

Stories of Success

Arizona Department of Agriculture
Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program

Helping Preserve Arizona's Open Spaces

In Recognition

The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program owes special thanks to a very special person who had the vision to protect open spaces on working ranch lands. This visionary was the late Franklin “Jake” Flake.



Franklin “Jake” Flake, circa 1970

When Proposition 303 was being developed by the Legislature in 1998, Representative Flake was instrumental in convincing a group of legislators and Governor Hull to give rural communities and working farm and ranch families a chance to demonstrate how to put conservation into action.

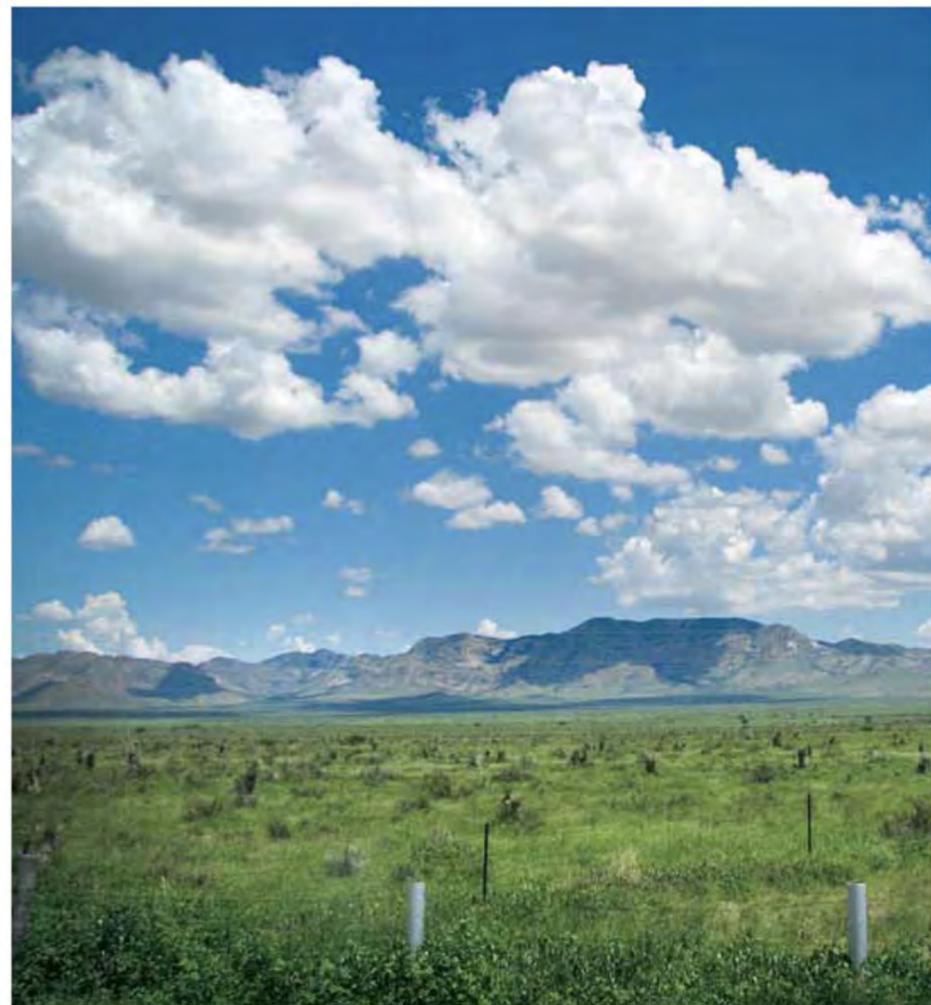
Jake Flake was a native Arizonan and the son of pioneers. He spent his whole life in rural Arizona raising a family, managing lands, applying conservation, producing food, and giving to his community in Snowflake. It was only in his later years that he brought his “Arizona Cowboy” common sense to the Arizona State Capitol. It was during this time he helped develop the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program concept and made it a reality.

Jake Flake understood “nature’s benefits” from working farm and ranch lands. He lived and witnessed for decades the values Arizona’s working farm and ranch lands provided for wildlife, healthy water cycles, recreation, viewsapes, and conservation. He understood land management and knew the experience of managing renewable natural resources in a manner which ensured their use for future generations.

Jake Flake believed in the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program. He knew if given the chance a program like this would demonstrate tremendous benefits and provide the public with an example of how to truly protect and maintain open spaces – in a fashion which benefitted all. He understood how it would benefit wildlife, recreation, conservation, water quality, air quality, local communities, and local citizens in Arizona’s rural communities and he wanted a chance to prove it to the public.

Now, after nine years, we can witness the results of his vision and recognize what he saw – a tremendously successful program that would provide the benefits of protecting open spaces, enhancing wildlife habitat and applying conservation, all while maintaining working farms and ranches.

The many examples of conservation provided in this book are real, on-the-ground examples of conservation and open space protection to be enjoyed by all of Arizona’s citizens and critters. It is what Jake Flake envisioned and now we can all see it firsthand.



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Statement from the Arizona Cattlemen's Association

In 1998, the people of Arizona made an investment in the future of ranching and farming to preserve its traditions, open space and way of life by passing Proposition 303. For the people on the land, this investment demonstrated that Arizonans recognize that ranch families are an essential piece of maintaining the open landscape that we all enjoy. Just a few short years later the ranchers and farmers of Arizona are utilizing the funds from Proposition 303 to improve Arizona's working landscape.

Cattle remain one of the most vital of the five "C's" here in the Southwest and ranching techniques continue to adapt to the changing landscape. Arizona's ranch families are proud stewards of over 40 million acres and maintain open spaces for the public to enjoy wildlife, recreation and other activities. They contribute 3.2 billion dollars to Arizona's economy and more than 400 million pounds of beef annually.

To maintain such a vibrant working landscape, Arizona ranch families work around the clock to improve the environment of which they are a part. The projects in which ranchers and farmers participate, thanks to Proposition 303, help to enhance the wildlife on the ground in a multitude of ways. Grant funds have been used to help increase access to water for cattle and for Arizona's wildlife. As we all know, water is a precious resource in our Southwest climate. The grants from this program not only ensure a clean drink of water for wildlife and cattle but also help farmers and ranchers utilize water conservation techniques. The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program has also allowed for implementation of new forage management techniques, allowing for more efficient utilization of forage on the range and ensuring a healthy landscape for wildlife. This conservation grant program has also accomplished the goal of keeping farms and ranches whole as productive elements in our economy, continuing rural traditions and maintaining open spaces.

The Arizona Cattlemen's Association thanks the Arizona public for their investment in rural Arizona along with their support of the ranching and farming community. Because of this investment, Arizona ranchers continue to maintain and enhance working landscapes for all to enjoy.

The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program

History



New fencing (top) improves range management on the Poppy Canyon Ranch in Graham County. A windmill (middle) on the Quarter Circle U Ranch in Navajo County provides water for livestock and wildlife. Cattle and horses graze (bottom) in a pasture watered by a solar powered sprinkler system on the Anchor Ranch in Greenlee County.

The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program (LCCGP) was originally part of the Proposition 303 Growing Smarter Statute that was passed by public referendum in 1998. At that time, the LCCGP was known as the Growing Smarter Open Space Reserve Grant Program (GSOSR). The Arizona State Parks Board (ASPB) was designated by statute as the overall administrator of the program, but entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the Arizona Department of Agriculture (ADA) to administer the GSOSR. Under the Growing Smarter legislation, the ASPB was given \$20 million annually, of which \$2 million was transferred to the ADA to administer the GSOSR.

On September 18, 2003, the Arizona State Legislature passed new legislation that created the Livestock & Crop Conservation Grant Program (LCCGP). The new legislation moved the LCCGP from under ASPB administration and charged the ADA with developing, implementing and managing the grant program. The LCCGP is funded by the Livestock and Crop Conservation Fund that is funded through the Growing Smarter Statutes. Approximately \$1.8 million is available in grant funds each year to assist ranchers and farmers with the implementation of conservation projects that ultimately provide for the preservation of open space.

Throughout Fiscal Year (FY) 2004, the design of the LCCGP was under development. ADA personnel met with various stakeholder groups including the United States Forest Service, United States Bureau of Land Management, United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), Arizona State Land Department, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Arizona Cattle Growers Association and The Nature Conservancy to gain input and feedback on the design and criteria of the LCCGP. As a result of this development period, no grants were awarded during FY 2004. The unspent FY 2004 monies in the Livestock and Crop Conservation Fund remained in the fund for future use by the LCCGP. Also during FY 2004, the ADA created a Grant Project Coordinator staff position within the agency to design, implement and administer the LCCGP.

The first grant cycle was run in FY 2005. It was decided that funding could be used for on-the-ground projects funded by the ADA as well as for matching funds to other conservation programs. The ADA received 101 applications requesting over \$10.4 million in funding. Over \$3.4 million in grants were awarded to 56 applicants. The average grant award was \$60,769. Approximately half of the 56 grants awarded were for matching funds to other conservation programs. The total matching funds leveraged by LCCGP funding in the 2005 grant cycle was \$3.62 million. Additionally in the 2005 cycle, projects were funded in 13 counties: Apache, Cochise, Coconino, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, Maricopa, Mohave, Navajo, Pinal, Santa Cruz, and Yavapai Counties.

The second grant cycle was run in FY 2007. The ADA received 93 applications requesting over \$11.1 million in funding. Due to interest income earned on the fund balance, the ADA was able to award over \$4.4 million in funding to 70 applicants. The average grant award in the 2007 grant cycle was \$63,553. Once again, approximately half of the 70 grants awarded were for matching funds to other conservation programs. The total matching funds leveraged by LCCGP funding was \$3.75 million. Funding was provided for projects in the following 14 counties: Apache, Cochise, Coconino, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, Maricopa, Mohave, Navajo, Pinal, Santa Cruz, Yavapai and Yuma Counties.

The third grant cycle was run in FY 2009. The ADA received 116 applications requesting over \$11.8 million in funding. The ADA was able to award approximately \$4.1 million in funding to 63 applicants. The average grant award was \$64,758. Twenty-seven of the 63 grants awarded were for matching funds to other conservation programs. The total matching funds leveraged by LCCGP funding was over \$4.5 million. The 2009 cycle provided funding for projects in the following 13 counties: Apache, Cochise, Coconino, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, Maricopa, Mohave, Navajo, Pinal, Santa Cruz and Yavapai Counties.

Overview

The purpose of the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program (LCCGP) is the preservation of open space in Arizona. The open spaces of rural Arizona are becoming increasingly more fragmented due to the pressure on ranching and farming families to sell privately held agricultural land to developers and other buyers. As the population of Arizona continues to grow and the metropolitan areas continue to expand, open space becomes ever more valuable. The LCCGP is designed to reduce the pressure on ranching and farming families to develop private properties and thereby, preserve more open space for the public to enjoy.

Per the grant program authorizing statute A.R.S. §41-511.23 (G)(1), eligible applicants include individual landowners and grazing and agricultural lessees of state or federal land that desire to implement conservation-based management alternatives using livestock or crop production or reduction practices to provide wildlife habitat or other public benefits that preserve open space.

LCCGP funds can be used for on-the-ground projects funded only by the Arizona Department of Agriculture or as matching funds to other conservation grant programs, such as the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (USDA-NRCS EQIP). Funded projects typically fall into four categories: Water Development, Grassland Restoration, Erosion Control and Fencing. Examples of Water Development projects include drilling wells, replacing gas generators with solar pumps and installing additional drinkers to provide water to livestock and wildlife. Grassland Restoration project examples include invasive species treatments and pasture re-seeding. Erosion Control projects include installing check dams and buffer strips. Fencing examples include fencing livestock out of sensitive riparian areas and dividing pastures to increase rotational grazing programs and improve range conditions. Projects can be done on Private, State and Federal (non-tribal) lands throughout Arizona.

Every grant cycle, the LCCGP manual and application package are revised and updated to make the program more efficient and effective

and to ensure it is meeting its objectives. LCCGP staff members discuss proposed changes and updates with and seek input from various advisors, including members of the agricultural community, the conservation community and various state and federal agency personnel. After the initial revisions are made, the draft manual and application package are subject to a statutorily mandated sixty day public comment period. At the conclusion of the public comment period, any comments that are received are reviewed and final revisions are made to the manual. The manual is then printed and distributed and a grant application deadline is announced.

During the application period, grant workshops are held around the state. The grant workshops are intended to give potential applicants an overview of the program and familiarize them with the application process and forms. The workshops also give potential applicants the opportunity to speak with staff members and ask questions about the program. Additionally, staff members are available throughout the application period to answer questions from applicants.

After the application period ends, all applications that are received are read into the public record and the evaluation process begins. Eligible applications are evaluated by an evaluation team made up of individuals from the agricultural community, the conservation community, the universities and various state and federal agencies. Applications are evaluated based on a set rating criteria as well as the strength of the project proposal. After the evaluation process is complete, the evaluation team makes funding recommendations to the Director of the Arizona Department of Agriculture. The Director reviews the recommendations and makes modifications, if necessary. Once the Director has approved the recommendations, awards are announced and LCCGP staff members begin developing grant contracts with the applicants who received funding.

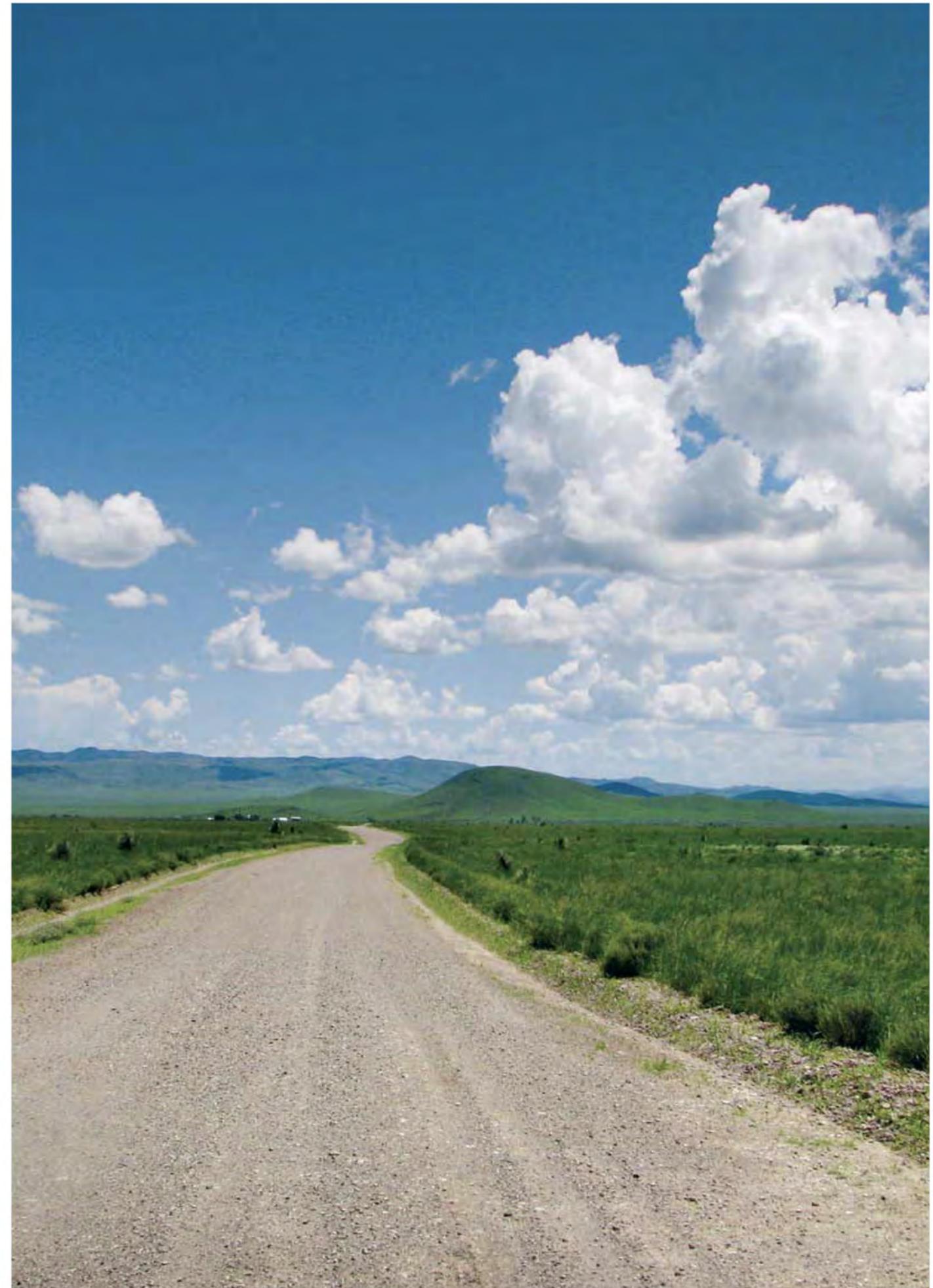
After grant contracts are in place, the LCCGP staff members are responsible for administering the contracts, including processing requests for reimbursement, interacting with grantees and monitoring project progress and completion.



Storage tanks (top) improve water availability on the KJ Ranch in Graham County. Solar panels (bottom) added to a well on Griffin Cattle Ranch in Gila County improve energy efficiency.

Stories of Success

The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program has positively impacted millions of acres of open space in Arizona. From the previously completed grant cycles, the Arizona Department of Agriculture awarded approximately \$11.9 million in funding to 189 applicants. The following is a small sampling of the many stories of success.



Apache County

Apache County is comprised of approximately 7,171,123 acres of land and is the sixth largest county in the United States. Navajo and Fort Apache Indian Reservation land make up 64.5 percent of the land in Apache County.



In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, four grants were awarded to participants in Apache County. The total funding amount of those grants was \$293,306.

Every grant awarded in the county contained a water development project and a fencing project. Additionally, one grant contained an erosion control project and two contained grassland restoration projects.

These projects are having a positive impact on approximately 150,980 acres. When all contracts are completed, approximately 25 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.

Quarter Circle U Ranch

According to Chuck Backus' "History of the Quarter Circle U Ranch," the Quarter Circle U Ranch is one of the oldest permanent cattle ranches in Arizona. It was officially established by the building of the ranch house in 1876. Chuck and Judy Backus purchased the ranch in 1977. At one time this ranch ran 5,000 cattle on 200 square miles of the southern part of the Superstition Mountains. Today it consists of about 22 square miles of mostly Arizona State Trust Land. In 1999, a 40 section US Forest Service Allotment near Show Low was added to the ranch. This allows the cattle to be moved completely off the Superstition range for the summer months, thus improving the range conditions of both ranges.

When the ranch began, cattle were turned out on the range and only gathered for branding and marketing. Now Chuck uses a "Modern Range Management Plan" to utilize the cattle to improve and harvest the grass in order to provide a healthy protein source for humans. This management plan can be defined as the use of plant, animal and range management sciences to achieve a desirable, productive and sustainable landscape that provides food and fiber for society. It requires pasture rotation and monitoring, improved cattle distribution, water development, herd quality and monitoring, facility development and solar power.

The northern portion of the ranch has been awarded two LCCGP grants to provide more open space and enhance wildlife and cattle habitats. Both grants involved participation and cost sharing by the USFS and the Arizona Game and Fish Department which allowed LCCGP funds to be spread further. One grant created a reliable water source in open spaces for antelope herd enhancement as well as better cattle distribution (this project took place in Navajo County). The second grant funded the removal of 2,200 acres of encroaching Juniper trees which allowed the space to be available for antelope herds and cattle grazing (portions of this project took place in Apache and Navajo Counties). An abandoned railroad bed runs through several miles of the area where the Juniper clearing was done which provides access for an excellent open space experience for hikers, hunters and bicyclists.

Chuck publicly talks about how beneficial the LCCGP has been to Arizona ranchers and citizens and how the program managers have been helpful, efficient and polite throughout the process.



An area cleared of juniper trees on the northern allotment of the Quarter Circle U Ranch provides more desirable habitat for antelope.

Cochise County

Cochise County is comprised of approximately 3,948,447 acres of land. One of its main towns, Willcox, was once known as the “Cattle Capital of the Nation.” Today, agriculture is still an important industry there.



In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of twenty grants were awarded to participants in Cochise County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$1,130,231.

Seventeen of the grants awarded in the county contained a water development project to improve water distribution and availability on the operations. Additionally, four grants contained erosion control projects, four contained grassland restoration projects and seven contained fencing projects.

The projects are having a positive impact on approximately 134,179 acres. At the completion of all of the contracts in Cochise County, approximately 50 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.

47 Ranch



An erosion control structure on the 47 Ranch decreases sediment and improves water quality.

The 47 Ranch was established in the 1990s by Bill Davis, who came to Arizona with a herd of cattle from Texas. He had been through Arizona on a previous cattle drive and remembered that there was good open grassland for his cattle to graze. In 2002, Dennis and Deborah Moroney purchased the ranch after selling their ranch Northwest of Prescott. They chose the 47 Ranch because it had a different climate with a different mixture of leased land than their previous ranch. They believe the most important things on their ranch are cattle that are matched to the terrain, water availability and a management plan that not only looks to the future but also learns from the past. The ranch totals 32,000 acres of mostly state land and private land, with 2,500 acres of federal land.

Over the years, the Moroneys have seen increased interest from government and environmental agencies to work with ranchers to increase conservation. Their grant has allowed them to increase the efficiency of the ranch. They have installed solar and wind energy to reduce the cost of pumping. They have also worked on erosion control projects, partnering with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. The Moroneys installed over 500 rock and wire

erosion control structures down washes and waterways to trap silt and organic matter, rebuilding the wash and restoring native grasses. The wash where the erosion control structures were installed is upstream from the White Water Draw Wildlife Refuge, which hosts various migratory waterfowl throughout the year. Due to the erosion control projects, the birds will have cleaner, less polluted water. The Moroneys also completed a fence to further divide their pastures and increase their rotational grazing schedule efficiency. Many positive changes have been seen as a result of these projects. Tours of the ranch have been given to show others their progressive choices, how those choices can work for the tour attendees and the sustainability that has been achieved through the improvements. The tours have included ranchers and farmers in the area; ranchers and farmers from Sonora, Mexico; Wilcox High School students; and miscellaneous NCRS workshop attendees.

The Moroney's experience with the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program has been fabulous and the assistance they gained from the grant program has allowed them to conserve and maintain open space not only for grazing and wildlife, but also for the public.

Palmer Farms

Palmer Farms is a small family operation that has been in business in Arizona for 15 years. They have a fairly diversified operation. They raise crops which are primarily used to provide feed for their feedlot and also have range ground for grazing cattle. Production agriculture is one of the few occupations that allows the Palmers to work with their son and grandchildren.

The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program (LCCGP) has been a tremendous help to Palmer Farms over the last several years. With the tight profit margins on agricultural operations it would have been extremely difficult to install the improvements that the LCCGP has allowed them to incorporate into their operation. The structure of the LCCGP not only allows, but encourages cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) and other programs, and has made it possible for Palmer Farms to keep the family farm in agriculture and not have to subdivide. Additionally, one of the improvements funded by the LCCGP is on both state and private ground. It is a benefit to be able to use this program with no penalty for that situation.

With the help of LCCGP and Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funds, Palmer Farms has been able to install new computerized pivots which conserve water, energy and time, thus making the farming operation more efficient and therefore more productive. Replacing obsolete center pivots has greatly improved crop yields. By putting the drops on 30" centers and using low pressure nozzles, they have seen an immediate improvement in water distribution. The computer panels allow the pivots to be programmed to apply more or less water over sections of the field with either different soil types or crops with different water needs. Better management not only saves water,

it saves energy used to pump and distribute it. They also have the ability to accurately apply fertilizer and chemicals through the pivots which decreases tractor passes over the field. Additionally, replacing the natural gas engine servicing one pivot with a submersible pump has saved energy, labor and maintenance. There is no noise, exhaust, or used oil to dispose of.

The following are several more examples of the public benefits of the project:

– Water development projects on the farm have led to an increase in the number of deer on the acreage venturing onto the farm from a nearby abandoned pistachio orchard. The herd of deer rests in the orchard during the day and feeds in a neighboring alfalfa field and in Palmer Farms' corn field during the night. The pivots supply water as well as feed and even shelter. Squirrel, raccoons, bear, bobcats, coyotes, quail, road runners, javelinas, dove, sandhill cranes, song birds, buzzards, rabbits and other wildlife have all been seen in the fields.

– Quail, dove, deer and javelina hunters have all enjoyed the benefit of increased wildlife present on the farm because of the water development projects.

– By providing the feedlot facility and the forage crops used in that feedlot, Palmer Farms can give ranchers another option to make their business profitable thus ensuring the open spaces all Arizonans love.

The LCCGP-funded conservation projects have allowed Palmer Farms to maintain profitability and will ultimately provide for the preservation of open space as Palmer Farms can continue to remain in production agriculture.



Paul Palmer and his grandsons (top) in front of the new center pivot that will improve irrigation efficiency and conserve water. A dirt tank (bottom) on Magoffin Ranch provides water to livestock and wildlife and habitat for an endangered frog species.

Coconino County

Coconino County is comprised of approximately 11,915,151 acres of land and is the second largest county in the United States. Settlers began cattle and sheep ranching in Coconino County dating back to 1870.



In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of thirteen grants were awarded to participants in Coconino County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$1,122,368.

Seven of the grants awarded in the county contained grassland restoration projects to reduce or eliminate the presence of invasive plant species and restore the land to its historic state. Additionally, seven grants contained a water development project, one grant contained an erosion control project and two contained fencing projects.

The projects are having a positive impact on approximately 268,293 acres. At the completion of all of the contracts in Coconino County, approximately 51 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.

M Diamond Ranch

The M Diamond Ranch is 100 years old and located between Camp Verde and Sedona. The ranch totals 120 acres of private land, and 33,000 acres of United States Forest Service grazing allotment administered by the Red Rock Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest.

In 2004, the ranch obtained funding from the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Habitat Partnership Committee to restore grasslands by removing juniper and mesquite trees and reseeded with native grasses. When they approached the United States Forest Service (USFS) about clearances, they were told the USFS had no available funding to conduct the NEPA and SHPO clearances necessary to

complete the project. Several years later, the M Diamond Ranch obtained a grant from ADEQ Water Quality Improvement Program which funded the clearances and also some erosion control projects. The ADEQ grant required nonfederal matching funds. The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program provided a portion of those matching funds with very minimal "strings attached" which enabled them to complete the projects. Each funding partner had a different mission, but all worked together to achieve significant rangeland improvements benefitting wildlife and preserving open space. Without this critical piece of the "Partnership Puzzle" it is next to impossible to implement on-the-ground work on Public Lands.



Two types of erosion control structures improve water quality on the M Diamond Ranch.



Coconino County

Little Horse Ranch and O X Ranch



New drinkers provide water to livestock and wildlife in several pastures on the Little Horse Ranch.

For more than thirty years Little Horse Ranch has held two US Forest Service grazing allotments consisting of 32,000 acres of timber and grasslands in the Coconino National Forest in Coconino County south of Flagstaff. These allotments enable the ranch to graze 395 yearlings each summer. These yearlings are born and raised at the O X Ranch – a cow calf operation located near Congress, Arizona, which consists of an area of approximately 53,000 acres of Arizona State Trust Lands, 1,300 acres of BLM lands, 7,000 acres of private, and 4,800 acres of leased private lands. The ranch has five full-time employees as well as several part-time and support staff.

In 2009 the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program of the Arizona Department of Agriculture joined with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in providing the ranch financial assistance for the purpose of constructing water facilities for cattle and wildlife at eight different locations in five different pastures at its Flagstaff operation. Assistance in eradicating invasive plant species was also a part of this effort. These new watering facilities have made it possible to more effectively manage the cattle and more evenly spread the beneficial impact of properly managed grazing. Because the Flagstaff ranch is contiguous to four large residential developments, it is particularly important that the amount of grass be controlled, in order to minimize the ability of these grasses to carry fire.

The financial assistance provided by the LCCGP has been important in enabling the ranch to undertake these water and invasive plant eradication projects. It has also given the

ranch the ability to use some of its own funds for other projects – cattle fencing, elk fencing, meadow rejuvenation, the protection of riparian areas, water conservation and others. Not only has the environment benefited from these projects, but the local economies are supported by the several hundred thousand dollars which are spent annually on these projects and other ranch operations.

For many years Little Horse Ranch has been working to restore the condition of the meadows on its Forest Service allotments. Numerous experiments were carried out to determine the best method of restoring the mountain meadows. Recently with help from NRCS and the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the ranch was able to put up an elk fence, making it possible to control the impact of grazing by wildlife and better evaluate these experiments. NRCS and the Forest Service have joined in evaluating this work.

At the O X Ranch, water is key. The LCCGP enabled the rehabilitation of two formerly unusable ancient wells and helped with the purchase of solar collectors and water pumps for them. The funds also improved the functioning of a long dormant spring. This work has allowed utilization of a very large area with a great deal of forage that previously had little water. Both of these projects enable the cattle to better utilize the forage, spread the usage over much larger areas, and are of great value to the wildlife.

During the 1860s Congress was at the epicenter of Indian uprisings and travel to the interior of Arizona and the gold mines was dangerous

“For a number of years, the cattle industry has been hit hard by economic factors, with many ranchers having to sell all, or a portion of their property to survive economically. Thanks to programs such as that provided by the LCCGP, thousands of acres have been spared this fate.”

indeed. Camp Date Creek, located on the O X Ranch, housed the soldiers needed to protect the travelers. The ranch provided the beef and hay needed by the post, and has continued to be a cattle ranch since that time.

Over the last 30 years, the environmental laws, new scientific studies and a greater awareness of the importance of caring for the land has energized the livestock industry. Although all ranchers are, and must be, aware of their land conditions as well as forage productivity as their cattle depend on it, a number of studies over the last 20 years have recommended even better management practices. The University of Arizona created a monitoring project almost 10 years ago to track plant changes. The O X was one of the first ranches to be involved, and each year personnel from the University, the AZ State Land Department, and the ranch have three intensive days of evaluating the condition of the range. On the Flagstaff grazing lease, the forage is evaluated both before and after the grazing season, as well as monitored continually throughout the summer. Flexibility of management assures that cattle movements enable the grasses to continue to improve each year.

Both the Little Horse Ranch and the O X Ranch have been very proactive in analyzing conditions and making improvements to the ecosystem. Working with NRCS, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, AZ State Land Department, as well as the University of Arizona, the objective has been to work together to accomplish everyone's goals. Cost share agreements have furthered these goals

related to water conservation, riparian health, erosion control, water facilities for both cattle and wildlife, better controlled grazing through additional fencing, invasive species eradication and the planting of a large number of trees for bird and quail habitat. Although the ranches continue to achieve many projects with their own funds, some of these projects would not have been financially possible without help. The funds of the LCCGP have enabled the ranch to do far more than would otherwise have been accomplished.

The LCCGP enables the citizens of Arizona to leverage the cost of improving the health of the environment and preserving the open spaces provided by the existence of ranches. However, for a number of years, the cattle industry has been hit hard by economic factors, with many ranchers having to sell all, or a portion of their property to survive economically. This has led to less open space, more development, and the loss of knowledgeable caretakers on the land. Thanks to programs such as that provided by the LCCGP, thousands of acres have been spared this fate.

The owners of the Little Horse and O X Ranches stated that, “We very much enjoyed working with the personnel of the LCCGP. They were thorough in their analysis of the projects, with adequate follow-up to assure that the funds were spent appropriately. It is our hope that these funds will continue to assist the caretakers of Arizona's ranch lands in their efforts to improve the health of their lands, preserve our open spaces and sustain our rural economies.”



Solar panels added to an existing well provide water on the O X Ranch.

Gila County

Gila County is comprised of approximately 3,051,330 acres of land. Agriculture and mining are two of the major industries in the area.



DC Cattle Company



DC Cattle Company was established around 1916 by Chas Rubottom and Frank C. Parker. In 1918 Parker bought out Rubottom, and when the forest service was established the ranch became known as the Parker allotment. In the 1970s, David Cook's family moved to the area so his father could work in the mines. While in the area they began a trail riding business on forest service land. In 2003 the Cooks purchased the Coolidge-Parker Allotment.

DC Cattle Company feels that the most important thing about ranching is caring for the land in a way that is not only profitable, but benefits the public, wildlife and community. The Cooks feel that it is important that a portion of their grazing fees are distributed to the school districts.

The DC Cattle Company includes 12,000 acres, comprised of private (including the original Parker Homestead) and federal lands, and ranges from 2,800 to 7,000 feet in elevation. The Cooks are actively pursuing conservation practices to benefit the land,

wildlife and their cattle. They actively monitor the rangelands for the trends and impacts of their conservation practices, and continually monitor the threatened and endangered species, the spotted owl. With Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program funds, the ranch has been able to improve the availability of water for livestock and wildlife (quail, deer, javelina, migratory birds, etc), construct fencing to allow for a more diverse rotation schedule and conduct spotted owl surveys which have aided regulatory agencies in their research and recovery of the owl. Without these improvements there would be no DC Cattle Company.

The DC Cattle Company feels that the LCCGP is the most valuable tool and program that they have ever seen in the State of Arizona for agriculture, livestock, conservation and wildlife. It has the most impact on the ground and the greatest public benefit of any program they have participated in. The DC Cattle Company hopes to see this program continue, especially to help those people who are living on and caring for the land that the entire State benefits from.



A windmill (top) pumps water for livestock and wildlife on the Coolidge-Parker Allotment. Rancher David Cook and son, David Jr. (bottom) install a wildlife escape ramp in a new water trough.

In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of thirty grants were awarded to participants in Gila County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$2,052,097.

Twenty-eight of the grants awarded in the county contained a water development project to improve water distribution and availability on the operations. Additionally, twenty-one grants contained fencing projects, two contained erosion control projects and four contained grassland restoration projects.

The projects are positively impacting approximately 677,155 acres. At the completion of all of the contracts in Gila County, approximately 205 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.

Griffin Cattle Ranch

Griffin Cattle Ranch was established in 1922 by John Cox Griffin, the grandfather of Dr. Therese Griffin Hicks and John A. Griffin who co-manage the ranch with help from their four sisters. John C. Griffin traveled to Arizona from Texas and after buying, selling and trading a few ranches he finally created the family ranch. In response to severe droughts in the 1960s, Griffin Cattle Ranch began a collaborative environmental process engaging scientists from the University of Arizona and the USFS. This began a 47 year tradition of environmentally sustainable agriculture on the ranch that includes a 12 pasture system of rest-rotational grazing and frequent monitoring of the grasses, forbs, and riparian areas.

The Griffins feel the most important thing about running Griffin Cattle Ranch is to ensure that it remains sustainable for generations to come. With a large family they have found that keeping the youth involved in the process of rural agriculture keeps them as solid as possible and helps them grow into environmentally sensible adults. Having good help, keeping the cattle healthy, and having a good strategy for rebuilding their herd are all fundamental to keeping this truly open space viable.

The ranch is comprised of 60 acres of private land and a 42,000 acre Tonto National Forest allotment. The ranch has been one of the most progressive ranches in the area with the father, James Griffin, receiving an environmental stewardship award several years ago. The recent cost sharing grant programs funded by both the LCCGP and NRCS have been the only way this family operation has survived. In 2002 the ranch was forced to sell their entire herd due to drought and an unprecedented decision by the Tonto National Forest to completely destock

90% of the cattle on the forest. Since 2006, when new range staff came into place and ranchers were allowed to rebuild, the family members had to choose to either invest their savings to rebuild the herd, or give up the ranch. Since every spare resource from the ranch goes toward restocking the cattle, the grant money has been used to construct vitally required fencing and watering systems. They have installed 5.5 miles of pipeline, two windmills, five water troughs, a storage tank, well and pumping facility, restored 13 springs, and constructed 15.5 miles of fencing. These projects addressed the need for adequate water distribution in upland areas to protect the naturally occurring riparian areas and gave them the ability to better control animal movement to encourage desirable vegetation growth. This money not only benefited the ranch, but also the local communities since most of the products and services were purchased from local vendors. These projects have enhanced the habitat for livestock and wildlife, created flexibility in management choices, safeguarded the legacy of tending the land for future generations and preserved the Griffin Cattle Ranch as a sustainable economic opportunity for family members and the community. They have also seen increased forage because of these improvements, as well as more wildlife in the area providing enjoyment and quality of life for the entire community.

The Griffin family has found the LCCGP to be critical in Griffin Cattle Ranch's come-back. They feel that the staff are very serious about creating a better landscape and are very knowledgeable in their input and guidance and should be commended for the personal attention they devote to getting the job done.



A new trough (top) on the Griffin Ranch provides water to livestock and wildlife. A section of new fencing (bottom) installed on the Griffin Ranch increases cattle rotation options and improves the health of the rangeland.

Graham County

Graham County is comprised of approximately 2,962,762 acres of land. Farming and ranching are principal industries in the county that is rich with agricultural operations.



In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of twenty-two grants were awarded to participants in Graham County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$1,027,120.

Every grant awarded in the county contained a water development project to improve water distribution and availability on the operations. Additionally, eleven grants contained fencing projects, two contained erosion control projects and five contained grassland restoration projects.

The projects are positively impacting approximately 203,170 acres. At the completion of all of the contracts in Graham County, approximately 75 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.

Poppy Canyon Ranch

Poppy Canyon Ranch was established in 1849 by the DeLong family, and in 1996 Dr. Bart Carter purchased the ranch because it was close to his home in Graham County. Dr. Carter believes that strong will-power and good equipment are essential for his ranch, especially on the rocky mountainous terrain. The ranch is comprised of 28,000 acres, of which 600 are private land, 14,000 are State Land, and 13,400 are BLM lease land. The main change on the ranch over the years has been the implementation of a rotational grazing program, which has increased the forage dramatically.

The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program allowed the ranch to complete 6.5 miles of cross fencing and develop water across the ranch. The cross fencing allowed for a more extensive rotational grazing program,

that helped the ranch utilize areas of the land that were previously under-utilized. The ranch put in over two miles of pipeline, four storage tanks, and six drinkers with LCCGP money. The projects have dramatically improved the water availability on the ranch and further increased the amount of forage available and the efficiency of the land use. These improvements have contributed to a 400% increase in the amount of mule deer on the ranch. Dr. Carter feels that LCCGP staff is extremely helpful and interested in improving the local ranches and conserving the open land in Arizona. He feels they are proactive in helping with fund acquisition and project design. These improvements are vital not only to the rancher, but also to hunters, wildlife and people of all kinds. Most ranchers could not afford to make these improvements on public lands without the help of this grant program.



A new fence on the Bonita Ranch near Willcox (above) increases the number of pastures available for grazing. This allows for greater flexibility in rotating cattle, giving more rest to parts of the ranch and ensuring the health of the rangeland. A well with a solar pump and a storage tank (below) keeps wildlife and livestock well watered on the Poppy Canyon Ranch.



Graham County

Lazy S Ranch



On the Tanque Ranch in Graham County, a new solar pump on a well (top) pumps water to fill a storage tank (bottom). The water from the storage tank then fills several wildlife friendly drinkers around the ranch, providing water to livestock and wildlife.

Mark and Susan Sanders purchased the Lazy S Ranch in 1995. To form the ranch, they purchased a portion of the O-O Ranch, which was owned at the time by Karl Rondstadt. The portion they obtained includes the original O-O headquarters, which sits in a canyon in the Pinaleno Mountains. The house was built in the late 1800s. The ranch, as they purchased it, included about 22,000 acres of state and federal leased land and 200 deeded acres. They later purchased an additional 120 acres adjacent to the Northwest side of the ranch to create their headquarters. The Sanders chose the ranch after touring all of New Mexico and Arizona and falling in love with the Willcox area. They noticed the picturesque historic headquarters, and all of the wildlife present on the ranch. Susan feels that being good stewards of the land and making the ranch a good place for wildlife, the public and the domestic animals are the most important things about running the Lazy S Ranch.

When the Lazy S Ranch was established the drought had just begun. The Sanders' plans changed drastically over the years of 1995-2002, as they tried to run the number of animals they were permitted for. After Mark Sander's death in 2002, following a tragic accident at the ranch, Susan began the

process of restoring the range. In 2008, she remarried and the new family loves the ranch. They are having a wonderful time running the Lazy S Ranch as a family, without hiring outside help. The ranch is flourishing under their new family management. Through a partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the LCCGP, the ranch has been able to improve the water resources and range conditions on the ranch. They have established a range management plan that incorporates prescribed grazing. With prescribed grazing, they have seen a huge increase in forage. The water improvements have helped distribute the cattle to improve the range, and they have seen an increase in wildlife utilization of the new water sources. The pronghorn population on the ranch, when it was purchased, was around 30 head. During the drought, they saw only about 6 head. Last year on the ranch there was close to 20 animals, including fawns and yearlings. Susan has seen many mule and white tail deer, elk, mountain lions, black bears, wolverines, coyotes, antelope, javelina, and other wildlife on the ranch, and welcomes their regal presence. Susan feels that the range is certainly a better place for people to visit since all the improvements have been made and that the LCCGP has been excellent and very helpful.

“The improvements have helped increase the amount of wildlife present on the ranch, kept all the wildlife and cattle healthier, and increased the aesthetic appeal of the land.”

KJ Ranch

KJ Ranch was established in the 1920s by the James Dubois family. They established the ranch to provide meat for the military post, Fort Grant. In May 2005, Brent Haas purchased the ranch because of its great location. The KJ Ranch is 5,000 acres – 1,760 acres of private, and 3,240 acres of state lease land. The Haas family has adapted to the changing environment in ranching by continually working with government agencies (such as Game and Fish for wildlife management, and NRCS for rangeland management) to maintain the land for future generations to enjoy. Brent feels that the most important thing on KJ Ranch is good management including rotational grazing that is based not only on the calendar but also on range conditions, which are continually monitored. He also feels that it is vital to make good improvements that properly utilize the resources, and to be sure to properly care for and maintain those improvements.

The grant the KJ Ranch received has allowed the ranch to remain profitable. At this time the money that is generated from the operation would not cover the improvements the ranch needs to properly maintain the rangeland and the cattle. The grant they received provided matching funds to an NRCS EQIP agreement. This funding allowed the ranch to install five wells, tanks and drinkers, which help to distribute cattle and wildlife more evenly

across the rangeland, increasing the utilization on the ranch and reducing overuse in watering areas. The ranch keeps these wells pumping year round, so the drinkers are always full for local wildlife. KJ Ranch also constructed special ramps to make the water accessible for smaller wildlife. The funding allowed them to construct three miles of fencing, all of which is wildlife friendly with a smooth wire on the bottom placed 18" from the ground. This fencing has allowed the ranch to manage the resources more efficiently by increasing the number of pastures where cattle can be rotated. The improvements have helped increase the amount of wildlife present on the ranch, kept all the wildlife and cattle healthier, and increased the aesthetic appeal of the land. They have also noticed an increased number of bird watching tours on the land because of the effects of these improvements.

The Haas family feels that the LCCGP is very responsive. This was the first grant proposal they had ever written, and LCCGP staff was extremely helpful and gave them the information they needed in a timely manner. They feel the staff is extremely personable, and all the funding went very smoothly. They also believe that this program preserves open space in Arizona, keeps ranches viable, reduces pressure on ranchers to subdivide, and helps them continue to improve and maintain the viability of the land.



Storage tanks and a well on the KJ Ranch (top) ensure water is available to wildlife and livestock. In 2009, the Haas family received a grant to install three new center pivots (bottom) on the farming portion of their operation. The new pivots improve the efficiency and effectiveness of irrigation which conserves water.

Greenlee County

Greenlee County is comprised of approximately 1,182,081 acres of land. Mining is the county's main industry, followed closely by ranching and other agricultural operations. The historic Coronado Trail (U.S. highway 191) runs through the entire county.



Upper Eagle Creek Watershed Association

Located in eastern Arizona, Eagle Creek stretches 64 miles through the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest. The small ranching community in the Eagle Creek Watershed was faced with a diminishing economy and the loss of ranching families and youth caused by a combination of increased federal regulations, drought, a reduction in livestock numbers and seemingly overwhelming issues with endangered species. The property owners and ranchers of Eagle Creek came together to solve these challenges.

The Stakeholders in the Eagle Creek area are ranchers, land owners, concerned citizens, the Forest Service and others, including government agencies, sportsmen's groups and conservation organizations. The group began meeting in the mid 1990s and, in 2003, the Upper Eagle Creek Watershed Association (UECWA), a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization, was formed. Since that time, regular meetings have been held that include all of the stakeholders and supporters with the intent of accomplishing four main objectives:

- To work together to preserve ranching heritage and traditions;
- To improve and preserve the watershed and other valuable resources;
- To protect, enhance and increase habitat for wildlife and domestic animals;
- To find sustainable methods of economic survival within the community.

The UECWA has been active in moving forward with these objectives and has collaborated with the United States Forest Service (USFS), the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and many other agencies to raise funds for range

improvements all across the watershed. The Arizona Department of Agriculture proved to be the key player in the success of the Association through its Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program. The ranchers who have participated in the LCCGP have been able to complete conservation programs and projects on their private lands and the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest that would otherwise have been out of their reach financially.

These projects have protected riparian areas and sensitive habitats, supported the USFS thinning and burning projects and aided ranchers in developing alternative grazing programs and water distribution systems that increase productivity while improving rangeland conditions. In addition, the grants served as matching funds to obtain support from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Quivira Coalition, the National Wild Turkey Federation and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality – to name a few. Also, the LCCGP opened the door to work with the Blue River Watershed Community and combine the Eagle Creek and the Blue River communities under the Upper Eagle Creek Watershed Association.

The benefit of the LCCGP to the ranching community cannot be overrated. It provided the critical funding to the ranchers in Greenlee County that brought together several million dollars from a combination of numerous agencies and groups. The funding allowed projects to be completed for the benefit of the rangeland and ultimately to assist the ranching community in finding methods to overcome many of the problems associated with environmental regulations, drought, open space preservation and endangered species.



A wildlife friendly drinker on the Tule Springs Ranch (top) provides a refreshing drink for the ranch's working dogs. New pipeline on the Four Drag Ranch (bottom) is suspended over Eagle Creek to prevent it from washing away during flood events.

In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of thirty-two grants were awarded to participants in Greenlee County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$2,774,591.

Twenty-seven of the grants awarded in the county contained a water development project to improve water distribution and availability on the operations. Additionally, twenty-one grants contained fencing projects, four contained erosion control projects and five contained grassland restoration projects.

The projects are having a positive impact on approximately 339,848 acres. When all of the contracts have been completed, approximately 176 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.

Double Circle Ranch

The Double Circle Ranch in Greenlee County is owned by Wilma Jenkins and her husband, Doug Dressler. Historically, the ranch covered over a million acres and ran upwards of 30,000 cattle, making it one of the largest ranches in the Southwest. The ranch was started by George Stevens in 1878 and was second only to the local copper mine in number of workers employed including 20-30 year round cowboys. Today the ranch is much smaller. The present Double Circle Ranch has a small private inholding and an USFS lease with the Clifton ranger district of Apache-Sitgreaves Forest. Doug and Wilma mainly run the ranch with their Texas Longhorn cattle by themselves with one cowboy helper.

Doug and Wilma feel they have been fortunate to work with the LCCGP to accomplish many much needed improvements to the ranch which had been neglected for many years. In 2005, their first LCCGP grant funded a solar water pumping system which provides wildlife and livestock water to 20 square miles on the ranch. This grant also paid for part of the pipelines, troughs and storage tanks to convey and store the water. In 2007, their LCCGP grant funded a well and solar pumping system on the eastern side of the ranch. This system provides water for an additional 10 square miles of coverage. Last summer every dirt tank on the entire ranch with the exception of one large tank on the eastern boundary of the ranch was bone dry, which made the rotational grazing and pasture moves dependant on the pumped water available. Having water available is crucial to ranching – and wildlife populations – in times of drought. In 2009, their LCCGP grant funded some boundary fences with neighboring USFS allotments. This benefits both the Double Circle Ranch and their neighbors including Anchor Ranch, T-Links Ranch, 4 Bar Ranch, Tule Ranch and Noland Ranch. It also replaces miles of old five and six strand barb wire with wildlife friendly fence.

An additional major benefit of having the LCCGP grant has been the matching capacity with other grants. Because of the ADA grant program, Doug and Wilma have been able to obtain funding from the Arizona Water Protection Fund, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Arizona Game and Fish Department, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and others. Altogether they have constructed over 25 miles of fencing, installed approximately 28 miles of waterlines, 20+ troughs with wildlife ramps and 120,000 gallons of water storage. The fencing and water sources allow them to control trespassing cattle, manage riparian areas correctly, and implement their rotational grazing cattle movement plans using day herding. In addition, the USFS conducted prescribed burns on 10,000 acres of the Double Circle to reduce juniper encroachment and improve forage and forest health. Without the initial LCCGP grant, it is unlikely that any of these improvements would have taken place. Today the ranch has volunteers that help with various projects including building erosion control structures and cleaning up old wire and metal. All of the volunteers get the ranch tour which highlights the progressive and sound conservation practices being implemented – largely due to the initial LCCGP funding and assistance.

Doug and Wilma feel that the LCCGP staff has been wonderful to work with. The staff understands ranching and conservation and always do their best to be of assistance in ongoing projects at the Double Circle. They hope to have more opportunities to work with the LCCGP in the future. It has been vital to their success as a ranching and educational/eco-tourism business and has helped preserve a piece of the American West for future generations.



Solar panels on the Double Circle Ranch (top) power the pump on a well that distributes water to wildlife and livestock. Open space (bottom) on the Double Circle Ranch.

Greenlee County

Anchor Ranch



Cattle graze in a rehabilitated farm field on the Anchor Ranch.

The Anchor Ranch, owned by Jim and Clarice Holder, was purchased around 1918 by Clarice's grandparents. Over time, the Holders have seen the number of ranches in the area decrease as ranches were sold and consolidated.

One of the biggest changes the Holders have observed is an increase in wildlife in the area. The increase can be attributed to the grants given to the Anchor Ranch and to their neighbors from the Arizona Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program. With one of the grants they received, the Holders were able to install fencing and increase the water available on the ranch. These improvements create greater flexibility for moving cattle and allow more of the ranch to be used for grazing. With more of the ranch being used for grazing, the land is rested more often, improving the health of the range. Additionally, due to these improvements, the Holders are increasing the grass cover and recovering the old plant species that were almost grazed out in the area. By increasing the number of grass species, more water is retained in the uplands and is released slowly into the water system. Also, in the past, during times of drought, cattle would congregate in the creek riparian areas. With the new water supplies, cattle can now be kept higher in the uplands and don't congregate down along the creek bottoms.

With another grant given to the Anchor Ranch, a very low-impact solar operated sprinkler system was installed to water and rehabilitate old farm fields. These fields are green during the early summer months, providing food to the wildlife. It is very common to see many varieties of birds, elk, deer, turkey and javelina grazing in the fields. This area also provides a great place to keep cattle that need to be watched closely or horses that are used on the ranch. It is a very valuable part of the operation.

Another big change the Holders have seen since the ADA grants have been available is that ranches in the area are staying with the same owners and are not being sold every 5 to 8 years. This is beneficial for two reasons. First, it prevents sub-division and preserves open space. Second, it also preserves the health of the land by keeping knowledgeable land managers on the land.

The Holders feel that the partnership between the Arizona Department of Agriculture and the land managers is irreplaceable and invaluable to all citizens in Arizona. They have found the LCCGP staff to be easy to work with and very knowledgeable about this program. With the ADA grant money comes hope and a chance to put improvements on the land. The ability to improve the land allows the ranch owners to feel better about themselves and the ranch which now has a firm basis to function as a profitable livestock operation.

“With the ADA grant money comes hope and a chance to put improvements on the land.”

Backwards K 7 Ranch

The Backwards K 7 Ranch is comprised of State, Bureau of Land Management and private land. Portions of the current ranch have been used for grazing since 1892. Joe and Daisy Mae Cannon purchased the ranch in March 1971. Prior to receiving LCCGP funding, the only permanent water sources were a well at the headquarters and three dirt tanks that held water for part of the year. The lack of permanent water meant that Joe and Daisy Mae had to haul water to their mountain pastures for the last 33 years. However, after receiving LCCGP funding, they were able to drill a new well and add three water sources on BLM and

State land. The additional water sources have enabled the Cannons to use parts of the ranch they could not use previously because no water was available in them. Wildlife has also moved into the areas surrounding the new water sources.

Both Joe and Daisy Mae come from ranching families. The LCCGP was the first grant funding they have applied for and they found the LCCGP staff to be very helpful. The improvements they were able to make with the LCCGP funding benefitted the ranch and wildlife and helped preserve a way of life for “two old ranchers.”



New fences on the Powder River Ranch improve pasture rotation and keep cattle off of the highway.



Maricopa County

Maricopa County is comprised of approximately 5,890,008 acres of land and is home to over half of the state's residents. In recent years, large tracts of agricultural land have disappeared under housing developments as producers have been pushed out by the rapidly rising population.



In the 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of four grants were awarded to participants in Maricopa County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$179,407.

Every grant awarded in the county contained a water development project to improve water distribution and availability on the operations. Additionally, three grants contained fencing projects.

The projects are positively impacting approximately 38,429 acres. At the completion of all of the contracts in Maricopa County, approximately 13 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.



K Cross Cattle Company

K Cross Cattle Company has been in the Gable family for almost 6 generations. Although the Gable brothers, Carter and Jack, have not officially handed the ranch down, their grandson, the sixth generation on the ranch, is now lending a helping hand. Carter and Jack's grandfather bought the ranch in Arlington, Arizona in 1889 when the canal company finished building the canals. The family has held the state lease that surrounds the privately owned acreage since Arizona became a state in 1912. In the 1930s they acquired their lease with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The ranch is currently made up of 48,000 acres of BLM lease, 8,000 acres of state lease, and 130 acres of privately owned ranch land.

Over the years the ranch has become more efficient in response to the changing environment and regulations. When it began, cattle were turned out on the range and brought back in when they were ready for sale. Now cattle are

rotated through a series of pastures and herd size has been reduced in response to drought and regulations on the leased land. The Gables now spend about 30-40% of their time on paperwork, tracking rainfall, cattle and various other things to maintain the health of the range land and stay in compliance with new regulations.

With the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program funding they were awarded, the ranch was able to complete a fence to divide a pasture. This allows them to use both pastures without the need for a full-time cowboy to keep the cattle in each section. It also allows them to spend more time making sure troughs and holding tanks are continually full ensuring that wildlife and cattle have an ample supply of water. The Gables feel that the LCCGP has been efficient in preserving the open spaces in Arizona. It has helped them to survive and maintain their ranch so that it can remain open and clear for not only cattle and wildlife, but also for recreation and hunting.



A pasture division fence on K Cross Cattle Co land (top) improves the health of the rangeland by increasing the number of pastures used for cattle rotation. A new well at GKJ Farms (bottom) in Maricopa County improves irrigation efficiency.

Mohave County

Mohave County is comprised of approximately 8,519,450 acres of land and is part of the Grand Canyon. The county is also home to several large lakes, including Lake Havasu, with close to 1,000 miles of shoreline.



Cane Springs Ranch



Cane Springs Ranch was established as a grazing allotment in 1936, however, the old ranch headquarters dates back to the late 1800s. Anita Waite purchased the ranch in 1993 after touring the facility and seeing the potential for a new lifestyle. She had been farming in California when her real estate broker mentioned that a ranch in Arizona was for sale. She toured the ranch and saw the recently upgraded fencing which was ideal for cattle rotation and that there was enough annual rainfall to effectively support a cattle ranch. So she moved to Arizona and began ranching. The ranch totals 70,000 acres – 34,000 acres of private land, 15,000 acres of BLM land, and 21,000 acres of state land.

With Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program funds, Cane Springs Ranch has been able to install 14 wells with drinkers and section their shipping pasture into three separate pastures. The new water sources have helped to create additional useable pastures and allowed the ranch to stock at full carrying

capacity. It has also helped better disperse cattle and wildlife since water is now available throughout the ranch. The improvements have contributed to better forage and ground-cover, which, according to studies, is keeping the ground cooler and increasing water retention as well as functioning as a filter, ensuring that the water that is absorbed is cleaner. Additionally, as a result of the increased forage, they have seen a much healthier population of deer and javelina.

Cane Springs Ranch feels that the LCCGP is very easy to work with and extremely beneficial to ranching operations. In 2000, the ranch sat down with BLM, State Land, NRCS, Game and Fish, and the Kingman Water Resource Group to develop a management plan and determine where the water would be most valuable. This huge project would not have been possible if the LCCGP had not stepped in and helped fund the ranch enhancements. These improvements have benefitted not only the ranch, but the wildlife and local hunters and hikers as well.



A new well equipped with a solar pump (top) provides water on the Cane Springs Ranch. A drinker (bottom) provides water to livestock and wildlife on the Cane Springs Ranch.

In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of six grants were awarded to participants in Mohave County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$515,400.

Every grant awarded in the county contained a water development project to improve water distribution and availability on the operations. Additionally, two grants contained fencing projects.

The projects are having a positive impact on approximately 449,718 acres. When all of the contracts have been completed, approximately 30 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.

Canyon Springs Ranch

Canyon Springs Ranch, originally Jordan Ranch, was established in the early 1900s. In 1993, Emmett and Janice Sturgill were looking to lease a ranch and found Canyon Springs Ranch. When the owner became ill and had to sell, Emmett and Janice and their partners, Jack and Stacie Fuller, decided to purchase the ranch. The 70,000 acre ranch is primarily comprised of federal land, but also contains 3,200 acres of state land and some privately owned land.

Canyon Springs Ranch is located close to town, so as subdivisions encroach on the ranch the cattle are pushed further into the BLM leased land in the mountain ranges. The grant Canyon Springs Ranch received from the LCCGP matched an EQIP grant that allowed them to drill 3 wells in three critical areas around the ranch. These wells connect to a 9 mile pipeline that delivers water to drinkers that are staged every 1.5 miles. This increase in water availability has allowed them to adapt their rotation schedule so that cattle and calves no longer have to be moved from the mountains through a subdivision to their state land. They can brand and wean the calves in the mountains, and only move the weaned calves through the subdivision. These drinkers also provide water for a herd of wild horses that are on

the land. The only natural water available for them is from two BLM springs, so the drinkers throughout the ranch help the horses stay hydrated. The local antelope herd has been dwindling as development in the area continues, but one of the wells on the edge of the ranch has a 10,000 gallon storage tank that is continually full in order to provide water to help replenish the herd. While drilling the wells, Canyon Springs Ranch had to grade the roads to get the equipment in. The owners have decided to maintain these roads for the public.

This grant has allowed the Sturgills and Fullers to take advantage of many EQIP opportunities that they would not have been able to without the matched funding. The funding has provided vital resources for the ranch, enabling them to continue running cattle. The LCCGP has allowed them to develop a relationship with the Arizona Department of Agriculture and get a true feel for working with a government agency. They feel they have been very fortunate and enjoy working with the people on the LCCGP. They appreciate that LCCGP staff is available to help them find solutions to problems as they arise. They feel that this program has really helped to conserve their land and make it a better ranch for grazing cattle and wildlife.



One of the new wells and windmills (top) providing water on the Canyon Springs Ranch. A sample of the open space (bottom) being protected on the Canyon Springs Ranch.

Navajo County

Navajo County is comprised of approximately 6,370,036 acres of land. When the county was split from Apache County in 1895, it was home to Aztec Land and Cattle Company, the third largest cattle ranch in North America. Today, ranching is still an important industry in the area.



In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of fourteen grants were awarded to participants in Navajo County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$636,548.

Nine grants awarded in the county contained water development projects and two contained fencing projects. Additionally, six grants contained grassland restoration projects to reduce or eliminate the presence of invasive plant species and restore the land to its historic state.

The projects are positively impacting approximately 53,655 acres. At the completion of all of the contracts in Navajo County, approximately 32 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.

Ellsworth Ranch



New solar panels create a sustainable energy source for a well that provides water to livestock and wildlife on the Quarter Circle U Ranch in Navajo County.

Ellsworth Ranch was established in the 1880s by Ethan Ellsworth's great-great-grandfather, and has now been in the family for five generations. Mr. Ellsworth was attracted to the ranch because of its good health which can be attributed to irrigation systems, planting, an active rotation schedule, and healthy water areas. The ranch is two townships, one section of which is private land and the rest is United States Forest Service (USFS) land. The increased population in the area has changed the ranch in many ways. The USFS actually traded some of the land that the Ellsworths were leasing for development and city growth, so the ranch has had to change rotation schedules and water availability. The Ellsworths have also fenced off riparian areas and fenced around local trails to be more socially aware of the encroaching city.

The grant Ellsworth Ranch received from the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program has allowed them to thin cedar trees on 500 acres and enhance water across the ranch. When the Forest Service traded some

of the leased land, the ranch lost some of their watering facilities. With their grant they were able to re-route 2 miles of pipeline, convert one well to solar energy, and add five drinkers. The solar well is now pumped full time to provide water year-round for local wildlife, and since it is piped to five drinkers, the cattle and wildlife can utilize the land more efficiently. This increase in water availability has increased the amount of forage available, which is not only better for the land but also gives local hikers beautiful scenery to enjoy. Clearing 500 acres of cedar trees has increased the amount of grassland available for grazing both cattle and the increasing number of antelope. The antelope prefer the open space since predators, like coyotes, cannot hide and attack them from behind the trees. This clearing has also decreased the fire risk for neighboring homes. The grant has allowed Ellsworth Ranch to make improvements that otherwise would not have been financially possible and has allowed them to improve the land and keep the ranch operating and beautiful for future generations to enjoy.

Carlisle Ranch

Carlisle Ranch was established in 1965 by Jack Carlisle who was born and raised in Taylor, Arizona. The ranch is comprised equally of private, state and federal land.

The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program funded three miles of pipeline, three drinkers and the removal of juniper carcasses on 2,000 acres. The Carlisles feel that water is the most important aspect of ranching for them, and the funding has allowed them to increase their availability of water from two water sources to five; four of which are available to cattle and wildlife on a constant basis. It has also increased their efficiency since they do not have to transport water to

other areas in order to keep cattle hydrated and moving throughout the ranch. By clearing 2,000 acres of juniper tree carcasses they have been able to increase the available forage by about 200%, which has not only benefitted their cattle, but also local wildlife. The local antelope herd has grown because of the increase in forage and water availability. They have also been able to open up the land to hunters because of this increase in wildlife. Carlisle Ranch feels that the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program has allowed them to make improvements and conserve land that they otherwise would not have been able to do. It has allowed them to continue ranching and to preserve the open spaces of Arizona.



A drinker on the Carlisle Ranch (top) provides water to livestock and wildlife. New grass (bottom) begins sprouting in an area where juniper trees were removed on the Carlisle Ranch.

Pima County

Pima County is comprised of approximately 5,879,210 acres of land. From 1867 to 1877, the county's main city, Tucson, was the capital of the Arizona Territory. Several Indian tribes live in Pima County, including the San Xavier, Pascua Yaqui and Tohono O'odham.



In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of seven grants were awarded to participants in Pima County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$395,154.

Every grant awarded in the county contained a water development project to improve water distribution and availability on the operations. Additionally, two grants contained fencing projects.

The projects are having a positive impact on approximately 49,118 acres. When all of the contracts in Pima County have been completed, approximately 20 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.

Carlink Ranch

The Carlink Ranch was established in 1884 by William Bayless – Andy Smallhouse's great-great grandfather. The Bayless family moved their brand to the San Pedro River Valley from Northeast Kansas because of the multiple opportunities that were available in the West with open land, military contracts for beef, ample water and feed, and a great climate. Every generation of the family has always felt very strongly about conservation management and industry involvement. They feel that in order to be a sustainable operation, there must be good overall management focused on efficiency, conservation, and an involvement in the agriculture industry to ensure a viable future.

The Carlink Ranch is comprised of state and private land, totaling about 60,000 acres. Over time they have adapted to the changing natural and political environments through a willingness to try new ideas and diversify, and through agricultural advocacy. With grant funding, the Carlink Ranch has been able to convert inefficient irrigation systems to highly efficient systems that save water, labor, decrease soil erosion, and produce an overall better crop. They have been able to use less water to produce a higher crop yield which has enabled them to better manage the movement

of cattle throughout the ranch, defer pastures on the rangeland, increase crop rotation, and depend less on an unreliable labor source. The Carlink Ranch has also improved yield to the point that they can diversify the operation to rely more on hay sales during periods when the herd must be reduced due to low rainfall.

The demographics of the Lower San Pedro River Valley have changed dramatically over the last few decades, with very little agriculture remaining. Today there are many more people living in the area who know very little about agriculture. They have no idea how food is produced or of the value of agriculture in maintaining open space for the benefit of everyone as well as wildlife. Because the Carlink Ranch was able to install more efficient irrigation systems through the LCCGP, they have been able to demonstrate how agriculture can be sustainable, maintain open space, and be conscious of the water needs throughout the community. The ranch has participated in the grant program twice and has been pleased with how uncomplicated and efficient the program is, how well managed it is, and how pleasant the Arizona Department of Agriculture has been to work with.



A new center pivot on the Carlink Ranch increases irrigation efficiency and conserves water.

Pinal County

Pinal County is comprised of approximately 3,436,540 acres of land. The western portion of the county consists primarily of irrigated agricultural operations.



In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of four grants were awarded to participants in Pinal County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$123,855.

Three grants awarded in the county contained water development projects and one contained a fencing project.

The projects are having a positive impact on approximately 75,381 acres. At the completion of all of the contracts in Pinal County, approximately 15 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.



A Diamond Ranch

Gregg Vinson purchased the A Diamond Ranch in 2001 after dreaming of owning the ranch for years. His degree in Natural Resources drew him to the local vegetation and the ranch's drought resistance, and accessibility made it even more appealing. The ranch is 22,000 acres; 80 of which are private land, 17,500 are state land, and the rest is comprised of BLM leased land. In 1993, the Gila River was fenced to keep cattle from grazing in the riparian area, but by cooperating with local agencies, the A Diamond Ranch is now able to graze their cattle along the Gila River fourteen days a year during the winter months to eat the salt-cedar saplings.

The LCCGP funding the ranch received allowed them to construct four miles of fence, enabling them to rotate their cattle, which has drastically increased the natural forage growth and helps with land management. The fence also helps keep ATVs off of the riparian areas and on the county maintained roads. The increase in forage and decrease in ATV activity has increased the amount of wildlife on the ranch.

The Vinson's interaction with the LCCGP has always been positive. The grant money has allowed them to make improvements that increase productivity and wildlife in the area; making the ranch better for the environment and the public.



New fences on the A Diamond Ranch improve the ability of the ranch to rotate cattle and also protect riparian areas from off-road vehicles.



Santa Cruz County

Santa Cruz County is comprised of approximately 792,086 acres of land and is Arizona's smallest county. The small town of Tubac is recognized as Arizona's first European settlement and was where Arizona's first newspaper, The Weekly Arizonan, was published.



In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of sixteen grants were awarded to participants in Santa Cruz County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$844,541.

Thirteen of the grants awarded in the county contained water development projects to improve water distribution and availability on the operations. Additionally, seven grants contained fencing projects, two contained grassland restoration projects and one contained an erosion control project.

The projects are positively impacting approximately 130,056 acres. At the completion of all of the contracts in Santa Cruz County, approximately 58 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.

C6 Ranch, LLC

Richard Collins established the C6 Ranch, LLC in 1993, after ranching in various other places around the state since the 1940s. The ranch is 11,000 acres; 10,000 of which is Forest Service land, and the remaining is made up of private and leased land. Richard Collins chose the Sonoita-Patagonia area because of the elevation, annual rainfall and great community. He believes the most important things in ranching are a management plan, being optimistic, and having good neighbors. His management plan consists of a rotational grazing schedule and monitoring. He feels a good management plan meets the environmental characteristics of the terrain, is realistic in terms of what it is asking of the cattle and environment, and is able to adapt to the changing environment (rainfall, forage growth, etc.).

Richard is thankful that he has great neighbors that formed the Canelo Hills Coalition when the Red Rock Creek area was being closed to grazing due to the endangered Gila Top Minnow. They all worked together with the Forest Service to develop a plan that would not only preserve the Gila Top Minnow but also the entire riparian area. The grant that the C6 Ranch received helped to achieve

this goal. They were able to put water in the uplands of the ranch in order to attract the cattle away from the riparian areas. This involved installing four storage tanks, totaling an additional 20,000 gallons in water storage capacity. They were also able to bury 10 miles of pipeline that delivers that water throughout the ranch. Without the money to bury the pipeline the ranch was going to have to cease using it, since it was continually being vandalized by people crossing the border illegally. These changes in water availability have allowed the riparian areas to flourish and the creek beds have rebuilt themselves. Due to the increased plant growth, flash flooding no longer occurs, reducing the amount of silt and pollutants that are washed into the creek after rainfall.

The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program allowed the ranch to develop water not only for cattle but also for wildlife and to dramatically improve the local riparian areas. Richard feels that the LCCGP is very easy to work with and understands that a ranch has to operate as a unit for everything to go smoothly. Richard has attended the workshops explaining the grant application and felt that they were easy to understand, and the staff was always available for questions and assistance.



A new solar system on the T4 Ranch in Santa Cruz County (top) supplies water to several wildlife friendly drinkers (bottom) throughout the ranch. The drinkers provide water to livestock and wildlife.

Yavapai County

Yavapai County is comprised of approximately 5,198,913 acres of land. It is one of the oldest counties in Arizona. The town of Prescott was founded in 1864 as the original Territorial Capital of Arizona.



In the 2005, 2007 and 2009 cycles of the LCCGP, a total of twelve grants were awarded to participants in Yavapai County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$550,414.

Eight of the grants awarded in the county contained water development projects and six contained fencing projects. Additionally, one grant contained a grassland restoration project.

The projects are positively impacting approximately 140,693 acres. When all of the contracts in Yavapai County are completed, approximately 42 miles of fencing and pipeline will have been installed.



Ash Creek Ranch

Ash Creek Ranch was homesteaded by two families in 1880. They chose this beautiful land for the fertile farm land, plentiful forage, mild climate, and free-flowing irrigation water from Ash Creek and Mulberry Spring. They maximized the natural resources by building rock homes, rock fences and gravity flow irrigation ditches. Their original production of forage crops, corn, vegetables and cattle supported the families for many years. Ash Creek Ranch encompasses three tracks of forest inholding totaling 120.5 acres of private land and 25,012 acres of Prescott National Forest allotment in Dewey, Arizona.

In 2003, Gary & Sharla Mortimer and their four children, Ashlee, Hayden, Kayla, and Kolten, were able to call Ash Creek Ranch home. They continue the work of the families before them to protect the land, conserve water, and raise premium quality beef. They believe that by caring for the environment, they will be able to

continue this legacy for many years to come. With Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program funds, the Mortimers have been able to install six wells, drinkers, and storage tanks to supply permanent water in eight pastures. The new water sources have helped to create additional useable year-round pastures and allowed the ranch to stock at full carrying capacity. It has also helped better disperse cattle and wildlife since water is now available throughout the ranch. The improvements have contributed to better forage and groundcover. The increase in available water and forage has supported an increase in wildlife populations.

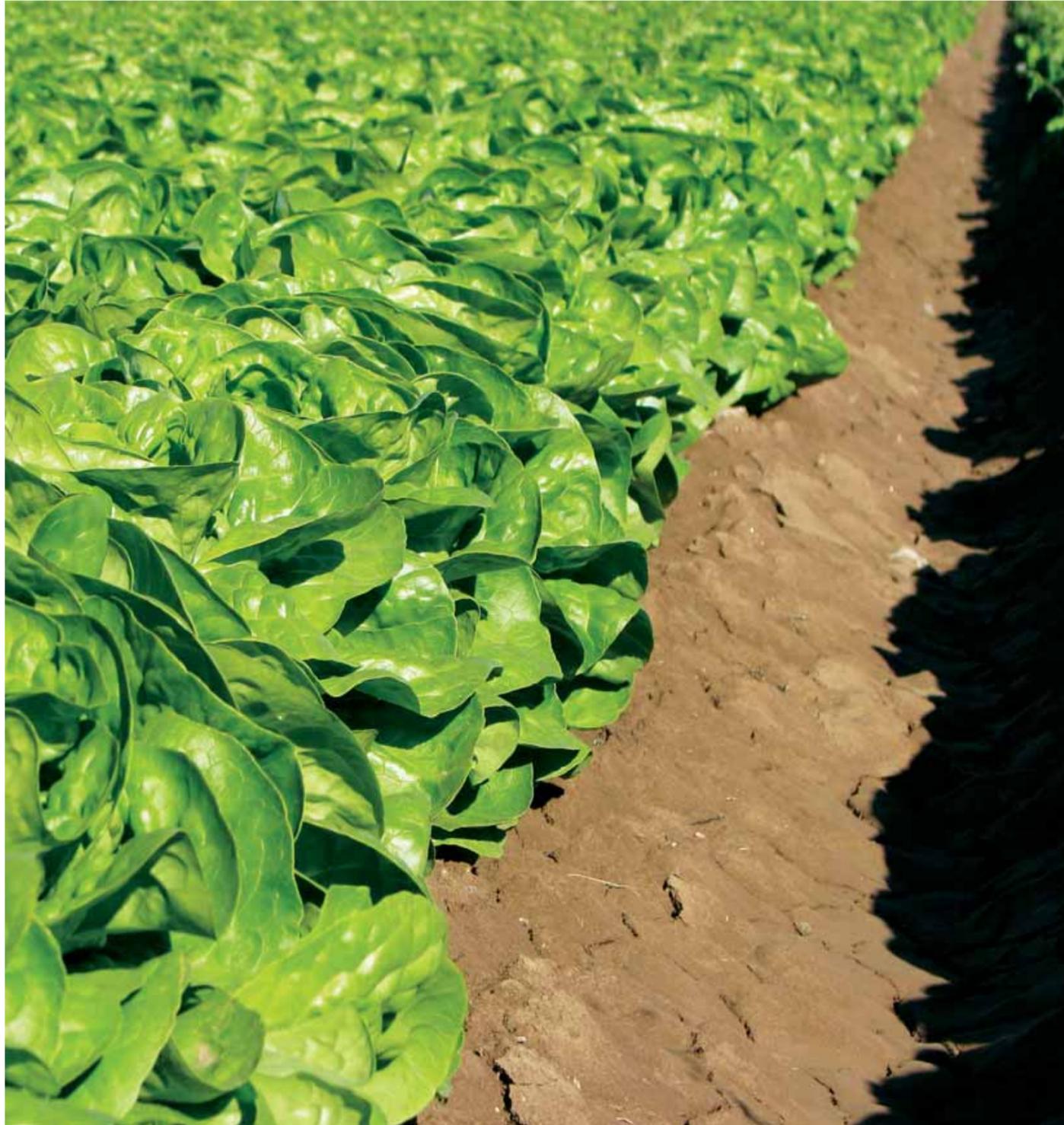
Ash Creek Ranch has found the LCCGP to be an extremely beneficial program for their ranch. The water systems they installed were very important to the wildlife and ranch management plan and this program made it possible for them to make a significant and immediate change in how they implement their management plan.



Fencing on the Date Creek Ranch in Yavapai County (top) increases the number of pastures available for rotating cattle and protects the riparian area. A new drinker on the O X Ranch (bottom) provides water for wildlife and livestock.

Yuma County

Yuma County is comprised of approximately 3,529,017 acres of land. Agriculture, military and tourism are its main industries. The largest city, Yuma, is known as the lettuce capital of the country and over 90% of the country's winter lettuce crops are produced in the Yuma area.



In the 2007 cycle of the LCCGP, one grant was awarded to a participant in Yuma County. The amount of funding awarded totaled \$75,000. This award was used to fund a water development project.

The project positively impacted 500 acres and 3,000 feet of pipeline was installed.

Hidden Valley Ranch

Hidden Valley Ranch was established in the early 1900s. Mark Skousen purchased the ranch in 1999 from Ray Hanson, who settled there because of the quality of the soil in the area. Mark decided this was the ranch for him when he noticed all the clean fresh water the land had to offer. The ranch totals over 6,000 acres and is comprised of federal, state and private land. Over the years, the biggest change Mark has noticed is that he spends more time working on paperwork to comply with new regulations.

The grant he received allowed Mark to put in 3,000 feet of underground pipeline, which eliminated water loss, and made the ranch

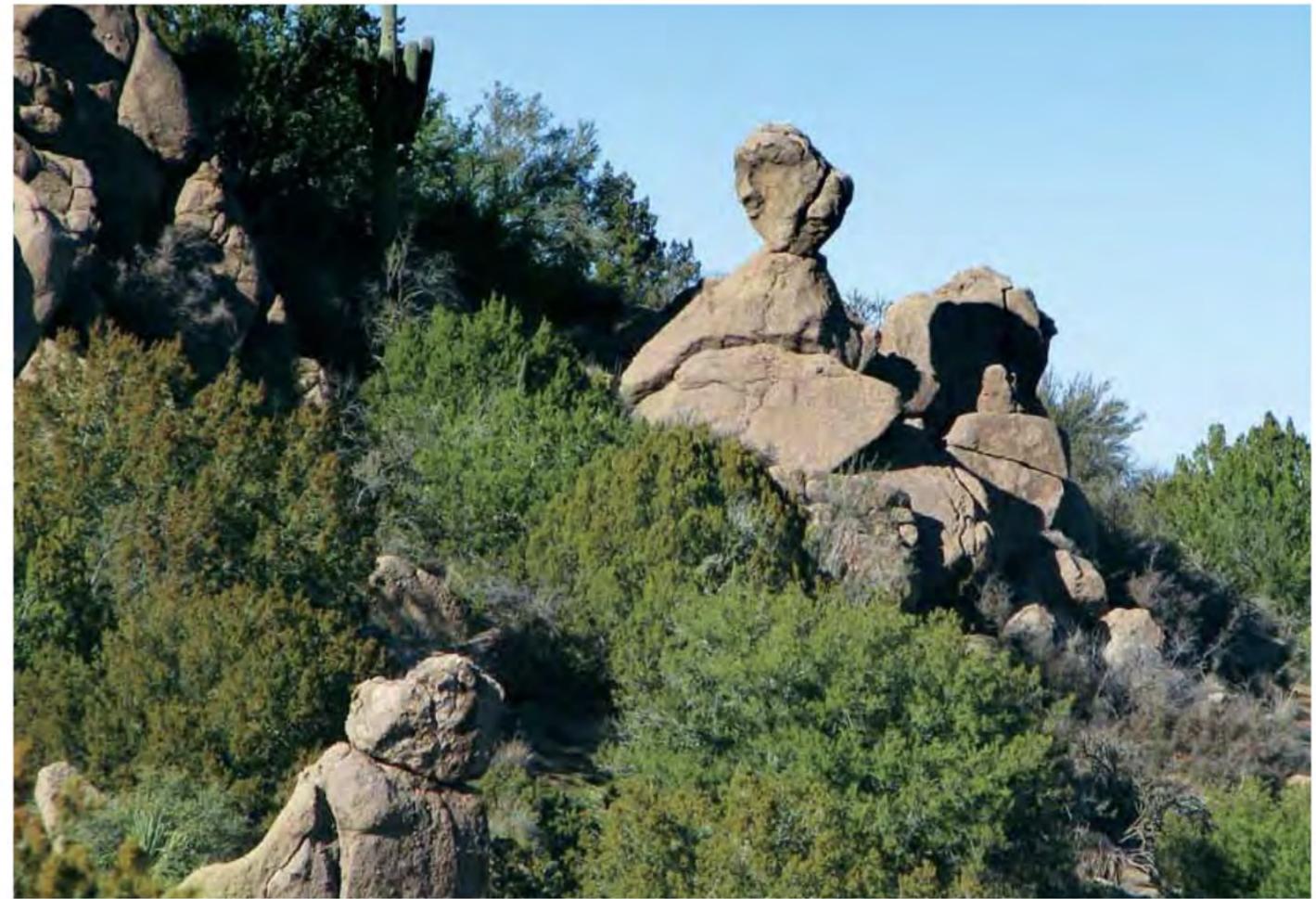
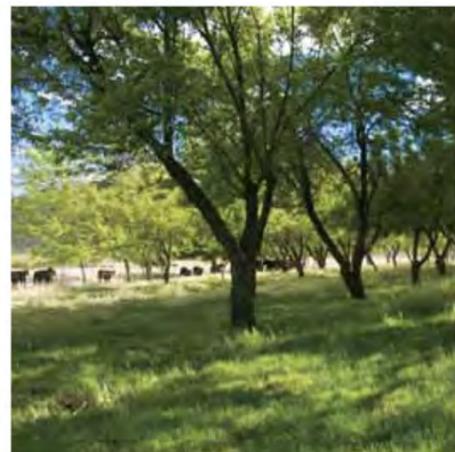
much more efficient compared to the old open ditches they used to use. Since there is no natural water source for 10 square miles surrounding the farm, wildlife is completely dependent on the water supplied by the ranch. The increased efficiency resulting from the LCCGP-funded project has allowed Mark to provide more water on a consistent basis. The wildlife on the ranch has increased tenfold since this improvement in water and feed availability.

Mark describes his experience with the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program as "great, they really helped me understand the grant process and what I would need to do to complete the application accurately."



After a flood, the open irrigation ditches at Hidden Valley Ranch were destroyed. With the help of LCCGP and NRCS funds, the open ditches were replaced with more efficient underground pipeline which eliminates water loss and is protected from future flood events.





Working with Partners

Working with partners is an important component of the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program. In addition to providing verbal support for the LCCGP, many other agencies and organizations have worked closely with the grant program to complete large, landscape scale projects on Arizona's open spaces.



Arizona Cattlemen's Association

The Arizona Cattlemen's Association (ACA) is made up of the Arizona Cattle Growers' Association and the Arizona Cattle Feeders' Association. Both associations are member-based organizations that are dedicated to the beef cattle industry in the state of Arizona. The associations played an important role in the formation of the legislation that established the Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program and have been a positive voice for the program for many years.

The LCCGP and the ACA share many goals. Both want to keep as much land as possible as open space and keep the agricultural producer on the land. In addition, both want to keep the land in the best condition possible. These shared goals created a natural partnership between the LCCGP and the ACA. The ACA has helped promote the LCCGP and encourages its members to apply for funding through the grant program. The number of applications received by the LCCGP has increased in the last few years and more ranchers have been helped through the grant program. As more producers receive grants, more open space is preserved and more improvements are done on the land. This helps both the LCCGP and the ACA to achieve their mutual goals. The ACA's voice and member base combined with the LCCGP's financial assistance has been an invaluable asset to the agriculture industry and open spaces in Arizona.



Arizona Game and Fish Department

The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program (LCCGP) is a valuable funding source for assisting landowners with a strong conservation ethic in achieving their conservation goals. While the primary goal of LCCGP is to assist landowners in preserving open space, the public's wildlife is also a primary beneficiary of these projects. Whether a landowner is building a watering facility for livestock, fencing off a riparian area or removing junipers from historic grasslands for increased forage, wildlife benefits.

During the last three cycles of the LCCGP, numerous rancher/wildlife projects have successfully been funded and completed. The Arizona Department of Agriculture, landowners and their conservation partners have worked together to complete several large grassland restorations. These restorations have benefited well known species such as elk, pronghorn antelope and mule deer as well as smaller species such as grassland birds, burrowing owls and numerous "at-risk species". These large-scale projects are necessary for maintaining ranching viability as well as working to keep common wildlife species common and preventing the decline of at-risk species.

Submitted by: AZGFD, Pinetop



Examples of grassland restoration projects done in Northern Arizona with AZGFD and LCCGP funds. Invasive Pinyon Juniper trees were removed to return the land to a more historic grassland landscape.

A sampling of the partners include: the Arizona Cattlemen's Association, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the United States Forest Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and various "critter groups" such as the National Wild Turkey Federation and the Arizona Elk Society.

Many of the partnering agencies and organizations provide funds for rangeland improvements, wildlife habitat and other projects that support the open space preservation purpose of the LCCGP. Working with partners enables additional projects to be done. This furthers the purposes and goals of all of the agencies and organizations involved and has a greater positive impact on the land.



Natural Resources Conservation Service

Open space, wildlife, and working farms and ranches are all essential to the culture of Arizona. The Arizona Department of Agriculture works with farmers and ranchers to improve the management of our land and natural resources in many ways. The United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA, NRCS) also works with Arizona farmers and ranchers to help them develop and implement sound conservation plans for their farms and ranches. The farmer and rancher conservation plans identify the structural, vegetative and management practices that will be implemented to maintain productive land and a healthy environment.

The Livestock and Crop Conservation Grant Program allows the Arizona Department of Agriculture to provide financial assistance to help farmers and ranchers implement their conservation plans. NRCS also has programs that provide financial incentives to farmers and ranchers to implement their conservation plans. This partnership of the state and federal agricultural agencies is providing millions of dollars each year for conservation in Arizona. The conservation funds are spread across the rural areas of Arizona, improving the management of our natural resources, helping rural economies, and maintaining our working landscapes as open space for everyone to enjoy.

Submitted by: NRCS, Phoenix Office



United States Forest Service

In Clifton Ranger District we're realizing how the whole really does become stronger than the sum of its parts. Nine of our Term Grazing Permit holders within the Upper Eagle Creek and Blue River watersheds were awarded LCCGP grants to implement conservation-based management practices across the fencelines of twelve Forest Service grazing allotments and neighboring private lands. We are combining reductions in livestock numbers with big game habitat restoration practices, fence construction, and water developments to enhance wildlife habitat and other natural resources.

Additionally, we have seen positive, cumulative effects on the entire watershed as a result of LCCGP funded projects working in concert with associated projects funded by other agencies, including the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Arizona Game and Fish Department, United States Fish and Wildlife Service and United States Forest Service. For instance, the Forest Service has implemented prescribed burns on approximately 60,000 acres in the watershed that have improved the health of the land and increased plant growth by as much as 75% in some areas. The burns, combined with water developments and fence improvements funded by the LCCGP, have allowed livestock to be better distributed across the landscape which helps ensure the continued health of the land.

The value of reduced soil erosion, improved water quality, and enhanced wildlife habitat – known as nonmarket goods – merits significant change. Ranchers, state and federal agencies, environmentalists and the public recognize that food and fiber can be produced while improving ecological conditions, as well as rural prosperity. Financial incentives like the LCCGP have motivated such changes and continue to inspire ranchers in the Upper Eagle Creek and Blue River watersheds to make the shift and do the work necessary to see projects through to completion.

Combined, the projects and hard work of the LCCGP recipients are positively affecting wildlife, water quality, social economics and soil stabilization.

Submitted by: USFS, Clifton Ranger District

Arizona Department of Agriculture

The mission of the Arizona Department of Agriculture is:
To regulate and support Arizona agriculture in a manner that encourages farming, ranching, and agribusiness while protecting consumers and natural resources.

The Arizona Department of Agriculture consists of three main divisions: Animal Services, Environmental Services and Plant Services. The Department includes the State Agricultural Laboratory; the Citrus, Fruit and Vegetable Standardization and Fresh Produce Grade Inspection program; and the Agricultural Consultation and Training program.

For additional information about the Department, please visit www.azda.gov.

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Lazy S Ranch, Graham County
KJ Ranch, Graham County
Double Circle Ranch, Greenlee County
Anchor Ranch, Greenlee County
Backwards K 7 Ranch, Greenlee County
K Cross Cattle Company, Maricopa County
Cane Springs Ranch, Mohave County
Canyon Springs Ranch, Mohave County
Ellsworth Ranch, Navajo County
Carlisle Ranch, Navajo County
Carlink Ranch, Pima County
A Diamond Ranch, Pinal County
C6 Ranch, LLC, Santa Cruz County
Ash Creek Ranch, Yavapai County
Hidden Valley Ranch, Yuma County
Upper Eagle Creek Watershed Association





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