



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Inter Tribal Council of Arizona and the Bureau of Reclamation Sign Historic Agreement to Ensure Tribal Participation in Colorado River Negotiations**

**PHOENIX, Arizona – March 2, 2021** – The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc., (ITCA), a consortium of 21 federally recognized Indian Tribes in Arizona, has entered into a groundbreaking memorandum of understanding with the Bureau of Reclamation's Lower Colorado River Basin establishing a platform for ITCA Member Tribes to engage directly with the Bureau of Reclamation on issues related to management of the Colorado River.

“This agreement is an historic step toward protecting the significant water rights and entitlements of ITCA Member Tribes,” stated Bernadine Burnette, President of the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona. “By formalizing the relationship between ITCA and the Bureau of Reclamation and establishing the Colorado River Tribal Roundtable, ITCA’s Member Tribes will, for the first time, have a means to actively engage in management and policy decisions affecting the Colorado River while also being able to leverage the resources of the Bureau of Reclamation to build informed participation with tribes.”

The Colorado River Tribal Roundtable will operate as part of ITCA’s Tribal Leader Water Policy Council, which has been a trusted forum for water policy discussions among ITCA’s Member Tribes for more than a decade.

“Reclamation has a long history working with the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona and the Tribal Leaders Water Policy Council,” stated Leslie Meyers, Area Manager for the Phoenix Area Office of the Bureau of Reclamation. “We are proud to sign this MOU and are ready to convene the Colorado River Tribal Roundtable.”

The Colorado River is managed by the Secretary of Interior through the Bureau of Reclamation. The 2007 Interim Guidelines, the current rules under which the Colorado River is managed, expire in 2026. As the Colorado River Basin tribes, states and stakeholders move toward renegotiation of the 2007 Interim Guidelines, this agreement will create a space for Tribal Leaders to work directly with the Bureau of Reclamation and other state interests to ensure that the water rights and contracts of ITCA’s Member Tribes are protected as federal trust assets in order to meet the future water needs of Arizona tribes.

### **About the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc.**

The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA), was first established in 1952 to provide a united voice for tribal Governments located in the State of Arizona on common issues and concerns. Currently, ITCA’s membership includes 21 of the 22 Tribes of Arizona.

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Ak-Chin Indian Community  
Cocopah Indian Tribe  
Colorado River Indian Tribes  
Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation  
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe  
Gila River Indian Community  
Havasupai Tribe  
Hopi Tribe  
Hualapai Tribe  
Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians  
Pascua Yaqui Tribe  
Pueblo of Zuni  
Quechan Tribe  
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community  
San Carlos Apache Tribe  
San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe  
Tohono O’odham Nation  
Tonto Apache Tribe  
White Mountain Apache Tribe  
Yavapai-Apache Nation  
Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe