

RAISE THE RIVER

RECONNECT THE COLORADO

2013

RESTORING THE COLORADO RIVER DELTA
RESTORATION OPPORTUNITY GUIDE



PHOTO: Jon Westerman

THE COLORADO RIVER DELTA, CIRCA NOW
OPEN BOOKLET TO SEE CHANGE

RAISE THE RIVER

RECONNECT THE COLORADO

OUR VISION

RAISE THE RIVER IS AN ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN LED BY LIKE-MINDED VISIONARIES

Raisetheriver.org sees a day when the Colorado River once again flows into the Gulf of California, and the Delta is brought back to life. By raising awareness, money and, ultimately, the water level of the river, we will restore the wetlands and reconnect the river with the Gulf.



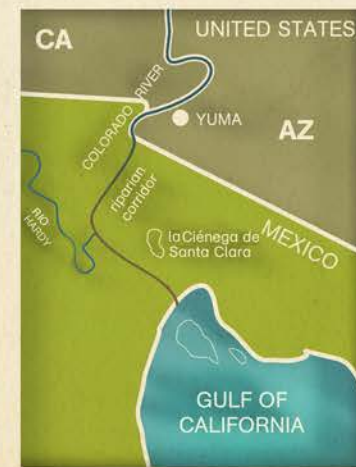
PHOTO: Guadalupe Fonseca-M.

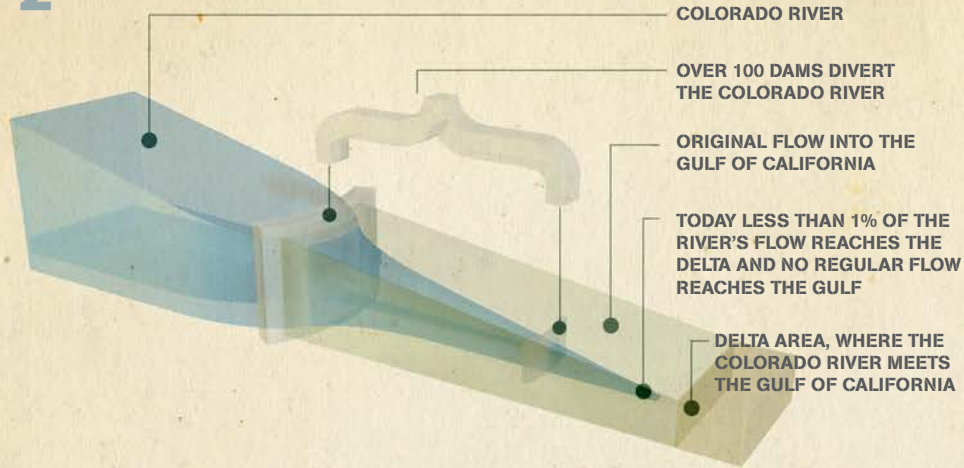
SONORAN INSTITUTE RIPARIAN RESTORATION SITE

- COLORADO RIVER
- COLORADO RIVER BASIN



COLORADO RIVER REGION OF INTEREST

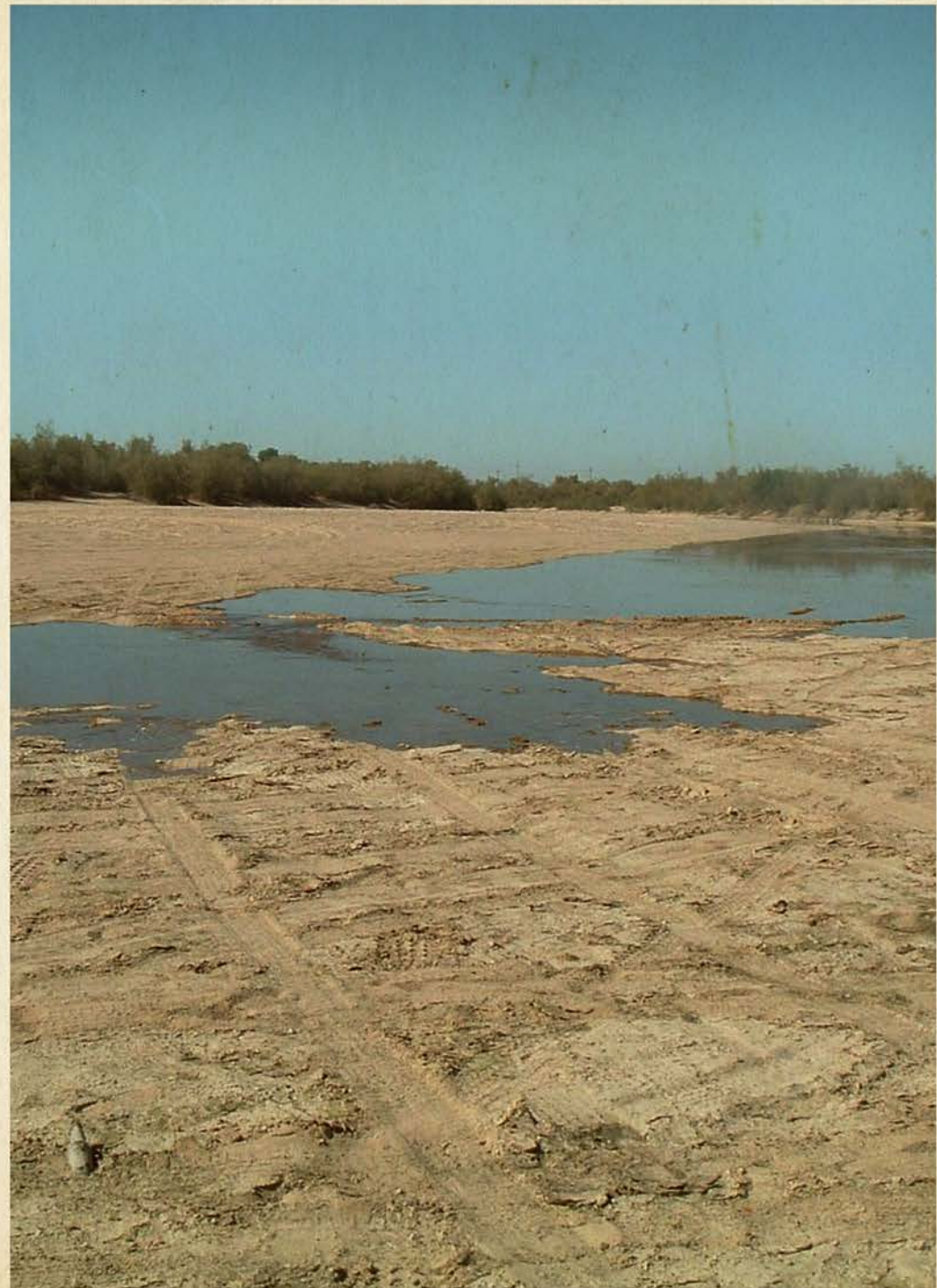


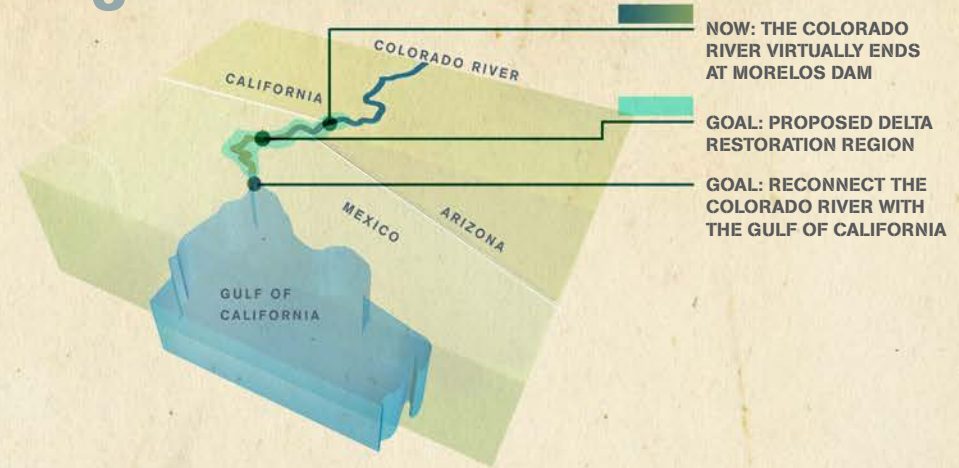


STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE

The Colorado River Delta was once a lush region of 3,000 square miles teeming with plant, bird and marine life. However, more than 100 dams on the river and its tributaries divert water to cities and farms, reducing the Delta to a tiny remnant of its former self. The Colorado River has not regularly flowed to the Gulf of California since 1960.

Although it is now a mostly dusty, dry expanse with only a few surviving stands of native trees and small marshes where agricultural drains, leaks and shallow groundwater allow water to reach the river channel, the Delta can be brought back to life. Restoration efforts and periodic floods have shown that it has tremendous potential for renewal.





THE TIME IS NOW

Independent organizations have been working to restore the Delta for years with some binational government and foundation support, but they have lacked the ability to acquire and manage water and habitat at a significant scale.

Now, for the first time in history, the United States and Mexico have reached an agreement to restore water to the Colorado River Delta. The Environmental Defense Fund, Pronatura Noroeste, The Sonoran Institute and The Nature Conservancy will match each country's commitment to provide water for the Delta, and will use water acquired through the Delta Water Trust, to implement habitat restoration projects with help from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and others.

While this agreement is historic, it is also finite. It expires in 2017 unless it is extended or replaced by a more comprehensive long-term agreement. The optimal time to restore the Delta is now.



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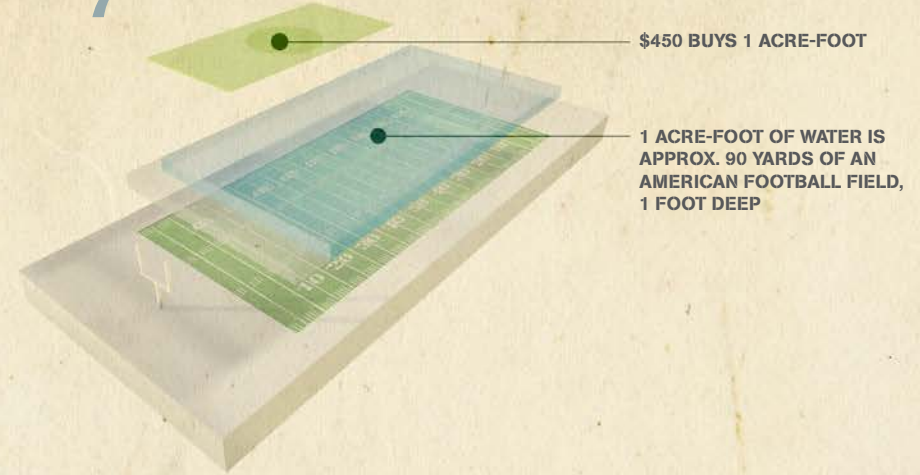
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PHOTOS: (1) KOTENT FILMS / (2) PETA MCBRIDE / (3,4) WILL STAUFFER-KORRIS / (5,6) JORGE RAMIREZ-H.

[1] COLORADO RIVER HEADWATERS, [2] COLORADO RIVER AT HORSESHOE BEND, ARIZONA, [3] RETAINING WALL AT MORELOS DAM, [4] SOUTH OF MORELOS DAM, THE COLORADO RIVER WATER BECOMES AN AGRICULTURAL CANAL, [5] DRY ESTUARY, [6] NEAR THE COLORADO RIVER MOUTH



\$450 BUYS 1 ACRE-FOOT

1 ACRE-FOOT OF WATER IS APPROX. 90 YARDS OF AN AMERICAN FOOTBALL FIELD, 1 FOOT DEEP

BE A PART OF HISTORY

WE AIM TO RAISE A TOTAL OF \$10 MILLION BY 2017

We have a long-term vision to reconnect the Colorado River with the Gulf of California. Our first step is to work with government agencies in the United States and Mexico to provide 158,000 acre-feet of water for the Delta over the next several years. This small amount of water—less than 1% of the river’s average annual flow—is enough to physically reconnect the Colorado River to the Gulf during a limited-duration “pulse flow,” while also providing water year-round to support the restoration of 2,300 acres of riparian forest and marsh habitat along a 70-mile stretch of river.

This demonstration will provide valuable information for a long-term recovery plan. By using the best available science during this period, we will gain necessary information about how to manage flows for maximum benefits over the long run and prove that it is possible to reconnect the river’s critical native habitat for birds and wildlife.

Success in this effort will show the promise of this new binational partnership for restoration of the Delta, and is an essential step in securing a long-term agreement between the U.S. and Mexican governments.

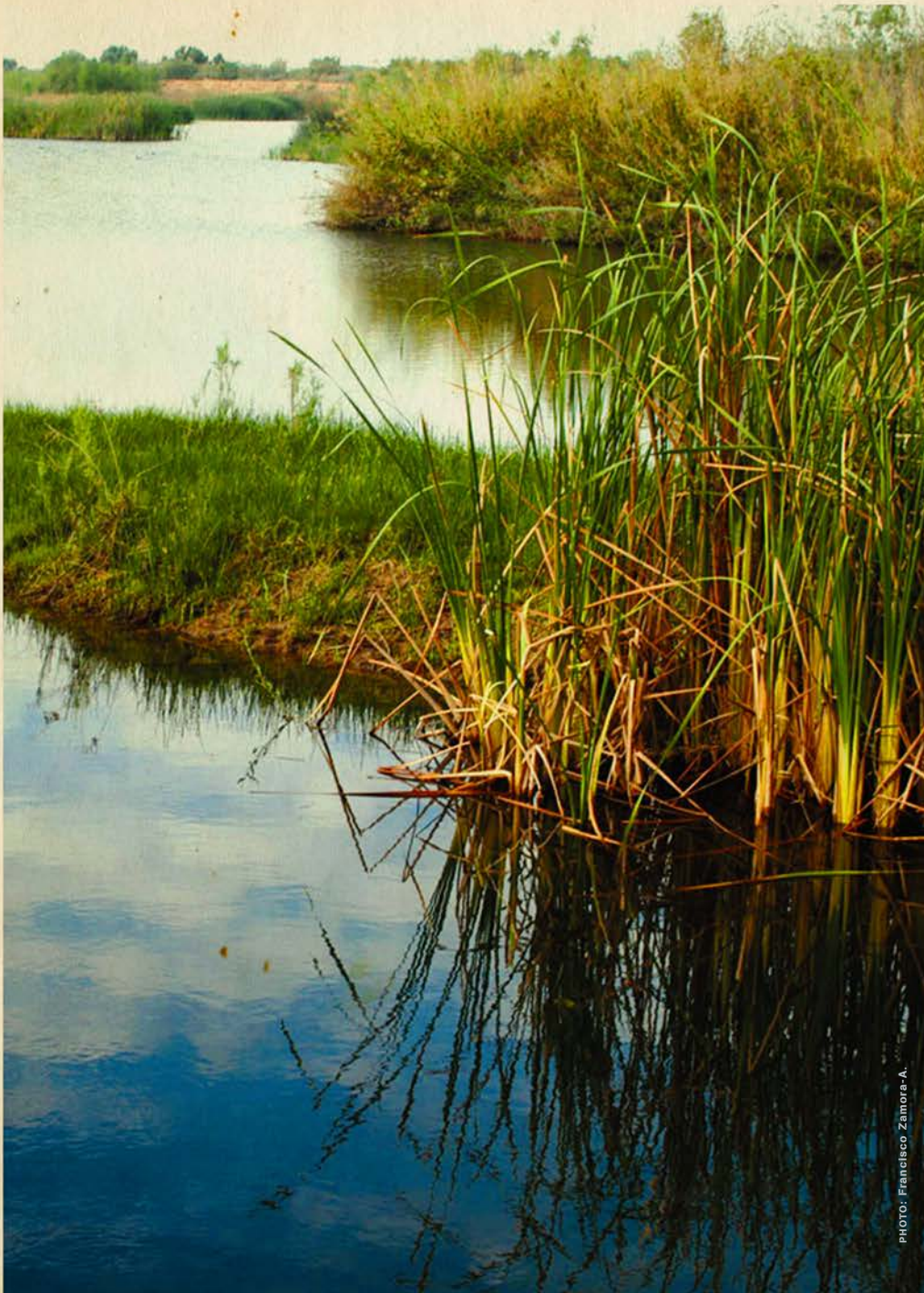
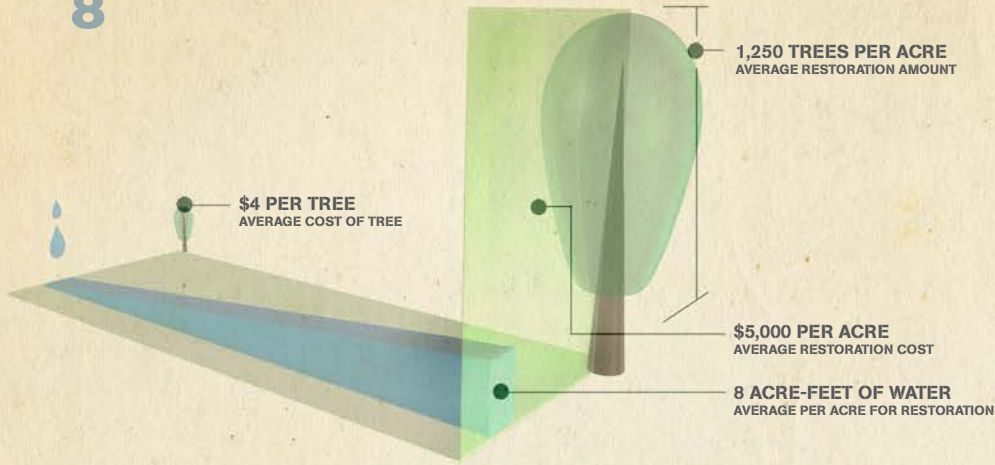


PHOTO: FRANCISCO ZAMORA-A.



BACK TO LIFE

LIFE ACROSS THE REGION WILL BENEFIT FROM A REVIVED DELTA

Enhanced riparian and marsh habitat will support 380 bird species, including more than 200,000 migratory water birds that travel along the Pacific Flyway and rely on the Delta as an oasis in the desert.

Freshwater flows to the Delta will create critical spawning grounds for fish and shrimp in the Upper Gulf of California, helping restock fisheries that communities rely on for food and income.

For indigenous groups in the region, particularly the Cocopah tribe—whose name means “people of the river”—a restored river could lead to a resurgence of their cultures and traditions, including subsistence fishing and hunting.

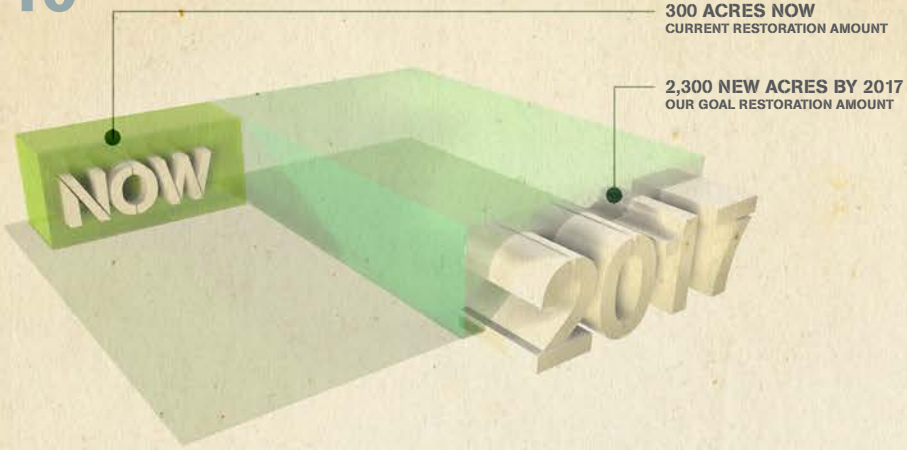
Restoration projects will create job opportunities for local communities through increased hunting, fishing and other tourism activities associated with healthy habitat.



PHOTOS: (1,3) Edith Santiago-S. / (2) Guadalupe Fonseca-M. / (4,5) Sonoran Institute

[1] GULF OF CALIFORNIA FISHERMEN, [2] GREAT HORNED OWL AT RIPARIAN RESTORATION SITE, [3] PLANTING NATIVE TREES AT RESTORATION SITE, [4] REMNANT WETLANDS IN THE DELTA, [5] LOCAL FISHERMAN ON THE RIO HARDY, A TRIBUTARY OF THE COLORADO RIVER

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THE GROUNDWORK HAS BEEN LAID

Nearly two decades of collaborative work on the part of nonprofit organizations, government agencies and community groups on both sides of the border have created a solid foundation for large-scale restoration of the Delta. Working together, we have already restored 300 acres of riparian habitat in the Delta and acquired the water rights needed to maintain and establish native vegetation.

Although these efforts have been significant, they are just the beginning. There is still a lot of work to be done. Large-scale restoration of the Delta is now possible through the collaborative efforts of two countries, nonprofit organizations, scientists, countless individuals and you.

Your donation will be used to purchase permanent water rights for the Colorado River Delta, put native trees in the ground, and engage local communities in restoration actions.

PHOTO: Edith Santiago-S.





YOU CAN HELP

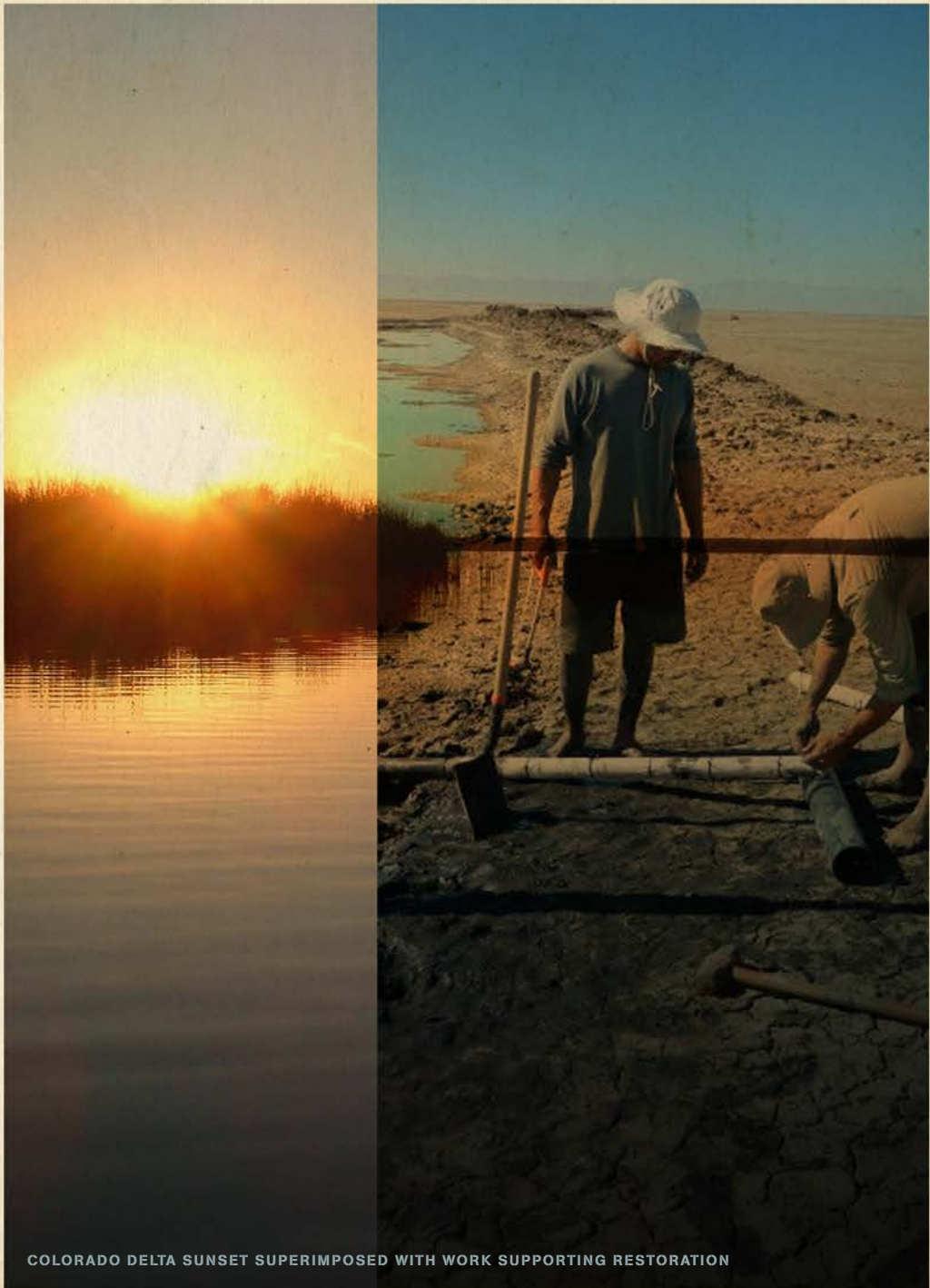
Though the Colorado River Delta has been severely depleted, it is not too late. Working together, we can bring the Delta back to life. Please help us restore this precious natural resource.

DONATE TODAY.

www.raisetheriver.org



PHOTOS: (LEFT) RICHTI Bernabe Rico-H. / (RIGHT) RIEM Sonoran Institute



COLORADO DELTA SUNSET SUPERIMPOSED WITH WORK SUPPORTING RESTORATION

**RAISE
THE
RIVER**
RECONNECT THE COLORADO



PHOTO: EDWARD ALPHONSO GOLDMAN; COURTESY OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, ARCHIVES
AND THE SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM.

THE COLORADO RIVER DELTA, CIRCA 1905