

We Are . . .

... a people who inhabit the Sonoran Desert in southwestern Arizona and northern Sonora, Mexico. Our Nation's lands cover almost 3,000,000 acres, or an area the size of Connecticut. Before European Contact, our people traveled extensively throughout Arizona and Mexico, hunting and gathering food, trading with neighbors, and visiting family.

...a people whose cultural values—our *himdag*—include respect for our land, respect for our elders, sharing with others, and hard work.

...a people whose origin stories tell us that we were created by Elder Brother and placed here. Archaeological evidence from Ventana Cave shows that people were living here at least 10,000 years ago.



T-JEWEDGA Our Land

PHOTOGRAPHER: BERNARD SIQUIEROS, HIMDAG KI: COLLECTIONS.

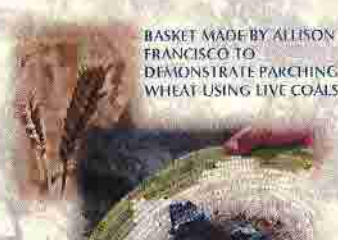
The traditional lands of the O'odham covered a large area, stretching from the Colorado River to the San Pedro River; from the Sonora River and Gulf of Mexico to the Superstition Mountains. The O'odham used all of the land's resources for shelter, food, clothing, tools, and more. The summer monsoon rains were and still are critical for a bountiful harvest and the Tohono O'odham sing and dance "to bring down the rains."

HA'ICU T-HUGĪ Our Food

The harvest from wild plants has sustained the O'odham for generations. Harvesting the *bahida* (saguaro fruit) is unique to the Sonoran Desert. The O'odham grew domesticated plants, using flood-water farming and irrigation systems. Later, domestic cattle were introduced by the Spanish. In the early 20th century, these resources were supplemented by commodities furnished by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Distribution Program.



JUANITA AHIL PICKING SAGUARO FRUIT (BAHIDA) AT HER CAMP NEAR TUCSON. PHOTOGRAPHER: HELGA TEIWES, COURTESY THE ARIZONA STATE MUSEUM.



BASKET MADE BY ALLISON FRANCISCO TO DEMONSTRATE PARCHING WHEAT USING LIVE COALS.

T-WAÑMEDAM C T-KOWNALIG Our Leadership

Traditionally, each O'odham village had its own leader who carried a leadership staff. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when O'odham lands were being reshaped by treaties and the creation of reservations, more central leadership modeled after the U.S. government evolved. Today the Nation has executive, legislative and judicial branches. One of the unfortunate results of this centralization has been the separation of O'odham from their homelands and families because the U.S.-Mexico international boundary split the aboriginal land base of the O'odham.



LEADERSHIP STAFF OF FELIX ANTOÑO FROM THE VILLAGE OF CEJADAGI WAWHAI (POSA VERDE) IN MEXICO.



MEETING OF FIRST PAPAGO COUNCIL IN 1937. PHOTOGRAPH, COURTESY OF THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.



PHOTOGRAPHER: BERNARD SIQUIEROS, HIMDAG KI: COLLECTIONS.

T-SONDALGA Our Veterans

The Veterans' Hallway Gallery is the backbone of the museum. Warriors of yesteryear and today are honored. They remind us of the sacrifices made by Tohono O'odham men and women to protect their families and lands.



JOSE LEWIS WITH A PAGE OF HIS NOTEBOOK; ORIGINAL AT THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, DC. PHOTOGRAPH, COURTESY OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

OFELIA ZEPEDA, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA, REGENTS PROFESSOR OF LINGUISTICS; FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE. PHOTOGRAPH, COURTESY OF AIEDE.



T-ÑI'OKĪ Our Language

Our language was first transcribed into English by Jose Lewis in 1897. Today, the Tohono O'odham language has its own writing system and a grammar book written by the well-known, Tohono O'odham linguist, Ofelia Zepeda.

Our current challenge is to teach Tohono O'odham to our children and our children's children in order to understand fully our *himdag* through our Native language.

. . . the Tohono O'odham.