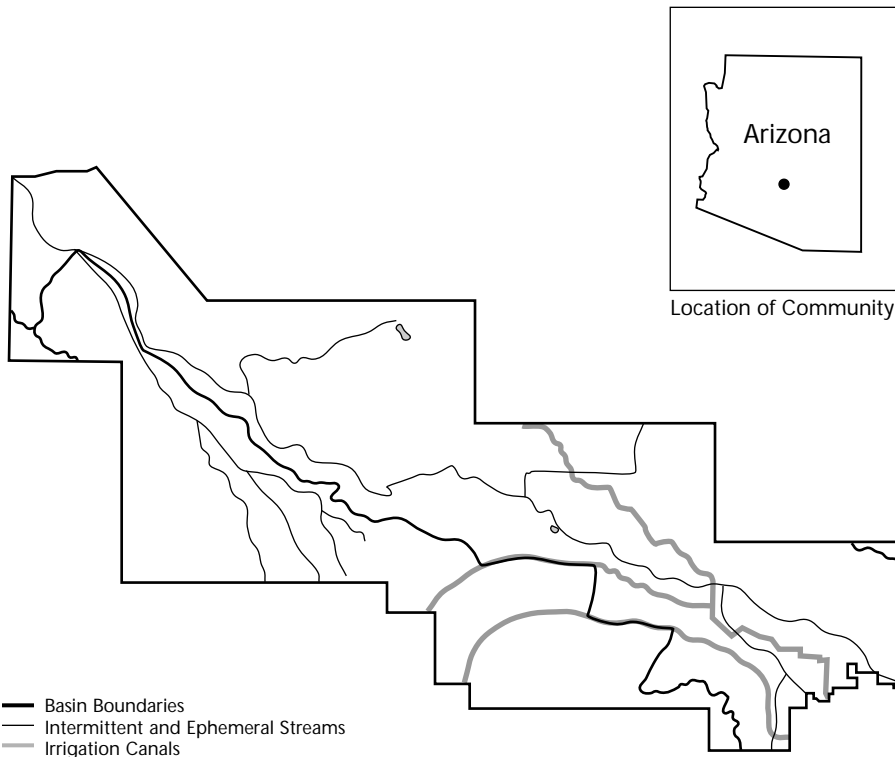


US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

# Gila River Indian Community



For a copy of the Gila River Indian Community 1994 305(b) report, contact:

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## Surface Water Quality

The Gila River Indian Community occupies 580 square miles in Central Arizona adjacent to the metropolitan Phoenix area. About 8,500 members of the Pima and Maricopa Tribes live in 22 small villages inside the Community. The Gila River is the major surface water feature in the Community, but its flow is interrupted by upstream diversions outside of the Community. Arid conditions and little

vegetative cover cause sudden runoff with high suspended sediment loads.

Surface water was evaluated with qualitative information due to the lack of monitoring data. Most of the Community's surface waters have fair water quality that partially supports designated uses because of turbidity, siltation, salinity, and metals loading from rangeland, agriculture, irrigation return flows, and upstream mining. Information was not available for assessing effects of toxic contaminants and acid rain. There is no information about water quality conditions in wetlands.

## Ground Water Quality

Community ground water quality generally complies with EPA's Maximum Contaminant Levels, but concentrations of total dissolved solids often exceed recommended concentrations. However, members of the Community have either adjusted to the aesthetic problem of high dissolved solids or begun purchasing bottled water, as have other ground water users in the metropolitan Phoenix area. Occasionally, concentrations of coliform bacteria, nitrates, and fluoride exceed recommended criteria in isolated wells. Pathogens from onsite sewage disposal systems have been detected in ground water and pose the primary public health concern. Other concerns include salinity and pesticides from

large-scale agriculture and potential fuel or solvent leaks.



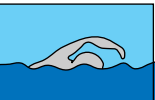


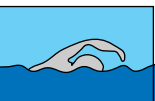
### Programs to Restore Water Quality

The Gila River Indian Community needs a comprehensive water quality protection program, especially as nearby urban growth and agricultural expansion create additional pollution and place new demands on aquatic resources. As a first step, the Community's Water Quality Planning Office intends to address point sources of pollution through a Ground Water Protection Strategy. The Strategy will seek to eliminate all discharges that could reach ground water or require rapid mitigation if a discharge cannot be avoided. Principles of Arizona's Aquifer Protection Permit Program may serve as a basis for the Community's Strategy, but the Strategy will be streamlined and simple to implement. The Strategy may include technology-based or standards-based protocols for facilities and conditions for land use permits.

### Programs to Assess Water Quality

The Community needs monitoring programs for ground water, surface water, and wetlands in order to assess use support and to support a water pollution control program.

## Individual Use Support in Gila River Indian Community

| Designated Use <sup>a</sup>   | Percent                 |                   |                             |                       |                       |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|   | Good (Fully Supporting) | Good (Threatened) | Fair (Partially Supporting) | Poor (Not Supporting) | Poor (Not Attainable) |
| <b>Rivers and Streams (Total Miles = 196)<sup>b</sup></b>                           |                         |                   |                             |                       |                       |
|    | Total Miles Assessed    |                   |                             |                       |                       |
|   | 196                     | 0                 | 0                           | 31                    | 69                    |
|    | -                       | -                 | -                           | -                     | -                     |
|    | 196                     | 0                 | 0                           | 31                    | 69                    |
| <b>Lakes (Total Acres = 153)</b>  |                         |                   |                             |                       |                       |
|  | Total Acres Assessed    |                   |                             |                       |                       |
|   | 153                     | 0                 | 0                           | 18                    | 82                    |
|  | 153                     | 0                 | 0                           | 0                     | 100                   |
|  | 153                     | 0                 | 0                           | 18                    | 82                    |

- Not reported.

<sup>a</sup> A subset of Gila River Indian Community's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the Community's 305(b) report for a full description of the Community's uses.

<sup>b</sup> Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.