

Past Water Use & Lost Water

- Over 2000 year history of practiced irrigated agriculture in central AZ – from 1790s through 1860s large scale agricultural production
- Post-Civil War theft of Community's water causes a decline in agricultural production to subsistence levels, eventually resulting in widespread starvation and famine
- Loss of natural flow of Gila River was also culturally devastating
- In pursuing claims the Community had two primary goals:
 - Restore agricultural economy
 - Bring back the river

Water Settlement

- After over 130 years of struggle, the Arizona Water Settlements Act of 2004 was signed into law, which included the Gila River Indian Community Water Settlement Act
- Settlement provided funding to refurbish existing irrigation infrastructure and construct new on-Reservation infrastructure to bring back traditional agricultural economy
- Settlement provides for a total annual water entitlement of 653,500 AF (about 213 billion gallons)
- Blended cost of water supposed to be around \$20-\$25/AF

Water Settlement continued

- Although the settlement includes an entitlement to Gila River water, the natural flow of the river was not restored
- Colorado River water through CAP is supplemental water to Gila River water
- The Community has the single largest entitlement to Colorado River within the CAP system – annual entitlement is 311,800 AF
- Community's CAP water uses to date:
 - Direct use within Reservation
 - Lease & exchanges
 - Off-Reservation storage (e.g. GSFs)
 - System conservation

Settlement Challenges & Actions

■ Challenges:

- Rising cost of CAP water delivery charges
- Settlement did not return natural flow of the Gila River
- Unanticipated events

■ Actions:

- Created the Gila River Water Storage LLC to market stored water to help fund future water costs
- Adopted a 5 Year Water Plan that required the creation of a Permanent Water Fund
- On-Reservation infrastructure improvements to increase groundwater capacity and “return” parts of the Gila River

Proposed DCP & DCP+

- Under DCP, if Lake Mead falls below 1075' AZ would cut back CAP supplies by over 500 KAF – an increase of nearly 200 KAF compared to 2007 Guidelines
- Cuts would eliminate Ag Pool water - Central AZ agriculture would be severely impacted
- Cuts would also limit the Community's NIA CAP water, and reduce its ability to store with GSFs
- DCP+ is an AZ stakeholder proposal to reduce the risk of Lake Mead falling below 1075' through incentives:
 - Paid System Conservation
 - Intentionally Created Surplus

Community's Role

- Make large portion of CAP supply available over short-term for system conservation and ICS to reduce risk of DCP cuts
- Increase groundwater capacity by developing recharge projects through partnerships with other AZ stakeholders
- Continued involvement in water supply discussion

