



# QUECHAN INDIAN TRIBE

## *Ft. Yuma Indian Reservation*

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September 3, 2009

Solar Energy PEIS  
Argonne National Laboratory  
9700 S Cass Avenue – EVS/900  
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Re: Quechan Indian Tribe's Comments on Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Solar Energy Development

Dear Solar Energy PEIS Team,

Thank you for notifying us of the preparation of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the six southwestern states. Portions of BLM lands currently being analyzed for solar development fall within the traditional land area of the Quechan Indian Tribe. In addition, the Tribe has federal reserved rights in the waters of the Colorado River and is concerned about impairment of the quantity and quality of the water resources.

### I. Cultural Resource Impacts

The Tribe's concerns regarding cultural resource protection and preservation must be taken into consideration by the United States. This is especially true when projects are proposed within the Tribe's traditional land area. In cases like this, where proposed projects are likely to affect cultural resources, the federal government has an obligation under existing resource protection laws, and pursuant to its trust obligation to the Tribe, to gather accurate information about the location of cultural resources so that it can make a fully informed decision, and then to adequately protect those cultural resources from harm.

The Quechan people and their ancestors have inhabited the area surrounding the confluence of the Colorado and Gila Rivers for centuries. The Indian Claims Commission found that the Quechan Tribe's historic lands extended well beyond the boundaries of the present day Fort Yuma Indian Reservation and includes certain lands to the north and west of the Fort Yuma Indian Reservation that fall within the solar energy study areas. *See* 8 Ind. Cl. Com. 111, 130 (Sept. 30, 1959).