



Corn Creek Field Station, NV



The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) has engaged Lucchesi Galati to help expand its interpretive and educational experience for visitors to the 1.5-million-acre Desert National Wildlife Refuge (DNWR), the largest wildlife refuge in the continental United States. The DNWR's main visitor center and access to the greater refuge is based at the Corn Creek Field Station in Southern Nevada. This location is the center of a unique riparian and wetland ecosystem for the Mojave Desert that is fed by several deep aquifer springs. Corn Creek was home to Native Americans for at least 5,000 years, who were attracted to the lush plant and animal resources thriving around these springs.

The new Corn Creek Visitor Center will be an example project for the USFWS, creating a new sustainable and environmentally friendly facility, striving for a LEED Platinum Certification and net-zero energy usage. NSI is designing an advanced wastewater treatment system with RV receiving station by utilizing constructed wetlands as a major component of a natural treatment system. The wastewater infrastructure will be built as a learning landscape so to create educational opportunities for the Las Vegas area to learn about and respect this dynamic environment located a mere 20 miles from the valley.

The USFWS desires that the project highlight the agency to raise public awareness for the Desert National Wildlife Refuge's mission of protecting native species and preserving their habitats. Construction for the 16,000-square-foot facility is estimated at \$7.8 million, and will be completed in 2011.