



# **The Water Talks of Native peoples (and nations) in northern L.A. and Ventura** counties (completed November, 2023 with data from 2020, 2019 full SAWPA reports) with reference to proposed **Rubidoux** and **Kuruvungna Springs** projects

Submitted by James V. Fenelon, Professor and Director at California State University, San Bernardino

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## Introduction and Summary of Report

The Director of the Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies at California State University, San Bernardino, was approached in August of this year (2023 upon his return from two years as a visiting professor at an east coast college) to complete a set of studies extended from related work (from 2016 through 2021) with particular focus on Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians in Santa Clarita and Santa Paula regions of the Santa Clara River valley. The result, comprehensive of all previous work, is this report.

For the general reader, and to lay a comparative historical foundation to the background of what constitutes California Indians and the tribal nations and socio-political groupings they represent, we need to describe the background of Settler Colonialism (Spanish Mission system) and Culturicide / Genocide (U.S. Taking, sovereignty) that created the complex realities of the Indigenous population.

The colonization of California Indians initially followed a somewhat predictable pattern – initially European “explorers” acting as advance agents for colonial invasions, using Discovery as their rationale, in the methods of establishing “missions” – made up of coerced and voluntary conversions of Natives, (to become Catholic but in fact only as neophytes) supported by military garrisons and government centers or representatives (presidios) – were built using Native labor and resources, along the coast, later inland in areas such as greater Los Angeles, causing disruption to the tribal nations.

Resistance from Native Nations started quickly, with the first revolt by the Kumeyaay around San Diego, followed by other missions in the southern region, notably the Chumash in the Santa Barbara region, and less coordinated attempts by Tongva-Gabrieleno in the Los Angeles region. Missions were designed to coerce Native families to move under Catholic systems, destroying traditional culture and languages, while using quasi-indentured labor to build mission complexes, shortening life spans, and breaking their connections (and later claims) to the land from which they were dispossessed (University of California, 2021; Costo and Costo, 1987).

After Mexico became independent, the missions were technically secularized, but no encouragement was given to Native peoples to rebuild and existing lands (and grants) were handed out to Mexican-Spanish descent leaders, often called *rancheros*, further eroding Indigenous cultures, and later making difficult political relations to those tribal nations continuing to survive and maintain tribal sovereignty.

When the United States took over (1848–1850) Anglo and other invasive immigrant groups seeking gold, and easy land takings, swept into the area, beginning to congregate in areas of San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, as cities. The California leadership (governor and legislature) compelled Indian men, women, and children into legalized indentured labor, physically assaulted many Native peoples being turned into vagrants on their own land and even declared partial state genocide, (war of extermination) along with sidelining/ shelving treaties made with Native tribal nations, (Fenelon and Trafzer, 2014).

The United States then built the state of California over tribal nations, some who had been eliminated, others existed in tribal groupings, often unrecognized by federal authorities, many identified by their “mission Indian” status. Dominated and ignored in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many emerged in contested status in later 20<sup>th</sup> century, struggling for sovereignty and recognition by the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



**Content and Previous Work Listing in this Report (as summary)**

Development of the modern world-system in the United States, specifically California, created urban environments, resource extraction and corporate agricultural production, destructive and exploitive of healthy environments, including riverine and watershed regions such as greater Los Angeles. Previous work done on the Santa Ana watershed and Los Angeles riverine areas were inclusive of Indigenous perspectives for the first time after 2010 as evidenced in tribal water summits and in planning groups, (where they were initially called “disadvantaged groups” of marginalized people) so those responsible and informed leaders requested reached out to entities such as Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies, (hosted at California State University where the Water Resources Institute (WRI); now the Institute for Watershed Resiliency (IWR) was also housed at the time) to participate in the studies and development of water issues. We are including that work in the writing of this report:

**The Water Talks** of Native peoples (and nations) in **northern L.A. and Ventura** counties.

(Prepared by James Fenelon, Sociology department, California State University San Bernardino)

We herein supply a series of “bullet points” from which this report is being constructed, which includes the following four sections:

- 1** – A section on the WRI initial involvement and planning, mostly as a subsequent subset of the SAWPA and L.A. River efforts, along with some of the meetings and listening sessions from that early work.
- 2** – Initial response and evaluation of the **Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County** (provided by various entities and the Sacred Places Institute in February of this year).
- 3** – Working report of attendance / participation with members of the Tataviam tribal nation at cultural / festival meetings (held in August 2023 in the Valencia – Santa Clarita area)
- 4** – Outline of Possibilities (for further work) and Proposals for ongoing research and development.

Let us address each of these (four) components of this work and report as stated herein.

**WRI (Native) Team Report for Community Water Ethnography Methodology Report 12/15/18 (and)**

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WRI<sup>i</sup> initial involvement and planning, mostly as a subsequent subset of the SAWPA and L.A. River efforts, along with some of the meetings and listening sessions from that early work.

The Water research with Institute for Watershed Resiliency (IWR) and CSU WATER was started, much to the credit of and following praise for: Boykin Witherspoon of CSU WATER, Jennifer Alford (IWR) in writing reports, and our Native American Team leaders, Luke Madrigal, and Julia Bogany. Collectively, we developed an approach and set of methodologies, reported below, some of which we extended to studies launched in northern Los Angeles and Ventura counties. This led to the reports and activities listed below.



We report on our printed (and informally published) work done through 2018 into 2019, followed by the initial work done with northern Los Angeles Native communities as connected to the Los Angeles River work started by our Native Team Leaders. This will primarily be drawn from:

CSUSB Research **WRI (Native) Team Report for Community Water Ethnography** and Methodology Report 12/15/18 – outline below with extensive discussion in the endnotes for each listing.

We refer to the working report to elucidate on the approach, planning, methodologies, sessions, provisional findings and activities of this 3 to 4 year project:

**Working Report – Native Listening Sessions, Planning, Observations, initial Findings**

**Description of Native SAWPA Design and Planning for Listening Sessions<sup>ii</sup>**

**Descriptions of Summaries – 1) Preparatory Work and 2) Native Listening Sessions<sup>iii</sup>**

**Summaries of Preparatory Work for Native Listening Sessions**

**Planning meetings for Indigenous Sessions and Methods<sup>iv</sup>**

**Planning meetings with Indigenous Leaders, Tribes and Organizations**

**Presentations and meetings at Tribal Water Summit (Sacramento, 1-3, 4/2018)**

**Informational sessions and conferences with WRI**

**Summaries of Interviews and Listening Sessions – 2**

**Tribal Alliance informational session at Torres Martinez (pre-sessions)**

**Tribal Alliance informational session at Cahuilla (post-sessions)**

**Tongva Cultural Center (El Monte) and Urban Indian population (north of Santa Ana River)**

**Sherman Indian School (Riverside) Cahuilla and Urban Indians (south of Santa Ana River)**

**Native Listening Session on Water– Indigenous Perspectives in Cahuilla land, Riverside June 16th**

**Luke Madrigal – Cahuilla Team Leader, Reflection Statement:<sup>v</sup>**

**Inland Empire Community Leaders (Native) Informal Interviews**

**Academic (Native Scholars) Public (Informal) Interviews**

**CSUSB Native Team (3) Roles and Profiles**

**Principal Investigator – Professional and Cultural qualifications**

**Indigenous Researchers – Cultural Knowledge and Native Nation experience**

**Partnerships Roles and Profiles**



**Research Methods and critical Scholar-Authors (Native Ethnographic Studies).**

**References**

*(Addendum: UCI Originating Primer with CSUSB Native Contributions to SAWPA Project)*

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This leads us to work done in 2019 experiencing shutdown (of on-site work) because of the pandemic.

We conducted initial Organizing sessions in rough replication of the above stated format, With the NA Water Talks team Julia Bogany and others (Luke Madrigal).

We conducted discussions with (Malibu site and other Communities claiming Chumash identity).

We had meetings and initial Zoom session (Santa Paula and Santa Clarita) (held in 2020 and 2021).

Pandemia hit us, Luke Madrigal passed away, we continued to have meetings and phone conversations, but no longer in person or face-to-face, unless including some Zoom meetings.

We had discussions / meetings with leaders from the various research groups and state administrators, after which Julia Bogany had health problems, and then passed away.

I took a leave of absence (visiting distinguished professorship) at Swarthmore College on the east coast.

Picture from Kuruvungna Springs showing Rudy Ortega (Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians) and other (Chumash, Tongva-Gabrieleno, so on) leaders, at signing years earlier:



**4 Tribal Nations sign with Catholic Bishops – Kuruvungna Springs – facilitated by Julia Bogany**

(this prelude to the Los Angeles River Watertalks, was never fully initiated before pandemic shutdown).



**Santa Ana River Watershed Ethnographic Strengths and Needs Assessment, August 2020**

(following are excerpts and selections from pre-existing studies coordinated by CIPS)

We report some of our initial findings in two separate ways, as found in the documents listed below:

**Santa Ana River Watershed COMMUNITY WATER EXPERIENCES An Ethnographic Strengths and Needs Assessment – Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program, Integrated Regional Water Management, August 2020**

**Engaging Native and Indigenous Communities, CSU San Bernardino by The Native SAWPA Listening Session team from California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB)**

Subset listing of the Engaging Native and Indigenous Communities report:

Engaging Native and Indigenous Communities, CSU San Bernardino.

4 preview Native informational and presentation events, (2017).

2 (or 4) formal Listening sessions (2018)

2 field-testing sessions

2 follow-up Feedback (formal) response sessions

200+ participants totals for the above sessions and events – We have completed Stages 1, 2 and part of 3 of our initial research design for Native American / Tribal / Disadvantaged Communities (DCI) inputs on water and related community issues - Outline report continues with breakdown by 4 stages of research activities and accomplishments

**Native Listening Session Findings to Date**      *Perspectives in Cahuilla Land*

Strengths and needs are summarized in the following table, and additional details will be available through the WRPI's (CSU WATERS) [Santa Ana River Watershed Disadvantaged Communities Technical Report Perspectives in Cahuilla Land](#) Listening Session Strengths, Weaknesses, and Needs Examples:

- **Water is a rich theme** across these communities in respect to their **spiritual connection** to the Earth and water rights.
- Recognize that **water dictated where people settled** and as such we should be mindful that if this is taken away it will impact communities for present and future generations.
- Water can heal solutions are in our landscape.
- Recognize that **water is part of all communities** not just native/tribal communities. **“We don’t own it, it owns us.”**
- Trends in water management have created barriers for them to connect to the land and water spirits (gates, reservoirs, etc.).



- Designation of “Disadvantaged” is derogatory and often **creates barriers to participation** in decision making processes.
- **Lack of representation in governmental process** means they are often “marginalized” in respect to inclusion on water decisions.
- Many don’t get involved until it impacts them as individuals. ● Community needs opportunities to **contribute to water management by sharing their knowledge** related to their documented historical records to accurately recognize water and its contributions to communities and help to address how to we **balance development with the rights of water** (spiritually).
- They want to learn to **“talk water” with water community** (i.e. agencies, providers, etc.).
- Want **action-oriented results**.

*El Monte: Tongva and related tribes* Table: El Monte Native Listening Session Strengths, Weaknesses, and Needs Examples<sup>vi</sup>

- **Historical wisdom of Environment**; understand cause and effect.
- Coordinate and **Host outreach summits**.
- Line of **communication with tribal government** and other sovereign people.
- Concerns fall on **deaf ears**.
- Profiteering **water districts steal water** to sell back to them.
- Government **agencies do not want to recognize**, listen to Tongva people because they know it’s native water and they **don’t want to recognize native rights**.
- Agencies and **water companies take** from the land, **do not give back** to land or communities.
- **Discrimination**.
- **Respect for rights** and needs.
- Need to transition **from a consultant to a decision maker** in water issues.
- More **accountability of companies** and government agencies related to water management.
- Greater **understanding of water governance** and agency roles to build coalitions.
- **Unity** across all communities: non-native, native, government, etc.

**Categorical Results:** Listening Session Themes #1 El Monte: Additional Findings <sup>vii</sup>

### **Themes Examples**

#### Legal/Societal Structures



- CA tribes seen as a formality or courtesy to reach out to them but there is **no “teeth” or accountability** to not following Native wishes about land-use. Consultation
- “If we’re not at the table, we’re on the menu.”
- **More recognition** and citizen involvement needed.

Signs of discrimination

- More education in school
- **Wasteful companies** take water and trees from land and give nothing back to the community

Spiritual

- Government agencies do not **want to recognize**/listen to Tongva people because they know its native water and they do not want to recognize where it’s been taken from.
- **Atrocity when developers do not divert projects for Native burial sites** preservation.

**Planning and Initial data collection** through meetings and less formal Listening Sessions – **Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians**

In this section, we review “lessons learned” from project development associated with earlier studies, (Rubidoux Project, mostly Cahuilla along the Santa Ana River) (Kuruvungna Springs project, not submitted mostly Tongva near the Los Angeles River environs) associated with the findings from the formal studies; link these with recent guided meetings, on-site visits (from Swarthmore student – faculty Native teams) and connections and response to the Sacred Places Institute report from this year, (provided to WRI). Then, our fourth component of this report, we make observations from meetings and sessions with the cultural representatives of the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians culled from previous work, and attendance at their annual gathering and public presentations festival near Santa Clarita and make various statements and proposals for potential projects and ongoing work in their region.

During my two years away, we had research groups visit the Chemehuevi about the Salt Song Projects, desert water sites and trails, reservation formation and sovereignty, and related socio-political matters. (October 2022), working with Native American Land Conservancy and other organizations. (including guided meetings with Matt Leivas of the Chemehuevi and phone consultancy with Sean Milanovich, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians). (reports of these visits available upon request)

Upon my Return in August of 2023, we brought up past meetings and sessions, and new reports, that did also consider the Participatory signing in the above events, where some of our work was Renewed, previous findings were re-considered, and we learned of new reports and work such as below –

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## Lessons learned from Rubidoux (supported) and Kuruvungna Springs (proposed) projects.

The Rubidoux (spelled Robidoux by state and local agencies) project grew directly out of the WRI CIPS (SAWPA) studies by Native participants and leadership and was formally proposed to the organizational evaluation teams (under SAWPA control) who chose it above other proposals for funding and support. Organization leaders in conjunction with non-Native competitors sought to undermine the proposal, forcing a lower funded proposal in re-competition, which the project survived again (with local agencies, metropolitan water districts and tribes, offering greater funding) when an unnamed group of leaders, (state-funded water agencies and political orgs) determined that an entirely Native led effort was not to be trusted, and pulled the initial (already won under competitive evaluation) acceptance to make it fully conditional to administrative coordinators under their control, and therefore answerable to agencies, rather than Indigenous led coalitions and the above named Native leaders. While our leaders did not like this approach and its covert criticism of Indigenous leadership and tribal self-determination, we did ask local tribal nations and organizations about their approach, and they collectively responded they would not work with the newly proposed coordinator as they did not know him, have any experience with his decision-making, or deference to Native leaders / control, which they had already accepted.

Local organizations and municipal water agencies decided to support the project irrespective of the proposal re-directions, and tribal authority and a renowned Native political representative offered full support under the leadership of Luke Madrigal, when he was taken down by an infectious disease and passed away. The proposal went on hold during this period, as we considered other Native leadership, even as we entered the pandemic, and then our other respected Native team leader, Julia Bogany, took a health fall (after participating in stressful virtual meetings on this very issue) and also passed away. CIPS Director then accepted the distinguished visiting professorship on the east coast, and the project proposal was never revisited.

We want to learn from this set of experiences, for proposals from other Native environmental teams, such as this report has identified, so they are not repeated, a problem all too common in Indian Country. First, let us take this short excerpt from the Rubidoux proposal:

Louis Robidoux Nature Center was recently leased by Riverside County Parks District to a consortium of local entities that will rehabilitate the site for multi-purpose benefits including habitat restoration, an educational center with focused sustainability programming, community farming, and a wildlife rehabilitation center (Consortium). With its location near the Santa Ana River, the site offers many natural resources that are culturally significant to local Tribes and Indigenous Peoples groups. ... Consortium is partnering with the Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies to lead development of features that will support the objectives of Native participants. The project area was a local meeting and trading place, where many of the Native Nations worked out important agreements. Rehabilitation of the site, incorporating this rich history is an important way to convey what is known about the environmental, physical, socio-political, and cultural relationships amongst the Cahuilla, Luiseno, Serrano and Tongva peoples who gathered in this locale. The ...project (will) develop three main elements to address Native participants' interests at the site.



First, plans and conceptual designs for Tribal gatherings and other events particularly as related to their connection to the land and water. Second, plans and designs for location(s) and/or facilities on site that support cultivation, demonstration, and/or education on the traditional uses of native plants and other natural resources including K12 educational programs, a master gardener program, songs and stories shared at a gathering location on site, etc. Finally, a web-based tool that will facilitate the long-term, secure documentation of important Tribal songs and stories gathered from Tribal members... (edited, James V. Fenelon, November 2023)

We can observe in this case study, an actual outgrowth of conducting this Water Talks research, is tribal leadership and self-determination is critical to any (re-)solutions or project proposals, as is participation by Native organizations, coalitions, or allies. We also see that only Indigenous peoples themselves with applied scholarship and cases from tribal nations, can identify cultural, socio-political and environmental issues that impact their peoples, and more broadly defined Native Americans in general, which actually comprises the much greater number in California (Native Americans as non-California Indians) which is partially the result of Indian Relocation efforts during the Termination era of latter 20<sup>th</sup> century policy, itself a set of influential actions (PL 280) stripping California tribes of jurisdictional self-determination. Finally, and most importantly, we can see the lack of informative stances, the benign neglect or actual hostility toward Native nations and peoples by state agencies and organizations, is still a big problem.

The Kuruvungna Springs proposal or visualized project, which never saw the light of day, has similar precedents and predictive issues for the work and associated report we are considering here today. Readily observable in the photo above, with Listing of tribal leaders (four 4 Nations, 2 representatives) including the Chumash, the Tataviam (Rudy Oretaga, included among leaders in this report), Tongva, Acjachemen (or Juaneño) and Urban Indian representatives, signing with the Catholic church (Bishops) are the full participation (self-determination) of tribal and urban representatives to provide accurate historical / cultural accounts of Native peoples at, for and because of Catholic Missions in their region. This is a first step toward reconciliation, reciprocity and repair, as the Harvard HUNAP conference just signified at their conferrings with University faculty and local tribal leadership – “*Responsibility and Repair: Legacies of Indigenous Enslavement, Indenture, and Colonization at Harvard and Beyond Event*” – including the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah); Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band; Massachusetts Tribe at Ponkapoag; and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe.

Kuruvungna Springs is a tribally controlled site (Tongva-Gabrieleno) located in central *Tovangaar* near an ancestral village, and now nearby UCLA and other central Los Angeles areas. Tribal nations from around the world are often received there (the Maori, Native Hawaiians, and so on) where Indigenous protocols are practiced and reproduced in modern settings. Our informal propositions were to develop the entire site and its relationship to other springs and the Los Angeles River, and of course tribal representation, into a demonstration project where coalitions of Native Americans, tribal Nations, Indigenous leaders, and scholars could present their worldviews, histories and cultural practices dealing with environmental and socio-political issues of the day. Julia Bogany, Tongva, association President and Native Team leader for our projects, was to head up this work, after conducting extensive listening sessions and meetings, similar to what had been done for the Santa Ana River watershed area and Rubidoux projects. However, as mentioned earlier, Tongva cultural leader Julia Bogany had blood clots and stroke after an intense set



of meetings with organizations opposing our Robidoux and other work, which developed into circulatory and heart issues that ultimately caused her passing to the spirit world, a great loss for Indian peoples. CIPS Director James Fenelon subsequently went on a distinguished visiting professorship, and all issues were postponed, and not followed through by new leadership unfamiliar with our studies, proposals, and likewise developmental work.

Here we see the importance of developing full Indigenous participation in a sustainable, reproducible way that can survive organization and state hegemonic threats, and divisions among Native people, which are structural results of long-term settler colonialism. After Acknowledging the Santa Ana Watershed and Los Angeles River – initial Findings of Strengths and Weaknesses, and their proposals – we consider the Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County (Sacred Places Institute, February 2023)

Initial response and evaluation of the **Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County** (provided by Sacred Places Institute) is found in a report (same name) **Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County** prepared by Sacred Places Institute, (Submitted February 17, 2023)

We link all the aforesaid work, especially the Tribal Water Needs Assessment Report for Ventura County, (since there is considerable overlap with the Chumash in these reports), with ongoing analysis based on the working report of our participation with the Tataviam at cultural / festival meetings (August 2023).

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**Report of attendance at / participation with members of the Tataviam at cultural / festival meetings (held in August 2023 in headwaters region of the Santa Clara riverine watershed)**

Renewal and Prescriptive Suggestive findings follow this part in the above-named report, that includes discussion and planning for the reported observations and reflections based on the research we had conducted previously in the region, mostly coordinated by our team leader Julia Bogany with significant input from Native team leader Luke Madrigal.

WaterTalks (Julia Bogany notes) Dates, Times, Events, Places (2020)

Chumash Ventura listening session meeting transcription 2-22-20 (excerpts J V Fenelon 11-4-23)

Santa Paula Water Talks – Summary Statements (February / March 2020)

These works conform directly to research work we completed in the Santa Ana Watershed ethnography, Los Angeles River and Rubidoux / Kuruvungna Springs projects, especially in the planning meetings, tribal alliance, and other information sessions, and of course in the actual listening sessions, as planned. Since we have efficiently described those processes, and identified their counterparts in developmental work described above, we will move directly to attendance and participation in the August 2023 meeting.

At the August 2023 event, multiple tribal leaders and members were in attendance, noting both Peoples and places, along with tribal sovereignty of the Tataviam and Chumash, and of the Northern Tongva Gabrielino, with other tribal representatives ranging from the Cahuilla to the Luiseno.



As in the earlier reports, we identify the State and other agencies, discounting past “settler colonial” practices with a focus on Indigenous trade relations of nations/tribes in the region. Herein we identify Inter-trading networks among tribes and protocols for constructive engagement and communication.

Perhaps the greatest development we have as an instructive model to date, is that of the Rubidoux center proposal submitted to SAWPA with the support of All of the surrounding tribal nations, various municipal and regional water authorities, and other inputs stated or observed in this report.

As we found in our earlier work on the Santa Ana and initial work on the Los Angeles River water talks, comprehensive Eco-systems must be considered as a whole, including the Headwaters (in mountains), tributary creeks and rivers, and erosion related to urban development (see Santa Ana environs, also Los Angeles River revitalization efforts with de-concretization) down to the ocean.

Extending from alluvial plains water flowing from tributaries/rivers (Santa Clara) spreading to the coast, alongside “wildlife” and plants in conjunction with cultural “fire” control methods by Indigenous people, we also consider rejection of Indigenous led / inspired Rubidoux proposal, to make our observations, followed by planning proposals and suggestions culled from interactions with local tribal leaders:

Below are cards and identity markers from some of the tribal leaders and members we interacted with:



Based on previous interactions with leaders, program coordinators and tribal members, including:  
(phone and zoom meetings, one listening session, continued contact communications, initial planning)



supported by short discussions during the event described above (including tribal leaders listed here) – :  
I (or we) can make the following tentative points or take-aways:

- The **Fernandeño Tataviam** Band of Mission Indians are still fighting for federal recognition as an expression of their traditional (inherent) sovereignty, critical to future developments
- Many of their leaders were present with the Chumash during their revitalization period in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and maintain those close relationships today.
- As noted elsewhere, water systems are/must be considered as a whole (ecosystem) from the headwaters to the ocean.
- Discussions and presentations of projects and efforts stated in earlier meetings and the initial listening sessions are more (or just as) viable today (and must originate from Native communities).
- Cultural restoration / revitalization can only be undertaken or developmentally guided by tribal members themselves.
- Development is both economic and educational, primarily for the youth and future generations.
- Relationships with water and land are both spiritual and culturally defined.
- *Mni Wiconi* as expressed at Standing Rock and now throughout many Indigenous communities – “water is life” – has been embraced by Tataviam peoples.
- Storytelling is an integral part, really a foundation, of their ongoing development / revitalization.
- The Tataviam (and their advisors) have identified cultural-environmental sites where projects, (like what was proposed for Robidoux and planned to be proposed for Kuruvungna Springs) could be, should be, supported to tie all these points together.
- Acknowledgement of the Indigenous land and water relationships is most important to identify and should be integral to co-development efforts with local municipalities and regional agencies.

and

- This report needs to be shared with The **Fernandeño Tataviam** Band of Mission Indians.

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**Possibilities For Further Work**

Proposals for research development with local Native Nations follow – (Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians and other Native Nations are our central concern here) – with specific recommendations concerning ongoing research modalities, methods, and outcomes.

Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies at CSUSB (Director, James V Fenelon)

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**Outline of Possibilities (for further work) and Proposals for ongoing research and development with the Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians and other Native Nations (Chumash, Tongva)**

When the report has been finalized / finished, we will consider possibilities of ongoing research and of proposals that could be developed, to review the following critical issues identified in the interactive meetings: Sovereignty and recognition, Regional / area environmental dynamics of Water and land...

In considering proposals, we need to identify the (whatever) agencies – state, Municipal authorities, WA, Ventura and L.A. County representatives – as actors who must do all ongoing and future work in conjunction with, and when on identified Native traditional lands, in deference to Indigenous protocols, culture and leadership as nominated by tribal nations themselves.

We need to praise the IWR and its working with tribes and delineate any Futures for its further work – while remembering the untoward actions taken against the Rubidoux project proposal – as indicative of hegemonic and powerful political interests, many of them discriminatory in nature and overt practice, that need to be recognized and curtailed to the extent possible.

All research, proposals and developments should be connected to issues that arose during the tribal water summits, and in conjunction with existing American Indian, Native Nation and Indigenous peoples programs at universities and colleges in their respective region. Moreover, these programs themselves need to be calibrated and tuned to local Native Nations as needed and/or called for by the Indigenous tribal nations and their leaders.

Universities must remain open to Indigenous interpretations toward such regulations as IRB boards, which otherwise are discriminatory and dismissive toward oral traditions, cultural representations, practices of respect and reciprocity (which exceed those of mainstream demands) and understandings of the broader environment as a lived and living world of all life forms, and indeed the earth as mother and stones as spirits as relatives (please see Fenelon, 2015 for analysis of this language).

Cultural – spiritual practices, such as Bird-singing, purification ceremonies, revitalized rites of renewal, and on the list goes as awareness deepens, need open respect in both public and private spaces, just as complicated and controversial historical narratives need to be addressed to incorporate Native voices. We note that genocide conducted by the state of California has only been accepted in the last five years, even as it alone affects all understanding of Indigenous and mainstream (dominant group) populations, and our collective histories, current realities, understanding of water, and therefore prospects.

We (now only the CIPS Director) would like to make a final note or statement on the hopes and dreams, and futures of Indigenous Peoples in California and indeed the world. Through recognizing, respecting, and revitalizing many Indigenous perspectives and practices toward what we call the Environment, Land, and Water, we not only take responsibility and begin to repair the legacies of settler colonial violence, we also look for contributions to create a better world for everyone, and see a vision of climate change and restorative justice that heals the past, builds equity in the present, and envisions an environment filled with hope for the generations to come...

James V Fenelon for the spirits of Julia Bogany and Luke Madrigal -----



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**Reports** (referred to) and **Attachments** (data excerpts, summaries):

Note: *these are sent to IWR of CSU-Water to be kept on file, rather than attached to the report*

WRI (Native) Team Report for Community Water Ethnography and Methodology Report 12/15/18

Santa Ana River Watershed COMMUNITY WATER EXPERIENCES An Ethnographic Strengths and Needs Assessment Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program, Integrated Regional Water Management, August 2020

Robidoux Project CIPS Tribal Programming Engagement w WRI SAWPA DWR (edited v2)

WaterTalks (Julia Bogany notes) Dates, Times, Events, Places (2020)

Chumash Ventura listening session meeting transcription 2-22-20 (excerpts J V Fenelon 11-4-23)

Santa Paula Water Talks – Summary Statements (February / March, 2020)

Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) – Contacts and Leaders (inserted into text)

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**Endnotes** as descriptors to the listings in this report.

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<sup>i</sup> The Water Resources Institute acronym at the time of the research under different leadership, recently changed to Institute for Water Resiliency IWR so will retain WRI for the past and use IWR for the present work.

<sup>ii</sup> The Native SAWPA team out of Cal State was first initiated in the late spring of 2017 when the CSU WRI Director approached the Director of the Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies, both at CSU-SB campus, about developing and conducting Listening sessions about water (and land) issues for Native Americans, California tribal groups and Indigenous-descent people in the region. Agreements grew out of these discussions, premier among them that for Native participants and leaders to be fully engaged, (perhaps even partially or engaged at all) Indigenous perspectives and protocols needed to be followed, gatherings or sessions would need to be led by local Native recognized community leaders, and that any “data” collected and all “findings” would have to be shared and reviewed by the community and leaders of the sessions, without qualification. The agreement was made, there was discussion on compensation, and follow through phases, and most of the rest is described below.

<sup>iii</sup> The main categories for the body of this part of the report on the pre-planning / preparatory work for the development and for implementation of the Native Listening sessions held for the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA) managed Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program (program) project partners in support of an upcoming report tentatively entitled: Native American / Indigenous Community Water Ethnography of the Santa Ana River Watershed, were 1) Summaries of Preparatory Work for Native Listening Sessions (four categorical descriptive reporting of activities and participants), and 2) Summaries of Listening Sessions (and Interviews) containing the primary informational and data collection ethnographic activities (also in four categorical descriptive reporting of the two Tribal Alliance informational activities and of the two Native Listening sessions with agendas and listing of participants).

<sup>iv</sup> Date: October, December, 2017 followed through from January to March, 2018 Location: Various including CSUSB, Claremont, CINC, UCR (San Bernardino / Riverside County) Facilitators: CSUSB and Native Leaders

<sup>v</sup> The process of putting together focus groups for SAWPAA was an important effort to Indian community. It wasn't surprising to find a high level of interest in this process despite the tendencies to shy away from bureaucratic processes that sometimes marginalize the Indian community. We were able to bring together significant numbers of tribal leaders, elders, and community members from local and relocated tribes. Of particular interest were story



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lines of local tribes such as the Cahuilla, Luiseno, Tongva, and others, where stories, information, and concerns raised (were about) traditional beliefs in water and environment. Recent events at Standing Rock, Water is Life, came to a forefront of immediate concern about futures of Indian and all people in securing answers to difficult questions to bring balance to environmental chaos we currently live in. In summary, I am excited and positive that bringing together more information about our traditional land use, water use, and traditional practices can incite us to action in this process, as well as ignite other processes of re-indigenizing us to do something for the future generations.

<sup>vi</sup> El Monte: Tongva and related tribes

[El Monte Tongva Native Listening Session Strengths, Weaknesses, and Needs](#)

Legal/Societal Structures • Atrocity when developers do not divert projects for Native burial sites preservation.