Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan today signed a contract with the Gila River Indian Community, completing the allocation of Central Arizona Project water to 11 tribes within the state "Central Arizona Project water will be instrumental in the future development of Arizona, and it will be especially beneficial to the Gila River Indian Community and other tribes sharing in it," Lujan said. "The signing of this contract is an important milestone, completing a process that has taken 16 years." Governor Thomas R. White, in signing for the tribe, said: "We have arrived at an historic moment for the Community. We feel honored to be here today to sign this important document."

Also participating in the signing ceremony in the Interior Secretary's office were former Governor Dana R. Norris and Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Eddie Brown. "As an Arizonan, I have a special appreciation for the importance of water to the tribes in my state," Brown noted. "These allocations enhance the value of tribal lands for agriculture and other economic development." The contract signed today provides for 173,100 acre-feet of water annually for the Gila River Indian Community of Sacaton. Arizona Indian tribes were allotted 309,828 of Central Arizona Project water under a decision made by the Secretary of the. Interior in 1976. Contracts with 10 other tribes entitled to share in the allocation were signed in previous years.