The Akimel O’otham and Pee Posh

Akimel O’odham or “River People” (Pima)

Pee Posh or “the People” (Maricopa)
“There was plenty of water in the river all the year round; we ... had a constant flow in our ditches (and) irrigated our land.”

64 year-old John Hayes of Sweetwater (1914)
“(We) owned all of the Gila River Valley (and) lived by agricultural pursuits. (We) were not a war-like people nor led nomadic lives.”

90 year-old Cos-Chin of Sweetwater (1914)
“(We raised) two crops a year; sowing wheat during the winter, melons, corn, pumpkins and other (crops) in the spring.”

60 year-old John Makil of Casa Blanca (1914)
“(We) used it continuously and were self-supporting and independent.”

81 year-old William Wallace of Blackwater (1914)
“I can remember very well the time when water in the river was plentiful and the Pima irrigated their lands and were a self-supporting people. Because there being sufficient water for irrigation, we raised (crops) in abundance.”

65 year-old George Pablo of Cottonwood District (1914)
“(We) had bountiful crops that (we) gathered the best for (our)selves and left the poorest ones for … horses and other animals”

67 year-old Antonito Azul of Sacaton Flats (1914)
“We (were) poor in horses and plows (but) rich in harvests.”

86 year-old Meguel of Bapchil
“Land was divided up to families no matter how small a family a man had. It was the idea of a Pima father to encourage his children in farming. When they got older, they were given land to work.”

65 year-old Tor White of Sweetwater (1914)
“We raised lots of wheat, corn, melons, (and) pumpkins, and never depended on the government.”

65 year-old George Pablo of Cottonwood District (1914)
“We (were) on both sides of the river getting all the water we wanted for irrigation and were self-supporting.”

80 year-old Havelena of Casa Blanca (1914)
“Time afterwards white people immigrated through Pima land going West. They generally stopped with the Pimas who were always willing to share their food and shelter.”

90 year-old Cos-chin of Sweetwater (1914)
“We considered them the Good Samaritans of the Desert.”

Benjamin Butler Harris, June 1849
“(He) used to fill up all his store houses with wheat bought from the Indians. People now have no idea how much wheat Indians used to raise in times gone by.”

81 year-old Henry Austin of Casa Blanca (1914)
The 1863 Warning
“The first diversion being so small we hardly noticed it, but (settlers) gradually took out more each year till we noticed our loss by not being able to irrigate all our fields, until some 20 years when we were left high and dry.”

67 year-old Chir-purtke of Alkali Village (1914)
“This district (Blackwater) began to catch the envious eye of the white land invader. Consequently, the waters of the Gila River … gradually decreased … until finally when the Florence Canal was constructed, we were left high and dry.”

71 year-old Frank Hayes of Blackwater (1914)
“When water was first taken out ... above the reservation, we felt it and suffered first, as were the last to take our water from the river.”

48 year-old Juan Lagons of Gila Crossing (1914)
“As for my father and myself, we abandoned about 123 acres. The claims which we were clearing at the time the water went down had to be abandoned and now remains under brush … because there is no water to irrigate with.”

67 year-old Antonito Azul of Sacaton Flats (1914)
“Although the water supply is small, we manage to distribute it equally thereby getting a crop each year.”

53 year-old James Hollen of Gila Crossing (1914)
“In order to keep alive we had to cut and sell wood in Phoenix and other towns. White people have no idea how the Pima Indian has suffered by the diversions of their water.”

70 year-old Joseph Head of Gila Crossing (1914)
“That 6,000 Pima Indians, always the consistent and active friends of the white man, should be reduced from a condition of wealth and great prosperity to actual starvation through neglect of the federal government … seems a … killing of friends.”

Chicago Tribune, June 19, 1900
“(Water loss) caused us to abandon our old farms and homes, which we loved so dearly.”

70 year-old Joseph Head of Gila Crossing (1914)
“Of 586 families visited … 432 families of industrious Indians eager for work have not been able to raise any crop at all for lack of water.”

Reverends Sheldon Jackson and George Spinning, Presbyterian Church (1900)
“Quite a number of our ditches are now lying idle and covered with brush.”

53 year-old James Hollen of Gila Crossing (1914)
“We have suffered much loss, our cultivated land was reduced and what fields we do cultivate, do not bring us as much as they did when irrigated by river water.”

49 year-old John Rhodes of Sranuka (1914)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Abandoned</th>
<th>Current</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fields</td>
<td>1,066</td>
<td>2,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres</td>
<td>6,998</td>
<td>12,069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean size</td>
<td>6.57 acres</td>
<td>5.16 acres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Since there is not enough water … I left my old home in Mt. Top village (and) lived (in Cottonwood District).”

65 year-old George Pablo of Cottonwood District (1914)
“If we had as much water now as we did then, our young people would be prosperous.”

70 year-old Ho-ke Wilson of Cottonwood District (1914)
“Our pride as self-supporting and independent people was ... taken from us.”

71 year-old Frank Hayes of Blackwater (1914)
“The farming here got uncertain just as it had in other districts. (We) are now forced …to do the best we can for subsistence.”

84 year-old Jose Enis of Sweetwater (1914)
All the while Congress debated restoring water.
In 1950, the Salt River Valley Water Users’ Association merged with the Salt River Power District to become the Salt River Project (SRP). Today the Salt River Project supplies power to about 930,000 customers. Generation capacity at Theodore Roosevelt Dam has increased to 36 mW. Hydropower from the Salt River generators are still part of SRP’s renewable energy portfolio.

At first, surplus power generated by the dam’s hydroelectric plant only served about half a dozen customers, but that number quickly grew. In 1912, the dam supplied power to a copper company in Miami, Arizona. By 1928, hydroelectric dams built on the Salt River at Horse Mesa, Mormon Flat and Stewart Mountain helped energize the Valley’s rural areas nearly 10 years before the passage of the National Rural Electrification Act.

Rural electricity was still so rare that transmission lines were a true novelty. Children made a game out of climbing the power poles, but the risks were real. Authorities warned: “Children often pretend to climb these poles, and if the warning is not heeded somebody may be killed. Parents will do well to impress these facts on their children.”

On August 1, 1909—over a year before the dam was completed and three years before Arizona’s statehood—hydroelectric power was first generated at the dam. Three months later, a brand new substation for Pacific Gas and Electric Company was receiving the hydroelectric energy.

By the turn of the century, hydroelectricity was fairly common in dams in the northeast. Members of the Salt River Valley Water Users’ Association were condominium owners, and the dam was their community swimming pool. The 4,500 kW power plant was one of the first large power facilities constructed by the federal government.

President Theodore Roosevelt, a naturalist and advocate for the conservation of soil and water, signed the National Reclamation Act of 1902. It was Reclamation’s first reclamation project but not without controversy. The Tonto site (Roosevelt Dam) was selected as the first reclamation project but not without controversy. It was Reclamation’s first hydroelectric project and last masonry dam. Standing 280 feet high and spanning 723 feet across the Salt River Canyon, it was the tallest masonry dam in the world when it was completed in 1911.

In 1886, the Salt River Valley was a desert, and the Hohokam—people who lived here for almost 1,500 years, building an advanced network of irrigation canals. In 1867, 400 years after the Hohokam left, a rancher by the name of Thomas Swilling arrived in the Salt River Valley based on the ruins of the Hohokam canals. “Swilling’s Ditch” irrigated crops which went to feed the gold prospectors at the Vulture Mine in Wickenburg. Irrigation canals quickly became popular, and over the next 40 years the Salt River Valley blossomed into an agricultural community.

President Roosevelt on his way to dedicate the dam named in his honor, 1911. U.S. Senator Barry Goldwater speaks at the dam’s Golden Jubilee in 1961.

Watch Theodore Roosevelt Dam: Arizona’s Living Legacy, created by SRP to celebrate the dam’s centennial.
“Appeal for Justice”

“We have not the papers to show just what the speculators and politicians of the Salt River Valley had to do with the appointments of Agent Alexander and Engineer Code, but the events which followed speak loudly. Before these men came on the scene, Government engineers … had recommended the San Carlos Reservoir site as the best in this part of the country. But some time between August 15, 1902, and July 25, 1903, it seems a reservoir was decided upon for the Salt River Valley. The Pimas were told that much of their reservation could be irrigated from the Salt River Reservoir, and Alexander and Code at once began talking of underground water for the Indians. To this the Indians objected.”

written by Antonito Azul (1911)
In 1908, the U.S. Supreme Court for the first time recognize Indian “reserved rights” to stream waters. The decision was ignored for decades.
The Little Gila Project
The Agency Project
The Casa Blanca Project
The Blackwater Project
The Sacaton Flats Project
The Florence-Casa Grande Project
Sacaton Diversion Dam
San Carlos Dam and San Carlos Irrigation Project
“Subjugation” of 50,000 acres of land.
1933 subjugation in District 5.
San Carlos Reservoir: 1941
Globe Equity No. 59

In the District Court of the United States
In and for the District of Arizona

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
vs.
GILA VALLEY IRRIGATION DISTRICT, ET AL.

DEGREE ENTERED JUNE 29, 1935
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
En Banc

IN RE THE GENERAL ADJUDICATION OF
ALL RIGHTS TO USE WATER IN THE GILA
RIVER SYSTEM AND SOURCE

Supreme Court
Nos. WC-90-0001-IR
through WC-90-0007-IR
(Consolidated)
WC-79-0001 through
WC-79-0004
(Consolidated)
Maricopa County
Nos. W-1, W-2, W-3,
W-4 (Consolidated)

OPINION

Interlocutory Review of September 30, 1988 Order
Superior Court in Maricopa County
The Honorable Stanley Z. Goodfarb, Judge (retired)

Issue 4: Do federal reserved water rights extend to
groundwater (underground water) that is not subject
to prior appropriation under Arizona law?

Issue 5: Are federal reserved rights holders entitled to
greater protection from groundwater pumping than are
water users who hold only state law rights?
CAP WATER DELIVERY CONTRACT
Tribal leaders fought for many years to bring about the 2004 Arizona Water Settlements Act
Gila River Indian Community
Water Budget (acre-feet per year)

- Underground Water: 173,700
- Globe Equity Decree Water: 125,000
- Community CAP Indian Priority Water: 173,100
- RWCD CAP Water: 18,600
- RWCD Surface Water: 4,500
- HVID CAP Water: 18,100
- ASARCO CAP Water: 0
- SRP Stored Water: 20,000
- Chandler Contributed Reclaimed Water: 4,500
- Chandler Reclaimed Water Exchange Prem.: 2,230
- Mesa Reclaimed Water Exchange Prem.: 5,870
- New CAP NIA Priority Water: 102,000
- Haggard Decree Water: 5,900

Water Budget: 653,500
Florence Canal 2014
The Consolidated Canal ca. 1900
Pima Canal 2010

September 7, 2010
Station 225+00
Looking South
“I hope that some day these once-cultivated lands may bring to coming children abundant harvests again.”

70 year-old Ho-ke Wilson of Cottonwood District (1914)
The Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project

Connected to the past.
Constructing for the future.