

Name of Property: EC Bar Ranch



Easement Property: EC Bar Ranch Conservation Easement

Size: 94 acres

Location: Apache County, Nutrioso, Arizona

Eco-region: AZ/NM Mountains

Conservation Values: Agriculture, Wildlife Habitat & Scenic Open Space

Type of Project: Donated Conservation Easement

Date Completed: December 2009

Property Description: Sometimes conservation has to defy the limitations of borders, so when NMLC learned from Jim Crosswhite about his amazing restoration accomplishments on the EC Bar Ranch in eastern Arizona and that he had been unable to find a land trust serving his region to complete a conservation easement, we knew that this opportunity was something we could not pass up.

The EC Bar Ranch conservation easement protects 94 acres of restored riparian habitat along a three-mile stretch of Nutrioso Creek, an important perennial stream and tributary of the Little Colorado River. Nutrioso Creek and the surrounding riparian area provide significant habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife, including several state and federally threatened and endangered species.

Through significant land management and restoration efforts over the past 13 years, Jim Crosswhite has achieved many “firsts,” and set an example for how to combine sustainable grazing practices with conservation in Arizona.

Perhaps one of his most impressive accomplishments is the removal of 13 miles of Nutrioso Creek from the list of non-compliant water bodies under the Clean Water Act by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This has resulted in the EC Bar Ranch attaining the highest water quality and aquatic/wildlife habitat standards for any landowner, public or private, in Arizona.

In addition, for the first time ever, as part of a Safe Harbor Agreement with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the federally

endangered Little Colorado River Spinedace was relocated from a segment of Nutrioso Creek on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest to the EC Bar Ranch.

Seemingly tireless, Mr. Crosswhite intends to continue his good practices such as removing invasive plants to improve habitat for the endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and other birds. "I look forward to doing more outreach to educate the public about restoration and private land protection strategies," he says. "I also would like to help Arizona figure out how to create tax incentives similar to New Mexico's for landowners who donate conservation easements to qualified organizations such as the New Mexico Land Conservancy."

Property Photos:



New Mexico Land Conservancy website link
<http://www.nmlandconservancy.org/Projects/ProjectsECBar.html>