



TRES RIOS ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION AND FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT

Subcommittee: Energy and Water

Request: Appropriate \$15 million in FY 2012 to complete design and continue construction of Phase III.

Community Value:

The city of Phoenix requests \$15 million in the Water and Energy Appropriation Bill for FY 2012 to be used by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for design and construction of the Tres Rios Project. Construction has been completed on 4 miles of a 4.5-mile flood control levee. Construction will start on the last section of the levee this fiscal year. The final stage of the project, Phase III - the In-River Features, includes the environmental restoration of the Salt River channel and is currently under design. The first segment, Phase IIIA, is scheduled to begin construction in March 2011. The \$15 million in appropriations will complete the design of Phases IIIB and IIIC, and the construction of Phase IIIB.

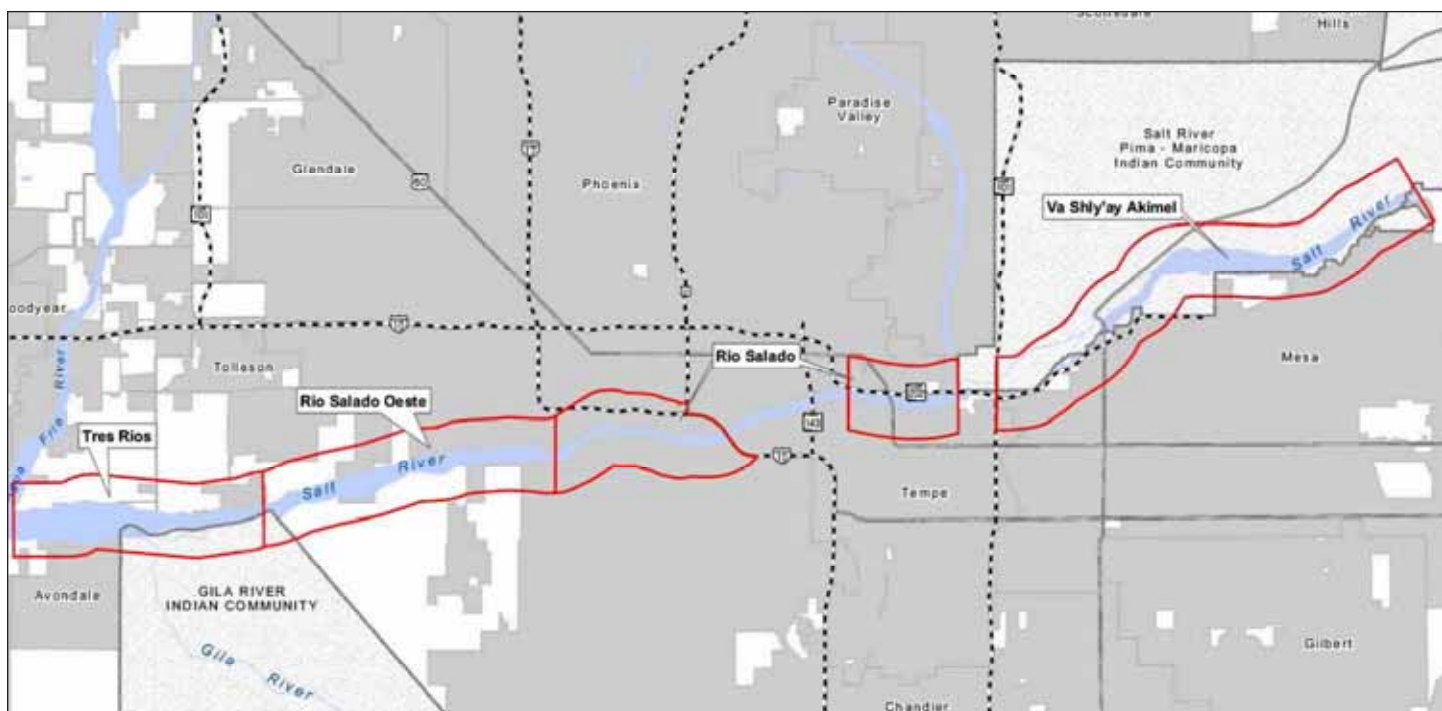
The city of Phoenix requests including reauthorization of the Tres Rios Project at a maximum cost of \$230 million in the next Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).

The Phase II pump station construction is fully funded and will be completed in March 2012. The Flow Regulating Wetlands and the Over-bank Wetlands were completed in December 2011



with the use of appropriations and stimulus funds.

The discharge from the 91st Avenue Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) constitutes the fifth largest river in Arizona and provides critical riparian habitat to the Sonoran desert. Under revised Aquifer Protection Permit (APP) rules adopted by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), without the Tres Rios project, extremely expensive treatment equipment (estimated at more than \$250 million) would be required at the





WWTP to meet the new standards. If this investment were required to be made at the WWTP, the city of Phoenix and partnering Sub-Regional Operating Group cities (Phoenix, Scottsdale, Mesa, Tempe and Glendale) would develop alternative uses for the plant discharge effluent in order to fund this additional investment. Effluent discharge from the WWTP to the river would decrease and eventually stop.

In that event, the riparian habitat that has developed from this discharge of highly treated effluent to the river over the past 45 years would suffer tremendously. Estimates are that riparian habitat in the western United States has declined more than 90 percent overall.

The Tres Rios project connects to the Rio Salado and Rio Salado Oeste environmental restoration projects, located between 28th Street and 83rd Avenue, and continues the restoration of the Salt River west from 83rd Avenue to the Agua Fria River. Tres Rios provides a net environmental benefit to the area by maintaining the effluent flow from the WWTP to the river (ADEQ would eliminate the revised APP requirement for the current WWTP expansion) and enhancing the riparian area through various aspects of the project. Other aspects of the Tres Rios flood control and ecosystem restoration project include protecting more than 600 structures from flooding via the 4.5-mile levee constructed on the north bank of the river downstream of the plant; maintaining habitat for many species of birds, reptiles and mammals to live, nest and raise young among the native cottonwood, willow and bulrush; and creating recreation opportunities along the Salt, Gila and Agua Fria rivers.

The Tres Rios pump station and wetland complex are vital aspects of the overall WWTP protection. Changing flood conditions in the Salt River has made the WWTP vulnerable to internal flooding in the event of a 100-year flood. During those times, the WWTP cannot discharge wastewater - this will cause the wastewater to flood out the WWTP, causing significant damage as well as spilling raw wastewater into the Salt River for a period of at least six months while repairs are made. The environmental impact of this would be enormous, with a

potential for steep EPA fines for such a discharge. Tres Rios will solve this problem by removing reliance on gravity for discharge of treated wastewater from the WWTP. The request for FY 2012 includes funding to finish the construction of the last phase of the levee. This will allow a community that has been damaged by floods several times in the last few decades to be protected. Also included is funding for the completion of the Phase III, In-river Features, pure environmental restoration aspect of the project. The wetlands need to be in place to accept water from the WWTP and polish the effluent prior to entering the Salt and Gila rivers. If the WWTP expansion cannot be utilized due to delays in federal funding for the wetlands, public health as well as growth in the Phoenix area could be jeopardized.

Fiscal Year 2011 Funding Request breakdown:

No federal funding was provided for in FY 2011.



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