

Tribal Water Successes and Challenges

**WRRC Conference
June 9-10, 2015**



- **Provide general themes for thinking about tribal water successes and challenges**
- **3 stories involving individual tribal successes and challenges**
- **3 sketches of intertribal involvement in water resource planning in Arizona**

History Counts

Ak-Chin Farms



- **Continuing a farming tradition**
- **Full use of settlement water**
- **Protection of water and land resources in the context of surrounding growth**

Quechan Agriculture



- **Transition from traditional flood plain farming to commercial irrigated agriculture**
- **Lease income for allottees**
- **Unique forbearance agreement with Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD)**

White Mountain M&I Water Needs



**Every Tribe's Story
Is Different**

Tribal Water Also Benefits Off-Reservation Communities

A Tribal Seat at the Table



Water Resources Development Commission

Final Report



Volume I

October 1, 2011

- **Inclusion of all tribal rights that are currently quantified**
- **Recognition of rights of tribes that are currently unquantified**
- **A statement of tribal position**

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study

Study Report



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation

December 2012

- **Tribes involved only after the Study started**
- **Inclusion of tribal water rights for tribes in both Basins**
- **Options submitted by tribes including Ten Tribes Partnership and ITCA**

SUBMITTED
DRAFT

DECEMBER 29, 2014



2015

CENTRAL ARIZONA GROUNDWATER
REPLENISHMENT DISTRICT

PLAN OF OPERATION



“CAGRD recognizes the unique nature of tribal water rights, whether decreed rights, rights pursuant to a federally-approved settlement, or contractual rights. CAGRD also recognizes the sovereignty of the tribes holding those water rights. . . . Simply put, CAGRD cannot use tribal water supplies without the express consent of the tribe holding the rights to those supplies.”

The Challenge to Come:

**Engaging Tribes Fully
in the Planning of Arizona's
Water Future**

Engaging Tribes: Why

- **First in time, first in right**
- **Tribes have 3 million acre-feet of currently quantified diversion rights to Colorado River water, along with substantial amounts yet to be quantified**

Engaging Tribes: How

- **Through an ongoing process**
- **All parties understanding the perspectives of all other parties**
- **Building trust**

A photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, partially obscured by the silhouettes of palm trees in the foreground. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with some wispy clouds. The water in the foreground is calm and reflects the colors of the sunset. In the distance, there are silhouettes of buildings and trees along the shore.

thanks

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