measures will be implemented to address the immediate critical needs for certain endangered species. Interim measures to benefit the endangered razorback sucker, bonytail chub, and southwestern willow flycatcher were initiated in the first two years.

**Program Cost**

Program development costs are projected at about \$4.5 million over three to five years for planning needs and implementation of the interim conservation measures. A federal/non-federal cost-sharing agreement is in place for the development of the program and the implementation of interim conservation measures.

**Participating Stakeholders**

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bureau of Reclamation  
National Park Service  
Bureau of Land Management  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Arizona  
Department of Water Resources

California  
Colorado River Board of California  
Department of Fish and Game

Nevada  
Colorado River Commission of Nevada  
Nevada Division of Wildlife

Tribes  
Lower Colorado River Tribal Coalition  
Hualapai Indian Tribe

Other Public Interests  
Trout Unlimited/B.A.S.S.

Environmental Groups  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Southwest Center for Biological Diversity

Water and Hydroelectric Power Agencies

Arizona Power Authority  
Central Arizona Water Conservation District  
Coachella Valley Water District  
Imperial Irrigation District  
L.A. Dept. of Water & Power  
Metropolitan Water Dist. of Southern California  
Nevada Power Company  
Overton Power Dist. #5  
Palo Verde Irrigation District  
San Diego County Water Authority  
Silver State Power Southern California Public Power Assoc.  
Southern Nevada Water Authority  
Valley Electric Assoc.  
Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation & Drainage District

**Location**

The program covers the mainstem of the lower Colorado River from below Glen Canyon Dam to the Southerly International Boundary with Mexico. The program planning area includes the 100-year flood plain and reservoir full-pool elevations.

**Biological Scope**

More than 100 federal or state-listed, candidate and sensitive species and their associated habitats, ranging from aquatic, wetland and riparian habitats, to upland areas will be addressed.

The program will address the biological needs of mammals, birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles, as well as invertebrates and plants.

6 tribes involved  
w/p. hualapai  
50/50 shared cost