

## Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project

Education Initiative  
2005-2006



*Restoring water to ensure the continuity of the Akimel O'otham and Pee Posh tradition of agriculture*

## The Creation and Recognition of the Pima Reservation

Part 69

Sylvester Mowry and Goddard Bailey—having visited and spoken with the Pima and Maricopa on a number of occasions—understood the importance of respecting Pima territorial integrity and control of their lands. Both men were familiar with the services provided to the United States by the confederated tribes and both recognized the “crystal water” of the Gila River that ran from village to village was the lifeblood of the Pima and Maricopa. Consequently, Bailey encouraged Charles Mix to confirm the land of the Pima and Maricopa as soon as possible.

Mix agreed, believing a reservation should be recognized and used to further an agricultural life. Informing Secretary of the Interior Jacob Thompson of the need to make an effort to secure their villages and agricultural lands, Mix stressed the propriety of distributing agricultural implements and arms to the Pima and Maricopa to “confirm their friendship.” Although Mix did not quantify the size of the reservation, he assumed it would be 240,000 acres, or forty acres for each of the estimated 6,000 Pima and Maricopa living in the villages. Thompson readily agreed and recommended that Congress act on the recommendation.

Representative Alfred B. Greenwood (D-AR) and Senator William K. Sebastian (D-AK) cosponsored an amendment to the 1859 Indian Appropriation Act that would recognize Pima land titles via Congressional action. Sebastian, an ardent supporter of the Pima, reminded his Senate colleagues of the many times the Pima had “assisted our emigrants.” Recognizing their lands and rights, the Senator asserted, was important since they were not “wild Indians, nor [should they be] treated as such.” It was “but ordinary justice,” the Senator assured his colleagues, “to secure them the homes [in] which they reside.”

Greenwood led the battle in the House, where the House Committee on Indian Affairs agreed, “that some section of land should be marked out as their locality.” Nonetheless, some representatives—painfully aware reservations in California had failed when the Indians refused to remain there and engage in agriculture—were opposed to spending any money given their concern of potential outbreaks. Addressing Congress on February 6, 1859, Mix nonetheless urged the House to “secure [the Pima and Maricopa] in the possession of their lands.”

Fearful of setting aside too much land, the House adopted a compromise proposal to create more, although smaller, reservations in the aboriginal homelands of the Indians. Consequently, the House bill restricted the Pima Reservation to 64,000 acres. While Greenwood praised the Pima for “aiding white settlement by keeping hostile bands at a distance,” the House of Representatives was concerned about a policy that might result in a political backlash if too much land were set aside. While Sebastian originally requested \$15,000 to purchase suitable presents for the Pima, the House reduced this to \$10,000.

On February 26, 1859, a joint conference committee convened and submitted a report to the House. After minimal debate, the committee agreed with the establishment of additional reservations in the future, provided no further expenses were incurred. With these differences ironed out, the committee presented the amendment to the full Senate and House, where approval came on February 28, 1859. A surveyed reservation not to exceed 64,000 acres was to be set aside “for the confederated bands of Pimas and Maricopas.” The act also included a special appropriation of

\$1,000 for the survey and \$10,000 for gifts “in acknowledgement of [Pima-Maricopa] loyalty to this government and the many kindnesses heretofore rendered by them to our citizens.”

Greenwood, confirmed as Commissioner of Indian Affairs that spring, appointed Mowry as special agent to oversee the survey of the Pima Reservation and reminded him to “see that the quantity [of land for the reservation] shall not exceed the limit specified by Congress.” In May, Greenwood informed Mowry that the appropriations for the survey and gifts were at his disposal.

Mowry traveled to the Pima villages where, in July, he called a meeting with Antonio Azul, Maricopa Chief Juan Chevaria and the other village leaders to inform them of “a large sum of money, especially sent, through me, by the government of the United States.” Azul, distrustful of the Americans, immediately replied “he had heard that story before” and that he did not “believe a word of it.” Unlike Lieutenant Chapman a year earlier, Mowry scolded the chief, stating, he “would tell [him] simply the truth, and that if [he] were silly enough to be imposed upon by every American who passed their villages, it was an evidence, not of neglect or want of good faith by the government, but of [his] own want of sense.”

Quieted in his suspicions, Azul promptly requested calico and cotton cloth for the women, arms and ammunition for the men and agricultural implements, cattle and horses. Having been informed by Silas St. John that John Walker had already distributed a number of ploughs, axes, shovels and hoes, Mowry reduced the number of these tools so he could purchase clothe for the women. Assuring the chiefs their good conduct “had not been unnoticed by the government,” Mowry sought to impress upon the chiefs the power of the United States, reminding them that although the Pima and Maricopa “considered themselves a great and numerous people, their entire population would only make a small pueblo in the United States.”

After meeting with the chiefs and headmen and gathering their input on how to spend the \$10,000, Mowry proceeded to Arizona City (Yuma) where he purchased a portion of the gifts, before traveling on to San Francisco to purchase the remainder. When shipping arrangements were completed, the agent arranged his return to the Pima villages. While intending to purchase fifty ploughs, Mowry deemed the high costs of shipping them—\$35 a piece—too costly and, since Walker and St. John had already distributed some ploughs, he instead purchased additional shovels, spades and axes.

On his return in September, Mowry brought together all the Pima and Maricopa “with the exception of a war party, which had gone out against the Apaches,” to experience the gift-giving event. An estimated 3,500 Indians assembled for the festivities. With Antonio Azul translating for the Pima and Francisco translating for the Maricopa, Mowry remarked, “that the continuation of such friendly behavior would insure for them the favorable notice and a continuance of the bounty of the government.” In other words, the Pima and Maricopa could expect new technology intended to stimulate their agricultural pursuits and “make their labor more profitable.” The agent was quick to note, however, that the United States did not intend to “support them in a state of idleness” but that it simply wanted to encourage continued expansion of Pima and Maricopa agriculture.

Speaking for the Pima, Antonio Azul expressed gratitude for the gifts, telling Mowry in an hour-long speech to inform the President the Pima “would teach their young men to use the implements sent to them.” Azul clearly understood that the gift of agricultural implements would not only enable his people to expand their operations but that they would also be able to learn new techniques that would allow them to compete economically with farmers anywhere in the country. While currently the only farmers in the region, Azul recognized that times were changing and that the emigrants passing through the villages would one day stay and settle near his people.

Once the speech making was over, the distribution of the gifts and presents began in proportion to the population of each of the twelve villages, a process accomplished with “great fairness.” If the Pima and Maricopa still believed the Americans were untruthful, as Juan Jose

accused Chapman in 1858, by the end of 1859 they felt otherwise because of the goods and tools distributed. When the remainder of the gifts arrived from San Francisco, a second, larger distribution occurred on November 8, with Silas St. John and John Walker presiding. "All passed off admirably," St. John wrote Mowry, "the large number of articles enabling me to give every Indian something." In addition to implements handed out by Walker in March, St. John distributed additional ploughs, mills, hoes and spades on June 28. These gifts were in addition to those Mowry had given out in the fall.

With the appointment of Sylvester Mowry as Special Indian Agent in May, the Pima could boast three Indian agents, John Walker based in Tucson being the third. With the gifts, the United States gave every intention of encouraging and supporting Pima and Maricopa agricultural expansion and, by extension, protecting their water resources so essential to farming in the desert. While cautioned not to expect this sort of gift exchange as a matter of everyday policy, the Pima and Maricopa had every reason to believe their agrarian way of life was secure.

### **Distribution of Gifts to the Pima and Maricopa, 1859**

#### **Implements**

444 axes  
 618 shovels  
 31 handsaws  
 706 butcher knives  
 516 hoes  
 240 sickles  
 48 files  
 270 harrow teeth  
 48 mattocks  
 72 whetstones  
 15 grindstones and fixtures  
 36 hay forks  
 36 hammers  
 48 iron rakes  
 48 trowels  
 12 screw drivers  
 1 carpenter's shop, complete set of tools  
 15 plows  
 15 sets of plow harnesses  
 1 forge, 1 anvil and 1 vice  
 1 set of sledges  
 1 cast-steel hand-hammer  
 3 pair tongs  
 1 set of files  
 12 file handles  
 36 hatchets  
 120 picks and handles  
 7 kegs of nails  
 9 gross of screws  
 1,400 needles  
 1 box sheet tin (for repairing implements)

#### **Goods for Women**

2,500 yards of manta (cotton cloth)  
 2,500 yards of blue drill  
 125 yards of scarlet flannel  
 108 yards of red flannel  
 1,000 yards of calico  
 180 check shirts  
 120 fancy shirts  
 180 hickory shirts  
 50 yards Turkey red cloth for chiefs  
 3 gross gilt buttons  
 2 fancy bowie knives  
 48 straw hats  
 60 pairs shoes for chiefs and wives  
 600 pounds smoking tobacco  
 280 pounds white beads  
 24 regatta shirts for chiefs of pueblos  
 144 pipes, with stems

#### **Seed**

4,000 pounds of barley  
 1 pint turnip seed

#### **For Chiefs**

1 American flag for head chief  
 1 suit of uniform, complete  
 1 suit of uniform, complete for son  
 1 uniform jacket for Maricopa chief

(Source: **Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1859**)

## *Teacher Plan for “The Creation and Recognition of the Pima Reservation”*

### Terms to know and understand

- Integrity
- Propriety
- Aboriginal
- Lament
- Pueblo
- Stimulate

### Students will be able to:

1. Explain why the Pima Reservation was originally limited to 64,000 acres and describe why this was insufficient land for the Pima and Maricopa.
2. Calculate an estimated division of gifts by village based on qualitative readings.

### Objectives

### Critical Thinking:

- Why do you suppose Antonio Azul was distrustful of Sylvester Mowry? In what ways was this simply a misunderstanding of official government protocols? What would Azul and the Pima and Maricopa have expected in terms of protocol and what would the United States have expected?
- Explain why it was rational that the Pima and Maricopa could assume or believe additional training or education would be forthcoming with the new farm implements and seed delivered to them. This desire for new technology implies a desire for schools. Discuss these implications.

### Activities:

- Using the population estimates taken from 1859 for each of the twelve villages, how might the gifts be distributed if they were distributed equitably?

<b>Village</b>	<b>Aged</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Buen Llano	--	120	126	73	87	406	
Hormiguero	40	270	173	43	40	566	
Casa Blanca	50	146	103	105	87	491	
Cochinilla	1	154	99	60	42	356	
Arenal No. 1	--	161	160	65	71	457	
El Cerro No. 1	--	77	91	44	38	250	
Hormiguerito	--	30	33	28	22	113	
El Cerro No. 2	--	65	52	53	23	193	
Arizo del Agua	45	218	168	58	29	518	
Arenal No. 2	11	124	127	80	78	420	
Sacaton	--	58	64	27	13	162	
Huesoparada	40	73	120	31	46	310	
<b>Total</b>		187	1496	1316	667	576	4242

### About P-MIP

The Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project is authorized by the Gila River Indian Community to construct all irrigation systems for the Community. When fully completed, P-MIP will provide irrigation for up to 146,330 acres of farmland. P-MIP is dedicated to three long-range goals:

- Restoring water to the Akimel O’otham and Pee Posh.
- Putting Akimel O’otham and Pee Posh rights to the use of water to beneficial use.
- Demonstrating and exercising sound management to ensure continuity of the Community’s traditional economy of agriculture.