



Arroyo Colorado Partnership Sustainability and WPP Implementation

Water Body	Arroyo Colorado Tidal (Seg 2201), Arroyo Colorado Above Tidal (Seg 2202)
Location	Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy Counties
River Basin	Nueces-Rio Grande Coastal (22)
Contractor	Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI)
Project Period	September 1, 2011 to August 31, 2014
Project Total	\$480,987 (Federal 60% and Local Match 40%)

Background

The Arroyo Colorado, an ancient distributary channel of the Rio Grande, extends about 90 miles from Mission to the Laguna Madre in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV). Flow in the Arroyo is sustained by wastewater discharges, agricultural irrigation return flows, urban runoff, and base flows from shallow groundwater. To address the Arroyo Colorado's water quality impairments for depressed dissolved oxygen, as well as nutrient concerns, the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership developed a [Watershed Protection Plan](#) (WPP) for the Arroyo Colorado in 2007. Following completion of the WPP, TWRI received a Clean Water Act Section 319(h) grant from the TCEQ to support/facilitate the Partnership and coordinate implementation efforts. This project was a success and ended in August 2011.

Project Description

This project extended the funding to support the Partnership and WPP implementation efforts through 2014. Over the next three years, the Partnership will implement a plan to become less reliant on federal funding and move toward local support. The newly formed Arroyo Colorado Conservancy (ACC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that will function as the Partnership's financial development work group and help guide the Partnership's transition to being locally supported. As the ACC grows and funding is brought in, the ACC will support a variety of new and ongoing educational, research, and agricultural incentive programs.

During this project, TWRI continued to coordinate WPP implementation efforts and facilitate the Partnership meetings. The milestones outlined in the WPP were assessed annually to track progress and to make revisions as necessary. The Arroyo Colorado Watershed Coordinator also provided education about the Arroyo Colorado through presentations and attending/participating at selected public events.



Current Status

The grant funding ended August 31, 2014. Local fundraising efforts and WPP implementation continue.

Public Participation

The Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership is an innovative gathering of federal, state, and private organizations who meet to improve watershed health, integrate watershed management, and make better use of watershed project funding. Important watershed issues are discussed at the meetings and everyone is encouraged to participate. For more information and meeting dates, please visit the [Partnership's website](#).

For More Information

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Websites

<www.arroyocolorado.org/>

Project Highlights

- 09/2011 – Contract executed.
- 10/2011 – Fall Partnership meetings held.
- 11/2011 – Post-Award Meeting held.
- 02/2012 – Winter Partnership meetings held.
- 04/2012 – Spring Partnership meetings held.
- 04/2012 – Arroyo Colorado evaluation period began.
- 05/2012 – ACC Fundraising Plan approved.
- 07/2012 – Summer Partnership meetings held.
- 10/2012 – Partnership voted to include bacteria in the next WPP update.
- 02/2013 – Partnership Annual Newsletter was published.
- 02/2013 – Winter Partnership meetings held.
- 02/2013 – Interactive water quality trends map posted on Arroyo Colorado website.
- 03/2013 – Arroyo Colorado Benefit Summary completed.
- 03/2013 – 2012 Arroyo Colorado Accomplishments Report completed.
- 04/2013 – Spring Partnership meetings held.
- 04/2013 – Arroyo Colorado fishing tournament held to benefit the ACC.
- 07/2013 – Habitat Workgroup meeting and AC Steering Committee/Partnership meeting held.
- 09/2013 – 2013 Arroyo Colorado Annual Accomplishments Report completed.
- 10/2013 – Soil Testing campaign began.
- 10/2013 – First Annual “Save the Arroyo Fiesta” held.
- 02/2014 – Habitat Workgroup meeting and AC Steering Committee/Partnership meeting held.
- 05/2014 – Habitat Workgroup meeting and AC Steering Committee/Partnership meeting held.
- 07/2014 – Habitat Workgroup meeting and AC Steering Committee/Partnership meeting held.
- 08/2014 – 2014 Arroyo Colorado Annual Accomplishments Report completed.
- 08/2014 – Final Report submitted to TCEQ.
- 08/2014 – Contract closed.