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CRIT Environmental
Fairholme Ranch

PERSONAL HISTORY INFORMATION

PLEASE STATE YOUR PERSONAL HISTORY, YOUR VIEWS, CONCERNS, AND WHAT YOU WISH TO ACCOMPLISH AS A TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBER.

I was raised on this Reservation with nine brothers and sisters on a land assigned to my father and mother in 1945. I attended and finished from all the local schools, including Le Pera Elementary and Parker High School. In higher education, I received a BS degree in mathematics education from the U of A, a BS degree in Civil Engineering from California State Polytechnic University, and a MA degree from California State University in Fullerton where I studied history and American Indian land tenure. I began my professional career by teaching high school mathematics in Snowflake, Arizona and later at Sherman Indian High School in Riverside, California, but the majority of my teaching experience has been in higher education. I taught mathematics, history, and physical education at Riverside College, and after twenty-five years of service was awarded the rank of Professor by the Board of Trustees. During that time, the faculty of our three-college district selected me to lead them as the president of the faculty academic Senate for two terms and then as the leader of the faculty union for two terms. I also participate in higher educational matters on the California state level. Other teaching experience was at UC Riverside, Cal State University Fullerton, and San Diego State University where I taught as an adjunct faculty member.

I became a part-time farmer in 1987 when I leased 56 acres of Tribal land on Eddy Road. Later, I leased land from my father and joined him in the cattle business. After I retired five years ago, I moved back to the reservation to farm full time, and leased and farmed over 10,000 acres. Today, I farm 550 acres for myself, and run a Reservation farm with over 10,000 acres of cotton, alfalfa, corn, wheat and Bermuda grass, on land leased by a California dairyman.

With all the great resources existing on our Reservation, tribal members should expect our 26 enterprises to prosper, but they are not. The Pandemic is certainly a factor in this. However, our enterprises were not doing well financially even before the Pandemic. CRIT Farms is also losing money. The Tribal Council assigned over 27,700 acres to the Farms, but they can farm only 8,200 acres due to the water shortage. When we leased (sold) our water, the Tribes took some of that water from CRIT Farm's water allocation. The Farms had to decrease their water consumption by not growing cotton. Then our multimillion-dollar cotton gin had to close, because CRIT Farms was the gin's only customer.

Other concerns are the need to improve the quality of education for our students by supporting our Public Schools, classroom problems in our Head Start program, dependable online education with better internet access, and high school graduation. These things need to be addressed and solved by working together. Public safety on the southern end of the reservation could be improved and the Tribes could do more to assistance tribal farmers and ranchers. The Covid-19 Pandemic has hurt the Tribes physically and financially, but now we face the bigger task of developing a viable plan that addresses both the illness and the economic recovery. I have the experience and desire to help solve all of these problems.

SUBMITTED BY:

