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# **U.S. BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS WESTERN REGION**

- BIA Water Resources/Water Rights Program: Tribal and Reservation Focus
- Interface with Urban Waters Federal Partnership – Arizona Water Reimagined
- Gila River Indian Reservation: Water Reimagined



## Circa 1980: A “Before” Shot

Gila River at I-10 on the Gila River Indian Reservation



# Milestones in DOI's Water Resources and Water Rights Programs

1964 Federal Water Decree in Arizona v. California (700,000 af/year confirmed to Arizona reservations on the Colorado River)

1968 – Congress authorizes the Central Arizona Project (1.5 million acre-feet/year to be diverted from the Colorado River into Central AZ)

1983 Secretarial Allocation of 300,000+ acre-feet/year of Central Arizona Project water to 10 Indian tribes in Arizona

1980-1987 deadlines to file water rights claims in the Gila River and Tributaries, in excess of 2 million acre feet.

1990 Issuance of DOI Policy Statement and Criteria and Procedures for Federal participation in Indian water settlement negotiations

1984-2010 Eight Indian water rights settlements in central AZ ratified by Congress, confirming over 1 million acre-feet/year to the tribes

Take-Away: Water Redistributed Among Indians and Non-Indians  
In Central Arizona and Partnerships Inspired





# Central Arizona Project Reimagined

- Evolution of Water Uses: From Ag to Urban
- Water Supplies as Commodities: Leasing/Marketing
- Surface Water/Groundwater Connectivity – Recharge Groundwater Using CAP Surface Supply
- Transactional Relationships: Tribes Transact with Cities, Mines, and Irrigation Districts to Exchange Water Sources, Recharge Groundwater, and Secure Robust Reservation Economies



# The Gila River Indian Reservation: Water Use Reimagined

- Managed Aquifer Recharge Projects
- Reimagining a Flowing Stream and Recharging Groundwater

Photo: Underground Storage Facility in the bed of the Gila River



## Olberg Bridge-Gila River Indian Reservation – Before and After





# Tribal Economic Ventures Using Settlement Water











