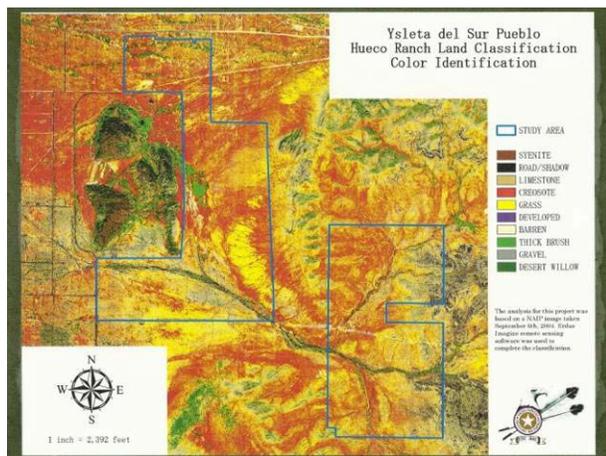


YSLETA DEL SUR PUEBLO



Project Title: Building Capacity using GIS/GPS Applications on the Tigua Reservation

Award Amount: \$280,189

Type of Grant: Environmental

Project Period: Sept. 2008 – Sept. 2010

Grantee Type: Tribe

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 3 jobs created
- 1 elder involved
- 27 youth involved
- \$55,902 in resources leveraged
- 5 individuals trained
- 19 partnerships formed

BACKGROUND

Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (YDSP), also called the Tigua or ‘the Pueblo’, is a federally recognized tribe of 1,601 members located in El Paso, Texas. The Tigua originated in the Pueblo of Isleta, just south of present day Albuquerque, New Mexico. After the Pueblo Revolt in 1682, a small group of Tigua was displaced by Spanish colonists to what is now El Paso's Lower Valley. These tribal ancestors established the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo. Since 1682, the tribe has maintained a significant presence in El Paso and despite much adversity has persevered as a pueblo, upholding its traditional political system, values, and culture.

Though the Pueblo has 74,357 acres of land, much of the Pueblo's land configuration is not contiguous and is separated by large tracts of privately held land. This is

commonly referred to as a “checkerboard” reservation. This land configuration, combined with the tribe’s minimal geospatial mapping capabilities, has created challenges for the Pueblo’s Environmental Management Office (EMO) in many aspects of land management. These challenges include mapping YDSP lands, vegetation, and wildlife; analyzing conservation plans, habitat improvements, regulatory and enforcement needs, and roads; verifying land boundaries; and other important infrastructure considerations.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this project was to build tribal capacity to make informed land management decisions using geographic information systems (GIS) and global positioning systems (GPS) technologies. YDSP staff sought to utilize spatial data analysis and mapping developed with GIS and GPS to inform tribal land management decisions and support a wide variety of applications on the reservation, including: environmental planning, intervention, and clean-up; conservation and management of cultural lands; economic development; public health and epidemiology; and emergency management. All of this would serve to enhance YDSP’s conservation and

management capabilities with regards to tribal lands, and ensure that environmental standards and land usage are maximized for the health of the community and the surrounding environment. The project was also intended to support the data and mapping needs of tribal government departments (e.g., emergency management, tribal records, and economic development) along with external requests from the Texas Department of Transportation, City of El Paso, and Hudspeth County.

The first objective of the project was to establish a GIS branch within the EMO by the end of the project’s first year. This entailed hiring a GIS specialist and a GIS assistant. This task presented a challenge because these were highly technical positions requiring uncommon skill sets and proficiencies. As a result, both staff members were hired more than a month later than anticipated. However, the new employees had strong pre-existing skill sets, so they were able to make up for lost time by efficiently utilizing pre-existing knowledge.

Additional activities completed by project staff to establish the GIS branch included purchasing and installing hardware, software, and office supplies; collaborating with outside agencies and internal tribal departments; creating a geodatabase; conducting a survey to define departmental and governmental needs and requirements of GIS technology; documenting the existing GIS skills of YDSP departments; establishing an evaluation advisory committee; and establishing data-driven decision-making procedures that contribute to the successful and efficient management of Pueblo lands.

The biggest obstacle facing project staff was collecting data from other tribal departments, most of which had records in paper form and a variety of different

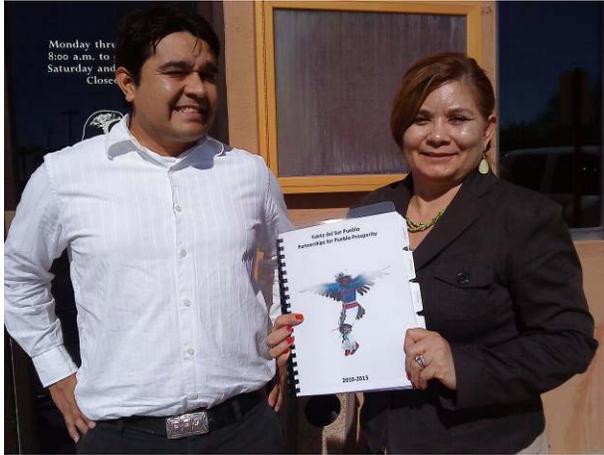
software applications. The challenge was to convert all of the data into a uniform, GIS-friendly spreadsheet format in a single software application. Project staff members were able to overcome this challenge through diligence and hard work, and were able to achieve all project objectives in a timely manner.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

YDSP now has geospatial mapping capabilities that enable the EMO to make data-driven decisions that contribute to the effective and efficient management of Pueblo lands. Tribal departments that benefit from this include: economic development, emergency management, housing, range management (wildlife committee), and tribal police. All tribal land was mapped successfully and 32 tribal members from various departments were trained to use GPS and GIS technology.

Also, the project team trained and mentored two tribal youth in GPS and GIS technology, helping them gain new professional skills and increased earning potential. Other positive outcomes included: the creation of a formal land use management plan that identifies the current and future land use of all tribal properties; vegetation maps that enhance conservation efforts; mapping of crime “hot spots” for tribal police; and mapping of cultural and sacred sites of the tribe. In sum, this project enabled YDSP to build capacity, self-sufficiency, increased educational and career opportunities for tribal members, and a GIS/GPS program that will support YDSP departments now and in the future.

YSLETA DEL SUR PUEBLO



Project Title:	Pueblo Partnership Strategy
Award Amount:	\$124,044
Type of Grant:	Social and Economic Development Strategies
Project Period:	Sept. 2009 – Sept. 2010
Grantee Type:	Tribe

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 3 jobs created
- 2 Native American consultants hired
- 5 elders involved
- 2 youth involved
- \$65,100 in resources leveraged
- 56 individuals trained
- 13 partnerships formed
- 1 governance code/ordinance developed
- 1 governance code/ordinance implemented

BACKGROUND

Based in El Paso, Texas, the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (YDSP) is a federally recognized tribe consisting of 1,601 members. In 2002, a state-pursued lawsuit against YDSP resulted in the closure of the tribe’s Speaking Rock Casino, directly affecting tribal employment levels. Prior to the casino's establishment, the tribal unemployment rate was over 50 percent, but had diminished to less than 1 percent at the peak of casino operations. Four years after the casino closure, the unemployment rate had increased to 25 percent. The casino

eventually reopened, but in a limited capacity; in its present form table games, such as blackjack, are prohibited. As a result, revenues and employment opportunities for tribal members have been considerably lower than they once were. Additionally, a 2008 tribal survey revealed the following: 33 percent of Tigua households were living at or below the poverty line; 24 percent of tribal members did not have a high school diploma; and 56 percent of Tigua children were living in poverty.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this project was to address the Pueblo’s need to develop and diversify economic opportunities for tribal members. To accomplish this, the YDSP’s Department of Economic Development (DED) sought to create a small business center and strategic plans outlining how the department would provide support services to tribal entrepreneurs and small enterprises.

The first objective was to determine unmet needs and gaps in services for the small business community. Project staff established an Economic Development Advisory Committee comprised of small business owners within the tribe, which

conducted an entrepreneurial survey to gather information and establish a knowledge base regarding small business endeavors on the Pueblo. Project staff analyzed the results of the survey by conducting a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), and held numerous meetings with small business owners to share information and garner feedback. Through these activities, the team identified a strong need for business planning services, marketing assistance, additional physical space to conduct business, and greater access to capital.

The second objective was to craft a strategic plan for providing small business development services. To accomplish this, project staff created a plan covering topics such as small business development incubators, matched savings accounts, revolving loan funds, profiles of existing and aspiring tribal businesses, stages of planning and development, SWOT analyses, partnerships, and evaluation methodologies.

The third project objective was to develop strategic plans for Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) and Individual Development Account (IDA) programs within the Pueblo. By project's end, staff completed the plans, tailoring them to fit the needs of tribal business owners by consulting with tribal entrepreneurs and partnering agencies.

OUTCOMES AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

The needs assessment and strategic plans created by the project team have been used to inform the DED's efforts to provide guidance, structure, and resources for small tribal business ventures and entrepreneurs.

There were numerous beneficiaries of this project. DED and other tribal departments improved their capacity for data collection

and created data profiles on small businesses operated by tribal members. Tribal entrepreneurs received training and expanded their technical knowledge and skills. The Tribal Council benefited by becoming better equipped to set the tribe's strategic direction and improved its resource allocation decision-making capabilities. Tribal administrators from various departments gained effective project management skills by observing the way this project was managed and then implementing similar processes and best practices in their own projects. Partnering agencies gained financial literacy and developed an asset-building knowledge base.

Additionally, 21 tribal and 11 non-tribal employees were trained in small business data collection, improving their capacity to collect and analyze data. Nine tribal members and five non-tribal employees were certified in small business development planning via a two-day 'Indianpreneurship' intensive training course. Partnering agencies provided additional trainings to small business owners on entrepreneurial basics, matched savings accounts for entrepreneurs, and capacity building support services.

According to the project director, "Economic development is a long-term process. This component was to plan a small business development center and related services, which served as the planning phase to address the statement of need. Causes of the problems have been identified and next steps have been outlined." Program staff members were pleased with the outcome of this project and expressed confidence that the tribe will continue to benefit from what was accomplished.