

**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Fort Worth District

Sponsor: City of Laredo

Ecosystem restoration adjacent to the Rio Grande

Project Fact Sheet
Continuing
Authorities
Program (CAP)

Oct. 19, 2016

Type of Project: Section 206, Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration

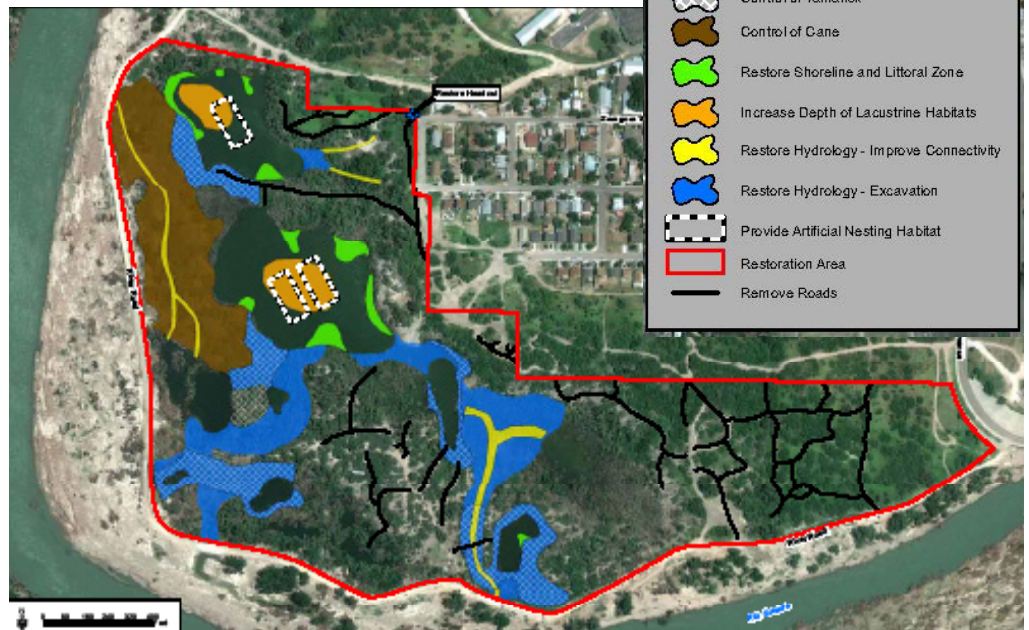
Authorization: Water Resources Development Act of 1996

Latest Project Milestone: Construction started Aug. 2, 2016, under \$2.44 million contract awarded to M.D. Merrett.

Background: The project is located in the city of Laredo in south Texas, 120 miles southwest of San Antonio, on the U.S.-Mexico border. The Laredo Riverbend area is adjacent to the Rio Grande along a 90 degree river bend in the southwest portion of the city. In this semi-arid region, it is part of an important migration, foraging and breeding corridor for resident and migratory wildlife species. Three are federally listed under the Endangered Species Act: the interior least tern, the ocelot and the Gulf Coast jaguarundi. However, this 77-acre riparian ecosystem has been significantly degraded by historic sand and gravel mining and proliferation of non-native plants such as tamarisk and Carrizo cane. It has also been negatively impacted by the creation of numerous trails and roads by recreational users, illegal aliens and law enforcement.



The project will restore this ecosystem to its natural state by improving the quality and/or quantity of aquatic, wetland and riparian habitat. It will improve hydrological connectivity with surrounding water bodies and reduce inundation within the area from off-site neighborhoods. Installation of barges in the two largest ponds would create a permanent source of nesting habitat for the interior least tern and great egret. Repairs to drainage features and shoreline topography will improve water quality. Removal of roads and trails will reduce erosion, and improved vegetative structure and diversity will increase foraging habitat for the ocelot and jaguarundi. Public trail access planned.



Carrizo cane is an invasive species that would be removed, according to the National Ecosystem Restoration Plan.