

2025 TRIBAL ELECTION PLATFORM

On August 1, 2024, the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) Tribal Council convened a special “Water Meeting” at the Blue-Water Resort & Casino to update the membership on the “Water Agreement” that included presentation from John Bezdek, Water Attorney and Tribal Council opinions (I questioned why Maragret Vick, the primary Water Attorney who worked on the initial agreement was not present)?

It was emphasized by the Chairperson that the leasing of water to the State of Arizona was done to protect CRIT Water Rights, and that it was “illegal to sell CRIT's Water Rights”. And the “leasing of water is not selling”, but the temporary use of CRIT's Water.

However, in order to lease the water to the State, CRIT had to “fallow CRIT agricultural land currently in production”, to reflect “water conservation” and to be monitored by Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). However, it was not disclosed that BOR required a “scorched earth” policy to ensure that lands were completely fallowed.

The Chairperson reiterated, the January 2019 Referendum “majority” vote, “authorized Tribal Council to work on leasing water to the State”. However, the initial Lease Agreement had to include: the Federal and State governments.

It was also stated by the Chairperson that the current monies obtained in this lease was currently in a “special savings account”, which is contrary to the original “intent” of the signed November 8, 2018 Tribal Resolution. To include, “increased Tribal distribution payment; agricultural development and water delivery infrastructure improvements; and membership needs...”.

The August 2024 meeting was to provide the membership with an update on the “Water Agreement”. Unfortunately, the meeting provided “redundant” information on the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the Federal government and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in the administration of our Decreed Allocation of Water.