



MISSING WATER: THE FLOWS AND USE OF WATER IN THE COLORADO RIVER BORDER REGION

In mid-November, the Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment, and Security will release a water balance that describes the use and flows of Colorado River water in the border region. More than 5.5 million acre-feet of water enter the region at Imperial Dam each year yet, in most years, almost all of this water is diverted from the river by the time it passes Morelos Dam, just downstream of the northerly U.S. – Mexico border. With full-color figures and in extensive tables, the water balance describes and illustrates where this water goes and how it is used. The report describes agricultural, urban, and natural uses of water in the region, and includes information on groundwater use and water quality. The report will be of interest to researchers studying the region, agencies and organizations active in the area, and those interested in the Colorado River and water use in the arid West.

The water balance uses the delta boundaries described by Godfrey Sykes in *The Colorado Delta*, defined as the approximate limit of the river's alluvial basin (outlined on the flow diagram on the reverse). These boundaries encompass roughly 3,325 square miles. Colorado River water continues to be the primary source for agricultural, urban, and natural uses within this broadly-defined delta, though river water now reaches most of the area via canals, aqueducts and pipes, rather than through the natural, shifting river channels of old. The water balance uses data from the 1990s, broken down into normal and high flow years. Normal Flow Year data reflects an average of the years 1991, 1992, 1995, and 1996. High Flow Year data reflects an average of the years 1993, 1997, and 1998, when large volumes of water flowed through the river channel below Morelos Dam.

The figure on the reverse shows flows of Colorado River water through the border region; the width of each line indicates the volume of annual flow. The figure shows both the quantity and location of diversions from the river and clearly indicates the difference in the quantity of water flowing below Morelos Dam between normal flow years and high flow years.

Missing Water: The Flows and Use of Water in the Colorado River Border Region may be ordered from the Pacific Institute by sending in the form below (copies are ok):

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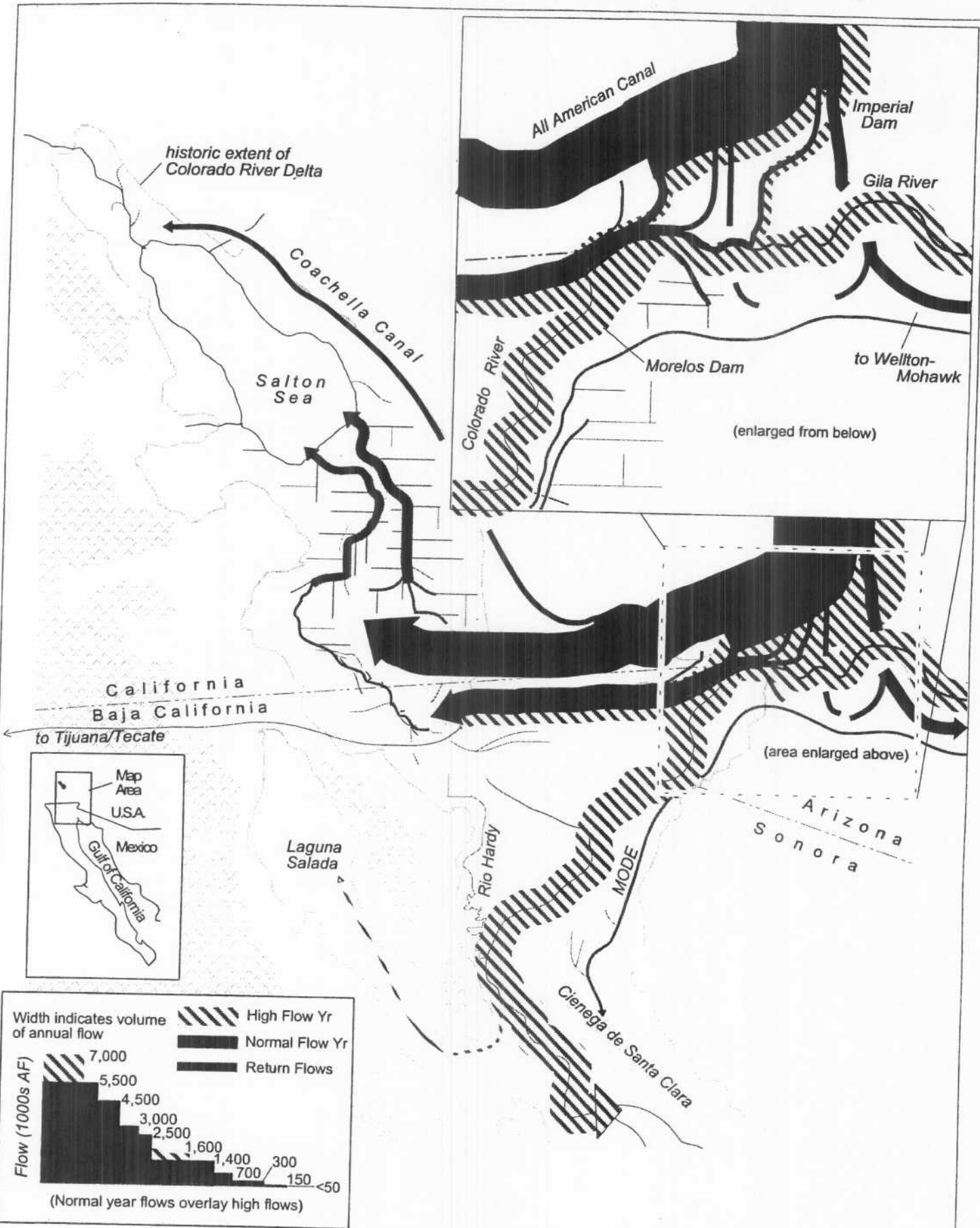
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Flows of Colorado River water through the border region



from: Missing Water: The Flows and Use of Water in the Colorado River Border Region (Pacific Institute, 2000)