



Binational Cooperation in Restoring the Colorado River Delta – Stakeholder and Government Engagement Across Borders

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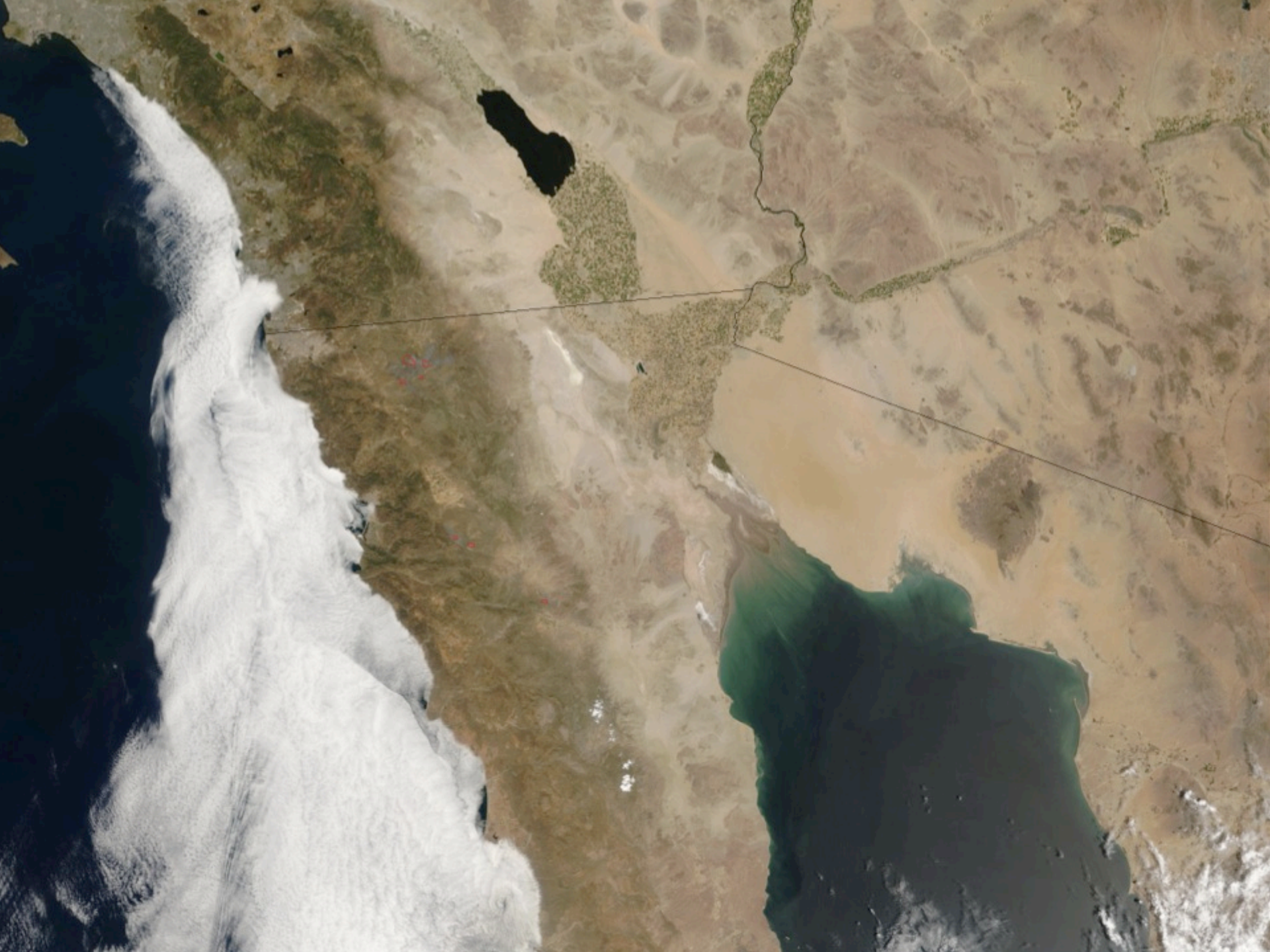
**RAISE
THE
RIVER**
RECONNECT THE COLORADO

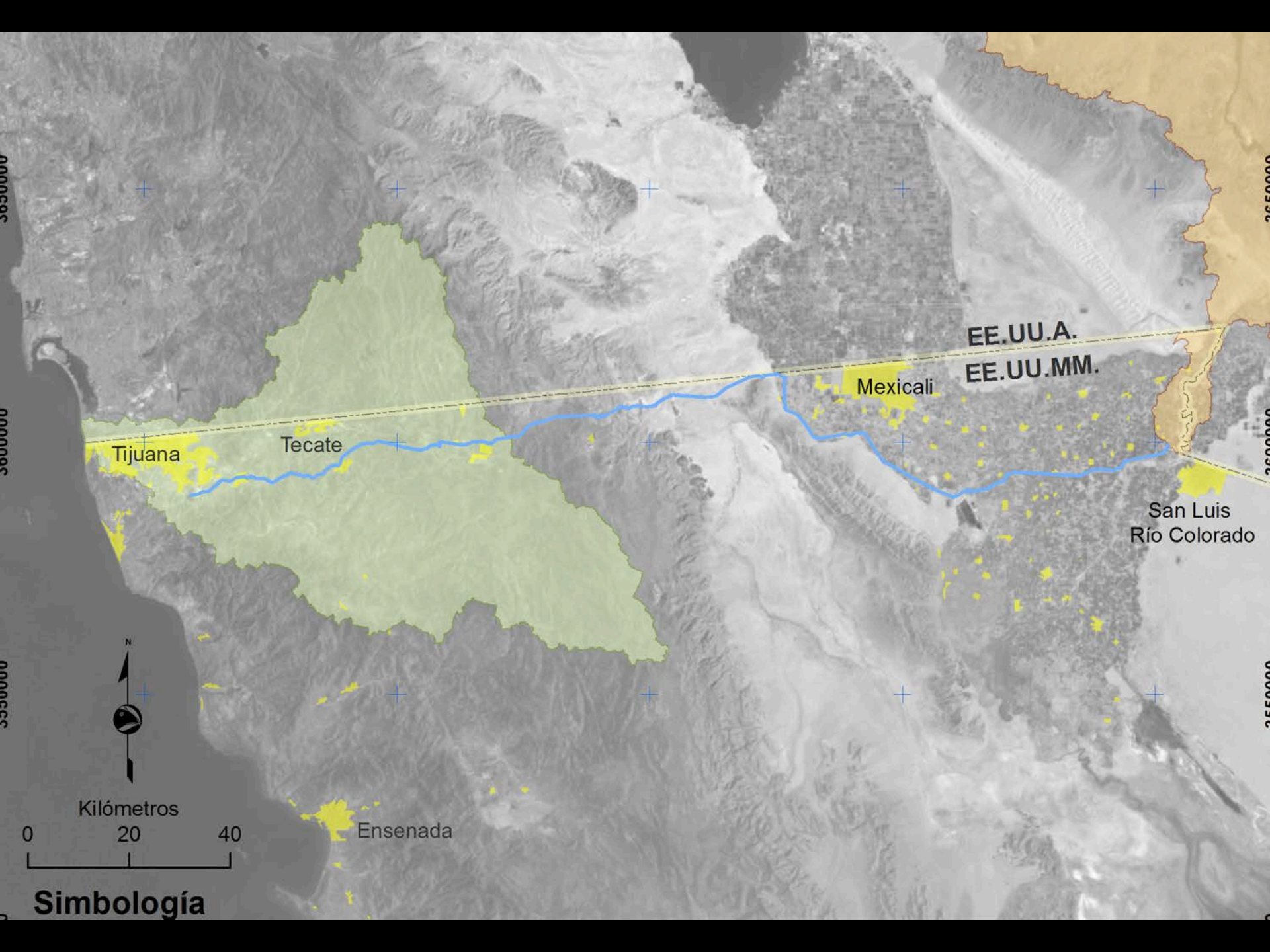
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COMISIÓN NACIONAL FORESTAL







EE.UU.A.
EE.UU.MM.

Mexicali

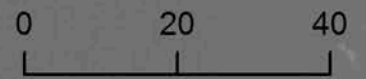
Tijuana

Tecate

San Luis
Río Colorado

Ensenada

Kilómetros



Simbología

A diversity of stakeholders in the Colorado River Delta

- Urban – Mexicali, Tijuana, Tecate, San Luis
- Border Region Industry
- Agriculture
- Tourism (river related, sport fishing, hunting)
- Fisheries
- Cucapá Tribe
- Environment
- Binational Context



Key strategies for Delta Restoration

- Research, planning, monitoring
- **Outreach and community involvement**
- **Binational negotiations and public policy**
- Water for the environment
- Protection of key sites
- Restoration

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Creating a Social Support System for the Restoration of the Delta

1. **Public support** for restoration in the Delta
2. **Policy work** with government agencies both in Mexico and the US
3. Integrating a **binational process** for restoration

Community Outreach

Started in 1997

- Stakeholder involvement
- Participatory mapping
- Community-based restoration strategies
- Environmental education

Developing a Vision
for Restoration



Community Outreach

Organization of local stakeholders as the voice of the river:

Ecological Association of the Hardy and Colorado Rivers (AEURHYC)

Tourist camps, fishermen, farmers, Cucapá tribe



Working with
landowners to protect
key wetland areas

Conservation
easements at the
Cienega de Santa
Clara and El Doctor

4,000 acres



Working with farmers to design a strategy to allocate water for restoration

- Over 1,000 surveys
- Building a relationship with water managers and users
- Understanding water law, water markets and water delivery practices

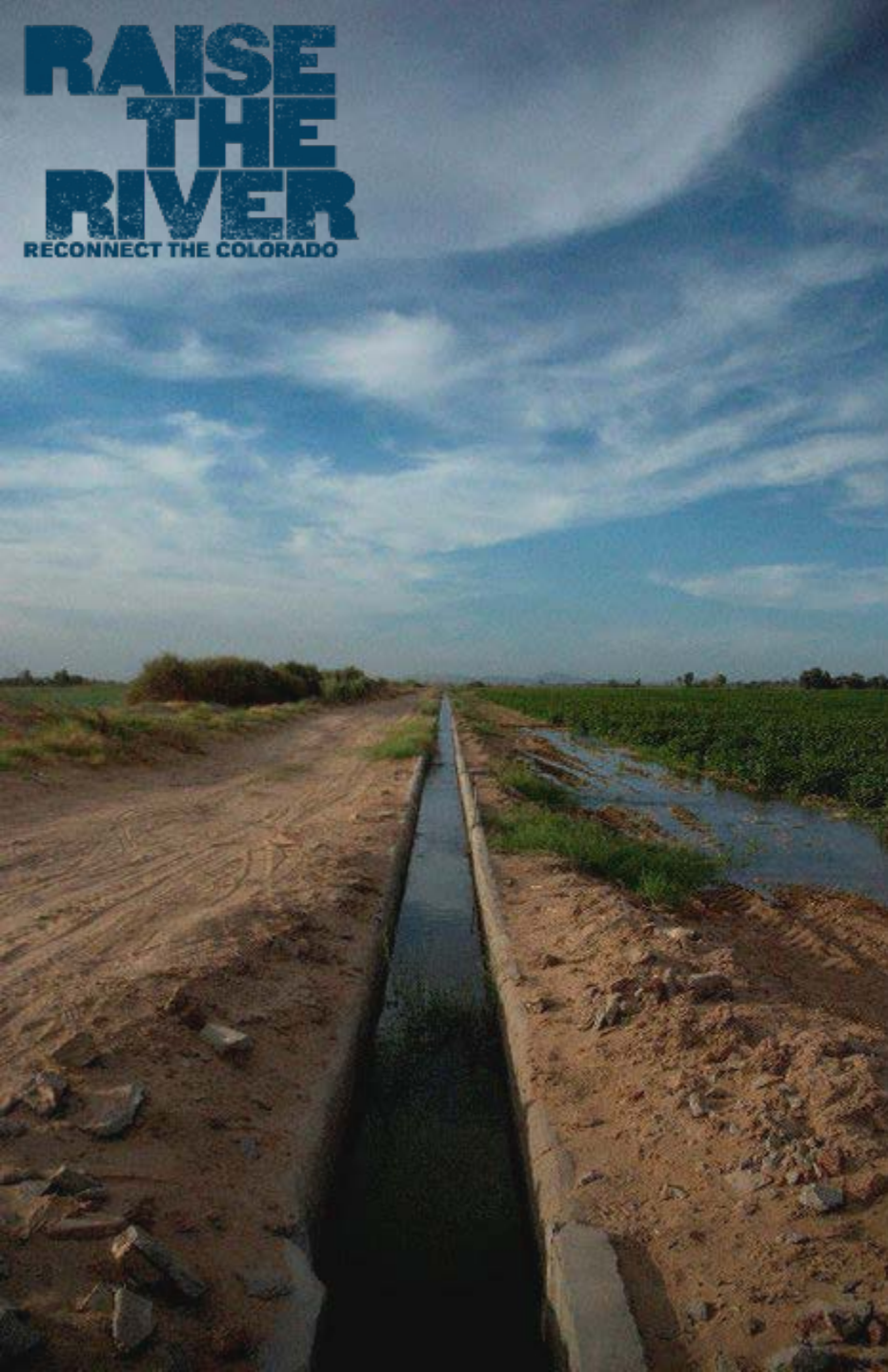


Fresh Water Allocation for Restoration

- Voluntary, market-based strategies
- Acquisition of water rights in the Mexicali Valley
- Water Trust for the Restoration of the Colorado River Delta



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Restauraremos el Colorado

Pronatura Noroeste,
Sonoran Institute, TNC,
National Audubon
Society

8,900 Acre-feet per year
of permanent water
rights for restoration

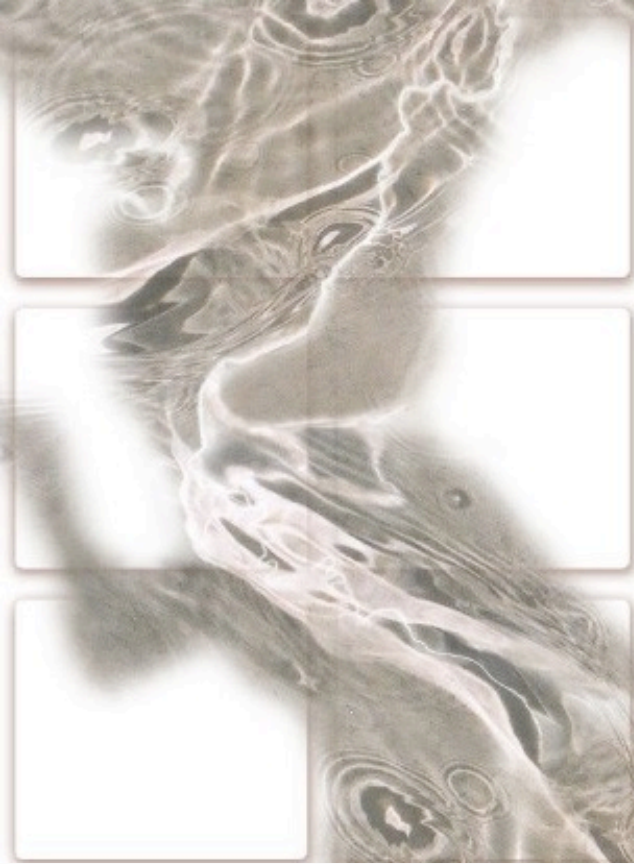
Policy Support for the Colorado Delta

Federal Biosphere Reserve in Mexico (1993)

Wetland of International Importance - Ramsar Site (1995)

Priority Wetland in Mexico & North America (1997)

Key Species: Yuma Clapper Rail (1999)



CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

IN THE



COLORADO RIVER DELTA

MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES



e ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE
finding the ways that work



Binational Workshop with scientists, government officials, planners, conservationists and stakeholders

- Map of the possible
- Building a common understanding and vision for the delta



Public Support for Delta Restoration

- Involvement of all the key agencies and stakeholders at the region and at the national level
- Understanding the needs and motivations of the agencies
- Creating a vision for restoration – benefit for nature and for the people

Public Policy Support in Mexico

Progress in 20 years – from “not an issue” to a regional and national priority

National Water Law

- Recognition of environmental water uses and wetlands in 2004
- Floodplain land concessions for restoration
- Instream flow determination and water reserves

Public Policy Support in Mexico

- Work with the **National Water Commission (CONAGUA)** at the national and local level
- Environmental representation in the Watershed Council of Baja California
- Wetlands Working Group of CONAGUA
- Recognition as a top priority by multiple agencies
- Gain a seat at the table

Public Policy Support in the US

- Colorado River Basin wide effort
- Reaching out to key federal partners (USBOR, DOI, USFWS)
- Reaching out to the basin states, especially lower basin (CA, NV, AZ) and key stakeholders and water leaders
- Gain a seat at the table

Binational Process through IBWC

- 1944 International Water Treaty
- Minute 306 - Concept Minute for Delta Restoration (2000)
- Minute 317 – Concept Framework for the Binational Process of the Colorado River (2010)



Minute 319 – Historic agreement (2012)

5-year agreement

- Water conservation
- Shortage and drought
- Environmental component

Federal agencies, plus basin states and environmental organizations



Environmental component

Allocation of water for restoration of the delta

158,000 acre-feet in 5 years

Contributions from the US, Mexico and NGO's



Media Coverage of the Pulse Flow in Mexico

361 media items during 2014

Liberan flujo pulso de agua ambiental en río Colorado

La Crónica.com

Se libera agua en el Río Colorado
con fines ambientales



El Sol de México

Revive caudal del río Colorado mediante acuerdo entre
México y EU

El Diario  **mx**

Llega el "flujo" al Golfo

EL IMPARCIAL

El gran río del
Oeste llega al mar

LA VANGUARDIA

Credit: Pronatura Noroeste and Karl Flessa

Media Coverage of the Pulse Flow in the US

263 media items during 2014

A pulse of life at the mouth of the Colorado

LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

**INFUSION OF RIVER WATER
HITS RESTORATION SITE**



**Water, wildlife surge back into once-parched
Colorado River delta**

Los Angeles Times

Colorado River reaches gulf

Arizona Daily Star





Photo: Sonoran Institute





Sábados Familiares en Laguna Grande

¡Descubre el delta del río Colorado!



15 sep - 27 oct - 24 nov - 08 dic | 9:00 am - 1:00 pm



Minute 323 of the Colorado River

- Environmental Component– 9 years
 - Joint commitments of funds and water from NGO's, US and Mexico
 - 210 K AF of water for environmental restoration in the delta
 - \$9 million dollars for restoration
 - \$9 million dollars for monitoring and science

Conclusions

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Restoration is a human process – legal, economic and political context

Find common ground, understand the needs of agencies and stakeholders

Multiple tools: outreach, policy, media, field trips, diplomacy

Goal: create a social support system for restoration

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