

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Energy Resources Conservation
and Development Commission

In the Matter of:) Docket No. 02-AFC-1
Application for Certification for the)
BLYTHE ENERGY PROJECT- PHASE II) (AFC Accepted 07/17/02)
_____)

COMMENTS OF CALIFORNIANS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY, INC. (CARE)
ON SOCIOECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCE IMPACTS

CALifornians for Renewable Energy, Inc. (CARE) respectfully submits these comments in behalf of Intervener Carmela Garnica who is a member in good standing of CARE, along with her father Alfredo Figueroa who is providing expert testimony over the potential socioeconomic and cultural resource impacts from the proposed project. We respectfully request you incorporate the attached photographs, petitions, newspaper story, and the attached foreword by Alfredo Acosta Figueroa to his book *Ancient Footprints of the Colorado River, La Cuna De Aztlan*, published 2002 by Aztec Printing Company, National City California.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael E. Boyd
President
CALifornians for Renewable Energy, Inc.
(CARE)
5439 Soquel Drive
Soquel, CA 95073
E-mail: michaelboyd@sbcglobal.net

Verification

I am an officer of the Commenting Corporation herein, and am authorized to make this verification on its behalf. The statements in the foregoing document are true of my own knowledge, except matters, which are therein stated on information and belief, and as to those matters I believe them to be true.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated on this 3rd day of April 2005, at Soquel, California.



Michael E. Boyd
President
CALifornians for Renewable Energy, Inc.
(CARE)
5439 Soquel Drive
Soquel, CA 95073
E-mail: michaelboyd@sbcglobal.net

Certificate of Services

I hereby certify that I have this day served the foregoing document “*Comments of CALifornians for Renewable Energy, Inc. (CARE) on Socioeconomic and Cultural Resource Impacts*” for the proceeding 02-AFC-1 on the Public Advisor’s Office as CARE is representing a Party with recognized economic hardship, and each person designated on the official service list, has been served via e-mail, on this 3rd day of April 2005, for the proceeding 02-AFC-1.

Dated on this 3rd day of April 2005, at Soquel, California.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael E. Boyd
President
CALifornians for Renewable Energy, Inc.
(CARE)
5439 Soquel Drive
Soquel, CA 95073
E-mail: michaelboyd@sbcglobal.net

Foreword by Alfredo Acosta Figueroa

This book is the result of more than forty-four years of study and observation of the Lower Colorado River Basin geographical surroundings, focusing on Blythe, California, and on the Palo Verde/Parker Valleys, cross-referenced with the oral traditions and songs and the Nahua Codex. My background as both a researcher and social activist and as a descendant of the Nahua Nation of historic Aztlan, of Moctezuma and Cuauhtemoc, the ancient Azteca/Mexica, today's Chicanos, has contributed to the foundation on which this book is based.

I was born in Blythe, California in 1934, the fourth son of a family of Indigenous-Chicano heritage from the Colorado River Indian Reservation, which encompasses the Palo Verde and Parker Valleys. My roots in this area go back six generations, from my mother to my great-great-grandmother. My father, of Yaqui-Pima descent, was from San Jose de Pima, Sonora, Mexico, where most people were miners. Ours is the only family that began mining during the Colorado River gold rush in 1862 and is still operating today.

My political activities in Blythe began in 1956 when that area was known as a "little Mississippi" because of its racial disorders and the prejudice of its Anglo-dominated powerbrokers toward Chicanos and other minorities. When my brothers and I were growing up in El Barrio Cuchillo, a section of Blythe, we were very active in all kinds of sports and other activities, along with the rest of the youth who lived in the barrio. There were 13 young Chicanos who played together. We would excel in most of our activities and one of our favorite sayings was, "This is one for the book." We were all going to one-day write a book about Los Figueroa and the Barrio del Cuchillo. Now, after 55 years of longing to write a book, I have been able to bring forth the first of a series.

As I grew up, it was the Anglos who wielded their power in public instruction, city government, the police force, the county sheriff's office, the border patrol and customs offices, and the judicial system. The Anglos were among the growers who were the major employers in this valley. In the 1960s there were close to five thousand braceros Mexican contract laborers in the Palo Verde Valley a factor that increased the negative feelings Anglos had toward the local Chicano population.

In 1960 I became involved with the AFL-CIO-led Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee during the Imperial Valley lettuce strike. Later I joined with Cesar Chavez to help organize the fledgling National Farm Workers Association. In 1963 I was brutally beaten by a couple of local Anglo police officers at a restaurant in the Mexican section of Blythe. My case became a cause celebre since I was the first Chicano to sue City Hall and win. Subsequently, I won favorable judgments against a justice of the peace and US Customs for violating my civil rights and those of my brother.

Eventually, abuses in the local educational system became so widespread that in 1972 I helped organize our own K-12 school, La Escuela de la Raza Unida. Later, under the auspices of La Escuela, we undertook several organizing projects such as the founding of

our own radio station (KERU), halting construction of the proposed Sun Desert Nuclear Power Plant, and more recently, organizing against a proposed nuclear dump site near Needles, California.

During this time, as my wife and I raised our nine children, I worked under the tutelage of two great leaders; Bert Corona and Cesar Chavez. My experience with these men deepened my appreciation for human values. Bert Corona stressed constantly the importance of pride in our Chicano culture.

As a native of the Lower Colorado River Basin and member of a gambusino (mining) family, I began to study the area carefully, examining its mountains, petroglyphs (rock carvings) and intaglios/geoglyphs (designs on the desert pavement). I also interviewed elders, both here in the United States and in Mexico, to learn more about oral tradition.

For nearly four decades I have felt the presence of a power that has given me the inexplicable mystical energy and the impetus to research and reveal the information I have collected in this book. My hope is that future generations will be motivated to seek the true knowledge of their own heritage -- "PAN-CHE-BEC" -- which means, in Maya, to seek the roots of the truth, leaving no stone unturned and no shadow of doubt.

Much of what has come to us -- all the indigenous groups, communities in this part of the world -- through public education, churches, governmental agencies and other organizations, well-meaning or not, has denied us the truth about our culture, language, customs and traditions.

Fortunately, we have entered a new era in which historical information is no longer accepted blindly, without critical appraisal.

The religious people say: blessed are they who haven't seen and yet believe. In the traditional way, we say blessed are they who have seen and experienced nature's events, our (human) relationships with the Cosmos and Mother Earth. They have seen for themselves and they shall determine whether or not to believe.

We are finally beginning to realize the seriousness of the educational misinformation promulgated to us, including the physical atrocities imposed on us for centuries by conquering Europeans. Philosophers and scholars have begun to study indigenous values and belief systems with the aim of integrating western philosophical thought into the more ancient codes. Five hundred years after the first great wave of European colonization in the western hemisphere, we have entered a new phase in the cycle of history -- the conquered peoples are influencing the invaders' perceptions of themselves and their values.

Central to the history of Chicanos, descendants of this continent's natives, is the location of Aztlan, the place of origin of their Azteca/Mexica ancestors. Since the fifteenth century, when Moctezuma Ilhuicamina, fifth ruler of the Mexican nation, first sent his historians north from Mexico/Tenochtitlan (modern-day Mexico City) to seek Aztlan, Chicanos have yearned to know their roots and the whereabouts of Aztlan.

My participation in the Chicano Movement -- the search for our indigenous roots -- has been more than just a hobby or fad. It is a way of life. The Escuela de la Raza Unida's successes are fulfilling the Mexica prophecy of cultural rebirth. ERU was born of conflict and throughout its 30-year history has been able to use that same conflict and struggle, internal and external, as a means of growth.

Today ERU stands as one of a very few completely self-sufficient Chicano organizations -- the only independent, indigenous/Chicano K-12 private school in "occupied Aztlan" -- a phrase coined by prominent Chicano professor and author Dr. Rodolfo Acuna. With the current renewed interest in educational parental choice and school vouchers, ERU can serve as a model for other school programs geared toward guiding and enlightening Chicanos about the importance of developing their own schools, empowering students and enabling them to find their true identity as they learn the truth about their historical origins.

Thus, the dual prophecy of the last Mexica ruler, Cuauhtemoc, will be fulfilled, "that our Sun will shine again and that the greatness of Mexico/Tenochtitlan will never perish." Until now, most writers have dismissed Aztlan (together with Chicomoztoc - birthplace of origin of the Nahua Nations), as something mythical, like the ancient Roman and Greek gods. Such misrepresentations of the truth are possible due to the lack of researchers, investigators, historians or archeologists who have done in-depth studies such as this one, based on the mountains, landmarks, pictographs, petroglyphs, intaglios, solstice and equinox, and native languages of the Lower Colorado River basin. (Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Map-J. Disturnell) Worse yet, they have neglected to study the connections between our local Lower Colorado River nations and those from Mexico City and the areas of Guerrero and Yucatan. Labeling Aztlan a myth is another historical ploy by Hispanicised writers who wish to misdirect La Raza (the continent's people of native heritage) from the truth of our roots. Today, like the ancient Phoenix bird, Aztlan is rising from the ashes of obscurity.

The exact location of Aztlan has never been definitively established. Some historians recorded very vague indications of its existence and have hypothesized that its supposed location covered part of northwest Mexico and the southwest United States. There is a reason for that vagueness: following the European invasion of 1492, published historical writings in Mexico needed a stamp of approval from the Consejo Real de las Indias, the Spanish ruler's administrative officer for "New Spain."

For three hundred years the history of Mexico was written and rewritten under the censorship imposed by this office, which followed the reactionary religious guidelines of the notorious Spanish Inquisition. During that time very few truthful historical writings were able survive this scrutiny out of Mexico.

Two of the most quoted historical accounts of the native way of life in Mexico during the 16th Century were Fray Diego Duran's "History of the Indias," and Fray Bernardino de Sahagun's "Florentine Codex: General History of the Things of New Spain." Duran was

the translator from Nahuatl to Spanish for the Spanish Inquisition and Sahagun was determined to convert the natives from their traditional culture to European at all costs!

The barbaric period of the Inquisition subjected those who refused to succumb to this religious conversion to a tragic form of genocide. This genocide was applied equally in the western hemisphere and in Spain. Thus, the Jews and Moors suffered the same consequences that the natives suffered on this continent. Many other groups who refused to obey the Spanish crown and the church were subjected to this genocide as well.

Today, as researchers begin to scrutinize writings related to the history of indigenous peoples, they are uncovering many serious misrepresentations attributable both to Hispanicized indigenous writers of the New Spain era (1521-1821) and later Anglo historians. Dr. Ignacio Romerovargas, professor of History at the University of Michoacan in Mexico, refers to modern historians and Chicano writers who insist on promulgating the erroneous research of Hispanicized historians as "repetidores" (repeaters) because they continue to re-tell the centuries-old distortions of real historical truth.

My interpretation of indigenous history goes contrary to many of today's academic assumptions. I take issue with those who continue to repeat currently held inaccuracies regarding Aztlan. I join with the respected scholars who envision a day when a well-documented social history of Chicanos will re-confirm the true significance of the term "Aztlan."

When newly uncovered evidence is seen to be contrary to the repetidores' distortions, it is often severely criticized by the history establishment as non-factual. Such was the case when the remains of the last Mexica tlatoani (spokesperson) Cuauhtemoc were uncovered in the city of Ixcateopan, Guerrero, Mexico in 1949. Some repetidores went so far as to discount the writings of such noted historians as Dr. Salvador Rodriguez Juarez, who was the 12th descendant of the Cuauhtemoc dynasty. They also discounted the tremendous contributions of Eulalia Guzman and Dr. Alfonso Quiroz Cuaron, two well-respected members of the Justice Forum that verified the authenticity of Cuauhtemoc's remains. (Aconagua, 1973)

Prior to the 1949 ceremony at Ixcateopan, Tasco, historian Professor Saturnino Tellez Reyes found a codex (ancient manuscript) that strongly supported Dr. Rodriguez Juarez' interpretation of the oral history and the written facts regarding the authenticity of Cuauhtemoc's remains. (Reyes, 1979)

However, even though the Mexican government has since designated the tomb of Cuauhtemoc as the "Altar de la Patria"(Altar of the Nation), there are non-believers who still refuse to accept it as the historical truth. Since the ceremony in 1949, the Mexican government has called the tomb site "Cuna de la Mexicanidad" (Cradle of Mexicanicity).

In this part of the continent, my research of our indigenous history has centered on the geographical area in which I have spent my entire life. Convinced that it is the place of origin of the Nahua nations -- Aztlan -- I call it "La Cuna de Aztlan" (Cradle of Aztlan)

and I believe it will eventually become one of the greatest indigenous shrines on the continent. The cumulative weight of all the facts provides a compelling historical argument that La Cuna de Aztlan was and is in the Lower Colorado River Basin, beginning in the north at Spirit Mountain near Laughlin, Nevada, down to the Gulf of California in Mexico, centered in Blythe in the Palo Verde/Parker Valleys.

I do not claim to have any knowledge as to the history of the Lower Colorado River natives prior to their settling here. It would be sheer speculation for me to comment on that subject, and I would be guilty of the same error as those historians who promulgate the Bering Strait theory invented by Europeans -- that all civilization originated from the so-called old world, the Eurasian continent.

This book is to serve as a guide for further in-depth study that will utilize the abundance of evidence found in the Lower Colorado River, Valleys that has for so long been obscured. It is now coming to light through this study that should continue to the south, along the Nahua migration paths, to Tenochtitlan and Ixcateopan, Guerrero.

The historian Altamirano said, "If you want to know who the Tolteca and Azteca were and what they did, don't rely on the history books. But rather, go to the state of Guerrero and visit the indigenous villages built in the heart of the mountains, where the natives have maintained their culture and traditions."

The fact remains that what is preserved in the mountains, intaglios, pictographs, petroglyphs, songs and oral history of the lower Colorado River Valley, substantiates my historical conclusions. Most of the evidence presented in this book has not been published previously; the totality of compelling evidence linking the Nahua Nations, Aztlan/Chicomoztoc and the Lower Colorado River, until now, has not come to light. I am honored to have been entrusted by our Creator with this task.

So now, after forty-four years, I present to you the first of a series of 13 books, "Ancient Footprints of the Colorado River," a journey that will take you south along the migration trails from the "Cradle of Aztlan" on the Colorado River to the tomb of Cuauhtemoc in Ixcateopan, Guerrero. I ask that as you read this book, you remember what the famous Cuban writer, Enrique Jose Varona, said to his history students, "Don't seek the truth in what a man says, but in what he does."

The Lower Colorado River Valleys

Extending from Needles, California in the north to Baja California, Mexico in the south, the Mojave/Chemehuevi, Parker, Palo Verde, Cibola, Yuma and Mexicali Valleys form the Lower Colorado River Basin. Hernando de Alarcon was the first European listed as having visited the natives living in the area of what we now call the Lower Colorado River. In August of 1540, he sailed up the river an estimated eighty-five leagues from the Gulf of California, around the area of the present-day Palo Verde and Parker Valleys. Alarcon was carrying supplies for the Francisco Vasquez de Coronado expedition that was in search of the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola (El Dorado). Unable to make contact

with Coronado, who was still traveling near the Santa Cruz River in Arizona, Alarcon returned to his base in Acapulco. (Waters, 1984)

Coronado, meanwhile, had sent Melchor Diaz to find Alarcon on the Lower Colorado and get the supplies from him. Diaz traveled to the Gila River, went northwest along the Halchidoma Trail (also known as the Coco-Maricopa Trail). This led to a spot across the river from what is now Blythe, California, in the aptly-named Cibola Valley, then to Yuma territory, where Alarcon had left a letter explaining his plan to return south.

In 1604 another European, Juan de Oñate, the first governor of New Mexico, journeyed west from the town of San Gabriel de Los Españoles, on the Rio Grande River. On the way he crossed a muddy, red-tinged river, which he named the Colorado (red). This is the first recorded use of the name, and even though the governor actually crossed at a tributary (the Little Colorado) instead of the main river, the name was adopted for the entire waterway. (Waters, 1984)

Oñate traveled southward all along the Colorado. He was the first European to travel most of the length of La Cuna de Aztlan, from the Bill Williams River fork in the north to the Gulf of California in the south. One hundred and sixty-four years later, in 1768, Padre Francisco Garcés and his biographer, Padre Font, also traveled the Colorado River upstream and down. According to Frank Waters, author of "The Colorado River," Garcés was among the Spaniards who regularly called the river the Colorado -- applying it, he explained, because as the river drained from the red earth during the spring months, it was tinged red by the melting snows. (Waters, 1984) . My mother told us that as recently as the early years of this century and before any dam, weirs or levees were built on the Colorado River, the residents of the towns along the river had to purify cooking and drinking water. They had to let it stand in tubs overnight, allowing the fine, light, dirty reddish silt to settle to the bottom.

The early history of the Lower Colorado River indicates that there was much trade up and down the river, particularly between the Palo Verde Valley and the delta where the river flows into the Gulf of California. The Quechan Trail, called Xam Kwatcan in Quechan, is the main north/south trail leading from Spirit Mountain/Avi Kwame, north of Needles, California, to Pilot Knob/Avi Kwalal west of Yuma, near Algodones, Baja California. The main east/west trail intersected at the Mule Mountains going east, parallel to Interstate I-10. (Johnson, 1985)

Traveling west from Phoenix, Arizona, on Interstate highway 10, a breathtaking panoramic view of several of the Lower Colorado River Valleys (Palo Verde, Parker and Cibola) is first visible after passing through the Ferras Gulch Pass in the Dome Rock Mountains. Ferras's Gulch is ten miles north of Weaver's Pass, traversed in 1540 by Melchor Diaz as he came through looking for Hernando de Alarcon. (Dellenbaugh, 1998) Descending the Dome Rock Mountains, one can see the majestic meandering Lower Colorado and the lush oasis it sustains in the rich agricultural valleys. This is La Cuna de Aztlan, place of origin of the Mexica ancestors of today's Chicanos.

Straight ahead, across the California state line, one can see the Mule Mountains (also known as Avi-Hamock, the Molcajete Calli Mountains). To the northwest is the Twin Peaks (Chichis) of the Big Maria Mountains. Looking south one can see the Twin Peaks (Tetones) of the Picachos, north of Yuma. (Personal Interview, William Hensey) These are some of the most sacred historical sites in La Cuna de Aztlan and early inhabitants of the Lower Colorado River valleys have left many signs of their presence. According to the Handbook of Arizona, published in 1877, a pyramid was located fifty miles above Ehrenberg, AZ, in the vicinity of the Parker Valley. Built of hewn blocks, each 28 to 36 inches high, it was 104 feet square at the base and 20 feet in height. Old-timers in the area have no recollection of seeing the pyramid, but have heard of its whereabouts. (Cook, 1985) This pyramid is the one shown in the first fold of the Boturini Codex, Tira de la Peregrinacion (the Azteca/Mexica migration from Aztlan).

Before the dams were constructed to contain the mighty Colorado, floods periodically wiped out nearly everything in the area, so it is logical to conclude that many artifacts of that ancient pyramid civilization were destroyed, as were pueblo-building civilizations and towns like La Paz, Arizona, six miles north of Ehrenberg.

Located on the Colorado River Indian Reservation (CRIT), La Paz was a thriving river port town from 1862 to 1870, during the Colorado River gold rush. Its vitality led some to suggest it be made the capitol of the Arizona Territory.

Now all that remains of the proposed capitol is a group of small dirt mounds, once adobe buildings. (Setzler)

There are at least four such adobe, pueblo-type ruins along the Lower Colorado, between the Palo Verde Valley in the north and the Mexicali Valley delta in the south. (Johnson, 1985)

In 1775, as he traveled west from Sonora, Mexico toward California, Spanish Army Captain Juan Bautista de Anza recorded that he came upon some ancient indigenous adobe structures twenty-five miles southwest of Pilot Knob in the Mexicali Valley. Noting their similarity to the adobe ruins located at Casa Grande on the Gila River in central Arizona, he concluded that they represented part of the Azteca Empire that once flourished in the region. (Galving) U.S. Army Lieutenant R.W. Hardy reported that on July 23, 1826 as he traveled up his namesake waterway (the Hardy River) in the Lower Colorado River delta, he was told of the adobe ruins there similar to the ones at Casa Grande and was invited by the natives to visit the site. Major Samuel P. Keintzelman, commander of Fort Yuma, claimed that in 1853, while sailing up the Lower Colorado, he saw large adobe ruins at the south end of the Palo Verde Valley. Located on a detached sandy plateau above a riverside rise, the structures bordered a settlement the Quechan's (Lower Colorado River natives) called Hut-Ta-Me-Mi. (Forbes, 1994)

Half a century later, in 1903, a cowboy familiar with the Lower Colorado delta region found some adobe ruins a few miles southwest of the junction of the Colorado and Hardy Rivers. Unfortunately, floods and farm cultivation destroyed these pueblo-type ruins before historians and archaeologists a delay that assumes greater historical significance with each passing year could inspect them carefully. (Forbes, 1994)

A site near the Palo Verde Lagoon, located about two miles north of the town of Palo Verde, California, was at one time, a main channel of the Lower Colorado. One day in 1953, in an open area on a small sand dune close to the lagoon, Tony Cota, a Blythe-area Cat-skinner (tractor driver), was knocking down heavy brush and mesquite trees to clear the land for agricultural use. He came upon some small adobe ruins containing remains of metates (mortars), manos (pestles) and broken ollas (jars). According to Boma Johnson, numerous sites along the Colorado and Gila Rivers have been reported to contain mounds of ruins, which were leveled for farmland. Obviously, the meandering rivers took most of these mounds as well.

The area of the Palo Verde and Parker Valleys has been populated since time immemorial. Different nations came and went. For thousands of years, the members of the Mojave, Quechan, Yavapai, Halchidom, Chemehuevi and other Pai and Uto-Aztec families migrated up and down the Colorado River Basin. (Kroeber, 1976)

During the La Paz gold rush of 1862, in the area of present-day Blythe, the Chemehuevi were living along the old riverbanks in half-submerged huts along the riverbanks called "jukis," (hookies). (Personal Interview, Peter Daniel) The old river channel ran southwesterly, almost parallel to present-day Riverside Drive, which was also known as "El Camino de la Liebre." At the North Carlton Street and Riverside Drive junction is the "Barrio Cuchillo" neighborhood of Blythe. (Personal Interview, Henry Lopez Ortiz)

According to Henry Ortiz, Sr. (deceased), Ignacio "Nacho" Macias and other Chemehuevi elders, the Barrio Cuchillo section was known as Barrio La Liebre, (the jackrabbit), and East Riverside Drive/Chanslorway was known as El Barrio Conejo, (rabbit). (Personal Interview, Ignacio "Nacho" Martinez Macias) The Duran Nahuatl Codex depicts an area called Acacitli, (Acatl- meaning tules or canes, and -citli meaning jackrabbit). Hence, Acacitli means, "Jackrabbit in the Tules."

The first fold of the Duran Codex depicts the rabbit and jackrabbit in front of a cave-- Chicomoztoc-- with two people in it.

In 1875, Thomas Blythe, a San-Francisco-based Englishman with a reputation as an international speculator and swindler, applied to the State of California for ownership of land in the Palo Verde Valley, claiming title under the State Swamp and Overflow Act. Even though the northern half of the valley was already part of the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) Reservation and the Chemehuevis and other nations were farming there, Blythe wrote in his application that there was "no one living in the valley." (Dekens)

Under the act, only swampland was available for purchase. According to Camiel Dekens' narrative "Riverman, Desertman", Thomas Blythe fulfilled this condition by claiming on his application to have rowed a boat all over the Palo Verde Valley area. What he neglected to mention was that his rowboat was being carried through the valley in a wagon pulled by mules. (Dekens) Unfortunately, the deception was successful. After Blythe took title to 40,000 acres of prime California land, the U.S. Army burned the native's homes and crops and forced the inhabitants across the river to the La Paz,

Arizona area, reducing the reservation boundaries on the California side and appropriating the rich gold mines on the Arizona side. (Personal Interview, Peter Daniel) According to Bureau of Indian Affairs records, the original boundary of the CRIT reservation extended west roughly to the high-water-flood-stage mark on the mesa west of Blythe, and it included most of the present-day town of the same name. (Personal Interview, Gilbert Lopez Leivas)



Blythe intaglios depict the Aztec creation myth providing evidence of its origin as La Cuna De Aztlan, or the Aztec Cradle of Civilization



Alfredo Figueroa speaks as a community leader to members of his tribe, and other members of Escuela De La Raza Unida at their 30th Anniversary 5/26/02



Alfredo Figueroa and Carmela Garnica with a sacred native cultural resource (the Throne of Quetzalcoatl) from "La Cuna De Aztlan"

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la atmosfera, destruira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienos de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:

Domicilio/Address

1. Rafael Garcia M 361 8 ST BLYTHE CA
2. José Balbato _____
3. NORMA CORNEJO 177 N SE 1ST BLYTHE CA.
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la asmosfera, destruira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienes de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:

Domicilio/Address

1. Sara Tostado 12733 1/2 DATE ROAD
2. Maria Lule PO BOX #154
3. Jose Luis Antunez 7212 N. INTAKE
4. Miguel Ochoa 2400 E. RIVERA DR. 248
5. Mario Ochoa
6. Josefa Ochoa PO Box 602 Blythe Ca
7. Marta Vasquez 586 S. Solano.
8. Ignacio Ochoa 10306-22-ND AVE BLYTHE
9. Jose Ochoa
10. Edna Garcia 1318 W Michigan Blythe
11. Martha Hernandez 1326 W Michigan Blythe Ca
12. Jose R. Ochoa 401 E. AV. A BLYTHE,
13. Jesus Lopez
14. Ramiro P. Ochoa
15. Gabino Archiga
16. Mario Ochoa P.O. Box 961 BLYTHE

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la asmosfera, destruiira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienes de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:	Domicilio/Address
1. <u>Juan M. Faus</u>	<u>1328 W. Wisconsin</u>
2. <u>Juanita Garcia</u>	<u>49-615 Harrison St. Sp 49 Coachell</u>
3. <u>Antonio R. Perez</u>	<u>389 SAN LUIS WAY</u>
4. <u>Marcia / AVARADO</u>	<u>17795 GREEN ST BLYTHE CA</u>
5. <u>Grace Ruiz</u>	<u>188 S Broadway</u>
6. <u>Lucy S. Cruz</u>	
7. <u>Maria Fada</u>	
8. <u>Imelda Gonzalez</u>	<u>200 E. 14th Ave.</u>
9. <u>Ramon Navarro</u>	<u>445 EARLE ST.</u>
10. <u>Glacia Tobias</u>	<u>BROADWAY</u>
11. <u>Maria Wells</u>	
12. <u>Rafael S. Luna</u>	
13. <u>Rosa Cisneros</u>	
14. <u>Maria Jo Ruiz</u>	<u>251 N. palm #22 Blythe</u>
15. <u>JOSE URBANO</u>	<u>10213 N BRADWAY</u>
16. <u>Consuelo G. de Valdez</u>	

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la atmosfera, destruira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienos de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:	Domicilio/Address
1. Olga S. Sanchez	17971 Caracci St.
2. [Signature]	P.O. Box 1359
3. Terina Tubby	473 N. 3rd St.
4. Juan S. Jones	21487 So Lovelock
5. Antonio Pulvis	4101 N Crocker
6. Wilfredo Amador	190 E 14 Ave
7. [Signature]	452 [unclear]
8. Nick Garcia	206 9 115X
9. Ricardo Rodriguez	1675 BROADWAY NO BORN BLYTH
10. Jeff Muro	P.O. 1861
11. Edwina Nunez	12897 DATE Rd #4
12. Rudy Garcia	13 1/2 S. BROADWAY
13. [Signature]	1639 V. de Sunrise Blythe Ca
14. Isaias Gonzalez	200 E. 14th Ave.
15. [Signature]	P.O. Box 1514
16. Ernesto Salas	13325 olive DR

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la atmosfera, destruira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienes de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:

Domicilio/Address

1. Berta F. 13305 Olive Dr.
2. Eulinda Dominguez 308 N Colton
3. Teresa M Reyes 219 N LOVEKI
4. Arcelia Contreras 392 N Fifth Blythe CA 92225
5. Isabel Velazquez 635 E. Michigan
6. Josefina Contreras 392 N. 5th ST. BLYTHE, CA 92225
7. Margarita Ratalcava 461 N Willow Blythe, CA.
8. Thina Young 340 N Third Street Blythe
9. Isabel / Verano 200 N. 9th Apt 105 Blythe CA.
10. Jose Reynoso 200 N. 9th St Apt 105 Blythe CA.
11. Lois Sanchez 392 N FIFTH ST BLYTHE CA.
12. Vicky Ferrer 392 N. Fifth st. Blythe Ca.
13. Ramon Prieto 24703 school Rd Ripley Ca.
14. Vicky Bamez 305 S Third St Blythe, CA
15. _____
16. _____

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la atmosfera, destruira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cientos de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:

Domicilio/Address

1. Yvonia Jesus Becerril 584 N. hovekin Blvd Bly1
2. Juanita Moreno Prieto 241 5^{ta}
3. Maria Becerril 10323 Siegfried Blythe rd
4. Geraldine Santam 11195 Broadway Ripley, Ca
5. Martha Chavez 24680 School RD Ripley, Ca
6. ARTURO GUILZAR 11522 ZETA AVE
7. Higuel Gutierrez 18040 PALOWALLA
8. ADRIAN GUILZAR 11522 28th AVE
9. Brian Lou 15937 Stephanson Blvd
10. SANTOS MEZIA 12727 N-Intake Blvd
11. Marbella Rosales 915w. Barnard
12. Donnie LAZZAROTTO 370 E. Bernard Blythe, Ca.
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la asmosfera, destruira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienes de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:

Domicilio/Address

1. Eva Hernandez 235 N. SPRING
2. MARIA Rivera 12644 McKinley Dr
3. Dick Rivera 12644 McKinley Dr
4. Tony Cota 350 N. Willow St Blythe
5. Rebecca Cota 14241 Bell Lane Blythe.
6. Hector Caballero 303 10th St Blythe
7. Bonita Co. Chavez Rt# Box 57 Cibola, AZ. 85328
8. RICARDO SEPULVEDA = = =
9. Martin Quihuis 603 Vester Avenue CN Blythe CA
10. Mendez, Luis 271.5 Broadway Blythe Calif.
11. Felix Jozaly P O Box 1705
12. Adriel Lopez 332 E. Stewart
13. Miguel Alfonso 926 W BARUAD
14. Ismael de la Cruz 440 N. PALM APT 146
15. Luis Castillo 408 SAN Luis WAY
16. Jesus Martin 316 So Main STR
- Amor Wu 400 N. PALM DR. #229

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construcion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la asmosfera, destruira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienes de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuire la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:

Domicilio/Address

1. Macario Villanreal 12683 M LTAKE BLYTHE CA
2. Jesus Flores PO Box 805 9222 BLYTHE CA
3. Alfredo G. Figueroa 424 N. Carlton Blythe Ca. 92225
4. Enlva Domingay 200 Annie Ave Blythe Ca 92225
5. Claudia Lozoya 161 MARIPOSA Blythe 92225
6. Betty Mendez 481 - NEUCALYPTUS AVE
7. Yatalina Zarate 188 S Broadway
8. Rafael Garcia 361 S HT BLYTHE CA
9. Joe manuel 450 S 3RD ST
10. IGUACIO RYVALCABA 9218167
11. RIGOBERTO PEREZ 9226674
12. Maria Perez 9226671
13. Richard Wynn 928-857-1062
14. RT #2 BOX 19 CIBOLA AZ.
15. Melba Perez CA-3377 3100 Alice Ave Blythe
16. Suzdelupe Rodriguez 2400 E. Rivera Dr # 2432-A Blythe, CA 922

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la asmosfera, destruira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienes de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:

Domicilio/Address

1. Emiliano R. Bucaram 10303 SioFried hant
2. Felix Gomez P.O. Box 170 Blythe Ca 92222
3. Guillermo P. Box 110 Blythe CA 92226
4. Fernando G. 760 JOSH ST
5. Rafael Godoy 196 S. Willow 92222
6. Charles Kunk 872 E. Hobson Way #65 92225
7. Ricardo Rivera PALOWALLA Rd.
8. Trinidad Almanza Trinidad Almanza
9. Mike Elsworth 12475 Beck St
10. PARVIE CEBALROS 200 N. PALM. H 164
11. Antonina Lazzarato 370 E. Bernard
12. Eduardo Sandoval 507 W. 110
13. 186
14. Guadalupe Ortega 14841 Bell hant Blythe
15. Alfredo Dorado - 723 W. WHEELS
16. JOSE RODRIGUEZ 17700 Palowalla Mesa Verde

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la asmosfera, destruira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienes de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:

Domicilio/Address

1. TOMAS G. MONA 251 EAST ORAZIS ST.
Blythe, Ca
2. Feliciana Lopez 5 SPRING 2094
3. Jose Molina 11551 28TH AVENUE
4. Nicolas Davila 203 S. Spring
5. Abelardo Flores PO Box 1637 Parker Ave
6. Martin Hernandez Martin Manaf
7. Rodolfo Castellanos PO Box 257 Ehrenberg
8. Augusta Rangel 17570 Blythe way Blythe
9. Victor Villanueva Gen. Delving Blythe
10. Salvador Flores 216 St. Blythe CA
11. Jorge Gomez 216 St. Blythe CA
12. Manuel Lopez 119 S 1TH
13. Francisco Lopez Tel 971-8167
14. Fernando Salas Blythe Ca 326 N. Carlton
15. Alfonso Lopez 25679 North Alhambra
16. Jose Castellanos PO Box #257 Ehrenberg Az 8533

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la asmosfera, destruiira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienes de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

Nombre/Name:

Domicilio/Address

1. JOSE UNCLONINO 10213 N BRADWAY
2. Virginia Rivera 12644 meek; Blythe CA
3. Rico Lopez Rivera 1644 meek; Blythe CA
4. Antonio Valdez = = = =
5. Super Shitens - 7212-N. Blythe Intake
6. Mary Correc 251 N Palm #47
7. Glady's Hernandez 253 N Third St
8. Christina Carrille 251 N Palm D #47
9. Blanca Sandra 226 W Barnard
10. Ernesto Sandra 226 W Barnard
11. ARMEN RIVERA 18270 Paloualla Rd
12. Yeatim Soto 284 N Carlton
13. Kello Mende 4505 4th Blythe
14. Alice Jimen 178 50 5th Blythe
15. MA Hill " " "
16. John Mende 4505 4th St

Peticion

Nosotros los residentes del Valle de Palo Verde que incluye Mesa Verde, Ripley y Blythe estamos totalmente en contra de la propuesta construccion de otra planta de energia similar a la 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant en Mesa Verde. Dicha planta traera mas polucion a la asmosfera, destruira las huertas de citrico donde trabajan cienos de trabajadores campesinos, y va a ser ostrucion al aterisaje de los aviones en el aeropuerto, y especialmente disminuira la poquita agua que ahorita tenemos y va a destruir los recintos sagrados de nuestro antepasados.

Petition

We the residents of Palo Verde Valley, that include Mesa Verde, Ripley and Blythe are totally against the proposed construction of a second plant similar to the 580 megawatts Blythe Energy Plant that is in Mesa Verde. Said plant will deplete the limited water in the Mesa Verde aquifer, pollute the atmosphere, obstruct the airport runway, destroy the citrus orchards where hundreds of our farmworkers work and it will continue to destroy the ancient indigenous sacred sites.

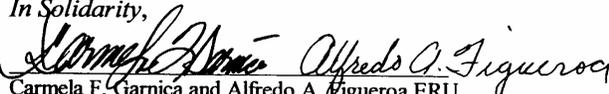
Nombre/Name:

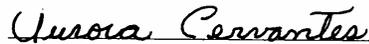
Domicilio/Address

1. Juan Gardener - 1701 S. S. 60th Klic
2. ~~Juan Perez~~ P.O. Box 509
3. Angelica M Perez 470 Holley Lane
4. ~~Maria~~ 8990 N SUTARE BLVD
5. Franerica pedroza 310 E Chocarral
6. Dennis Goyz 491 Duwa Coast
7. ~~Greg~~ 491 Duwa Coast
8. ~~Laura~~ RINGAS 24825 BORDER AVE
9. CALDRINA DURAN 24825 BORDER AVE
10. YGONACION RINGAS 24825 BORDER AVE
11. PULLON FILLOW 14031 W BROADWAY RIPLEY
12. Guillermina Paredes = = = =
13. Bastian Alcalá 10351 Siesfried Ln
14. Lorenia Alcalá 11 11 11 11
15. Ignacio Espinoza PO BOX 1483
16. Cecilia Diaz PO Box 1485 Blythe Ca

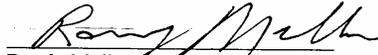
In Solidarity in the Spirit of Cinco de Mayo

*We, the undersigned organizations, associations, committees, clubs, and other community entities, hereby declare that we come, once again, **together in solidarity** to better our community through our own grassroots organized efforts. Just as our forebearers strived to better their future for us; we likewise strive and struggle to better our community for our own future generations. Sometimes, the odds of bettering our community seem insurmountable; and our foes continue to mistake our economic poverty with a lack of intelligence or knowledge on our behalf. In our own ways we will continue, with the same courage as our forebearers did, to make our community a better place to live for the benefit of **all** our citizens. In the spirit and significance of our community's annual Cinco de Mayo commemoration, we come **together as one** to improve not so much our quantity of life, but our quality of life. We pledge our continued solidarity to improve our families, our homes and our schools; we come together to improve our jobs and our livelihood, and our places of worship, and our recreational setting and enjoyment; and we come **together as one** to improve our environment- our clean water and air and our precious soil.*

In Solidarity,

Carmela F. Garnica and Alfredo A. Figueroa ERU


Aurora Cervantez, Migrant Committee, PVUSD

Claudia Lozoya, Chicano Correctional Workers Association


Randy Mullen, Desert Dreams, CC



Maria Garcia & Ernestina Vaca, Mesa Verde Organizing Committee/Mujeres Organizadoras, Mi Voz



Cesar Chavez behind the microphone of KERU during his many visit to ERU. Left to right Carmela Garnica, Lisa Cota, Angelica Rodriguez, and Maria "Machi" Rivera.

CIVIL RIGHTS

UFW organizer shared struggle with Chavez

Figueroa reflects upon the changing role of Latinos in the Inland region.

BY MARK PETIX
THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

The life of Alfredo Acosta Figueroa is a corrido, a Mexican song of passion, defiance, bravery.

Persistence.
At 68, Figueroa remains a strong voice in the barrio, a native son of sweltering Blythe who played minstrel to the prophet of the fields, Cesar Chavez.

From Delano to Coachella, he stood with Chavez at the rallies and strikes of the 1960s and '70s. He was a United Farm Workers organizer who sang and played to the emotions of the crowd, vigorously strumming a guitar worn thin where he picked it.

A corrido must be sung loud, he said. When he was manhandled by police or pelted with lettuce, he only sang louder.

"Cesar liked me because I have a big mouth," he said.

As Latinos move from minority to majority in California, Figueroa said there can be no forgetting those deadly serious days.

They were fighting for the basic human rights of men and women who picked the grapes and the lettuce and the grapefruit, he said. That meant they were fighting growers and the police.

"This was a tragic time," Figueroa said. "It was very dangerous, but we were tough. We had to be tough."

Like the men and women who work the fields for little money and few rights, Figueroa was born tough.

His mother, Carmen, was a midwife, a member of the Chemehuevi tribe. She was born just across the Colorado River from Blythe.

His father, Don Mario, was a Yaqui Pima from Sonora. He came



Alfredo Figueroa, left, poses with labor leader Cesar Chavez, center, in the late 1960s.



At left, longtime farmworker labor organizer Alfredo Figueroa at his home in Blythe. Right, Figueroa plays guitar and sings at a labor rally in the 1960s.



especially gold.

Growing up brown and poor, there was plenty to be angry about, he said.

"Before, we were dirt," he said. "We couldn't even swim in the pool. We could go to the movies, but we had to sit in the balcony. But we fought. We fought."

The fight for civil rights led him to jail on July 4, 1968. Figueroa and three others were arrested for allegedly disrupting a speech by former Riverside Congressman John Tunney in Coachella.

The Coachella Four, as they were known, were sentenced to 120 days in jail. They served 50 days before being released pending a state Supreme Court appeal. The high court overturned the sentence two years later.

"All I did was raise the (UFW) flag," he said.

A few months ago, he attended a ceremony in Indio marking the release of the Cesar Chavez stamp. He was stunned by what he saw.

"I spent two months in jail for raising the (UFW) flag at a rally," he said. "Now the flag is in the post office. After all these years. It was very emotional"

The father of nine now spends much of his time researching the Palo Verde Valley's ancient culture and calling for protection of native art from off-roaders and vandals.

He said a new generation must continue the struggle Chavez began.

"We have to move more forward than when Cesar was alive," he said. "Farmworkers are still in the same boat. You still can't make it. You've got to have everybody working."

He said a Latino majority means nothing unless it improves people's lives.

"It will help if we regain our culture," he said. "If we realize we're all one human race. That's the only way. We need to teach people to be respectful. Not just of Mexicans. For all humans."