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| **VIDEO** |  **AUDIO** |
| **SUGGESTED LEAD-IN****15 sec****Daryl Vigil:** **Jicarilla Apache Nation****Water Administrator****:06-:10****“Southern Ute Indian Tribe”****(mandatory courtesy over traditional dance cermony)****:11-:15****Selene Hawkins: 1:11-1:25****Nature Conservancy****:21-:25** | With growing water shortages on the Colorado River, tribal communities are demanding a bigger role in river management and access to water they legally own but have never actually possessed. Major river water users will gather in Las Vegas this week to plot how to save this rapidly failing waterway. These Native American tribes may be key to that effort.Jerd Smith of Fresh Water News reports:**------------------------------------------------------------------------------**(Nat)All we’re asking is to be able to be self-determining in how our water is developed………..NAT) tradition dance ceremonyTribal nations have been active in finding solutions, but they haven’t had a seat at the table.As the Colorado River sinks deeper into drought, the basin’s 30 tribes have joined forces asserting their right to negotiate with federal, state and local water agencies. But little progress has been made.And it’s a big issue. Tribal communities legally are entitled to roughly 25% of the river’s water and they’ve been pushing hard for access to that water. They’ve been denied access for more than 100 years. Though the request seems simple, there are complex rules that govern the river, its powerful users, and state and federal agencies. That makes the tribes’ undertaking a challenge.But recently there’s been progress.  Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and New Mexico have begun formal meetings to find ways to negotiate with six tribes who claim water rights in those states.  It’s a first step towards the negotiating table. |
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