

The National Extension Indian Reservation Program (EIRP)

By Joseph Hiller

Twenty-one Indian tribes and nations exist within the geographic boundaries of Arizona. The Extension Indian Reservation Program (EIRP) was authorized by the 1990 Farm Bill (P.L. 101-64). This measure directed that the “Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Extension Service, shall establish appropriate extension education programs on Indian reservations and tribal jurisdictions.” The legislation specified consultation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Intertribal Agriculture Council, and the Southwest Indian Agriculture Association in establishing these extension programs.

Extension Indian Reservation Program funding has enabled The University of Arizona to hire Cooperative Extension agents on six Arizona reservations. Agents currently serve the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT), Hopi and San Carlos Apache Indian reservations, Hualapai and Havasupai reservations (one agent for both), and The Navajo Nation (two agents). EIRP program funding allowed The University of Arizona to join with New Mexico State University and Utah State University in a consortium to hire and place two Cooperative Extension agents on The Navajo Nation in Shiprock, New Mexico and Window Rock, Arizona.

The La Paz County Extension office is located on CRIT, the only Cooperative Extension office in the United States that is on an Indian reservation. Currently there are requests and needs for at least 12 more Cooperative Extension agents to be placed on Arizona Indian reservations.

This issue of Arizona Land & People highlights EIRP programs on the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation and the Navajo Nation. Other Arizona EIRP programs will be covered in subsequent issues. ❖

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