



Delivering water and power™

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Chairman Raul Grijalva  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Bruce Westerman  
House Committee on Natural Resources  
1329 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grijalva and Ranking Member Westerman:

I am writing to share Salt River Project's (SRP) support for H.R. 7633, the *Hualapai Tribe Water Rights Settlement Act of 2022*, introduced April 28, 2022 by Arizona Congressman Tom O'Halleran. This important legislation authorizes the Hualapai Tribe Water Rights Settlement Agreement ("Agreement") among the Hualapai Tribe, the United States and neighboring Arizona water users, including SRP.

SRP is comprised of the Salt River Valley Water Users' Association and the Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District. The Association, formed in 1903, and the District, formed in 1937, collectively operate the Salt River Federal Reclamation Project ("Project") which is the Phoenix metropolitan area's largest supplier of raw water, delivering more than 800,000 acre-feet annually to municipal, urban and agricultural water users. The Project also includes one of the nation's largest not-for-profit public power systems through which SRP provides electrical power to more than one million customers in the Phoenix area and certain rural areas of central Arizona. SRP has worked with numerous tribes and stakeholders to resolve Indian water rights disputes in a manner that benefits both Indian communities and their non-Indian neighbors. Most important among the benefits is water supply certainty, which is a fundamental outcome of any water rights settlement.

The Hualapai Tribe's Reservation is located in northwestern Arizona along the Colorado River with a portion in the upper end of the Verde River watershed, upstream from SRP's Verde River reservoirs. The United States, acting on behalf of the Tribe, has asserted claims in the Gila River General Stream Adjudication, to 14,495 acre-feet of water annually from the Verde River watershed.

The terms of the Agreement were originally agreed to and finalized among the Hualapai Tribe and state parties in 2019. The Agreement would, among other matters, permanently resolve the claims of the Tribe and the United States on its behalf to the Colorado and Verde River watersheds and would do so without impacting SRP's downstream Verde River water rights. State parties, including SRP, along with the Hualapai Tribe signed the agreement that year, and

legislation was introduced to congressionally authorize the settlement. That legislation, however, lacked the full support of the United States and required further negotiation.

The parties, including the United States, worked diligently to resolve concerns and the *Hualapai Tribe Water Rights Settlement Act of 2022* represents an agreement among the original parties that we believe satisfies concerns expressed by the United States in the prior legislation. Passage of this legislation is a necessary step to finalizing the settlement.

SRP submitted a letter in support of the legislation in 2019 because the Agreement provides certainty to the Tribe, United States, and neighboring Arizona water users regarding the extent of the Tribe's water rights, and because we believe its terms are fair and equitable to the settling parties. For those same reasons, SRP supports the *Hualapai Tribe Water Rights Settlement Act of 2022*, which would authorize the Tribe and the United States on its behalf, to enter into the Agreement.

SRP thanks Congressman O'Halleran for introducing the *Hualapai Tribe Water Rights Settlement Act of 2022*, and his work to secure Arizona's water future. We look forward to working with the Hualapai Tribe and encourage you to consider and advance this legislation soon.

Sincerely,



Dave Roberts

cc: Congressman Tom O'Halleran