



The **US Pyramid**
Project is
a **501(c)3** dedicated to
solving
the global freshwater
crisis.

Legal & Regulatory Compliance Checklist

Our Patent was developed & is exclusively owned by the USPP.

Summary

There are several regulatory and legal steps that need to be taken in order to execute this project. First, a US Based attorney will be acquired to 1) finalize agreement between project funder and USPP, 2) change our nonprofit entity status to the correct form in order to collect Public forms and do business in Mexico, 3) Begin applications/permit process for project, and 4) acquire project real estate and/or acquire a lease for project real estate.



Our US Attorney Choices:

1. **Peter W. Culp** – Managing Partner, Culp & Kelly, LLP (Phoenix, AZ-based, with deep Mexico expertise)

- Peter is Nationally recognized in Western water law and Colorado River policy, with 20+ years on binational U.S.-Mexico agreements (e.g., Minutes 316–323 for Delta restoration). He's directly advised NGOs like Sonoran Institute and Pronatura Noroeste on permits, water trusts, and low-impact projects in the Delta—exactly your wheelhouse. US-based but specializes in cross-border issues, including SEMARNAT/CONANP navigation.
- Contact: pculp@culpkelly.law; (602) 888-7011; culpkelly.law
- Next step: Reach out for a consult on tying into Raise the River—he's collaborated on similar efforts.

Our Mexican Attorney Choices:

Creel, García-Cuéllar, Aiza y Enríquez, S.C. (Mexico City-based full-service firm)

- Why a fit: Top-ranked Mexican firm for environmental law, specializing in regulatory approvals (SEMARNAT EIAs, CONANP biosphere permits) and transactional issues in protected areas. They handle water/natural resources projects, including sustainability and compliance for international clients. Strong track record in biosphere reserves and environmental due diligence—ideal for your non-permanent infrastructure and brine management.
- Contact: General inquiry: +52 55 4748 0600; creel.mx/en/services/environmental-practice
- Next step: Ask about experience with Delta-specific restorations; they're a heavyweight for fast-tracking permits via NGO partnerships.

Hogan Lovells (Mexico City office, global firm with U.S. ties)

- Highly rated for environment in Mexico, with expertise in SEMARNAT/CONANP approvals, water law, and protected natural areas. They advise on permits for eco-projects, risk assessments, and binational compliance—perfect for your free-water restoration model and avoiding political hurdles. Their international reach could help with U.S.-Mexico treaty angles.
- Contact: Mexico City: +52 55 5091 0000; hoganlovells.com/en/locations/mexico-city (environmental team leads: **Juan Francisco Torres Landa**)

Easy Legal Mexico (Mérida-based, with national reach)

- Why a fit: Boutique firm focused on Mexican environmental law, including SEMARNAT permits, EIAs for coastal/protected zones, and water/waste management. They're accessible for smaller projects, emphasize compliance in biosphere reserves, and handle federal maritime zones (relevant for your ocean intake). Affordable entry point for initial consultations.
- Contact: +52 (999) 944-0296; info@easylegalmexico.com; easylegalmexico.com/environmental-law
- Good for a quick opinion letter on our setup's low-impact status.

Regulators involved in Project:

For our Cube desalination pilot project in the **Colorado River Delta** (within Mexico's **Alto Golfo de California y Delta del Río Colorado Biosphere Reserve**), our regulatory checklist includes the key Mexican federal agencies that **definitively** oversee environmental protection, natural protected areas (ANPs), water resources, and enforcement in biosphere reserves. These are non-negotiable based on Mexico's legal framework (primarily the **LGEEPA** — General Law of Ecological Balance and Environmental Protection), the **National Water Law**, and specific biosphere reserve management programs.

Here are the organizations that are **for sure** on our regulatory checklist:

SEMARNAT (Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales — Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources)

- The overarching federal ministry responsible for environmental policy, legislation, and major approvals.
- They handle the **Manifestación de Impacto Ambiental (MIA/EIA)** — the key environmental impact assessment required for any project with potential effects on ecosystems, even low-impact or restoration-focused ones in protected areas.
- They oversee norms like NOM-001-SEMARNAT (wastewater/brine discharge) and related drafts for desalination (e.g., brine management).
- Almost every project in a biosphere reserve starts or routes through SEMARNAT.

CONANP (Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas — National Commission of Protected Natural Areas)

- Directly administers and manages biosphere reserves like the Alto Golfo/Delta one (a federal ANP and UNESCO World Heritage/Wetlands of International Importance site).
- They enforce the reserve's **Programa de Conservación y Manejo** (Management Program), which sets rules for activities in core zones, buffer zones, and sustainable use sub-zones.
- Required for any authorization related to land/infrastructure use, habitat alteration, or restoration activities—even non-permanent (e.g., modular setups or sandbags).
- They coordinate with SEMARNAT on EIAs and can provide guidance/exemptions for aligned restoration projects.

CONAGUA (Comisión Nacional del Agua — National Water Commission)

- The sole federal authority for water resources management under the National Water Law.
- They issue **concessions/titles** for water extraction (e.g., seawater intake), use, and any discharge/reinjection.
- Critical for desalination: They review brine disposal, hydrology impacts, and compliance with water quality norms. Even non-commercial projects need their input if drawing from federal waters (ocean/river interfaces).
- Often collaborates with SEMARNAT on integrated permits.

PROFEPA (Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente — Federal Attorney for Environmental Protection)

- The enforcement arm of SEMARNAT (environmental "police").
 - They conduct inspections, audits, and impose sanctions for non-compliance in protected areas.
 - While not a primary permitting agency, they're on the checklist for compliance monitoring—especially if your project involves any construction, brine holding beds, or potential discharge. They can halt operations if issues arise.
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Additional Notes for our Checklist

- **Local/State Level** (e.g., Baja California or Sonora state environmental agencies like CEDES in Sonora): Often secondary but may require land-use or construction permits, especially if near ejidos or municipal boundaries.
- **Binational/International** (e.g., IBWC — International Boundary and Water Commission): Not a direct permit issuer, but relevant for Colorado River-related projects due to Minute 319/323 agreements—could help with advocacy.
- **NGO/Partner Layer** (e.g., Raise the River coalition members like Pronatura Noroeste, Sonoran Institute): Not regulatory agencies, but essential for navigation—include as a strategic step to engage these for support in filings, community consultations, and precedent-based approvals.

Suggested Regulatory Checklist Structure

1. **Pre-Application/Scoping:** Engage Raise the River/Pronatura Noroeste → site assessment.
2. **Environmental Impact:** Submit MIA to SEMARNAT (with CONANP input).
3. **Water-Related:** Apply for concession/extraction permit from CONAGUA.
4. **Protected Area Authorization:** Obtain CONANP approval/compatibility opinion.
5. **Compliance/Enforcement:** Prepare for PROFEPA oversight (e.g., monitoring plan).
6. **Other:** Municipal/state land-use if applicable; any ZOFEMAT (federal zone/beach use) if coastal.

This core federal quartet (SEMARNAT, CONANP, CONAGUA, PROFEPA) covers the must-haves—anything less risks major gaps.

Partnering early with **Raise the River** can help bundle/submit these efficiently and build the case for our non-commercial restoration angle.



Once these permits have pre approval, we can proceed with acquiring the Real Estate for this project. Since the project is on Mexican coastline, it cannot be owned by an American. We can partner with a Mexican National to acquire the property and should be someone with a stake in our project. For that reason, we propose that the Mexican Engineer on our project, Iram Chavirez, should be the owner. We are open to your Mexican contacts as well.

