

# Colorado River Update

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FOR TRIBAL MEMBERS

JULY 8<sup>TH</sup> - 9<sup>TH</sup> 2026

PARKER, AZ

JOHN BEZDEK  
LEAD WATER COUNSEL  
COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES



# Breaking News. Troubled Waters.

Arizona Daily Star



COLORADO RIVER STATES INCH CLOSER TO COURT BATTLE AS WATER EXPERTS TESTIFY IN D.C.  
ARIZONA DAILY STAR- MAY 3, 2026

The Salt Lake Tribune



MIKE LEE SAYS THERE SHOULD BE CONSEQUENCES FOR STATES THAT SUE OVER THE COLORADO RIVER.  
SALT LAKE TRIBUNE- JUNE 12, 2026

AZMIRROR



ARIZONA HIRES HIGH-POWERED LAW FIRM, SETTING THE STAGE FOR A LEGAL BATTLE OVER  
COLORADO RIVER WATER.  
ARIZONA MIRROR- MARCH 23, 2026

Reuters



US CONSIDERS PROPOSAL TO CUT COLORADO RIVER WATER USE, ARIZONA SAYS.  
REUTERS- JULY 2, 2026

91.5  
KJZZ



ARIZONA LAWMAKERS ADD \$6 MILLION TO COLORADO RIVER LEGAL FUND AHEAD OF POTENTIAL  
COURT BATTLE.  
KJZZ- JUNE 12, 2026

COLORADO NEWSLINE



NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES CAME TOGETHER TO SECURE WATER RIGHTS. FOUR STATES ARE STALLING THE DEAL.  
COLORADO NEWSLINE-JULY 3, 2026



# Personhood Status

## Key Parts of Tribal Resolution

*“The River is Alive!”*

LAST FALL, AFTER INTENSIVE OUTREACH WITH MEMBERSHIP, COUNCIL PASSED A RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE COLORADO RIVER HAS ALWAYS BEEN AND WILL ALWAYS BE A PERSON UNDER TRIBAL LAW. THIS IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND ACTION IN THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN. ACKNOWLEDGES THE RIVER IS ALIVE IN EACH TRIBAL MEMBER.

*“There is no greater expression of sovereignty than protecting, stewarding, and securing for future generations what our ancestors handed down to us.”*

Resolution No. 375-25

**RESOLUTION**  
COLORADO RIVER TRIBAL COUNCIL

A Resolution to Proclaim Personhood Status for the Colorado River and to Direct the Attorney General and Legal and Technical Staff to Develop Proposed Amendments to the CRIT Water Code and Other Related Actions.

Be it resolved by the Tribal Council of the Colorado River Indian Tribes of the Colorado River Indian Reservation, in special meeting assembled on November 6, 2025

WHEREAS, the Colorado River Indian Tribes (hereinafter "CRIT" or "Tribes") is a federally recognized Indian Tribe, duly organized with a tribal governing body known as the Tribal Council according to the provisions contained in the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934; and

WHEREAS, Article VI, Section 1(r) of the Constitution of the Colorado River Indian Tribes authorizes the Tribal Council to preserve and encourage the arts, crafts, culture, and traditions of the Colorado River Indian Tribes; and

WHEREAS, since time immemorial the Tribes occupied these lands and had a deep and continuous connection to, and relationship with, the Colorado River and its tributaries; and

WHEREAS, Tribal Council has consulted with tribal membership, including interviews, outreach through social media, and discussion at events for tribal members and acknowledges that it's in the interest of the tribal members to foster and protect the relationship they have with the Colorado River; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of the Colorado River Indian Reservation in 1865 for the "Indians of the Colorado River and its tributaries" acknowledged and preserved this connection when these lands were set aside and preserved for the original occupants, the Aha Mahkav, and later the Chemehuevi, Hopi, and Navajo; and

The foregoing resolution was on November 6, 2025 duly approved by a vote of 7 for, 0 against and 0 abstaining, by the Tribal Council of the Colorado River Indian Tribes, pursuant to authority vested in it by Sections 1, Article VI of the Constitution and By laws of the Tribes, ratified by the Tribes on March 1, 1975 and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on May 20, 1975, pursuant to Section 10 of the Act of June 18, 1934, (48 Stat. 984). This resolution is effective as of the date of its adoption.

COLORADO RIVER TRIBAL COUNCIL  
By Amelia Thom Chairwoman  
Secretary Secretary

**RESOLUTION NO. R- 375-25**  
**NOVEMBER 6, 2025**  
**PAGE 2**

WHEREAS, water is life and the Colorado River has always been the life-sustaining cultural, spiritual, and economic focal point of the members of the Tribes; and

WHEREAS, we have relied upon the Colorado River for our cultural practices, to grow food and crops and support the fish and animals we depend on, and to sustain the trees, plants, and other resources central to our culture and traditions; and

WHEREAS, the United States government first authorized an irrigation system in 1867 and ultimately the Colorado River Indian Irrigation Project with the first irrigation system built by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which has become a critical centerpiece of CRIT's economy; and

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court on March 8, 1964 issued its decree in *Arizona v. California* establishing our present perfected federal Indian reserved water rights from the Colorado River mainstream in Arizona and California with March 3, 1865 as our oldest water right priority date; and

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court on March 27, 2006 issued its final consolidated decree in *Arizona v. California* which established the final quantity of the Tribes' water rights as 719,248 acre feet per year, with 662,402 acre feet of water in Arizona and 56,846 acre feet of water in California; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado River is a living being carrying and sustaining life as it flows through the reservation and our ancestral lands; and

WHEREAS, the spiritual and cultural well-being of the Tribes and of our tribal members from the beginning of time and through the end of time, is directly linked to the health and well-being of the Colorado River and its resources; and

WHEREAS, application of personhood status under tribal law will ensure that the health and wellbeing of our living River will always be a part of every decision made by this and future Tribal Councils of CRIT; and

WHEREAS, there is no greater expression of sovereignty than protecting, stewarding, and securing for future generations what our Ancestors handed down to us, and that personhood status is a reflection of our values and responsibilities as a people and our spiritual, cultural, and religious connection to the Colorado River from the beginning of time through the end of time.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Tribal Council of the Colorado River Indian Tribes to hereby proclaim that the Colorado River is a living being whose health and welfare is directly linked to the well-being of the Colorado River Indian Tribes and its members; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Tribal Council of the Colorado River Indian Tribes that the Colorado River has always been and will always be a person under tribal law and will be entitled to the protections under tribal law befitting this status; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Tribal Council of the Colorado River Indian Tribes that the Attorney General and attorneys and staff working under the supervision of the Attorney General are directed to develop and recommend to Council for review and approval, as appropriate, provisions to be included in the tribal code, including but not limited to, the Water Code and potential designations as a traditional cultural property, cultural resource, and cultural landscape, to reflect the personhood status of the Colorado River and obtain the protections to which the Colorado River is entitled under tribal law and any other applicable law; and

BE IT FURTHER AND FINALLY RESOLVED that the Tribal Council Chairwoman and Secretary, or their designated representatives, are hereby authorized and directed to execute any and all documents necessary to implement this Resolution.

**PERSONHOOD RESOLUTION**



# Personhood IN THE NEWS

BBC



TRIBES GRANT THE COLORADO RIVER LEGAL PERSONHOOD -  
CAN THIS HELP SAVE IT?  
BBC- FEBRUARY 14, 2026



COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES DESIGNATE THEIR NAMESAKE WATERWAY A  
'LIVING BEING' LEGAL RIGHTS  
KUNC RADIO-NOVEMBER 25, 2025

azcentral.



COLORADO RIVER WINS PERSONHOOD STATUS FROM ARIZONA TRIBAL COUNCIL  
ARIZONA REPUBLIC-NOVEMBER 25,2025

Los Angeles Times



WHY ONE TRIBE HAS DECLARED THE COLORADO RIVER A LEGAL PERSON  
LOS ANGELES TIMES- DECEMBER 4, 2025



COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES GIVES PERSONHOOD TO NAMESAKE WATERWAY  
KJZZ-NOVEMBER 12, 2025



THE COLORADO SUN

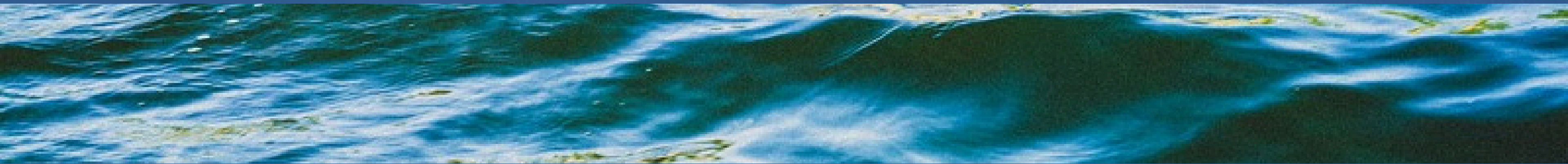


COLORADO RIVER ADVOCATES' TOOLBOX CHIPS AWAY AT THREATS WITH MANY  
APPROACHES — INCLUDING PERSONHOOD  
COLORADO SUN-APRIL 6, 2026

TIMES  
of SAN DIEGO



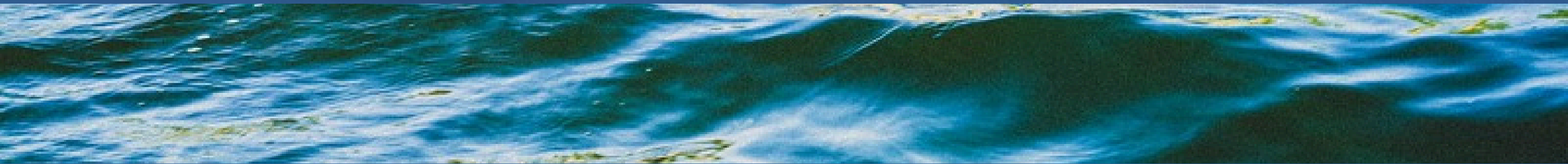
INDIAN TRIBES DESIGNATE COLORADO RIVER A 'LIVING BEING' WITH LEGAL RIGHTS  
TIMES OF SAN DIEGO-NOVEMBER 25, 2025



# Tribal Sovereignty

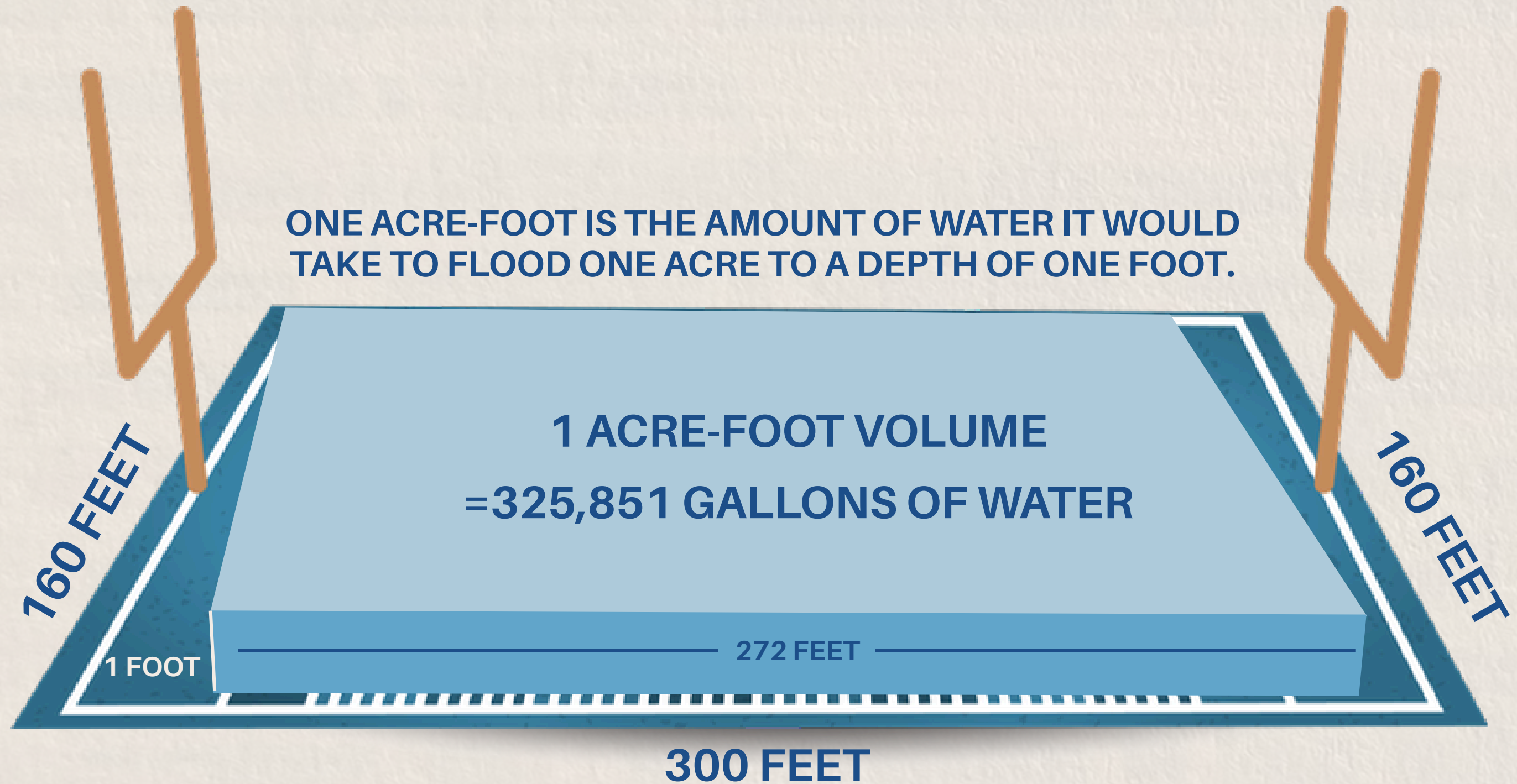
THE RIGHT OF TRIBAL NATIONS TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS ABOUT THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF ITS PEOPLE AND ITS GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING DECISIONS REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF WATER RESOURCES.

TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY IS INHERENT IN EVERY TRIBAL NATION. IT DOES NOT COME FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT- IT COMES FROM EACH OF YOU!



# 1 Acre-Foot Volume of Water

ONE ACRE-FOOT IS THE AMOUNT OF WATER IT WOULD TAKE TO FLOOD ONE ACRE TO A DEPTH OF ONE FOOT.



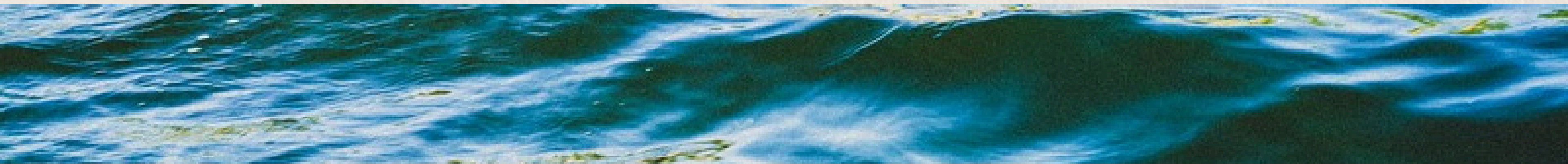
# MEET THE Water TEAM



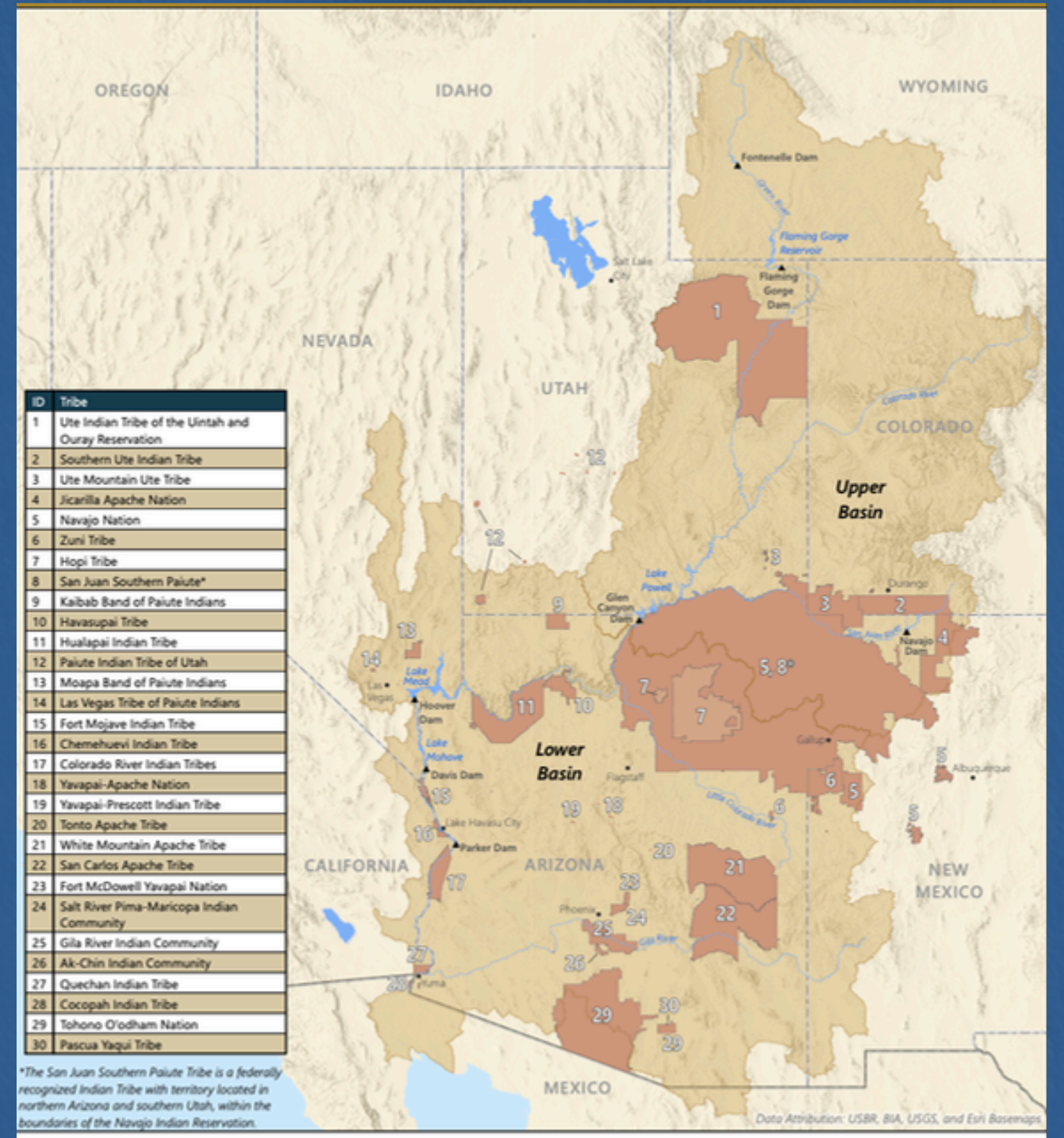
**EXPERIENCED AND SEASONED LEGAL, TECHNICAL, AND POLICY PROFESSIONALS IN WATER RESOURCES, AND TRIBAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT.**

**REPRESENTATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THE CONGRESS AND ADMINISTRATION IN DC, THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE IN PHOENIX, AND WITH STATE OFFICIALS IN SACRAMENTO.**

**THE CRIT WATER TEAM TAKES DIRECTION FROM TRIBAL COUNCIL WORKING THROUGH THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. THE WATER TEAM INCLUDES: LEAD WATER COUNSEL, SUPPORTING WATER AND LITIGATION COUNSEL, WATER ENGINEERS, WATER ECONOMISTS, AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS SPECIALISTS.**



# Tribal Nations in the Colorado River Basin.

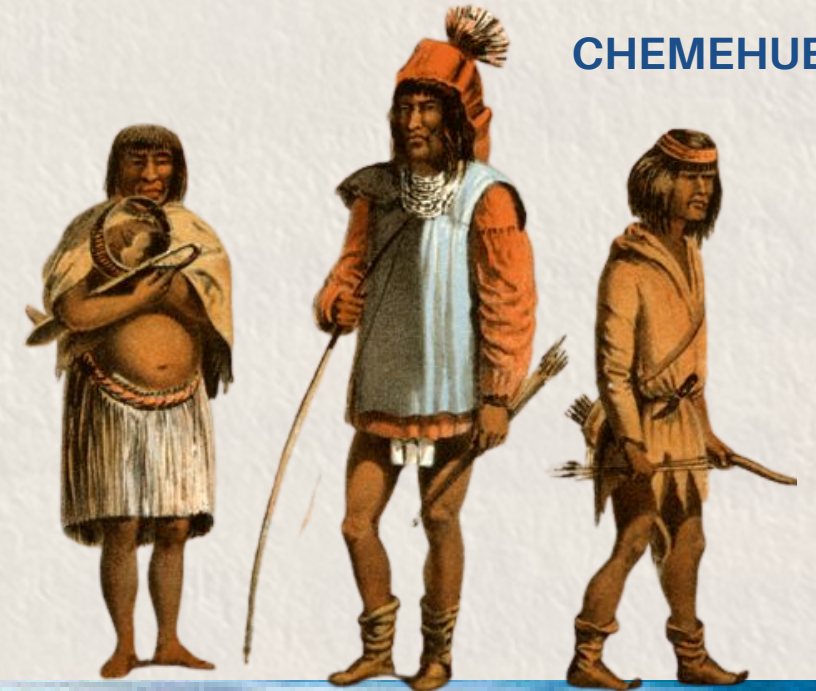


# Mohave &



MOHAVE

# Chemehuevi



CHEMEHUEVI

BEGINNING OF TIME - MOHAVE AND CHEMEHUEVI ANCESTORS LIVE ALONG THE MAIN STEM COLORADO RIVER AND ITS FLOODPLAIN, GROWING FOOD, HUNTING, AND GATHERING.



# 1500s

## SPANISH EXPLORERS ARRIVE IN THE SOUTHWEST

THIRTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS. Sess. II. Ch. 127. 1865. 559

*Indian Service in the Territory of Arizona.* — For the general incidental expenses of the Indian service in the Territory of Arizona, presents of goods, agricultural implements, and other useful articles, and to assist them to locate in permanent abodes, and sustain themselves by the pursuits of civilized life, to be expended under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, twenty thousand dollars.

All that part of the public domain in the Territory of Arizona, lying west of a direct line from Half-Way Bend to Corner Rock on the Colorado River, containing about seventy-five thousand acres of land, shall be set apart for an Indian reservation for the Indians of said river and its tributaries.

in Arizona.

Indian reservation.



# 1865

## PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN APPROVES AN ACT OF CONGRESS ESTABLISHING A RESERVATION FOR THE, “Indians of the Colorado River and its tributaries,”



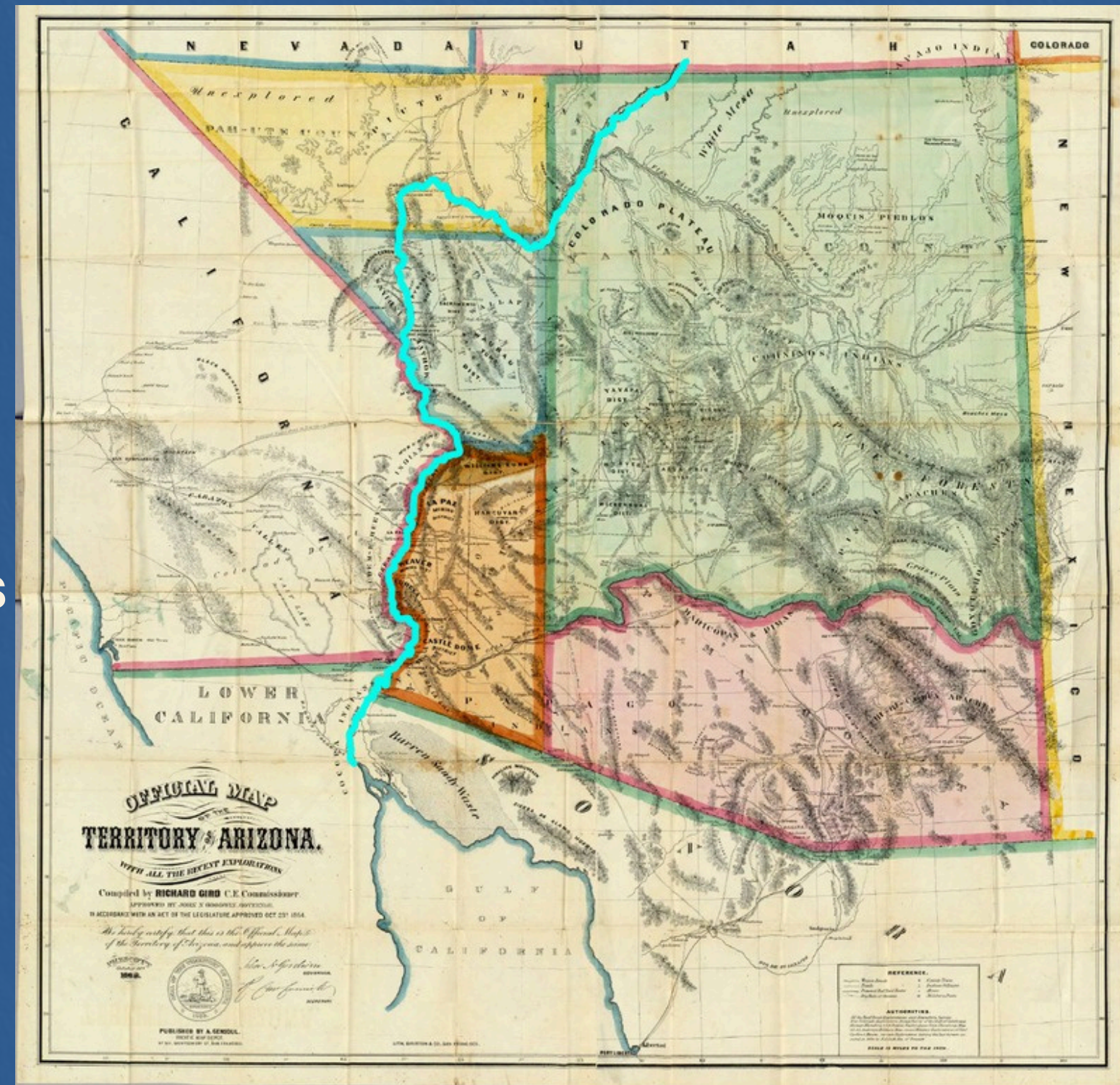


# Map of the Colorado River before major Federal Infrastructure

1864 MAP



ARIZONA  
TERRITORY  
INCLUDES  
TRIBAL  
COMMUNITIES  
AND LOCAL  
TOWNSHIPS.

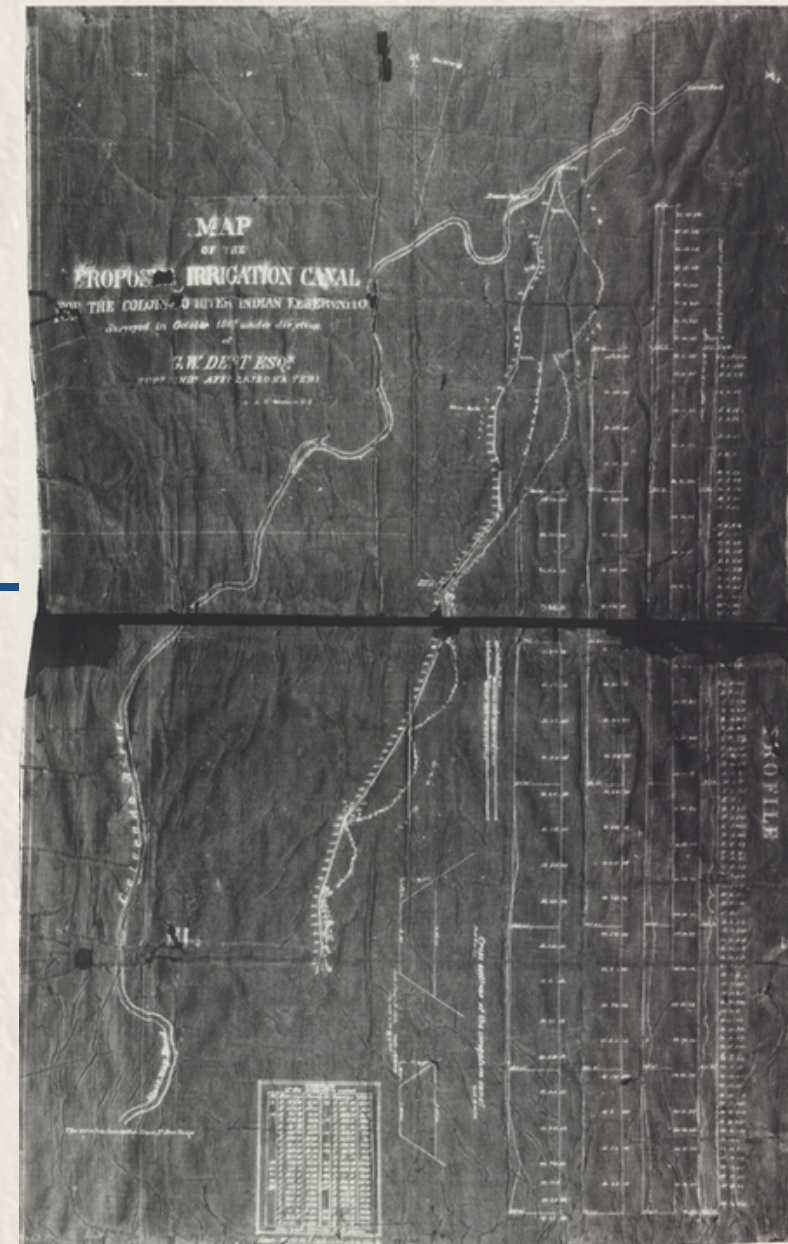


# 1867 Grant-Dent Canal

CONGRESS APPROPRIATED \$50,000 FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GRANT-DENT CANAL ON CRIT RESERVATION.



*This was the first time congress authorized money to be spent on water resources on tribal lands.*



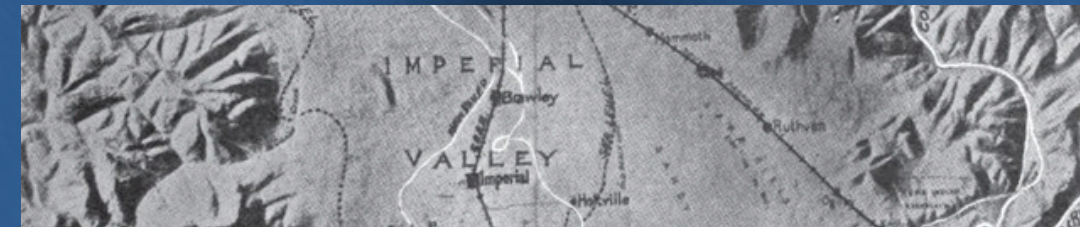
# Water Use Outside of the Basin Begins

1867



COLORADO RIVER WATER DELIVERED ACROSS CONTINENTAL DIVIDE INTO EASTERN COLORADO THROUGH THE GRAND DITCH - THE RIVER'S FIRST TRANS BASIN DIVERSION PROJECT.

1901



CALIFORNIA DEVELOPMENT CO. DIVERTS COLORADO RIVER WATER INTO IMPERIAL VALLEY.

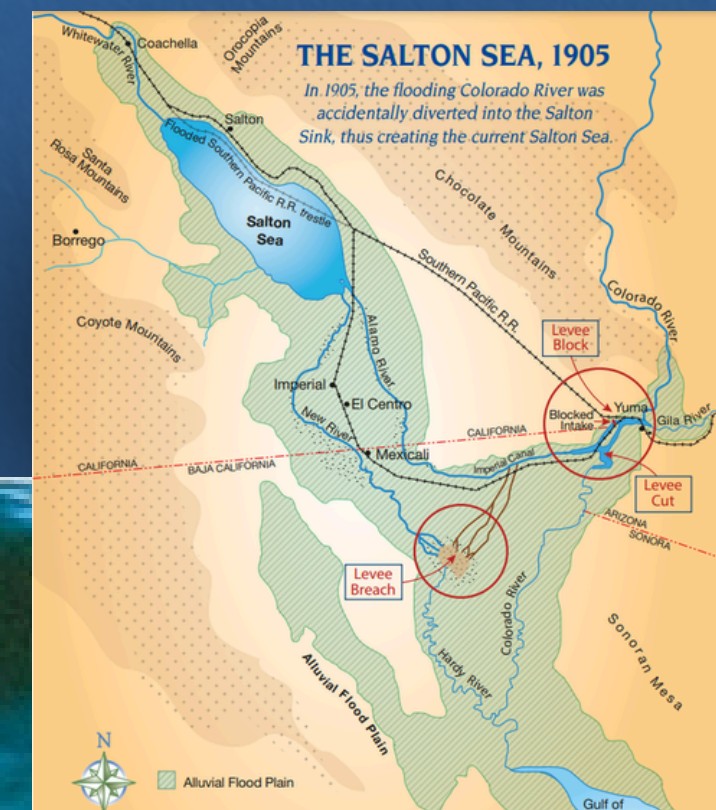
1902

RECLAMATION SERVICE (BUREAU OF RECLAMATION) ESTABLISHED.



1905-07

COLORADO RIVER BREAKS THROUGH IMPERIAL VALLEY CANAL, FLOWING INTO ANCIENT LAKE CAHUILLA TO FORM WHAT IS NOW CALLED THE SALTON SEA.





# Winters v. United States

SCAN TO READ THE FULL COURT CASE



## 1908

IN THE WINTERS V. U.S. DECISION, SUPREME COURT RULES THAT THE TREATIES CREATING RESERVATIONS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES CONVEY A RIGHT NOT ONLY TO LAND, BUT TO WATER AS WELL.

564

OCTOBER TERM, 1907.

Syllabus.

207 U. S.

phases of it—are ably dealt with in the opinion of the Court of Claims, and it would be unnecessary repetition to go over the argument or to review the cases.

*Judgment affirmed.*

WINTERS v. THE UNITED STATES.

APPEAL FROM THE CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT.

No. 158. Argued October 24, 1907.—Decided January 6, 1908.

The rule that all the parties must join in an appeal or writ of error unless properly detached from the right so to do applies only to joint judgments and decrees. This court has jurisdiction of an appeal taken or writ of error sued out by one of several defendants if his interest is separate from that of the other defendants.

In a suit against several defendants as trespassers in which some of them defaulted and others answered, *held*, that each defendant was a separate trespasser and that while those who defaulted were precluded from questioning the correctness of the decree entered against them, the answering defendants had nothing in common with the others and could maintain an appeal without them.

In a conflict of implications, the instruments must be construed according to the implication having the greater force; and, in the interpretation of agreements and treaties with Indians, ambiguities should be resolved from the standpoint of the Indians.

In view of all the circumstances of the transaction this court holds that there was an implied reservation in the agreement of May 1, 1888, 25 Stat. 124, with the Gros Ventre and other Indians establishing the Fort Belknap Reservation, of a sufficient amount of water from the Milk River for irrigation purposes, which was not affected by the subsequent act of February 22, 1889, 25 Stat. 676, admitting Montana to the Union, and that the water of that river cannot be diverted, so as to prejudice this right of the Indians, by settlers on the public lands or those claiming riparian rights on that river.

The Government of the United States has the power to reserve waters of a river flowing through a Territory and exempt them from appropriation under the laws of the State which that Territory afterwards becomes. 148 Fed. Rep. 681. affirmed.

# 1922 Interstate Compact



IN 1922, 7 COLORADO RIVER BASIN STATES AGREED ON HOW TO SHARE THE COLORADO RIVER.

NO TRIBAL NATIONS WERE INVOLVED. THEY AGREED ON TWO BASINS- AN UPPER BASIN AND A LOWER BASIN.

7.5 MILLION ACRE-FEET TO EACH BASIN.

1944 TREATY WITH MEXICO FOR ADDITIONAL 1.5 MILLION ACRE-FEET.



1922

The Upper and Lower Basins Established.



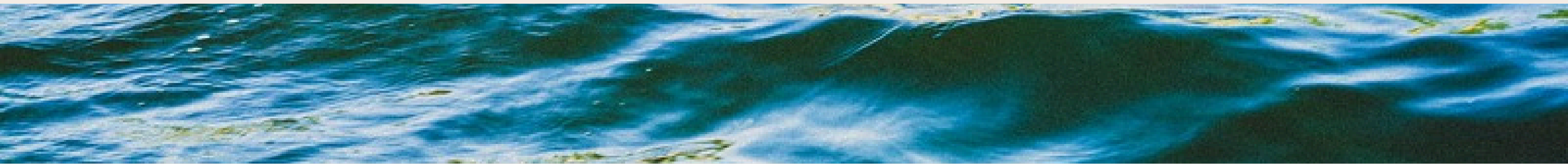
# The Beginning of a Math Problem.



1922 THE GLASS IS THOUGHT  
TO BE FULL AT 16.4 MILLION  
ACRE-FEET OF WATER PER YEAR

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UNDER THE COMPACT , IF EACH BASIN USES ITS FULL ENTITLEMENT, THAT  
MEANS 15 MILLION ACRE-FEET OF WATER IS USED.  
IN 1944, THE U.S. SIGNED A TREATY WITH MEXICO FOR 1.5 MILLION ACRE-FEET.  
THIS MEANS THE RIVER WAS THOUGHT TO PROVIDE 16.5 MILLION ACRE-FEET.



# Hoover Dam & the Metropolitan Colorado River Aqueduct 1928



# All American Canal

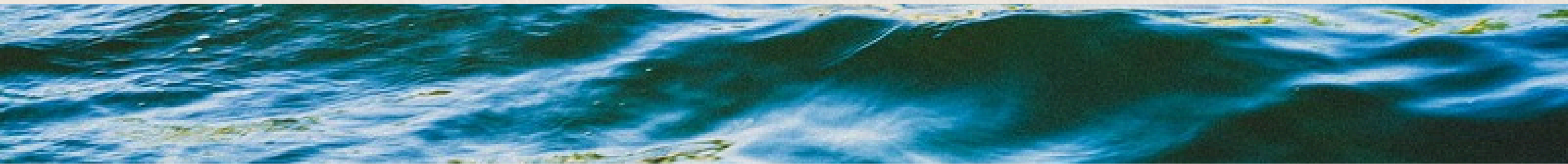
1940

AUTHORIZED FOR CONSTRUCTION IN 1928,  
AND COMPLETED IN 1940.



# Headgate Rock Dam on CRIT Reservation Completed

1941



# POSTON INTERNMENT CAMP ESTABLISHED ON CRIT RESERVATION



1942



1945

## HOPI & NAVAJO FAMILIES RELOCATE TO CRIT RESERVATION





# 1944

U.S. AND MEXICO SIGN TREATY TO ANNUALLY ALLOCATE 1.5 MILLION ACRE- FEET OF COLORADO RIVER WATER TO MEXICO.



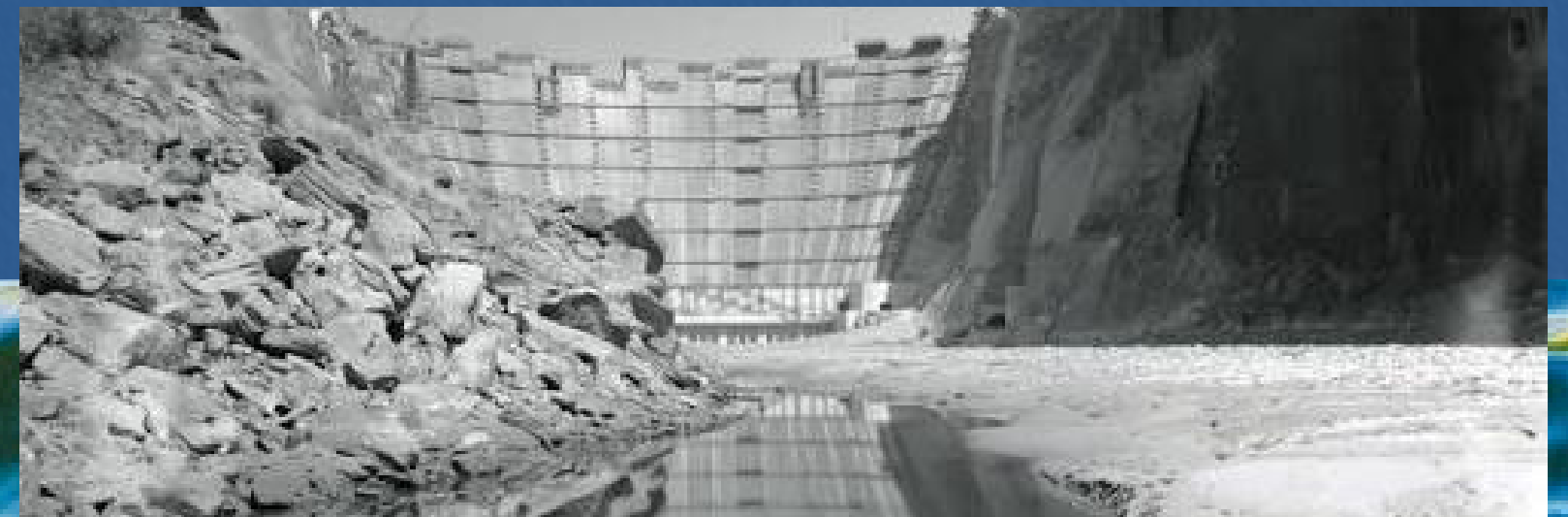
SIGNING OF THE 1944 WATER TREATY at Washington, D. C. on February 3, 1944. At end of table, seated, is United States Secretary of State Cordell Hull signing the document, and to his right, also seated, is Mexican Foreign Relations Secretary F. Castillo Najera. Seated to Secretary Hull's left are United States Ambassador George S. Messersmith (nearest Hull) and United States Commissioner, IBWC, Lawrence M. Lawson. To Secretary Najera's right is Rafael Fernandez McGregor, Mexican Commissioner, IBWC. Standing to the left of the door is the U. S. Section Legal Counsel Frank B. Clayton.

# 1948

COLORADO, WYOMING, UTAH AND NEW MEXICO SIGN UPPER COLORADO RIVER COMPACT APPORTIONING WATER AMONG THEMSELVES AND PAVING THE WAY FOR NEW WATER PROJECTS.

# 1956

COLORADO RIVER STORAGE PROJECT ACT APPROVES MULTIPLE PROJECTS IN THE UPPER BASIN, INCLUDING FLAMING GORGE DAM AND GLEN CANYON DAM.



# Arizona v. California

## 1964



READ THE FULL COURT CASE HERE



**AFFIRMS CRIT AS THE SENIOR TRIBAL RIGHT IN THE BASIN WITH RIGHTS TO 719,248 ACRE-FEET OF WATER TO IRRIGATE 107,903 ACRES OF LAND.**

*The United States reserved the water rights for the Indians, effective as of the time the Indian reservations were created, and these water rights, having vested before the Act became effective in 1929, are "present perfected rights," and, as such, are entitled to priority under the Act. Pp. 373 U. S. 598-600.*



# CONSOLIDATED DECREE 2006



READ THE FULL DECREE HERE



*The Colorado River Indian Reservation in annual quantities not to exceed (i) 719,248 acre-feet of diversions from the mainstream or (ii) the quantity of mainstream water necessary to supply the consumptive use required for irrigation of 107,903 acres...*

**PRIORITY DATE IS MARCH 3<sup>RD</sup> 1865**

# Central Arizona Project (CAP)

A THREE COUNTY SERVICE AREA



## 1968



CONGRESS AUTHORIZES COLORADO RIVER WATER TO BE DELIVERED FOR USE IN CENTRAL ARIZONA.

IT IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST REASONS CENTRAL ARIZONA'S CITIES, AGRICULTURE, AND ECONOMY IS ABLE TO GROW. IT ALSO MEANS MANY COMMUNITIES THAT ARE FAR FROM THE RIVER, AND HAVE JUNIOR WATER RIGHTS TO CRIT, DEPEND HEAVILY ON COLORADO RIVER WATER.





1992

TEN TRIBES PARTNERSHIP IS FORMED PROVIDING TRIBES A COLLECTIVE VOICE IN PROTECTION AND USE OF TRIBAL WATER RESOURCES.

1999

INTERIOR SECRETARY APPROVES RULES ALLOWING LOWER BASIN STATES TO "BANK" WATER IN ARIZONA AQUIFERS. SCIENTISTS DETERMINE YIELD OF THE COLORADO RIVER IS ONLY AN AVERAGE OF 15.2 MILLION ACRE-FEET BETWEEN 1906 AND 1999.

2000

THE "MILLENNIUM DROUGHT" BEGINS ON THE COLORADO RIVER, WHICH WILL PROVE TO BE THE WORST DROUGHT ON THE RIVER IN AT LEAST 1,200 YEARS.



# The Math Problem Begins to Worsen.



20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY ONLY YIELDED 15.2 MILLION ACRE-FEET.

16.4 MILLION ACRE-FOOT ORIGINALLY BELIEVED IN 1922 IS NOW 15.2 MILLION ACRE-FOOT.

$16.4 - 15.2 = .1.2$  MILLION ACRE-FEET OF WATER IS MISSING

...WAS IT EVER THERE?

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SCIENTISTS START TO UNDERSTAND THE RIVER WILL NOT YIELD AS MUCH AS THOUGHT.



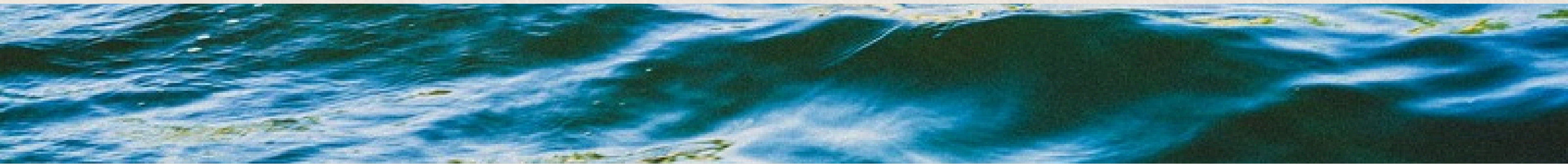


**2007** SEVEN COLORADO RIVER STATES REACH AGREEMENT ON THE "INTERIM SURPLUS GUIDELINES," A PACKAGE OF MEASURES TO HELP THEM WEATHER THE DEEPENING DROUGHT.  
*No Tribal Involvement.*

**2010** FOLLOWING A 7.2 MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE, MEXICO AND U.S. SIGN MINUTE 318, AN INTERIM AGREEMENT THAT ALLOWS MEXICO TO STORE PART OF ITS ALLOCATION IN LAKE MEAD WHILE IT REPAIRS DAMAGED INFRASTRUCTURE.

**2012** MINUTE 319, ANOTHER SUPPLEMENT TO THE U.S.-MEXICO WATER TREATY, ALLOWS MEXICO TO STORE WATER IN LAKE MEAD AND PROVIDES FOR "PULSE FLOWS" TO HELP RESTORE THE COLORADO RIVER DELTA.

**2014** A PULSE FLOW IS RELEASED FROM MEXICO'S MORELOS DAM DOWNSTREAM INTO THE COLORADO RIVER DELTA, WHERE CONSERVATION GROUPS ARE WORKING TO RESTORE SOME OF WHAT WAS ONCE MORE THAN 2 MILLION ACRES OF RIPARIAN HABITAT AND WETLANDS VITAL TO BIRDS AND WILDLIFE.





2018

TEN TRIBES PARTNERSHIP WATER STUDY IDENTIFIES CONDITION OF CRIIP AS A LIMITING FACTOR FOR CRIT WATER USE.

2021

CRIT PARTICIPATES IN THE DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLAN TO PROVIDE 150,000 ACRE-FEET FOR LAKE MEAD TO PROTECT THE SYSTEM. THERE IS 10,000 ADDITIONAL ACRE-FEET THAT IS CONVERTED INTO A SAVINGS ACCOUNT FOR FUTURE CRIT USE. BUT THIS WATER IS ALSO SUBJECT TO SPECIAL RULES INCLUDING BEING SUBJECT TO EVAPORATION LOSSES.

2023

CONGRESS PASSES CRIT WATER RESILIENCY ACT OF 2022. RECLAMATION, INTRODUCES THE CONCEPT OF PRO-RATA SHORTAGES.

2024

CRIT SIGNS THREE PARTY AGREEMENT WITH DOI AND ARIZONA FOR OFF-RESERVATION LEASING.

2025

READ THE WATER CODE IN ITS ENTIRETY HERE



CRIT TRIBAL COUNCIL, AFTER EXTENSIVE COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION WITH MEMBERSHIP DECLARE THAT THE COLORADO RIVER ALIVE UNDER CRIT LAW AND ENTITLED TO PROTECTION.

*Tribal Council passes a comprehensive Water Code.*



# The Drought and the Math Gets Worse.



SCIENTISTS NOW DETERMINE AS OF 2026,  
ONLY 12 MILLION ACRE-FEET.

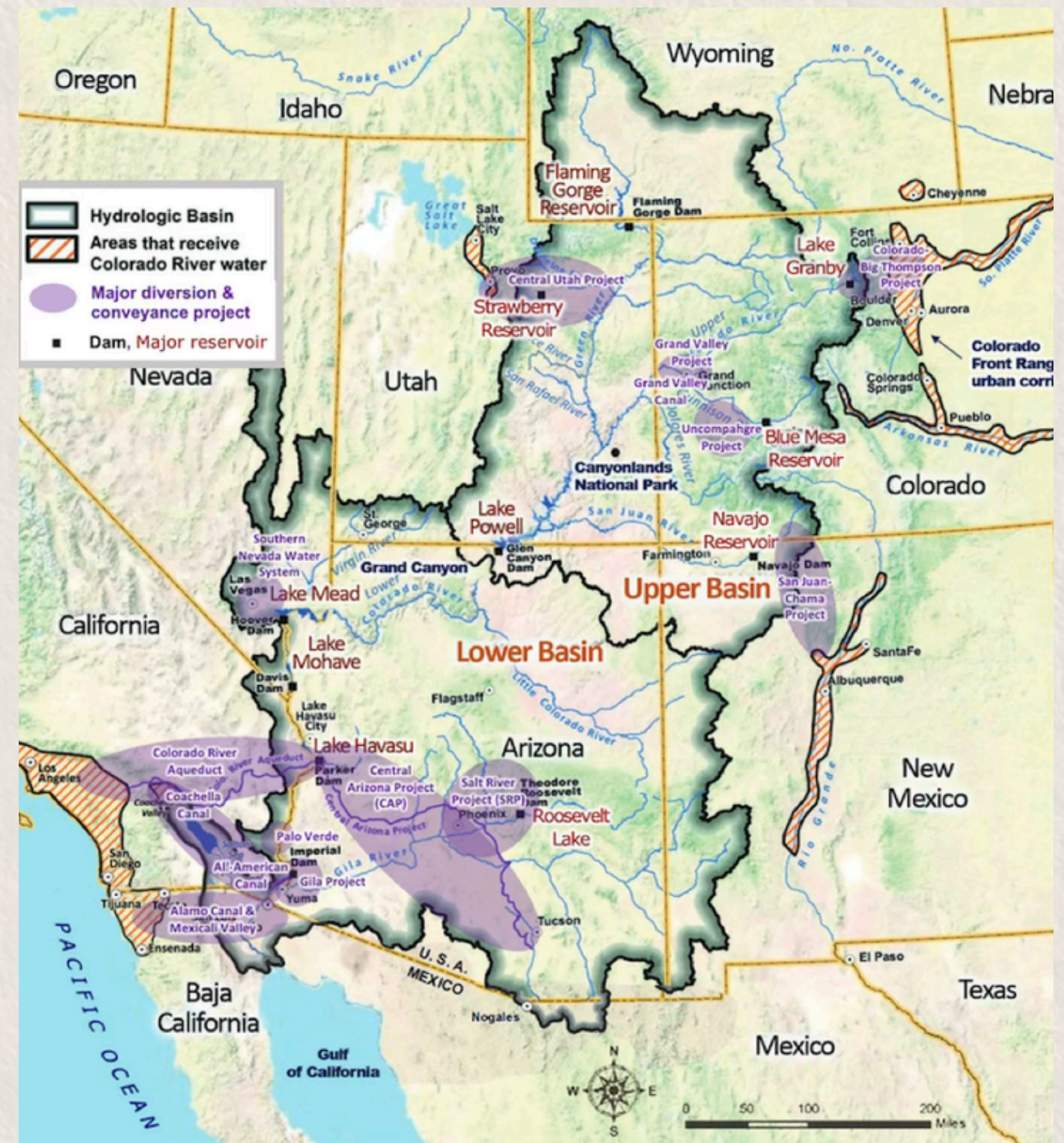
THEREFORE,  $16.4 - 12 = 4.4$  MILLION ACRE-  
FEET LESS!

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SCIENTISTS DETERMINE THAT FROM 2000-2026, THE YIELD OF THE RIVER IS ONLY 12 MILLION ACRE-FEET.

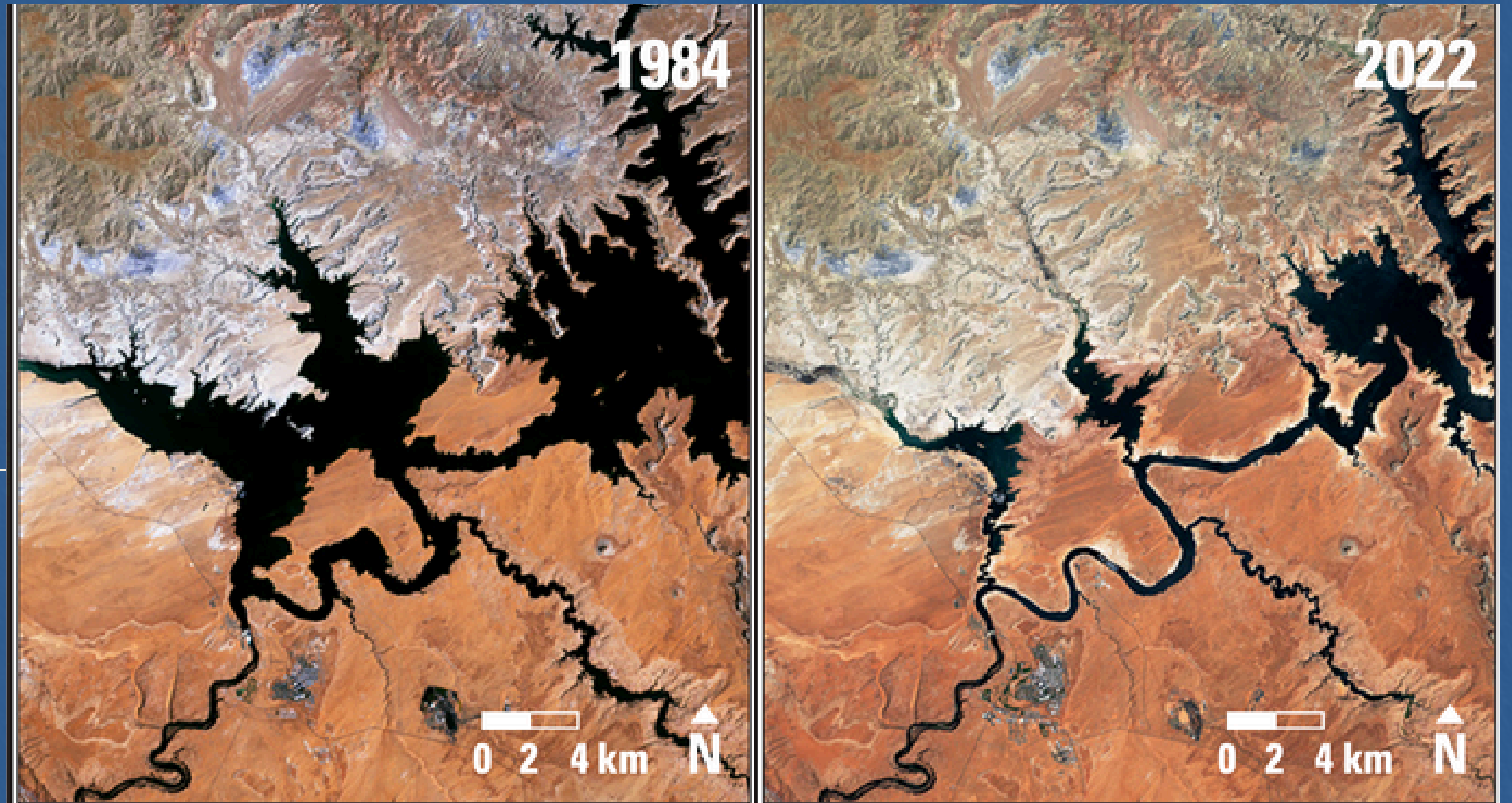


# Where Colorado River Water Flows Today



# Lake Powell

THEN AND NOW



# The Rules for Lake Powell & Lake Mead.

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**THE RULES FOR HOW BUREAU OF RECLAMATION OPERATE LAKES MEAD AND POWELL EXPIRE ON OCTOBER 1<sup>ST</sup> OF THIS YEAR.**

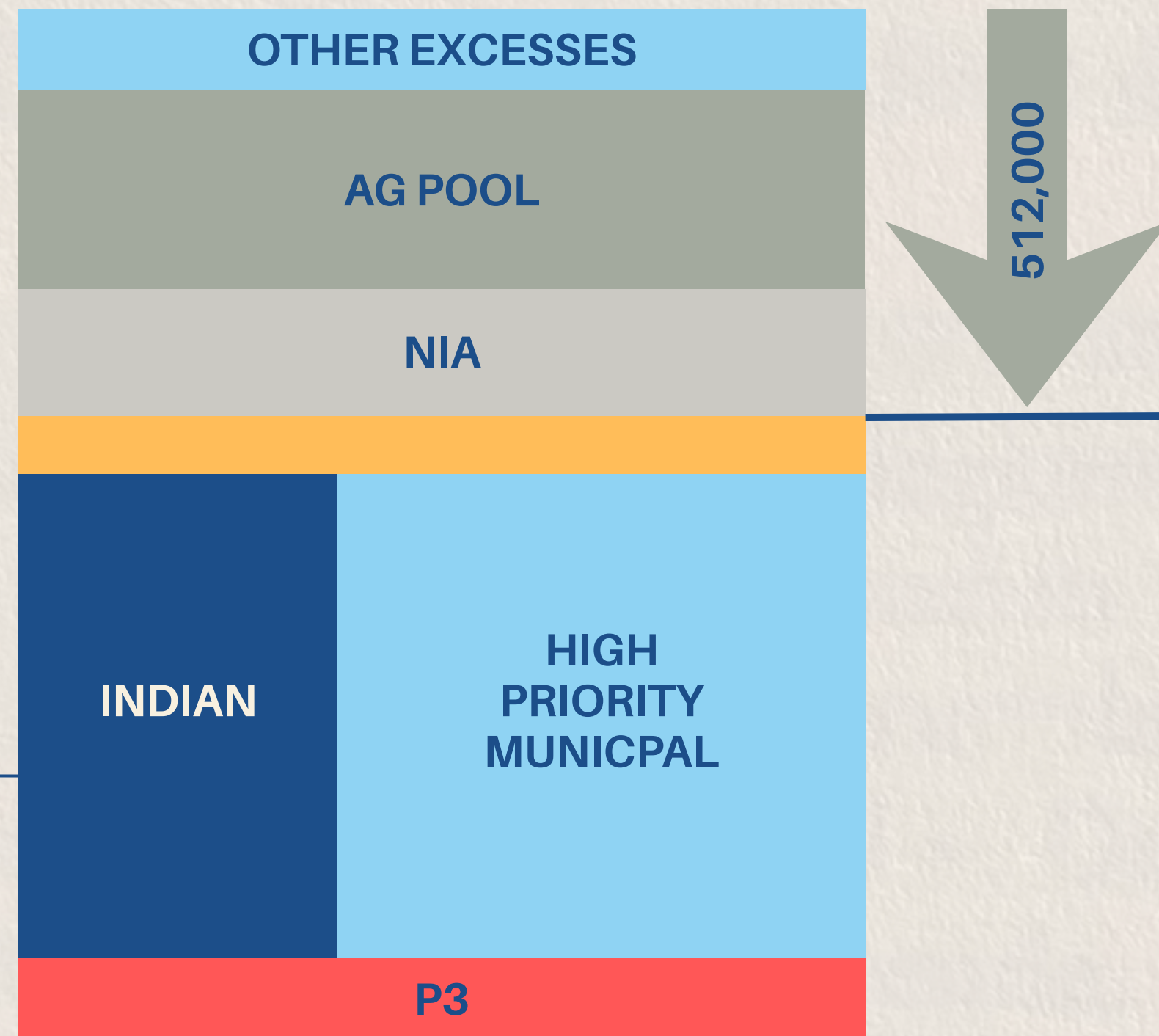
**UNDER THE CURRENT PLAN, ARIZONA WILL BE REDUCED BY 512,000 ACRE-FEET. UNDER THE NEW PLAN, ARIZONA SHORTAGES ARE ANTICIPATED TO BE A MINIMUM OF 760,000 ACRE-FEET, AND COULD GO DEEPER DEPENDING ON THE HYDROLOGY.**



# Current Shortages

DUE TO AGREEMENTS MADE MANY YEARS AGO, THE CAP TAKES THE MAJORITY OF SHORTAGES IN THE LOWER BASIN.

CURRENTLY, CAP IS ALLOCATED A 512,000 ACRE-FOOT SHORTAGE. MOST EXPERTS AGREE THAT REDUCTIONS MUST GO DEEPER AND THAT ARIZONA MUST TAKE A MINIMUM OF 760,000 ACRE-FOOT REDUCTION!



# What does this mean for CRIT?



CRIT HAS THE SENIOR MOST TRIBAL RIGHTS IN THE BASIN.  
UNDER THE LAW, THIS MEANS THAT CRIT IS THE LAST TO BE SHORTED.

**CRIT SHOULD BE SAFE.**

*but are we....?*





# NO Pro-Rata!

PRO-RATA IS WHEN SHORTAGES ARE ALLOCATED EQUALLY AMONG ALL WATER USERS WITHOUT REGARD TO PRIORITY DATE.

**IT IS ILLEGAL AND WRONG!**

RECLAMATION HAS INCLUDED PRO-RATA AS A POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVE IN ITS ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS. TRIBAL COUNCIL HAS BEEN IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO ITS INCLUSION.

AFTER INTENSE LOBBYING BY COUNCIL AND THE CRIT WATER TEAM, RECLAMATION HAS AGREED TO REMOVE PRO-RATA FROM ITS PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE IN THE FINAL EIS.

*This is a major victory for CRIT!* **BUT WE MUST REMAIN VIGILANT!**



# CRIT Water Use

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**IN ARIZONA, CRIT IS ENTITLED TO DIVERT 662,402 ACRE-FEET FROM THE COLORADO RIVER, BUT IN 2025 ONLY DIVERTED 528,695 ACRE FEET.**

**IN CALIFORNIA, CRIT IS ENTITLED TO DIVERT 56,846 ACRE-FEET, BUT IN 2025, WE ONLY DIVERTED 3,130 ACRE-FEET.**

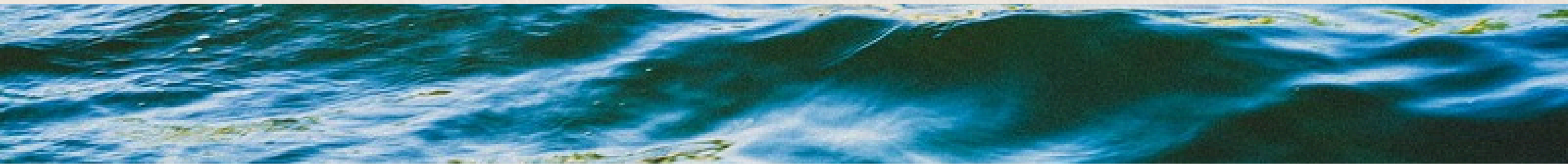
***Water that is unused is water at risk!***



# What is Reclamation Proposing?



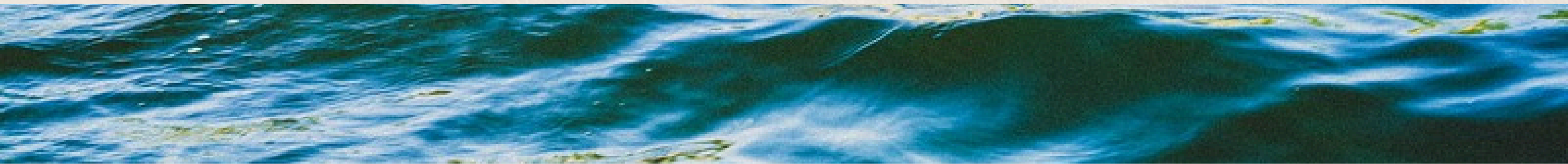
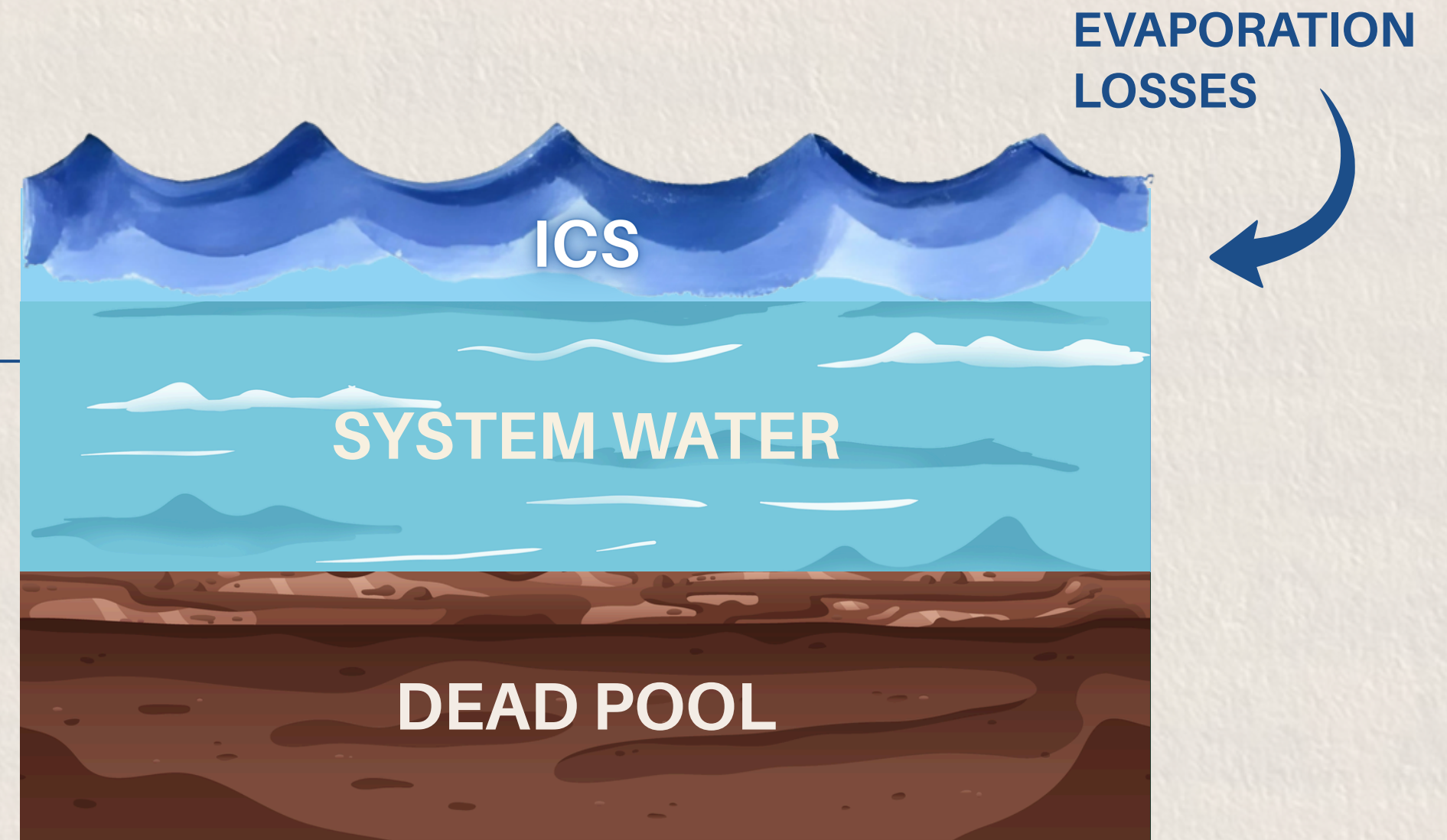
**RECLAMATION IS PROPOSING A 10-YEAR PLAN BUT BREAKING IT DOWN INTO 2-YEAR INCREMENTS TO ALLOW FOR FLEXIBILITY BASED ON HYDROLOGY.  
SHORTAGE SHARING IS BASED ON VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS- NO PRO-RATA.  
RECLAMATION'S ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS STATES UP TO 3 MILLION ACRE-FEET OF SHORTAGES MAY BE REQUIRED.**



# Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS)

ICS IS LIKE A SAVINGS ACCOUNT FOR WATER USERS TO KEEP THEIR WATER IN LAKE MEAD FOR LATER INSTEAD OF USING IT NOW.

BUT BECAUSE THE WATER IS STORED IN LAKE MEAD, RECLAMATION ACCOUNTS FOR EVAPORATION LOSSES.





# ICS Continued...

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FROM 2020 TO 2022 IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST FROM THE GOVERNMENT TO PROTECT LAKE MEAD, CRIT CONSERVED 150,000 ACRE-FEET. CRIT WAS COMPENSATED FOR THIS WATER.

IN UNDERTAKING THIS CONSERVATION, CRIT CONSERVED AN ADDITIONAL 10,000 ACRE-FEET THAT WAS UNCOMPENSATED.

THIS ADDITIONAL 10,000 ACRE-FEET WAS PLACED IN AN ICS ACCOUNT.

BUT BECAUSE ICS IS SUBJECT TO EVAPORATION LOSS, THAT 10,000 ACRE-FEET IS NOW 9,000 ACRE-FEET.

TRIBAL COUNCIL IS CURRENTLY EXPLORING WAYS TO BE COMPENSATED FOR THIS 9,000 ACRE FEET BEFORE IT SHRINKS EVEN MORE.





# What you can do to help protect CRIT's Water Resources.

USING AS MUCH OF CRIT'S SUPREME COURT WATER ALLOCATION AS WE CAN WITHOUT WASTE, IN WAYS THAT ARE GOOD FOR CRIT'S PEOPLE, OUR LANDS, OUR ECONOMY, AND OUR CULTURE.

WORK WITH COUNCIL TO PLACE ADDITIONAL LANDS INTO PRODUCTION.

BE VIGILANT IN COLORADO RIVER MATTERS AND PROTECTING OUR WATER FROM ANYONE WHO TRIES TO TAKE IT.

PARTICIPATE IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS, LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD/NO PRO-RATA REDUCTIONS!  
DEVELOP MORE RESTORATION PROJECTS THAT BENEFIT FISH AND WILDLIFE, OUR LANDS, OUR WATERS, OUR PLANTS, AND OUR TREES.

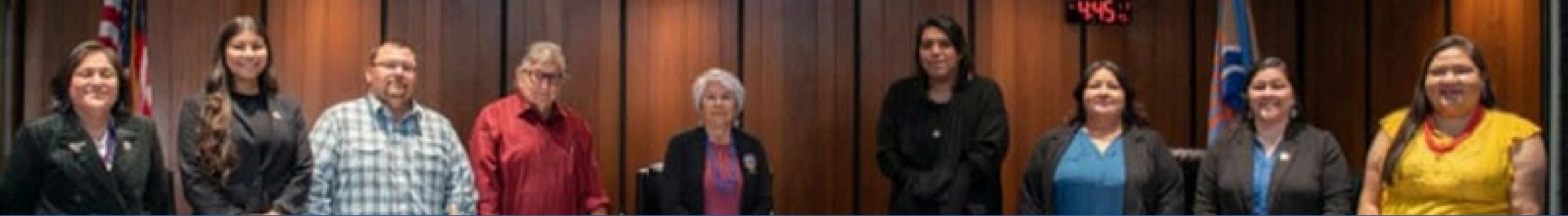
PROTECT YOUR CONNECTION TO THE RIVER.

CONTINUE TO EVALUATE NEW CROPS AND USES OF CRIT WATER.

CONTINUE TO COORDINATE WITH OTHER ON-RIVER TRIBES AND OTHER SENIOR WATER RIGHTS HOLDERS.

EDUCATE OUR YOUNG TRIBAL MEMBERS ABOUT THE RIVER, AND THE NEED TO PROTECT WHAT WE HAVE FOR THE FUTURE.





# Actions by Tribal Council to address Water Issues

*Adopted a Personhood Declaration that the River is alive and must be protected.*

WE ARE REQUIRING RECLAMATION TO CONSULT WITH US ON HOW TO PROTECT THE RIVER, AND ENHANCE OUR WATER RESOURCES FOR THE BENEFIT OF FUTURE GENERATIONS, INCLUDING AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THERE ARE IMPACTS TO CRIT CULTURE WHEN COLORADO RIVER WATER IS DELIVERED TO CENTRAL ARIZONA AND THE CALIFORNIA COAST.

*Enacted a comprehensive water code that will track water use on the reservation and provide the framework for the protection, development, and enhancement of CRIT's water resources.*

AT QUAIL MESA IN ARIZONA, BRINGING 854 ACRES OF LAND INTO PRODUCTION, AND TAKING STEPS TO PROVIDE OVER 2,000 ADDITIONAL ACRES THIS YEAR.

TAKING STEPS TO ADDRESS INEFFICIENCY OF THE IRRIGATION PROJECT THROUGH DEVELOPMENT OF A RE-REGULATION RESERVOIR TO CAPTURE SPILLS.

*Engaging at the highest levels with the federal and state government. Including three separate government to government consultation visits to CRIT in the last year alone!*

UNDERTAKING A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE NEEDS OF THE IRRIGATION PROJECT TO BRING IT UP TO DATE.





**Engaging at the highest levels with the federal and state government. Including three separate government to government consultation visits to CRIT in the last year alone!**

**UNDERTAKING A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE NEEDS OF THE IRRIGATION PROJECT TO BRING IT UP TO DATE.**

**IN THE PLANNING AND DESIGN STAGES FOR A PROPOSED RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT IN CALIFORNIA.**

**TAKING STEPS TO ADDRESS INEFFICIENCY OF THE IRRIGATION PROJECT THROUGH DEVELOPMENT OF A RE-REGULATION RESERVOIR TO CAPTURE SPILLS THAT WILL ALSO HAVE FISH AND WILDLIFE BENEFITS.**

**LISTENED TO THE PEOPLE, THROUGH WATER RIGHTS DAY, SURVEYS, AND HEARING YOUR INPUT AT SATURDAY MEETINGS TO MAKE SURE THAT WE ARE DOING EVERYTHING WE CAN TO PROTECT OUR RIVER AND OUR WAY OF LIFE.**

**AT RAINER RANCH, CLEARING 1,178 ACRES FOR MODERN FARMING WITH MORE EFFICIENT WATER DELIVERY.**

**COMPLETING AN ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS 1,500 ACRES OF ADDITIONAL AGRICULTURE IN CALIFORNIA.**



# Thank You

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, ATTENTION, AND COMMITMENT TO CRIT'S FUTURE. THE COLORADO RIVER HAS ALWAYS SUSTAINED OUR PEOPLE. TOGETHER, WE CARRY THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT IT, UNDERSTAND OUR RIGHTS, AND SECURE THEM FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

