



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
September 7, 2023

USIBWC Colorado River Citizens Forum Features Presentation on the Binational Effort to Restore the Colorado River Delta

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) Colorado River Citizens Forum board is pleased to announce that it will host an in-person and virtual public meeting on Wednesday, **September 20, 2023, from 4-6 p.m. MST.**

Please join us for an important presentation and discussion with Dr. Karl Flessa, Professor of Geosciences at the University of Arizona. His presentation will focus on the treaty agreements between Mexico and the United States to allocate water and funding for the restoration of riparian habitat along the 85-mile course of the Colorado River from the border to the Gulf of California.

The public meeting will be held in person at:

**Yuma Civic Center Lounge
1440 W. Desert Hills Drive,
Yuma, AZ 85365**

The public meeting will also be held virtually. To join the Microsoft Teams meeting, go to [this link](#). Click on the “Join” button. If you do not have Teams installed on the device you will use to attend the meeting, it will work through any internet browser. If possible, it may be helpful for you to test connectivity on your own prior to the meeting by clicking on the “Join” link and ensuring your camera and microphone are functioning. Or join by phone: Call in number [+1 872-240-1286, 504774332#](#) Meeting ID: 270 111 707 803, Passcode: vcvLhB

For those connecting via phone, the presentations will be available before the start of the meeting. Go to the Colorado River Citizens Forum page <https://bit.ly/3R8YTz9h> Look for the links for the 9/20/2023 meeting.

If you would like to speak during the public comment period, please sign up ahead of time by contacting Leslie Grijalva at leslie.grijalva@ibwc.gov or 915-832-4770 by noon on September 15.

News Media Contact:

Leslie Grijalva
leslie.grijalva@ibwc.gov

C: 915-443-3692
W: 915-832-4770

The background of the slide is a photograph of green leaves and branches, likely from a tree or shrub, with sunlight filtering through them, creating a bokeh effect in the background.

The Binational Effort to Restore the Colorado River Delta

Karl W. Flessa
University of Arizona
kflessa@arizona.edu

September 20, 2023

Gallery forest of
cottonwood
trees, Colorado
River delta,
January 1905



RECLAMATION
Managing Water in the West



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Norte**

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COLORADO**

**RAISE
THE
RIVER**
RECONNECT THE COLORADO



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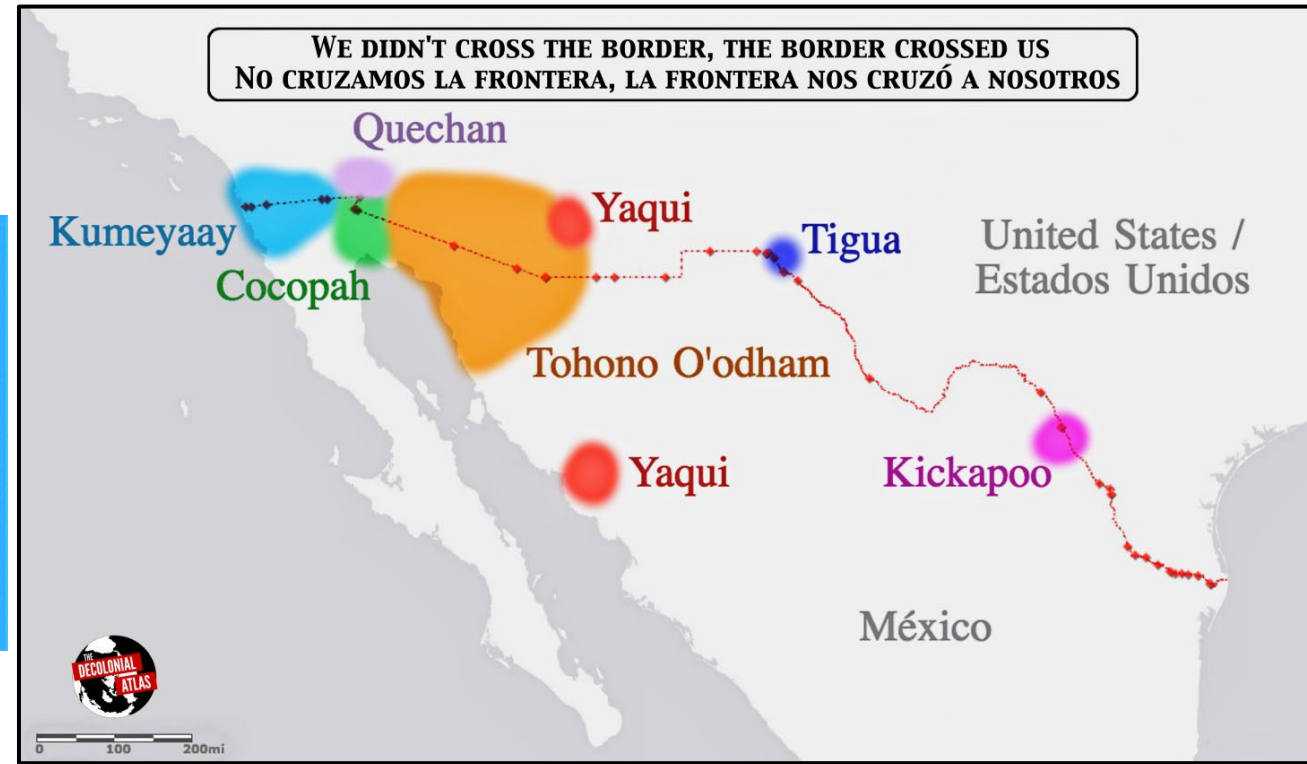


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Cocopah/Cucupá (Kwapa)

<https://www.cocopah.com/>



Tohono O'odham

"Following our ancestral heritage, we became scientists of our environment."

<http://www.tonation-nsn.gov/>

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and waters on which we have done our research and pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We honor the past, respect the present and look towards a prosperous and reconciled future.







Celebrating the 2014 Pulse Flow; Celebrating binational trust

U.S. – Mexico Water Treaty - additions

2010: Minute 318

Mexico stores water in Lake Mead (U.S.)
“Earthquake water”



2012: Minute 319 A five-year Minute 2012-2016

U.S. and Mexico share future surpluses and shortages

U.S. pays for water-saving infrastructure in Mexico; gets water in return

Environmental flows to delta

Mexico contributes 52,500 af/ 65 mcm
U.S. contributes 52,500 af/ 65 mcm } **Spring 2014 Pulse Flow**
NGOs contribute 52,500 af/ 65 mcm over five years: **Base Flow**

Scientific evaluation of environmental flows







Point 22, 21 March 2014

Preparing for restoration: Before the flow



Point 22, 10 April 2014

During the flow



Point 22, 29 September 2014

5 months after the flow



Point 22, 12 September 2016

27 months after the flow

Francisco Zamora, Sonoran Institute,
with aerial support from Lighthawk

May 15, 2014



Minute by Minute: Progress in binational water management

2010: Minute 318

2012: Minute 319 A five-year Minute, 2012-2016

2017 Minute 323 A nine-year Minute: 2017-2026



- Mexico can store water in U.S.
- U.S. and Mexico share future surpluses and shortages
- U.S. pays for water-saving infrastructure in Mexico; gets water in return
- Mexico reduces use in advance of official shortage. i.e., participates in Drought Contingency Plan - DCP

Environmental flows to delta (but no pulse flow): Mexico/US/NGOs - 70 kaf/86 mcm each

Funding for restoration : \$3M each

Funding for monitoring & research: \$3M each

Restoration sites along the river

NGOs purchase or lease water from farmers in the Mexicali Valley





Miguel Aleman and Janitzio sites



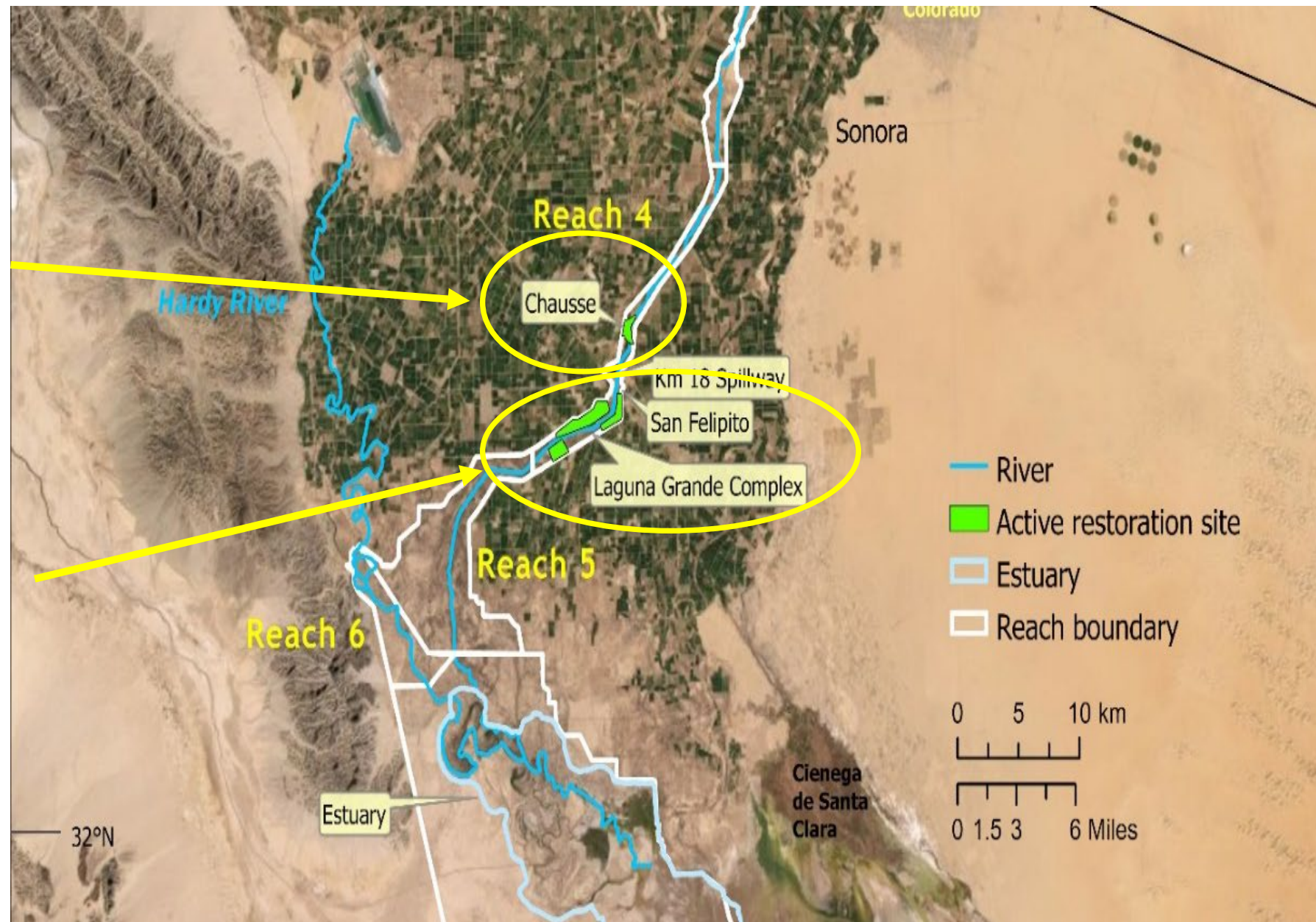
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**Chausse and
Don Parna sites**

**Laguna Grande
complex sites**



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**Restoration sites
are irrigated via
the canal system**





March, 2019



March, 2019

**Miguel
Aleman site,
2019**

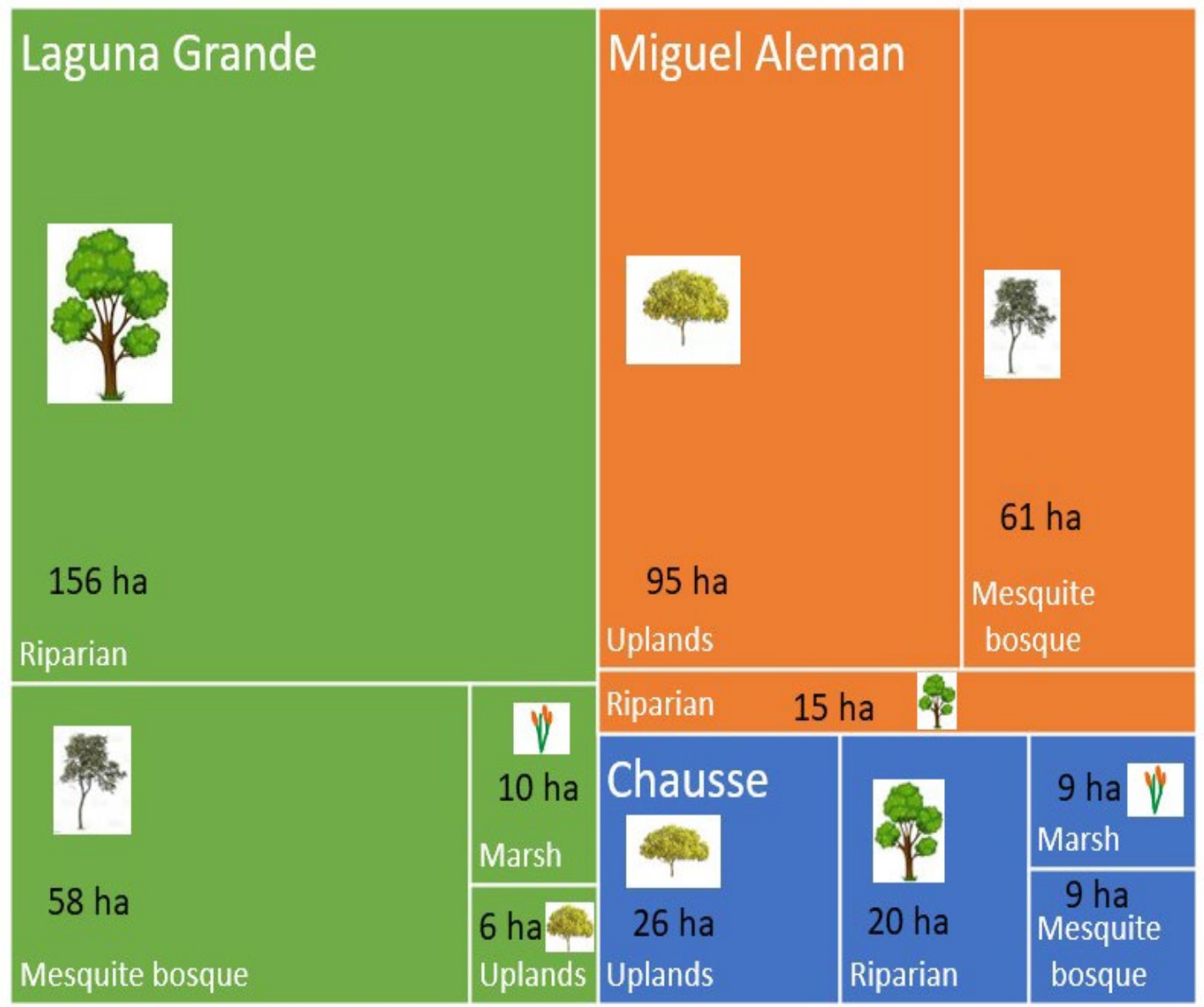


Restoration by habitat type in each site

572 hectares =
1,413 acres

So far....

■ Chausse ■ Laguna Grande ■ Miguel Aleman



Pacific Flyway



Other wildlife:

Turtle

Bobcat

Coyote

Raccoon

Muskrat

Rabbit

Beaver




video





All images: Sonoran Institute

video

- 
- Restoring and sustaining riparian habitats in the delta requires ongoing environmental flows.
 - Active management is needed: Nature cannot take care of itself.
 - Restoring and sustaining habitats depends on social and policy sustainability.
 - The next Minute will be negotiated soon.

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