



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

April 25, 2012

Earth Data Analysis Center
University of New Mexico
MSC01 1110, 1 UNM
Albuquerque, NM 87131

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Re: Development of a text searchable online electronic repository with a GIS interface for documents associated with Native American water rights settlements

To whom it concerns;

On behalf of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the largest and oldest organization consisting of Indian tribal governments and tribal members, I write in support of the Earth Data Analysis Center's efforts to seek funding for a Native American Water Rights Settlement Database.

As you know, the number of tribes that have successfully completed the settlement process is far fewer than the number of tribes that have not even begun the process of quantifying their water rights. As more tribes begin to look towards potential settlements, a database such as the one proposed would allow them to reference past settlements in paving their own path to water quantification. In short, we agree with you that there is a need for such a database.

While the acts of Congress approving the settlements are available to everyone, the settlement agreements and other implementing documents are not readily available. Collecting these settlement agreements and implementing documents into an accessible database could prove invaluable to those federal, state, tribal and private party negotiators currently involved in negotiations.

In closing, NCAI supports the University of New Mexico's Earth Data Analysis Center in their pursuit of funding to develop a Native American Water Rights Settlement Database with a GIS interface. Thanks for your time and we look forward to assisting you to ensure this important information is accessible to tribes.

Sincerely,

Jefferson Keel
President