

YAVAPAI-APACHE LAND EXCHANGE

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE YAVAPAI-APACHE NATION AND ITS LANDS



BY
THE YAVAPAI-APACHE NATION

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The Yavapai-Apache Nation is a federally recognized Indian Tribe comprised of two distinct tribes with their own traditions, material cultures and unique languages. The *Yavapé* (Yavapai) People (often mistakenly referred to as Mohave-Apache) are from the Yuman language family, and the *Dilzhé'é* (Tonto Apache) are Athapaskan speakers, which are as different as German and Turkish.

The aboriginal homeland of the *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* spans more than **16,000 square miles** across central Arizona.



Imperial Spain Claims the *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* Homelands

By 1542, the *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* homelands had been claimed by the conquistador Francisco Vázquez de Coronado for the King of Spain. Yet, in these early years of Spanish exploration of the New World, the Spanish only periodically penetrated *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* lands in central Arizona. For example, the conquistadors Antonio De Espejo (1583), Marcus Farfan (1598) and Juan de Oñate (1598 and again in 1604) passed through the territory in their search for silver and gold, but finding none, they left and never came back. For more than 200 years, other Spanish expeditions would avoid *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* territory due to the fact that the *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* had made this region uninhabitable for settlement outside of a few heavily fortified towns.

Franciscan Catholic Missionaries are Unsuccessful Finding Converts in *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* Territory

During the years of Spanish rule, an occasional lone missionary, such as Father Garcés (1776), would also pass through *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* territory looking for souls to glean, but when they found an insufficient number of converts in central Arizona, they returned to the established missions farther south at Tubac, in southeastern Arizona, to the east in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and to the west in southern California.

The *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* Homelands Come Under the Rule of Mexico in 1821

The 250-year Spanish entrada had virtually no direct effect on the *Yavapé* or *Dilzhé'é* People, and by the early 19th century, Spain had tired of the expense of administration of "New Spain." Following the Mexican War of Independence, Spain ceded its claimed lands, including the *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* Homelands, to the new government of Mexico in 1821.

The United States Gains the *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* Homelands by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848

The United States' invasion of, and war with Mexico from 1846 to 1848, ended with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in which Mexico ceded all of the lands of New Spain north of Old Mexico to the United States, which is now essentially the southwestern United States, including the State of Arizona. This cession, included by fiat, the 16,000 square miles of *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* homelands. All of this was, of course, accomplished without the personal knowledge or legal consent of our *Yavapé* or *Dilzhé'é* ancestors.

The California Gold Rush Brings Miners and Settlers Much Closer to *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* Territory

In the same year the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, gold was discovered in California at Sutter's Mill (1848), thus starting the mad race westward in the name of "manifest destiny." One of the main tracks west out of the southern states to California was through the southern third of Arizona Territory, opening the entire region to more settlement by non-Indians and further disruption to Native People. Even so, the *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* were still relatively free of any incursions into their territory except by the occasional group of trappers, prospectors, railroad surveyors tracking west, and the federal cavalry units escorting gold from California east along the 35th parallel to the railheads in Kansas.

The Full-Scale Invasion of the Yavapé and Dilzhé'é Homelands Begins in 1863 When Gold is Found in the Territory

In 1863, gold was found in the drainages of the Bradshaw Mountains at Turkey Creek and months later at Lynx Lake near Prescott. The strike was smack in the middle of our Yavapai and Apache lands. Now the door was wide-open and the world flooded into a region otherwise untouched by non-Indian culture, metal technology and land use practices completely alien to our People. This included claiming land, occupying water sources, killing off the game *en masse*, and depleting any resource found useful or that could be monetized. Naturally, our People took up arms and fiercely resisted this invasion of our homeland.

The 1871 Camp Verde Indian Reservation (Rio Verde Reserve) is Established

In an effort to reduce the expense of open warfare and remove what the non-Indians viewed as the Indigenous menace from the landscape, the United States established the Camp Verde Indian Reservation on October 3, 1871, under the order of President Ulysses S. Grant.

CAMP VERDE RESERVE.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BOARD OF INDIAN COMMISSIONERS,
Camp Verde, Ariz., October 3, 1871.

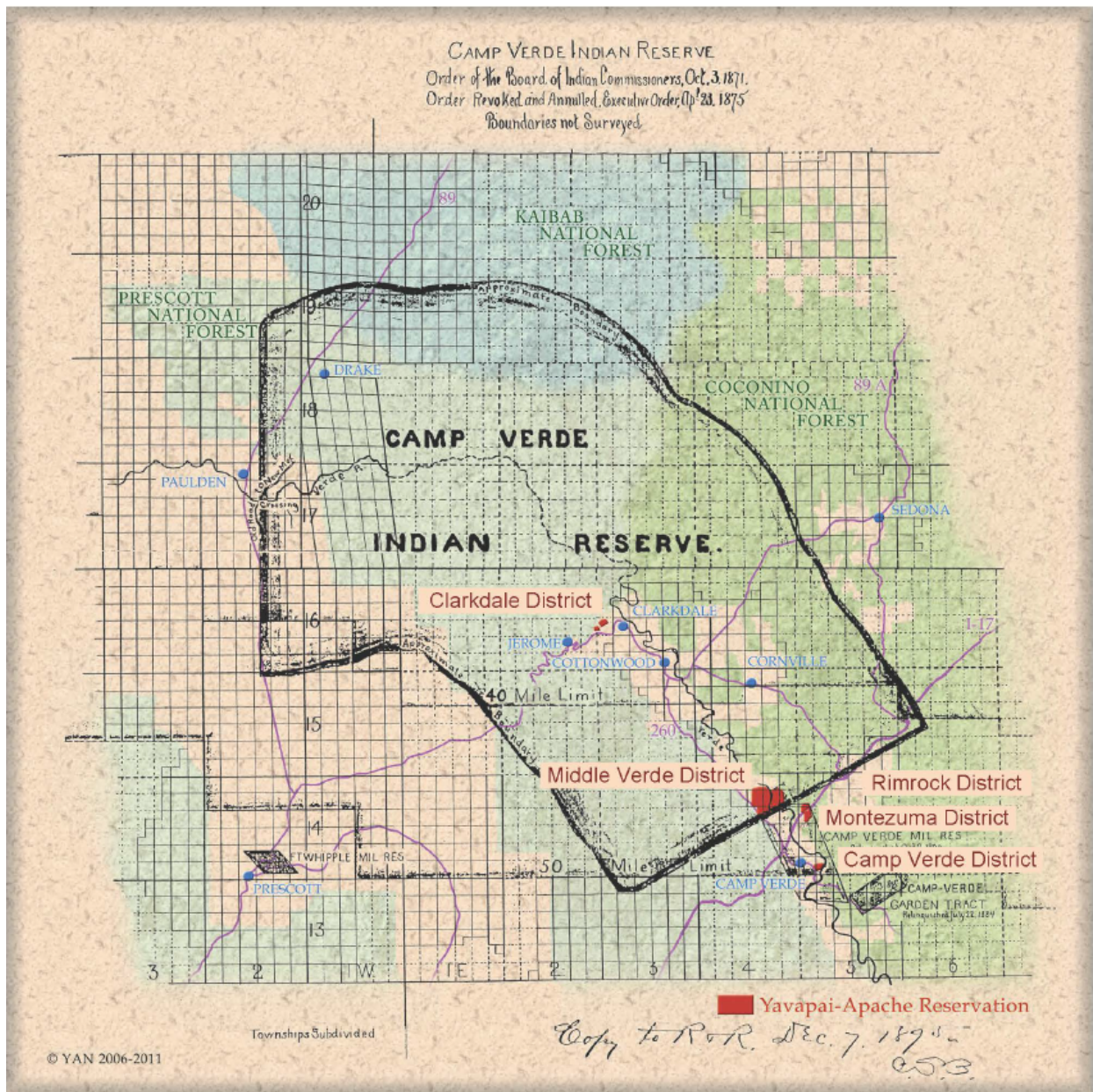
GENERAL: Having personally inspected the country and condition of the Apache Mohave Indians on the Verde River above the post, and finding the Indians to be in considerable numbers, destitute and in a starving condition, having no boundaries defining their homes, their country overrun by hunters who kill their game, and not unfrequently kill the Indians—gold prospectors and others, none of whom locate in this section of country—agreeably to the powers conferred upon me by the President, and communicated to me in the letter of the Secretary of the Interior, dated July 21, 1871, and the orders of the Secretary of War of July 18 and 31, 1871, and in harmony with the humane action of Congress in providing funds for this purpose, I have concluded to declare all that portion of country adjoining on the northwest side of and above the military reservation of this post on the Verde River for a distance of 10 miles on both sides of the river, to the point where the old wagon road to New Mexico crosses the Verde, supposed to be a distance up the river of about 45 miles, to be an Indian reservation, within the limits of which all peaceably disposed Apache Mohave Indians are to be protected, fed, and otherwise cared for, and the laws of Congress and Executive orders relating to the government of Indian reservations shall have full power and force within the boundaries of the same, unless otherwise ordered by Congress or the President.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

VINCENT COLYER, *Commissioner.*

Bvt. Maj. Gen. C. GROVER,
Commanding Camp Verde, Ariz.

The 1871 Reservation was **900 square miles** beginning in what is now the Town of Camp Verde, extending up the Verde River for 45 miles to the crossing at Drake, Arizona, and encompassing ten (10) miles on each side of the Verde River.



Historical Survey Map showing the 1871 Camp Verde Indian Reservation with overlays of the current National Forest lands, Verde Valley cities, towns and communities and the Nation's current Reservation lands.

While the 1871 Camp Verde Indian Reservation (also known as the “Rio Verde Reserve”) may seem like a large tract of land to an eastern farmer or real estate broker, for the 2,000+ hunting and gathering Yavapé and Dilzhé’é who had been in a state of territorial equilibrium for centuries, it was the geographic equivalent of being moved into a modern football stadium and told to stay there. Reducing our range from 16,000 square miles to a mere 900 was a 94% loss in our livable space, analogous to a modern family farm of 100 acres reduced by the government by 94 acres, and being told, “No problem you can make it on six acres.”

The Hard-Fought Struggle to Remain in Our Homeland

At first only a few *Dilzhé'é* Apache clans came into the Reservation. Many of our ancestors stayed out on the land through another harsh winter, while being relentlessly hunted by troops and cavalry columns out of Fort Verde at Camp Verde, and at Camp Reno on Rye Creek south of Payson. Our People were hard pressed to survive without access to their stored food and traditional winter camps.

In the spring of 1873, *Dilzhé'é* war chiefs began coming into the Reservation with their people. Chalipan (Grey Hat) and Hosteen Nez (Tall Old Man) surrendered to General Crook. These men represented several hundred Apache men, women and children. Grey Hat famously told General Crook that, "We are not afraid to fight you, but we cannot fight you and our own people" (meaning the Apache scouts in Crook's command). Previously, and possibly more famously, the General had said in 1871, "It takes an Apache to catch an Apache." Thus marking the beginning of the United States Army's practice of using Apache scouts to hunt their own people.

Even still, Apache men remained out on the landscape fighting for *Shi ke Yaa* (the *Dilzhé'é* Homelands). Tel Chee (Red Ant) was one of these war chiefs from the Tonto Basin. Crook called him "the liar" as he had come in before to get rations and then left. Crook put a five-dollar gold piece bounty on his head. Over the next year, a number of heads came into Camp Verde. Finally, the right one was identified by a single turquoise earring held by copper wire still attached. He was recognized by a cousin who was a scout in General Crook's command.

At this same time, the majority of *Yavapé* People were being held at Date Creek west of Congress Junction (a remote place even today). In April 1873, our *Yavapé* ancestors were brought over Mingus Mountain to the 1871 Reservation. They were meant to be moved onto the Reservation the previous fall (1872), but winter intervened and, lacking blankets and shoes, the march was postponed by the Army until the following spring.

Yet, even after being brought to the 1871 Reservation, a *Yavapé* war chief, Wa Potea (Big Rump), remained out causing trouble for the miners and settlers from Wickenburg through the western Tonto Basin up until 1876, when he was finally run down and killed in the low desert. Both Red Ant and Big Rump capitalized off one another's exploits with the Army. They kept the Army confused in the field by blaming each other for their own transgressions and depredations. In the end, they stayed out too long and their own violent deaths fighting for their Homelands marked the end of open resistance by *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* warriors.

General Crook's Search for an Appropriate Location for the Indian Agency on the 1871 Camp Verde Indian Reservation

In April 1873, with the Reservation population of *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* greatly increased on the Reservation, General Crook set out to locate a permanent site for a new Indian Agency within the 1871 Reservation. The trip was described at the time in the local newspaper, the *Weekly Arizona Miner*:

Peck's Lake.

Leaving the post Thursday morning, Gens. Crook and Small, Drs. Bendell and Williams, two Date Creek Apache-Yuma Indians and three or four other persons, besides myself, started up the [Verde] River [from Camp Verde] to examine the valleys and thereby gain some idea of adaptability of the country for an Indian reservation. Ascending for about 17 miles, we camped for the night, in the neighborhood of Peck's lake and congratulated each other upon the advantages of this section for a home for the three tribes of this vicinity – advantages which may be summed under the heads: plenty of rich bottom land; miles after miles of good grass; abundance of water, timber, fish, game, isolation from white settlements, and a mild climate. To this place the Date Creek Indians will soon be removed; here will the Verde Indians, the Indians of the Tonto Basin and McDowell be domiciled, in bands and families along the [Verde] river, which is the prettiest stream of water yet seen by us in Arizona. High mountains rise upon either side of this stream, from whose tops and sides flow many streams of crystal water. Fearing ague [malaria], the Indians will be made to live on the high land overlooking the valleys, and everything possible will be done to make them happy and content. That such efforts as we know will be made may prove entirely successful is our most earnest wish.

Weekly Arizona Miner, April 12, 1873, p.2.

Yavapé and Dilzhé'é Adaptability in the Face of Adversity

By the fall of 1873, the *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* People on the Reservation were producing fodder and fresh produce for the Army and for themselves.

About the 20th of April the agent was rendered by illness incapable of duty, and Capt. J. W. Mason, Fifth Cavalry, then commanding Camp Verde, Arizona Territory, was detailed to take charge of the reserve. Captain Mason immediately procured a competent assistant in the person of Mr. D. Marr, and undertook the construction of a dam and acaquia. In less than one month this work was completed, the labor being done by Indians, and the leveling and superintendence by Captain Mason himself. The Indians were encouraged to work by presents of tobacco, and the whole enterprise was conducted without expense to the Government except the salary of an additional employé. Owing to the late date at which this work was commenced, it was impossible to do extensive planting, but by July 1 the Indians had planted about 35 to 40 acres of corn, with a very considerable quantity of pumpkins, melons, potatoes, and beans. The ditch is one and three-fourths miles in length, with extension of about one-fourth of a mile staked out; when fully completed it will irrigate about 250 acres of good arable land.

* * *

I had intended to make the Indians build permanent dwellings and villages; but the early commencement of the rainy season, which prevented adobe-making, has compelled me to postpone this until a more favorable opportunity. However, they have improved greatly on their old style of building, many living in roomy huts with dirt roofs. The crops, which are duly irrigated and cultivated by the Indians, are looking as finely as any I have seen in the Territory, and, unless some unlooked-for accident intervenes, the Indians will realize about 75,000 pounds of corn, and about 2,000 pounds of potatoes, besides pumpkins and melons. I can confidently state that, with one other irrigating-ditch, which can be constructed this fall, the Indians can, next season, put in at least 300 acres of grain and large quantities of vegetables. They display great interest in the progress of their crops, and seem to fully understand that they will have to become self-supporting in a short time.

Report of W.S. Schuyler, Acting Rio Verde Agent, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (1874), p. 299.

In April and May 1874, an irrigation ditch had been successfully hand dug by the *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* on the Reservation at the current site of Dead Horse State Park. The ditch, which was 1 ¾ miles long, put nearly 60 acres under cultivation and there were plans to expand it another ¼ mile to irrigate a total of 250 acres of land. Notably, this irrigation ditch was later taken over by non-Indian settlers, and today, it operates as the "Cottonwood Ditch" and provides irrigation water on several properties located in the heart of the City of Cottonwood.

Taking Away the Last of Our Homelands – Our Removal from the 1871 Camp Verde Indian Reservation to the San Carlos Apache Reservation

In spite of the end of open warfare across our *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* territory, and our People's success at farming on the Reservation, the pressure and agitating for the 1871 Reservation to be opened up to white American settlement was ever increasing. This pressure came particularly from a ring of federal contractors in Tucson, and at the federal enclave in Parker, whose profits were being compromised by the success of the *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* farmers on the Reservation. The contractors had representatives and lobbyists in Washington, D.C. Our People did not.

And then the malicious hand of the white man's graft showed itself. At Tucson there existed a political ring of federal officials, contractors, etc...This gang of racketeers saw with alarm that under Crook's management the Indians at Camp Verde would soon be self supporting. It meant that the white contractors would cease to furnish...inferior supplies and thin cattle at exhorbinant prices...One day a peremptory order came to remove the Indians from Camp Verde to the barren San Carlos Reservation.

Paul I. Wellman, *Death in the Desert* (1935), p. 148.

In the bigger picture of the federal conquest of the western states, by the mid-1870s, the U.S. Army was also facing logistical issues on a broad front. The northern and central plains were still home to numerous powerful tribes, and much of the Southwest was still on fire with conflict, including from the Chiricahua and Warm Springs Apaches located farther south and east of *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* territory.

Thus, one of the federal solutions in the Arizona and New Mexico Territory was to sequester all of the Apache groups into one location, where the Army could fulfill its role as jailer, while still conducting military operations against Geronimo. Thus, the decision to remove our *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* People from our Reservation and homelands in central Arizona, to the low desert of the San Carlos Apache Reservation located 180 miles to the southeast, was made in short order by the White House.

In February 1875, the newly appointed Special Commissioner of Indian Affairs, L.E. Dudley, who was specifically assigned the task of our removal, arrived at our Reservation for the first time. He knew nothing about our People nor our territory, yet he would begin the long march to San Carlos within two weeks of his arrival. Our People had been told nothing, but they were suspicious. Rations (never generous) had been cut in half, the seed for spring planting, cloth, tools and other essential goods that had been promised were late in coming. Trepidation was in the air. The *Yavapé* and *Dilzhé'é* leaders requested a conference with Dudley asking him to reconsider, but he did not have the authority, let alone the will.

Then "Captain Snooks," the spokesman for the chiefs, told him they would not go where they would be outnumbered by their enemies; that this was their own country and always had been. He told him their fathers and grandfathers were born here and had died here; their wives and children were all born here; and he reminded the commissioner of the written promises that had been made to them when they were assembled here, that the country along the river and 10 miles on each side should be theirs forever. He said that was little enough land for so many people who had been accustomed to roaming for many miles before the white man came and stole it from them.

William T. Corbusier, *Verde to San Carlos* (1971), p. 268.

Dudley showed no empathy or regard for our People, let alone any human pity, and chose the more direct and significantly more treacherous route to San Carlos through the mountains, including several stream crossings at high water, in the dead of winter. Proper preparations and precautions for the journey were not made.

[Dudley] had announced his intention to take the Indians across the mountains instead of around them by means of wagons and horses. Schuyler and the Doctor delayed the conference several days in an endeavour to persuade him to change his mind, but he stubbornly stuck to his foolish plan, saying..."They are Indians, let the beggars walk."

William T. Corbusier, *Verde to San Carlos* (1971), p. 267.

So, unceremoniously, on February 27, 1875, without consent or consideration, 1,476 of our People, young and old, pregnant and infirm alike, were force marched as prisoners of war in horrendous conditions for 180 miles to an unknown land. A land that had belonged to enemies in previous times. More than 100 of our ancestors died *en route* due to exposure, trauma, childbirth and drowning. Today, our Nation commemorates this event every year as Exodus Day in memory of our ancestors and as a reminder of the suffering they endured with the complete loss of our traditional Homelands.

...as the long, silent, and sad procession slowly passed. They had to carry all their belongings on their back and in their V-shaped baskets (*ku-thaks*), old and young with heavy packs. One old man placed his aged and decrepit wife in one of these baskets, with her feet hanging out, and carried her on his back, the basket supported by a band over his head, almost all the way. He refused help, except at several stream crossings, where he was persuaded to allow a trooper to take her across on his horse. Over the roughest country through thick brush and rocks, day after day, he struggled along with his precious burden – un-complaining.

William T. Corbusier, *Verde to San Carlos* (1971), p. 270.

The End of Our 1871 Reservation



Bronze Statue of Man Carrying His Wife in a Basket to San Carlos, Located at the Yavapai-Apache Culture Center, Camp Verde, Arizona.

As already alluded to, settlers were clamoring to occupy the water-rich Verde Valley, which they considered being wasted land as an Indian Reservation. The non-Indians' "joy" at the removal of our ancestors was expressed in the March 5, 1875 edition of the Weekly Arizona Miner:

They started on Saturday from the Verde some 1476 strong, under guard of 15 soldiers and 40 Indian allies, on their way to San Carlos. Joy and peace go with them and may they never again set foot in Yavapai county. The reservation in the Valley of the Verde will now be thrown open to settlement by white people, and when it is known abroad that there are no Indians within hundreds of miles of Prescott we shall expect to see families and all the better class of immigrants whose lives are valuable and who are concerned for the safety of those dependent upon them, turn their teams in this direction where they can be free from the fear of Indians as well as because of the richness of the country's resources.

Weekly Arizona Miner (March 5, 1875), p. 2.

And just a few weeks after our People arrived at San Carlos, on April 23, 1875, our 1871 Reservation was terminated and restored to the public domain with just the stroke of President Grant's pen:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, April 23, 1875.

All orders establishing and setting apart the Camp Verde Indian Reservation, in the Territory of Arizona, described as follows: "All that portion of country adjoining on the northwest side of and above the military reservation of this [Camp Verde] post, on the Verde River, for a distance of 10 miles on both sides of the river to the point where the old wagon road to New Mexico crosses the Verde, supposed to be a distance up the river of about forty-five miles," are hereby revoked and annulled; and the said described tract of country is hereby restored to the public domain.

U. S. GRANT.

The Return to Our Aboriginal Homelands

After nearly a generation on the San Carlos Reservation, the wars against the Apache were finally over and the Army was done with military operations in the Arizona Territory. After Geronimo surrendered in September 1886, the Army began issuing permits so our People could work off the Reservation in Globe, Arizona, to cut 'grass hay' for the Army, and gather traditional food for themselves to supplement the nutrition-less rations of beef, flour, lard, coffee and sugar provided by the government.

By 1890, the Army was tired of their role guarding prisoners of war and they simply stopped enforcing the permit system. At that point, a lot of our People simply began walking home to wherever we had come from: the Tonto Basin, the country south of Prescott at Mayer, southwest to Paloma, the Mogollon Rim country above Payson, and to the Middle Verde country in the Verde Valley.

Some of the former scouts who had served under General Crook and other commanders had a horse and a rifle, and a few families had a wagon and a mule, but most made the journey on foot. There were virtually no good roads then, just trails. Some families took several years to get back home, but the pull of "where we came from" was always there. Some stopped to work on the various bridges, dams, mines, and roads being built in the region, including the Apache Trail and Roosevelt Dam located just east of metropolitan Phoenix (1905-1911), the Fossil Creek hydroelectric facility (1907-1909), and Cherry Creek Road over Mingus Mountain.



Theodore Roosevelt Dam



Apache Indians from the San Carlos Reservation worked on Roosevelt Dam from its conception in 1902 until it was finished in 1911. The Reclamation Service first hired Apache laborers to work on the Mesa-Roosevelt road at Fish Creek Hill and other isolated areas along the road. Apaches later worked on the High Line road, power canal, division dam, quarries, sluicing tunnel, and the dam itself. Apache crews usually consisted of 12 to 14 men and at times were supervised by Apache men, often clan chiefs. The Apaches became known as hard workers with Louis Hill, district engineer at Roosevelt, rating them above Mexican and Anglo workers at many jobs. It is estimated that during the course of construction, over 1,500 Apaches worked and lived in the Roosevelt area. One source said of Louis Hill: "Hill's use of Apache laborers at Roosevelt is generally acknowledged as a key to his success in completing the project." (Courtesy U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.)

Images of America: Roosevelt Dam by Kathleen Garcia (2009), p. 32.

In the Verde Valley, many of our men worked as 'cowboys' on the local ranches and in the numerous mines that had cropped up all across the landscape. Our People became a cheap and dependable labor force in a lightly populated region and much like today, as then, somebody has to do the jobs others won't or cannot do.

They depend for their living upon chance employment and generally such as the kind of work such as the white laborers do not care to undertake. The Indian women frequently wash for the households while the men work cleaning ditches, grubbing mesquite and when there is great demand for laborers they work in the hay field, they are also sometimes employed at road building. They do not materially come in conflict with white labor. Since they are always here they are very convenient for short jobs for which white men cannot be obtained for the reason that white laborers cannot afford to remain here to pick up these chance jobs and remain out of employment during the rest of the time. Most of the idle white men in the community at times are cowboys who are very efficient in their calling but who do not care nor wish to perform the kind of work performed by the Indians, they have a natural pride in their trade that makes them dislike to engage in the lower forms of labor. They enter in that way as an economic factor in the valley.

Statement of Mr. Vyne to Supervisor Otis B. Goodall, March 17, 1914.

Our women worked as nannies, laundresses and domestic help. They also made and sold world-class baskets for extra cash. However, it was not all roses for the displaced exiles returning home. For those wanting to live in the traditional way, it was a rough go and virtually impossible after the federal lands (our traditional homelands) were fenced off. The ranchers had essentially usurped and now controlled the greater part of the landscape in our home country. The good ground around Prescott, the Verde Valley, and along the East Verde had all been platted and settled in our decadal absence. All the springs, seeps and creeks that our People had depended on for their seasonal rounds were all spoken for by the non-Indian newcomers.

Our ancestors returned home as strangers in their own land, in a world with new rules and customs. By 1907, our tribal population in the Verde Valley and surrounding area was around 400 people.¹ And still, families were out in the nooks and crannies trying to make it in the old way to the extent they could. Dr. Taylor Gabbard, the Indian Agent assigned to the "Apache Indian Community of Camp Verde", complained by letter to Washington D.C in 1908 that taking a census of "these Indians" was almost impossible as he had "Indians" spread across the landscape "from Turkey Creek to Cibecue" without any means of discovering their whereabouts or exact numbers. (NARA M95 microfiche, Dr. Gabbards Camp Verde correspondence).

MORE THAN A CENTURY OF REBUILDING A RESERVATION FOR OUR PEOPLE...PIECE BY PIECE

After our People made our way home from San Carlos, there were non-Indian people in the Verde Valley who thought the federal government needed to take better care of the tribal people they had displaced, but there was also an angry and vocal local contingent who wanted our People removed to the Fort Mohave Reservation on the Colorado River. Our agent, Dr. Gabbard was dedicated to helping our People and he lobbied hard for Congressional support to purchase land for our People who had come home. Because of the settlement of the Verde Valley during our exile in San Carlos, there was not a lot of land, especially good land, available within the boundaries of the old 1871 Reservation or the old Camp Verde Military Reserve.

¹ Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior, 1907, p. 177.

THE CAMP VERDE DISTRICT. Eventually, conscience won the day, and in **November 1909**, the United States purchased an **18.35 acre²** parcel of land along the Verde River from James and Hattie Wingfield for the Nation. Today these lands remain part of our Reservation known as the “Camp Verde” or “Lower Verde” District.

Of course, this tiny parcel of land was far too small to provide an adequate land base to grow enough food for our community, let alone provide a place to live. To first have our lands forcibly reduced from 16,000 to 900 square miles, then the devastation of a long exile at San Carlos, the hardship of returning home, and then to get a parcel of a mere 18.35 acres, must be one of history’s greatest case studies in diminishing returns. It was a small start, and our People were grateful for it, but still more needed to be done.

THE MIDDLE VERDE DISTRICT. In **1915 and 1917**, Congressional appropriations made it possible for the U.S. Indian Service to purchase an additional **458 acres** of land within our former 1871 Reservation. Today these lands are part of the **Middle Verde District** of our Reservation.

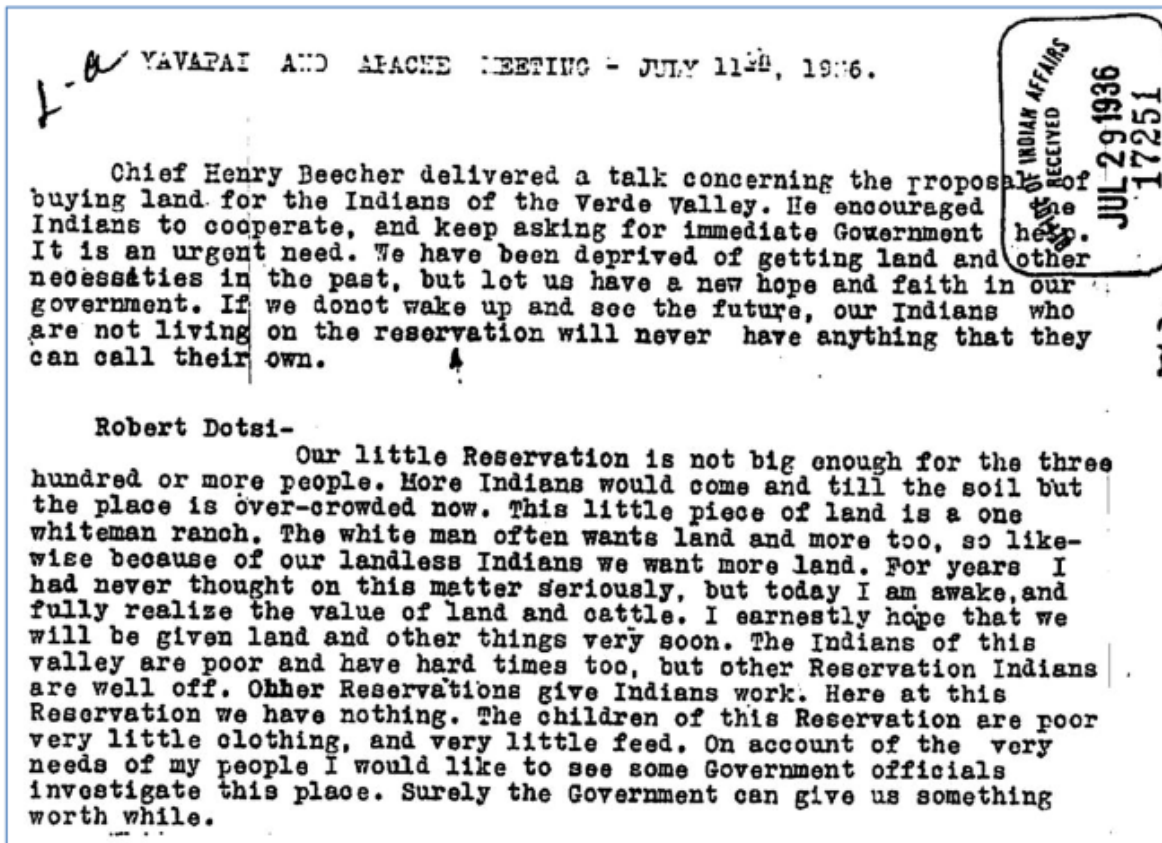
As soon as these lands were purchased our People started putting in gardens, and many were quite successful, winning awards at the state fair for corn, melons and squash as well as providing for the local markets and their own families. One man raised turkeys and supplied the townfolk with the birds for Thanksgiving. It was at this same time the U.S. Indian Service relocated the Camp Verde Indian School to Middle Verde.



Exhibit at the "Indian Fair" at Middle Verde in 1916.

² Due to accretion from the Verde River, this 18.35-acre parcel of land is now 53.3 acres as formally surveyed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management in 2016. The accreted land includes a large portion of the Verde River floodplain which was once a wider flowing Verde River.

Yet, despite the federal government's reacquisition of these small dis-jointed pieces of land at Camp Verde and Middle Verde for our People, they were still not enough to sustain our growing population and additional land was still needed. But our pleas for help fell on deaf ears and nothing was done to find additional land for us for more than 30 years.



Record of U.S. Meeting With Yavapai-Apache Indian Community, July 11, 1936. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) at Laguna Niguel, California.

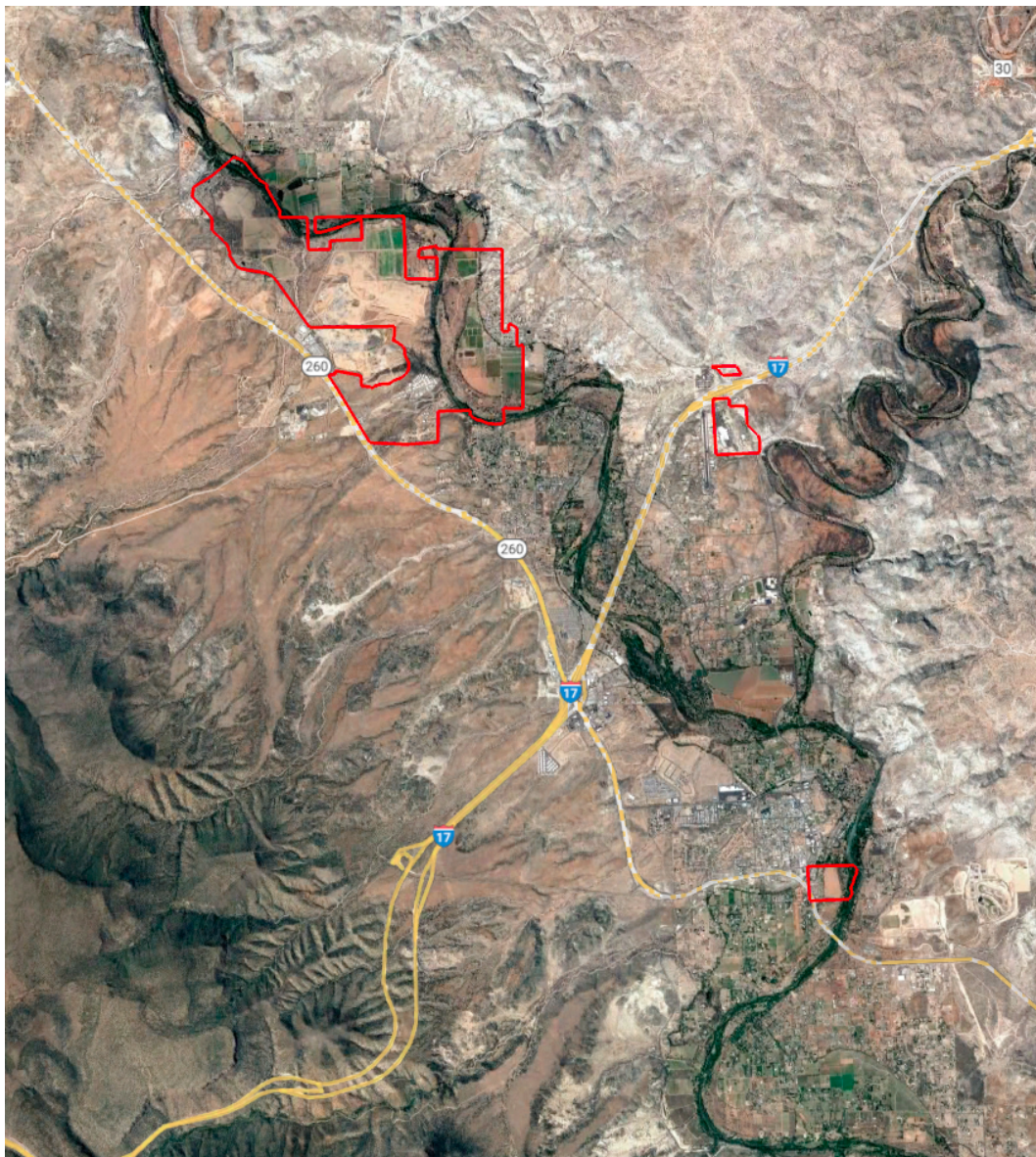
THE RIMROCK DISTRICT. It was not until 1967 that another very small 3.67-acre parcel of land, which had been re-settled for decades by an Apache scout and his family, was taken into trust along Wet Beaver Creek near Rimrock, Arizona. This area is known today as the **Rimrock District** of the Reservation.

THE CLARKDALE DISTRICT. Then, in 1969, 58 acres were taken into trust within the Town of Clarkdale, where an old camp of our People was located before our ancestors were removed to San Carlos. Today, this parcel is known as the **Clarkdale District** of the Reservation.

THE MONTEZUMA DISTRICT. And a few years later, in 1974, a 78.84-acre parcel of land where the Cliff Castle Hotel & Casino complex is located was taken into trust to help address the Nation's critical need for economic development. The casino and hotel, built in 1995, have allowed the Nation to enter the modern world of business and generate the revenues we need to provide essential governmental and social services for our community—not to mention a source of jobs for our people as well as our friends and neighbors in the Verde Valley. Today this parcel is known as the **Montezuma District** of the Reservation.

OUR RESERVATION TODAY. Although other contiguous parcels of land have been added to portions of our Reservation since 1974, our current Reservation consists of only ~**1,810 acres**, which is less than three (3) square miles in total. This land base represents only **0.3% of our former 1871 Reservation** and **0.0017% of our original Homelands**.

Today, our Nation's Tribal population is nearing 3,000 and our community is growing with each passing year. The lands we have now are not sufficient to sustain our current situation, let alone provide a prosperous future for our children and grandchildren. While we cannot regain what has been lost, we have hope for the future, and we honor those who sacrificed so much to get us to where we are today. The pending Yavapai-Apache Land Exchange and the action to take the lands into trust as an addition to our Reservation, will help restore another small portion of our Homelands to us. It is an integral part of the Nation's ongoing healing, and it is what we as a People need to move forward.



Map showing the Yavapai-Apache Nation's existing Middle Verde, Camp Verde and Montezuma Reservation Districts.