**SCRIPT— WATER DESK**

**TITLE: SOUTHERN UTE TRIBE AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

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| **VIDEO** | **AUDIO** |
| **SUGGESTED LEAD-IN**  :15 Kevin Mallow  Agriculture Division  Southern Ute Tribe  1:13 Lorelei Cloud  Southern Ute Tribal Council | The megadrought in the Southwest is impacting everyone, including Native American tribes that have survived here for  thousands of years. Gary Strieker reports from the Southern Ute Reservation.  **------------------------------------------------------------------------------**  **ON ITS SMALL RESERVATION IN SOUTHWESTERN COLORADO, THE SOUTHERN UTE TRIBE STRUGGLES TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE.**  SOT (22:25) **– “**So that’s a big worry. And a lot of the tribal members also say we’re in climate change, we’re in this situation where we’re going to be in continual drought. Is it going to be worth it for me to put the funds into this, the investment that I need to put into this?”  **ON THIS 40-ACRE PLOT, THE TRIBE HAS INVESTED TO REHABILITATE AND IRRIGATE.**  SOT (9:12) – “When we first started on this, there were raised  ditches going across, there were dead trees out in the middle  of it, there were prairie dogs all over it, there were weeds all  over it. And now, after six years of production, it’ll make  anywhere from four and a half to six tons of hay per acre per  year..”  **THE BIG QUESTION IS WHETHER THE TRIBE WILL**  **HAVE ENOUGH WATER TO SUSTAIN ITS CROPS**  **IN THE YEARS AHEAD. THE RESERVATION GETS**  **MOST OF ITS WATER FROM THE NEARBY**  **VALLECITO RESERVOIR, FED BY WINTER**  **SNOWPACK AND NOW AT LESS THAN 40**  **PERCENT OF ITS CAPACITY.**  SOT (Cloud 9:28) – “Once this reservoir drops below a certain  level, it triggers a response and we need to notify the irrigators  within our irrigation system to let them know there’s going to be  a shorter irrigation season…  2:56) – “The tribe has very much impacted my tribe and my reservation…(15:30) Ute people were nomads and we traveled around what is now known as the state of Colorado, Utah and  the northern part of Arizona and New Mexico… Not being able  to live closer to the higher elevations like we normally have  been has impacted the way that we live down here in the  lower part of Colorado, again because we’re having to deal  with the higher temperatures…Climate change is something  that’s completely different for us. We are not used to these hot temperatures in the area that we live in so we’re having to  adjust and find a balance.”  **FOR THE SOUTHERN UTES, ADJUSTING AND**  **FINDING THAT BALANCE IS THE CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE FACING 40 MILLION OTHERS IN THE COLORADO RIVER BASIN.**  **FOR THE WATER DESK, GARY STRIEKER**  **REPORTING.** |