Cochise Conservation & Recharge Network

FACT SHEET

Coyote Wash Stormwater Management Project

Urbanized areas produce additional storm runoff from streets, parking lots, and roof tops that can be put to beneficial use to increase regional water supplies.

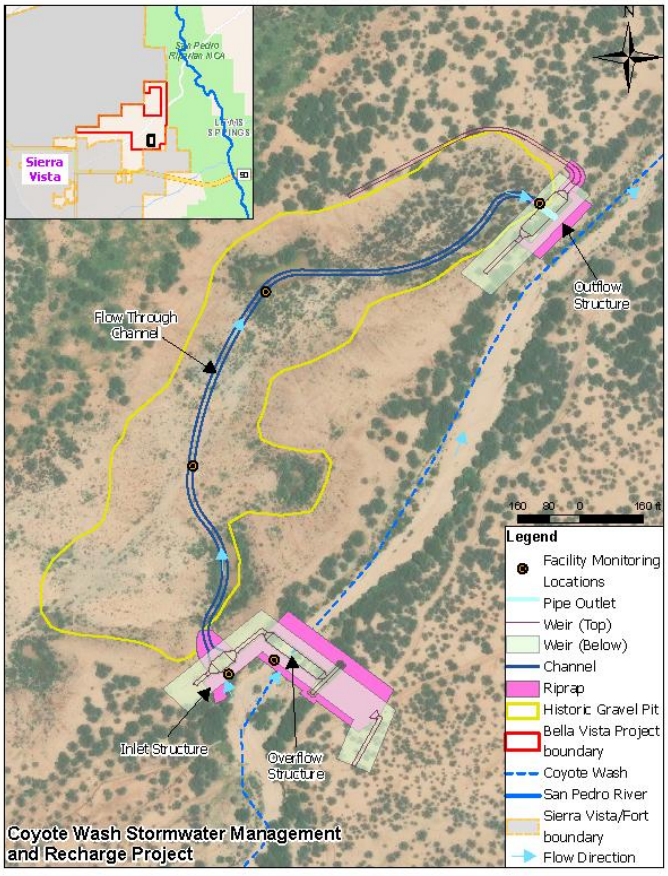
The **Coyote Wash Stormwater Management Project** was constructed in early 2026 to slow the flow of the additional "urban enhanced runoff" within the watershed that drains most of downtown Sierra Vista. Slowing the flow of urban runoff enhances the infiltration of water into the ground and increases recharge to the underground aquifer.

This innovative, first-of-its-kind project is designed to increase water availability for local communities and habitats in the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (SPRNCA). By slowing accelerated urban runoff at this location, the project will reduce direct runoff into the river, allow more time for water to infiltrate within Coyote Wash, and help limit pollutant delivery to the river.

The project is located within the 3,000-acre Bella Vista Ranch, that was slated for development until it was purchased by The Nature Conservancy and transferred to Cochise County for a regional recharge project. This project was made possible by funding support from: U.S. Army's Compatible Use Buffer Program, Cochise County Flood Control District, Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona (WIFA), the Office of Governor Hobbs, the U.S. Army's REPI Program, and the Walton Family Foundation.

As shown at the right, a small diversion dam was constructed to divert flood flows from Coyote Wash into a former gravel pit next to the channel.

The project will not only increase groundwater recharge, but also reduce flooding, runoff, erosion, and sedimentation downstream, and improve the water quality of runoff from the urban area before it enters the San Pedro River.



The historic gravel pit next to Coyote Wash has been renovated to temporarily detain flood waters and slowly release them back to the channel to increase infiltration and recharge within Coyote Wash, before flows enter the San Pedro River.

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