

Phantom Lake Springs Ciénega wetter and better



USFWS

This small wetland in Texas supports rare aquatic animals.

Two endangered fishes—the Comanche Springs pupfish and Pecos gambusia—and three rare

invertebrates live in Phantom Lake Springs Ciénega, located in west Texas. These animals live in extreme

conditions due to a spring flow decline since the 1940s, coupled with short-term failures of pumps that were installed in 2001. With funding through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Desert Fish Habitat Partnership; U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, a new ciénega (Spanish for “marsh”) was created, the existing pool modified to slow leaking of water through a cave wall, and a new pumping system was installed. The lined pool created a larger, more reliable habitat that acts as a refuge, provides spawning and cover habitat, and maintains water levels for longer periods of time. This ciénega now has more habitats, increasing populations of the aquatic species that swim there. F
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