

Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program



Balancing Resource Use and Conservation

Palo Verde Ecological Reserve

Palo Verde Ecological Reserve (PVER) encompasses 1,352 acres of Colorado River historic floodplain near Blythe, California. Formerly known as Riverview Ranch owned by the Travis family, the ranch was acquired by the Trust for Public Lands in early 2004. In September 2004, the property was conveyed to the State of California, which identified approximately 1,100 acres of active agricultural lands as suitable for habitat restoration for the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program.



As part of the LCR MSCP, the California Department of Fish and Game and the Bureau of Reclamation are jointly planning the conversion of portions of PVER (see map) from agricultural crops to a mix of native plant species, including cottonwood, willow and/or honey mesquite.

Some of the species anticipated to use this habitat include the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher and yellow-billed cuckoo, and a number of other species. While the habitats to be created are those required by MSCP-covered species, it is expected that other species that use or depend on cottonwood, willow and mesquite habitats will benefit as well.

After planting is complete, the entire habitat will be managed and maintained for the 50-year life of LCR MSCP. Provisions are also made to ensure the habitat is maintained beyond that period. Additionally, Reclamation and its partners will continually monitor conditions to ensure that the proper habitat structure is present through the 50-year period. For example, Southwestern willow flycatchers require early succession (younger) tree communities such as cottonwood and willow, while yellow-billed cuckoos require more mature tree communities.

The PVER site's long-term restoration activities are divided into phases. A phase-specific restoration plan is prepared each fiscal year which documents the planning, design, planting, and monitoring requirements of that phase. An annual report is prepared each year summarizing restoration and monitoring activities conducted during the previous year.

LCR MSCP covered species located at PVER include: Colorado River cotton rat; MacNeill's Sootywing; acoustic detections and capture of western red bat and western yellow bat; acoustic detections of California leaf-nosed bat and Townsends big-eared bat; confirmed breeding of yellow-billed cuckoos, Sonoran yellow warblers, Arizona Bell's vireos; and migratory summer tanagers and willow flycatchers. For more information and documentation about this activity, visit the LCR MSCP website at: www.lcrmscp.gov

**E4 - Palo Verde Ecological Reserve
Managed Acreage Through 2012**

