

For Immediate Release
October 23, 2008

Contact: Lisa Cohen (San Manuel), 310.395.2544
Bernadine Jones (Havasupai), 928-448-2731

HAVASUPAI ANNOUNCE ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

--Plan Made Possible By \$1 Million Donation by San Manuel Band of Mission Indians--

Phoenix, AZ -- Today, as the result of a \$1 million contribution made by the California-based San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians, the Havasupai Tribe of Arizona announced a comprehensive Economic Recovery Plan to help the Tribe begin to re-build following the devastating August flash floods in the Grand Canyon that wiped out their economic infrastructure. The Havasupai, a 650-member tribe living in the Grand Canyon, received national attention in August when flooding forced them to evacuate their land and resulted in their economic infrastructure being wiped out.

Supai is an extremely popular tourist destination visited by thousands of people that enjoy hiking, camping and swimming in the towering waterfalls located deep in the Grand Canyon. The floods damaged the walking and hiking trails, which left only one way to access the grounds: via helicopter. The Havasupai tribe was forced to shut down its tourism business, the main economic base for its people, resulting in no jobs and no revenues for the community.

“Today, with the generous donation from our tribal brothers and sisters from San Manuel, our effort to rebuild Supai and re-establish our economic base has new hope,” said Don Watahomigie, Chairman of Havasupai Tribe of Arizona. “Our people are eager to see the day when visitors can return to Supai and experience one of the most beautiful places on earth. We are grateful to have the opportunity now to launch our recovery plan as we wait for the Government to do its part to help us recover from the floods.”

The Economic Recovery Plan, released today at a press conference in Phoenix includes:

- **Rebuild Infrastructures:** The dangerous floods that swept through the community not only left miles of debris, but they also damaged critical bridges and walking trails. There are only two ways to access Supai – via helicopter or via the horse and hiking trails. The top priority is to remove the debris and repair the trails and bridges so that residents and visitors will once again be able to move safely.
- **Install Early Warning System:** The community deserves no less than a state-of-the-art early warning system to protect residents and visitors. The advanced communications technologies are available, and the community will make an early warning system a top priority.
- **Update Emergency Response Plan:** It was fortunate that no one was seriously hurt from this disaster. The Havasupai will update its current emergency response plan, including obtaining needed equipment and training.

- **Provide Needed Emergency Assistance:** Havasupai will immediately begin offering emergency assistance to members that have lost their jobs and their ability to generate income for their families. The Tribe will supply shelter and food for the community, including the horses and mules that provide transportation that is essential to the tourism that drives the Havasupai economy. This program will continue until the Tribe is able to reopen the campground to tourism business that fuels its economy.
- **Prepare Tourism Materials:** It is absolutely critical for the public to know that the Havasupai is on its way to recovery. The Tribe will produce materials that allow it to promote tourism and bring back the outdoor enthusiasts that drive its economy.

“The floods damaged more than just homes and walking bridges in Supai,” said James Ramos, Chairman of the San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians. “It shut down an entire economy. We hope that the aid will help our brothers and sisters open their doors for business very soon so that the world will once again be able to enjoy the stunning environment of Supai. We encourage other tribal nations who can assist the Supai people with their rebuilding efforts to please give this your highest consideration.”

San Manuel also announced today a \$100,000 contribution to the National Congress of American Indians Embassy Campaign Fund and a \$200,000 contribution to the Native American Rights Fund, the non-profit law firm dedicated to Native American rights. The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians strives to be a good community partner, both in California and to its brothers and sisters around the country. Since 2001, San Manuel has donated over \$30 million to various causes including special needs kids, the elderly, Toys for Tots, UCLA, California State University, San Bernardino and relief efforts for the Southern California fires and Hurricane Katrina victims.

About the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

The San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians is a federally recognized American Indian tribe located near the city of Highland, Calif. The Serrano Indians are the indigenous people of the San Bernardino highlands, passes, valleys and mountains who share a common language and culture. The San Manuel reservation was established in 1891 and recognized as sovereign nation with the right of self-government. Since time immemorial, the San Manuel tribal community has endured change and hardship. Amidst these challenges the tribe continued to maintain its unique form of governance. Like other governments it seeks to provide a better quality of life for its citizens by building infrastructure, maintaining civil services and promoting social, economic and cultural development. Today San Manuel tribal government oversees many governmental units including the departments of fire, public safety, education and environment.

###