

**Student Activity Sheet
Tree Ring Expeditions (TREX)**

Lab 3: Sharing a River: The Colorado River Story

Name: _____

Part 1 – Straws in the Colorado River: Will We Run Out of Water?

1.1 Where did the writer and photographer begin their journey?

1.2 What did Pete McBride mean by "straws drinking out of the river"?

1.3 What is the state of Colorado's dilemma regarding rainfall and the Rocky Mountains?

1.4 What mode of transportation did the writer and photographer use get to the mouth of the Colorado River at the Sea of Cortez?

1.5 How do the long-term trends of the two graphs compare?

1.6 What three years had the least snowpack in the Rockies between 1965 and 2010?

1.7 What three years did the Colorado River had is lowest flow volume?

1.8. List the top five holders and their % water usage. Which holder uses the most water compared to the extent of its geographic area?

1.9 How much of the total water available from the Colorado do the top five holders use? How much water is left for all the other holders?

1.10 What was the difference between water used and water supply in 1922 when the Colorado Pact was signed?

1.11 What was the difference between water used and the total water available in 2002?

1.12 Give two reasons that you think would account for the rising demand for water in the Colorado River Basin.

Part 2 – Explore the Colorado River Basin

2.1 What major rivers flow into the Colorado River in the Upper Basin?

2.2 What are the major rivers that branch from the Colorado River in the Lower Basin?

2.3 List the major dams that have been built in the basin and lakes/reservoirs that have formed behind them.

2.4 How many canal systems have been built to carry water to other portions of the basin? Where do they carry water to?

2.5 At which sites did you find evidence of decreasing water levels in the system?

2.6 Paste in your picture of bathtub rings in Lake Powell.

2.7 What do you think caused the flow of the Colorado River below Morelos Dam to be so drastically reduced?

2.8 How did the vegetation change as you traveled along the river in the lower basin?

2.9 Much of the water in the Colorado is being used to irrigate otherwise dry, unproductive desert regions. Take a screenshot of a good example of this practice.