

# Rio Loco Update by: Mario Rodriguez, Resource Conservationist, NRCS



## Lower Watershed Water Quality Project

- ⇒ Over \$1.5 Million in NRCS allocations for Conservation Implementation and \$400 thousand in Technical Assistance
- ⇒ 17 contracts for 1,194 acres planned for conservation since 2010.
- ⇒ The Southwest Soil and Water Conservation District is in charge of the conservation practices implementation and supervision at the Rio Loco
- ⇒ Lower Watershed project
- ⇒ Project is divided in three (3) Phases
- ⇒ Phase I includes Two (2) water reservoirs and one (1) sediment basin at Santa Rita Farm..
- ⇒ NRCS is in charge of all conservation planning and Engineering Designing
- ⇒ Four (4) Irrigation Water Reservoirs has been designed and submitted for construction permits.
- ⇒ Irrigation Water Reservoirs construction will add over 35 million gallons of fresh water coming from Rio Loco dam, reducing the amount of water normally used from the aquifers.
- ⇒ Three (3) Sediment Basins are planned for Rio Loco Lower Watershed.
- ⇒ One (1) of the Sediment Basins construction has started at the Santa Rita Farm with capacity for about 450,000 cubic feet of sediment.
- ⇒ Two (2) Open Channels are suggested for Runoff control. One (1) 5,556 feet (1,694 meters) long Open Channel is completely designed and ready for construction on Phase 2.

**Irrigation Water Reservoir 3 under construction on Santa Rita Farm, Guanica, P.R.**



## Upper Watershed Shaded Coffee Initiative

- ⇒ US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is in partnership with NRCS in this initiative.
- ⇒ USFWS in in charge of site evaluation and recommendation for forestry and wildlife.
- ⇒ Over \$480 thousand in NRCS 2010-2012 allocations.
- ⇒ Over \$168 thousand paid to our farmers since 2010 for reforestation and conservation practices.
- ⇒ 37 active contracts. 90% of the participants are Limited Resource Farmers.
- ⇒ 916 acres contracted since 2010 for conservation
- ⇒ 675 acres are planned to be planted in shade for coffee.
- ⇒ 307 of the 675 acres already planted for coffee shade using Multi-Story cropping systems.
- ⇒ Over 11 thousand trees planted as today.

**Guama tree, one of the species used for Coffee shade at the**



## Rio Loco River Restoration

- ⇒ Three (3) segments of the Rio Loco River have been identified as severe damaged
- ⇒ Stream bank Stabilization on the first segment, Las Latas Sector, has been evaluated and pre-designed by NRCS.
- ⇒ Final Project Design has been completed by NRCS and sent to the Southwest Soil and Water Conservation District to start with the permits.
- ⇒ 600 meters of stream bank will be stabilized with structural and Bio Engineering practices.
- ⇒ \$400 thousand are allocated in funds from NRCS in partnership with Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture.

**View of Las Latas Segment of the Rio Loco River**



### Next for Rio Loco:

- > October 2012—projected initiation of Phase 2 of the Lower Watershed Water Quality Project .
- > Rio Loco river restoration permits submission for processing
- > Outreach meetings will be held along the Rio Loco Watershed area.

**Sediment Basin B under construction at Santa Rita Farm, Guanica, P.R.**



**Rio Loco River Restoration construction design for Las Latas Segment, Guanica, P.R..**

