

Company: Compañía General de Canteras, S.A.
Location: Cantera “Llano de las Monjas y San Juan”, Cádiz, Spain

Objective The main objective of this restoration was to get a full regeneration of damaged lands, where nowadays it is hard to imagine the presence of a previous activity.

Context The gravel pits are at the flood terraces of the river Guadalete, rich in gravel and sand, used in construction.
The Compañía General de Canteras carried out the open cast exploitation of the resources, by transference mining, to make an integrated restoration in parallel with the exploitation works. By thus, the impact was minimized and a quick regeneration of the area was supported.

Solution The company adopted every kind of measures to warranty the good development of the future restoration. They had special care in the protection of aquifer; by means of:

- Besides of separating the riverside vegetation for protection, they have created protection barriers to avoid the possible erosion of the river and the rain dragging of materials to the river.
- The maintenance of the phreatic surface, the minimum time in the open air to avoid its accidental pollution and its evaporation.
- The restitution of the appropriate filtering material surface of the size >40mm, to avoid the banks water balance being damaged.

As well, it was carried out the specific restoration of the different areas in the 52 hectares of the site, to bring them back to the original environmental levels of the exploitation.

Result For being a very rich agricultural and ecological area, when the exploitation works were finished, more than 52 concerned hectares were brought back to the original environmental quality levels. On bird migration seasons, the restored site becomes a place full of life, were to the usual bird species, a lot of new flying visitors are temporally added. The vegetal species used to reforest the area non recoverable for agricultural uses were: white poplars, reeds, willows, elms, and several shrubs species.

The project is finalised and the site is now closed, but the biodiversity values are still good or even better.

