

RC&D PROJECTS!

Babacomari River Riparian Protection Project in Santa Cruz County

was awarded \$118,125.00 in grant funding by the Arizona Water Protection Fund. This project will implement a three-step process to conserve significant riparian assets on two adjoining ranches in southeast Arizona, the Babacomari Cattle Ranch and the Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch of the National Audubon Society. The water, plant and animal resources of this system are diverse and unique in the fact that they are in a rarely found intact condition with good environmental and hydrologic conditions.

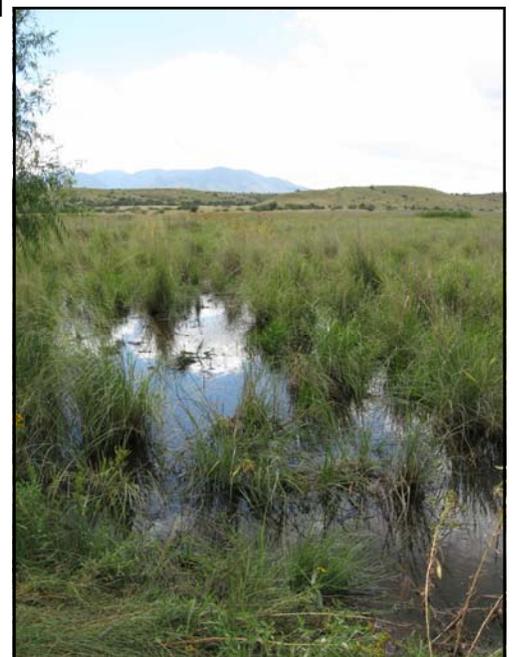
In the first step, 2.2 miles of livestock fence will be installed to separate a stretch of perennial stream on the Babacomari River from an upland pasture. The upland pasture has adequate water, but if livestock go down into the riparian area, they tend to stay rather than travel back to the higher more rugged terrain. This fence will remove cattle access to the riparian area from that pasture.

Step two will establish two permanent vegetative monitoring sites in riparian areas along the Babacomari River. These will be used to gather information on hydrologic and vegetative function. Monitoring and a majority of the outreach tasks will be subcontracted to Robinett Rangeland Resources LLC, with Dan Robinett and Linda Kennedy.

In step three, data will be gathered and assembled into resource reports that can be used by the cooperating ranches to make management decisions to maintain and/or improve vegetative conditions on the Babacomari River, the Babacomari Cienega and sacaton floodplains along Lyle, O'Donnell and Turkey Creeks. Information gathered will be presented to a wide audience. With an estimated contribution of 6,000 acres per foot of water annually to the San Pedro River, the Babacomari River and its upper watershed is a valuable Arizona natural resource, worth preserving and protecting for generations to come. This project will serve as a model for protection of desert rivers in southwest North America.



Post Canyon in flood on the Research Ranch.



O'Donnell sacaton in flood on Babacomari Ranch.