COLORADO RIVER ALLIANCE

STRATEGIC PLAN

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



ADRIENNE LONGENECKER

Dear Friends of the River,

I am excited to share with you the incredible journey we are undertaking at the Colorado River Alliance to champion the long-term vitality of the Texas Colorado River.

Connecting Hearts to the River's Beat As I reflect on the impact we've had and the path we are taking into for the future, I am reminded of the countless personal stories that underscore the heartbeat of the Texas Colorado River. Stories of economies transformed, ecosystems preserved, and lives touched by the enduring flow of this majestic river. I want to share one such story that embodies the spirit of our mission.

Darlene and her two sons have been volunteering with CRA during the Lake Travis Cleanup for four years. Each year, they pick a different site around the lake with the intention of volunteering at all twelve sites before the boys go off to college. Darlene and her sons keep coming back for two reasons – the feeling that comes with having a personal impact on a resource that is essential to their health, and the knowledge that they gain about the Colorado River during each event.

Their story is the essence of our work, the ripple effect that each contribution creates, touching lives and landscapes along the Colorado River. Your support has been instrumental in scripting these narratives, and I invite you to continue co-authoring the story of a vibrant, thriving river.

A Symphony of Support The urgency of our mission cannot be overstated. As we embark on the implementation of our strategic plan, we recognize that time is of the essence, and the symphony of support from individuals like you is crucial to its success. Your contribution is not just an investment; it is a powerful note in the melody of change, a melody that will resonate for generations to come.

Together, we are expanding our flagship programs up and down the river basin, relaunching programs such as *Groundwater to Gulf* and the *Speaker Series*, and creating new opportunities such as the *Water Pledge* and the award-winning children's activity book, *Ripple's Adventures.*

Your support will directly contribute to the long-term vitality of the Texas Colorado River. This is an invitation to be a part of something greater than ourselves, to be the architects of a future where the river flows forever, sustaining the lifeblood of our communities, our environment, and our heritage.

Join Us on this Journey I am reaching out with an open heart, inviting you to join us on this inspiring journey. Your support is appreciated; it is essential. Your contributions, no matter the size, are the building blocks of a legacy—a legacy of a vibrant, protected Texas Colorado River.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to the Colorado River Alliance. Together, let's continue composing the symphony that ensures the Texas Colorado River is valued and protected by all.

With heartfelt gratitude,
Adrienne Longenecker, CFRE
Executive Director Colorado River Alliance

COLORADO RIVER ALLIANCE

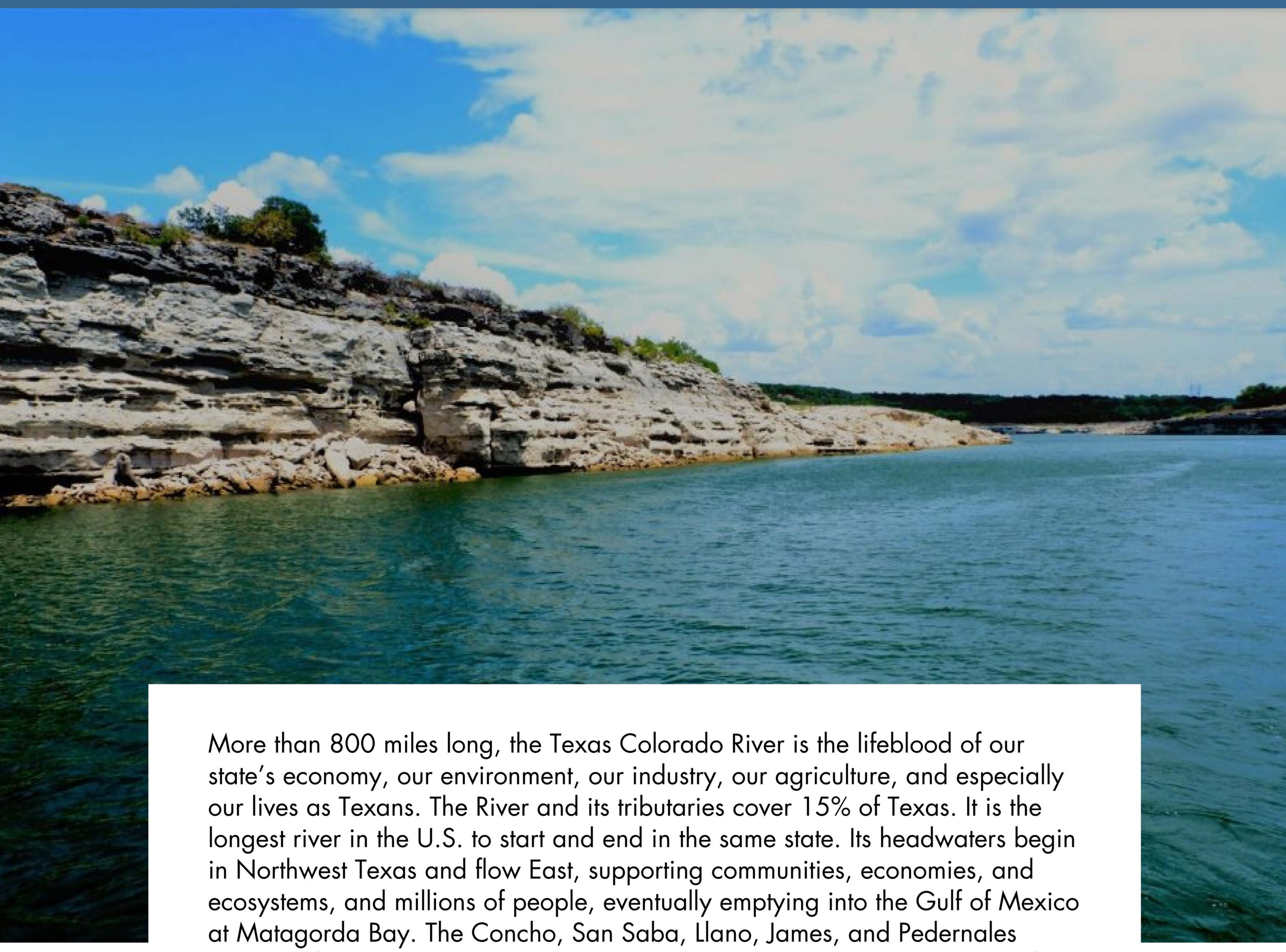
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Executive Director | **p1**
The River & Challenges Ahead | **p3**
The Opportunity | **p4**
Letter from the Board President | **p5**
Board of Directors | **p6**
Vision, Mission, Purpose | **p9**
Impact | **p10**
Initiatives | **p11-14**
Supporters | **back cover**



THE RIVER & CHALLENGE AHEAD



More than 800 miles long, the Texas Colorado River is the lifeblood of our state's economy, our environment, our industry, our agriculture, and especially our lives as Texans. The River and its tributaries cover 15% of Texas. It is the longest river in the U.S. to start and end in the same state. Its headwaters begin in Northwest Texas and flow East, supporting communities, economies, and ecosystems, and millions of people, eventually emptying into the Gulf of Mexico at Matagorda Bay. The Concho, San Saba, Llano, James, and Pedernales Rivers all flow into the River. Altogether, there are more than 7,500 miles of creeks, streams, and rivers in the Colorado River basin.

The Colorado River basin has always experienced floods and droughts. Due to numerous factors, both extremes are becoming more frequent, more severe, and more costly. These conditions can be catastrophic for the region's economy, agriculture, wildlife, and neighborhoods along the river. These extreme weather conditions have contributed a significant threat to water quantity for all communities in the River basin. Dramatic changes in weather along with the significantly increasing population in the River's basin and resulting water consumption are a leading focus for the communities which rely on the Texas Colorado River.

THE OPPORTUNITY

THE VITALITY OF OUR WORK

The Colorado River Alliance endeavors to serve communities throughout the full length of the Colorado River Basin, to support, activate, or create efforts to conserve and protect the River. Colorado River Alliance has three decades of experience providing education, activation, resources, and collaboration through its work.

With a commitment to innovation and collaboration, the Alliance provides educational and engagement activities that provide Texans with knowledge and tools to protect the Texas Colorado River and ensure its long-term vitality. The organization is headquartered in Austin, Texas at the site of Tom Miller Dam and its flag-ship programming is currently centered in Central Texas. Alongside those efforts, initiatives are taking place in the Highland Lakes area, Bastrop, Columbus, and near the Gulf of Mexico at Matagorda Bay.

Founded in 1994 with support from LCRA, the Alliance is a standalone 501(c)3 successfully leading programs that reach 14,000 community members and school children annually. The Colorado River Alliance continues to partner with LCRA and many others to provide river stewardship education and to be a champion for the people, ecosystems, communities, and businesses that depend on this essential natural resource. The Alliance has a long history engaging young people, as well as adults, through practices of teaching and working together to protect water quality and conserve water quantity. The Alliance is in a unique position to extend its highly successful education services as well as its experience in inspiring a generation of river stewards. Educating students, kindergarten through college-age, to protect and conserve our region's water is central to its mission. The Colorado River Alliance is a highly visible, resilient organization that maintains long-standing partnerships with hundreds of partners throughout the basin. The Alliance benefits from an expert and engaged staff as well as an active Board of Directors, Advisory Council, Legacy Leaders, Tributary League, and a young professionals' group, The River Society. Comprising leaders from throughout the community, these groups attract individuals and businesses to serve as ambassadors and support the work of the Alliance. The Alliance also has an Endowment which supports its education and outreach programs. However, the health of the River depends on enlisting a much greater number of partners, community organizations, individual leaders, and resources from throughout the basin. There are numerous groups and initiatives along the Colorado River that aspire to enjoy, protect, and draw from this extraordinary water resource. It is the focus of the Colorado River Alliance to identify and engage people and organizations who share the interests and strategic vision of the Colorado River Alliance.

LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT



WADE WEBSTER

I am thrilled to share with you the strategic plan that will guide the Colorado River Alliance in its mission to champion the long-term vitality of the Texas Colorado River.

As we embark on this journey, it is essential to acknowledge the critical challenges facing the Texas Colorado River. The River, spanning over 800 miles and covering 15% of Texas, is indeed the lifeblood of our state. However, the increasing frequency of weather extremes, coupled with a surge in population and escalating water consumption, poses a significant threat to the health of our beloved River.

Our strategic plan is a direct response to these challenges. It is intricately designed to address the pressing issues and rising concerns about water quantity in the River basin. By focusing on initiatives that expand river awareness, engage communities, provide hands-on STEM education, and increase our capacity to deliver, we aim to have a positive, lasting impact on the health of the River.

A crucial aspect of our strategic vision is the expansion of collaboration. While we have long-standing partnerships with entities such as the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), Austin Water, and others, the health of the River demands a more extensive network of partners throughout the basin. The Alliance is committed to actively seeking and engaging a diverse array of community organizations, businesses, and individual leaders who share our vision for the Texas Colorado River.

Our plan includes initiatives to build alliances that amplify the importance and value of the River. We believe that only through a united effort can we ensure the long-term vitality of the Texas Colorado River.

The success of our strategic plan is not just measured by the initiatives we undertake but by the tangible outcomes and impacts we achieve. We are dedicated to providing transparency and accountability in our efforts. For instance, our vision for expanding river awareness involves piloting a quarterly program to visit the Wilkerson Center for Colorado River Education and supporting the re-launch of the River Society. These initiatives are not just aspirations but tangible steps towards ensuring that the Texas Colorado River is valued and protected by all.

As we progress through our three-year plan, we will regularly update you on our achievements, challenges, and the evolving landscape of our mission. Your support has been instrumental in our journey thus far, and we invite you to join us in this next phase of commitment and action.

Together, we can achieve a day when the Texas Colorado River is not just a lifeline for our state but a symbol of our shared dedication to environmental stewardship.

Thank you for your unwavering support.
Sincerely,

Wade Webster
President and Board Chair Colorado River Alliance

2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Colorado River Alliance is a highly visible, resilient organization that maintains long-standing partnerships with entities such as the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), Austin Water, Austin Watershed Protection, Austin Parks and Recreation, and Travis County. They benefit from an active Board of Directors, Advisory Council, Tributary League, and a young professionals' group, The River Society. Comprising leaders from throughout the community, these groups attract individuals to serve as ambassadors for the work of the Alliance. However, the health of the River depends on enlisting a much greater number of partners (community organizations and individual leaders) throughout the basin.

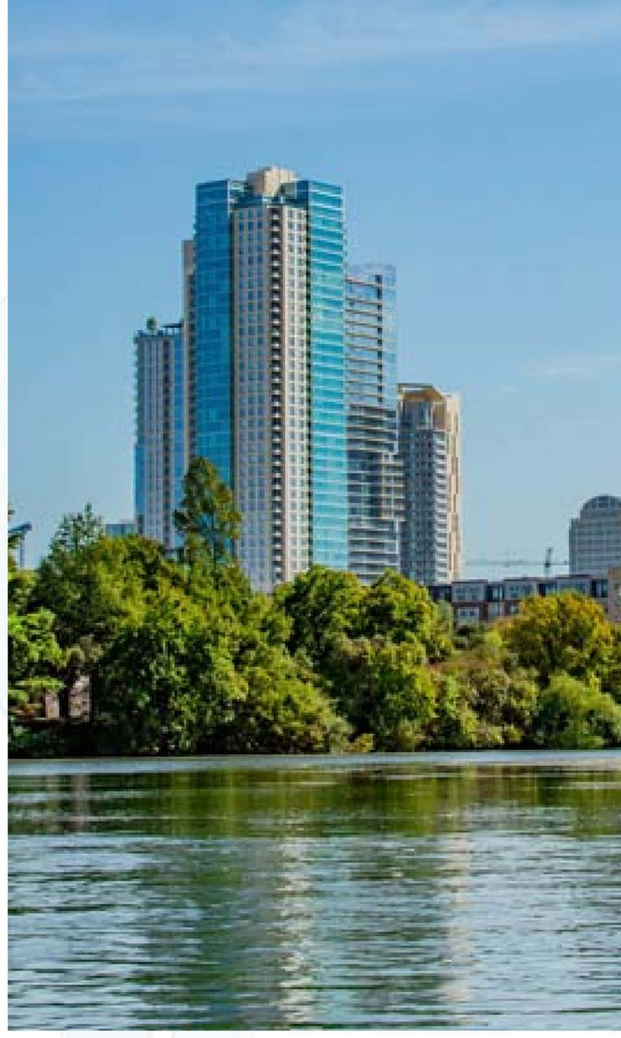
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OUR VISION

A day when the Texas Colorado River is valued and protected by all.

OUR MISSION

To champion the long-term vitality of the Texas Colorado River.

OUR PURPOSE

Reach every Texan with a message of the River's importance.

IMPACT AREAS:

Expand River Appreciation:
reach more people throughout the basin and a greater variety of people.

Engage People to Act:
move people from awareness to action and engagement in our mission.

Provide Hands-on STEM Education:
inspire lifelong appreciation and stewardship.

Increase Capacity to Deliver:
attract investments and resources to get the job done well.



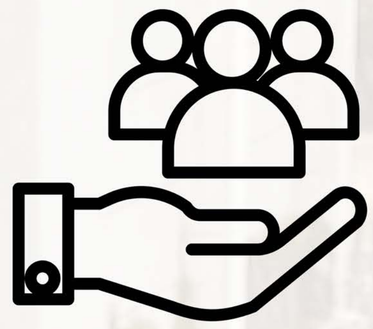




EXPAND RIVER APPRECIATION

Reach more people and a greater variety of people with a message of the River's importance.

- Affinity Groups: to attract new and different people, build experiences and programming based on groups of people, both demographic and geographic.
- Partnerships: to expand education and to increase appreciation, build an alliance of partners that share Colorado River Alliance's vision.
- Public Awareness Campaigns: to amplify the importance and value of the River, explore traditional and nontraditional media campaigns.



ENGAGE PEOPLE TO ACT

Move people from awareness to action through engagement in our mission to champion the long-term vitality of the River.

- River and Lake Cleanups: to provide opportunities for people to “get their hands dirty”, expand cleanups throughout the basin.
- Digital Resources: to equip people with tools to take personal action, distribute digital resources and encourage participation in the Water Pledge.
- Ambassadors: to increase impact while river concerns expand, build a core of trained volunteer ambassadors.

PROVIDE HANDS-ON STEM EDUCATION

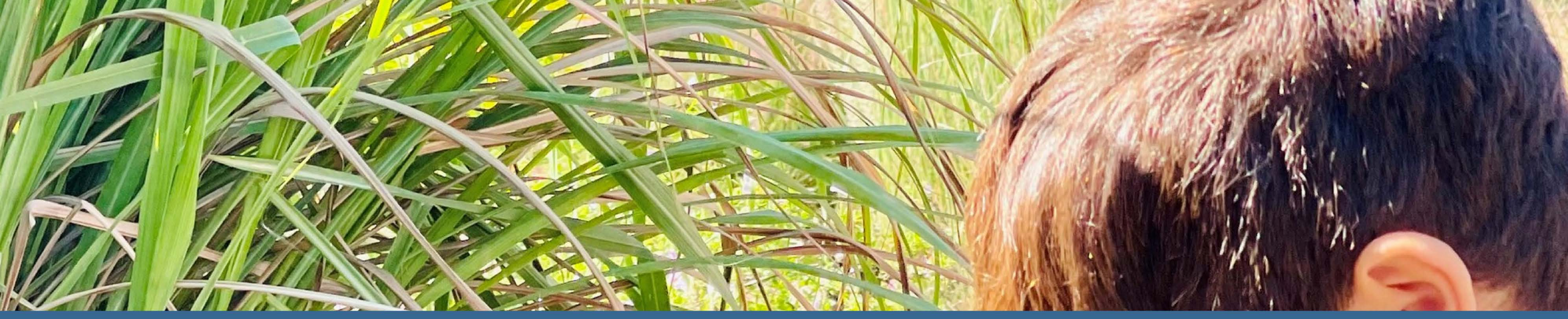
Inspire lifelong appreciation and stewardship, leveraging intern and volunteer support.

- Direct Service STEM Education: to remain relevant and true to our founding, refresh and redesign our flagship, youth education programs.
- Place-based Programs: to build upon the success of the Wilkerson Center, explore place-based programming, river models, and "on-River" programs elsewhere in the River Basin.
- Educator Engagement: to equip educators, expand resources for educators including Groundwater to Gulf Educators Institute.

INCREASE CAPACITY TO DELIVER

Attract investments and resources to get the job done well.

- Board & Staff Development: to attract and retain the talent needed to be successful, adopt a people-first culture and commit to an equity assessment.
- Fiduciary: to ensure the financial resources necessary to be successful, explore earned revenue models, multi-year fundraising campaigns, and investment in the Endowment.
- Measurement & Reporting Systems: to ensure impact, refine and refresh measurement and reporting systems.



LEGACY LEADERS

Your generosity and support are essential to the mission of Colorado River Alliance. Thank you for championing the long-term vitality of the Texas Colorado River.

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