

**Journal
&
Campaign Packet
April, 2001**



A WATERSHED EVENT

From March 5 to March 15, 2001, river activists from Glen Canyon Action Network (GCAN) in Moab, Utah and its Living Rivers program in Phoenix, Arizona traveled the Colorado River watershed to promote water conservation as a primary means to restore this once-mighty river. The timing coincided with the fourth International Day of Action Against Dams and for Rivers, Water and Life.

The principle objective of the "Sustainable Water Project Tour" was to launch a public campaign to reestablish flows to the river's delta in Mexico. Utilizing an empty water tanker truck to collect donations for the dying delta, the group covered 2,800 miles and participated in rallies for the river in Salt Lake City, Albuquerque, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Blythe and Los Angeles.

This was the first ever activist roadshow for the Colorado's restoration, and the first time water agencies in the basin have been collectively challenged to begin leaving water in the river to aid in its restoration. We have much more hard work ahead of us before these agencies actually make restoration a part of their missions, but we are very pleased that 122 organizations from the US and Mexico have come together to support this initiative, and that local, regional and national media outlets are helping to sound the alarm.

The pages that follow chronicle this unique journey and the wide range of support that exists for delta and Colorado River restoration. It also contains some background information about the "1% for the Delta" campaign, and describes how you can get involved in this critical effort to help transform this most developed of US river systems back into an ecosystem.



Thank you to all the volunteers and organizations that helped make this tour and the launch of the "1% for the Delta" campaign a tremendous success, especially: Penelope Archibald-Stone, Craig Axford, Reggie Bannister, Shawn Baur, Steve Bloch, Philmer Bluehouse, Denise Boggs, Howard Boyer, Jean Brocklebank, Paul Brown, Shelley Buchholz, Rick Canfield, Michael Cohen, Chris & Aileen Crawl, Lara Derasary, Rani Derasary, Sean Diener, Kara Dohrenwend, Brett Doran, Nancy Eberle, Don Fanning, Alfredo Figueroa, Jesús Figueroa, Roxane George, Moe Gonzales, Bill Guerra Addington, Marcia Hanscom, Corbin Harney, Michelle Harrington, Steve Harris, Jessica Hodge, Dave Hogan, John Horning, Carol Kent Ireland, Craig Keffeler, Gordon LaBedz, MD, Paul Lenart, Matthew Leivas, Michael Lewis, Sharon Lungo, Diana Mann, Bruni Mason, Don May, Eric Meyer, Charlie Moore, Liz Moore, Bruce Monroe, Thomas Morris, Jr., Peter Neils, Jamie Newlin, Jr., Zhetonia Piluso, Lynne Plambeck, Gigi Fast Elk Porter, Kirk Robinson, David Rowland, Tom & Lynn Rymysza, Jeff St. Clair, Jon Sherman, Susi Snyder, Scott Stovall, Kalynda Tilges, Eric Ward, Susetta Weisheit, Frank Welsh, Ray Williams, Matt Wilson, Bob Witzeman, MD, and Larry Young, A&A Budget Signs, Action Resource Center, California Earth Corps, Center for Biological Diversity, Diné Medicinmens Association, Forest Guardians, Friends of the Los Angeles River, Arizona, Nevada and Utah Green Parties, Maricopa Audubon Society, Palo Verde Valley Farmworkers Association, Peace and Dignity Journey, Shundahai Network, the Sierra Club's Glen Canyon Group, Southern Nevada Group and Angeles Chapter, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Utah Animal Rights Coalition, Utah Environmental Congress, Water Information Network, West Coast Print Center and Wetlands Action Network.



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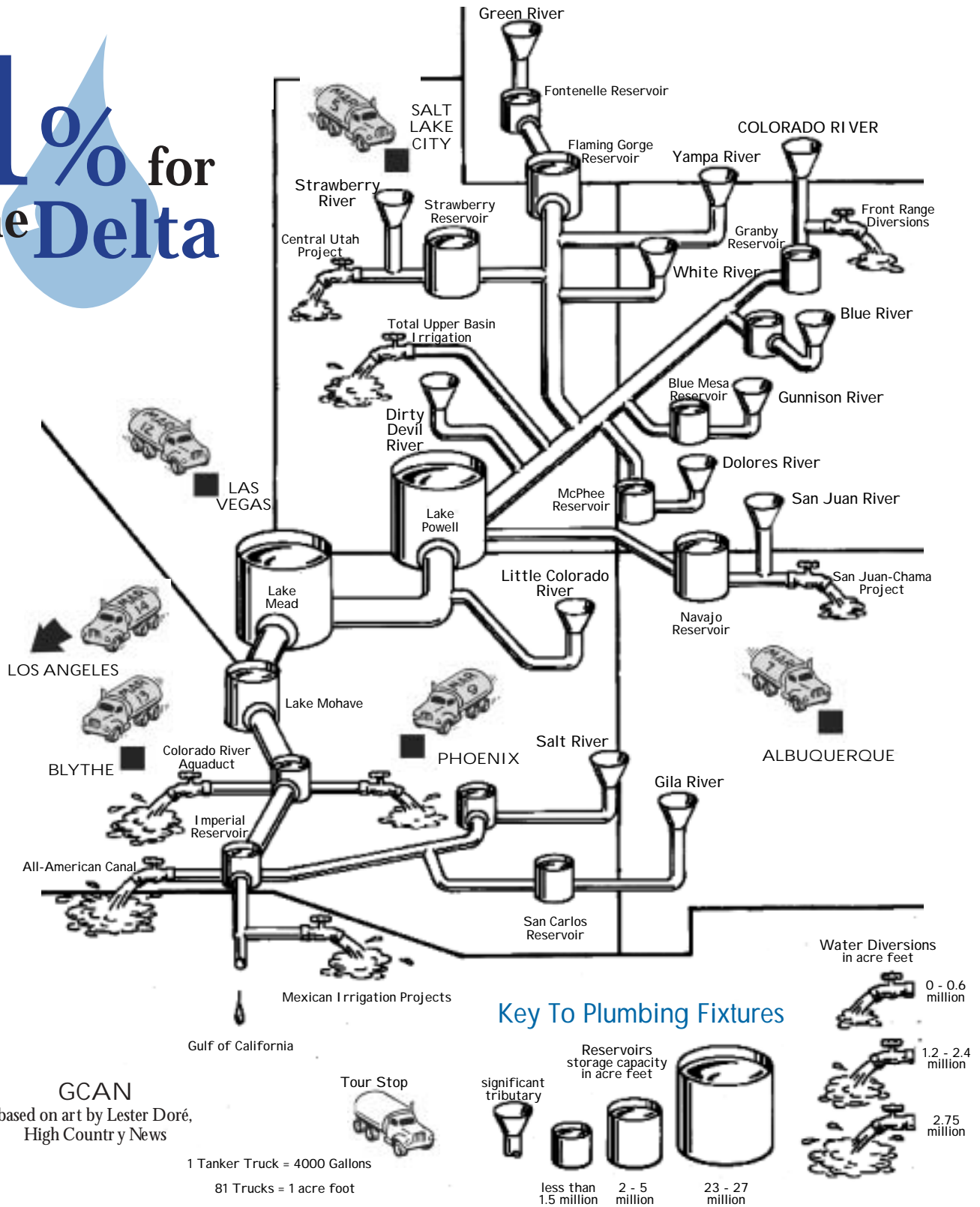
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Revive the Colorado

“An ecosystem not a plumbing system”

1% for the Delta



GCAN
based on art by Lester Doré,
High Country News

Epilogue as Prologue



It was dark when we finally arrived at the point of the Colorado River's passage into Mexico, just below Morelos Dam amidst flat farmlands near Yuma, Arizona on March 15th. We'd traveled 2,800 miles along portions of the river's mainstem as well as its primary tributaries: the Green, San Juan and Gila rivers. Our craft was not a boat, as was used by John Wesley Powell and earlier explorers, but a 4,000-gallon water tanker truck. Nor was our mission one of natural discovery, but one of building social awareness for the watershed's restoration, especially its dying delta that begins just downstream.



Sustainable Water Project crew delivering water to the delta

We had come to deliver back to the river the water that we had collected on our 11-day journey — water which under more natural conditions would flow down the river to replenish the delta and the Gulf of California. Today however, the river's flow is diverted entirely through the Colorado's vast plumbing system of dams, reservoirs, pipelines and tunnels. Our truck's payload would represent less than one billionth the amount of water that historically flowed past this point each year. Yet, given the river's present state, our contribution felt more than symbolic.

The night's darkness could not mask the river's pain: just a trickle meandered through the channel. Behind the thin veneer of vegetation, the river's shriveled self appeared little different from the hundreds of irrigation ditches we passed earlier that

day. It was difficult to distinguish at first between nearby ditches and the river. The large main canals near Yuma, in contrast, carry far more of the river's flow than the river itself. A collection of lawn hoses from a Las Vegas suburb seemed capable of dispensing more water than what flowed past us there on the banks of this once-mighty river.

We stood at the international boundary, representing a coalition of 122 organizations and twelve million people from the United States and Mexico who want water to reach the delta once again. This tour marked the founding of the largest and broadest-based movement yet to call for Colorado River restoration.

Just one percent of the river's average annual flow is all we ask of water agencies. We want them to agree to leave this tiny amount in the river so that the eight percent of the original delta that still remains can at least be kept on life support.

We held rallies, teach-ins and organizing meetings during our Sustainable Water Project Tour. We hand-delivered letters on behalf of the coalition to water agencies requesting their one percent contribution. We generated television, radio and newspaper coverage for the river and delta. Along the way, our truck rolled down the highways and through the communities of the Colorado River watershed, collecting water "donations" from reservoirs, municipal water systems, and irrigation ditches.

But as our journal illustrates, it's not just the delta that's suffering. Major stretches of the basin's rivers and riverine habitat are also in peril. Colorado River water misuse and abuse is needlessly killing one of North America's most geologically, biologically and culturally diverse river systems.

Our delivery to the delta that night carried with it the spirit of people living in towns, cities and rural communities across the region and beyond, who are united in their commitment to preserving and restoring the river and its watershed. The launching of the "1% for the Delta" campaign is the latest effort to make this happen.



The Colorado's dried-up delta

Tour Launch at the Bureau of Reclamation



On a brisk Monday morning, our empty water-tank truck rolled to a stop in front of the Wallace Bennett Federal Building in Salt Lake City. The large, white water truck—weighing in at 23,000 pounds gross vehicle weight and normally used for dust control on construction sites--was emblazoned on both sides with large banners proclaiming the Colorado River “An Ecosystem, Not a Plumbing System.” The truck symbolized our urgent call to the US Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec) to encourage Colorado River water agencies to voluntarily give back at least one percent of the Colorado River water they currently use, in order to restore the river’s dying delta south of the border with Mexico.

A dozen Utah-based groups gathered on the downtown plaza, cheering as speakers, musicians and Native American drummers stepped up to the microphone, one after another, sharing their concerns about the Colorado River’s decline and their hopes for quick corrective action by the water agencies. The rallying cry was “1% for the Delta, 1% Now!”

The program opened with traditional drumming and singing by the Peace and Dignity Spirit Runners, Native Americans who have made several trips from Alaska to Mexico on foot, while nine activists danced with a 50-foot Chinese Dragon named Glen, who made his debut a year ago at a rally calling for the decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam, the second largest dam on the Colorado.

One of the hot-button issues raised by environmentalists at the rally is a proposed water pipeline that would pump water from Lake Powell reservoir on the Colorado River to faraway St. George, Utah. Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance attorney Steve Bloch said this project would threaten areas proposed by citizens groups for wilderness protection, and spur development sprawl in the environmentally sensitive Mohave Desert. Utah has the third-highest per capita water consumption of any state in the US, and St. George reportedly has the highest water consumption rates in Utah. Making more subsidized water available for a growing community would only stimulate more unbridled, unsustainable growth.

Denise Boggs of the Utah Environmental Congress, a group that fights timber sales and grazing on public lands, pointed out that the ecological integrity of the entire Colorado River watershed is threatened by resource extraction, and called for ending federally subsidized logging and grazing programs. By redirecting the huge subsidies that flow to these industries today, to worker retraining and ecological restoration public works projects, we could protect the Colorado River basin all the way from its headwaters downstream to the delta—the end of the “pipeline” of the Colorado River.

Eric Ward of the Utah Animal Rights Coalition brought along a friendly cow (okay, it was really a vegan in a cow costume) to graphically identify the primary consumer of crops grown with Colorado River water. Growing alfalfa, a crop that requires huge amounts of water, is a wasteful and inefficient use of irrigation water. Ward said that if we were to grow less feed for cattle, and more fruits and vegetables for humans, we could reduce our consumption of Colorado River water while encouraging more people to eat a healthier diet. By eating less meat, or giving it up altogether, we could reduce our environmental impacts in many important ways.

At the rally’s finale, John Weisheit, president of GCAN and Living Rivers, read the letter he would be presenting to the regional director of BuRec on behalf of 122 organizations calling on Colorado River basin water agencies to give their one percent for the delta.



“1%” supporters visit BuRec office in Salt Lake City

“Environmentalists--who rallied Monday outside the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation downtown--say it is time for states to reduce their water demand, leaving more of it in the river.”

Salt Lake Tribune
3/6/01

Weisheit and Living Rivers project director Lisa Force then ceremoniously dumped a bucket of Central Utah Project water into the empty tank of the water truck, symbolizing the need for water donations for the thirsty delta. The action exemplified the grassroots nature of the “1% for the Delta” campaign, and the effort that would be required in the coming months to raise awareness and pressure the water agencies to do the right thing. The event was reported on by television, radio and print journalists.

Following the Salt Lake City event, we drove southward to the Colorado Plateau, to GCAN’s home in Moab for a good night’s sleep, one of the last we’d have for some days to come.

Praying with the Diné on the San Juan



Come morning we gathered by the side of the Colorado River for a ceremony to mark our passage over the river and to take an additional donation of water — this time directly from the Colorado River near Moab’s Highway 191 bridge.

Heading south through the canyon country of southern Utah, we passed through Monticello, then turned east, crossing the border into Colorado. We were detained for an inspection of our truck at the weigh station in Cortez, but after we convinced the authorities that our truck was carrying only two buckets of water and that we were on an educational tour, we were allowed to proceed south through the Southern Ute Indian Reservation into New Mexico and the Navajo Nation. Passing the stark sacred rock formation of Shiprock that rises incongruously from the desert floor, we turned eastward yet again, travelling past the belching smokestacks of the coal-burning Four Corners Power Plant and San Juan Generating Station (major sources of air pollution in the desert), on into the community of Farmington, New Mexico.

Our principal stop for the day was Navajo Dam, upstream from Farmington on the San Juan River, where we met with members of the Diné Medicinemens Association (DMA) to discuss a campaign to heal the sick and dying San Juan River. This major and once-vital tributary of the Colorado begins in the San Juan mountains of southwestern Colorado and flows 360 miles to its confluence with the Colorado, a sacred site to the traditional people that has been submerged under Lake Powell reservoir since 1963.

We chose to meet at Navajo Dam because it is the only major dam on the San Juan, and has directly and indirectly led to significant damage to the river downstream. Completed in 1962, the dam also submerged a number of sacred sites significant to Diné people. We met with leaders of the DMA downstream of the dam for a riverside ceremony to pray for the river’s movement and release from the dam — to allow the San Juan to one day flow unimpeded to the sea. We had intended to meet and perform a ceremony at the crest of the dam, but that had to be delayed because uninvited law enforcement officers occupied the dam just prior to our scheduled 1:00pm start time.

Over the course of the day, DMA president Thomas Morris, Jr. of Window Rock, Arizona, conducted three ceremonies calling for restoration of ecological and cultural resources along the San Juan River and throughout the Colorado River basin.

“I came here early in the morning today to pray for the river, Earth, and sky, and apologize for what has been done to harm them,” said Morris, who as a young man visited sacred sites that are now flooded beneath Navajo Reservoir with his grandfather, a medicineman as well. “The costs we have been forced to pay for the convenience of storing all this water are only now being accounted for.”

Ancient archeological and ceremonial sites, as well as an entire town, were submerged beneath the rising waters of the reservoir almost forty years ago.

Costs for the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project near Farmington, are still rising, too, thirty years after the project was supposed to have brought prosperity to the Navajo people. Water from Navajo Reservoir is used



Medicinemen making donation of water at Navajo Dam

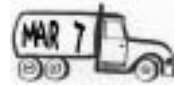
by the Navajo Nation to grow mostly low-value crops, such as alfalfa and potatoes. Recently, the Tribal Council approved a multimillion-dollar bailout for the fiscally troubled program.

While the riverside ceremony was under way, law enforcement officers, thinking the event at the dam's crest had been canceled, left the area. Once the natural calm had been restored, we drove our water-tank truck to the dam, where the last ceremony of the day was conducted.

After a series of traditional prayers, songs, and drumming with Peace and Dignity, the ceremony concluded by pouring a symbolic donation of water taken from Navajo Reservoir into the tanker truck, which accepted the contribution for later delivery downstream.

We departed from Navajo Dam in high spirits, heading south for our next stop in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Rain Can't Silence Rally in Albuquerque



Bill Guerra Addington, Water Information Network

The tour continued at City Hall Plaza in Albuquerque, where we gathered to call on Albuquerque to give back one percent of its contracted water from the San Juan River to assist in restoring the dying Colorado River delta. Albuquerque has more than 50,000 acre-feet of San Juan water under contract, which it plans to develop as a primary drinking water source. The City Public Works Department has proposed constructing a large water treatment facility to serve urban growth. The water for this facility will come from the San Juan River in the Colorado River watershed, through the existing San Juan-Chama Project tunnel, into the Chama River, a tributary of the Rio Grande. Although this water is already being diverted, it has not been used for municipal purposes.

A light rain set in at noon as the program commenced with presentations by DMA leaders. Despite the drizzle, our spirits were not in the least dampened as Thomas Morris, Jr. and DMA secretary Philmer Bluehouse addressed the crowd, both in the Navajo language and in English about the importance of water and healing the damage that has been done to our rivers.

Bill Guerra Addington, a board member of the Albuquerque-based Water Information Network and a third-generation resident of the Rio Grande Valley in Sierra Blanca, Texas, spoke about the need for restoring the Rio Grande. The "Great River" sometimes runs dry in places as a result of diversions. The cities of Albuquerque, Ciudad Juarez and El Paso, and large farms in the valley, take life-giving water out of the streambed, imperiling river-dependent species such as the endangered Rio Grande silvery minnow. Addington said that the river where he lives is now a meager trickle compared to the healthy flows seen in years past.

John Horning of Forest Guardians, based in Santa Fe, addressed the crowd on the current ecological crisis on the Rio Grande, where dewatering of the river in recent summers has pushed the Rio Grande silvery minnow to the brink of extinction. One of the prime culprits is the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD), which withdraws up to four times more water from the river than the next-largest diverter. The MRGCD provides irrigation water primarily for growing alfalfa and other cattle feed crops. Horning said that because the MRGCD has never resolved its water rights with the State Engineer's Office, it is operating outside New Mexico state water law.

We spoke about the effects of the San Juan-Chama diversion on the San Juan River, and expressed concern that Albuquerque's unsustainable growth and water use was not only harming the Rio Grande, but was also standing in the way of restoring the Colorado River. We then delivered our coalition letter to the office of Mayor Jim Baca, asking the City to allocate its one percent to delta restoration.

Musical entertainment was provided by Peter Neils, a local activist and singer who performed music he wrote that commemorates the exquisite beauty as well as the environmental tragedy of the Rio Grande today. Our Native American friends traveling with us from Peace and Dignity Spirit Runners also performed several traditional songs.

Following our rally, we loaded up the truck and drove out to the banks of the Rio Grande along the old Route 66 east of downtown. We saw a river lined with large, old cottonwood trees and some newly planted trees that are part of a community restoration program. There we paused for a brief ceremony with Albuquerque activists and medicine people.

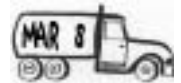
From the riverbanks, we drove a short distance to visit with new friends at the Southwest Network for Environmental & Economic Justice (SNEEJ), a group of community activists working primarily on environmental justice issues in and around the Albuquerque metropolitan area. SNEEJ has been particularly effective at raising awareness about the impacts that the local Intel microchip plant has had on the environment and social fabric of the community. Intel is one of the largest industrial water users in the Rio Grande Valley.

We wound up the day by joining our friends from KP Vision Paper for a spicy New Mexican dinner. Tom and Lynn Rymysza are the founders of the kenaf paper industry in the US, and have their headquarters in Albuquerque. We discussed the promise of a growing shift to alternative fiber papers, and the prospects for developing a larger kenaf industry to relieve pressure on our forests. The production of kenaf paper uses no chlorine and half the water of typical tree-based paper pulping. The conversation turned to the question of when US environmental groups will abandon tree-fiber paper for environmentally preferable kenaf fiber. Although it currently costs about twice as much as tree-fiber paper, kenaf is used by GCAN and a growing number of groups to protect forests and create a viable market for the fiber. By building demand for kenaf, we help to bring the price down. We encourage everyone to join with us in demonstrating that paper needs can be met without destroying forests and watersheds.

"When the Sustainable Water Project tour began, [Diné Medicinemens Association Secretary Philmer] Bluehouse and other medicine men conducted healing ceremonies for the Colordao River. They prayed that the river and its tributaries might once more flow freely to the sea."

Independent Native News
3/28/01

Along the Rio Grande and the Gila



We said our goodbyes to the Rymyszases and headed south on Interstate 25, passing by the University of New Mexico's well-watered 18-hole "championship" golf course south of town. The University promotes this golf course as a site for national golf tournaments. The City of Albuquerque boasts of more than 15 golf courses, all equally well-irrigated, no doubt.

The first community we passed through on our way south was the Isleta Pueblo Indian Reservation. The Rio Grande flows through the lands of the Isleta Nation, for whom the river is sacred. The tribe successfully sued the City of Albuquerque several years ago for dumping partially treated sewage into the river upstream of the reservation. This established an important legal precedent for both environmental protection and tribal sovereignty; the courts recognized for the first time that Indian nations have the authority to enforce environmental laws on their lands and on streams that flow through their lands, even if the culprit polluters are off the reservation.

We were heartened to see a dense riparian forest of cottonwoods, willows, and other native plants along the riverbanks as we crossed the river at Isleta. The local term for this riparian forest is "bosque," and the bosques are in trouble because agricultural water withdrawals are lowering local water tables and land is being cleared for crops. In many areas of the Rio Grande, exotic tamarisk (salt cedar) has invaded and choked out native vegetation.

Following generally the course of the Rio Grande, we traveled first to the town of Belén, one of many old farming communities along the Rio Grande. The Rio Grande south of Albuquerque often forms two or more parallel streams — the river proper and one or more ditches. At certain times the ditches carry more

water than the river itself. Many of the small river towns, called "pueblitos" — a term that evokes the rich Hispanic heritage of the region, have been inhabited for centuries. The pueblitos and other small communities in New Mexico have traditionally managed their water by small diversions known as "acequias." These diversions were not, however, the focus of our concern for inefficient use of Rio Grande water. We were in Belén to meet representatives from New Mexico's biggest Rio Grande water diverter, the MRGCD.

We came to visit not the district's corporate headquarters, but instead the offices of the Irrigation



Delivering "1%" letter to MRGCD

Division, where the work of diverting the water is done. We drove the water truck into the parking lot of the small, nondescript cinderblock office building for our photo op, then we walked inside where we met the affable manager, Richard Jaramillo. We presented him with a copy of our letter requesting one percent for the delta, and asked for his consideration. He very politely responded by telling us that he would bring this issue to the attention of his board of directors. We thanked him for his time and headed back out on the road.

Interstate 25 follows the river on its journey south to the Mexican border. The freeway is just another piece of industrial infrastructure on the landscape, but it also reflects the determinative role the river has played in the cultural and economic geography of the southwest.

Where for generations people walked, then later rode horseback, along the river, today a steady stream of autos, RVs, 18-wheelers and an occasional, water-tank truck flows by.

We passed the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge near Socorro, and later the Bosque del Apache Refuge. These refuges are vital for the waterfowl populations that migrate along the Rio Grande. Sadly, however, agribusiness and hunters keep a tight rein on the management of these federal lands. Alfalfa and other grain crops are grown for cattle and duck feed on the refuges, providing yet another subsidy to the livestock industry in a region whose economy is largely based on such subsidies.

Our next stop was Elephant Butte Reservoir, created by one of the first concrete dams ever constructed by the Bureau of Reclamation. Each year, as much as 25 percent of the river's flow evaporates from the reservoir into southern New Mexico's sunny desert skies.

It was late afternoon when we rolled into the town of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. This charming town, known for many years as "Hot Springs," made a deal with a television game show back in the 1950s in which the town agreed to change its name to help promote the program. Today the town's name could well apply to the management of the river that flows by it.

We had water, not television, on our minds, however, as we drove through downtown "T or C," as it's known locally. We were headed to the far side of town, to Elephant Butte Dam on the Rio Grande. This dam dates to the early twentieth century, and is ornately accented by a row of lights on concrete standards across the dam's crest. The water level in the reservoir was low, as usual. This is one of several reservoirs in southern New Mexico that divert water for the state's agricultural sector. The town of Hatch, a few miles downstream from T or C, is the world-renowned center of the chile pepper industry. Peppers grown with

Rio Grande water are a mainstay of the economy and culture of this valley. But while peppers steal the show for tourists and lovers of spicy foods, the biggest crop in the valley is still alfalfa.

At the dam, we were disappointed to learn that our water truck was one ton over the weight limit for crossing the dam. While a few more cracks in the concrete probably wouldn't hurt the dam, we decided to snap a few photos next to it before turning the truck around.

Back on the highway, we cruised across the stunningly beautiful landscape of the Chihuahuan Desert and across the Continental Divide near the town of Deming, where we reentered the Gila River drainage of the Colorado River watershed. We would be traveling

"This is the first broad-based organizing effort among the basin's environmental and social justice communities to emphasize the need to transform this vast plumbing system back to an ecosystem."

Environmental Network News
3/8/01

through the Gila's watershed as we passed through Tucson and Phoenix. The Gila River is the most developed of the Colorado River's three principal tributaries, so developed that it no longer reaches the Colorado. Just as the Colorado's mainstem dries up before it reaches the delta, the Gila runs dry 125 miles before it reaches the Colorado in southern Arizona. One of the most important river advocacy initiatives in Arizona is the growing effort to restore critical habitat for endangered fish and birds on the San Pedro River, a tributary of the Gila.

Crossing from New Mexico into Arizona, we were briefly detained at the weigh station where once again inspectors expressed skepticism at our story that we were driving our truck around as an environmental education project. But they couldn't find anything wrong, so they let us go and we were off, into the Sonoran Desert night.

The moon was almost full as we drove through southern Arizona in the soft, eerie lunar glow. We passed through Tucson at midnight, continuing on to our next destination: Phoenix.

Phoenix Calls for 1%



The tour rolled into Chandler, Arizona after 2:00 am Friday morning. The tired but excited crew rested for a few hours before our next rally, scheduled some eight hours later. After two weeks of rain in Phoenix, the clouds parted just in time for the Sustainable Water Project Tour to make its triumphant entry into the heart of one of the fastest-growing cities in the US.

We gathered at the Arizona Department of Agriculture in downtown Phoenix to urge the regulators of Arizona's agricultural water to conserve water and give back one percent of their Colorado River water allocation to restore the dying Colorado River delta. We also called upon the Central Arizona Project (CAP), which controls 1.5 million acre-feet of Colorado River water, to dedicate just one percent of its allocation to the delta. Finally, we encouraged the people of the State of Arizona to do their part to conserve just one percent of the water they use daily and join us in demanding that the state work to ensure that the saved water will reach the delta.

The rally opened to the enthusiastic cheers of about 75 activists who came from all over the state to show support for the Sustainable Water Project Tour and the "1% for the Delta" campaign. Flagstaff, Tucson, Prescott and Phoenix were all represented, as were kids, dogs and expectant mothers.

The program commenced at 10:30am with traditional Native American music by Peace and Dignity Spirit Runners. Lisa Force then spoke about the grave situation in the delta and the need to restore it. Next was a presentation by Frank Welsh, author of the classic conservation book, [How to Create a Water Crisis](#). During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Welsh and others battled state and federal lawmakers in an effort to stop the Central Arizona Project (CAP). This boondoggle, completed in 1993, takes water from Lake Havasu reservoir near Parker, Arizona and pumps it over a mountain and then east-southeast hundreds of miles to Phoenix and Tucson via a massive canal.

Welsh spoke about how Arizona does not need Colorado River water, but could manage its abundant groundwater resources and surface water supplies to easily meet its drinking water and irrigation needs. "There's no water crisis in Arizona, just a crisis of mismanagement," he told the crowd.

The next presentation was by Dr. Robert Witzeman, conservation chair of Maricopa Audubon Society. Witzeman spoke about how agribusiness is using most of our water to grow low value, water-wasting crops.



Young delta activists call for "1%" from State of Arizona

"The delta, where the river meets Mexico's Gulf of California, has lost more than 90 percent of its vegetation in recent decades."

Arizona Republic
3/10/01

"Nearly 80 percent of Colorado River water is used for agriculture," he said. "And 60 percent of that is for growing alfalfa and feed grains for cows. They like to say the rest is used for growing food for people, but most is used for growing cotton. I've never eaten cotton."

Next up was Owen Lammers, GCAN's executive director, who spoke of our one percent request, offering examples of how that one percent could easily be conserved

and made available for the delta. Lammers was followed by John Weisheit, who read and then delivered our standard letter requesting one percent for the delta to Department of Agriculture director Sheldon Jones. A letter was also mailed to Sid Wilson, general manager of CAP, requesting that his agency voluntarily contribute one percent of its Colorado River water allocation.

Our program was capped off by a symbolic contribution of water from the Department of Agriculture building. Frank Welsh and Bob Witzeman did the honors, pouring the water into the tanker truck, while Owen Lammers led the crowd in an enthusiastic cheer of "1% for the Delta – Got to Give it Back!"

The rally was well attended by local media outlets. The *Arizona Republic* newspaper covered the event, as did three local television networks and the state's two leading talk radio stations. Producers of a documentary about the Colorado River delta made a special trip to the rally to interview Living Rivers and GCAN, and to get live shots of the crowd and the water truck.

Following our rally, we loaded up and drove to Arizona State University (ASU) in Tempe for a teach-in. Although it was the last day of mid-term exams, students and faculty from ASU, Paradise Valley Community College and Scottsdale Community College joined us, as did a group of students and faculty from Prescott College who had made a special trip to Phoenix for the rally and teach-in.

Owen Lammers opened the teach-in with a dialogue about the global state of rivers and the dams that impact them. Lisa Force gave a slide presentation about the delta with more detailed information about the impacts dams and diversions have on it, and addressed ways to begin restoration. Then John Weisheit gave us a 'virtual' tour through Glen Canyon before it was drowned, using slides of the canyon before it was inundated by the reservoir. Shawn Baur, a Living Rivers volunteer, wrapped up the teach-in by presenting an exciting plan for organizing students statewide for environmental advocacy projects. After the teach-in, Tour organizers and volunteers met for a brief celebration in Tempe, then retired for a much-needed few hours' rest.



Veteran dam fighter, Frank Welsh, gives back CAP water

Return to the Colorado

As we packed up this morning, we were pleased to learn that the news media had not disappointed us. There was television and radio coverage the night before and a good story in Saturday's *Arizona Republic*.

Our travels took us next to Sun City, one of the original "snowbird" retirement communities that seem to dominate the Arizona landscape these days. Here, golf carts have the right-of-way and saguaro cacti surround lavish fountains. This is Del Webb's version of the good life: senior citizens from around the US flock to this artificial oasis on the outskirts of the sprawling Phoenix metropolitan area.

We were somewhat relieved to watch Phoenix fade in the rearview mirror. The traffic, even on a Saturday, was horrible. But we had to face the fact that we were leaving the country's second-fastest-growing city, headed for the first. Yes, our next scheduled stop was to be none other than Las Vegas, Nevada.



Back on the open road, we traveled in a northwesterly direction along US Highway 93, up through Wickenburg and the Joshua tree forest to Kingman, Arizona. By nightfall we dropped back down into the Colorado River valley to a desert campsite on the shore of Lake Havasu reservoir, across from the gamblers' mecca of Laughlin, Nevada.

A Trip Across Hoover Dam



The world capital of water waste and conspicuous consumption is generally acknowledged to be Las Vegas, Nevada. Water flows in this desert, uphill as they say, toward money. Water is sprayed into the air by fountains, it is used to irrigate lawns and golf courses, it is used to wash the dust off expensive imported sports cars. Water is everywhere it seems, in this land of little rainfall. Basic economics tells us that price is related to scarcity, yet here in southern Nevada the laws of economics seem just as irrational as the Law of the River, which allocates more water than the Colorado River has to give.

On our way, we rolled our truck across the BuRec's Great Pyramid, the 726-foot-high Hoover Dam. A sacred shrine to dam builders the world over,

it is known as one of the engineering wonders of the world. For years the world's highest dam, Hoover also happens to be the cornerstone of Colorado River development — and of growth and development throughout the arid southwestern US.

Our arrival at Hoover Dam was anticipated by federal law enforcement officials. As our water tanker rolled onto the art deco dam's crest, we were greeted by two police cruisers that followed closely behind and met us in the parking lot on the other side. Numerous unmarked police vehicles and even a helicopter were in place, awaiting our visit. Once convinced that terrorism was not on our agenda, however, Hoover Dam's chief of police offered to assist us with any activities we might have planned while visiting the dam.

We told him all we were looking for was one percent for the delta — that's half of one percent of the water stored behind Hoover Dam! We were there seeking donations. The police chief graciously offered to let us take as much water as we would like, and escorted us back across the dam to the ramp down to the reservoir (known as Lake Mead) where we collected our donation for the delta. The bucket brigade once again went into action, collecting yet another few symbolic gallons.

Tourists were everywhere on that fine Sunday afternoon, taking photos and asking questions about our campaign. We handed out literature and distributed our official "1% for the Delta" buttons. We had been concerned that the authorities might choose to enforce an obscure federal statute that prohibits First Amendment activities at Hoover Dam. However, the police chief was very cooperative in permitting us to get our message out.

This was our second dam visit of the day. Earlier that morning, we rolled our truck across Davis Dam, which forms Lake Mohave reservoir below Hoover Dam. Davis is yet another Bureau of Reclamation dam in a series of stair-step reservoirs on the lower Colorado River. Davis Dam's reservoir stores less water than is lost annually through

evaporation and seepage out of the reservoirs behind Glen Canyon Dam and Hoover Dam combined. This loss is nearly 20 times what is needed to help restore the delta.



Crossing the Colorado's largest dam

--Las Vegas Sun

"A tanker truck from the Sustainable Water Project Tour drove across Hoover Dam Sunday as part of a campaign by environmentalists to get states, including Nevada, to contribute one percent of their shares of the Colorado River to save the Colorado River delta in Mexico"

Las Vegas Sun

3/12/01

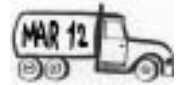
We also visited the Mohave Generation Station (MGS) in nearby Laughlin, Nevada, one of the most heavily polluting coal-burning power plants in the southwest, and a prime contributor to smog and haze in Grand Canyon National Park. This power plant was constructed following the defeat of BuRec proposals in the 1960s to build dams in the Grand Canyon.

The MGS is notorious for its use of an underground coal slurry pipeline to bring its fuel to Laughlin from Black Mesa on the Hopi and Navajo Nations, nearly 300 miles away in northeastern Arizona. Water is used to form the slurry — pure fossil water pumped from deep in the Earth beneath the reservations, and evaporated into the desert skies above Laughlin once the coal reaches its destination.

Water and energy conservation go hand in hand in our efforts to protect and restore the Colorado River, in a land where casino lights reach galaxies far, far away.

We stayed the night Sunday in Boulder City, Nevada, the "town that built Hoover Dam," and home to the Lower Colorado Regional Office of BuRec, overlooking Lake Mead reservoir.

Stop Gambling with the Colorado



Promoting water conservation on the Las Vegas Strip

We brought our message to the water users of Las Vegas, hoping to find support for our cause from the general manager of the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA), the highest official from a Colorado River water agency to publicly express support for delta restoration to date.

We began our day at the offices of Nevada's leading environmental groups to make last minute preparations for the day's rally. Our local colleagues included the Sierra Club's Southern Nevada Group, the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada, Citizen Alert and Friends of Nevada Wilderness. The rally was held at noon at the combined offices of the Las Vegas Valley Water District and SNWA. GCAN and Living Rivers were joined by a number of other environmental groups to promote

water conservation and to ask for one percent of the river's flow for the delta.

As we pulled into the parking lot, the water district staff directed our Sustainable Water Project Tour water-tank truck to a designated rally location. This was a surprising turnabout, as the water authority had previously resisted our advance requests for a permit — the only such agency to do so.

Unlike other states that withdraw water from the Colorado River, nearly all of Nevada's withdrawals are for municipal purposes, including significant consumption by the entertainment industry — casinos, hotels, restaurants, golf courses, and other water-wasting playgrounds. Nevada's per capita water consumption leads the nation at twice the national average of 101 gallons per person, per day. Despite water scarcity, Las Vegas leads the nation as the fastest-growing metropolis. The SNWA and the Las Vegas Valley Water District jointly control the water that allows this consumption and sprawl to occur.

Our rally began with a prayer by Corbin Harney, a spiritual leader of the Western Shoshone Nation. Harney reminded us of the importance of water as a life force and the need for it to be treated with great respect — rather than as a resource to satisfy human greed. Jessica Hodge of the Sierra Club spoke about the critical need to manage our rivers and freshwater systems. Hodge is the Sierra Club's staff person working on the campaign to halt sprawl in Las Vegas and the surrounding area. Susi Snyder of the Shundahai Network spoke about the need for solidarity in Las Vegas



Patricia Mulroy, Gen. Mgr., Southern Nevada Water Authority --Lin Alder

and throughout the Colorado River watershed. She called on everyone to take advantage of the upcoming International Day of Action to focus on reducing water consumption in our daily lives. A number of leaders from other advocacy groups spoke about the importance of water conservation as well.

In contrast to our previous rallies, several agency personnel were in attendance. SNWA general manager Patricia Mulroy was on hand to personally receive the letter requesting one percent of the river's flow for the delta. Mulroy addressed the crowd, specifically stating that the delta is a concern to her agency, but that no action would be taken until such time as the other six states and Mexico complete negotiations to begin delta restoration. She stated that there are no guarantees that water sent to the delta would not instead be diverted by other consumers downstream. She also said that the seven states and Mexico must work together to restore the delta, and that her agency, in the meantime, has an aggressive water conservation program. We concluded the activities by reminding the audience that the water authority's conservation programs only allow for more urban sprawl, rather than delta restoration. Another water donation went into the truck, concluding the Las Vegas rally.

While the media packed up to file their stories, the Water Authority invited us in to watch a documentary that they had made about the delta. The video included some accurate information about the current state of the delta, its native species and its people, but also included misstatements about the pre-degradation size of the delta (one million rather than 1.9 million acres) and minimized US water users' contribution to the degradation. The video also implied that restoration of the mainstem of delta's portion of the Colorado could come only at the expense of another valuable wetland area, the Cienega de Santa Clara.

We concluded the day by taking our tanker truck and conservation message first to the casinos and gamblers on the Las Vegas Strip and then to the Desert Lakes subdivision, home to expensive homes surrounding artificial lakes, for some great photo shoots with the water truck.



Jessica Hodge of the Sierra Club, contributing to the delta

Farmworkers Lend Support for River and Delta Restoration



This morning we left Las Vegas, heading south across the Mohave Desert for the farm country of the lower Colorado River basin. Our destination: Blythe, California, to rendezvous with our friends the Palo Verde Valley Farmworkers, for an evening rally to support restoration of the Colorado River delta and to oppose construction of a 500-megawatt natural gas-fired power plant known as the Blythe Energy Project.

The Sustainable Water Project Tour focused for the day on the connection between energy conservation and river restoration. The alleged energy crisis in California has raised public concerns about the region's electric power generating capacity. But the problem is not one of shortage of power supply, but instead is an issue of management and the need for conservation.

In recent months, California Governor Gray Davis has made headlines calling for "fast-tracking" permits for a number of proposed new power plants. While the Governor has also called for implementing some conservation measures, the emphasis has been on increasing the state's generating capacity. Too little is being done to take advantage of the full range of opportunities currently available that could obviate the need for building new plants, like the one proposed for Blythe.

"The Mexican delta and its native species have suffered in recent decades as federal projects including Hoover Dam have diverted the Colorado River to agriculture and cities including Las Vegas."

Las Vegas Review Journal
3/13/01

Our day once again began with media coverage of the previous day's events. The *Las Vegas Review-Journal* carried a story on our Monday rally, with a photo of Corbin Harney speaking in front of our water truck. Next to him stood six-year-old Jonathan, a friend from the Shundahai community. It was gratifying to see more good coverage of our tour.

We loaded up the truck and drove south from Las Vegas, passing through interesting desert communities such as Searchlight, Nevada and Needles, California. As we traversed the stark landscape, we caught occasional glimpses of the shining Colorado River and its riparian zone, a ribbon of critical habitat for many diverse native species that could not survive without this refuge from the punishing summer heat.

We passed by the Giant Desert Intaglios, one of the largest indigenous rock art panels in North America, a few miles north of Blythe. Our friend and longtime Blythe resident Alfredo Figueroa, co-founder of the Palo Verde Valley Farmworkers Association, is the acknowledged regional expert on this sacred site.

Soon we rounded a bend in the road, where an entirely different landscape stretched out before us. No longer were we surrounded by drab creosote bush and spiny ocotillo plants.

Instead a carpet of lush green alfalfa, planted in carefully cultivated blocks and separated by rows of irrigation ditches, greeted our blinking eyes! We had just entered the Palo Verde Valley, domain of the Palo Verde Irrigation District, another Colorado River water-using agency and one of the oldest irrigation districts in the basin.

We passed some blocks where cattle stood, contentedly gorging themselves on fresh alfalfa. As we drew nearer to Blythe, a cropduster flew overhead, spraying pesticides on the laser-leveled field — and on us. The odor was sickeningly strong, making us wonder about the myriad environmental injustices farmworkers have been forced to endure over the years.

We pulled the truck off the road, alongside an agricultural drainage ditch, from which we dredged up a bucketful of "water" (who knows what that liquid really was) that we used to make a donation to our traveling water tank.

We pulled into Blythe and went straight to Todd Park near City Hall to join our friends for the rally. The park's bandstand was decorated with United Farm Workers banners and signs, to which we added the "1% for the Delta" message. We parked the water truck right next to the stage

where about 150 people had gathered to hear fiery speeches and eat spicy, home-cooked food.

"We welcome our friends here," said Alfredo Figueroa. "We have known for a long time that the river delta is drying up and we're pleased that groups are now taking an active interest in its restoration."

Figueroa also praised the work of GreenAction, a San Francisco-based group that is cosponsoring the rally and helping the farmworkers fight the power plant. GreenAction executive director Bradley Angel is helping Blythe citizens challenge the permitting of the Blythe Energy Project by the California Energy Commission in Sacramento.

After speakers explained the problems with the proposed power plant, Figueroa called the group to march down the street, to the City Council that was meeting a block away at City Hall.

At this point, Glen the Chinese dragon made another appearance. Carried by children, the dragon led marchers to City Hall where Blythe residents descended upon the City Council to express their concerns about the power plant. The Council chambers overflowed with concerned citizens who came to speak out



Lisa Force of Living Rivers collects delta donation from alfalfa irrigation ditch



Alfredo Figueroa, Palo Verde Valley Farmworks

against building the power plant in their community. Representatives of the plant's engineering consulting firm stated "there's nothing you can do; it's a done deal." To which Figueroa and other activists responded that they would continue to fight — and win.

Following the rally, we loaded up the dragon, our signs and other materials and headed back on the freeway for another night of driving, this time east to the City of Angels, site of the final scheduled event of the tour.

"Animals such as the Vaquita porpoise are among species threatened by the lack of fresh water reaching the Colorado River delta."

Associated Press
3/12/01

Los Angeles and the International Day of Action



A large number of environmental groups celebrated the fourth "International Day of Action Against Dams and for Rivers, Water and Life," on Wednesday, March 14 at three locations in Los Angeles. A noon-time rally downtown at the Old Pueblo Plaza was followed by a ceremony near the banks of the Los Angeles River, and lastly by a protest against bulldozing rare coastal wetlands near Ballona Creek in Marina del Rey.

The fourteenth of March marked the near culmination of our eleven-day, five-state tour. We began the with a rally in downtown Los Angeles across the street from the offices of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. At the site of the original settlement of Los Angeles, representatives of the Action Resource Center, California EarthCorps, Friends of the Los Angeles River, Friends of the Santa Clara River, Sierra Club Angeles Chapter and Wetlands Action Network joined GCAN and Living Rivers to call for restoration of the Colorado River watershed. Supporters of river restoration came from as far away as Washington State to join the lively rally. The festive scene was highlighted by performances by Diné dancers, and musicians Jon Sherman and Reggie Bannister. Dozens of schoolchildren participated in a "burning of the sage" ceremony conducted by Gigi Fast Elk Porter.

California EarthCorps executive director Don May acknowledged the recent passing of environmental leader David Brower, who was a co-founder of GCAN and Living Rivers. May urged the crowd and activists present to carry on Brower's legacy of leadership.

From the Olvera Street Plaza, the Sustainable Water Project Tour traveled on to the site of California's earliest agricultural irrigation development along the banks of the Los Angeles River, known today as the Cornfields, or Chinatown Yard. Activists gathered to celebrate the announcement the day before, of the cancellation of a controversial condominium project planned for the site, which clears the way for acquisition and conversion of the property to public parkland. The Friends of the Los Angeles River organization

has long advocated for protecting the Cornfields as parkland as a significant contribution to the larger goal of restoring the Los Angeles River.

A traditional Native American ceremony known as the "planting of the milpa" was conducted beside an exposed section of the historic aqueduct constructed by original settlers of the Pueblo de Los Angeles. Sharon Lungo of Action Resource Center and Zhetonia Piluso of Friends of the Los Angeles River assisted Gigi Fast Elk Porter in planting the corn, beans, and squash that symbolize in traditional teachings three "sisters": corn as the tall, strong sister; beans the round, short sister; and squash the protective sister. The "milpa" seeds together represent the Earth's life-giving force.



Marcia Hanscom of Wetlands Action Network calls for restoration of delta's wetlands

From the Cornfields, the Sustainable Water Project Tour traveled next through heavy L.A. traffic to the site of the contested Playa Vista development project on wetlands near Ballona Creek in west Los Angeles. A drama was unfolding as the water truck caravan arrived. For two days, bulldozers had been plowing the soggy muck which activists hoping to restore this important wetland habitat have defended for more than three years. The struggle against one of California's largest urban development projects took an exciting turn when, just as the water truck pulled up, a grandmother named Mary Wright locked herself by the neck to the fence, in a show of protest. While demonstrators chanted along the street, two activists entered the construction site rowing a small boat through a flooded area that the developer had previously argued did not qualify for designation as wetlands.



Milpa planting ceremony near Los Angeles River

More than 90 percent of California's wetlands have been destroyed over the years, reducing habitat for migratory waterfowl and contributing to the endangerment of many species. Wetlands Action Network and the Citizens United to Save All of Ballona have opposed development of the Ballona wetlands and urged protection and restoration of the site. Acquisition of an adjacent parcel for public parkland is planned in the near future. Ballona Creek is a former outlet to the sea for the Los Angeles River, and is home to many marine species including octopus, sharks, and rays.

While several great egrets stood in the marsh nearby looking for food, officers of the Los Angeles Police Department arrived on the scene and ordered the assembled protesters to move their vehicles, including the water tanker, or face fines. Not wanting to see our water truck arrested, we loaded up and left the raucous crowd. We drove down to Venice Beach where we enjoyed the last light of this International Day of Action and the sunset over Santa Monica Bay.

Our day was capped off by a visit with friends working to restore the estuary of the Los Angeles River.

Making the Delivery and the Road Home



We loaded up the trucks in Long Beach. It was time to deliver our water back to the river, then head home to Phoenix and Moab. We had had a very restful night's sleep at the cozy home of Dr. Gordon LaBedz, chair of the Sierra Club's 50,000-member Angeles Chapter, and his wife Diana Mann, leader of the Eco Link coalition of environmental groups in Los Angeles and Orange counties.

Gordon and Diana live near the mouths of the Los Angeles and San Gabriel rivers, an area that at one time was a thriving, extensive wetland marsh complex but is today home to not less than seven fossil fuel-burning electric power plants and a maze of oil and gas wells, surrounded by highways, shopping centers, and housing developments. A particular passion of this activist couple is to take down the breakwater in Long Beach Harbor, the largest such structure in the world, which has caused serious damage to the estuaries of the two primary river systems of the Los Angeles basin.

With all the hospitality, we could have stayed a week there, but said our goodbyes and headed out of town toward the Mohave Desert. We drove along through one sprawling desert community after another, passing through San Bernardino, Palm Springs, and Indio, into the heart of the Coachella Valley, home to the Coachella Valley Water District. Here, water from the Colorado River is delivered through a 500-mile irrigation system to grow fruits, vegetables and other high-value crops. According to the water district, Coachella Valley farms consistently have the highest gross crop value per acre of any major irrigated area in the US.

Our route took us through shady palm plantations and fields of artichokes and other exotic tropical crops, down to the shimmering Salton Sea, the largest lake in California, situated incongruously in the midst of the Mohave Desert. This "sea" lies in a deep basin more than 200 feet below sea level and supports a



Salton Sea, not exactly paradise

thriving bird population. To the uninitiated, this expansive body of water is a thing of beauty, but the beauty is only surface deep. The Salton Sea is really a sump — a gigantic agricultural drainage basin replete with pesticides, fertilizers and more salt per liter than the ocean. Another by-product of Colorado River development. In recent years, massive bird and fish die-offs from outbreaks of avian botulism and cholera made headlines and forced officials to install industrial-size crematoria to dispose of the carcasses. Not exactly a pristine environment!

Following a quick stop for a photo on the shoreline, our crew resumed its southeastward journey toward the Mexican border, passing

through fields of alfalfa stretching off toward the horizon. This is the Imperial Valley, home to the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) which is, at three million acre-feet per year, the largest single user of Colorado River water.

As we rolled into the farm town of Brawley, California, we crossed over the New River. This "river" (really a huge ditch) was created accidentally by canal builders in 1905 when the errant, flooding Colorado River left its banks. The river began flowing through the Alamo Canal, then under construction, spilling over into the Imperial Valley and formed a "new" river that in turn created the Salton Sea.

Onward we rolled, past the farms to the headquarters of the IID in El Centro, where several workers waved in support of our truck's restoration message. After a brief stop for photos, we headed east on Interstate 8, bound for historic Yuma, Arizona, and yet another rendezvous with the Colorado River.

Along the highway we saw one of the largest ditches in the world, the 80-mile-long All-American Canal, which delivers water to the Imperial and Coachella valleys from the Colorado River at Imperial Dam upstream of Yuma.

Seeing the river at Yuma is a startling experience. Depleted of roughly 90 percent of its flow, this stretch of the Colorado usually carries only half the flow of the All-American Canal. The "hydraulic society," as historian Donald Worster calls it, is starkly obvious here.

We steered our tanker south across the floodplain fields, then back west toward the setting sun, to a dirt road and a small bridge across yet another canal and then a levee. Through the growing darkness we could soon make out dense stands of vegetation behind which we knew lay the choked-off Colorado River. We drove downstream of Morelos Dam, the last diversion on the river within the US, to the first point where the vegetation parted just enough to allow us to back our tanker up to the edge. We had arrived at our ultimate destination, the departure point where the Colorado River leaves the US, the place where we would send the water we had collected on our tour down to the delta where it rightly belongs.

Just as we had backed up the truck and were preparing to dispense our collected water into the river, a US Border Patrol vehicle rumbled along, the driver briefly training a floodlight on us. "La Migra" (the immigration officers) just shook their heads and drove on. Ceremoniously, we dumped the water we had collected over the previous ten days, in a symbolic effort of giving back to Mexico, the delta and gulf a tiny donation of the flows that we know are needed. One percent for the delta is a small but significant amount of water to begin to compensate for the century of damage that's been done to this river.



John Weisheit, giving it back to the delta

We turned the now-empty water tanker around and drove north, heading home for Utah. But we still had one last stop to make before our Sustainable Water Project Tour was complete. We drove through the Phoenix "metro-sprawl-itan" area in the dead of night, stopping for a nap shortly after sunrise in view of the San Francisco Peaks north of Flagstaff. From there, we continued on to the town of Page, Arizona, and a quick visit to Glen Canyon Dam.

In the late morning, we pulled the truck into the parking lot at the Carl Hayden Visitor Center for a leisurely photo session of our truck in front of the dam. It was a much quieter atmosphere than the rally we organized there one year ago, but it was a critical pilgrimage nonetheless. The decommissioning of this dam will free up more than ten times the water necessary to restore the delta, water that is now lost due to evaporation off the reservoir's surface and seepage into its surrounding sandstone banks.

We strolled inside and distributed some of our literature to the visitors, as the dam's security team became increasingly apprehensive about our presence. After about 15 minutes we were surprised to see a squadron of police cars pulling up. The Coconino County Sheriff's Department, which provided security for our rally last year, was almost apologetic when informing us that they had been called out to investigate our presence at the dam, feeling fairly confident that we had no intention of violating any laws.



Glen Canyon dam, wasting precious Colorado River water

"With the simple rallying cry '1 percent for the delta,' environmentalists hope to overcome the complexities of the Colorado river politic and send some water to the river's dying delta in Mexico."

High Country News
3/26/01

Pleasantries aside, we had the final leg ahead so we bid the good sergeant adieu and pointed the tanker eastward, through the small City of Page, crossing into the Navajo Nation and coming soon into view of the three gigantic smokestack towers of the Navajo Generating Station.

This is one of the largest, most polluting coal-burning power plants in the Southwest. It generates power to drive the pumps of the \$4-billion-

dollar Central Arizona Project, and to fuel the growth and development of Phoenix and other Southwestern cities. The coal is hauled by electric train from the Kayenta Mine on Black Mesa, one of the largest coal strip mines in the country (the same Black Mesa that supplies coal to the Mohave Generating Station that we visited in Laughlin, Nevada).

A ten-mile side trip to the site of the proposed Antelope Point Marina development was canceled because the weather was growing stormy. The sunny weather ended quickly as snow and high winds bore down upon us, and the decision was made to make a break for home. Plowing through some heavy snow around Monticello, Utah, we managed to arrive home, safe and sound, tired but satisfied, hours later in Moab.

And thus drew to a close our successful and rewarding journey, the FIRST Sustainable Water Project Tour. We learned a lot about the plight of the Colorado river, and the many ways we can aid in its restoration. Most importantly, we assembled the largest, most broad-based coalition yet, working to make possible the restoration of the entire river's watershed, beginning where the river ends, the delta.

Communities in many parts of the basin are now aware of the need to give back one percent for the delta, and the water agencies that serve them know that there is mounting pressure for the agencies to leave this water in the river. But this has merely been the launch of the "1%" campaign. Much hard work lies ahead before that delta water begins to flow. We look forward to your help along the way, as we continue to make change in the antiquated water distribution and management system — the plumbing system — of the Colorado. Join us as we continue our exciting journey, pressing onward for a living Colorado and support for living rivers everywhere!

The "1%" Campaign for the Colorado River delta

Historically, the Colorado River delta and the Gulf of California were recipients of the Colorado's entire annual flow, averaging some fifteen million acre-feet of water. Aldo Leopold, the eminent ecologist who picked up where John Muir left off, journeyed through the Colorado delta and described encounters with jaguars and vast riverside jungles.

Of his travels in the Colorado delta, Leopold wrote, "...in fact the river was nowhere and everywhere, for he could not decide which of a hundred green lagoons offered the most pleasant and least speedy path to the Gulf. So he traveled them all....He divided and rejoined, he twisted and turned, he meandered in awesome jungles, "

In Leopold's time, the delta supported ninety percent of the lower Colorado River's riparian habitat. It is difficult to quantify how much of this



Jaguar, now extinct in the delta



habitat has been destroyed, because few detailed records survive that document the ecosystem that existed prior to the era of dam construction. We do know that today more than ninety percent of the delta is gone, and with it, much of the gallery forests. The native salt grasses are having difficulty reproducing, the river's nutrients no longer reach the Gulf, and the numbers of the region's indigenous Cucapá

people, who once relied on the delta's rich habitat for their survival, have dwindled to a few hundred individuals.

Several delta species are considered by government scientists to be endangered. The vaquita is the world's smallest and rarest porpoise. The Southwest willow flycatcher and Yuma clapper rail are among the region's imperiled bird species. The totoaba, razorback sucker and desert pupfish are endangered fishes that inhabit the delta region.

The Gulf and delta are crucial to wintering waterfowl and hundreds of migratory birds as well that use the delta as a stopover along the Pacific Flyway. It is estimated that the Gulf and delta are home to more than 900 species of fish and marine mammals, many of which are dependent upon replenishing freshwater inflows from the Colorado River.

Reduced flows have also placed segments of the delta's human population at risk. The Cucapá, the Native Americans who historically lived and flourished in this part of Mexico, today face hard times as diminished river flows have polluted the water and dramatically reduced fish catches. As a result, the Cucapá people can no longer rely on traditional subsistence harvesting of Palmer's salt grass and fishing. The current situation forces many Cucapá to truck their boats further and further away to find work and alternative sources of income.

Organizing for “1%”

As the Colorado River flows across the US border into Mexico and on toward the delta, the river runs dry, well before reaching the Gulf. The 1.5 million acre-feet that the US is required to deliver to Mexico - ten percent of the river's annual flow - is diverted shortly after it crosses the border.

A small percentage of the river's flow could sustain what life yet remains in the delta. Scientists believe that less than one percent of the average



Cienega de Santa Clara, in Mexico's Colorado River delta

annual flow would be needed. The delta would of course benefit from additional flows, as it requires overbank flooding every few years simply to maintain existing vegetation. Larger floods would further enhance and extend the native riparian vegetation and increase the amount of freshwater runoff into the Gulf.

In the last seventy years, since the filling of Hoover Dam and other reservoirs far upstream, the delta has seen small flows only during flood years.

Under current US water laws, any water conserved (not used) by a water rights holder is available for diversion by a downstream user. Water users must "use it or lose it," so they strive to protect their rights by using as much as they can, even if doing so leads to waste. This system provides strong disincentives to users to conserve, and effectively encourages waste of water. To restore the delta, dedicated flows will be necessary—meaning that upstream water users must not only conserve water but must also be prevented from appropriating the conserved water

for other uses. Allowing water to simply flow downhill is a great challenge in the lower Colorado River.

Attempting to convince the Mexican and US governments to dedicate flows for the delta has in the past been as difficult a pursuit as has encouraging water users to divert less. But in December 2000, the Republic of Mexico and the United States signed an historic agreement to identify potential areas of cooperation that could lead to guaranteed restorative flows for the delta at some time in the future. However, the agreement did not specify any requirements

for water deliveries for restoration purposes, nor did it provide for any timetable for action. For now, the governments have committed only to studying the issue. But this opportunity has opened the door for more discussion and interest.

To increase the likelihood that the intent of this binational agreement will be realized, Glen Canyon Action Network and Living Rivers have launched the "1% for the Delta" campaign. We and 122 other environmental and social justice organizations are asking all users of Colorado River water to commit to providing the minimum flows considered necessary by scientists to begin the restoration process.

- We are encouraging water agencies to support in principle the need for dedicating permanent instream flows for the delta, with the water to be obtained through implementing conservation measures.
- We also encourage water agencies to participate in good faith in the upcoming discussions between the US and Mexico, and to support additional diplomatic measures leading to an agreement between the two countries to dedicate flows to the delta.
- We request that the basin's water agencies collectively pledge, at a minimum, 32,000 acre-feet per year, with an additional 260,000 acre-feet every three to four years to replenish the delta region. The agencies should also support efforts to make additional water available for the delta when such water becomes available through purchase or other voluntary agreements.
- We request that water agencies ensure sufficient flows are maintained for the Cienega de Santa

Clara wetland, a portion of the delta fed by agricultural drainage from the Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation District in Arizona.

- Lastly, we ask the United States Bureau of Reclamation, the lead agency for Colorado River management in the United States, to provide support and encouragement for these agencies to cooperate in moving the delta restoration process forward.

Critical to this effort is mobilizing public involvement. Every user of Colorado River water needs to be made aware of their personal responsibility to the river and the delta. Whether suburbanites take shorter showers, or farmers employ more water-efficient cropping patterns, the one percent needed for the delta is easily achievable. But this is the easy part. Where public support is really needed is in applying pressure directly to local water agencies, and in ensuring that water saved actually reaches the delta, and not appropriated or sold instead to other users.

This campaign represents the first basin-wide effort to begin encouraging water agencies to amend their missions. It is time that agencies accept responsibility for, and actively work toward, caring for the river that has taken care of their interests. It is time that agencies commit to leaving more water in the river over time, as opposed to trying to take more water out.

The campaign is off to a great start as a result of the Sustainable Water Project Tour, that spearheaded the public awareness efforts. This initial success is largely due to the many groups and individuals that were able to come together quickly and support the tour, March 5-15, 2001.

This is just the beginning. The water agencies need to hear from many more people and organizations. They need to know that we have an obligation to meet the river's and delta's water needs, in addition to our own. We can revive the delta, so please take part in this effort by supporting the activities outlined on the back of this report, "Doing Your Part for the Delta."

How Can We Get "1%"?

More Delta, Fewer Cows

Approximately 80 percent of the Colorado's water is used for agriculture. As a result, some 2.3 million acres are under cultivation, producing everything from almonds to carrots, and broccoli to grapefruit for supermarket produce bins. These food

crops are not, however, the primary consumers of Colorado River irrigation water. That distinction belongs to cattle feed. Alfalfa, for example, is the most prevalent and the most water-consumptive crop grown. Alfalfa requires four times as much



Cattle overgrazing, waiting for alfalfa supplements

water per acre as carrots, and eight times as much as lettuce. In addition, alfalfa generates the least value per unit of water used as compared to other commercial crops. For example, alfalfa generates 1/4 the revenue of almonds and 1/8 that of tomatoes per acre foot of water used.

Because of the relative inefficiency of alfalfa production, significant water savings can be achieved by shifting the way in which some alfalfa fields are used. To reach the one percent conservation goal for the Colorado River delta, we could:

- shift 43,000 acres of alfalfa from sprinkler to drip irrigation;
- shift 38,500 acres of alfalfa to higher value, less water-intensive citrus and vegetable crops; or
- remove 17,200 acres of alfalfa from production altogether.

In addition, producing a pound of beef protein in this way requires up to fifteen times more water than producing an equivalent amount of plant protein. It can take from 2,500 to 12,000 gallons of water to produce one pound of beef, depending on the environment where the cattle are raised. Even using the lower estimate, the thirty million Colorado River water users could save the one percent for the delta by reducing their consumption of beef by eight ounces per person, per year.

Moving Toward the National Average

Many Colorado River basin states could individually save enough water to meet the delta's immediate needs (106,000 acre-feet per year) by implementing municipal water conservation and recycling programs to bring their states' per capita consumption down to the national average.

| Municipal Water Consumption for Selected States | | |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| | Gallons per person per day | Acre-feet saved by reducing consumption to the national average |
| Arizona | 134 | 144,000 |
| California | 122 | 717,000 |
| New Mexico | 188 | 127,000 |
| Nevada | 213 | 181,000 |
| Utah | 184 | 167,000 |
| National Average | 101 | |

(Source: US Geological Survey, 1995)

Looking at these high water-use figures, it may come as a surprise to learn that most municipal water agencies operating in the Colorado River watershed have conservation programs in place. The majority of their mandated programs generally emphasize low-flush toilets and low-flow shower heads and faucets. Nearly all other conservation programs are voluntary. The City of Albuquerque, for example, prohibits backwashing swimming pools into the street, but does not require swimming pool covers that would reduce evaporation. The City of Las Vegas promotes low water-use landscaping for its municipal buildings, but does not require such landscaping for private homes or casinos, leading Nevada to top the nation in per-capita water use.

Savings of just three gallons of water per person per day, by those plumbed into the Colorado River system will help prevent disaster in the delta and start to put it back on track. That's an average of one toilet flush, or 70 seconds less in the shower per day. A recent study of water leaks in homes in Phoenix, Los Angeles and San Diego revealed that simply fixing those leaks could save enough water for the delta. And far greater savings can occur by shifting to landscaping practices that emphasize native and drought-tolerant plants.



Marching for water and energy conservation, Blythe, CA, March 2001

Most importantly, municipal water agencies need to hear from you that you support water conservation and that you don't want your water savings to just help them add more customers to their distribution system. Yes, we can easily conserve the one percent we need for the delta, but we must ensure that the water agencies leave this water in the river so that it indeed can reach the delta.

“One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds. Much of the damage inflicted on land is quite invisible to laymen. An ecologist must either harden his shell and make believe that the consequences of science are none of his business, or he must be the doctor who sees the marks of death in a community that believes itself well and does not want to be told otherwise.

The government tells us we need flood control and comes to straighten the creek in our pasture. The engineer on the job tells us the creek is now able to carry off more flood water, but in the process we lost our old willows where the cows switched flies in the noon shade, and where the owl hooted on a winter night. We lost the little marshy spot where our fringed gentians bloomed.

Some engineers are beginning to have a feeling in their bones that the meanderings of a creek not only improve the landscape but are a necessary part of the hydrologic functioning. The ecologist sees clearly that for similar reasons we can get along with less channel improvement.”

--Aldo Leopold in Round River

Colorado River and Delta Basics

Where is the Colorado River?

The Colorado River is born in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and New Mexico, nearly 14,000 feet above sea level. The river flows to the southwest for 1,470 miles to the Gulf of California (Sea of Cortez) in Mexico, traversing three major desert regions and the states of Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, and California in the United States, and Sonora and Baja California del Norte in Mexico.

How large is the Colorado River basin's watershed?

The Colorado River watershed encompasses over 250,000 square miles, including portions of seven US states, more than twenty Indian nations, and two states in Mexico. Major tributary streams include: the Green River in Wyoming, Utah and Colorado; the Gunnison River and Yampa River in Colorado; the San Juan River in Colorado, New Mexico and Utah; and the Gila River in Arizona and New Mexico.

How much water does the river produce?

The river's average annual flow is about 15 million acre-feet (source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation). An acre-foot is about 326,000 gallons.

How much water is withdrawn?

Every drop, in most years. The river no longer reaches the Gulf of California, except in floods. In fact, the river has been over-allocated, meaning that more water has been claimed by users than actually exists.

How is the water withdrawn?

The Colorado is the most dammed, diverted, and depleted river in the United States, with more than 40 Bureau of Reclamation dams, reservoirs and diversions making up its plumbing system. (See map of the "plumbing system" if attached.)

How is the water used?

Thirty million people in the seven-state Colorado River Basin use Colorado River water for household needs—drinking water, bathing, toilets, lawn watering. The majority of municipal users are in Southern California. Because of the many reservoirs, evaporation and seepage accounts for between fifteen to twenty percent of the "use." However, most of the Colorado River—about eighty percent of what's available after evaporation—is used for agriculture.

Which uses waste the most water?

Agriculture is the primary water waster because most Colorado River crops are grown using flood irrigation, a method in which only a small percentage of the water is used by the plants. The balance that is not evaporated or absorbed into the soil returns to the river, contaminated with salts, pesticides and other toxins.

What have been the environmental impacts of withdrawing every drop?

Ecosystems, habitats and their dependent species are dying all along the river. In the Grand Canyon, four of the eight native mainstream fish species are either endangered or extirpated, partially due to the depleted state of the ecosystem. The Salton Sea, a large agricultural drainage basin in southern California, is polluted by toxic run-off. International treasures such as the Grand Canyon, Dinosaur National Monument and the Colorado River delta are all suffering. Over ninety percent of the delta, once a vast 1.9 million-acre wetland, has disappeared.

What species are endangered because of excessive withdrawals?

Mammals, fish, birds, marine life and their vegetative and invertebrate food sources are endangered. Included are the magnificent jaguar (extirpated), Southwest willow flycatcher, brown pelican, razorback sucker, Colorado pikeminnow, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, totoaba and vaquita—the world's smallest porpoise. More than two dozen additional species have been listed as candidate, sensitive or declining.

What is the 1922 Colorado River Compact, and why does it need to be revised?

The most significant governing document for the river is the 1922 Colorado River Compact. This document divided the river's allocation into three segments: the upper basin of Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and New Mexico; the lower basin of Arizona, Nevada and California; and Mexico. The upper and lower basins are each currently allowed to divert 7.5 million acre-feet, and 1.5 million acre-feet are allocated for Mexico. These allocations are based on assumed river flows of at least 16.5 million acre-feet annually. However, since 1930, the river's annual flow has averaged only about 15 million acre-feet. Current allocations are not only unsustainable, but do not reflect reality.

What is needed for restoration?

All that is necessary to begin the restoration process is the implementation of available water conservation practices to allow water to remain in the river. Municipal water consumption can be cut in half by requiring low-flow appliances, native landscaping and water reuse programs. Similarly, agricultural users can implement more efficient irrigation technology and altered cropping patterns that allow major reductions in water use and potential increases in farm revenue. More efficient water use eliminates the perceived need for dams and diversions, allows flows to reach the delta and gulf, and permits restoration of natural river processes.

The Colorado River Delta

Where is it?

The Delta region begins just beyond the Colorado River's departure from the United States' southern boundary, and includes portions of the Mexican states of Sonora and Baja California del Norte, stretching to the upper Gulf of California. The delta ecosystem once occupied more than 1.9 million acres, but has now been reduced by more than ninety percent. Much of the delta habitat that exists lies just along the river's main channel, or in areas fed by agricultural drainage.

Why is the delta so important?

The delta's marshes were once primary stopover habitat for millions of birds migrating on the Pacific Flyway. The decline in wetland habitat has forced many birds to use alternative water sources, including agricultural waste ponds that favor the spread of avian disease and result in increased bird mortality. The delta supports a high concentration of migratory and non-migratory waterfowl and shorebirds as well as fish, reptiles and mammals. Several endangered species including the jaguar, desert pupfish, Yuma clapper rail, the totoaba and vaquita porpoise, have been affected by the decline of the delta ecosystem.

How much water reaches the delta?

Very little. The delta once received all of the 15 million acre-feet of water flowing from the United States. Now only ten percent of that flows across the border, all of which is consumed by municipal, industrial or agricultural users. All the water that regularly reaches the delta region comes from agricultural drainage.

How have dams affected the delta?

From the time the reservoir behind Hoover Dam began to fill in the 1930s, and on through the construction of other dams in the basin, the Colorado River delta saw its flow cut off. Water from the Colorado mainstem can occasionally reach the delta region when river flows are too large to be stored by all the upstream reservoirs in the US.

What other factors have affected the delta?

The loss of water and drying of the delta have encouraged the conversion of land to agricultural use. This has been aided by the cutting of the delta's cottonwood, willows and mesquite forests for firewood and construction materials. Also the invasion of non-native species such as salt cedar (tamarisk), the loss of sediment and nutrients trapped behind the dams upstream, and the growing concentrations of pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals have contributed to the deterioration of delta habitat.

What indigenous communities still inhabit the delta?

The Cucapá Indians once thrived in the delta region, subsisting on its vast resources. Their numbers have dwindled to several hundred, and it is no longer possible for them to survive solely on the reduced productivity of the delta's environment. They are playing a leading role in working toward the delta's restoration.

What about the Gulf of California?

The marine environment of the Gulf of California achieved its uniqueness in part as a result of the freshwater inflows from the Colorado River delta. With those flows gone, the estuarine environment is becoming increasingly saline, threatening many of the species that inhabit the Gulf region.

What can be done?

The delta wetlands are extremely resilient. Merely reestablishing flows will allow seeds to take root and the natural restoration process to commence. An annual commitment by Colorado River water users to allow just one percent of the water currently diverted to instead remain in the river and reach the delta, will be sufficient to sustain the life that remains in the delta. Saving what's left can lead to restoring what has been lost.

Colorado River and Delta References

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One of the letters sent to Colorado basin water agencies

LIVING RIVERS

A PROJECT OF GLEN CANYON ACTION NETWORK

March 14, 2001

Mr. Phillip J. Pace
President of the Board
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
PO Box 54153
Los Angeles, CA 90054-0153

Dear Mr. Pace:

On behalf of the 122 organizations and more than twelve million people they represent, we are writing to you to request your support for restoring the Colorado River delta.

As you know, the Colorado River is a limited source of water for millions of people in seven of the United States, Mexico and numerous Indian Nations. The river once supported a delta, marshland and estuary system of almost two million acres, but today has been reduced to less than ten percent of its original size because of near-total utilization of the river's flows, on both sides of the international border. It has been further compromised by land use changes in Mexico, the invasion of tamarisk (salt cedar), and the entrapment of sediment behind upstream dams, causing the delta to shrink rather than grow. The wetlands of the Colorado River delta have been designated both a biosphere reserve and a Ramsar site (high-priority critical habitat area identified for protection and restoration under the international Convention on Wetlands).

Today the delta is in crisis; the birds and other wildlife, the fisheries, and the ecosystem are all in dramatic decline. Scientists have warned for years of the consequences of ignoring the lack of freshwater inflows. Some flood flows over the past twenty years have helped to keep the delta from drying up entirely, and even allowed for some modest improvement, but no mechanism is in place for the delta's long-term protection. Unless action is taken soon, we could lose what little still remains.

A significant obstacle to progress is the lack of agreement among the community of Colorado River water users to pursue a solution. We, the undersigned individuals and organizations, come to you with a request for acknowledgment of the seriousness of the problem, and a commitment to take action by voluntarily offering to leave in the river a very small portion of the water that your organization currently withdraws.

Scientists estimate that the restoration process can begin with a modest amount of water—less than one percent of the river's average annual flow. A guaranteed base flow of 32,000 acre-feet per year, augmented by a simulated flood flow of 260,000 acre-feet every three to four years

endorsed by 122 organizations from the US and Mexico

Mr. Phillip J. Pace
March 14, 2001
page 2

would provide a minimal source of life-sustaining water for this once vast span of wetlands, riparian habitat, freshwater marshes and estuary.

We have an important responsibility to future generations to assure the preservation of this internationally acclaimed bioregion. Although such accommodations were not priorities when the Law of the River began to evolve, they have become a priority for society now. An average annual contribution of 106,000 acre-feet will help maintain what little remains along the river's main channel. This represents less than one percent of the 15 million acre-feet that the basin's water users divert on average each year. A modest amount indeed, but a major contribution toward preserving this endangered habitat and the many lives that it supports.

Therefore, we ask you to pledge "One Percent for the Delta"—a realistic goal that can readily be achieved by implementing additional water conservation measures. In addition, we ask that you pledge flows necessary to maintain the Cienega de Santa Clara at its current size and water quality. Finally, we ask that you support the delivery of additional water to the delta region when such water becomes available through purchase or voluntary agreement.

The United States and Mexico have agreed to meet, discuss and make recommendations for possible actions to implement a Colorado River delta restoration program. Your voluntary commitment will send an important signal to the governments of the two nations, amplifying the growing public support and consensus that the Colorado River, its delta wetlands, and the northern Gulf of California must once again become a place of life for humans and other living things.

We also request that you publicize to all your clients and customers the need for implementing these conservation measures in the context of delta restoration. All users should be made aware of the problems occurring in the delta and the simple steps we can take to help remedy them. We are available to assist you and your organization in any way possible to put such a program in place.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your reply and pledge of support.

Sincerely,



John Weisheit
President
Living Rivers/Glen Canyon Action Network

Colorado River Basin Water Agencies

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

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Organizations Supporting the 1% for the Delta Campaign

Access for All (CA)
 Action Resource Center-Los Angeles (CA)
 Alameda Creeks Alliance (CA)
 Algalita Marine Research Foundation (Mexico/US)
 Alliance for Sustainable Jobs & the Environment (national)
 Alliance for the Wild Rockies (northern Rockies)
 Ambience Project (MT)
 American Lands Alliance (national)
 American Whitewater (national)
 American Wildlands (MT)
 Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest
 Arizona Ecumenical Council
 Arizona Green Party
 Bear Creek Farms (New Mexico)
 Biodiversity Legal Foundation (national)
 Black Canyon Audubon Society (CO)
 Bluewater Network (CA)
 California EarthCorps
 California Floaters Society
 Center for Biological Diversity (AZ/CA/NM)
 Center for Environmental Equity (OR)
 Centro de Derecho Ambiental e Integración Económica del Sur (Mexico)
 Christians Caring for Creation (national)
 Citizens' Progressive Alliance (CO)
 Colorado Plateau River Guides (CO/NM/UT)
 Colorado Plateau Wildlands Defense Council (AZ)
 Colorado River Ward Valley Coordinating Committee (AZ/CA/NV)
 Colorado Rivers Alliance
 Columbia Gorge Coalition (OR/WA)
 Desert Fishes Council (international)
 Diné Medicinemens Association (AZ,UT,MM)
 Ecological Association of Users of the Hardy & Colorado Rivers Civil Association (Mexico)
 El Dorado Audubon Society (CA)
 Electors Concerned about Animas Water (CO/NM)
 Endangered Species Coalition (national)
 Eyak Preservation Council (AK/CA)
 Flagstaff Activist Network (AZ)
 Forest Conservation Council (NM/FL)
 Forest Guardians (NM)
 Friends of Arizona Rivers
 Friends of Cabeza Prieta (AZ)
 Friends of Nevada Wilderness
 Friends of the Earth (national)
 Friends of the Los Angeles River (CA)
 Friends of the River (CA)
 Friends of Rough & Ready Creek (OR)
 Friends of the Santa Clara River (CA)
 Friends of Scherer Park (CA)
 Friends of Yosemite Valley (CA)
 Glen Canyon Institute (AZ)
 Glen Canyon Action Network (southwest US)
 Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association (AZ)
 Great Salt Lake Audubon Society (UT)
 Green Party of Utah
 Green Party of Nevada
 Greenpeace USA
 Grupo Ecologista Antares (Mexico)
 Heartwood (eastern US)
 Humane Society of the United States
 Idaho Sporting Congress
 Instituto de Investigaciones Oceanologicas de la Universidad Autonoma de Baja California (Mexico)
 International Marine Mammal Project (CA)
 International Rivers Network
 John Muir Project (CA/WA, DC)
 Jumping Frog Research Institute (CA)
 Jumping Frog Society (CA)
 Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Project (CA/OR)
 Living Rivers (western US)
 Maricopa Audubon Society (AZ)
 Mining Impact Coalition (WI)
 Mosaic Outdoor Club (N.Y.)
 National Wildlife Federation
 Native American Environmental Justice Advocacy Fund (CO)
 Native Cultures Institute of Baja California (Mexico)
 Native Forest Council (OR)
 Native Forest Network (international)
 Nevada Desert Experience
 Northern Arizona Audubon Society
 Northern Arizona Univ. Campus Greens
 Northern Arizona Univ. Free the Planet
 Northern Arizona Univ. Students Against Sweatshops
 Oregon Natural Resources Council
 Oregon Wildlife Federation
 Palo Verde Valley Farmworkers Association (CA)
 Payette Forest Watch (ID)
 Phoenix Zoo
 Pro Esteros (Mexico)
 Rainforest Information Center (Australia)
 RangeBiome (western US)
 Rio Grande Restoration (NM)
 Rocky Mountain Peace & Justice Center (CO)
 San Diego Audubon Society
 San Fernando Valley Audubon Society (CA)
 San Juan Citizens Alliance (CO)
 San Pedro 100 (AZ)
 Santa Clarita Org. for Planning & Environment (CA)
 Santa Cruz Earth First! (CA)
 Save the West! (ID/OR/WA)
 Shundahai Network (CA/NV)
 Sierra Blanca Legal Defense Fund (TX)
 Sierra Club Grand Canyon Chapter (AZ)
 Sierra Club Glen Canyon Group (UT)
 Sonoran Desert National Park Friends (AZ)
 Southern Appalachian Biodiversity Project (GA/NC/TN)
 Southern California Watershed Alliance
 Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
 Southwest Environmental Center (NM)
 Spirit of the Sage Council (CA)
 Stop Taking Our Parks (CA)
 Superior Wilderness Action Network (MN/WI.)
 Surfrider Foundation (international)
 Sustainable Salt Lake (UT)
 Terra Firma (UT)
 The Brower Fund (CA)
 U.S. Public Interest Research Group
 Utah Animal Rights Coalition
 Utah Environmental Congress
 Utah Rivers Council
 West Texas Water Protection Fund
 Western Land Exchange Project (Washington)
 Western Watersheds Project
 Western Wildlife Conservancy (UT)
 Wetlands Action Network (CA)
 Wild Utah Project
 Wild Wilderness
 Wildfire Infoshop
 WildLaw (eastern US)
 Wildlife Advocacy Project (national)
 Willow Creek Ecology (UT)
 Witness Against Lawless Logging (CA/OR/WA)
 Wyoming Outdoor Council
 Yavapai-Apache Nation



Organizational Endorsement for the "1% for the Delta" Campaign

Yes, we support the Living Rivers request of users of Colorado River water to donate approximately one percent of their allocation to begin restoring the Colorado River delta. We understand that the "1% for the Delta" campaign is an international alliance of organizations and individuals who seek to protect and restore the Colorado River delta.

Name of Organization: _____

Name & Title of Individual
Representing Organization: _____

Organization Address: _____
Street or P.O. Box _____

City/State/Postal Code _____ / _____ / _____

Phone/Fax Number: (____) _____ / (____) _____

Email Address: _____

WWW: _____

Number of Members Who Belong to Your Organization: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please send form to GCAN/Living Rivers at: P.O. Box 1589, Scottsdale, AZ, 85252.



I want to become more involved in the "1% for the Delta" campaign.

Name of Individual: _____

Address: _____
Street or P.O. Box _____

City/State/Postal Code _____ / _____ / _____

Phone/Fax Number: (____) _____ / (____) _____

Email Address: _____

WWW: _____

____ I would also like to become a member of Living Rivers & Glen Canyon Action Network. Enclosed is my \$30 contribution. I understand that I will be receiving the quarterly publication, *Living Rivers Currents* and occasional announcements about events and other action items pertaining to Colorado River restoration.

Please send form to GCAN/Living Rivers at: P.O. Box 1589, Scottsdale, AZ, 85252.



The Tour's Main Crew



**GCAN president John Weisheit,
the water truck driver, at Glen Canyon Dam**



**David Orr, GCAN's field director,
banging out another late night press release**



**Living Rivers program director Lisa Force
with the press corps in Phoenix**



**Peace and Dignity Spirit Runners
drumming at Salt Lake City**



**GCAN's executive director Owen Lammers,
scooping a water collection
from Lake Mead reservoir**

About the Organizers

Our rivers once teemed with life. Dams, diversions, and effluent have now clogged, depleted and poisoned the waters such that many species fight to hang on. Their capacity to support people is also suffering as the full-scale impacts of river manipulation and mismanagement become known. The arteries of our planet are in peril.

But a new force is emerging to reverse this course. A force committed to servicing human needs while restoring our rivers' ecological integrity. A force building community responsibility for watershed stewardship, and removing the barriers that destroy our rivers' natural processes. It's a force for Living Rivers, and it's building throughout the world.

Living Rivers is a new, action-oriented environmental and social justice group committed to promoting river restoration on a large scale in the Western US. Living Rivers works to build broad-based advocacy networks committed to reducing the scale of human impact on river systems. Living Rivers promotes water and energy conservation and other resource and land-use consumption reduction strategies that can accelerate the healing of our rivers and watersheds. Through research, grassroots organizing, public campaigning and litigation, Living Rivers is working for river renewal in the West.

Living Rivers' initial focus is the Colorado River, whose name evokes a landscape of astonishing contrasts and contradictions, an ever-changing rainbow of currents shimmering in the desert moonlight or mirrored in cool mountain skies. Whether passing deep inside redrock canyons or widening into a reed-rimmed slough, the river's wonder is the dramatic sight and sound of rushing water. For its 1,450 miles, the Colorado River has been a life-giving resource for millennia.

But today, the Colorado, like so many rivers, is threatened. It is the most developed river system in the United States. Where once a roiling river thrived, water levels have been manipulated to critically low levels and the shores have been replaced by miles of jig-sawed mud flats. This once biologically rich riverine ecosystem is dying.

Living Rivers is affiliated with the Glen Canyon Action Network, whose mission is building a people's movement for the revival of a free-flowing Colorado River through Glen Canyon. Submerged behind a 710-foot-high dam in 1963, Glen Canyon's 180 miles were sacrificed for energy and water storage to help subsidize development in the southwest. Today, concerns about the dam's safety and its devastating impacts on the ecosystem of the world-renowned Grand Canyon, combined with advances in energy and water conservation, appropriate agriculture and restoration science, point to the viability of restoring this stretch of river and its stunning canyons.

LIVING RIVERS

PO Box 1589
Scottsdale, AZ 85252
(480) 990-7839
(480) 990-2662 fax
info@livingrivers.net
www.livingrivers.net

GLEN CANYON ACTION NETWORK

PO Box 466
Moab, UT 84532
(435) 259-1063
(435) 259-7612 fax
info@drainit.org
www.drainit.org

Doing Your Part for the Colorado River Delta.

Letters

Write to the US Bureau of Reclamation and request that they immediately devise a plan with Colorado River water agencies to secure the water flows that scientists say are needed to begin delta restoration. This amounts to roughly one percent of the river's average annual flow. Also write to any or all of the Colorado River water agencies and request that they pledge their one percent for the delta's restoration. A sample letter and the list of agencies can be found on pages 28 and 30, respectively.

Meetings

If you live near one of the Colorado River water agencies listed on page 30, begin attending their meetings. Ask them to include maintaining the river's flows and ecosystem health as part of their agency mission. Reinforce the point that water conservation alone is not enough. Some of the water saved must remain in the river, as opposed to being used solely to service new customers.

Water

Work to improve the efficiency of your own water use and that of your friends and neighbors. Become more familiar with water consumption patterns and conservation strategies as outlined on pp 23-24. Just a few less toilet flushes per week by the 30 million people served by Colorado River water is enough to keep the delta from dying. Also be conscious of how much beef you eat, as the number one user of Colorado River water is feed crops for cattle. Eating less beef - as little as 1/2 pound less beef per person per year - will save enough water for delta restoration.

The Movement

Spread the word to your family and friends about the plight of the Colorado River delta, and the potential for its restoration. Remember that just one percent is needed to get the process rolling. Examine the list of organizations supporting this effort so far. Thank organizations that you belong to that are already taking part. If groups that you belong to are not listed, use the enclosed form to urge them to endorse.

The Message

Keep in touch with the campaign through Living Rivers and GCAN for the latest news and alerts. If you have not yet become a member, please do so. You will not only be supporting the restoration of the delta, but restoration efforts throughout the Colorado River watershed and beyond.