



CIENEGA FACT SHEET

DESCRIPTION: The Cienega is a recreated desert wetland in the functioning Meadows detention flood basin on the 180-acre Springs Preserve (Preserve) site.

OBJECTIVE: To recreate the original springs system that occupied the site until it dried up in the early 1960's for the purpose of restoring a functioning habitat for wildlife, to recreate the beautiful landscapes that once were part of the site and to teach visitors about the importance of a desert wetland ecosystem in the Mojave Desert.

SIZE: 2.5 acres

LOCATION: Springs Preserve
333 S. Valley View Blvd
Las Vegas, Nevada

OPENING: June 8, 2007

DESIGNER: Natural Systems International (Santa Fe, NM)

**HISTORICAL
BACKGROUND:**

The Preserve is the site of the original springs that supplied water to ancient native Americans, early explorers and later, the new community of Las Vegas. The water sustained meadows and thickets of mesquites and willows. When the springs dried up, much of the vegetation that relied on the water from the springs died, however many of the trees and shrubs that had roots tapped into shallow ground water survived.

SIGNIFICANCE:

- The Cienega has attracted over 35 species of wildlife new to the site, including over 30 species of birds.
- Rarely observed birds found at the Cienega include the peregrine falcon, belted kingfisher, black-crowned night heron, white-faced ibis, black-necked stilt, ruddy duck and snowy egret.
- Restored vegetation on the site now includes thriving Mojave species such as cottonwood, willow, mesquite, acacia trees and an abundance of shrubs.

**CONSTRUCTION
OVERVIEW:**

The Cienega restoration process began in fall 2003 with the construction of several ponds, a stream and re-vegetation designed to recreate the original wetlands ecosystem that thrived on the site for thousands of years. Reconstructing native landscape required construction and design of a self-sustaining infrastructure, which included grading of the land to create ponds and

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a stream to capture run-off water. Additional prep work included soil preparation and amendment, seeding, transplanting, plant salvaging, irrigation and monitoring. The Cienega is now sustained by diverting the flow of nuisance water from the Alta Flood Channel into a reconstructed cauldron pool and down a stream that meanders through the detention basin.

The Cienega is accessed by a loop trail (The Cienega Trail) that runs along the western edge of the wetlands and includes a place for hiking, walking, docent demonstrations and wildlife observation. Features include a Cienega stream channel, a viewing ramada and a cauldron pool.

WEB SITE:

www.springspreserve.org

MEDIA

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