



July 23, 2024

The Honorable Cliff Bentz, Chairman  
House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries  
1324 Longworth House Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jared Huffman, Ranking Member  
House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries  
1324 Longworth House Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support of H.R. 8949 - Yavapai Apache Nation Settling Its Water Rights in the State of Arizona

Dear Chairman Bentz, Ranking Member Huffman, and Members of the Subcommittee,

American Rivers is pleased to submit a letter of support to the House Natural Resources Committee for the Yavapai Apache Nation's (YAN) proposed water settlement. American Rivers and YAN have developed a deep and supportive relationship through collaboration on the conservation of the Verde River in central Arizona. We support the Nation's need and right, as a sovereign, to negotiate a permanent water settlement with the State of Arizona and the United States. Indeed, this is necessary in order to provide for a "permanent homeland" for the Nation.

Since 1973, American Rivers has protected wild rivers, restored damaged rivers, and conserved clean water for people and nature. With headquarters in Washington, D.C. and 355,000 supporters, members, and volunteers across the country, we are the most trusted and influential river conservation organization in the United States, delivering solutions for a better future. On behalf of AR, I would like to thank Chairman Bruce Westerman and Ranking Member Raul Grijalva for your leadership to conserve rivers, improve clean water access, and safeguard public drinking water supplies now and into the future.

Native Nations are key partners in this shared work, and YAN in particular is a valued and trusted partner of American Rivers. In addition to our desire for the Nation to have all of the resources that it needs in order to flourish into the future, we appreciate the steps that it took in order to protect the Verde River and local groundwater in the details of its proposed water settlement. This exemplifies the forward-thinking nature of the Nation and its long-standing relationship to water in an arid region.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony. Please contact Kelsey Cruickshank, Director, Policy and Government Relations ([kcruckshank@americanrivers.org](mailto:kcruckshank@americanrivers.org)) with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Kiernan".

Tom Kiernan  
President and CEO  
American Rivers