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August 11, 2009

Contact: Natalie Luna (520) 622-6788 office

(520) 904-0375 cell

Ruben Reyes (520) 940-7752 cell

Grijalva Introduces Legislation to Protect Colorado River

Tucson, AZ-- Congressman Raúl M. Grijalva has introduced a bill to provide for the protection of the quality of water in the Lower Colorado River.

The Lower Colorado River Protection Act of 2009 seeks to restore and maintain the ecosystems and water quality of the Colorado River consequently assuring the health of the millions of Americans who drink its water and eat food grown with its water, protecting the River Basin's precious natural resources, and insuring the region's economic prosperity.

The bill will provide for the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan for the prevention and elimination of pollution in the Lower Colorado River and the maintenance of a healthy Lower Colorado River ecosystem.

"The habitat along the Colorado River has been altered by dams, human interference, and non-native plant and animal species," Grijalva said. "The effects of the massive population growth in

the Southwest have threatened the Lower Colorado River. The bill will work to reduce the destruction to the River and thereby protect it from future damage.”

The Colorado River supplies drinking water for more than 25 million people and irrigates over 80 percent of winter vegetables consumed in the United States. The Colorado River and its tributaries are home to many rare and unusual species including 36 native fish species (not including two that have already gone extinct), of which 25 are found nowhere else.

Preserving the water quality of the Lower Colorado River is essential to the health, economy, security, and ecology of Arizona, Southern California, and Southern Nevada. As the climate changes and the population of the region grows, the Lower Colorado River will come under increasing stress. The Lower Colorado River Protection Act will safeguard the region’s add drinking water supply and protect its precious natural resources.

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Natalie Luna Rose

Press Secretary

U.S. Congressman Raúl M. Grijalva

Arizona District 7

(520) 622-6788

(520) 904-0375

grijalva.house.gov

