



Bi-National Borderlands Ecological Restoration Initiative

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The majority of the Mexico-United States border region is a semi-arid and fragile desert ecosystem. For more than 200 years the primary land use along the border has been ranching, and much of the land has suffered from overgrazing, loss of ecosystem biodiversity, soil erosion and desertification. As the economic viability of traditional ranching has declined due to grassland resource depletion, the land has become more and more fragmented, and in many instances abandoned – worsening problems of poverty and unemployment, and contributing to border security concerns. Natural resource management in the United States has long been accomplished in a watershed approach. Decisions about the use and management of natural resources are best made by focusing on the functioning of natural systems within a landscape. Watersheds cross all political and social-economic boundaries. Protecting watershed health along the U.S. and Mexico borders is of immense concern and key to solving resource and economical development problems. Restoration of ecosystems provides multiple benefits to humans and the wildlife that inhabits these regions. Ecological Restoration of Northeastern Mexico is being accomplished through collaborations by SEMARNAT, PRONATURA, CUENCA LOS OJOS (CLO) and CEMEX. To date approximately 40,000 ha have been treated with a Lawson Aerator and reseeded to native grass where needed. Creation of a Bi-National Borderland Ecological Restoration Program to protect our Natural Resources and to combat the effects of desertification has been proposed. The Bi-National approach to Cooperative Conservation on shared watersheds will yield Clean Water and a Healthy Environment and Habitat.

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