



Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee

E-mail update

August 2006

Pittman Wash Pilot Wetlands project restored

The Pittman Wash Pilot Wetlands received a much-needed facelift during recent months. The 1/2-acre project, which was originally constructed and planted in spring and early summer 2005, sustained heavy flood damage during three storm events that summer. Project Team contractor Native Resources had just finished clearing flood deposits and restoring wetland flows when another storm hit on October 18, 2005, sending high flows down the channel that covered the site anew with a thick layer of sediment.

Upcoming Meetings

Operations Study Team Meeting
August 2, 2006
8:30 a.m.

Interagency Cooperative Sampling Committee Meeting
August 14, 2006
1:30 p.m.

Selenium Presentation by Dr. Skorupa
August 15, 2006
9:00 a.m.

Las Vegas Wash Weed Partnership Meeting
August 17, 2006
8:30 a.m.



Pittman Wetlands, July 8, 2006



Pittman Wetlands, October 18, 2005

In an effort to protect the site from further flood damage, project managers decided to raise the height of the concrete curbs on the north and west sides from 1.25 and 2.5 feet, respectively, to four feet. The higher walls bordering the site on its upstream and channel sides should divert storm flows around the wetlands. Once the concrete improvements were completed, Native Resources got to work clearing the October storm deposits. The site was restored to its original form, which includes two wetland cells, one with surface and the other with subsurface flows. In June 2006, water from Pittman Wash was diverted through the reconstructed cells. With flows restored, the cells were planted with bands of four species of bulrush: California bulrush (*Schoenoplectus californicus*), hardstem bulrush (*S. acutus*), and a mixture of Olney threesquare (*S. americanus*) and common threesquare (*S. pungens*). The planting occurred almost one year to the day after the initial planting effort. The bulrush are filling in quickly, and water quality monitoring began in July.

Although frustrating, the struggle with storm damage has been an important part of the learning process for this pilot project. The goals of the project include not only demonstrating whether constructed wetlands can be used to improve water quality in an urban flood control channel, but also identifying the challenges involved in working in such an environment. Flood damage has certainly been a challenge.

The Pittman Wash Pilot Wetlands project is made possible by the partnership of the Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau), City of Henderson, Clark County Regional Flood Control District and the Southern Nevada Water Authority, and is funded through a grant from the Bureau.



Subsurface cell



Surface cell

Did you know?

Endangered Las Vegas bearpoppy found near the Wash

The Las Vegas bearpoppy (*Arctomecon californica*), listed as a critically endangered plant species by the state of Nevada, has been popping up within the Clark County Wetlands Park boundary near the Wash. Over the past several months, a few hundred bearpoppies have been observed on the north side of the Wash off of Hollywood Drive. The Las Vegas bearpoppy only grows in gypsum-rich soil. Silver-green hairy leaves shaped like bear paws form basal rosettes from which the long stems of yellow flowers arise. You can see the flowers from March to June, but remember the removal or destruction of this plant requires a permit from the Nevada Division of Forestry so look but don't touch!



Las Vegas bearpoppy leaves



Las Vegas bearpoppy