

Appendix C
Las Cienegas National Conservation Area
FY 2004 Border Project
BLM—Tucson Field Office

Project Name: The Narrows of Cienega Creek closure (from north side)

Unit Name: Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (LCNCA)

Date of Project: March 19-21, 2004

Location: *Township(T), Range(R), Section:* T18S, R17E, Sec. 1 & 12; T18S, R18E, Sec. 6 & 7

Participants: 15 volunteers from Sky Island Alliance (SIA), Maile Adler (BLM), Jeff Lark (SCA)

Project Coordinator(s): Trevor Hare (SIA), Maile Adler (BLM), Karen Simms (BLM), Jeff Lark (SCA)

Description of Project: The Narrows is an area in Cienega Creek where, previously, motor vehicles had been traveling in and through the creek. The creek is home to two species of endangered fish. One of the decisions of the *Approved Las Cienegas Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision* (2003) was to close the Narrows to motor vehicle use. First a closure was attempted from the south with the placement of very large boulders with heavy equipment. With an apparently closed route through the Narrows from the south, this project was intended to secure the closure by placing vehicle barriers on the access roads from the north side of the creek. Railroad ties were deposited with heavy equipment. Volunteers constructed a vehicle barrier by cementing in two of the steel ties and mounted another horizontally. Native vegetation was planted along the creek to help rehabilitate the impacts from the vehicle damage. Trash was collected in and around the site. The other access roads were closed using surrounding materials and then naturalized. All routes were signed with posts instructing visitors that the area is closed to motor vehicles.

Results: Fifteen volunteers provided 180 hours of labor to assist in the closure of the Narrows to motor vehicles. Three access roads from the north side of Cienega Creek were closed with vehicle barriers. Three bags of trash were collected. Unfortunately, this project will need to be redone. Vehicles continue to circumnavigate the extensive barriers constructed on the south side of the creek. This area will remain posted as closed, but no more project work will be attempted until the southern access is effectively closed to motor vehicles.



Before



After

FY 2004 Border Project BLM—Tucson Field Office

Project Name: The Narrows of Cienega Creek closure

Unit Name: Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (LCNCA)

Date of Project: April 23-25, 2004

Location: GPS data: 54200072 / 352715375

Participants: 19 volunteers from Sky Island Alliance (SIA), Maile Adler (BLM) and Jeff Lark (SCA Intern)

Project Coordinator(s): Trevor Hare (SIA), Maile Adler (BLM), Karen Simms (BLM), and Jeff Lark (SCA)

Description of Project: The Narrows is an area in Cienega Creek where, previously, motor vehicles had been traveling in and through the creek. The creek is home to two species of endangered fish. One of the decisions of the *Approved Las Cienegas Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision* (2003) was to close the Narrows to motor vehicle use. The first closure was attempted with the placement of large boulders. Unfortunately, this route was breached and again, vehicles were driving in and through the creek. Many of the vehicles impounded from this particular area were associated with the smuggling of illegal immigrants and drugs. This service project was another attempt to close the route to motor vehicles, using several methods and tactics. Metal C-posts were planted along places without sturdy natural barriers, angled towards the potential violator. A natural cliff was emphasized using hand-tools. A natural drainage in the road was dug out to provide a steeper deterrent for vehicles. Several large boulders were moved to provide a naturalized barrier. Native vegetation was planted along the creek to help rehabilitate the impacts from the vehicle damage. Trash was collected in and around the site. Signs were placed that indicated the route ahead was closed to motor vehicles.

Results: A crew of volunteers from Sky Island Alliance worked for 228 hours reclosing the Narrows to motor vehicles. After a full day's work at "closing" the route to motor vehicles, the volunteers were camped out within miles of the site. That night, a vehicle rearranged the area in order to pass through the closure and through the creek. In the morning, the volunteers returned to the site to find most of their hard work undone. Despite the apparent defeat, they gathered their tools and creative ideas and went to work for another full day to create an even more challenging closure for the unlawful visitors.

FY 2004 Border Project Tucson Field Office

Project Name: The Narrows of Cienega Creek closure

Unit Name: Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (LCNCA)

Date of Project: September 24-26, 2004

Location: GPS data: 54200072 / 352715375

Participants: 18 volunteers from Sky Island Alliance (SIA), Emily Hertz (SCA) and Donna Myers (SCA)

Project Coordinator(s): Trevor Hare (SIA), Maile Adler (BLM), Karen Simms (BLM), Donna Myers (SCA), and Emily Hertz (SCA)

Description of Project: The Narrows is an area in Cienega Creek where, previously, motor vehicles had been traveling in and through the creek. The creek is home to two species of endangered fish. One of the decisions of the *Approved Las Cienegas Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision* (2003) was to close the Narrows to motor vehicle use. The first closure was attempted with the placement of large boulders. Unfortunately, this route was breached and again, vehicles were driving in and through the creek. Most of the vehicles impounded in this particular area are associated with the smuggling of illegal immigrants and drugs. This service project was another attempt to close the route to motor vehicles, using several methods and tactics. A natural drainage in the road was dug out to provide a steeper deterrent for vehicles. Eight very large boulders were moved with heavy equipment to block the route. Native vegetation was planted along the creek to help rehabilitate the impacts from the vehicle damages. Trash was collected in and around the site.

Results: A total of 18 volunteers from Sky Island Alliance worked for 146.5 volunteer hours on reclosing a route designated closed by the recently approved Las Cienegas RMP. The project work was led by Student Conservation Association Interns Donna Myers and Emily Hertz. The closure consisted of placement of 8 large boulders, 7 angle irons cemented into the ground, and digging out the cliff drop-off. The area was then revegetated using native plants from the area including grasses and willows along the creek. An illegal motorized route (2-track) above the creek was also naturalized. Border Patrol and BLM law enforcement agents contacted the volunteers during the project. Five bags of trash were collected at the site.



Before



After

FY 2004 Border Project Tucson Field Office

Project Name: Bilingual Signing, clean-up and rehabilitation to mitigate UDI impacts at Las Cienegas National Conservation Area

Unit Name: Sites throughout the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (LCNCA) and Audubon Research Ranch

Date of Project: April 26-30, 2004

Location: *Township:* ____ . *Range:* ____ . *Section:* Not Available
GPS data: Not available

Participants: One Youth Corps of Southern Arizona (YCOSA) crew, Jeff Lark, Amanda Webb, and Chris Hartman (Student Conservation Associate Interns)

Project Coordinator(s): Jeff Lark (Student Conservation Associate) and Catie Fenn (BLM)

Description of Project: One YCOSA crew spent one week mitigating the impacts from UDI smuggling operations. YCOSA removed waste, installed signs, rehabilitated and reseeded damaged soils and vegetation, and enacted fire prevention methods at the Empire Ranch House. All of these projects were located within the borders of the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area. YCOSA also participated in a clean-up of lands surrounding the Audubon Ranch in Elgin, Arizona.

Results: Six 2' x 3' and one 3' x 4' metal bulletin boards were installed; one large and one small area were rehabilitated from smuggling and illegal off-road driving by reseeding and vertically mulching; "weed eaters" were used to reduce the fire hazard and other fire prevention measures were taken around the Empire Ranch House; and 15-20 lime green bags of litter were removed from the Audubon Ranch and within the LCNCA. Over 200 lime green trash bags and one dozen trash pick-up sticks were provided to the Audubon Research Ranch to assist in future volunteer clean-up projects on LCNCA.