



The Great Bend of the Gila:

Contemporary Native American Connections to an Ancestral Landscape

Key Findings

The Great Bend of the Gila is an ancestral landscape to at least 13 contemporary Native American tribes in Arizona, California, New Mexico, Sonora, and Baja California. These tribes ascribe considerable heritage value to the Great Bend of the Gila because their histories are embedded in this land and its cultural and natural resources.

Native American connections to the Great Bend of the Gila are diverse and specific to each tribe. The associated tribes unanimously contend that effective and respectful management of federal lands within this ancestral landscape requires truly collaborative engagement among all of the associated tribes and the Bureau of Land Management.

The Native American tribes who participated in this study affirm that heightened protection for the fragile and imperiled cultural resources of the Great Bend of the Gila is critically needed, and they therefore support a Great Bend of the Gila National Monument as set forth in Congressman Grijalva's House Resolution 5556.

The associated Native American communities consider their involvement in the stewardship of the Great Bend of the Gila and other ancestral lands to be fundamental to carrying tribal identities forward. For this reason, the Great Bend of the Gila National Monument Establishment Act (HR 5556) calls for associated tribes to actively participate in an advisory council to develop and implement a management plan for the proposed national monument.

The full report can be found here: www.archaeologysouthwest.org/pdf/gb_ethno.pdf