

SCRIPT— WATER DESK

TITLE: APACHE WATER

VIDEO	AUDIO
SUGGESTED LEAD-IN	AS THE COLORADO RIVER IS IMPACTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE AND DROUGHT, NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES ARE HELPING TO FIND SOLUTIONS. FROM THE WATER DESK, GARY STRIEKER REPORTS ON ONE TRIBE THAT FOUND A WAY TO CONTRIBUTE ITS WATER TO USERS DOWNSTREAM. ----- IN THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN THERE ARE 30 FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBES THAT CLAIM WATER RIGHTS TO ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF THE RIVER’S AVERAGE FLOW, A NUMBER THAT’S NOT YET REALLY SETTLED. SOT (VIGIL) 27:51 – “Right now, in 2022, with the tribal water rights being a gray area, we want clarity on that.” DARYL VIGIL IS THE WATER ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE JICARILLA APACHE NATION IN NEW MEXICO. SOT (VIGIL) 22:35 – “So all we’re asking for is the ability to be self-determined in how we can develop our water rights to speak to our own water rights.” AND THIS TRIBE HAS TAKEN A BIG STEP IN THAT DIRECTION WITH A NEW DEAL THAT LEASES THEIR WATER, UP TO 20,000 ACRE-FEET A YEAR FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS, BILLIONS OF GALLONS, TO HELP NEW MEXICO COMPLY WITH ITS WATER COMMITMENT TO USERS DOWNSTREAM, AND TO BENEFIT THE RECOVERY OF ENDANGERED FISH IN THE RIVER.

**THE NATURE CONSERVANCY ASSISTED IN
NEGOTIATING THE DEAL BETWEEN THE
TRIBE AND THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO.**

SOT (HAWKINS) 5:42 – “Tribal nations have been a very active part of the effort to look for solutions in the Colorado River Basin, but they haven’t always had a seat at the table when major policy decisions are made and so I see this as the Jicarilla Apache Nation really stepping up with quite a bit of water to be part of the solution in this incredible river system.”

**FOR YEARS THE TRIBE’S WATER WAS
LEASED TO COAL-FIRED POWER PLANTS
DOWNSTREAM, BUT THOSE PLANTS ARE
CLOSING AND HAVE TERMINATED THE
LEASE.**

**THE JICARILLA APACHES NEEDED TO FIND
ANOTHER MARKET FOR THEIR WATER, AND
THEY’VE NOW DONE THAT.**

**GARY STRIEKER, REPORTING FOR THE
WATER DESK.**