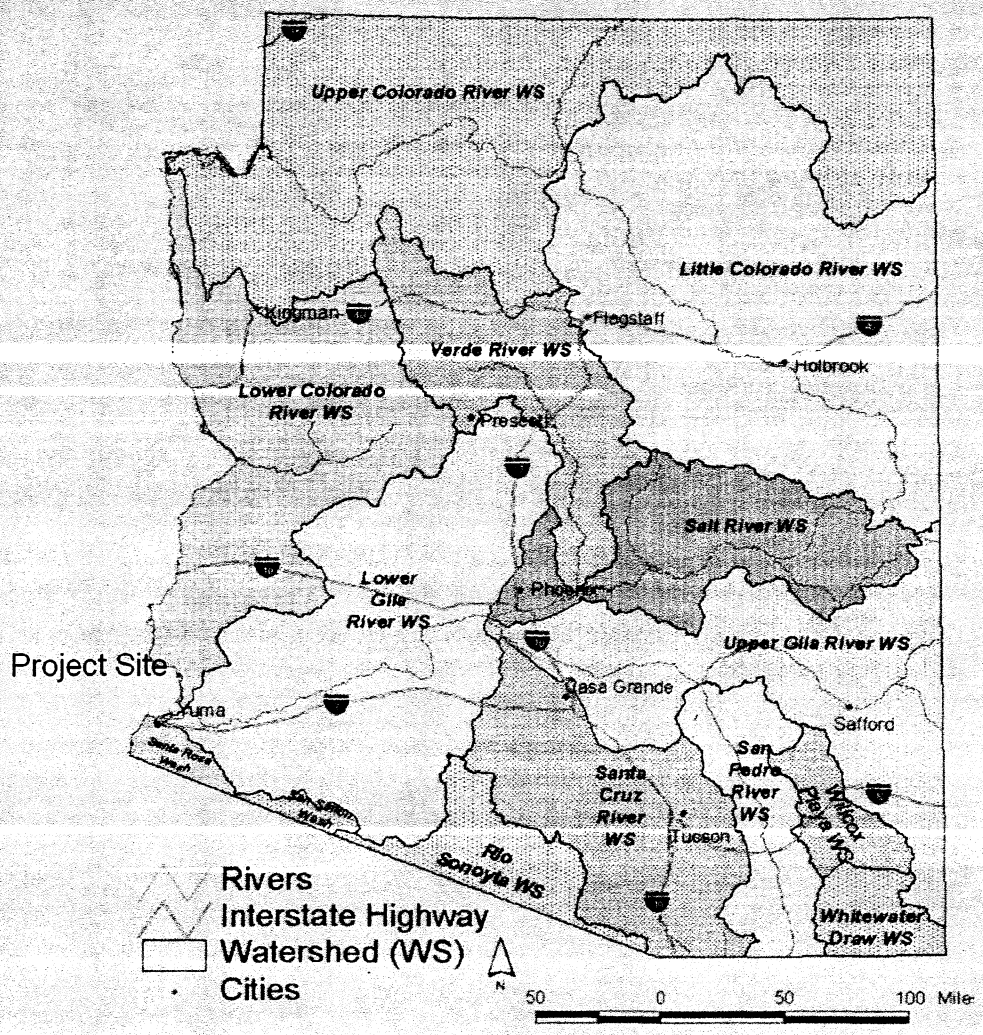
Arizona Watershed Map
FY 2007



Title of Project: Pratt & South Mittry Restoration

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) requests funds to maintain, create, restore, and treat 54 acres of riparian habitat over a 5-year period. This project can be subdivided into two distinct but similar projects: Pratt Restoration and South Mittry Restoration.

Pratt Restoration Project (Pratt). We propose to install and operate a well to flood-irrigate a 12-acre cottonwood-willow site. Ultimately, the well will irrigate a total of 60-acres of cottonwood-willow forest once BLM retires the adjacent agricultural lease in the future. Currently, the 8-year-old, 12-acre, restoration site is a thriving, dense, cottonwood-willow forest. The trees have reached the shallow ground water within 7 years, and therefore the restoration project is self-sustaining; the site has not been irrigated in over a year. Despite a lack of moist soils, the trees support a variety of wildlife, including birds, mammals, reptiles, and insects. However, to attract the breeding, federally endangered, southwestern willow flycatcher, which has not been documented breeding in the Yuma area since 1938, the site needs to have moist soil conditions, which is the primary goal of this aspect of the project. To monitor the effectiveness of the irrigation, BLM will annually conduct bird surveys for these two species.

South Mittry Restoration Project (South Mittry). Adjacent to the Pratt is the South Mittry. The irrigation systems to each of these two restoration projects are independent from each other and are not interconnected. Consequently, they need separate sources for water. For the South Mittry, we propose to treat, plant, and irrigate 42 acres of flood-irrigated fields. Ultimately the fields will produce a forest similar to that of the Pratt. However, structural diversity will be inherently designed into the planting scheme. Consequently, the shrub component will exist, and structural diversity will be high, which attracts a greater diversity of wildlife. This forest within the 42 acres is expected to self-sustaining within 7 years. That is, irrigation will not be required after 7 years. However, we will attempt to maintain moist soils within the forest beyond the 7 years to attempt to attract southwestern willow flycatchers and yellow-billed cuckoos, which is a federal candidate bird species.

The overall plan for both projects is to restore and maintain a total 54 acres of native plants for 5 years with Arizona Water Protection Funds (AWPF). BLM commits to irrigating beyond the 5 years to a point where the entire 54 acres is self-sustaining, at a minimum. The large, contiguous restoration area will provide:

1) Habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife
2) Habitat for the federally-listed southwestern willow flycatcher and yellow-billed cuckoo
3) Opportunities for the public and community college students to observe wildlife and restoration efforts