When the next Census Day arrives on April 1, 2020, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe will be ready. With the support of the Tribal Council, a dedicated committee of tribal staff has been working to insure an accurate count of all tribal members. Most of the members of the Tribe's Census committee are veterans from work on the 2010 decennial census. Their efforts increased the tribe's count in 2010 by 5.1% from what it was in 2000.

The Tribe's reservation is located just west of Tucson, Arizona. Though its trust land base is relatively small, the tribe has an enrollment of over 20,500 members. Its members have lived in the vicinity of the Santa Cruz and Gila Rivers for hundreds of years, although the Tribe only gained federal recognition in 1978.

The Tribe's readiness for the upcoming Census is the responsibility of its Complete Count Committee, created with the support of the Tribal Council. It includes representatives from the many different Tribal departments, along with a current member and a former member of the Council. This broad representation enables the Census promotional efforts to reach all Tribal members.

The Tribe is in contact with the Census Bureau's Regional Office staff in Denver. At a meeting with this staff, the main topic was the timeline for the 2020 headcount. That timeline extends from now, when the Bureau is establishing its partnerships with tribes and Native organizations, through 2019 when many of the Area Census Offices are scheduled to open, through Census Day, April 1, 2020, and on into July when the follow-up effort to make sure every member of every household is counted draws to a close.

One of the most important lessons that the Pascua Yaqui Tribe's Complete Count Committee learned in 2010 was the need to make all its promotional materials very specific to the tribe. General Census Bureau materials distributed to tribes and Native groups tend to feature pictures and stories from larger tribes in other parts of the country. Such materials have limited appeal to Yaqui members who have very different traditions. Instead of using the Census-supplied materials, the Tribe created its own.

One notable product from 2010 was a result of an art contest held by the Tribe. The winning poster featured a variety of Yaqui traditional symbols with the slogan "It's in your hands" in the Yaqui language.
Census 2010
Yoemia Naikiawame
United States
Census 2010
“Enchim Mampo Taawak”
“Its in Your hands”
The Tribe's Complete Count Committee also produced a very high quality video for the 2010 Census. Distributed on a CD, it featured the many reasons that Tribal members should respond to the Census questionnaire.

Other materials widely distributed in 2010 included T-shirts, bumper stickers, back scratchers and baseball caps. The tribe's own radio station was used in broadcasting Public Service Announcements. Age groups that received special attention ranged from children in Head Start to members in Senior Centers. Presentations were made at numerous events including community meetings, events at the Boys and Girls Clubs, a Halloween Bash and the Christmas Community Party.

Partnerships were important in 2010. Among other groups, the Complete Count Committee worked with First Things First, the Tribe's Yoem Tekia Museum, the Pascua Yaqui Youth Council and the Tribe's two casinos, along with a number of other organizations.

One of the Tribe's unique challenges in its Census outreach efforts is the need to reach all Tribal members. There are eight Yaqui communities in Arizona, spread out from Tucson to Phoenix, some as many as 125 miles apart. Each of the communities has access to Tribal services, with a major Tribal complex in the community of Guadalupe, just southeast of downtown Phoenix. However, only one of the communities has reservation status.

Census geography is key to finding appropriate numbers to use in grant applications for the various communities. Tribal staff had to learn the numbers of the various Census "tracts" to collect that data.

**Issues the Tribe Faces in 2020**

The 2020 Census will feature a number of ways to respond to the questionnaire: on-line via computer, tablet or smart phone, "update/leave" with a Census Bureau enumerator noting the precise geographical location of the housing unit and leaving a paper questionnaire for someone in the household to fill out and return, and "update/enumerate" where a Census Bureau enumerator notes the precise geographical location of the housing unit and collects the information for the questionnaire on the spot from a person in the household.

The on-line response is likely to be an important option at Pascua Yaqui. The reservation and the other Yaqui communities are in areas with regular street addresses. The members of the Complete Count Committee expect the on-line option to be favored by the younger members of the Tribe, though not the elderly who may speak Yaqui, Spanish or both.
For 2020, the Tribe is considering setting up a computer kiosk to enable members to answer the Census questionnaire on-line.

The Committee members point out that "update/enumerate" tends to work better for those who are unlikely to use the on-line response option. This method gives the enumerator the opportunity to explain the questions and point out why the response to the Census is important to the household and to the community.

The Tribe will also help to recruit members to serve as Census Bureau enumerators.

One of the main controversies related to the upcoming Census involves the addition of a question on citizenship on the decennial questionnaire. This will not be a problem for Pascua Yaqui Tribal members as US citizenship is required for enrollment. However, it may be an issue for any non-Tribal members that live in Tribal member households.

Funding of Census promotional activities is a problem for all tribes, Pascua Yaqui included. In 2010 the Tribe was able to secure several small grants to help with the work. The Tribe itself contributed far more, including generous amounts of staff time devoted to its Census outreach and promotional efforts.

Although the Tribe itself can control its own work on the Census, the cooperation of Census Bureau staff is critical in coordinating efforts while the enumeration is actually underway. The Tribe needs to have some idea of the areas that the Bureau enumeration has and has not completely covered so that it can focus its promotional efforts, particularly during the "Non-Response Follow-Up" operation. This procedure is an attempt to insure that those who don't initially answer the questionnaire are counted.

Tribal or Native organization staff wanting more information on the preparations that the Pascua Yaqui Tribe is making for the 2020 Census may contact the Tribe's Census Liaison Officer, Ms. Letticia Baltazar at Letticia.M.Baltazar@pascuayaqui-nsn.gov.

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Redistribution of this information is encouraged