



## Urban Rivers Restoration Pilot Fact Sheet Tres Rios, Arizona

**BACKGROUND**—In recent history, the Tres Rios area has felt the impact of an expanding human population. The population of the Phoenix metropolitan area is approximately 3.1 million people and is expected to grow to 3.7 million by 2010. The project area has lost wetlands and a portion has been used for a landfill.

**ACTIVITIES, AUTHORITY, AND FUNDING**—The City of Phoenix and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are cost-sharing partners on the multi-purpose Tres Rios Ecosystem Restoration project, which focuses on a seven-mile stretch of the Salt and Gila Rivers west of the Phoenix metropolitan area. The goals of the project include restoration of native riparian habitat, water quality improvement, flood damage reduction, recreational expansion, cultural resource preservation, and environmental education. Under the Urban Rivers Restoration Pilot, which features expanded partnerships, Tres Rios work also is focusing on the characterization and possible pollution mitigation and remediation of the 123rd Avenue Landfill (closed), located within the Gila Riverbed and the Tres Rios Project boundaries. EPA is supporting Phase I and Phase II site assessments, and the City of Phoenix is conducting a geophysical survey to support site sampling efforts. The team has secured concurrence of property owners to proceed with sampling. Sampling of an exposed drum onsite is being conducted, and comprehensive sampling is planned to determine the contents of the

landfill and extent of contamination. Assessment results will help shape cleanup options and are expected to assist USACE in finalizing its habitat restoration design for the overall Tres Rios Ecosystem Restoration project. The collaboration of federal, state, and local agencies and community organizations in the pilot is expected to result in a comprehensive restoration of this urban river, including ecosystem restoration, improved water quality, flood damage reduction, as well as recreation and education opportunities. The project also stands to benefit tribal lands in the area.

USACE activities in the Tres Rios Ecosystem Restoration project were authorized in WRDA 2000, Section 101(b)(4) of PL 106-541. In FY03, the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act provided an additional \$1 million in construction funding. The project is currently in the preconstruction engineering and design phase. Since USACE authorization does not specifically include



water quality improvements as a primary output, water quality problems associated with the 123rd Avenue Landfill cannot be addressed without the collaboration of others who are authorized to deal with water quality challenges.

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