



New Mexico Wetlands Restoration

National Water Replenishment and Enhancement Initiative

Historic and current recreational mining were threatening wetlands, a rare and critical resource in arid New Mexico. In addition, eroding gullies were adding sediment to area waterways. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service partnered with the National Forest Foundation (NFF), Coca-Cola, others to design a restoration strategy to prevent further loss of wetland, while also improving water quality in Placer Creek and Comanche Creek. The partnership also focused on enhancing important habitat for native flora and fauna.

Location: Carson National Forest, New Mexico

Partnership Accomplishments: Restored 191 acres of wetlands and 4 miles of stream, planted 1,200 native trees/shrubs, and installed 67 stream restoration structures and 4 road drainage structures (does not include 2016).

Number of Projects: Three (2013, 2015, and 2016)

Project Accomplishments:

- 2013: Restored 40 acres of wetlands, planted 1,200 native trees/shrubs, and installed 19 stream restoration structures and 4 road drainage structures along a portion of Placer Creek.
- 2015: Restored 151 acres of wetlands and 4 stream miles and built 48 stream restoration structures along a portion of Comanche Creek.
- 2016: Restoring 132 acres of wetlands and continuing restoration activities at Comanche Creek.



Log structure used to raise water table in Comanche Creek. (Courtesy National Forest Foundation)

Restoration Benefits: Established flood control, removed sediment, and protected wetland habitat.

Additional Benefits: Within hours of the completion of the Placer Creek restoration work, the meadow was re-wetting.

Coca-Cola Replenishment Value: 133 million liters per year (does not include 2016).

Total Funding: \$367,800 (Funding Sources: Coca-Cola—\$316,800, New Mexico Trout Unlimited—\$35,000, National Forest Foundation—\$16,000)

Implementation Partners: National Forest Foundation, Watershed Artisans, New Mexico Trout Unlimited





*Placer Creek
before it was
restored,
summer 2013.
(Courtesy U.S.
Forest Service)*



A much wetter Placer Creek following work to restore the area, spring 2014. (Courtesy U.S. Forest Service)