Partner Overview: **Borderlands Restoration Network**

The Comcaac, also known as the Seri Indians, are an indigenous people living in coastal desert mountains near the Gulf of California in Northern Mexico. For over a thousand years, residents of their two villages, Desemboque and Punta Chueca, have survived and thrived under extreme desert conditions as hunters, fishers and gatherers. However, in recent years increased extreme weather events such as droughts have disrupted their subsistence-based livelihood, decreasing their access to clean drinking water and to fresh foods.

Organization Overview:

Borderlands Restoration Network is a longtime partner of the Seri community. In collaboration with the community, Borderlands has created an intergenerational apprenticeship program that combines traditional ecological knowledge with modern science. Graduates of the program are the next generation of Seri leaders, dedicated to protecting the Comcaac's territory and natural resources.

Project Summary:

Borderlands Restoration Network is installing a solar water pumping system in the town of Desemboque. The system consists of a network of interconnected pipes and solar panels that provide power and water to public buildings and homes, stabilizing access to water and power in the community. The panels are surrounded by an agro-voltaic garden that acts as a cooling mechanism for the solar panels, and increases access to fresh produce.

The water and PV system will be managed and maintained by three Seri women, previously trained as solar technicians at Barefoot University in India. These women will also educate the community on maintenance and repair, and recruit/train local students to serve as solar technician assistants. The project is accompanied by a culturally relevant education program that highlights how using the energy of the sun has long been a part of the Seri way of life.

Award Amount: $100,000