

University of Oklahoma College of Law

University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons

American Indian and Alaskan Native Documents in the Congressional Serial Set: 1817-1899

6-22-1894

Agreement with Yuma Indians in California

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.ou.edu/indianserialset>



Part of the [Indigenous, Indian, and Aboriginal Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

H.R. Rep. No. 1145, 53d Cong., 2nd Sess. (1894)

This House Report is brought to you for free and open access by University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in American Indian and Alaskan Native Documents in the Congressional Serial Set: 1817-1899 by an authorized administrator of University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact Law-LibraryDigitalCommons@ou.edu.

AGREEMENT WITH YUMA INDIANS IN CALIFORNIA.

JUNE 22, 1894.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HUNTER, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany S. 1919.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 6751) to ratify and confirm an agreement with the Yuma Indians in California, beg leave to report as follows:

Your committee recommend the substitution of the Senate bill (S. 1919) for the same purpose, and the passage of the same, with the following amendments:

For section 5 substitute the following:

SEC. 5. That the Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized and directed to dispose, within a reasonable time, of the tract of land provided for in article seven of the agreement, including the buildings thereon, being the tract of land known as Fort Yuma, together with sufficient land lying to the eastward of said tract to make one-half section of land, or three hundred and twenty acres, to be used as a school farm and for educational, religious, and hospital purposes for said Yuma Indians, upon such terms as to him shall seem best, for the care, education, and training of said Indians.

In section 7 strike out from the word "tribe," in line 4, to the word "shall," in line 5, and from the word "granted," in line 5, to the word "water," in line 6, and add at the end of the section, "(during the period of ten years, to be computed from the date when said irrigation company begins the delivery of water on said reservation," so that the section as amended shall read—

SEC. 7. That the Secretary of the Interior shall have authority to, from time to time, fix the rate of water rents to be paid by the said Indians, and that each male adult Indian of the Yuma tribe shall be granted water for one acre of the land which shall be allotted to him, if he utilizes the same in growing crops, free of all rent charges during the period of ten years, to be computed from the date when said irrigation company begins the delivery of water on said reservation.

The treaty with the Yuma Indians, for the ratification of which this bill provides, was made on the 4th of December, 1893, by a commission appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, composed of Washington H. Houston, John A. Gorman, and Peter R. Brady, on the part of the Government, and the Indians themselves, being signed by a large majority of them, by all who were at that time on the reservation. It has been sent to Congress with the indorsement of the Secretary of the Interior and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. It provides for the allotment of about 3,600 acres of land among the Indians, and makes equitable provision for supplying them with water, without which, in that country, the land is worthless for agricultural purposes.

The paramount reason for the proposed settlement is found in the proposition of the Colorado River Irrigation Company to furnish the Yuma Indians with water for irrigation purposes. This irrigation enterprise has been organized with the purpose of building an extensive canal, to be supplied with water from the Colorado River, which, heading at the upper extremity of the present Yuma Reservation, crosses the entire reservation and passing through Lower California, extends into the Colorado desert, where there is an immense body of land susceptible of irrigation. This region is the most arid in America, the annual rainfall amounting to only about 3 inches in the aggregate. When water has been supplied it has been found to be exceedingly fertile, and the climate is such as to peculiarly adapt it to the growth of semitropical and tropical fruits and vegetation. All reports agree that if water can be placed upon the soil, as there is no doubt it can be, by this proposed canal, the region will soon become one of the most prosperous and productive in the country. As it is now an absolute waste land, it seems to us that the canal enterprise should be encouraged to the extent, at least, that this bill provides, of permitting the settlement of the part of the reservation susceptible to irrigation.

It is but proper to say that the irrigation company receives no other benefit from the proposed legislation than that which will accrue through the settlement which will take place under the line of the canal, and for this advantage and for the right of way for the canal which was granted by the Fifty-second Congress it proposes to make the handsome return of granting a perpetual free-water right to the Indians on the lands which they retain and of granting free-water rental to the adult male Indians for a portion of this land. This arrangement will supply the Indians with ample means of earning a livelihood, and in a country as arid as their reservation will render the 3,600 acres retained by them of far greater value than the entire reservation now is. The building and operation of the canal will also furnish many of the Indians with remunerative employment.

On the question of the sufficiency of the allotment, we call attention to the report of the commission and the letter of the Indians themselves.

Reference is made on this and other points to Ex. Doc. No. 68, giving the treaty, the letter of the Secretary of the Interior, the original bill as drafted by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the report of the commission, etc.