

*Darrell Petska*

## **SOS in Sand**

Here! Here I am,  
your Rio Grande, two thousand miles winding,  
three million years enlivening  
the sprawling southwest desert—  
now just a whisper of my former self  
that roiled unrestrained toward the Gulf.  
Dammed, parsed, disbursed  
across two million thirsting acres,  
I'm on the edge of forgotten.  
Old laws enslave me.  
I'm overused, climate-stricken,  
my flowage a mirage months at a time.  
Have I no rights to my water?  
My plight plays out in sand.  
How long will my silvered minnow swim,  
rock wren sing, brush holly bloom  
heavy with bees? My dependents  
await me at each turn.  
Please hurry: raise me up, speed me on,  
that bold voices once more can sing my lore—  
of cowboys and lovers, scented desert nights,  
the magic of moonlight on rushing water—  
or soon I'll be gone.