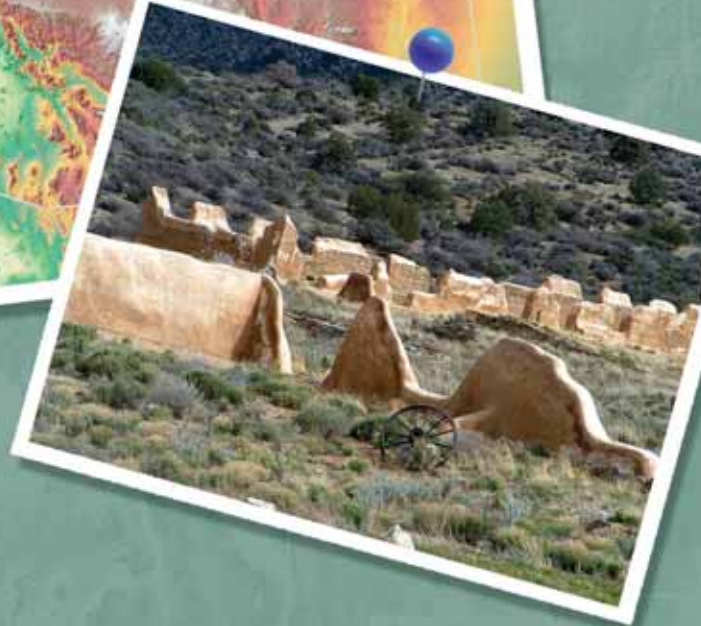


Sonoran Institute

2007 ANNUAL REPORT



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CONSERVE &



**The Sonoran Institute inspires and
enables community decisions
and public policies that respect
the land and people of
western North America.**



Editor: Victoria Collier; Designer: Theresa Reindl Bingham; Maps: Erin Mock
Photos: Front cover: Phillipsburg, Mont., - Jennifer Boyer; Hanging Lake, Colo. - V. Collier; Ft. Bowie Nat.
Historic Site - Jeff Balmat; Girl dancing, Baja Calif. - Mark Lellouch; Inside front: Cimarron Ridge, Colo. -
V. Collier; Page 1: Luther - Elizabeth Storer; Page 2: View from Rincon Mts., Ariz. - Sonoran Institute file
Page 3: Gabrielle Giffords - Chris Mooney; Page 4: Colorado Nat. Monument - V. Collier; Page 6: Planting in
Colo. River Delta - Emily Brott; Kwapa writer - Joaquin Murrieta; Page 7: Santa Cruz River, Ariz. - Amy McCoy;
Ariz. cactus - Jason Meining; Page 8: Parachute, Colo., store - V. Collier; Bike riders - Luther Propst; Page 9:
Bozeman, Mont., front porch - Brian Brush; Dupuyer, Mont., riders - Dave Wedum; Page 10: Grand Canyon -
Sarah Pitcher; Denny Minano - Sonoran Institute file; Page 12: Canyon rainbow - Sarah Pitcher
Inside back: Western sky - V. Collier; Back cover: Ouray aspens - V. Collier

“... we believe in the power of civil dialogue, collaboration, sound information, optimism and big-picture thinking to bring about lasting conservation and prosperity.”



Friends,

If you are reading this, we likely share a deep interest in the West. If you care about the land, people, lifestyle or economy of this sublime region, I think you will appreciate the Sonoran Institute's recent work and our intentions for the next several years.

In this space last year, I wrote that we were creating a long-term plan to decide where and how to best apply our time, skills, funding and other resources in a West undergoing rapid growth and change. While most of its tangible results lie ahead, the plan itself is a worthy accomplishment. Its highlights, along with some of the other successes we've had this year, are featured in this report.

Our new strategic plan focuses our work in two ways:

1. In four distinct landscapes, we are applying multi-faceted, long-term conservation efforts to address each region's unique issues. We call these our Legacy Programs.
2. West-wide, we are working on policy reform to improve public lands management, to encourage smarter growth, and to influence state and federal decision-makers on a broad range of conservation and growth issues.

These words on paper translate into exciting, timely, critical, on-the-ground work that protects wild places and wildlife, conserves resources, maintains quality of life, and promotes long-term prosperity.

This work succeeds due to the energy, knowledge, and passion of our staff, the dedication and leadership of our board of directors, and the support and encouragement of our partners and funders. They believe in and contribute to a vision of western North America with:

- *Healthy landscapes where people, native plants and wildlife live in harmony in an environment of diverse habitat, open spaces and majestic scenery;*
- *Vibrant communities that embrace conservation to protect quality of life and assure clean energy and water, fresh air, and the positive interdependence of people and nature;*
- *Resilient economies that support prosperous communities, diverse opportunities for residents, productive working landscapes, and stewardship of the natural world.*

All of our work and plans support our mission – to inspire and enable community decisions and public policies that respect the land and people of western North America. As always, we believe in the power of civil dialogue, collaboration, sound information, optimism and big-picture thinking to bring about lasting conservation and prosperity.

Best regards,

Luther Propst
Executive Director





**“We can either be victims of change or we can plan for it,
shape it and emerge stronger from it.”**

—Luther Propst

BIG VISION, *Ambitious Plan*

From building railroads and dams to conserving public lands, the West has long been the home of big, bold ideas. Now – with rapid growth and change underway – is the time for another one.

In 2007 the Sonoran Institute created a new strategic plan based on an ambitious goal: a West where civil dialogue and collaboration are hallmarks of community decision-making; where clean water, air and energy are assured; and where healthy lands, resilient local economies and vibrant communities reflect a West “both prosperous and healthy, with a civilization to match its scenery,” as the great writer Wallace Stegner envisioned.

Inspired by that vision, the new plan scales up the Institute’s efforts to address rapid, unplanned growth, demands on public lands, climate change, and many other challenges in the changing West.

The core of our expanding and deepening work is in two spheres:

WEST-WIDE POLICY-RELATED WORK
to help communities and land managers better manage growth and protect natural and cultural assets through state and federal policy reform, training, research and on-the-ground conservation efforts. See more about this work on pages 4-5.

LONG-TERM LEGACY PROGRAMS
in four regions of the West, applying our expertise and multiple conservation approaches to benefit their communities and lands and to produce results that positively influence other areas. The Legacy Programs are outlined on pages 6-9.

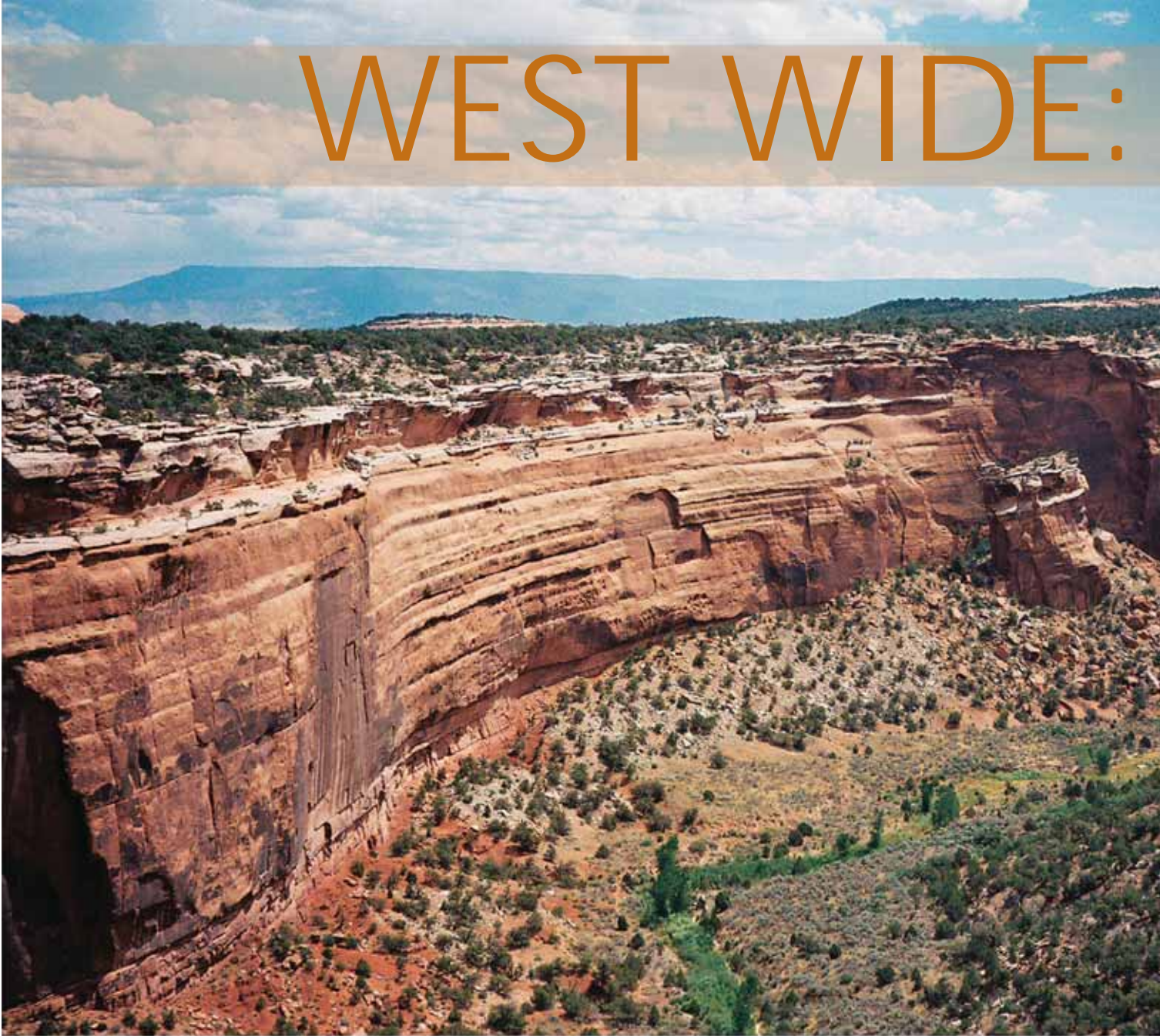
“ I have long been a supporter

of the Sonoran Institute’s work – work that is more vital today than ever. The Institute’s collaborative approach to conservation and development is critical in the fastest-growing state[s] throughout the West. This rapid population growth presents us with tremendous economic opportunities if we can properly manage it. Conservation and economic development are intertwined. The Institute’s dedicated board of directors and hard-working staff recognize that each and every one of us has extraordinary power over our environmental fate, and by working together, we can protect and preserve our air, land and water for future generations.



U.S. Congresswoman
Gabrielle Giffords

U.S. Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords
from a speech at the Sonoran Institute’s
Faces of Conservation awards, March 2007



WEST WIDE:

“I was shaped by the West and have lived most of a long life in it, and nothing would gratify me more than to see it ... both prosperous and environmentally healthy with a civilization to match its scenery.”

—Wallace Stegner



Policy reform is key to smarter growth & public-land conservation

Land, wildlife, communities and quality of life suffer when rapid growth is poorly managed. Appropriate policies and legislation are a critical part of the remedy. Cities, counties and public land managers need the authority and resources to enhance, sustain and conserve vibrant communities and healthy landscapes in the face of growth and change. As a result of our 2007 strategic planning process, the Sonoran Institute is acting to have a deeper and broader impact in the state and federal policy arena in three primary ways: demonstrating public lands conservation; promoting smart growth; and influencing policy reform. These efforts are supported by the Institute's ongoing research on land policy, growth impacts, the changing economy, the roles of public lands and other topics.

Public lands conservation

On-the-ground projects demonstrate the need for or the benefits of good land management policy. Projects to improve the conservation and management of public lands in partnership with diverse local stakeholders, elected officials, conservation advocates and government agencies are a staple of the Sonoran Institute.

■ ■ ■ 2007 Highlight

In 2007 the Sonoran Institute began facilitating meetings of agencies and counties with management authority for and interests in Oregon's Wild and Scenic John Day River. Alex Phillips, the Institute's John Day field coordinator, organized a river trip where several officials shared perspectives of on-the-ground issues. Following the trip, six agencies signed an agreement to coordinate the river's management and create a shared vision for its future, something they had been unable to achieve for nearly six years.

Smart growth policies

The Sonoran Institute is building diverse, statewide coalitions to advocate for improved smart growth policies – initially in Montana, Wyoming and Arizona.

■ ■ ■ 2007 Highlight

The Institute's Montana Smart Growth Coalition (MSGC) set the standard for advocating for smart growth legislation by influencing the passage of seven of eight such bills. "We also stopped every bad land use bill," said Tim Davis, MSGC project manager. In Arizona, Institute staff and partners worked hard for the successful passage of bills that boost incentives for energy efficiency and help protect rivers and streams. In the fall the Institute launched the Partnership for Wyoming's Future to help the Cowboy State's communities handle growth challenges.

Federal policy reform

The Sonoran Institute is working with partners and establishing action networks of local officials from across the West to influence policy reform by engaging federal decision-makers on conservation and smart growth issues.

■ ■ ■ 2007 Highlight

For several years the Sonoran Institute and other organizations worked closely with state and federal agencies to ensure that any new Colorado River Basin agreement benefits both wildlife and people. Two components the Institute advocated for are included in a seven-states agreement signed in December 2007:

- *incentives to improve water use efficiencies and to have the water that is saved reallocated for purposes such as the restoration of important wildlife habitat;*
- *provisions for entities other than water agencies to store water in Lake Mead.*

The Institute is continuing to work with state and federal interests in the U.S. and Mexico to extend parts of the agreement to include Mexico.

■ ■ ■ 2007 Highlights

As the Colorado River was diverted for agriculture and cities, the way of life of the native Kwapa, "people of the river," was profoundly altered. Now they strive to maintain cultural traditions. With the Sonoran Institute's help, Kwapa women are integrating local plants into their intricate beaded "chaquira" jewelry and selling it on both sides of the border. The Kwapa people are also mapping natural and historical features of their landscape with input from tribal elders and Institute-sponsored workshops and field visits. The maps will highlight the area's ecological and cultural richness and the Kwapa's enduring relationship with the river.



The Sonoran Institute and our partners in Mexico completed two more Colorado River Delta restoration projects enhancing 30 acres of riparian habitat. This work included planting 3,400 trees along Delta rivers. Along with Baja California's office of tourism and a local organization, we began building the Hardy River Eco-Camp, which incorporates ecological restoration and environmental education with economic opportunities for the region's people.

Outreach to nearly 2,400 local people helped increase awareness of the importance of stewardship in the Delta. The Institute launched the Adopt-the-River program to build long-term community involvement and leadership in restoration efforts. Five local people were employed full time to help us with restoration work. Our partnership with the Autonomous University of Baja California helped several students obtain graduate degrees while contributing to our understanding of the Delta's ecology.

Our partner Pronatura Noroeste secured the first 768 acre-feet of water of the 51,000 acre-feet needed in perpetuity for the Colorado River's base flow and to support large-scale restoration efforts. Together we established the Colorado River Delta Water Trust to secure the remaining water.



UPPER GULF OF CALIFORNIA

The Upper Gulf of California region is facing the challenges and opportunities created by large-scale coastal development. The diminished Colorado River Delta, once one of the world's greatest desert estuaries, remains a key stopover for migrating birds along the Pacific Flyway. The potential for the Delta's restoration at a relatively modest cost is enormous, and bi-national water policy agreements will bolster on-the-ground efforts. In the Upper Gulf of California, the Institute is working to:

- Restore and protect 160,000-plus acres of Delta wetlands;
- Acquire water to re-establish freshwater flows for the Delta's long-term recovery;
- Influence tourism and coastal development to protect environmentally sensitive areas;
- Assist local communities with conservation and sustainable economic opportunities.





The need to manage water for multiple uses is evident as the Santa Cruz River winds through fields and developments.

SUN CORRIDOR

In fast-growing Arizona, Phoenix and Tucson will become a “mega-region” of more than 10 million people over the next 20 years. The Sun Corridor’s future prosperity – and the state’s – depends on competing for human and financial resources in a global economy. To maintain a competitive advantage, Arizona must protect and enhance its quality of life. Under current policies, sprawl is the paradigm. Skyrocketing development consumes up to 15 acres of Sonoran Desert every day. Wildlands are becoming backyards, and energy and water sources are further strained. Better decisions and approaches for managing rapid growth are urgently needed for stewardship of resources and to preserve open spaces, wild places, streams and quality of life. The Sonoran Institute is helping achieve a long-term vision for the Sun Corridor by working to:

- Promote commuter rail linking Phoenix and Tucson;
- Create a model sustainable desert community;
- Advance a clean, secure energy future;
- Conserve a million-plus acres of the Sonoran Desert;
- Preserve three remaining free-flowing rivers – the San Pedro, Santa Cruz and Verde.



2007 Highlights

An initiative to create a model for sustainable desert communities is in the works for the Superstition Vistas, 275 square miles of state trust land in the path of metro Phoenix growth. A committee of public and private entities, including the Sonoran Institute–Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Joint Venture, is driving a visioning and planning process for the area to demonstrate smart growth. The Joint Venture committed funds for sustainability components, including a workshop to identify and evaluate best practices.

The Sonoran Institute with other groups is promoting the citizen-based Sonoran Desert Protection Proposal to protect BLM lands in western Maricopa County for current and future Arizonans to enjoy. We are helping residents, land owners, farmers, developers, cities and other stakeholders develop a consensus proposal to permanently protect important wildlife habitat, wilderness lands and recreation access.

The Santa Cruz River’s future brightened in 2007 when the Sonoran Institute was awarded a significant EPA grant to work on restoration, monitoring and conservation policy for the watershed. The project’s water harvesting component kicked off with a workshop to teach construction professionals about greywater installation and applications.

Pinal County has had no designated open space, but that will change as the result of the county’s 2007 unanimous adoption of its Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan. The Sonoran Institute supplied technical input on the plan and is helping form a broad-based coalition to support the county’s open space conservation efforts.

2007 Highlights

Groups from six Rocky Mountain communities learned about land use, transportation, local policies and other sustainable energy strategies at a Sonoran Institute workshop last summer. Since then, Gunnison County passed a resolution in support of an energy plan, developed a baseline inventory of energy use and is engaging the community with education and outreach. The other communities have also made progress, including the Town of Basalt, which performed an energy audit of its buildings and is seeking funding to solar heat its swimming pool.

Community leaders in Saguache County, the Baca Grande subdivision, and the Town of Crestone and federal land directors from the Great Sand Dunes National Park, USFWS Baca Wildlife Refuge, and the Forest Service, with assistance from the Sonoran Institute, collaborated to select a northern access route to the park and national forest. The group is working to minimize trespassing on private lands and to protect nearby watersheds.

Following a series of community workshops the Institute helped organize in Chaffee County, a citizens' task force is working on revisions to the county's land use plan and code to help protect local farms and ranches from subdivision pressures. The recommendations will be submitted to county commissioners in the spring of 2008.



WESTERN COLORADO

Profound long-term trends are having wide-ranging social, economic and environmental impacts in western Colorado. It is home to some of the country's fastest-growing communities as skiers, retirees and seekers of quiet are lured to its mountains and high valleys. This is also prime territory for oil and gas development, and uranium mining is resurgent. In addition, climate change is affecting snowfall, runoff and stream flow. Building on our work there to date, the Institute in 2008 will develop a comprehensive Western Colorado Legacy Program to help communities:

- Promote smart growth and preserve agricultural lands and wildlife habitat;
- Pursue clean, safe, secure energy and mitigate oil and gas development impacts;
- Strengthen land use, transportation, water and energy policies to adapt to climate change;
- Support conservation of public lands to sustain amenity-driven growth.



The Orton Family Foundation's Founder and Board Chair Lyman Orton (left) and President and CEO William Roper take a break while on a California bike ride. The Foundation partners with the Sonoran Institute on projects in the Rockies, providing planning expertise, technical assistance and some funding.

“ I jump at every chance I get

to partner with the Sonoran Institute! Its staff lives in and knows the West, and I've found them to be great listeners and thinkers who care deeply about natural and human resources. The Institute works tirelessly to engage broad constituencies and help communities articulate their heart and soul and solve difficult growth issues with the long-term in mind. They are dedicated to making a real difference.

On top of all that, they are a lot of fun!

—William Roper, President and CEO
The Orton Family Foundation



TOP OF THE ROCKIES

Signature features of this region include wide open spaces, working ranches and farms, historic small towns with exceptional quality of life, abundant wildlife, and celebrated wild areas such as Glacier National Park and the Bob Marshall Wilderness in Montana, the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness in Idaho, and the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem. Despite vast public lands, growth and private land development threaten the viability of farms and ranches, rural quality of life, and key wildlife corridors and winter ranges. The Institute is working to help communities:

- Promote fiscally responsible smart growth that enhances communities;
- Collaborate with public land managers to avoid harmful development at the wildland-urban interface;
- Shape growth to allow wildlife and humans to better coexist;
- Protect scenic vistas, agricultural lands, small-town character and wildlife habitat.



2007 Highlights

Thousands of requests for copies followed extensive media coverage of the Sonoran Institute's publication of "Building from the Best of the Northern Rockies" in March 2007. Years of work with partners across the region resulted in 132 colorful pages documenting, celebrating and promoting innovative design, building, planning and development that respects the environment and traditions of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Follow-up workshops are helping developers apply these best development practices, which enhance rather than degrade communities and rural landscapes.

The Institute's Montana Smart Growth Coalition influenced the passage of seven of eight bills that advance smart growth principles and stopped every poor land use bill in the 2007 legislative session. MSGC also awarded Gallatin Area Planning Grants to 11 projects in four Montana counties to help communities plan for and manage growth and protect their character, quality of life and natural assets.

Lemhi County, Idaho, adopted a new comprehensive plan with significant conservation provisions in 2007. The Sonoran Institute helped the county define its objectives and obtain a state grant for the plan's development.

With assistance from the Sonoran Institute, Madison Growth Solutions, a citizens' group in Madison County, Montana, conducted extensive public outreach that was used to draft recommendations for strengthening the county land use plan. In the spring of 2007, the Madison County Commissioners officially incorporated these recommendations into the county's land use plan.



MORE 2007 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

“ I like results; I like big picture solutions. ”

I came across this organization that is truly dealing with the West's conservation issues on a significant scale and doing it in a way that goes beyond established models and solutions. The people at the Sonoran Institute recognize that communities really do make good decisions if they're given good information and tools.

The Institute has a big and inclusive vision but knows that you have to execute in a pragmatic and thoughtful way. What the Sonoran Institute does so well is challenge conventional models of thinking and create solutions that are results driven. I'd rather not work where people over-study a problem but where they work to solve it.



”

Dennis Minano always knew he would end up in the West. The blue skies, big mountains, unique desert and “an environmental culture” eventually brought him and his wife Marty to Tucson, Arizona. Once there he found the Sonoran Institute was the right place for him to contribute to the well-being of the West he loves. Denny became a donor, but, as the newly retired vice president of Environment and Energy at General Motors Corporation, he sought a more active role and now serves on the Institute's Board of Directors. Denny's career involved looking at the big picture and long-term consequences, which explains in part why the Sonoran Institute appealed to him.

■ ■ ■ THE GEOTOURISM MAP of the Peninsula of Baja California was unveiled in October by the National Geographic Society's Center for Sustainable Destinations, the Sonoran Institute, Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, Lindblad Expeditions, and the Office of Tourism of Baja California. The map features the region's most significant assets according to its citizens and promotes conservation of its unique character.

■ ■ ■ IN AJO, ARIZONA, Curley School Artisan Housing's grand opening celebrated the \$10 million restoration and conversion of the historic Curley School. The International Sonoran Desert Alliance (ISDA) spearheaded the project, which has 30 apartments rented to artisans who bring their skills and micro businesses to the community. In the 90s, the Sonoran Institute helped launch ISDA, a small nonprofit based in Ajo, which works to preserve the environment, culture and economy of Sonoran Desert communities in the U.S. and Mexico and on the Tohono O'odham Nation.

From the Sonoran Institute

A LEADER IN COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION IN WESTERN NORTH AMERICA

■ ■ ■ FORTY-FIVE MEMBERS of the Arizona-Mexico Commission and 15 Central Arizona Project board members toured the lower Colorado River and its Delta to discuss and observe water management practices and opportunities. La Ruta de Sonora, the Sonoran Institute's educational tourism project, lead the multi-day trips for water management decision-makers, the first of a series of policy tours La Ruta plans in the region.

■ ■ ■ THE INSTITUTE'S AWARD-WINNING adaptive management team surveyed nearly 1,500 acres of BLM land in southern Arizona for invasive plants, documenting 7.6 acres affected by buffelgrass in the Ironwood Forest National Monument and two miles along Cienega Creek with Johnson grass in Las Cienegas National Conservation Area. The BLM is using this data to prioritize control efforts.

■ ■ ■ WATERSHED COUNCILS from several Northern Rockies' storied trout streams – the Madison, Yellowstone, Gallatin, Beaverhead, Henry's Fork and others – acquired tools to manage growth and protect rivers and watersheds at a multi-day Sonoran Institute training. The Institute is helping many of the groups apply techniques for preserving water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

■ ■ ■ "TEN TRUTHS & TRENDS in the New American West," a Sonoran Institute report, formed the basis for Executive Director Luther Propst's testimony in February at a hearing on the "Evolving West" before the U. S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources. The report presented research on growth, economic trends, the link between prosperity and protected lands, and other issues.

■ ■ ■ THE PARTNERSHIP FOR WYOMING'S FUTURE was launched this fall with the hiring of Jim Whalen as project manager. We are bringing together a broad coalition of individuals and organizations to promote better land use policies and help the state's communities and counties deal with growth and change. Wyoming's 35-acre subdivision exemption law is under scrutiny from a wide range of stakeholders and legislative leaders, so it is an opportune time for the Sonoran Institute to lend its experience, knowledge and values to the process.

■ ■ ■ THE SONORAN INSTITUTE successfully worked with diverse groups to defeat a proposition in Tucson that would have had the city limit new water hookups, pushing growth and sprawl outside its boundaries and negatively impacting the area's aquifer, transportation infrastructure and desert landscapes. Tucson voters soundly defeated Proposition 200.

■ ■ ■ "DELTA FORCE" staff from the Sonoran Institute went to San Francisco in September, along with partners from Pronatura, Environmental Defense, University of Arizona, AEURHyC, Cocopah Tribe, Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area and others. They updated foundation representatives, government officials and others on the restoration efforts in the Colorado River Delta and opportunities to scale up this work. Mexico's Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources expressed support for the work and the successful collaboration. The previous day, the *Los Angeles Times* ran a major story about a report from the Institute and Island Press that recommends changes in U.S. and Mexican water management policies and strategies to help restore the Delta and encourages more discussion about the region's future.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

FY 2007: July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007

The statement of financial position, statement of cash flows and notes to financial statements are not included in this presentation.
The Sonoran Institute is audited annually by DeVries CPAs of Arizona, P.C.

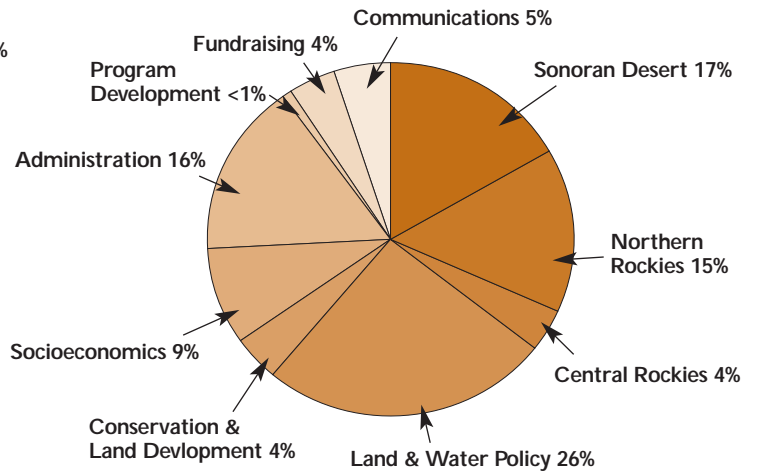
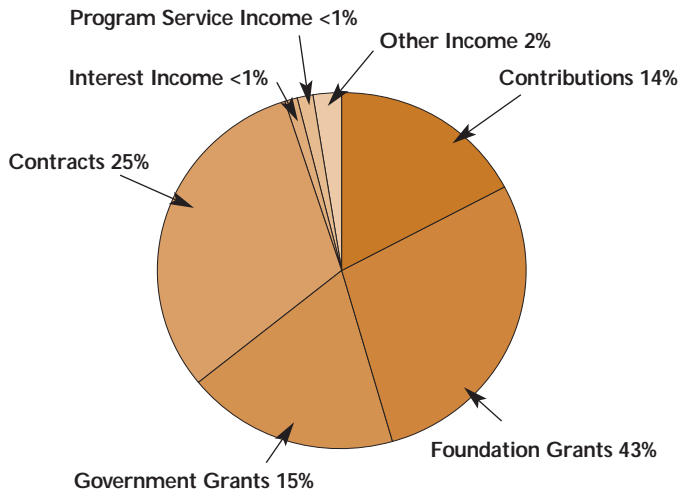
Revenues & Resources

Contributions	\$654,386	14%
Foundation grants	2,004,115	43%
Government grants	693,539	15%
Contract income	1,132,447	25%
Interest income	41,065	<1%
Program service income	18,798	<1%
Other income	73,722	2%
Total	\$4,618,072*	100%

*In addition, resources for FY07 include \$2,013,129 in multi-year grants carried forward from previous years and restricted for use in this and future fiscal years.

Expenses

Sonoran Desert	\$913,343	17%
Northern Rockies	768,811	15%
Central Rockies	212,727	4%
Land & Water Policy	1,348,486	26%
Conservation & Land Development	196,640	4%
Socioeconomics	449,670	9%
Administration	830,099	16%
Program Development	33,086	<1%
Fundraising	223,828	4%
Communications	266,293	5%
Total	\$5,242,983	100%



NEW DONATIONS ARE DOUBLED!

Gifts from first-time donors and from those who resume giving to the Sonoran Institute following a lapse are matched dollar-for-dollar through the generosity of an anonymous donor via the Kendeda Fund for Sustainability of the Tides Foundation.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT January 1 to December 31, 2007

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