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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**  
**Date: August 17, 2008**

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### ***Rescue Operation in Supai Village Continues***

Flagstaff, AZ- As of 8:30 pm on Sunday, August 17, 170 occupants of the Supai Village and campground have been safely airlifted to the Hualapai Hilltop area and subsequently bussed to an American Red Cross, evacuation reception center at a tribal gymnasium in Peach Springs, Arizona. Rescuers from nine public safety organizations have worked together throughout the day to locate campers and village residents and safely transport them to the top of the canyon. Air operations involving at least five helicopters from the Arizona Department of Public Safety and the Arizona National Guard were suspended late Sunday due to darkness and the nature of the terrain of the canyon.

Coconino County Sheriff's Deputies, BIA Police Officers, and US Deputy Marshals have been inserted into the canyon and will remain there throughout the night to maintain public safety and closely monitor the current weather conditions and the water level. Rescuers will reevaluate existing weather conditions and the level of flood waters at first light on Monday morning and make a decision regarding whether or not to resume air evacuations. Some individuals who were believed to be in the canyon at the time of the flooding are currently unaccounted for. Rescuers conducted an extensive search for those missing individuals today and will continue their efforts throughout tomorrow.

Several storms have passed over Northern Arizona during the last several days releasing significant rainfall. Additionally, at 6:00 am this morning, Coconino County Officials learned that a small earthen dam was breached, allowing additional water to flow down Cataract Canyon in a westerly direction eventually feeding into Supai Canyon. Flooding in Supai Canyon and the potential for additional flooding necessitated the evacuation of approximately 170 campers and full time residents.

Members of the public with questions regarding the location of people who may have been in the area are advised to call the American Red Cross Evacuation Center at (928) 769-2654.

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