



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 31, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Resources and Development Committee approves report regarding conditions of Water Resources Department field offices**

**MANY FARMS, Ariz.** – On Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee received a report from the Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources director Najam H. Tariq, regarding the conditions of the facilities and the Water Management Plan under the Technical, Construction, and Operations Branch.

Tariq, requested to replace the Many Farms Irrigation Office along with other field offices throughout various locations in the Navajo Nation that are in need of new buildings.

“We have a list here of buildings that are not safe and these are all field office buildings. These are the buildings where we provide direct services to our local Navajo Chapter communities and our local people. This office alone takes care of all the irrigation systems throughout various parts of the Navajo Nation,” stated Tariq.

Prior to the meeting, Tariq took the RDC members on a tour of the Many Farms Irrigation office which has a missing roof on the shop building.

“I was appalled when I stopped here, one day, and asked to use the facilities and to see the conditions that we subject our employees to,” stated RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta).

According to the report, due to the severity of drought conditions that have significantly impacted the Navajo communities and livestock, the TCOB is currently constructing, repairing, maintaining livestock and irrigation water systems, which includes the proposed construction of new field offices.

“Like any other chapter, especially Many Farms Chapter, we need water. Please somewhere along the line, Resource and Development Committee, allocate water for us so we can provide for our rangeland, farmland, and so on,” stated Many Farms Chapter president Katherine O. Arthur.

Other TCOB responsibilities include the maintenance of irrigation water facilities such as, livestock earthen dams, windmills, storage tanks, water lines, water wells, pumping stations, and irrigation canals. The Navajo Nation currently has hundreds of miles of water lines and six irrigation systems.

“We do plan on repairing all the windmills, but it all depends on the availability of the funding, staff, and equipment,” stated Tariq, who also mentioned that the primary objectives are to repair existing water facilities and to maintain existing equipment.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) voiced his concern regarding water conditions on the Navajo Nation.

“I saw water running over at Thoreau, through Whitehorse, and all the way down the arroyo. And that water is probably in the upper part of the Grand Canyon. By next week it will be in Phoenix. In the meantime, we have no conservative effort. This is why we need to go to zero-based budgeting. Start from anew. Why? Let’s fund the needs of the Navajo people,” stated Delegate Tsosie.

According to the report, approximately 70% of the 900 windmills need extensive repairs. However, the funding process for the rehabilitation projects is not yet complete.

Also in attendance was Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) who represents the community of Many Farms.

“As you heard, the Many Farms irrigation canals are not being repaired and the concern of not having enough water. The current farming area I believe is about less than 10 percent. What I wanted to ask this committee is I would really like to concentrate on Many Farms at this time,” stated Speaker Naize.

At the conclusion of the discussion, RDC members voted 4-0 to accept the report.

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**Law and Order Committee receives update report  
on the Navajo Nation Suicide Surveillance System Project**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee received an update report regarding the Navajo Nation Suicide Surveillance System Project, which was created and will be carried out by the Navajo Nation Epidemiology Center.

The NNEC is proposing a pilot-program to initiate a suicide surveillance project to identify risks and preventative measures relating to suicides and suicide attempts through information sharing with the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety.

According NNEC epidemiologist Ramona Antone Nez, it has been difficult for their department to establish a working relationship with the NNDPS and hoped to receive guidance from the LOC.

“What seems to be the barrier at this point other than collaborating, is they [NNDPS] are concerned with confidentiality and I think they are trying to protect that as well,” said LOC vice chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat).

Delegate Shepherd added that public safety officials have authority over sensitive information on suicide occurrences, which may pose a problem. However, he said the NNEC should have access to demographic information such as age, gender, employment, etc. for purposes of understanding and preventing suicides on the Navajo Nation.

According to the report, in addition to seeking demographical information, NNEC representatives want to be able to accompany public safety on-scene of a suicide or attempted suicide as an emergency response unit to aid in collecting information.

LOC member Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) expressed his support of the Suicide Surveillance System Project, and asked the NNEC if their department is willing to provide funding or staff to travel to the suicide scenes or to produce reports at the police stations.

“I only ask this because our police officers get so bogged down with writing reports and if you require additional reporting from them, it may cause officers to fall behind on their work,” said Delegate Begaye.

Delegate Begaye suggested that the NNEC request a meeting between the directors of the Navajo Nation Division of Health and Division of Public Safety as a starting point to establish a relationship between both divisions to begin the information sharing process.

LOC members voted 2-0 to accept the report.

In addition to the NNEC report, Legislation No. 0177-14 was considered by the LOC, however it was ruled out of order due to technicalities found within the legislation language. The legislation aims to adopt the Healthy Diné Nation Act of 2014, which would impose an additional two-percent sales tax on food items that are considered to have minimal to no nutritional value.

Legislation No. 0177-14 will be considered by the LOC again on Monday, August 11.

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nmlb.communications@gmail.com

**Naabik'iyátí' Committee tables legislation seeking to  
amend the Nation's Criminal Code to strengthen sentencing provisions**

*Work session to be held on August 8 to address the legislation*

**WINDOW ROCK** – With a vote of 7-5, Naabik'iyátí' Committee members on Thursday tabled Legislation No. 0161-14, which seeks to amend sentencing provisions within Title 17 of the Navajo Nation Code.

Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat), sponsor of the legislation, said the proposed amendments are necessary to address crimes on the Navajo Nation that are not addressed under current laws.

For example, if a person commits a drive-by shooting current laws do not provide for penalties and the person is often released from custody within hours of the incident, according to Delegate Shepherd, a former law enforcement officer.

In 2000, the Navajo Nation Council eliminated jail terms and fines for a number of offenses in part because the Nation had limited resources to prosecute and jail criminal offenders.

In July 2012, the Navajo Nation Council's Law and Order Committee established the Title 17 Sentencing Provision Review Task Force, to review the current sentencing provisions and to provide recommendations to strengthen existing laws.

Since then, the task force has held a total of five public hearings across the Navajo Nation and conducted a radio call-in forum to seek public input and recommendations.

The perception of the public is that the Navajo Nation has been "too soft on crime," and that the current sentences are inadequate justice for victims of crimes, according to a written report provided by the task force.

During Thursday's discussion, a number of concerns were raised by committee members including Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake), who recommended that a comprehensive approach be taken to address crime on the Navajo Nation.

Delegate Tsosie issued several suggestions including stationing officials from the Federal Bureau of Investigation in each of the Nation's five agencies, increasing the use of security cameras, and reallocating funds to create additional police sub-stations.

Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), chair of the Law and Order Committee and former law enforcement officer,

recommended that each committee member take a “ride-along” with law enforcement officers to gain a better perspective of criminal activity occurring on the Navajo Nation.

Delegate Yazzie also noted that illegal drug activity is becoming more common because non-Navajos take advantage of inadequate penalties for drug offenses.

Following the discussion, committee members tabled the legislation pending a work session—tentatively scheduled for August 8, beginning at 10:00 a.m. in Window Rock— to address concerns and recommendations.

To view more information regarding the proposed changes to the Navajo Nation Criminal Code and sentencing provisions, please visit:

<http://www.navajonationcouncil.org/pressReleases/2014/JUL/Title17TaskForcePresentationforPublicHearings.pdf>

At the conclusion of Thursday’s Naabik’iyátí’ Committee, the following delegates answered roll-call: Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates, George Apachito, Russell Begaye, Katherine Benally, Charles Damon, II, Jonathan Hale, Jonathan Nez, Alton Joe Shepherd, Danny Simpson, Roscoe Smith, and Leonard Tsosie.

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**Congressional bill seeks to amend the Navajo-Hopi Land Settlement Act**



**PHOTO:** U.S. Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz. with Navajo-Hopi Land Commission members Council Delegates Duane Tsinigine, Jonathan Nez, Lorenzo Curley, Alton Joe Shepherd, Dwight Witherspoon, and Walter Phelps.

**WINDOW ROCK** – On July 9, U.S. Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., introduced H.R. 5039, a bill seeking to amend Public Law 93-531. This Navajo Technical Amendments Act of 2014 amends the Navajo-Hopi Land Settlement Act to make changes that would foster development and efficiency on the part of the relocation program, and expedite rehabilitation of the Former Bennett Freeze Lands.

The Navajo-Hopi Land Commission has worked with Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., to address the unique needs of the Former Bennett Freeze Area and other critical issues directly relating to the families impacted by the Navajo Hopi Land Settlement Act.

"I am very proud of the work of the commission and the work of Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick in putting forth this legislation that will help the complicated issue which the commission has

been addressing over the years," said Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii) who chairs the NHLC. "This will start an important dialogue and bring a focus back to these Navajo communities who suffer from the harsh consequences of relocation and construction freezes."

H.R. 5039 proposes six technical amendments to the existing law:

1. Clarifies the boundary of the Navajo Nation for land selection purposes. The bill provides clarity so that all the Navajo Nation's trust lands are included within the definition of the reservation for this purpose.
2. Allows for the deselection and reselection of lands to correct a BLM surveying error to allow the Nation to deselect and reselect lands subject to the restrictions in the Act.
3. The bill will require the secretary to evaluate the fee setting process and create a plan for bringing rental determinations current.
4. Create a Navajo Tribal Sovereignty Empowerment Demonstration Project. The Navajo Nation seeks to exercise more sovereignty over its lands and spur economic development and streamline the regulatory process by waiving certain federal laws, while keeping in place their Navajo equivalents, for the limited purposes of renewable energy, housing, public and community facilities, and infrastructure development (limited to 150,000 acres in identified zones).
5. Allow Navajo families living on Hopi partitioned land to relinquish their accommodation agreements and restore their eligibility for relocation benefits.
6. The Act established the Navajo Rehabilitation Trust Fund to provide monies to the Navajo Nation to address the adverse impacts of Federal relocation of Navajo families. This bill releases the Navajo Nation from the obligation to repay these monies and reauthorizes the Trust Fund, allowing Congress to appropriate development dollars in future years should it so choose. The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

A hearing on the legislation has not yet been announced.

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# President Shelly applauds U.S. EPA BART decision



*Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said he appreciated the U.S. EPA's recognition of the work completed by the technical work group for the final determination on the regional haze rule. Stephen Etsitty of Navajo EPA was equally satisfied. (Photos by Rick Abasta)*

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced a final determination under the Regional Haze Rule and a final federal implementation plan for the Best Available Retrofit Technology for nitrogen oxide emissions for Navajo Generating Station. This action is intended to improve visibility at National Parks and other Class I areas in the Four Corners region.

EPA is adopting a “better than BART” alternative proposal that was developed and submitted by the Navajo Nation and others who formed a technical work group.

“I sincerely appreciate the EPA’s decision to recognize the hard work of the technical work group and to incorporate the understanding of the parties who are most impacted by this federal environmental regulatory decision,” President Shelly said.

President said recognizing the uniqueness of the NGS

facility and the Navajo Nation the federal action balances the need to improve visibility in the southwest U.S. and to maintain the continued operations of the Nation’s primary economic engines.

Over the next few weeks the Navajo Nation will review the details of the decision, and continue to consult with EPA and the work group partners as the BART decision is implemented.

In Feb. 2013, the EPA issued a proposed rulemaking and a draft federal implementation plan for NGS, which required strict controls. The costs were expected to exceed \$1.1 billion if the plant was required to install bag houses along with the technology.

The emissions control technology that the EPA proposed was selective catalytic reduction technology, which is the most stringent and expensive technology for reducing nitrogen oxide emissions on the market

today.

The requirement for the installation of this technology was in addition to the voluntary installation of low nitrogen oxide burners and separated overfire air system, which NGS installed on all three units from 2009 to 2011.

Because NGS is located within the Navajo Nation, the EPA recognized it has more flexibility to establish a final implementation plan pursuant to the federal Clean Air Act, Tribal Authority Rule.

EPA proposed two alternatives, which still require an aggressive schedule for installation of selective catalytic reduction technology. EPA’s proposed alternatives contained schedules that would have a long-term negative impact on Navajo jobs and revenue.

EPA also provided an opportunity for other parties to submit alternative proposals for consideration as “better than BART.” This included a one-year public comment period on its proposed rule and government-to-government consultations with the Navajo Nation and other affected tribal governments.

In March 2013, a group of stakeholders convened to develop an alternative solution to the strict proposal.

This technical work group consisted of the Navajo Nation, Gila River Indian Community, Environmental Defense Fund, Western Resource Advocates, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Department of the Interior and Central Arizona Project. The Nation’s representatives were attorney general Harrison Tsosie,

and Navajo EPA executive director Stephen B. Etsitty.

The work group submitted a “better than BART” alternative proposal to the EPA in July 2013. The proposal focused on reducing emissions from one of the three units at NGS and keeping the remaining two units operating.

This would result in the reduction of all air pollutants, including carbon dioxide, by one third. Additionally, the Interior Dept. included commitments to assist the Navajo Nation and other tribes with the development of low emitting energy projects.

Tsosie said the alternative proposal was the best possible scenario for all interests involved, although nobody walked away from the table declaring a landslide victory or a loss of everything.

“Everyone was able to walk away with something, but no one lost everything,” he said.

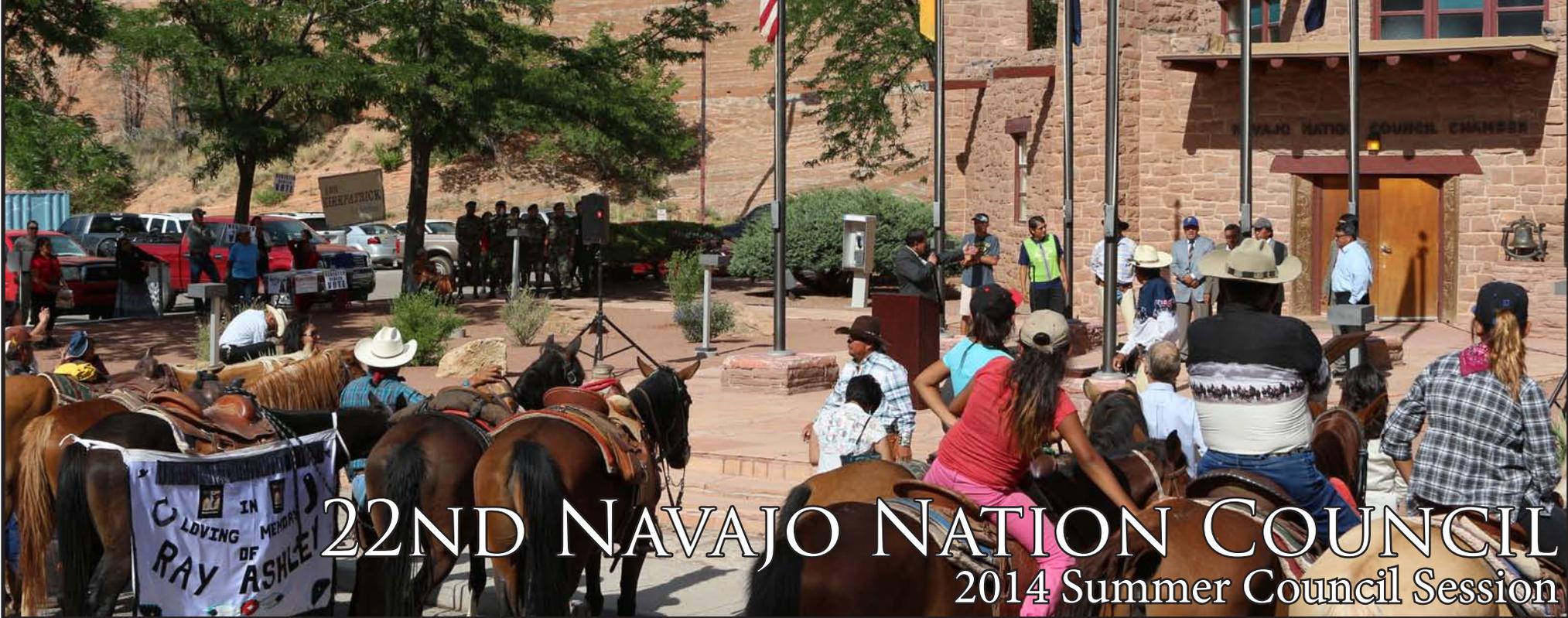
The EPA BART determination arrives on the heels of the Navajo Nation lease renewal for NGS, which needs approval by the Secretary of the Interior Dept., pending the outcome of an environmental impact statement that is currently underway.

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# NAAT'ÁJÍ NAHAT'Á HÁNE'

## LEGISLATIVE BRANCH NEWS



## 22ND NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL 2014 Summer Council Session



NAAT'ÁJÍ NAHAT'Á HÁNE'  
*Legislative Branch News*

### 22nd Navajo Nation Council

*Office of the Speaker*

P.O. Box 3390

Window Rock, AZ 86515

Phone (928) 871-7160

Fax (928) 871-7255

navajonationcouncil.org

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## Speaker Pro Tem's Message

Yá'át'ééh Diné Citizens and welcome to this edition of the Naat'áji Nahat'á Hane' – Legislative Branch News. This document serves the purpose of providing the Navajo People a comprehensive overview of activities and legislative actions taken by the 22nd Navajo Nation Council during the Summer Council Session.

The Council began the summer session on the morning of July 21, by recognizing and honoring emergency and fire officials who exemplified tremendous service and dedication during the recent Asaayi Lake

Wildfire, which spread over 14,000 acres of land northeast of Navajo, New Mexico. Those recognized included the Navajo Hot Shots Crew, Southwest Area Management Team 3, Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management, Navajo Nation Forestry, Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture, as well as the many chapter and school officials who selflessly donated their time to assist in sheltering and providing services to our Diné Citizens.

I express my sincere appreciation to these individuals and entities that sacrificed

and went above and beyond to serve our Navajo People and to protect our land and livestock from further devastation. On behalf of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council, I say 'Ahé'héé' to each and every one of you, especially the brave men and women who fought the wildfire on the ground and risked their safety and their lives to protect our sacred land and our people.

I would also like to thank the many individuals who participated in the annual summer horse and bike rides to honor our past leaders and also to bring awareness to issues and



Photo: Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates

concerns that are important to our constituents.

This year, hundreds came together to take part in the

See **SPEAKERS MESSAGE**, Page 2

## Council blocks proposed uranium recovery project

By Jared Touchin

On Day Two of the Summer Council Session, the Navajo Nation Council engaged in a two-hour long discussion to determine whether to rescind a resolution passed by the Resources and Development Committee in December of last year. The resolution acknowledged the right-of-way and surface use by Uranium Resources, Inc. for

the purpose of an in situ uranium recovery project in the community of Churchrock, N.M. and created a sub-committee comprised of two RDC members.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), who represents the Churchrock community,

asked for the support of his Council colleagues to prevent URI from developing the uranium recovery project.

"We need to follow the regulations. The regulations are [in place] to look out for our people," said Delegate Yazzie, who made reference to the largest radioactive spill in the U.S. which occurred on the Navajo

Nation in 1979.

Delegate Yazzie also referenced the Diné Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005 and the Radioactive Materials Transportation Act of 2012, stating that the two laws prohibit the proposed project from being developed on the Navajo Nation.

See **URI**, Page 2

# Navajo Nation Council supports the permanent extension of the Indian Coal Production Tax Credit

By Jolene Holgate

For decades, the Navajo Nation has relied on its coal resources to generate vast amounts of revenue to fund programs that aid Navajo people such as education, public safety, social services, and chapter assistance.

In addition, coal has made way for outside entities to conduct business with the Navajo Nation, which in turn has increased economic devel-

opment and strengthened the Nation's autonomy in managing its coal resources, according to Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood).

Speaker Naize sponsored Legislation No. 0090-14, supporting the U.S. Congress' Permanent Extension of the Indian Coal Production Tax Credit, which expired at the end

of 2013.

According to Anthony Peterman, energy advisor with the Office of the Speaker, the coal tax credit is given to outside companies that do business on Indian land and in return, receive tax credit money that returns back to the company, which provides an additional incentive for other energy companies to conduct business with the Navajo Nation.

"I am in support of this legislation, although there is concern about climate change and global warming, but at the same time, this is something we use heavily to generate revenue for the Navajo Nation and its people," said Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake).

Delegate Tsosie added that the tax credit eligibility should not only apply to outside energy companies, but should also extend to enterprises and entities owned by the Navajo Nation.

In response, Peterman pointed out that the coal tax credit would indeed benefit the Nation's newly-acquired coal company, Navajo Transition-

See COAL TAX CREDIT, Page 3

## URI / Council rescinds uranium project and RDC subcommittee

From Page 1

Enacted in 2005, the Diné Natural Resources Protection Act banned uranium mining and processing on the Navajo Nation, while the Radioactive Materials Transportation regulates the transportation of uranium within the Nation's boundaries.

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake), who sponsored the legislation passed by the RDC in December, said the Radioactive Materials Transportation Act does not specifically address the transportation of uranium.

"I would understand your argument if the law had said 'thou shall not transport uranium'—it doesn't say that," Delegate Tsosie stated. "At the moment, there is no physical transporting of uranium so there's no physical act being done as of today to transport uranium."

Delegate Tsosie also argued that the RDC acted appropriately and within the scope of its authority as outlined in Title II of the Navajo Nation Code.

Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse'ii'ahi, Whiterock) continuously argued that the resolution passed by the RDC, acknowledging the right-of-way and surface use by URI, should have been brought before the full Council for consideration.

Speaking in favor of rescinding the resolution, Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts'ah Bii Kin) said he supports the "overwhelming" number of young Navajo people who have spoken out against the proposed project and against uranium mining in general.

"By nullifying this [resolution] we are saying 'no' to any future uranium exploration

on the Navajo Nation," stated Delegate Nez. "We need to all take a stand once again, to those major industries and companies throughout the globe and stay steadfast and say no more, enough is enough."

Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) also expressed her opposition to the proposed uranium recovery project.

"I am absolutely against uranium development of any kind because I am from the community of Dennehotso, which mined uranium in the [1940's and 50's] so I have seen the consequences to this day,"



Photo: Council Delegate Danny Simpson speaks at a press conference organized by a group known as, "Concerned Diné Citizens" who advocated for the nullification of a resolution that would have allowed for Uranium Resources, Inc. to conduct a uranium development project in Churckrock, N.M.

said Delegate Benally.

Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle) spoke in support of RDC's resolution, while cautioning his Council colleagues of the possible consequences should the situation end up in litigation.

"Have we really sat down and looked into the consequences?" asked Delegate Pete.

"Somewhere along the way, the wisdom of this Council, the common sense of this Council, the foresight of this Council is going to be tested."

Following the discussion, members of the Council approved Legislation No. 0091-14 with a vote of 18-3.

## Speaker Pro Tem's message / thanks participants and youth

From Page 1

event, many of which had the opportunity to voice their concerns while having face-to-face dialogue with members of the Council.

I was particularly pleased to see many of our youth participate, including the Tour de Rez bike riders and the Dusty

Trail Riders group on horseback. I am very appreciative of your participation and for your willingness to bring forth your respective concerns and issues.

Over the course of the summer session, Council deliberated and approved a total of 12 legislations. Although

some may not agree with the outcomes, each legislation was carefully examined and thoroughly discussed in a prudent manner.

I am also pleased to report that our live-streaming audience continues to grow and to reach many people nationally

and internationally. During the summer session, we had over 2,000 viewers from 19 different countries tune in to the live-proceedings. The responsibility of keeping the Diné Citizens informed and engaged in their government rests on the shoulders of each of us as elected

leaders.

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council for their continued efforts to improve the lives of our Navajo People and for our great Navajo Nation.

# Horse and bike ride kick off 2014 Summer Council Session

By Jolene Holgate

In the midst of hot-button issues on the Navajo Nation such as the feral horse roundup, uranium development, and the recent \$554 million award to the Nation from the federal government, horse and bike riders across Navajo Land prepared for a long and arduous journey to Window Rock. The annual event marked the kick-off of the 2014 Summer Council Session, in which Navajo lawmakers would make critical decisions on a number of key issues.

The challenging ride to the Council Chamber is an annual occurrence for the Nation's elected officials, carrying on a tradition that resonates with culture, government accountability, and the collective concerns of constituents throughout the Na-

**Photo (below): Riders from the Eastern Navajo Agency who rode to the Window Rock from the base of Mount Taylor, N.M.**



## Coal Tax Credit / from page 2

al Energy Company, L.L.C., which now owns Navajo Mine, located near Shiprock, N.M.

Legislation co-sponsor Roscoe Smith (Crystal, Fort Defiance, Red Lake, Sawmill) said the bill is a collaborative effort with the Crow Tribe in Montana to support the extension of the coal tax credit. The Crow Tribe of Montana has an abundance of coal resources and relies heavily on it for revenue, similar to the Navajo Nation.

vajo Nation.

Vanessa Begay-Lee, the "trail boss" for this year's horse ride from the Eastern Navajo Agency, said the journey from Mount Taylor to the Council Chambers was intended to revitalize the age-old tradition of Navajo leaders that would ride chapter to chapter to hear the concerns of Diné Citizens. The former leaders would then take those concerns to Window Rock, serving as a voice for the people during regular council sessions.

Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churckrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) joined the group on the ride and expressed his continuing support of the horse ride from the

**Photo (below): Riders from the Eastern Navajo Agency who rode to the Window Rock from the base of Mount Taylor, N.M.**



At the conclusion of the discussion, Council unanimously approved the legislation with a vote of 17-0, including one amendment to eliminate language in the bill pertaining to the Navajo Nation opposing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's proposed carbon tax.

Delegate Smith stated that the proposed carbon tax is an issue which will be addressed in a separate legislation at a later time.

Eastern Agency.

"In past horse rides, I talked with constituents, who were concerned with the Fort Wingate land area, and they told me to do my best to get that land back for Navajo, and I take that to heart," said Delegate Yazzie. "I am doing my best to fulfill their wishes."

Delegate Yazzie stressed that the importance of the horse ride allows him as a leader, to speak with his constituents and to carry on the tradition of advocating for his people's concerns.

In conjunction with the horse ride, delegates have also begun partaking in bike rides from their respective areas to the Council Chamber, such as the Tour de Rez coordinated by Tom Rigganbach and Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts'ah Bii Kin).



**Photo (above): The Dusty Trail Riders and riders from Oak Springs, AZ arriving at the Window Rock Fairgrounds on July 20, beginning their journey from Navajo Mountain, U.T.**

"We appreciate each and every one of you for promoting to live a healthy and active lifestyle, and that is what we have always been encouraging with Tour de Rez," said Delegate Nez.

The biking participants rode over 200 miles, beginning from Navajo Mountain, U.T. and going through communities such as Shonto, Kayenta, Chilchinbeto, Chinle, Ganado, and finally arriving in Window Rock the day prior to the start of the summer session.

Along with the Tour de Rez from the Navajo Western Agency, the Dusty Trail Riders also began their journey on horseback from Navajo Mountain. Group leader, Jimmy Black of Shonto, said the overall goal of the ride was not only to visit various communities, but to promote the importance of horses

in Navajo life and to exemplify how horses serve as the vessels in carrying the message of the Navajo people to their leaders.

On the opening day of the summer session, the riders proceeded to the Council Chamber from the Window Rock Fairgrounds where they were greeted by Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland), who provided a welcome message to the Navajo people stressing the importance of youth participation.

"It is important for the Navajo Nation to get the youth involved, and you see them here. They have ridden just as long, if not longer, and each year I see more of them on horseback and on bikes. I want to thank the youth for participating again and I hope you continue to take part in this longtime tradition," said Pro Tem Bates.

Pro Tem Bates also recognized the late Ray Ashley, a former legislative employee who often took part in the horse ride event. Horse riders from the Oak Springs community and the Dusty Trail Riders, led a rider-less horse with the group in commemoration of Mr. Ashley.



**Photo (left): Tour de Rez participants arriving in Window Rock from the west, beginning from Navajo Mountain, U.T.**

# Navajo Nation anticipates \$554 million award from federal government

By Jared Touchin

On July 22, the Navajo Nation Council approved a legislation to amend a landmark agreement over the Navajo Nation's claims against the United States over the historical mismanagement of the Navajo Nation's trust assets, with claims dating as early as 1946.

The Council approved the agreement in principle on May 30. Following the approval, it was determined that the Navajo Nation had to also accept the current trust fund account balances as stated in the Periodic Statements of Performance for the period ending June 30, 2014.

Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins), who chaired the Naabik'iyáti' Committee Trust Mismanagement Litigation Task Force, which was created to guide the Navajo Nation Department of Justice and outside legal counsel throughout the litigation said the legislation was necessary to "make matters very precise."

Other task force members include Council Delegates Russell Begaye, Charles Damon, II, Walter Phelps, Alton Joe Shepherd, Roscoe Smith (vice chair), Leonard Tsosie and

Dwight Witherspoon.

The Periodic Statements of Performance are delivered to the Navajo Nation from the federal government on a monthly basis to inform the Nation of the current balance in its trust fund accounts.

Under the terms of the agreement in principle, the Navajo Nation agreed to dismiss its lawsuit which was filed on Dec. 29, 2006 in the United States Court of Federal Claims. In return, the U.S. will award the Navajo Nation \$554 million, representing the largest single resolution in the more than 100

cases filed against the United States by American Indian tribes.

Sam Buffone, the lead negotiator from the BuckleySandler law firm, explained that upon approval by the Navajo Nation an expedited process will be in place to have the U.S. Department of Justice sign off on the agreement by the end of July.

Following federal approval, the Navajo Nation expects to receive the \$554 million award within 120 days.

Members of the Council's Naabik'iyáti' Committee

issued a directive to the Office of the Speaker to initiate public hearings regarding the use and/or investment of the anticipated \$554 million award.

Speaker Pro Tem Lorenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) said the Office of the Speaker will hold the public hearings in each of the five Navajo Agencies in the month of August. A tentative schedule is forthcoming.

## Council approves supplemental funding for the 9-1-1 Emergency Response System

By Jolene Holgate

The Navajo Nation is the largest land-based tribe in the United States in one of the most remote areas in the country, which has contributed to the Nation's struggle to improve public safety emergency response times to Navajo communities.

Legislation No. 0103-14 secured supplemental fund-

ing to enhance the Nation's Telecommunications Commission's 9-1-1 Emergency Response System's services and anticipated shortfalls in its effort to implement the program, as well as expanding internet service in certain locations across the Navajo Nation.

Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) ex-

pressed concern regarding the requested amount of \$697,480, which includes acquiring additional expertise and services for implementation.

"When the NNTRC first came to us, you told us you would have funding or seek funding from other sources," said Delegate Begaye.

NNTRC executive di-

rector Brian Tagaban responded saying that the 9-1-1 program is still relatively new and needed additional money to continue operation. Tagaban also noted that the program is continuing to seek additional funding from other sources.

Council tabled the legislation on July 22, requesting that the budget amount be re-

vised and include proper budget forms to reflect a reasonable amount.

On July 23, Council voted 16-0 to pass the legislation, with a reduced supplemental funding amount of \$570,310.

## Nicole Johnny appointed to the Commission on Navajo Government Development for 2-year term

By Chrissy Largo

The Navajo Nation Council unanimously confirmed Nicole Johnny to serve as a graduate student representative on the Commission on Navajo Government Development, with a vote of 18-0. Originally from Crystal, N.M., Johnny graduated in May 2013 with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Business Finance from Azusa Pacific University, located in Southern California.

It took an outspoken and determined professor who recognized Johnny's strong math skills from Azusa Pacific University, to talk her into pursuing a finance degree instead of a psychology degree.

"I started going for a psychology degree to be a clinical psychologist because I would see the children at the Crystal Boarding School and how badly their homes were for them due to alcoholism. It made me really feel for them," stated Johnny. However, she ended up switching majors because she realized that she had a "niche" for math.

"The way I view it is: the government belongs to the people. I'm really excited to bring out the business perspective to the Commission. Finance, business, and economics are pivotal and I wish more people would try to understand it,"

stated Johnny.

Johnny also touched on areas of focus that are of importance to her and described how growing up on the Navajo Nation played into the development of her understanding of certain issues.

"I think of the Navajo Nation's economy as a developing economy which relies solely on their natural resources as their revenue, such as coal. Then, you have developing countries like Japan, Korea, U.S., and Germany that rely on their manufactured goods or public service goods. Navajo Nation is not there yet," Johnny stated.

Growing up, Johnny experienced first-hand the effects that uranium mining had in her community. Her grandfather became ill from uranium exposure, which she says now allows her to sympathize with Navajo people on this issue.

"I grew up on the reservation. I definitely know about everything that is talked about in the Council Chambers. In the back of my mind, after I received my education, I wanted to come back to the Navajo Nation," Johnny added.

Johnny noted that she wants to offer a strong understanding and perspective from the financial standpoint when it



Photo (above): Nicole Johnny outside the Council Chambers.

comes to serving on the Commission.

"I want to see progress. I want to see improvement. For me, when I came back [to the Navajo Nation] and I had my

See NICOLE JOHNNY, Page 5

# Navajo Nation Council refers referendum measure to “Empower the Navajo People”

By Jared Touchin

On the third day of the Summer Council Session, Council approved Legislation No. 0123-14, which will allow Navajo voters an opportunity to decide by majority vote whether to amend Title II of the Navajo Nation Code, to state that power originates from the Navajo People.

Additionally, voters will decide whether to change language to state that all powers not delegated are reserved to the people of the Navajo Nation.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin), said the proposed changes are long overdue and necessary to amend language in Title II imposed on the

Navajo Nation government dating back to the 1930’s.

“Through this legislation and our peoples impending vote on November 4, we have the opportunity to rewrite the laws to acknowledge what we already know—that is our people maintain all rights not delegated to the Navajo Nation Council—and they are the source of all power through their vote, their voices, and their initiative,” said Delegate Nez.

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) opposed the legislation, stating that it would create an imbalance in the Navajo government because

it only addresses the legislative branch, not the judicial or executive.

“I don’t think anybody is against having the Navajo people having a say in their government,” stated Delegate Tsosie, while urging delegates to vote against the measure to avoid the likelihood of litigation and to avoid challenges to the authority of the legislative branch due to the proposed language.

“This is a badly-worded referendum language that’s going to bring nothing by litigation—that’s what’s going to happen,” Delegate Tsosie affirmed. “It will cause the legislative branch of the Navajo Nation to be hobbled.”

Council Delegate Mel Begay (Coyote Canyon, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, Bahastl’a’a’) recommended further examination of the referendum language and suggested Council focus on other needs of the people.

“I think our people are asking for certain services and I know that for a fact,” Delegate Begay said. “They want scholarships, they want housing, they want power lines, they want water lines, they want road improvements—that’s what’s lacking. That’s what people want and what our people need.”

Following over an hour of discussion, Council members voted 14-6 to approve Legislation No. 0123-14.

Delegate Nez expects the referendum measure to be placed on the ballot during the upcoming Navajo Nation general election in November.

According to 11 N.N.C. §406 (A), the referendum shall pass if a majority “of all eligible registered voters who cast a vote” vote in favor of it and shall be deemed effective upon certification by the Navajo Nation Board of Election Supervisors.

“I think it’s time we allow the Navajo people to vote on the issue of whether the source of governing power is the people or the Council. Through this referendum, we can then gage the public — if further government reform needs to happen.”

## Council confirms Malcolm P. Begay as probationary District Court Judge

By Chrissy Largo

On the final day of the Summer Council Session, with the vote of 18-0, Council members unanimously confirmed Malcolm P. Begay to serve as probationary District Court Judge under the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch.

In accordance with Title II of the Navajo Nation Code, the Law and Order Committee initially determines the qualifications of all applicants for judgeships through a thorough screening process. Those that are deemed qualified are forwarded to the President for appointment, which are then subject to confirmation by the Navajo Nation Council.

Begay is from the community of Steamboat and a graduate of Holbrook High School. Five days after completing high

school, he entered boot camp for the U.S. Marine Corps., receiving an honorary discharge in 1990.

He attended law school at the Lewis and Clark College (Northwestern School of Law), located in Portland, Oregon. In 2009, Begay graduated with his Juris Doctorate and has since attained his Bar License with the Navajo Nation. Soon after, Begay landed a job with the White Collar Crime Unit and moved on to the Chief Prosecutors Office in Kayenta.

In addition, Begay interned for the Navajo Nation Supreme Court for the former Chief Justice and gained additional experience with the Office of Water Rights for the Gila River Indian Community. Begay also volunteered his time at

the Maricopa County Attorney’s Office, working with their homicide unit.

Begay’s acknowledges that through his academic and work endeavors, his passion for public service grew steadily.

“My main goal after high school was to serve various capacities in the public realm. I’ve done so in the military. I’ve done so in the State of Oregon. Now, my intention is to remain on the Navajo Nation for the remainder of my life,” stated Begay.

“My background addresses a lot of areas of law. I have diverse experience on and off the Navajo Nation. In any academic or work setting, it must be able to address the needs of communities,” stated Begay.

Since November 2010, he has served as a staff attorney at the Chinle Judicial District, assisting judges in Shiprock, Kayenta, and Chinle, as well as the Navajo Nation Supreme Court.

“My reason for applying for the Navajo Nation Probationary District Court Judge position is because I do take this position seriously. Judges are required to be impartial. They are to respect the parties before them that have legal disputes,” stated Begay.

Immediately following his confirmation by the Council,



Photo (above): Malcolm Begay being sworn as a new Navajo Nation District Court Judge by Navajo Nation Supreme Court associate judge Eleanor Shirley on July 23.

Begay was sworn in by Navajo Nation Supreme Court Associate Justice Eleanor Shirley on the Council Chamber floor.

Begay will serve a two-year probationary period as mandated by Navajo Nation law.

## Nicole Johnny / continued from page 4

degree, I started to question how many people that know about the stock market or know about investing. I believe that we can definitely strengthen in this area,” stated Johnny, who currently serves as an Associate Accountant at the Navajo Na-

tion’s Office of the Controller.

In February, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee issued a public notice regarding the vacant position. Johnny submitted her application in late February and was later nominated by the HE-

HSC.

The Commission on Navajo Government Development is comprised of 12 members including representatives from each of the five Navajo Agencies, representatives from the three governmental branches,

as well as representatives from the traditional sector, Women’s Commission, Diné College, and one tribal standing committee.

With the confirmation, the Commission now has five vacant positions which include representatives from each of the

Nation’s three branches, Diné College, and the Navajo Women’s Commission. Johnny will serve a two-year term on the Commission.

# 2014 Summer Council Session Legislation Results

## 22nd Navajo Nation Council

\*Chaired the discussion - only votes in the event of a tie

**Legislation No. 0095-14:**  
Approving Amendments to 2 N.N.C. §§500 ET SEQ. and 2 N.N.C. §§701 ET SEQ.

Primary Sponsor:  
**Danny Simpson**

**TABLED** - Referred back to the Resources and Development Committee and will return to Council after the committee has reviewed the legislation. (Tabling Vote Results)

**Yea (12):**  
Nelson BeGaye  
Katherine Benally  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Jonathan Hale  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Roscoe Smith  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie  
Dwight Witherspoon

**Nay (9):**  
Mel Begay  
Russell Begaye  
Lorenzo Curley  
Charles Damon, II  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Danny Simpson  
David Tom  
Edmund Yazzie

**Not Voting (3):**  
George Apachito  
\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates  
Elmer Begay

**Legislation No. 0179-14:**  
Amending the Settlement Agreement between the Navajo Nation and the United States and Accepting the Current Trust Fund Account Balances as stated in the Periodic Statements of Performance

Primary Sponsor:  
**Lorenzo Curley**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

**Yea (20):**  
George Apachito  
Mel Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Russell Begaye  
Katherine Benally  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Lorenzo Curley  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Hale  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Danny Simpson  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie  
Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (0):**

**Not Voting (4):**  
\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates  
Elmer Begay  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Speaker Johnny Naize

**Legislation No. 0081-14:**  
Amending 12 N.N.C. § 1171, The Navajo Nation Veterans Trust Fund

Primary Sponsor:  
**Edmund Yazzie**

**TABLED**  
(Tabling Vote Results)

**Yea (17):**  
George Apachito  
Mel Begay  
Russell Begaye  
Katherine Benally  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Hale  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Danny Simpson  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Duane Tsinigine  
Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (3):**  
Nelson BeGaye  
Lorenzo Curley  
Leonard Tsosie

**Not Voting (4):**  
\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates  
Elmer Begay  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Speaker Johnny Naize

**Legislation No. 0090-14:**  
Supporting the Navajo Nation and the Crow Tribe's Combined and Collaborative Efforts in Energy; Supporting the United States Congress' Permanent Extension of the Indian Coal Production Tax Credit

Primary Sponsor:  
**Johnny Naize**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

**Yea (17):**  
George Apachito  
Mel Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Russell Begaye  
Katherine Benally  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Hale  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie  
Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (0):**

**Not Voting (7):**  
\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates  
Elmer Begay  
Lorenzo Curley  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Jonathan Nez  
Danny Simpson

**Legislation No. 0091-14:**  
Rescinding, Repealing and Rendering Null and Void Resolution RDCD-69-13: Relating to Resources and Development; Acknowledging the Right-of-Way and Surface Use by Uranium Resources, Inc., of its Churchrock Properties Licensed by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission License No. SUA-1580; Authorizing a Subcommittee

Primary Sponsor:  
**Edmund Yazzie**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

**Yea (18):**  
George Apachito  
Elmer Begay  
Mel Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Russell Begaye  
Katherine Benally  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Lorenzo Curley  
Charles Damon, II  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Jonathan Nez  
Walter Phelps  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Danny Simpson  
David Tom  
Duane Tsinigine  
Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (3):**  
Leonard Pete  
Roscoe Smith  
Leonard Tsosie

**Not Voting (3):**  
\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates  
Jonathan Hale  
Kenneth Maryboy

# 2014 Summer Council Session Legislation Results

## 22nd Navajo Nation Council

*\*Chaired the discussion - only votes in the event of a tie*

### Legislation No. 0103-14:

Approving Supplemental Funding from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance in the Amount of \$570,310 to Implement and Manage a 911 Emergency Response System

Primary Sponsor:  
**Danny Simpson**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

**Yea (16):**  
George Apachito  
Mel Begay  
Russell Begaye  
Katherine Benally  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Hale  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Danny Simpson  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (0):**

**Not Voting (8):**  
*\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates*  
Elmer Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Lorenzo Curley  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie

### Legislation No. 0122-14:

Accepting the Fort Wingate Taskforce Memorandum Supporting H.R. 3822 The "Fort Wingate Land Division Act of 2014"; and Documenting The Navajo Nation's Support of U.S. House Bill H.R. 3822 The "Fort Wingate Land Division Act of 2014"

Primary Sponsor:  
**Danny Simpson**

**TABLED**  
(Tabling Vote Results)

**Yea (12):**  
Mel Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Russell Begaye  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Jonathan Hale  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Walter Phelps  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (9):**  
George Apachito  
Elmer Begay  
Lorenzo Curley  
Charles Damon, II  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Danny Simpson  
Leonard Tsosie

**Not Voting (3):**  
*\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates*  
Katherine Benally  
Duane Tsinigine

### Legislation No. 0123-14:

Referring a Referendum Measure on Amending 2 N.N.C. §102

Primary Sponsor:  
**Jonathan Nez**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

**Yea (14):**  
George Apachito  
Elmer Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Russell Begaye  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Lorenzo Curley  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Hale  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Jonathan Nez  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Danny Simpson  
Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (6):**  
Mel Begay  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Leonard Tsosie

**Not Voting (4):**  
*\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates*  
Katherine Benally  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Duane Tsinigine

### Legislation No. 0134-14:

Confirming the Appointment of Nicole Johnny to the Commission on Navajo Government Development for a Two Year Term

Primary Sponsor:  
**Jonathan Hale**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

**Yea (18):**  
George Apachito  
Elmer Begay  
Mel Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Russell Begaye  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Lorenzo Curley  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Hale  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Danny Simpson  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (0):**

**Not Voting (6):**  
*\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates*  
Katherine Benally  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie

### Legislation No. 0147-14:

Confirming the Appointment of Quincy Natay to the Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise Board of Directors for a One Year Term

Primary Sponsor:  
**LoRenzo Bates**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

**Yea (9):**  
George Apachito  
*\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates*  
Mel Begay  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Jonathan Hale  
Walter Phelps  
Danny Simpson  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom

**Nay (7):**  
Russell Begaye  
Katherine Benally  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Edmund Yazzie

**Not Voting (8):**  
Elmer Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Lorenzo Curley  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie  
*\*Dwight Witherspoon*

# 2014 Summer Council Session Legislation Results

## 22nd Navajo Nation Council

\*Chaired the discussion - only votes in the event of a tie

### Legislation No. 0148-14:

Confirming the Appointment of Tamara Begay to the Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise Board of Directors for a Three Year Term

Primary Sponsor:  
**LoRenzo Bates**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

#### Yea (17):

Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates  
Elmer Begay  
Mel Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Russell Begaye  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Hale  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Danny Simpson  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (2):**  
Katherine Benally  
Lorenzo Curley

**Not Voting (5):**  
George Apachito  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie  
\*Dwight Witherspoon

### Legislation No. 0149-14:

Confirming the Appointment of Kristina Haskell to the Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise Board of Directors for a Three Year Term

Primary Sponsor:  
**LoRenzo Bates**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

#### Yea (17):

George Apachito  
Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates  
Mel Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Russell Begaye  
Katherine Benally  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Lorenzo Curley  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Hale  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Danny Simpson  
David Tom

**Nay (0):**

**Not Voting (7):**  
Elmer Begay  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Roscoe Smith  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie  
\*Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

### Legislation No. 0150-14:

Confirming the Appointment of Leah Claw to the Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise Board of Directors for a Three Year Term

Primary Sponsor:  
**LoRenzo Bates**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

#### Yea (11):

George Apachito  
Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates  
Elmer Begay  
Jonathan Hale  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Danny Simpson  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Edmund Yazzie

#### Nay (7):

Russell Begaye  
Katherine Benally  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Lorenzo Curley  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Nez  
Alton Joe Shepherd

#### Not Voting (6):

Mel Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie  
\*Dwight Witherspoon

### Legislation No. 0152-14:

Confirming the Probationary Appointment of Malcolm P. Begay as Navajo Nation District Court Judge

Primary Sponsor:  
**Russell Begaye**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

#### Yea (18):

George Apachito  
Elmer Begay  
Mel Begay  
Russell Begaye  
Katherine Benally  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Lorenzo Curley  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Hale  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Danny Simpson  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (0):**

#### Not Voting (6):

\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates  
Nelson BeGaye  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie

### Legislation No. 0158-14:

Changing the Name Sheep Springs Chapter to Tooh Haltsooi Chapter; and Amending 11 N.N.C. § 10(A)

Primary Sponsor:  
**David L. Tom**

**PASSED**  
(Simple Majority Vote)

#### Yea (16):

George Apachito  
Mel Begay  
Russell Begaye  
Katherine Benally  
Joshua Lavar Butler  
Charles Damon, II  
Jonathan Hale  
Jonathan Nez  
Leonard Pete  
Walter Phelps  
Alton Joe Shepherd  
Danny Simpson  
Roscoe Smith  
David Tom  
Dwight Witherspoon  
Edmund Yazzie

**Nay (0):**

**Not Voting (8):**  
\*Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates  
Elmer Begay  
Nelson BeGaye  
Lorenzo Curley  
Kenneth Maryboy  
Speaker Johnny Naize  
Duane Tsinigine  
Leonard Tsosie



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 25, 2014

## President Shelly meets with Mayor Berry

Leaders discuss homelessness in Albuquerque and forming new task force



*Albuquerque Mayor Berry listens to Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly on concerns from the Nation on the recent murders of two Navajo men who were homeless. The two leaders are partnering to form a new task force to prevent violence against the homeless. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*

ALBUQUERQUE—The recent murders of two homeless Navajos has united a city and tribal nation against further attacks.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry on July 24 to discuss details of the murders and work together to prevent further violence from happening.

“We’ve come here to create a partnership and collaboration on how we can work together,”

President Shelly said.

Joining him were tribal representatives from the Division of Social Services, Division of Public Safety, Division of Health, Office of the Speaker, and the Human Rights Commission.

The president said similar attacks prompted partnerships with Gallup, Farmington and Bloomfield.

“We need to prevent this happening again and we all need to work together,” President

Shelly said. “Life is precious.”

Mayor Richard Berry agreed with President Shelly and said the incident was “a senseless act.” He noted that in 2012, the city collaborated with Harvard University on a study of Native American homelessness.

“This was a senseless act. It was something that really wakes up an entire community to the plight of the homeless and also to our friends in the Native American community,”

Berry said.

He said that the city of Albuquerque would work with President Shelly to craft an agreement to address the issue. More meetings need to be scheduled, Berry said, for development of an action plan.

Turning to President Shelly, Berry said, “Between the two of us, if we can use our collective powers of impact to let our congressional delegations, our legislators, and cities to get

resources and identify gaps in services to try and get that in place, I think that's really going to be the key."

Leonard Gorman, director of the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, said public hearings were held in border towns, including Albuquerque, between 2008 and 2009.

He said they engaged the Albuquerque Human Rights Office and that after a successful opening dialogue, the discussions and communications trailed off.

"At that time, Mayor Chavez was in office and we were dealing with his cohorts in crafting an agreement," Gorman said.

He noted that the human rights of Navajo people needed to be

commission to deal with Native American concerns; and to allow the NNHRC to setup interviews with the city councilors.

After the hour-long meeting concluded, President Shelly traveled to the Albuquerque Indian Center to break bread and eat with a roomful of natives from different tribes that came to the center for a soup lunch.

"I grew up in hard conditions, similar to yours," President Shelly told the youth in the group. "But look at where I am today.

"If I can do it, so can you," he added.

President Shelly said each individual has a choice, much like opening a door. If you do nothing about it, the door remains

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## **"We expect the perpetrators to be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."**

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acknowledged, in addition to cultural sensitivity.

"We need to have an understanding of the cultural relationships we have as human beings, or as president said, as five fingered individuals," Gorman said.

Dr. Jennifer Denetdale, a member of the NNHRC, shared several points with the group.

Her first point was exacting.

"We expect the perpetrators to be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law," Denedale said.

She added that the commission did not want any plea bargains and that an investigation needed to happen on whether or not the incident was a hate crime.

Her remaining six points were to investigate the crime and establish a task force; allow the NNHRC to participate in the decision making process; have the city of Albuquerque provide the resources for the task force; for Mayor Berry to publicly acknowledge Albuquerque is dangerous for homeless people, especially natives; formation of a

closed. To exit the challenges of living on the street, one must open the door and begin making decisions to turn their life around.

The Albuquerque Indian Center submitted a budget to the Navajo Nation for supplemental appropriations amounting to \$38,000. The bulk of those funds are used for services like the lunch that was provided to the homeless and indigent natives in need of services.

President Shelly will meet with Mayor Berry again next week to begin forming the task force and creation of an action plan.

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*Mayor Berry and President Shelly spoke after the meeting about what they expect from the partnership and the proposed task force. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*



*President Shelly visited the Albuquerque Indian Center after the meeting with Mayor Berry and had lunch with the clients of the center, many of which were homeless. He said he grew up in similar circumstances and made it to where he is today by self-reliance and proper decision making. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*



*The Albuquerque Indian Center sees a large number of native clients from various tribes that are homeless. The center provides food and services to the indigent population, including the two deceased men. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*



## THE NAVAJO NATION

# *Proclamation*

## IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF THE LATE NAVAJO CODE TALKER EDWARD B. ANDERSON, JR.

WHEREAS, The Navajo Nation is greatly saddened by the loss of the late Edward B. Anderson, Jr., who served in the U.S. Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, The late Edward B. Anderson, Jr. was a Navajo Code Talker who served the United States of America, the Navajo Nation, and U.S. Marine Corps with courage, honor and distinction; serving from 1942 to 1945, when he was honorably discharged; and

WHEREAS, The late Edward B. Anderson, Jr. served in the 1st Marine Division and was stationed in the South Pacific, Australia, Guadalcanal, New Guinea, and New Britain; and

WHEREAS, The late Edward B. Anderson, Jr. also was a Navajo Code Talker who was awarded the Purple Heart, South Pacific Ribbons, and the Congressional Silver Medal; and

WHEREAS, The Navajo Nation unites and offers prayers for his family and friends during this time of grief;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BEN SHELLY, President of the Navajo Nation, do hereby proclaim that all Navajo Nation flags shall be flown at half-staff in honor of the late Navajo Code Talker Edward B. Anderson, Jr., from sunrise on July 23 to sunset on July 26, 2014.

**ORDERED THIS 22<sup>nd</sup> DAY OF JULY 2014**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ben Shelly, President  
THE NAVAJO NATION



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 22, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nrlb.communications@gmail.com

**Apache County Board of Supervisors votes  
against the sale of the Ole Red Barn Liquor license**



**Photo: Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley expresses his opposition to the sale of the liquor licenses to the Apache County Board of Supervisors at Tuesday's meeting.**

**NAHATA DZIIL** – On Tuesday, approximately 300 people attended a public meeting held in the community of Nahata Dził in which the Apache County Board of Supervisors addressed the proposed sale of two liquor licenses owned by Gary McDonald.

McDonald currently is facing charges stemming from a search warrant executed at his residence in 2012, in which large quantities of a substance believed to be methamphetamine was found, along with 20 firearms.

McDonald, a long-time resident of Sanders, owns four liquor licenses that were renewed at the end of May despite public outcry from the community.

Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins), who has worked with community members to address the liquor licenses for several months, voiced his opposition to the sale at Tuesday's meeting.

"The Navajo Nation passed a resolution opposing the sale of transfers of the liquor licenses, so, I ask the members of the Board of Supervisors for consideration of opposing the liquor license sales because it is not in the best interest of the Navajo people," stated Delegate Curley.

In April, the Navajo Nation Naabik'iyati' Committee passed a resolution opposing the renewal and transfer of McDonald's liquor licenses, which McDonald is now attempting to sell to a close associate, George Ryan, for \$2.50 each.

Also in attendance were Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, Arizona Senator Carlyle Begay (Dist. 7), and representatives from the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly strongly opposed the sale of the liquor licenses.

"I am going to express my opposition to the transfer of Red Barn and Lee's Liquor licenses to George Ryan. One of my main concerns is the children. There is no reason for children to be exposed to a situation of intoxicated people or domestic violence," stated President Shelly.

Sen. Carlyle Begay said he had the opportunity to talk with the families affected by alcohol sales.

"To hear about the devastating stories that have impacted the families, it is just not about the alcohol sales, it is about the side effects that this issue has caused. My primary concern is to think forward for the future of this community, 10-20 years from now," stated Senator Begay.

At one point during the discussion, County Supervisor Joe Shirley, Jr., asked Ryan why the prices for the liquor licenses were very low, which Ryan did not provide a clear answer to.

Commissioner from the Navajo Nation Rights Commission, Jennifer Nez Denetdale, noted that Ryan has been the manager of McDonald's liquor establishments since McDonald has been incarcerated.

"We believe there is no difference between these two individuals [McDonald and Ryan]. We contend that they consistently show a disregard for the well-being of the Navajo citizens of the Nahata Dziil Chapter. They show a complete lack of accountability and responsibility to the communities," stated Denetdale.

The ABOS voted 3-0 in opposition of the sale of the liquor licenses. Ryan now has the option to appeal the decision with the Arizona Liquor Board.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 22, 2014

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Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

**Navajo Nation Council blocks proposed in situ uranium recovery project**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On the second day of the Summer Council Session, the Navajo Nation Council approved Legislation No. 0091-14, rescinding, repealing, and rendering null and void resolution RDCD-69-13, passed by the Resources and Development Committee last December which acknowledged the right-of-way and surface use by Uranium Resources, Inc. for the purpose of an in situ uranium recovery project in the community of Churchrock, N.M.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), who represents the Churchrock community, asked for the support of his Council colleagues to prevent URI from developing its in situ uranium recovery project.

Delegate Yazzie referenced the Diné Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005 and the Radioactive Materials Transportation Act of 2012, stating that the two laws prohibit the proposed project from being developed on the Navajo Nation.

“We need to follow the regulations,” said Delegate Yazzie. “The regulations are [in place] to look out for our people.”

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake), who sponsored the legislation passed by the RDC in December, said the Radioactive Materials Transportation Act does not specifically address the transportation of uranium.

“I would understand your argument if the law had said ‘thou shall not transport uranium’—it doesn’t say that,” Delegate Tsosie stated. “At the moment, there is no physical transporting of uranium so there’s no physical act being done as of today to transport uranium.”

Speaking in support of the legislation, Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin) said he supports the overwhelming number of young Navajo people who have spoken out against the proposed project and against uranium mining in general.

“By nullifying this [resolution] we are saying ‘no’ to any future uranium exploration on the Navajo Nation,” stated Delegate Nez. “We need to all take a stand once again, to those major industries and companies throughout the globe and stay steadfast and say no more, enough is enough.”

Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) also stated her opposition, while emphasizing her stance against uranium mining.

“I am absolutely against uranium development of any kind because I am from the community of Dennehotso which mined uranium in the {1940’s and 50’s] so I have seen the consequences to this day,” said Delegate Benally.

Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle) spoke in opposition of rescinding RDC’s resolution, while cautioning his Council colleagues of the possible consequences should the situation end up in litigation resulting from the nullification.

“Have we really sat down and looked into the consequences?” asked Delegate Pete. “Somewhere along the way, the wisdom of this Council, the common sense of this Council, the foresight of this Council is going to be tested.”

Following a two-hour discussion, members of the Council approved Legislation No. 0091-14 with a vote of 18-3.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 22, 2014

## President Shelly appalled by beating deaths of Navajo men

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Innocent men do not deserve to be murdered in their sleep.

Three teens were indicted for murdering two homeless Navajo men on July 21 in Albuquerque, N.M. The victims were beaten with cinder blocks and a pole.

“It’s beyond senseless that these teens would attack homeless people in this manner,” President Shelly said. “The Navajo Nation is appalled that this type of attack is happening upon our people. We pray that justice will be carried out in this case.”

Incarcerated on \$5 million bail the trio – Alex Rios, 18, Nathaniel Carrillo, 16, and Gilbert Tafoya, 15 – are facing two open counts of murder, tampering with evidence, three counts of aggravated battery with a deadly weapon and robbery.

The teens allegedly attacked more than 50 other homeless people in the Albuquerque area.

Regardless of the homeless state of the victims, President Shelly said no person deserves to be beaten to death in that manner. The horror of such violence in this day and age is incomprehensible, he said.

“The Navajo Nation needs an opportunity to meet with Albuquerque Mayor Berry about this attack. We need to sit down and discuss possible solutions to assist the homeless population in Albuquerque,” President Shelly said.

He mentioned the efforts of NCI in Gallup and the Friendship House in San Francisco, both of which assist homeless and indigent Native Americans with alcoholism issues through counseling and rehabilitation services.

President Shelly will work with the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission to request a meeting with Mayor Richard J. Berry.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 22, 2014

## President Shelly orders flags at half-staff in honor of Edward B. Anderson Jr.



*Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly sends condolences and prayers to the family of Edward B. Anderson Jr., a former Navajo Code Talker. Anderson passed on July 20 in Phoenix, Ariz. at Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center. (Courtesy photo)*

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—The Navajo Nation mourns the loss of another warrior.

On July 20, former Navajo Nation Code Talker Edward B. Anderson passed at Banner Good Samaritan Medical Center in Phoenix, Ariz. He was 89 years old.

“The Navajo Nation sends our deepest condolences and prayers to the family during this time of mourning,” said Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly.

“We lost a true role model to our Navajo people. The Navajo Code Talkers saved our country from war through the use of our language and demonstrated the power of Dine’ bizaad in the process. He will truly be missed,” he said.

Anderson was born and raised on the Navajo Nation and was a lifelong Ariz. resident.

Born in St. Michaels to Josephine Gatewood and Edward B. Anderson Sr. of Sawmill, he was of the Honaghaahnii (One Who Walks Around) Clan and born to the Todich’ii’nii (Bitter Water) Clan.

Anderson enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps at the age

of 18 and served from 1942 to 1945, when he was honorably discharged.

A member of the 1st Marine Division, Anderson was stationed in the South Pacific and Australia. He saw combat at Guadalcanal, New Guinea and New Britain.

He was wounded in battle and was a recipient of the Purple Heart, South Pacific Ribbons and the Congressional Silver Medal.

He lived in Cornfields and St. Michaels for most of his life and was married to Ione Hillis Anderson, who preceded him in death. They had five children, six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

The funeral for Anderson will be on July 25 beginning at 10 a.m. at the Ganado Presbyterian Church. He will be buried at the Veterans Cemetery in Ft. Defiance, Ariz., with a reception to follow.

The family will have two gatherings, the first of which will be held on July 23 at Cornfields Chapter House at 6 p.m. The second will be at St. Michaels Chapter House on July 24 at 6 p.m.

A Wells Fargo Bank account has been setup for contributions. It is under the name Edward B. Anderson Jr. and the routing number is 122105278 and the account number is 2261100214. You may also call 1-800-869-3557.

The family sends thanks and appreciation for any contributions made.

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22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council  
Summer Council Session  
Speaker Pro Tem's Report



Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker  
P.O. Box 3390  
Window Rock, AZ 86515



**Summer Council Session**  
**Monday, July 21, 2014**  
**Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates**

Yá'át'ééh, my fellow Navajo Nation Council colleagues and to our guests including chapter, tribal, state, and federal leaders, and most importantly to our Diné Citizens with us today. I also want to welcome those of you watching live on the internet, including our brave men and women serving in the military throughout the world. Welcome to the 2014 Summer Council Session.

I also want to recognize and thank the many men and women who embarked on a long and difficult journey to take part in the Summer Horse and Bike Ride. Many of you began your journey over a week ago in the spirit of honoring our past leaders who would ride to each regular Council session on horseback. Along the way, they would stop and listen to the concerns and issues of their respective communities. When they arrived for Council sessions they were well-informed and able to voice the concerns of their people.

It is with that same spirit that delegates take part in the annual horse and bike rides which have evolved over time to bring awareness and to promote causes such as healthy living and domestic violence awareness—two very critical issues throughout the Navajo Nation.

With that in mind, I am confident that each of us as elected leaders will address the issues and legislations before us while being mindful of the needs and voices of our people so that years from now, Diné will continue to prosper for many more generations.

**Trust Mismanagement Litigation Agreement**

On May 30, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council passed Resolution CMY-28-14, approving an agreement to end the Navajo Nation's lawsuit against the United States over historical mismanagement of trust fund assets. In return, the Navajo Nation was awarded \$554 million after years of hard fought negotiations by a team that included members of the Trust Mismanagement Litigation Task Force comprised of Council Delegates Lorenzo Curley (chair), Roscoe Smith (vice chair), Russell Begaye, Charles Damon, II, Walter Phelps, Alton Joe Shepherd, Dwight Witherspoon, and Leonard Tsosie.

The task force worked diligently with the Navajo Nation Department of Justice, the BuckleySandler law firm, and numerous other entities to negotiate the agreement.

On July 10, the Naabik'iyati' Committee issued a directive to the Office of the Speaker to initiate public hearings regarding the anticipated \$554 million award.

The Office of the Speaker is currently in the process of securing sites in each of the Nation's five agencies that will enable the use of live-streaming. The hearings will undoubtedly provide our Diné Citizens the opportunity to voice their thoughts and opinions as to how the award should be invested or otherwise used.

It is very important that Navajo people have a say in the planning and strategizing. Our office will soon release a schedule of public hearings. I cannot stress enough the importance of planning carefully and responsibly so that the benefits for the Navajo Nation and the Navajo people are maximized.

### **Voting Rights**

While the redistricting of state legislative districts was redrawn in 2011, the Navajo Nation continues to be involved in redistricting litigation in the states of Arizona and Utah. In addition, congress is entertaining a legislative fix to the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the matter of *Shelby County v. Holder*.

In Arizona, Navajo Nation was an opposing amicus party to the lawsuit filed by the Republican Party, alleging that the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission violated Arizona laws. Recently, the federal court three-judge panel issued its opinion in which it ruled that the redistricting commission did not violate laws. However, the Republican Party appealed the federal district court ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court. Navajo Nation must continue to be a party in the appeal process due to the potential effects on Navajo voting rights resulting from the outcome. Should the U.S. Supreme Court rule in favor of the appealing party, it is likely that the Navajo people on the Arizona side of the Navajo Nation will be impacted by the eventual requirement to redraw the 2011 legislative districts.

In Utah, the Navajo Nation is engaged in assuring that Navajo voters are properly represented in the San Juan County commission redistricting and the school district board member district plans. In the third quarter, the Office of the Speaker has been in discussions with various parties regarding the county requiring mail ballots for its June primary election. While the results of the June primary election are still being evaluated, it is clear there is significant decrease of voter participation in San Juan County elections. Council Delegate Jonathan Nez is actively evaluating the situation.

In June 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its opinion which stated that Section 5 requirements of covered states are outdated. That is, those states that are found to discriminate against minorities must submit their redistricting plans to the U.S. Department of Justice for pre-clearance. Since the requirements of Section 5 have been outlawed by the U.S. Supreme Court, the Navajo Nation has been involved in the national voting rights commission meetings to appropriately introduce a legislative fix. Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin introduced House Bill 3899. Unfortunately, H.B. 3899 does not fully protect Navajo voters in Arizona. The Office of the Speaker has been providing recommendations as to improve H.B. 3899.

Finally, as the voting rights issues continue to be at the forefront, the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona solicited nominations of individuals who exhibit exemplary citizenship traits. Mr. Leonard Gorman was nominated and is awarded the *Harrison and Austin Citizenship Award*. Frank Harrison and Harry Austin were pioneers that demanded that Native Americans have the right to vote and the State of Arizona must recognize that right. They filed the second lawsuit in 1948 that resulted in the Arizona Supreme Court ruling that recognized Native Americans in Arizona have the right to vote. Congratulations to Mr. Gorman.

## **Fiscal Year 2015**

The Office of the Speaker participated in several branch chiefs' meetings during the third quarter of FY 14. The Budget and Finance Committee has approved the allocation of FY15 projected revenues among the branches. The Office of the Speaker has established a budget review team that will assess the program budgets in the Legislative Branch.

## **Sacred Sites**

The Naabik'iyat'i' Committee established the Subcommittee on Sacred Sites several years ago, which met several times during the third quarter of FY14. With the assistance of the Office of Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, the Subcommittee has been active in examining the work conducted by the United Nations General Assembly President. In 2010, the UN General Assembly decided to conduct a world conference on indigenous issues.

In 2011, Naabik'iyat'i' Committee also authorized the President and Vice President of the Navajo Nation, Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, their designees, and Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission to do all things necessary to protect San Francisco Peaks as a sacred site for the Navajo people. One of the issues affecting the Navajo Nation in the process of deliberating the world conference is sacred sites and places and sacred objects.

In addition to the world conference, the subcommittee is confronted with the fact that Navajo sacred objects and paraphernalia were auctioned in Paris. The subcommittee has the daunting task of ensuring that France, and the world community, respects Navajo people's sacred objects and paraphernalia. The subcommittee recently participated in the world conference preparatory meeting in New York City and met with the France Mission.

## **Navajo Nation Council Chamber Renovation**

During the third quarter, the Office of the Speaker advertised and received proposals from Navajo firms to renovate the Navajo Nation Council Chamber seating arrangement. While the Office of the Speaker continues to assess the proposals, a number of issues have surfaced that require immediate attention; these issues were not anticipated but must now be addressed.

First, since the 2006 rehabilitation of the Council Chamber, the vigas have been excessively exposed to the elements. The Office of the Speaker learned that the copper flashings that were installed on top of the vigas are missing, allowing the elements to penetrate the pine logs. It is

important that proper rehabilitation methods be employed to ensure that if possible, to preserve the integrity of the Council Chamber structure, specifically the top tier roof system.

Secondly, when the Office of the Speaker was in the process of solidifying arrangements with the most qualified proposer, it became clear that the substructure of the Council Chamber require the remediation or abatement of asbestos in the tiles and adhesives. While it is presently contained under the raised floor, it is clear that the Office of the Speaker must appropriately address the existence of asbestos underneath the Council Chamber floor.

In addition, the Council has invested in upgrading its current voting system software that will offer an array of new options that will allow for a number of upgrades that to increase efficiency among Council and transparency for the public. The upgraded software is capable of securing and storing Council voting records, generating voting reports, and allowing the public to access voting records. In addition, the software is capable of transmitting information such as amendments and voting results for the public and delegates to view on their mobile devices as these actions take place on the Council floor.

The addition of television screens within the Council Chambers will also allow for amendments and other materials to be displayed for the public to see as well. The upgrades and additions are part of an effort to increase transparency and accountability.

Please keep in mind that the installation and configuration of the upgraded software and equipment will certainly entail technical challenges that will require time to resolve. The software upgrade will be implemented during the current session.

### **Document Review Tracking System**

Within the last three months, the Office of the Speaker has implemented a Document Review Tracking System in order to increase efficiency and to protect the integrity of documents that are submitted to the office. The system is centered on a cover sheet which requires staff to acknowledge their receipt of the document(s) by signing off on the sheet. If a financial request is submitted, the cover sheet will document the availability of funds as provided by the Financial Advisor. The system was implemented to ensure that documents are accounted for and to secure their location and tracking at all times.

### **Legislative Documents**

The Office of the Speaker, Office of Legislative Counsel, and the Office of Legislative Services have collaborated to increase efficiency and to secure the integrity of sensitive legislative documents by streamlining the processing and sharing of documents between the offices.

It was brought to my attention that the production and processing of legislations and resolutions often entailed duplication of services which prolonged the entire process from beginning to end. The three offices strategized and developed a safe and efficient file sharing process that allows certain staff to access files as needed.

## **Sanders Liquor Licenses**

In April 2014, the Naabik'iyat'i' Committee issued a directive for the Office of the Speaker and Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission to ensure that a strategy plan is instituted to ensure that four liquor licenses in Sanders are not renewed. Since the directive was issued, the Office of the Speaker has worked closely with the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, Renewal of Hope Task Force, and Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley to not only develop strategy plans but to ensure that appropriate efforts are instituted.

In May, the Office of the Speaker, Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, and Lewis and Roca law firm met with the Arizona Liquor Department Executive Director. It was clear that under normal circumstances liquor licenses are automatically renewed. In this particular case, the Navajo Nation raised strong concerns regarding the previous owner's qualifications to run liquor stores as he is presently in jail. In light of these concerns, the liquor department entered an agreement with the previous owner of the liquor licenses in order for him to relinquish the licenses. However, part of the process to relinquish liquor license allows the owner(s) to transfer or sell their licenses.

During the early part of June 2014, Mr. Gary McDonald, previous owner, transferred ownership of four licenses to Mr. George Ryan. Currently, the Navajo Nation is concentrating on raising strong concerns regarding Mr. Ryan's credibility, reliability and qualifications. Since the licenses are scheduled to be transferred, in accordance with Arizona laws, the local government (Apache County) will have the opportunity to recommend approval or disapproval of the liquor licenses. Apache County Supervisors will be meeting on July 22, 2014 at Nahata Dziil Chapter to consider its recommendation.

## **Navajo Health Care Issues**

There is continued monitoring and assistance to improve the overall health care system on the Navajo Nation.

Additionally, further enhancing and understanding the issues that cause many of the illnesses and health problems on the Navajo Nation was discussed. Public outreach and education to stem the rising numbers of Navajo people with diabetes, mental health treatment, and accidental deaths is key to helping our people.

Legislation No. 0346-13 was introduced by Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon to create a Navajo Nation Department of Health. The legislation was proposed and subsequently tabled by the Naabik'iyati' Committee. This legislation would significantly change the Navajo Nation Division of Health to allow oversight and regulating of all health care services on the Navajo Nation.

In response to a work session held in Flagstaff, AZ on January 3, 2014, a task force was created, Department of Health Creation that would review Legislation No. 0346-13 and develop it in the best interest of the Navajo Nation and the people. Included in the task force are four delegates,

the Vice President, Division of Health, representatives from 638 health providers, a traditional healer, a non-emergent transportation provider, and a home health care provider.

The task force was meant to dissolve by the start of Spring Session. However, due to an incomplete legislation, an extension was granted and work continued on Legislation No. 0346-13.

Since its creation, the task force met March 16, March 28, April 4, June 20, July 7, and July 16 in regard to modifying the original legislation. There have been suggestions on the recommended changes. The proposed changes will either be incorporated into the legislation or not.

Currently, the task force has a 90% working solution to the proposed creation of the Navajo Nation Department of Health. The request for additional time to complete the legislation is proposed. When the completed changes are made, a special session will be requested to consider the amended legislation.

### **The Cobell Land Buy-Back Program.**

The process of creating a cooperative agreement for conducting the Land Buy-Back Program on the Navajo Nation was completed on April 30, 2014.

The program has a directive to complete the buy-back for a number of tribes across the United States with each having a set time period of its own. The program will be completed in four phases: Outreach, Land Research, Land Valuation, and Land Acquisition. Determining the phases that the Navajo Nation will complete is the purpose of the cooperative agreement.

The cooperative agreement was completed and sent to the U.S. Department of the Interior. On May 15, 2014, the Navajo Nation was selected among other tribes for participation in the Land Buy-Back Program. Federal program implementation is planned for calendar year 2015.

Staff continues working with Mr. McClanahan and the Executive Branch as we continue to discuss the overall framework for the Navajo Nation's Buy-Back Program plan. The next months will examine the impact that implementation will have on the land users, permit issues, title issues, and office establishment.

### **Navajo Veterans Issues**

There is a continued effort to help Navajo Veterans across our Nation. There is much yet to accomplish, and in continuing to support our returning Veterans, there are still unmet needs—namely, employment opportunities, health care, and education benefits.

Staff has continued direct coordination with the Navajo Nation Department of Veterans Affairs (NDVA). Together, they have kept the priorities aligned with those of the Office of the Speaker. The department faces a number of challenges and funding is key to providing the services requested.

There is continued work on the creation of the Veterans' Act. Staff has offered recommendations for improving the document through dialogue with the NDVA. Currently, there is not a document that can be presented through legislation.

Staff is in direct contact with the Navajo Department of Veterans Affairs and the various state agencies responsible for serving our veterans. I am apprised of the various issues that our Veterans face across the Navajo Nation. The Office of the Speaker is committed to helping the leadership and local organizations that support and aid our Navajo Veterans.

### **Fort Wingate**

The agreement that exists to divide the land known as the Fort Wingate Army Depot, between the Navajo Nation and the Zuni Tribe is on-going. As you may be aware, H.R. 3822 proposes to direct the division of the land of Fort Wingate Army Depot. H.R. 3822 and is sponsored by Rep. Ben Ray Lujan and Rep. Steve Pearce.

On June 13, 2014, Legislation No. 0122-14 was passed by the Naabik'iyáti' Committee, which will be considered during the summer session. Rep. Lujan has held off action on H.R. 3822 until the Navajo Nation Council decides whether or not to support Legislation No. 0122-14.

### **Navajo Mine Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)**

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement (OSM) prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Four Corners Power Plant and Navajo Mine Energy Project. OSM evaluated five alternatives and proposed Alternative A, under which OSM would approve Navajo Transitional Energy Company's (NTEC) Pinabete Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) permit application and Navajo Mine SMCRA application for permit renewal. Additionally, the Bureau of Indian Affairs would approve right-of-way renewals, Navajo mine access roads, and Amendment 3 of the Four Corners Power Plant lease with the Navajo Nation.

On March 28, 2014, the DEIS was made available to the public with a public comment period ending in May 27, 2014, which was later extended to June 27, 2014. On June 27, the Navajo Nation working through the Navajo Nation Department of Justice and the Navajo Environmental Protection Agency, submitted comments affirming OSM's conclusion that Alternative A is the preferred alternative, based on the information presented in the DEIS. The DEIS is expected to be completed by January of 2015, after which NTEC will be able to expand its operations necessary to meet the coal supply of the Four Corners Power Plant into 2031.

### **APS Application for 2% Rate Increase**

The Navajo Nation's purchase of the Navajo Mine from BHP to NTEC has been a long and arduous process filled with many challenges and rewards. Although we have completed the lion's share of the work and currently own the mine, there is much more work to ensure the economic viability of our venture. One of the obstacles in the mine purchase was APS's ability to purchase units 4 & 5 from Southern California Edison under strict deadlines and to then

apply to the Arizona Corporation Commission for a utility rate increase to cover the costs associated with this purchase. We are now at the stage involving an Evidentiary Hearing which will be held to consider the merits of this rate increase. It behooves us as a Nation reliant on the taxes and revenues from this venture to offer our support of these measures.

We have approximately 5,000 Navajo Citizens who rely on APS for their source of electricity—both on and off the Navajo Nation—who will be affected by this rate increase. Although, this may seem to be a potential hardship on our citizens, the alternatives were much more difficult. Had APS not purchased Southern California Edison's share of units 4 & 5, they would have had to build entirely new facilities and the utility rates would have increased by over 5-percent. Additionally, our taxes and revenues as well as Navajo jobs would have been greatly impacted. We now have the added benefit of participating in these proceedings as the owner of the Navajo Mine, working to maintain the long-term economic viability of our operations.

### **EPA's Proposed Rule**

On January 8, 2014, the EPA released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: "Standards of Performance for Greenhouse Gas Emissions for New Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units", which proposes to create new standards for fossil fuel-fired electric steam generating units, including utility boilers and integrated gasification combined cycle units (IGCC), and for natural gas-fired stationary combustion turbines. The comment period for this rulemaking ended on May 9, 2014 and the Navajo Nation has submitted its comments through the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency.

At the center of this issue is the Navajo Nation's ability to continue to utilize our coal resources for new fuel-fired electric steam generating units. Although we as a Nation realize the need to transition to cleaner sources of energy, we must also realize that our major natural resource is coal and that there are viable alternatives, such as integrated gasification combined cycle units (IGCC), for utilizing these coal resources and still meeting more stringent EPA standards.

Our ability as a Nation to continue to mine coal relies on the emerging technologies associated with IGCC and carbon capture and storage (CCS). It is important that the U.S. EPA recognize how devastating the impacts of their proposed rulemaking could have on particular economic interests such as our sovereign Nation's ability to take care of our own. We must continue to advocate for the development of rulemaking that will allow for these emerging technologies to be developed in an economically viable fashion here on Navajo Land for the benefit of our future generations and in a way that will allow for a smooth transition to a greener future.

### **Navajo Nation Energy Policy**

We have recently completed the first phase of an Energy Policy, a long time in the making. We are a Nation who is heavily reliant on energy resources for the day-to-day operations of the critical needs of our Diné Citizens. It is important that we have a clear understanding and process of how energy projects are processed through our Nation with all the proper due

diligence and forethought necessary for a healthy Navajo Nation economy. At the heart of this Energy Policy is the development of a Navajo Nation Energy Office, a central repository of information and resources necessary for the successful development and deployment of energy projects.

As we have coined our newly formed 'Navajo Transitional Energy Company', it is a true reflection of the major challenge of our time, transitioning our energy and economic resources from fossil fuel-based energy to alternative and renewable energy sources. This transition will require a team of professionals working full time for the benefit of our future and able to collaborate and engage the resources of the legislative and executive branches of our Navajo government.

This is no small task and will require the joint efforts of both branches working together to ensure the successful realization of our ever growing government to meet the complexities and challenges of an ever changing world.

### **Conclusion**

As we move forward, I ask each of my Council colleagues to remain focused as we face the challenges before us and to continue advocating for the voices and needs of our people. It is through the people that we have been elected to serve our communities and our Nation and we must continue to forge ahead in a manner that best secures the futures of Diné Citizens.

# THE STATE OF THE NAVAJO NATION

President Ben Shelly

and

Vice President Rex Lee Jim



*The Executive Branch Report:  
Working Together for the Benefit of the Navajo People*

Presented to the  
22nd Navajo Nation Council  
July 21, 2014



**2014 SUMMER SESSION  
STATE OF THE NAVAJO NATION  
NAVAJO NATION PRESIDENT BEN SHELLY  
NAVAJO NATION VICE PRESIDENT REX LEE JIM  
JULY 21, 2014**

**S**peaker Pro Tem Bates, members of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council, veterans, leaders, visitors, and my fellow Navajo people:

Yá'át'ééh and welcome to the 2014 Navajo Nation Council summer session. It is a privilege to join you here today inside this historic council chamber, the site of many great achievements that our past tribal leaders accomplished to bring our Nation forward.

I am thankful to provide a report on the Navajo Nation highlighting our significant accomplishments from the past quarter. Although we have not always seen things eye-to-eye, our administration is thankful for the cooperation and support we have received from the Council over the past three-and-a-half years.

Together we have accomplished many great successes on behalf of our Navajo people. It is important that our three branches of government work together to keep our tribal government moving forward, while strengthening sovereignty and pushing for economic growth.

Summer is here and that means the potential for forest fires and monsoon flooding. We must be cautious and be mindful of our elders in need of assistance in the remote areas of the Nation. Be sure to check up on your elders and see if they need any food or supplies.

### **ASAAYII LAKE FIRE**

In mid-June, more than 14,000 acres was burned on the Chuska Mountains after catching fire near the Asaayii Lake Campgrounds. The high wind spread the flames and we are looking at costs in excess of \$8 million to pay for the fire. I want to say thanks to the Southwest Region Incident Management Team 3 and the Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management for assisting us with the fire.

While this fire was devastating, it also opened our eyes to the need for responsibility and fire prevention. Most importantly, it was a time of working together to overcome a challenge facing our Nation. I am proud of the way we banded together to put the fire out in less than two weeks.

Several divisions and departments joined to fight the blaze, including Navajo Division of Transportation, Division of Health, Division of Public Safety, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and many others.



Many people and organizations also stepped forward to provide donations in the form of water, food, clothing, and financial contributions. These contributions were properly accounted for and distributed in accordance with tribal law.

## **NAVAJO DIVISION OF TRANSPORTATION**

During the fire NDOT had to close several access roads leading into the Asaayii Lake area. These roads had to be closed to the public for safety purposes and they also had to be accessible to the firefighters battling the blaze.

In addition, NDOT worked with the Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management and other tribal divisions and departments at the Emergency Operations Center to provide updates and maintain communications with chapters affected by the fire.

NDOT is also making great progress on other fronts. The division selected Wilson and Company from Albuquerque, N.M. to assist with the planning and development of priority projects. Included in the scope of work was identifying and developing gravel and borrow pits across the Nation for chapter road projects. This is a major accomplishment. For the first time in the history we are moving forward with our own gravel pits instead of relying on outside contractors.

The Huerfano Bridge Project is also moving forward. This bridge is a major bus route and the only bridge providing access to and from the community. Funded through the NDOT direct funding agreement with the Federal Highway Administration, this project is in cooperation with San Juan County to replace an outdated bridge. A wider bridge was designed and is under construction. The BIA Transportation Dept. also contributed funding.

## **DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

The Title IV-E agreement between the Nation and U.S. Department of Human Services Children's Bureau is complete. The Navajo Nation is the first tribe in the country approved to administer the entire Title IV-E Program.

We will be providing direct funding reimbursements. This includes foster care, guardianship and adoption subsidies. Too often, our Navajo children in foster care are put in the care of state agencies. Their extended families are often unable to obtain guardianship due to financial hardships. This will address that need and provide a stable stream of resources for our kids.

The Division of Social Services also entered into an agreement with the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The Casey Foundation is devoted to developing a brighter future for millions of children at risk from poor educational, economic, social, and health outcomes. Their work focuses on strengthening families and building stronger communities.

As the Navajo Nation collaborates with the Casey Foundation, we will be focused on keeping



kids safe, establishing permanency, and providing kinship placement of Navajo foster children.

## **DIVISION OF EDUCATION**

The Navajo Technical University Navajo Language and Culture Teacher Summer Immersion Program is making progress at improving the technical expertise of our teachers at schools on the Nation. This summer, teachers participated in the program, learning about different areas of Navajo language and culture. They also earned six to seven credit hours in the process.

The curriculum for Navajo History and Government was also completed this quarter. The curriculum was developed by a committee of teachers for the instruction of Navajo and American history.

On June 9, Navajo Head Start passed their review for the comprehensive federal tribally designated renewal system. It was the first time in 20 years the Navajo Head Start passed the review process and it was a historic achievement for the program. Navajo Head Start will receive a five-year grant award of \$125 million.

In Sept. 2011, the Navajo Nation Washington Office informed me the Navajo Head Start was in non-compliance of federal regulations and that a reduction of funds was coming. Immediately, I met with the director of Head Start, Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, on Sept. 26, 2011.

Ms. Fuentes gave me a letter from the previous administration that stated the Navajo Nation was waiving authority over Navajo Head Start and would instead seek to privatize the program. I expressed my objection to the position of the previous administration and convinced the director not to accept waiving the authority of the Navajo Nation. We had hard work ahead of us and I knew privatizing the program was not the answer.

In Dec. 2011, she visited the Navajo Nation and reviewed our program with a team of experts from Washington, D.C. This began our effort to save Navajo Head Start, with the Office of the President and Vice President, Navajo Nation Washington Office and Navajo Department of Justice taking the lead.

Since that time, we have pushed hard for corrective action measures to be fulfilled for the program and ensuring that Head Start leadership was in compliance with our vision. Upon hearing the news of passing the federal review, we were happy beyond words.

## **NAVAJO GAMING REGULATORY OFFICE**

The renewal of the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort was achieved this past quarter, after an April 29, 2014 inspection. As a result of passing the inspection, the Navajo Gaming Regulatory Office received the renewal license on May 1, 2014.



The renewal license was issued for a period of one year and is in accordance with our tribal and state gaming compact. The same day, Twin Arrows opened Phase II of their resort and added 110 additional rooms to the hotel. The Twin Arrows bingo hall is moving forward. We have received the bingo equipment and the procedures for operating the bingo hall have been approved. It is only a matter of time before we open the doors.

On July 17, Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort received the AAA Four Diamond Award. AAA evaluated our gaming facility and the recent 110-room expansion. The news of the award is cause for celebration, as our Navajo gaming facility and hotel are now the only Four Diamond rated hotel in Flagstaff.

## **DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

The Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs is making progress with building 75 homes for Navajo veterans in the five agencies. Presently, we have 48 homes in various stages of construction. Over the next four years, we will have 300 new homes for our Navajo veterans in need of housing.

Since receiving the \$1.9 million funding contract for construction materials from Home Depot in Jan. 2014, Navajo Veterans Affairs has acquired certified house floor plans. They selected Witte Architect, Inc. to design and engineer the homes. Additionally, three Priority I contractors were selected to install the house wiring for the homes.

## **DIVISION OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

The Department of Emergency Management presented a \$1.3 million reimbursement check to NTUA for the 2013 Operation Winter Freeze effort. This was the fastest FEMA reimbursement for Indian Country, which was completed within a year's time. Normally, the process takes three to five years to complete before reimbursements from natural disaster costs are received from the federal government.

On June 19, the Department of Corrections received the notice of substantial completion for the Kayenta Multi Justice Center. This \$34 million facility was funded by the American Recovery Reinvestment Act and was constructed by Bitco-Kitchell. They primarily employed a Navajo workforce during the construction.

The 54,000 square foot facility consists of 84 beds, a short-term holding facility and a 13,500 square foot support building for dispatch, police and criminal investigation departments. The building was signed over to the Navajo Nation and a request for insurance coverage has been submitted to the Department of Risk Management.

The Navajo Police Department is moving forward with updating General Orders for the command staff. The standing orders have been in place since 1979. Department personnel discussed the General Orders update and other issues during a work session in May. The department invested



in a 2014 Diamondback airboat and trailer for the Navajo Police Department Swift Water Rescue Team.

For the Department of Emergency Medical Services, six new ambulances were purchased to continue their mission of providing life support and transport services. The department ordered radios and other equipment for the vehicles, which will be deployed to six field offices.

## **DIVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

The division administration recently received computers from the Social Security Administration. This computer hardware was distributed to various chapters for office use and chapter operations.

On April 24, the Community Housing and Infrastructure Department entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program for weatherization projects. Additionally, the department received a \$5.1 million NAHASDA grant award from Navajo Housing Authority for construction of new homes.

The Housing Improvement Program received \$1 million for the construction of seven new homes on the Nation. The program also completed the closeout of \$2.3 million in ARRA funding for housing.

Because the Navajo Nation did not receive funding for the FY 2013 funding cycle, the Community Development Block Grant Program submitted a letter of concern to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development headquarters in Washington, D.C. The department completed two power line projects in the last quarter for LeChee and Rock Point. The Weatherization Assistance Program closed out their \$9 million ARRA grant after completing 836 weatherization projects. They submitted their final financial report on June 27.

## **DIVISION OF HEALTH**

The 2014 Division of Health and Navajo regional consultation was conducted on April 22 in Window Rock. The regional consultation group shared ongoing issues related to the health and welfare of Navajo people for visiting federal agencies.

The division also released a report to Congress on the feasibility of a Navajo Nation Medicaid Agency in May 2014. Mandated by the Reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act through the Affordable Care Act of 2010, the study concluded that with the Navajo Nation's experience with other programs, a Navajo Nation Medicaid Agency is feasible.

Additionally, the division advocated for healthcare facilities construction to federal officials in Washington, D.C. The Navajo Nation Washington Office assisted in the promotion of five IHS healthcare facilities that are on the construction priority listing. The division made contact with 12 congressional offices. \$1.5 million was also paid to 18 downwind victims and nine uranium



workers.

Other items the Executive and Legislative Branches have completed together in the past quarter include the \$554 million settlement for the trust litigation suit against the federal government, the approval of the five-year CIP plan, federal approval of the General Leasing Act, and enactment of the Navajo Nation Adult Guardianship Act of 2014.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

There's plenty more news to share with you regarding our accomplishments and everything is detailed in the Executive Branch quarterly report. One thing is certain: our collaboration and dedication to hard work must continue in order to move this Nation forward.

As we work for the Navajo people, we must never lose sight of that fact that many of our Navajo people, young and old, are struggling. The Navajo people must be kept in the forefront of efforts, whether it is tribal legislation, federal charters, tribal enterprises, or any other area of work requiring government participation. It is the Navajo people that are the governing body of this Nation and that basic fact cannot be disputed.

Thank you for working with us to move the Navajo Nation forward. I realize there is still much more work ahead of us, and the only way this will be achieved is by working together. We look forward to continued relations with the Council for the benefit of our people. Ahe'hee.



***OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT  
THE NAVAJO NATION  
P.O. BOX 7440  
100 PARKWAY  
WINDOW ROCK, AZ 86515  
PHONE: 928-871-7000  
FAX: 928-871-4025  
WWW.NAVAJOPRESIDENT.ORG***



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 17, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

**New homes for Navajos in the Former Bennett Freeze Area nearing**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Thursday, members of the Navajo-Hopi Land Commission announced that funding has been processed and is now available to purchase 17 manufactured homes for Navajo residents of the Former Bennett Freeze Area.

According to Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii), the NHLC approved Resolution NHLCJY-20-13 last July, which allowed the use of approximately \$1 million from the Former Bennett Freeze Area Escrow Fund Budget to purchase the homes.

“This marks a very significant achievement that will bring homes to families who were identified as most urgent and in serious need in the Former Bennett Freeze Area,” state Delegate Phelps who chairs the NHLC.

Members of the NHLC, the NHLC Office, and the Navajo Nation Department of Justice negotiated and finalized a contract to purchase the 17 homes from a company called Living Life Easy, LLC.

NHLC member Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins) said although the funding was approved last year, the process to make the funds available which included establishing an account through the Office of the Controller took time.

“It was a difficult and lengthy process, however, we are now very close to providing much needed homes for those people who are most in need,” Delegate Curley said.

Raymond Maxx, executive director of the Navajo-Hopi Land Commission Office, said he is hopeful that the homes will be available to families within one month, while explaining that his office collected information and data to determine the recipients of the homes.

“Our staff conducted surveys and based off of their findings we determined which individuals were most in need,” stated Maxx.

“It’s a good start,” said NHLC member Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin). “This is another step toward empowering the people in that area and hopefully it continues to revitalize and create prosperity within the region.”

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 16, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nrlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Health, Education, and Human Services Committee receives report regarding Affordable Care Act exemption for Native Americans**

**WINDOW ROCK** - On Monday, the Health, Education and Human Services Committee received a report on the Affordable Care Act regarding upcoming public training seminars to educate Navajo people on ACA revisions pertaining to tax exemptions.

The training seminars will take place in various locations throughout the Navajo Nation from July 28 to August 1, according to Navajo Division of Health director, Larry Curley.

EHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) stated that the Indian Health Service urge Navajo people to sign-up for exemption to avoid potential tax penalties.

"I do not want our constituencies out in the chapters to say 'my government did not tell me it was important for me to file for exemption,'" stated Delegate Hale.

In accordance with the ACA, beginning in 2014, individuals are required to have health coverage or pay a tax penalty, unless they qualify for an exemption. Failure to file for exemption can lead to a tax penalty which can result in incurring interest fees.

"There are more exemptions coming up where people need to identify themselves as a member of a Federally Recognized Tribe. These are requirements being brought up especially if applicants are over and above the federal poverty line," stated Curley.

In March 2010, President Obama signed the ACA to establish comprehensive health insurance improvements to make health insurance coverage more affordable and accessible for Americans nationwide, including Native Americans and Alaskan Natives.

"There is no clear protocol nor is there a step-by-step process from the IRS when dealing with the exemption issue," said Delegate Hale. "If you do not file exemption, they are going to fine you."

Delegate Hale added that it is important for young Navajos to assist the elderly and encouraged them to take their parents and grandparents to the upcoming seminars.

According to the report, the training seminars are a joint collaboration project between the Navajo Division of Health, Navajo Indian Health Service, and the National Indian Health Board.

"In looking at the bigger picture, the ACA expands much more beyond than just filling out forms. These seminars will do the best they can to inform the Navajo people," stated Curley.

Dates and locations for the ACA training seminars can be accessed at:

[http://www.nihb.org/tribalhealthreform/ai1ec\\_event/nihbnavajo-area-tribal-affordable-care-act-training/](http://www.nihb.org/tribalhealthreform/ai1ec_event/nihbnavajo-area-tribal-affordable-care-act-training/)

To access additional information and the exemption application, please visit:

<http://marketplace.cms.gov/getofficialresources/publications-and-articles/tribal-exemption.pdf>

HEHSC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 14, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nmlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Naabik'iyátí' Committee issues directive to hold public hearings regarding the \$554 million Trust Mismanagement Agreement**

**WINDOW ROCK** – Last Thursday, Naabik'iyátí' Committee members issued a directive to the Office of the Speaker to initiate public hearings regarding the anticipated \$554 million award to the Navajo Nation in its Trust Mismanagement Litigation agreement.

In addition, the directive proposed by Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) also calls for public hearings to be held.

The Navajo Nation Council approved the terms of the agreement on May 30, which was later signed into law by President Ben Shelly.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Navajo Nation is expected to receive a total of \$554 million, representing the largest recovery of any Indian Nation in any breach of trust litigation with the United States government.

Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) said the Office of the Speaker will release a schedule of the public hearings which will include each of the five Navajo Agencies.

“Our intention is to inform the Navajo people and provide the opportunity to voice their thoughts and recommendations.” said Pro Tem Bates. “It’s very important that we develop a responsible and careful plan that benefits Navajo people.”

Naabik'iyátí' Committee voted 10-3 in favor of the directive. A tentative schedule of public hearings is forthcoming.

###

For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



Navajo Nation Parks and Recreation  
P.O. Box 2520  
Window Rock, AZ. 86515  
(928) 871-6647  
[www.navajonationparks.org](http://www.navajonationparks.org)



Contact: Roberta John – Senior Economic Development Specialist

Email: [bobbie@navajonationparks.org](mailto:bobbie@navajonationparks.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 14, 2014**

## **Navajo Nation to Host Energy Summit**

WINDOW ROCK, AZ. - A new Navajo Nation energy portfolio.

That's the goal of the Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources.

Tribal officials state that the Navajo Nation is at a pivotal point in time where it is faced with depleting natural resources and therefore, must find innovative ways to generate new revenue using renewable energy.

This is one topic that will be discussed at a first-ever Navajo Nation Energy Summit, which will be held on July 23-24, 2014 at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort.

The Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources is sponsoring the Navajo Nation Energy Summit to establish energy development as a priority for the Navajo Nation. Moreover, the summit will be held educate the Navajo people about the Navajo Nation Energy Policy, which was passed by the Navajo Nation Council in October 2013.

According to Administrative Service Officer Michelle Henry, this is the very first time a summit is being held.

“We want to help the Navajo people better understand the need for a energy policy that best fits the Navajo Nation and establish energy development as a priority,” Henry explained. “We want to educate the Navajo people about the revised energy policy and to showcase current and future energy projects on the Navajo Nation such as large scale power generation to small scale community level renewable projects.”

Currently, the primary source of natural resource revenue generation derives from coal.

Henry noted, “With the new goals of the federal government, the Navajo Nation needs to position themselves to have a balanced portfolio.”

Some of the topics of discussion will include the Energy Policy of 2013, the history of natural resources and energy development on the Navajo Nation, the future of renewable energy, the Navajo

land title data system, information about the general leasing process on the Navajo Nation, protecting, managing and developing Native American's outdoor and natural resources, the Department of Energy's comprehensive energy approach for a clean energy future, information about gasification technology, a project development and finance workshop, Bisti Ranch and Bisti renewable potentials, coal markets and its future, carbon capture and information about the global institute of sustainability. Organizers state some of the topics for discussion are subject to change.

Summit organizers are stressing that attendees pre-register, but can also register the day of the conference. For more information about the summit, contact Michelle Henry at [michellehenry@navajonnsn.gov](mailto:michellehenry@navajonnsn.gov) or (505) 371-5405. For information about registration contact Susan Day at [sday@frontiernet.net](mailto:sday@frontiernet.net) or at (928) 729-4003 or Char Roanhorse at [cjroanhorse@frontiernet.net](mailto:cjroanhorse@frontiernet.net) or at (928) 729-4004. For booth information contact Irma Roanhorse at [iroanhorse@frontiernet.net](mailto:iroanhorse@frontiernet.net) or at (505) 371-5406.



Navajo Nation Council  
2014 Summer Horse and Bike Ride - Tentative Schedule

**Tour de Rez 2014 – Council Delegate Jonathan Nez**

Tuesday, July 15 - Navajo Mountain to No Man's Mesa (Adults Only)

Wednesday, July 16 - No Man's Mesa to Monument Valley/Goulding's

Thursday, July 17 - Monument Valley to Kayenta to Chilchinbeto

Friday, July 18 - Chilchinbeto to Canyon De Chelly

Saturday, July 19 - Canyon De Chelly to Nazlini to Ganado

Sunday, July 20 - Ganado to Window Rock fairgrounds

Monday, July 21 - Window Rock fairgrounds to Council Chamber

**For more information for the bike ride please contact Tom Riggerbach at (928) 429-0345**

**For more information for the horse ride please contact Jimmy Black at (928) 401-8746**

**Eastern Agency Horse Ride – Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie**

Monday, July 14 - Mountain Taylor (western base) to Haystack

Tuesday, July 15 - Haystack to Baca Chapter

Wednesday, July 16 - Baca Chapter to Thoreau to Smith Lake to Crownpoint (or Littlewater) to Nahodishgish

Thursday, July 17 - Nahodishgish to Standing Rock to Pinedale

Friday, July 18 - Pinedale to Churchrock to Bahali to Chilchiltah to Manuelito

Saturday, July 19 - Manuelito to Tseyatoh to Rock Springs

Sunday, July 20 - Rock Springs to Window Rock fairgrounds

Monday, July 21 - Window Rock fairgrounds to Council Chamber

**For more information please contact Vanessa Begay at (505) 879-9460**

**Healthier Sustainable Communities events – Council Delegate Elmer Begay**

(Horse/bike ride postponed)

Monday, July 14 - Men's Health Conference at Birdsprings Chapter

Monday, July 14 - Health Fair and presentations at Tolani Lake Chapter

Tuesday, July 15 - Health Fair at Teesto Chapter

Tuesday, July 15 - Health Fair and Youth Conference at Dilkon DBHS Grounds

Wednesday, July 16 - 10 mile run from Teesto to Dilkon DBHS grounds

Wednesday, July 16 - Health Fair and Presentations at Indian Wells Chapter

Thursday, July 17 - Health Fair and Presentations at White Cone Chapter

Thursday, July 17 - Health Fair and Presentations at Greasewood Chapter

**For more information please contact Claudia Jackson at (928) 221-6982**

**Window Rock/Council Chamber**

Sunday, July 20 at approximately 4:00 p.m. (tentatively) meet at the Window Rock fairgrounds

Monday, July 21 at 9:00 a.m. (tentatively) proceed to Council Chamber in Window Rock, AZ

If you have any questions, please call the Office of the Speaker at (928) 871-7160



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 9, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

**Law and Order Committee receives update on Ramah Detention Facility**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee received an update report regarding the construction and funding of the Ramah Detention Facility.

According to Ramah Navajo Chapter Office of Grants and Contracts development officer Martha Garcia, estimates show that it will cost approximately \$5 million to complete the construction of the facility, which had to be scaled down in order to meet bid requirements.

“We have been holding biweekly meetings between the construction [entities] and the chapter. Things have been moving along smoothly and we are on schedule,” said Garcia.

The company Arcadis is the delegated construction manager for the project, while the Whiteriver Construction Company is carrying out the construction of the facility, according to Garcia.

The construction is funded by several sources including the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Fund, the Navajo Nation, Ramah Navajo Chapter, and other federal grants awarded to the project.

LOC member Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) expressed concern regarding the size and cost of the project in relation to the future operation of the facility, which is scheduled for completion in May 2015 and scheduled to begin operating in October 2015.

“Do you have an estimate in terms of additional funding? I do not want to see this great building get built and it’s too much for the chapter to handle,” said Delegate Begaye.

Garcia said approximately \$350,000 from the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development has been allocated to the project and has recently completed the SAS process, and will now begin the legislative process to approve the funding.

She added that the funds would go towards the security system and laundry area for the detention facility, which were part of the scale backs that can now be added back to the project.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat) commended the chapter and construction entities for the efficient communication

and diligent work on the project, and encouraged the chapter to seek additional funding to cover potential shortfalls.

“I know there were some scale backs on this project, but I think we can seek additional funding to return those needs back to the project and get them constructed as well,” said Delegate Shepherd. “This facility has been long overdue.”

LOC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



### \$19 MILLION FUNDING FOR CHAPTERS

President Shelly signed off on legislation to provide chapters with \$19 million from the Undesignated, Unreserved Fund Balance, page 9.



### \$554 MILLION TRUST LITIGATION SETTLEMENT

The Navajo Nation litigation against the federal government for breach of trust responsibilities resulted in a \$554 million settlement, page 20.



### \$1 BILLION ABANDONED URANIUM MINE CLEANUP

The bankruptcy settlement from the Tronox Inc. litigation has provided more than \$1 billion for cleanup of 49 abandoned uranium mines, page 21.

# HOZHOOJÍ NAHAT'Á BA HANE'

JULY 2014  
VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

A PUBLICATION OF THE NAVAJO NATION

EXECUTIVE BRANCH NEWS  
WWW.PRESIDENT.NAVAJO-NSN.GOV



President Ben Shelly and Vice President Rex Lee Jim celebrated Navajo sovereignty on June 27, when the Navajo Nation Title IV-E Agency Plan and Child Welfare Partnership Agreement were signed into law. The Navajo Nation is the first tribal nation to administer the entire Title IV-E program through a direct funding agreement. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

## NAVAJO SOVEREIGNTY

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Quality foster care is important in keeping children safe and providing a stable living environment.

On June 24, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly received a letter from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services stating that the Nation was approved to begin their Title IV-E plan, effective Oct. 1, 2014.

The Navajo Nation set a new precedent

in foster care with a recent decision by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families (Children's Bureau) to execute a direct funding agreement with the Nation.

“We applaud the Navajo Nation's efforts in bringing approval of this plan to fruition that, once implemented, should help further strengthen the safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for your most valuable children and families,”

stated Joo Yeun Chang, associate commissioner of the Children's Bureau.

On June 27, President Shelly penned the agreement into law, along with representatives from the Division of Social Services, Judicial Branch, Legislative Branch and Children's Bureau.

“The Navajo Division of Social Services is the first tribal program in the country to administer the Title IV-E program,” President Shelly said.

SEE Navajo on page 14

## \$34 million Kayenta Justice Center opens new detention facility, police headquarters

KAYENTA—Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly will tour the new \$34 million justice facility in Kayenta on Tuesday, marking the substantial completion of the American Recovery Reinvestment Act funded project.

He will be signing the official acceptance of the center from the Bitco-Kitchell project team on June 20 at 10 a.m..

Designed by Sloan Architects, the 54,000 square foot building consists of 84 beds, a short-term holding facility for male and female inmates, and a 13,500 square foot support building that will house dispatch, police and criminal investigation

departments.

“This new justice center will provide the Nation with needed infrastructure for detention services and a suitable headquarters for our Navajo Police in the area,” President Shelly said. “The facility will allow our public safety officers to continue direct services to the Navajo people.”

The facility is located next to the Kayenta District Court, which is another benefit. The location cuts down on travel distance because in the past, families had to travel to other detention facilities in Tuba City or Window Rock to visit incarcerated relatives.

Detention facility

overcrowding will find some relief with the new facility, President Shelly added.

Other touches to the new center include culturally beneficial healing areas for a sweathouse, teepee ground and a hogan.

The Navajo Nation Department of Corrections emphasized the importance of maintaining family connections and cultural values in facility, which they believe will help incarcerated members rehabilitate and transition back into society.

Brad Gabel, a partner from Bitco-Kitchell, said the joint venture maximized job opportunities for local workers.

“The construction team created ‘carve outs’ of construction projects to maximize participation by community laborers,” Gabel said. “The result was an 80 percent Navajo worker participation rate throughout the project.”

He noted that his team was honored to be a part of the project, especially the cultural immersion, which increased their knowledge of Navajo traditions and customs.

Bitco is a leading Navajo owned construction management firm. Kitchell is a Phoenix-based construction company with more than 60 years in business.



Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim toured the Kayenta detention facility in April 2014 and met with the construction crew, many of which were Navajo employees. The facility opened in June and includes a police headquarters. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



*Yá'át'ééh!*

Welcome to the first issue of *Hozhooji Nahat'á Ba Hane'*.

There are many issues facing the Navajo Nation today and the stories provided in this newsletter are only a glimpse of some of the current challenges.

One such story is the court settlement for the Navajo Nation trust litigation against the federal government for breach of trust. The \$554 million settlement is a victory for the Nation and will go a long way to addressing needs with infrastructure, housing, academic scholarships and providing services to our disabled tribal members.

We recently celebrated the Treaty of 1868, which brought our Navajo ancestors back home from *Hweeldi*. It is because of their sacrifice that we survived to become the thriving, 300,000-plus powerhouse of today. We must never forget them or the treaty.

For the first time in more than 14 years of trying, the Navajo Nation has approved the Capital Improvement Projects five-year plan. This was a long time coming,

especially for the 110 chapters that submitted prioritized projects over the years. In cooperation with the 22nd Navajo Nation Council, this major achievement was completed.

Working together and communicating effectively between our branches of government is the only way we will move our Nation forward. We cannot fall back into the rut we were in five years ago, when nothing moved, except petty news releases slinging mud between the branches.

Vice President Rex Lee Jim launched the Navajo Nation Golden Rule Day in April. As ambassador for peace and recipient of the Peace and Humanities International Golden Rule International Award, Vice President Jim will be hosting this annual Golden Rule event. His first effort brought peacemaking, effective communication and difficult conversations to the forefront of tribal consciousness.

We have also provided an update from the divisions, on major accomplishments completed during the first quarter of FY 2014. We

are making tremendous headway on behalf of the Navajo people and we have a vision to continue moving forward.

Thanks to the efforts of Sen. John Pinto, Gov. Susana Martinez, NM Dept. of Transportation Sec. Tom Church and Navajo DOT director Paulson Chaco, we will see the completion of four-lane construction on U.S. Route 491. This tremendous undertaking is funded through performance bonds issued by NMDOT, which was approved by Gov. Martinez.

There's much happening on the Navajo Nation. Take a peek inside and read the latest news affecting your chapters and communities. Read about how the Shelly-Jim Administration has been making a difference to improve your quality of life.

*Ahe'hee.*

Ben Shelly, President  
THE NAVAJO NATION



## ASAAYII LAKE FIRE DONATIONS

TSE BONITO, N.M.—Navajo Nation chapters, including Local Governance Act certified chapters, are a sub-unit of the tribal government. As such, they are required to follow the policies and procedures set forth by the tribal government.

The Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management was established under Title 2 of the Navajo Nation Code, under Article 4, Section 881.

As such, they are mandated by the Council to “lead Navajo Nation efforts, in protecting from all hazards and threats by coordinating: preparedness, protection, prevention, response, recovery, and mitigation, to provide effective and efficient emergency management services.”

Additionally, they are granted general and enumerated powers under Section 884.

This includes “ensuring the accountability by establishing specific policies, procedures and guidelines for the use of funds, goods, services or any type of assistance intended for use in meeting the requirements of the people in any declared emergency.”

Recent media accounts about donations from the Asaayii Lake Fire being taken without cause are untrue. These sensationalized news stories have been based on Facebook posts from displaced residents affected by the Asaayii Lake Fire.

For more than one week Navajo communities

affected by the fire have been under tremendous stress worrying about their homes, livestock and the condition of the land.

Compounding their worries is the inconvenience of having to live in temporary shelters for an unknown amount of time. This increases their level of frustration and anger from the emergency situation.

An obvious outlet for many to vent these frustrations have been social media sites such as Facebook, where they have let loose a litany of diatribes and blame on the Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and the Department of Emergency Management.

These have included several death threats.

The need for accountability of donations is mandated by the Navajo Nation Code, which specifically relegates these authorities to the NNDEM.

“The Department of Emergency Management has been in compliance with all applicable tribal laws, policies and procedures since the start of the Asaayii Lake Fire,” said Rose Whitehair, director of NNDEM.

She noted that the negative comments and innuendo posted on social media sites have been erroneously taken as fact by several news outlets reporting on the fire.

“Reporters are supposed to be objective in their reporting and not subjective, which is definitely happening in

the case of the donations,” Whitehair said. “The fire has flared the emotions of many, but it must be understood that we are in compliance with tribal law.

“The donations are being accounted for and provided as necessary,” she added.

The Navajo Transportation Complex has been hosting teleconference briefings at 6 p.m. since June 20 at the Emergency Operations Center.

The purpose of the briefings is to share activities out in the field with stakeholders in the tribal government, from such areas as natural resources, transportation and public safety.

During the June 22 briefing, news of closures at the Newcomb High School and Tohatchi High School was shared. Both locations will no longer serve as shelters for displaced residents or provide meals.

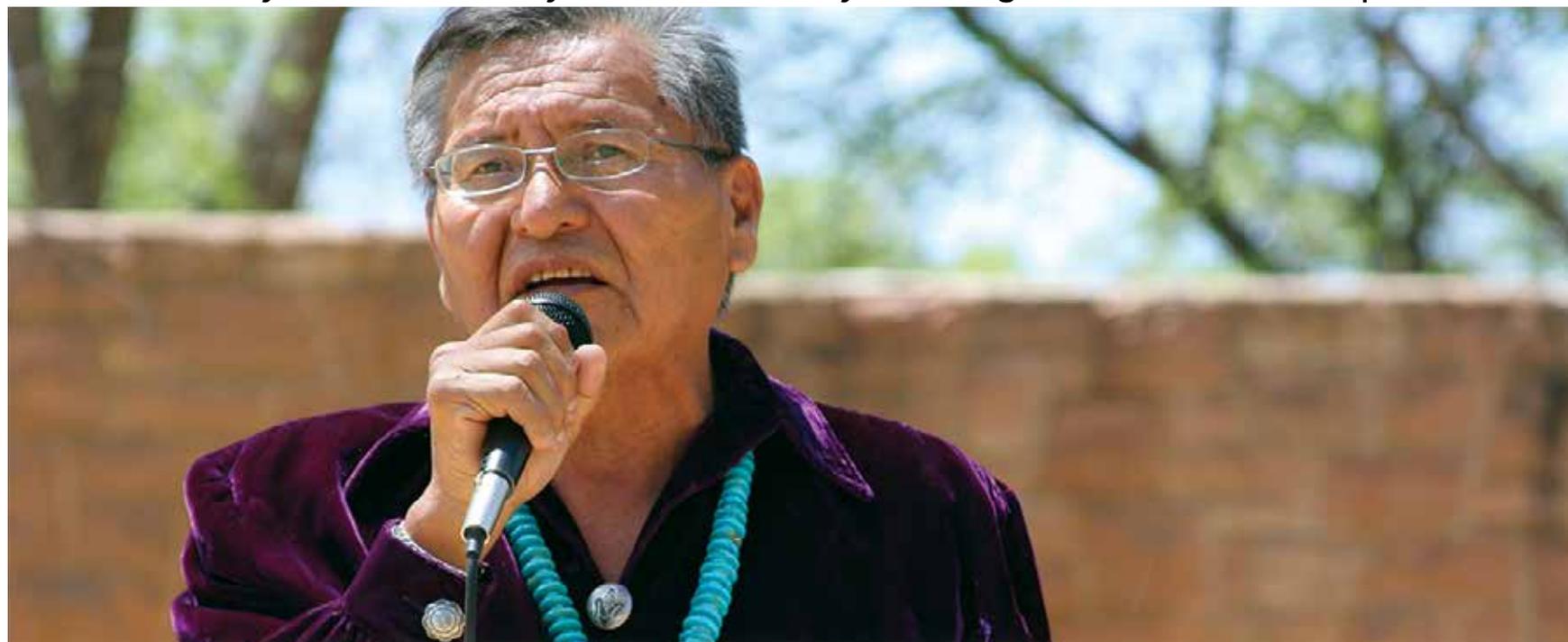
The Newcomb location will continue to serve firefighters battling the blaze.

In operation still is the Naschitti shelter location, which has a total of 10 people at that location, eight adults and two children. Many families were given the green light to return to their homes today.

The NNDEM will have hard numbers on the number of displaced residents tomorrow, including actual evacuees that received donations from the centers.

# 2014 NAVAJO TREATY DAY CELEBRATION

President Shelly contrasts treaty with modern day federal government trust responsibilities



President Shelly said the federal government trust responsibilities to the Navajo Nation are outlined in the Treaty of 1868. He said Navajos must return to the traditional concept of self-reliance. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

FT. DEFIANCE, Ariz.—Under a cloudless sky and blazing hot sun, tribal leaders and local community members gathered to commemorate an event central to the Navajo people’s survival.

On May 31, the community of Ft. Defiance gathered to celebrate Treaty Day with a reenactment of the Treaty of 1868 signing, guest speakers and a barbecue luncheon.

More than 100 people gathered at the Bureau of Indian Affairs Park near the old hospital to participate in the festivities.

The Treaty of 1868 guaranteed more than freedom for the Navajo people. It created another way of life for the Navajo people and new responsibilities for the federal government.

## ***Hweeldi Ba Hane’***

The Long Walk of 1864 began with the scorched earth tactics of Kit Carson, who burned Navajo crops and killed livestock in order to force Navajos into surrender.

As Navajos surrendered, they eventually began the 400-mile journey to Ft. Sumner in southeastern N.M. Scores of Navajos died along the way, many of them elders and children.

They suffered internment at Ft. Sumner and many lives were lost during the time of Navajo history known as *Hweeldi*. The Long Walk changed the lives of Navajo people for the generations that followed.

*T’áá hwó ájít éego*, or self-reliance, was the mindset of many Navajo people before the Long Walk. After the return back home, that philosophy was changed into dependence upon the government and the reluctance from federal officials to live up to trust responsibilities guaranteed in the Treaty of 1868.

## ***T’áá hwó ájít éego***

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly has long since said we need to return to that traditional lifestyle of doing for ourselves because nobody will do things for us.

President Shelly was keynote speaker and began by acknowledging the lives

lost at *Hweeldi* and said it was because of their sacrifice that Navajo people were alive today and thriving.

“When the Navajo people returned from *Hweeldi*, we had to start over again. Homes had to be rebuilt. Crops had to be replanted. We had to learn to live under the federal rules and regulations,” President Shelly said.

Today, he said the Navajo Nation is 300,000 strong and still growing.

“Our sovereignty and strength is in our language, *Diné bizaad*. The Navajo language saved this country from war, through the heroics of our Navajo Code Talkers,” he said.

## **Breach of Trust**

On May 30, President Shelly signed legislation into law that ended the litigation against the federal government for breach of trust in safeguarding Navajo Nation trust fund assets. These assets included mineral right royalties from coal, oil and gas.

The Navajo Nation will receive \$554 million in an agreement that ends the litigation that has been in court since Dec. 29, 2006.

“I want the priorities for this \$554 million to go toward housing, infrastructure, scholarships and accessibility for our disabled Navajo citizens,” President Shelly said.

Because of limited funding, budget cuts and diminishing mineral royalties, President Shelly said he has been fiscally conservative with the Nation’s money, often executing the line item veto to trim spending.

The funding from the lawsuit will change all of that.

“With this half-a-billion dollar surplus, I will begin loosening these line item vetoes so that projects can be funded,” he said. “All I ask is that our legislators follow the proper tribal law and processes for their projects.”

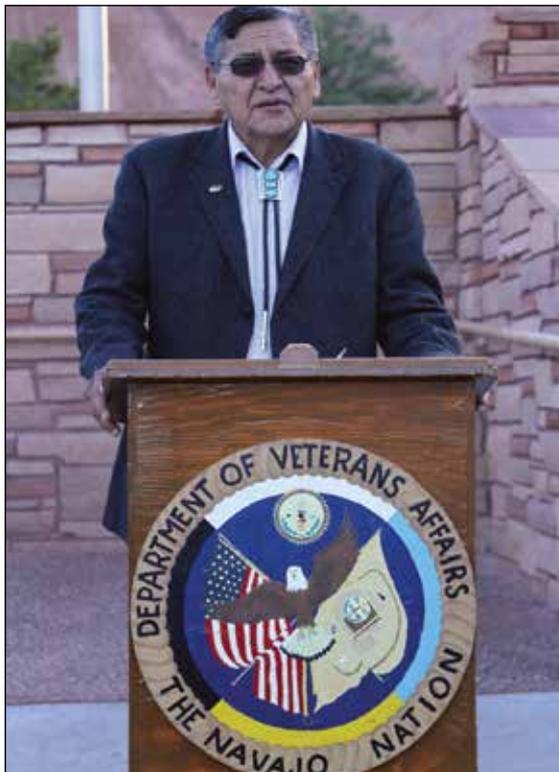
The Executive and Legislative Branches of government will begin meeting to plan for the money, he said, and that a 120-day review period will begin for the prioritization of projects.

*“T’áá hwó ájít éego*. That is what our elders taught us,” President Shelly said.

# President Shelly presents wreath of honor for fallen Navajo veterans



President Shelly presented the wreath of honor in the memory of fallen Navajo warriors for Memorial Day observance at the Window Rock Veterans Memorial Park. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



President Shelly said the Navajo Nation is a tribe of warriors and that many have given their lives in battle. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Top, families brought flags to be refolded. Above, the color guard prepare to raise the flags at sunrise. (Photos by Rick Abasta)



Top, the color guard salute. Above, David Nez, director of the Navajo Dept. of Veterans Affairs. (Photos by Rick Abasta)

# Navajo Nation CIP five-year plan approval

After 14 years of effort, President Shelly signs plan into law



Top, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signs the Navajo Nation CIP five-year plan into law after 14 years. Above, Legislative and Executive leadership stand poised. (Photos by Rick Abasta)

It took almost 14 years to complete.

On May 5, President Ben Shelly signed the Navajo Nation Five-Year Plan into law and finalized 14 years of effort for prioritizing capital improvement projects.

During the spring session last month, the 22nd Navajo Nation Council approved Legislation No. 0118-13 and recommended for approval to President Shelly the Navajo Nation five-year capital improvement projects plan.

The multi-year plan is for capital expenditures, including a detailed one-year capital improvement budget. The priority list includes anticipated project costs, source of

capital funds to complete projects, completion dates, and priority rankings.

The CIP plan includes various infrastructure projects, such as bathroom additions, house wiring, power lines, waterlines, buildings, wastewater treatment plants, parking lots, roads, sewer lines, and heavy equipment.

## Cause for Celebration

The mood was celebratory as President Shelly penned his name to the legislation.

The five-year CIP plan from 2013 to 2017 totals \$295,669,676.35 for projects from the 110 chapters.

The Division of Community Development, along with

the Capital Improvement Office, hosted a barbecue luncheon at the Window Rock Veterans Park to kickoff the festivities.

President Shelly and members of the Navajo Nation Council provided remarks about the achievement during the luncheon, before sharing the news with the Navajo people during a live remote broadcast with KTNN AM 660 at the Office of the President and Vice President.

## Navajo Nation Council

Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) said the CIP plan from the 110 chapters was a major legislation that involved a lot of effort from tribal leaders and provided a blueprint for infrastructure development moving forward.

She mentioned that perhaps the interest from the Permanent Trust Fund could be utilized to fund the projects for the 110 chapters.

“Thank you to the Resources and Development Committee. We stood strong and worked on this. By a vote of 19-1, it passed Council. Thank you, delegates,” Benally said.

LoRenzo Bates (Nenahezad, Newcomb, San Juan, T’iistoh Sikaad, San Juan, T’iistoh Sikaad, Tse’ Daa’ Kaan, Upper Fruitland) said passage of the CIP plan was a new beginning for the Navajo Nation.

“We’re moving forward in improvements

that are needed at the chapter level, as well as at the central government level,” Bates said. “This has been in the making for nearly 14 years.”

He noted that the 2014-2015 budget for the Navajo Nation is the first time there will be no waiver of the Appropriations Act because of the unavailability of a five-year plan.

“The next big step is to fund these projects,” he added.

Jonathan Nez (Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Shonto, Tsaah Bii Kin) gave appreciation to President Shelly and the 22nd Navajo Nation Council for moving the initiative forward.

“I want to say to the Navajo people that this is your voice and a lot of the chapter officials deserve great kudos,” Nez said. “I want to thank each and every one of them for bringing their project listings to the Council.”

He added that there is still time for chapters to submit proposals.

“At the end of the day, as President Shelly always states, ‘It’s about job creation.’ I believe there will be a lot of job creation as a lot of these projects go into construction,” Nez said.

Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) said he was thankful for the careful deliberation from tribal leaders to approve the CIP plan.

“There are many challenges facing our people. We need roads

for our school kids,” Hale said. “We are thankful for this legislation moving forward.”

George Apachito (Alamo, Ramah, Tohajiilee) agreed with his colleagues and said it was time to address the many needs out at the chapters, such as new buildings for the Navajo Head Start students.

He gave thanks to the vision and leadership of the Resources and Development Committee, Health and Human Services Committee, and Speaker Pro Tem Bates.

“To our Navajo people, these are your funds. We will be moving forward on your behalf. Ahe’hee,” Apachito said.

## Working Together, Making Change Work

President Shelly was the final speaker for the KTNN live remote broadcast.

“This effort has been ongoing since 1998, during the days of the 88-member Navajo Nation Council, under the guidance of the former Transportation and Community Development Committee,” President Shelly said.

He said the CIP plan came directly from the Navajo chapters for infrastructure development.

They have conducted assessments for their community needs, he said, and noted that task forces were formed to conduct real property inventory and

identification of chapter boundaries.

“We have nearly \$2 billion in the Permanent Trust Fund and the interest from that is \$295 million, enough to fund these projects,” President Shelly said. “A lot of hard work went into working on this project listing for almost 14 years.

“We must combine our savings and leverage them against other funding sources to get this work done,” he added.

President Shelly said thanks and gratitude must be given to the past leaders that had a hand in developing the CIP plan, from Peterson Zah, Edward T. Begay, Albert Hale and Kelsey Begay.

“People say there’s bad things happening in Window Rock. That’s not what I see. I see planning and tribal leaders working together to move this Nation forward,” he said.

“As leaders, we make decisions for the benefit of all. There’s three branches working together. Now’s the time to get working on behalf of your communities,” President Shelly said. “Together, we’re making change work.”



## Tribes and pueblos stand united with a strong tongue for Tsoodzil TCP designation



Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim has been advocating for Tsoodzil to be recognized as a TCP at the international level. He said the name means “strong tongue.” (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Tsoodzil, also known as Mount Taylor, has been under attack by mining companies interested in the search for uranium on the mountain. (Photo by Ettie Anderson)



The historic Casa Esencia was the site of the Mount Taylor TCP designation celebration. Many in attendance were professional archaeologists and anthropologists. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

ALBUQUERQUE — Sometimes, the strength of a unified collective has to power to defeat the machinations of industry and development.

Such was the case with the traditional cultural property (TCP) designation of Mount Taylor in New Mexico.

Since time immemorial, Mount Taylor has been known as Tsoodzil to the Navajo people and has been revered as the southern mountain of the Four Sacred Mountains.

The traditional homeland of the Navajo people is located between the Four Sacred Mountains of Sisnaajini (Mount Blanca) to the east, Tsoodzil (Mount Taylor) to the south, Dook’o’shiid (San Francisco Peaks) to the west and Dibé Nitsaa (Mount Hesperus) to the north.

On March 18, 2014, Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim provided the welcome address at Casa Esencia Hotel to celebrate of the designation of Mount Taylor as a TCP. The event was hosted by the Society for Applied Anthropology and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

“Within Navajo, Tsoodzil means ‘strong tongue.’ So we speak with the power of Tsoodzil,” Vice President Jim said. “We are taught that the sacred begins at the tip of our tongue.

“So when we speak of Tsoodzil, we speak of our ability to articulate, to express ourselves in ways that convinces others,” he added.

Vice President Jim said Mount Taylor allowed Navajos, pueblos and tribes to speak what’s on their mind and in their heart and that it will always be the cultural property of native people.

“Some of us have been fighting on the international level through the United Nations, creating the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, so that all people, wherever they live, where they have sacred sites, that they will be protected,” he said.

The effort to protect Mount Taylor from uranium mining and other industrial development coalesced in 2007, when the Pueblo of Acoma began coordinating the effort for the TCP designation.

The TCP Workgroup was created as a partnership of five tribes – the Navajo Nation, Hopi Tribe and Pueblos of Acoma, Laguna and Zuni – to nominate Mount Taylor as a TCP with the New Mexico Register of Cultural Properties.

Tribal cultural advisors, elders and traditional practitioners provided narratives on the cultural significance of the mountain and worked in tandem with GIS professionals, hydrologists, environmental specialists and archaeologists to document tribal relationships to the mountain.

Theresa Pasqual, director of the Pueblo of Acoma Historic Preservation Office, took the lead role in the effort,

after being inundated with mail from tribal members opposing the uranium mining.

The spark that ignited the effort to protect the mountain came Pasqual’s phone call to the Hopi Tribe and Pueblo of Zuni.

“I wanted to know if they were seeing the same things that I was seeing at my office: the enormous amount of letters regarding the proposed development happening on Mount Taylor,” she recalled.

A series of meetings titled “Protecting the Sacred” convened after that phone call and over the past seven years, the tribes worked together to map the mountain and reach out to national organizations to bring attention to preserving the mountain.

The Navajo Nation Land Department and Historic Preservation Department provided the maps and GIS data used for the technical aspects of the TCP designation.

“What came out of the effort was truly a partnership and that’s what we’re celebrating,” Pasqual said.

In 2009, the state provided the original TCP designation, which resulted in a mountain of opposing legislation

and lawsuits from private landowners, Spanish land grant members and uranium mining companies.

Pasqual said the slew of legislation was meant to undermine the cultural property laws in the State of New Mexico.

The case navigated through the state courts for five years and on Feb. 6, 2014, the New Mexico Supreme Court affirmed the TCP designation.

The high court’s decision to uphold the designation of 400,000 acres and assign it TCP status was unprecedented and profound, according to Dr. Jeffery Pappas, N.M. State Historic Preservation Officer and director of the N.M. Historic Preservation Division.

“It’s an immensely important recognition of a very important traditional and cultural property that is unprecedented throughout the American southwest,” Pappas said.

While the mood at Casa Esencia was celebratory, all agreed that the TCP designation of Mount Taylor was only the beginning and tribes and pueblos must continue working together for the protection of sacred sites and tribal sovereignty.

### TSOODZIL

Tsoodzil is one of the Four Sacred Mountains of the Navajo, it is the mountain of the south. Decorated with turquoise, Tsoodzil is fastened to the earth with a stone knife and is covered with a blanket of blue cloud. The mountains are our leaders.

Tsoodzil is a significant site in the stories of the Navajo Hero Twins and their quest to eliminate the monsters of the area. Monster slayer killed the Walking Giant, whose blood you can still see to this day as lava flows in the area of Grants, N.M.

# \$78 million funding designation for U.S. Route 491 construction

Sen. John Pinto's efforts for more than 20 years finally pays off



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly joined New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez to announce the funding designation of \$78 million to complete four-lane road construction on U.S. Route 491. Gov. Martinez said the funding was made possible through the sale of performance bonds by NMDOT to raise money. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



New Mexico Senator John Pinto said he gave more than two decades of his life lobbying for funding to complete the construction on U.S. Route 491. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly praised the efforts of Gov. Martinez and her willingness to work with the Navajo Nation on infrastructure projects across the Nation. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Top, Gov. Susana Martinez lauded the hardwork and dedication of Tom Church, her cabinet member for NMDOT. She said they have been fiscally responsible. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

# First Lady Martha Shelly coordinates One Sight Project, eye exams



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly has his eyes examined by the One Sight Project staff doctors. First Lady Shelly said the purpose was to provide youth and elders with eye care. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

KAYENTA, Ariz.— Navajo Nation First Lady Martha Shelly recently launched an initiative to provide eye examinations for elders and children in Kayenta.

The One Sight Project brought a mobile eye lab to provide eye exams, screenings, and eyeglasses courtesy of Walking Shield, Inc.

Serving families since 1986, Walking Shield has followed the mission of improving the quality of life for American Indian families by coordinating programs

that provide shelter, healthcare, community development support, educational assistance, and humanitarian aid.

Phil Stevens, a Lakota Sioux, founded Walking Shield, Inc. to improve the quality of life for American Indians. Walking Shield is his Lakota name.

From May 12 to 16, Navajo elders and children received eye exams and eyeglasses free of charge after signing up for the services months in advance.

First Lady Shelly said, “The One Sight Project is unique because they do eye screenings, eye exams and produce eyeglasses on site through their mobile lab.”

A total of 157 Navajo elders from Kayenta and the surrounding communities received services and 99 percent received eyeglasses.

In addition, 800 school kids received free eye exams and glasses. The students were from Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta, Pinon, Rough Rock, and

Shonto schools.

During the awards dinner on May 15, First Lady Shelly said the need for eye exams existed throughout the Navajo Nation because not all children and their families had the necessary insurance for examinations.

“In 2010, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) reduced the cost for children’s healthcare, especially in the area of eye exams and dental care,” she said. “In addition, we have parents

and grandparents that are not working and cannot afford healthcare.

“This project is addressing those needs,” she added.

For day one, the doctors served 150 elders from the Kayenta Senior Citizens Center. School kids were bussed in for the next three days to undergo exams for glasses.

In addition to the examinations for prescriptions, the professionals from Walking Shield checked for eye diseases and other

vision conditions.

The Navajo Nation First Lady’s Office continues their mission of providing public outreach to the elders and children across the Nation.

“Thank you to Walking Shield for providing these desperately needed services,” she said.



# Navajo Nation forges ahead with new developments

## DIVISION OF TRANSPORTATION

The division has worked closely with the New Mexico Legislature in the 2014 session to acquire funding for several road and highway projects. Through such advocacy with chapters, state transportation department and legislators, the funding to complete four-lane construction on U.S. Route 491 was secured. This was not only a major victory of the Navajo Nation, but for Sen. John Pinto as well. His tireless service to the Nation and state is to be commended, especially his unwavering determination to get U.S. Route 491 widened. The Huerfano Chapter bridge construction is also underway, with collaboration with the San Juan County and BIA Transportation Dept. A second bridge project is also underway at Dennehotso, which is in the initial stages of planning and preliminary engineering. Both projects were funded through the direct funding agreement between Navajo DOT and the Federal Highway Administration. The collaboration with legislators in the Arizona Legislature continued in the 2014 session to revert a portion of the Navajo Nation Fuel Excise Tax funds that go to the state. The effort is intended to fund direct service delivery of road improvements on the Nation.

## DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The administration has provided technical assistance to chapters on information technology efforts regarding chapter websites, N.M. partnerships, and WIND updates. The Community Housing and Infrastructure Department received a \$5.9 million grant from NHA to construct 30 to 40 new homes on the Nation. Design and Engineering Services is moving forward with work on Administration Building No. One. Construction documents were completed and construction began in April 2014. The Solid Waste Management Program hosted 25 public education forums on proper solid waste management and recycling practices to 22 chapters and one community land use planning committee. Approximately 479 individuals attended the events.

## DIVISION OF HEALTH

The Kayenta Health Center is now 72 percent complete and is expected to receive additional funding in FY 2015 for completion of construction. The head of the Office of the Environmental Health and Engineering, Admiral Gary Hartz, conducted a site visit of the facility. The Division of Health met this quarter to shore up partnerships between the Navajo Nation, federal government, states and non-profit entities to implement preliminary services for homeless veterans. The plan is to work toward creation of a Navajo Veterans Wellness Facility. For this past quarter, \$1,341,161 was paid to Navajo uranium workers through the Office of Navajo Uranium Workers.

## OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

In the past quarter, the Budget Section reviewed and processed 100 program budgets for FY 2014 for supplemental appropriations. The reports were compiled and summarized into report format for the final FY 2013 expenditure reports for the branch chiefs and division directors. The Contracts and Grants Section has focused on the FY 2014 federal budget and tracking of continuing resolution number one. The impact of FY 2014 funding at the Navajo Nation level has not been determined. Work also continued on the FY 2016 budget request for PL 93-638 funding. The Nation submitted a \$49 million budget request for Health, Emergency Management Services, and Navajo Treatment Centers for Children and their Families. A total of \$262,337,404 was submitted to the BIA Navajo Region Office on behalf of 19 contracted programs for FY 2016.

## DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The Minerals Department completed a draft agreement with Mid-America Pipeline Company for renewals of rights-of-way for existing natural gas liquid pipelines. Also included were oil and gas, and coal lease audits, plus sand and gravel lease applications. The Land Department completed the General Leasing Act of 2013 passage through the Navajo Nation Council and President Shelly delivered the legislation to the Secretary of the Interior. The Department of Fish and Wildlife auctioned bighorn sheep hunting permits to promote big game hunting on the Nation. They sold for \$35,000 and \$49,000 respectively. Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands completed FY 2010 Public Facility Projects for Forest Lake water system improvement and the Nageezi Chapter administration building expansion. The FY 2012 Whitehorse Lake Chapter waterline extension project was also completed.

## WASHINGTON OFFICE

The Washington, D.C. Office has a stronger presence with local news organizations and reporters near the Navajo Nation and the communications director was recommended to serve on the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Public Affairs Committee. The office continues to track legislation on behalf of the Nation, such as the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act. In addition, they have facilitated communication between the Division of Dine' Education, Bureau of Indian Education, Department of Education and White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education regarding the Alternative Accountability Workbook and other issues. The office has worked on the rewrite of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, which regulates telecommunications across the country.

## OFFICE OF THE NAVAJO TAX COMMISSION

For the second quarter of FY 2014, a total of \$54,816,777 in tax revenues was collected, which represents 50

percent of the FY 2013 tax revenue projection. From that amount, \$35,139,045 is considered Navajo Nation General Funds. The office tax attorney addressed a large number of pending taxpayer appeals, consisting of 20 assessments and 16 cases. The attorney is also working with four chapters to develop tax ordinances.

## OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER

The Office of the Controller has finalized the draft p-card policy and procedure and forwarded the document to the Navajo Nation Council standing committees for approval in April 2014. Grant closeout activities continue and there is a need for temporary staff to closeout FEMA grants. The Title III grant reports are complete and reimbursements have been received for services that do not involve client services. Training for online reporting was done in April 2014. Title III grants will be audited by KPMG. A total of \$1,902,416.64 for right-of-way revenues was collected for the quarter, including \$328,840.98 for land rent revenues.

## NAVAJO-HOPI LAND COMMISSION OFFICE

The FY 2012 U.S. Department of Energy grant was executed with Tetra Tech, Inc. for implantation of Phase III on the 4,000-megawatt solar farm at Paragon Bisti Ranch, in N.M. The \$2 million NAHASDA grant detailed project management plan, including budget and training was completed. Additionally the office completed three work sessions with nine Former Bennett Freeze Area chapters. Ten ongoing projects have been reactivated to the end of FY 2014 utilizing monies from the Navajo Rehabilitation Trust Fund.

### President Shelly signs \$19 million funding distribution to chapters



*For the duration of his administration, President Shelly has been fiscally conservative, often invoking the line item veto to save money. The UUFB was in the red by \$22 million when he took office. After building up a \$30 million savings, he was recently able to sign off on \$19 million from the UUFB for the 110 Navajo chapters. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*

## Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe leadership meet, discuss golden eagles, confluence



Top, President Shelly spoke on the plight of the golden eagle and shared a photo of Shelly, his adopted eagle at the Navajo Nation Zoo. Above, Chairman Honanie listens. (Photos by Rick Abasta)

Navajo DOJ attorney Katie Grounds explains the trespassing order against the Hopi Tribe for fiber optic drilling near the Jeddito area. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

Top, attorney general Harrison Tsosie shares concerns from the Navajo Nation on the golden eagle harvests conducted by Hopis. Above, Chairman Honanie views a map. (Photos by Rick Abasta)



The Feb. 2014 meeting between Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, Vice President Rex Lee Jim, and Hopi Chairman Honanie was amicable and informative. They spoke on issues ranging from the golden eagle harvests to surface damage issues in Jeddito to the Grand Canyon Escalade near the confluence on the Little Colorado River. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

# GENERAL LEASING ACT

The U.S. Department of Interior has approved the Navajo Nation General Leasing Regulation Act of 2013, after meeting with Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly several times since 2013.

President Shelly traveled to Washington, D.C. in March and again met with federal officials on a host of issues, including leasing provisions, telecommunications, housing and Navajo Head Start. He also met with the Interior Department to stress the importance of approving the General Leasing Act, especially for its use with the Navajo Land Title Data System.

In 2013, the General Leasing Regulation Act was enacted to streamline residential and business site leasing on the Navajo Nation by providing the Nation authority to approve such leases without involvement from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

However, mineral and right-of-way leases were excluded from the legislation and still require DOI approval, he said.

“The approval of the General Leasing Act by the Department of Interior is another step toward self-sufficiency,” President Shelly said. “This provides the Navajo Nation the authority to approve leases for homes and businesses.

“New business means growth and economic development for the Nation,” he added.

The Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership Act, or the HEARTH Act, was enacted on July 30, 2012, after President Barack Obama signed H.R. 205 into law.

The bill followed the Navajo Nation Leasing Act of 2000 as a template.

Mike Halona, manager of Navajo Land Department said approving the Navajo Nation General Leasing Regulation Act of 2013 would be another historic step for Indian Country.

“There will be no need for the BIA to approve residential home site leasing, schools, religious sites, agriculture, energy, grazing. The Navajo Nation can now do all of those needs to streamline the approval process,” Halona said.

“Once again, the Navajo Nation is leading the way for the rest of Indian Country by using technology and self-determination,” President Shelly said. “The Navajo Nation improved the HEARTH Act for all tribes.”

The decision to use the Navajo Nation Leasing Act as a template occurred in 2010, when Halona and others met with the BIA and DOI to request for seed money for the Navajo Land Title Data System.

The Navajo Land Department is currently uploading data to the NLTDS.

All current conveyances are being uploaded to the database and Halona said the department is simultaneously entering past data records. He anticipates completion in one to two years.

“Then we’ll have the government certify our system as a title plant,” he said.

Streamlining the land conveyance process will provide users with access to personal, industrial and economic leases, including community land use plans. Since 2006, the Land Department has invested \$1.2 million into the database.

“Which is peanuts when you consider what we’ve been able to develop. We developed a system that you cannot get anywhere else and helped all tribes,” Halona said.

The Navajo Land Department will have an enterprise license in place by summer and will begin providing other tribal departments and entities with access to their automated land title plant.

Twelve tribes are already on the waiting list for the chance to follow the NLTDS as a template for their own automated database.

“Imagine the independence that we’ll have. We’ll know every square inch of our land,” Halona said.

## Navajo Nation Adult Guardianship Act of 2014 signed into law by President Shelly



President Shelly signed the Navajo Nation Adult Guardianship Act of 2014 into law in June 2014. The law reaffirms the rights of disabled citizens. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—*T’aa bi bohoh niih.*

“It’s up to the person” is not only a concept of Navajo Fundamental Law, but it is also an inherent right of disabled Navajo citizens.

On June 12, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed the Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014 into law and reaffirmed the rights of disabled Navajos.

“The most important thing we need to remember is that (disabled citizens) have rights that are guaranteed by Navajo Fundamental Law,” President Shelly said.

Such rights include decision making in regard to finances, education, housing and guardianship consent.

He explained that when the Shelly-Jim administration first took office, they began by hosting a series of town hall meetings across the Navajo Nation to engage the Navajo people on their needs.

From those discussions, the challenges facing disabled Navajo citizens came to light, in particular the fact that there have been no major amendments to the tribal code regarding the disabled since 1945.

The newly enacted Guardianship Act changes all of that.

“We have been meeting with Hoskie Benally, president of the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disabilities to assist with legislation that meets (the disabled) needs,” President Shelly said. “We’ve also been meeting with the Native American Disability Law Center to discuss the legal aspects of the legislation.”

He said the Executive Branch would make the recommendation to invest funding from the \$554 million trust settlement for accessibility at tribal offices and buildings, including facilities at the chapter level.

We have not forgotten the needs of our disabled Navajos, he said, especially since many are returning home with disabilities from the war.

Hoskie Benally, president of the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disabilities, expressed gratitude for the new law.

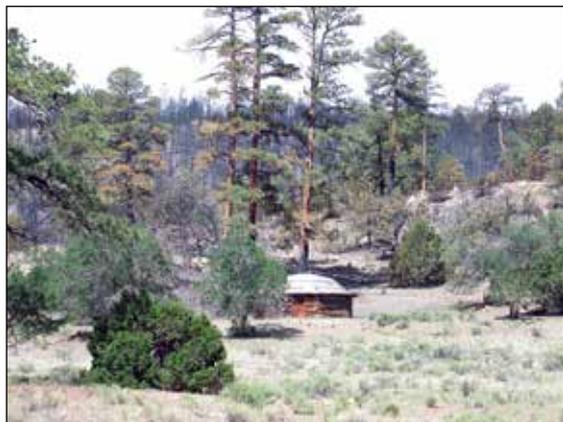
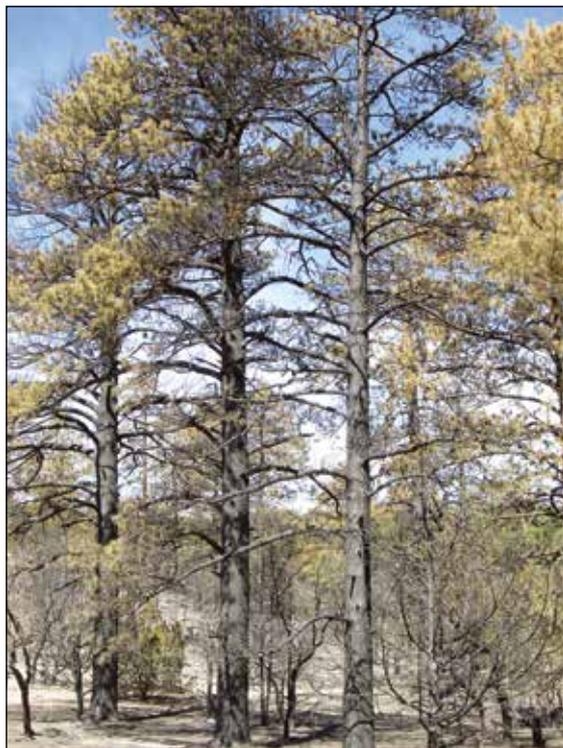
“It’s been since 1945 that (the tribal code) has been revised to meet the needs and give the due process to those with disabilities,” Benally said.

Council delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Standing Rock, White Rock) called the law “historical.”

“I took this legislation very personal to get it passed. As you know, when something very comprehensive comes before the council, it takes five to 10 years to get it passed,” Simpson said.

The 26-page legislation took one-and-a-half years to get enacted by the Navajo Nation Council and President Shelly.

# Asaayii Lake Fire spreads after high winds batter Navajo Nation



*The Asaayii Lake Fire scorched more than 14,000 acres and became the largest wildfire in Navajo Nation history. More than 20 structures were burned, but many others survived, including large areas of forest and vegetation. (Photos by Ettie Anderson)*

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Emotions were running high.

But in the midst of adversity, there is one major truth about the Asaayii Lake Fire: there has been no loss of human life.

Clouds of smoke have billowed across the horizon since Saturday. Residents are worried about their homes and livestock in the mountainous area.

On June 17, Gov.

Susana Martinez flew into Window Rock and met with Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and Vice President Rex Lee Jim.

She came to offer assistance to the Navajo Nation and take a firsthand look at the fire that began in the Asaayii Lake area.

“We have a strong working relationship with Gov. Martinez and we appreciate her taking the time to offer assistance,”

President Shelly said. “There have been numerous individuals and organizations that have stepped forward to help.

“We appreciate this outpouring of support. Together, we can make a difference,” he added.

President Shelly and Gov. Martinez walked through the command center shaking hands and commended firefighters for their hard work in extinguishing the blaze.

The fire was described as “spotty” and a “dirty burn” by operations staff. This meant portions of land were still left untouched.

Gov. Martinez had questions about the loss of livestock and structures in the fire. She also asked if the livestock board was being utilized to clear out livestock in the fire area.

Officially, two structures were reported as burned and no reports have come in regarding loss of livestock. Crews couldn’t get anyone into the area to clear out the livestock because of the road closures and potential danger from gusting winds.

The primary concern for the fire crews has been structures and watersheds.

Staff said 13 Type-I hotshot crews are battling the blaze, along with Type-II initial attack crews, 15 engines, four dozers and miscellaneous taskforce leaders and other resources.

Incident commander Bea Day explained that it was a full suppression fire and that was the

reason why they were actively going after the fire with the number of crews they have.

“We also have a number of aircraft, if we can fly them,” Day said. “We are ready to take action and we are looking good on the south side and west side.”

She said they had great coordination with the BIA Navajo Region and the Navajo Nation for the purpose of successfully extinguishing the fire. Chapter houses have been actively participating as well, with spike camps in Crystal and Sheep Springs.

Rose Whitehair, agency representative for the Navajo Nation, spoke of the need to dispel rumors about the need for cash donations. She noted that the money was not going to the firefighters or to the incident command team.

“The Red Cross is here and they are helping us with the huge amount of donations. They’re giving us technical assistance with donations management,” Whitehair said.

The Navajo United Way has also stepped up to assist with monetary donations. An account has been established under the name “Asaayii Lake Fire Relief Fund.”

She explained that Facebook pages sprung up for acceptance of monetary donations. The governor knew of the propensity for fraud during an emergency from past experiences.

“It’s going to be very difficult. That’s why donate the cash donations go only to the Red

Cross,” Gov. Martinez said. “You’ve got to get that word out.

“Also, do not accept calls soliciting from Red Cross. Instead, say if I’m going to donate, I’ll make the call,” she added.

She asked if additional law enforcement assistance was needed for the state police to be on standby or to be onsite. However, Whitehair said they were already working with the necessary resources and that the incident command was already being inundated with traffic.

Day said some residents disregarded the roadblocks and snuck through the blockades during the middle of the night in search of their livestock.

“I understand their concern,” she said. “But they have to understand that it’s still very dangerous in here.”

After the briefing, President Shelly, Vice President Jim and Gov. Martinez boarded a N.M. National Guard helicopter and flew over the site to see the fire damage before landing on a baseball field at Newcomb School.

They met with Newcomb Chapter residents and shared information about the aerial view of the fire damage. The spot fire patterns were consistent with reports from the crews battling the blaze.

President Shelly and Gov. Martinez assured the residents that the fire wasn’t as enormous as it seemed. The heavy smoke gives the

impression that all of the landscape is charred, but that isn’t the case.

They also traveled to Nashcitti Chapter and again met with residents to reassure them that the wheels were in motion to extinguish the blaze.

With the winds dying down, the incident management team was able to get more aerial vehicles out to drop water and fire retardant.

On June 17, President Shelly and Vice President Jim broadcast news about the fire to listeners of KTNN AM 660.

President Shelly’s address focused on the coordinated efforts, from the June 12 executive order mandating fire restriction to the declaration of emergency and the call for tribal programs to assist with the fire.

Vice President Jim’s address focused on safety and he encouraged residents to stay away from the fire zone until the crews had the blaze under control. He also reminded the Navajo people to pray and remember the traditional values.

The next day, medicine men and women were allowed access to the fire site to provide offerings and prayers for the winds to calm for the fire to be extinguished. Vice President Jim also provided prayers and offerings.

President Shelly said the Division of Natural Resources is already communicating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to reseed the damaged areas.

# Southwest Area Incident Management Team 3 controls fire within two-weeks



Hotshots from the southwest and other crews from the Southwest Area Incident Management Team 3 quickly mobilized to control the blaze. (Courtesy photo)



Gov. Susana Martinez toured the fire damage with President Shelly in a Blackhawk helicopter from the N.M. National Guard to survey the damage. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Top, Vice President Jim, President Shelly and Gov. Martinez listened to a briefing in Ft. Defiance before flying over the fire. Above, Gov. Martinez makes a point. (Photos by Rick Abasta)



Top, spot fires burned some portions of the land, but trees and vegetation survived much of the blaze. Above, a somber sight of charred forest. (Photos by Ettie Anderson)

# \$1.38 million NTUA reimbursement from FEMA



President Shelly and staff stand proudly after the signing for the \$1.38 million reimbursement from FEMA. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



NTUA assistant deputy manager Rex Koontz proudly displays the \$1.38 million check. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—It was the fastest processing for a FEMA reimbursement check for a tribal nation.

On June 11, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly presented Navajo Tribal Utility Authority with a \$1.38 million reimbursement check for costs associated with Operation Winter Freeze in early 2013.

Winter Freeze was the first tribal disaster declaration made by the Navajo Nation in accordance with amendments to the Stafford Act.

“Congratulations to the Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management for their work with NTUA and FEMA to get this reimbursement processed quickly,” President Shelly said. “Great things happen when tribal entities work together.”

President Shelly plans

to submit a proposal for the creation of an escrow account to address unforeseen natural disasters that may arise in the future. This way, tribal entities can be repaid right away while the reimbursement process takes place.

Rose Whitehair, director of NNDEM, commended NTUA for their thorough accountability.

“They had 100 percent of their documentation and that made all the difference in the world,” she said. “We could not have done it without assistance from the Department of Justice and Office of the Controller.”

Most FEMA reimbursements take three to five years after the emergency declaration to be processed. Operation Winter Freeze was completed in one year.

“We do have a

computerized system and we went through a bit of trouble to get through the billing,” said Rex Koontz, deputy general manager for NTUA.

He said the tribal entity’s investment in the system paid dividends, especially when they were able to extrapolate data on the work committed, equipment used, labor hours and more.

“FEMA has their own reporting process that requires certain data. Our system automatically gave them the data and that made (the reimbursement) very quick,” Koontz said. “The Navajo Nation did very good. It unprecedented in getting these dollars back.”

Whitehair said NNDEM also obtained

approval from FEMA for refund for the Navajo Nation’s oldest disaster, Operation Hastlish, which was on the books since Dec. 28, 2004.

“President Shelly’s administration developed a new FEMA policy and procedures to streamline reimbursements. This was done with collaboration with NNDEM, DOJ, and OOC,” she said.

In preparation for the upcoming monsoon season, NNDEM has scheduled a sandbag training session on June 27 at the Navajo Nation Zoo.

Other courses include the Community Emergency Response Team training in July and the benefit cost analysis course in August.

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

## Navajo Nation to operate Title IV-E program for foster children

*Continued from page 1*

“I commend Sharon McCabe and her staff for making this possible.

“Our kids are important and we must do everything we can to protect them,” he added.

Sharon Begay-McCabe is the director for DSS and has been working with the Children’s Bureau to amend the Nation’s foster care program since 2011, when President Shelly gave the directive to move forward on the direct funding agreement.

According to the Children’s Bureau, the Federal Foster Care Program helps to provide safe and stable out-of-home care for children until the children are safely returned home, placed permanently with adoptive families or placed in other planned arrangements for permanency.

Title IV-E is an annual appropriation with specific eligibility requirements and fixed allowable costs for uses of funds. In FY 2010, the

direct funding provision was made available to Indian nations, tribal organizations and tribal consortia with approved plans to operate the program.

The Navajo Nation is the first tribe to qualify and administer the entire Title IV-E program through a direct funding agreement.

“Families can now get reimbursed for caring of our children who are in the custody of Navajo Division of Social Services,” Begay said.

“This law will ensure and promote stability for our children and their families.”

The three main focus areas are in foster care, adoption and guardianship. The Nation will also be reimbursed for training and administrative costs.

“Running the Title IV-E program is an exercise of tribal sovereignty. We will operate a Title IV-E program that is culturally sensitive,” President Shelly said.

Child welfare partners

such as the Casey Family Program, Navajo Nation Judicial Branch, Division of Public Safety, Office of the Chief Prosecutor, Office of the Chief Public Defender, Department of Dine’ Education, Division of Health and Office of the President and Vice President were instrumental in getting the direct funding agreement approval.

The daylong celebration was held at Window Rock Veterans Memorial Park and included speakers from

across the country.

President Shelly signed the Navajo Nation Title IV-E Agency Plan and Child Welfare Partnership Agreement into law. It is a new precedent for Indian Country to have a tribe administer the entire Title IV-E program.



# President Shelly joins Gov. Brewer to sign NTU funding agreement

PHOENIX—Education is a cornerstone for the Shelly-Jim administration.

In support of this, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with Ariz. Gov. Jan Brewer on March 26 to sign a funding agreement between the Navajo Nation, the State of Arizona, Dine' College and Navajo Technical University.

A funding agreement between the Nation and Arizona has been in place since 1999, but recent amendments to the legislation allowed for funding to also be provided for Navajo Technical University.

While signing the agreement into law next to President Shelly, Gov. Brewer said, "It is an honor today to be able

to participate with you."

He responded, "Well, it's an honor to be with you today. I was supposed to be with Gov. Martinez, but I chose to be here with you today."

Flanked by Speaker of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council Johnny Naize, delegate Dwight Witherspoon, Dr. Maggie George, Dr. Elmer Guy and former delegate Andy Ayze, President Shelly and Gov. Brewer signed the agreement into law.

After the agreement was signed, President Shelly joined the group for photos and expressed appreciation for the funding.

"The Navajo Nation is thankful for the support we have received from Governor Brewer and the State of Arizona,"

President Shelly said. "This legislation gives our Navajo students a healthy learning environment and the necessary infrastructure at our tribal institutions of learning.

"Chief Manuelito instructed the Navajo people to climb the ladder of education. We are still climbing," he added.

Under terms of the agreement, Transaction Privilege Tax revenues collected on the Navajo Nation will be utilized to provide up to \$1.75 million annually for Dine' College and \$875,000 annually for Navajo Technical University. This will continue through 2020.

Gov. Brewer presented the "\$7 million pen" to President Shelly after the

signing was completed. He gave the pen to Dr. Guy as commemoration of the historic event for NTU.

On Feb. 7, 2014, Resolution No. 0038-14 was sponsored by Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hard Rock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) and introduced to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Nation Council as an action relating to Health Education and Human Services and the Budget and Finance Committees.

The funding compact with the state has been in place since Oct. 19, 1999 and was originally only for Dine' College. TPT funding collected on the Nation was provided to the college to support maintenance, renewal and capital expenses.



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signs an agreement with Arizona Governor Jan Brewer to provide NTU with \$7 million. The funds are covered by TPT revenues. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

# Bread Loaf School of English partners with Dine' College for workshop



Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim has advocated for the writing workshops at Dine' College, in collaboration with the Bread Loaf School of English. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

TSAILE, Ariz. — The Bread Loaf School of English collaborated with the Navajo Nation and Diné College for the Navajo Nation Writing Centers Workshop on Jan. 18-19, 2014. The two-day work session

took place at the Tsaile main campus.

Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim said the event was a success and that it was the first in a series of workshops designed to encourage writing for

participants of all ages.

"Reading and writing are the fundamentals of education. We must encourage our Navajo students to strengthen their writing as we continue to share our stories, culture and lives with the outside world," he said.

Schools that participated in the workshop included Window Rock Unified School District, Rough Rock Community School, Rock Point Community School, Gallup-McKinley County School District, Central Consolidated School District and Diné College students and faculty.

The respective schools identified representatives

that would benefit from renowned professionals at national higher education institutions across the country.

Vice President Jim said, "We ensured that each of the participants understood what a writing center is and that they would be able to convey the knowledge they gained when they returned back to their schools."

Although workshop was geared toward high school teachers and writing curriculum, invitations were also sent to students.

A sophomore from Window Rock High School had her eyes set on a writing career and said

the training was valuable. Her participation in the workshop was equally valuable for the teachers in attendance because she provided insight on what would interest students.

She suggested having access to library collections and historical records documenting the Navajo Nation as important components of the high school writing centers. The group also discussed the potential of dual credit programs with Diné College and Navajo Technical University at WRHS.

Other considerations included college students participating in a mentorship program

with high school students to prepare them for the rigors of college, especially with writing.

"Students expressing these kind of ideas are important," Vice President Jim said. "We must engage our students when developing educational programs."

The push for peer mentorship will continue, especially for college students tutoring high school students in language arts.



# ASU Hozho' and Education: Tribal leaders meet with students



The Hozho' and Education leadership forum at Arizona State University on April 11 brought together students and tribal leaders. Discussions focused on leadership, jobs for college graduates, scholarships and maintaining cultural identity outside the Navajo Nation. President Shelly brought his cabinet members to provide specific insight on several subject areas. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



President Shelly answered questions on leadership and advocated for the return to the traditional Navajo philosophy of self-reliance. He said we must not be dependent on others (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Arizona Senator Carlyle Begay spoke of his humble beginnings as a sheepherder being raised by his grandmother. He said education was his way out. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Larry Curley, director of the Navajo Nation Division of Health, said there are many scholarship opportunities available for students in the health profession. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

# President Shelly tours Cutter Dam, receives progress report on water delivery system



Water from the Cutter Reservoir will be utilized for the southwest portion of the Navajo-Gallup Water Delivery System, which will serve more than 250,000 residents. President Shelly toured the Cutter Dam with tribal, federal and state officials to receive an update on the project in May 2014. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

NAGEEZI, N.M.— Drive through the Navajo chapters of Nageezi, Huerfano and Dzil Na’oodilii, one thing becomes abundantly clear: the communities are in the midst of drought.

A recent tour with tribal, federal and state officials provided a firsthand view of the conditions in the northwestern N.M. communities located on the eastern portion of the Navajo Nation.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly joined chapter officials and representatives from the Navajo Nation Council, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Services for a tour of Cutter Dam and Reach 22 on May 9.

The Cutter Lateral is one of two main laterals of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project (NGWSP).

Authorized for construction in 2009 through the BOR, the NGWSP is a basis of the New Mexico Water Rights Settlement between the Navajo Nation, U.S. and State of New Mexico.

Estimates from the bureau indicate that by

2040, a population of 250,000 will be served by the project.

It will provide a long-term, sustainable water supply from the San Juan River Basin to 43 chapters on the Navajo Nation, the southwest portion of the Jicarilla Apache Reservation and the city of Gallup, N.M.

In Sept. 2012, President Shelly and former U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced an agreement for \$43 million for the Navajo Nation to design and construct a portion of the NGWSP.

The portion will provide clean water to thousands of Navajos and create up to 600 new jobs in the area.

“This project has been in development for a long time, back to my days as a county commissioner and council delegate,” President Shelly said. “These chapters are in desperate need of water and this project will address that.”

The NGWSP is separated into 27 reaches for construction.

The BOR states that the beginning of a reach is typically the location of a turnout that will deliver water to communities.

The two main laterals of the project features 270 miles of pipeline.

Cutter Lateral will provide water to the eastern side of the Navajo Nation and a portion of the Jicarilla Apache Reservation. Reaches 21 through 26 are in the Cutter Lateral segment of the project.

The San Juan Lateral will begin at the San Juan River near Kirtland and stretch south along U.S. Route 491 through Gallup. Reaches 1 through 20 and 27 are in the San Juan Lateral of the project, with extensions to Crownpoint, N.M. and Window Rock, Ariz.

BOR construction engineer Barry Longwell facilitated the tour of Cutter Dam and provided information on the project.

Constructed in the early 1970s, the Cutter Reservoir was completed in 1974 and has provided water to the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project since. About 80,000 acres is under irrigation presently.

He explained that when the dam was built, a pipe was constructed through the bottom portion of the reservoir to release water when the dam was low.

“That’s where we’re going to tie into to get water for the Cutter Lateral,” Longwell said. “That will be our pipeline that will be taking water out to all of your communities around Highway 550.”

The 27-inch conduit that extends into the reservoir is where the Cutter Lateral begins. The BOR will be doing modifications to the concrete down at the bottom of the vault, including the pipe gaskets and joints.

We want to ensure the pipe doesn’t leak, so we’re going to put steel bands inside that pipe where and gaskets and joints and seal those, he explained.

“They’re 40 years old now. We don’t know what condition they’re in, so we’re going to seal them and make them water tight,” Longwell said.

A new vault and a T will be constructed for the Cutter Lateral pipeline to hook into for water delivery. The

pressure from the reservoir will be used to push the water down to the other side of Blanco Canyon, the site of the first pumping plant.

Longwell said the purpose was to reduce the amount of infrastructure in the remote location to keep costs low.

President Shelly expressed appreciation for the tour of the dam and explanation of its proposed Cutter Lateral use for Navajo chapters.

“For our chapters and communities in the Eastern Navajo Agency, the water is coming. All of you leaders from the eastern agency and agency council have a lot of planning to do,” he said.

“It’s great to see the progress that is being made on this project after so many years of development and discussions,” President Shelly said. “We will continue working together to serve the needs of the Navajo people.”

**“For our chapters and communities in the Eastern Navajo Agency, the water is coming.”**

## VITAL STATISTICS

-Two main laterals totaling approximately 270 miles of pipeline.

-Cutter Lateral – Reaches 21 through 26. Serving the far eastern side of the Navajo Reservation and providing a tap to serve the TeePee Junction area of the Jicarilla Apache Reservation.

-San Juan Lateral – Reaches 1 through 20 and 27. Starting at the San Juan River near Kirtland, NM and extending southward, roughly following US Hwy 491 through Gallup; with extensions to Window Rock, AZ, and to nearby Crownpoint, NM.

-Numerous pumping plants and storage tanks.

-Two Water Treatment Plants – Cutter Lateral and San Juan Lateral.

-Power Supply Facilities – Project is eligible to receive Western Area Power Authority (WAPA) power.

-Navajo Nation (29,060 acre-feet/year = 6,410 in AZ and 22,650 in NM)

-City of Gallup (7,500 acre-feet/year)

-Jicarilla Apache Nation (1,200 acre-feet/year)

# PNM-NN Workforce training provides opportunity



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly praised the partnership with PNM and the Navajo Nation to produce a strong workforce for the burgeoning energy market. (Photo Michele Morris)



The honorary stoles presented to students by President Shelly during the commencement ceremonies at Navajo Technical University and San Juan College. (Photo by Michele Morris)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—On April 17, 2014, more than 100 Navajo college students were honored at Navajo Technical University and San Juan College.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly joined Patricia K. Collawn of PNM to honor the students. Collawn is chairwoman, president and CEO of PNM.

Students received scholarships as part of the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program for careers in energy, construction, manufacturing and technology.

One such person was Sean Tohannie, a SJC student majoring in instrument and controls technology.

In a letter to PNM and the Navajo Nation, Tohannie stated, “Since I live in Arizona and

San Juan College is in New Mexico, we had to commute to and from for a total of four hours. It took a lot of money and time out of our studying and homework. When we the extra money we were able to stay in motels for another day to catch up.”

Tohannie was one of the 47 NTU and 77 SJC students in certificate, associate and bachelor degree programs to receive scholarships since 2013.

The initiative was created in 2013 by PNM’s \$1 million five-year funding commitment. It is designed to prepare Navajos for jobs that are in demand and important to the Four Corners area and the Navajo Nation.

These jobs are in the energy, oil and gas, construction, information technology and manufacturing

sectors.

Addressing students at NTU, President Shelly said, “Here on the Navajo Nation, our most important resource is our Navajo people. Our human resources are our heart and mind.”

“To compete globally, we are creating a workforce to attract business. Our resources at home are you and your talent,” he added.

In May 2014, 12 students will graduate from NTU and nine will graduate from SJC.

NTU’s recent effort to offer a four-year degree brought in 15 PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program participants for enrollment in information technology, engineering and environmental science programs.

“As we move forward as a people, we are making

a future to provide for our families, how we are going to provide for our children and most importantly, how we are going to provide for our elderly,” President Shelly said.

He said there are over 300,000 Navajos in the world and what sets

said.

The training program is part of PNM’s efforts to minimize economic impact related to the proposed 2017 closure of two units at the San Juan Generating Station near Farmington.

The closure is part of an agreement between PNM, the Environmental Protection Agency and the New Mexico Environment Department that would allow San Juan to comply with a federal regional haze rule.

The program scholarships are not funded by customer rates and provides \$200,000 over five years.

“Helping lay the foundation for a stronger New Mexico economy is important to PNM and all of us here,” Collawn said. “Having a strong economic base empowers our communities.

“It allows individuals to provide for themselves and their families to improve their quality of life,” she added.

NTU President Dr.

partnership, students will have the opportunity to achieve the career goals in numerous disciplines,” Pendergrass said.

From studying building trades and civil drafting to occupational safety and welding, she noted that the students are the future of business and the community.

Through the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program, Navajo students can qualify for \$1,000 to \$2,000 in funding per semester for specific programs at NTU and SJC.

“Through public and private sector partnerships, we are able to enhance support for Navajo students enrolled in certificate, associate and bachelor degree programs,” Guy said. “The program is not only contributing to the success of Navajo students, but also empowering our graduates to compete economically at home, nationally and globally.”

**“To compete globally, we are creating a workforce to attract business. Our resources at home are you and your talent.”**

us apart from Indian Country as the largest tribe in the U.S. is our drive, vision and belief that there’s always something better out there.

“Everything rests on you,” President Shelly

Elmer Guy and SJC President Dr. Toni Pendergrass joined President Shelly and Collawn last week to honor Navajo students in Crownpoint and Farmington.

“Because of this



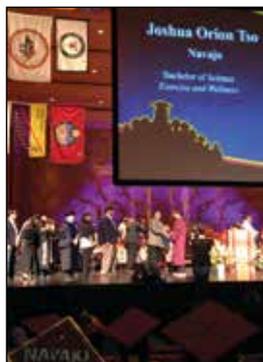
# Arizona State University, University of Arizona convocations



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and First Lady Martha Shelly were joined by Hopi Chairman Herman Honanie and his family at the University of Arizona Native American Student Affairs Convocation in Tucson in May 2014. A multitude of students graduating from the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Left, Victor Begay, a doctorate graduate at ASU, provided the keynote address to students. Right, the Navajo Nation Flag was on display at Gammage Auditorium. (Photos by Rick Abasta)



Left, President Shelly presents graduates with stoles during the ASU American Indian Convocation in Tempe. Right, graduates at the University of Arizona file in. (Photos by Rick Abasta)



Left, graduates from the University of Arizona anxiously await their chance to walk the stage. Right, President Shelly congratulates a Navajo student from St. Michaels. (Photos by Rick Abasta)



# President Shelly signs \$554 million litigation settlement



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signs the \$554 million settlement for the Navajo Nation trust settlement against the federal government for breach of trust responsibilities. Upon signature, the Nation will have to wait 120 days to receive the settlement. While many task force members have been advocating the development of an expenditure plan, President Shelly has strongly encouraged all to consider creating an investment plan instead. He cited the areas of housing, scholarships, infrastructure and disabled citizens as legitimate areas of need for the Navajo Nation. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



President Shelly presented Navajo DOJ Deputy Attorney General Dana Bobroff with a blanket for her years of hard work on the case. She broke down in tears. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Navajo Nation Attorney General Harrison Tsosie said the litigation was won in court by attorneys who were prepared for the Nation. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Leadership from the Executive and Legislative Branches stood proudly after the signing for the accomplishment of a hard fought victory won by working together. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Council delegate Lorenzo Curley expressed the need to expedite an expenditure plan before the funds arrive in 120 days. He was also on the task force. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

# Navajo Nation \$1 billion bankruptcy settlement

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On April 3, the U.S. Department of Justice announced the court decision for Tronox Inc. v. Anadarko Petroleum Corp.

According to the settlement, Anadarko Petroleum and former parent Kerr-McGee Corp., have agreed to pay \$5.15 billion for abandoned uranium mine cleanup in the northern and eastern agencies of the Navajo Nation.

Approximately \$4.4 billion will fund environmental claims and cleanup for damages for claimants of Tronox. The Nation is one of several claimants in the case, which include the U.S., 22 states, four environmental response trusts and a trust for tort plaintiffs.

Tronox will receive 88 percent of the \$5.15 billion settlement and the Navajo Nation will receive 23 percent of that amount, totaling \$1 billion. The Nation will utilize the funds for cleanup of 49 abandoned uranium mines that were owned by the Kerr-

McGee.

“This settlement was the result of the Navajo Nation’s claim against Tronox when it filed for bankruptcy in 2008,” President Shelly said. “We lobby Congress heavily to request funds from federal agencies and that takes a long time.

“Going into a bankruptcy case demonstrates that we have not stood idle on this effort. The government understands its trust responsibility for cleanup of the legacy uranium mines,” he added.

The settlement will address cleanup at 49 abandoned mine sites, but hundreds more still remain unfunded.

The Kerr-McGee reorganization of 2005 placed decades of environmental liabilities upon Tronox. Anadarko eventually acquired Kerr-McGee and became the parent company of Tronox in the process.

The lead agencies in the settlement agreement were the Navajo Nation’s Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Justice.

For more than three decades, several individuals working for the Navajo EPA Superfund Program contributed significantly toward the landmark settlement, including the late Arlene Luther, Jerry Begay and Eugene Esplan.

Stephen Etsitty, director of Navajo EPA, said the opportunity to file a claim in the Tronox bankruptcy case came in 2009.

“Tronox was overloaded with environmental liabilities from Kerr-McGee,” Etsitty said. “They wound up suing Kerr-McGee and Anadarko.”

David Taylor, staff attorney with Navajo DOJ, assisted Etsitty with the legal work to complete the filing.

Working for Navajo Nation since 2005, Taylor brought valuable Superfund cleanup experience to the table and was previously the principal enforcement attorney for the state of Missouri.

“Taylor’s efforts to cleanup the dioxin contaminated lands in Times Beach, Missouri in the 1980s and early 90s is commendable. It is still recognized as the largest civilian exposure to dioxin in U.S. history,” Etsitty said.

In 2011, staff from the Navajo EPA Superfund provided tours of the Kerr-McGee abandoned uranium mine sites to U.S. Justice Department attorneys in preparation for the trial.

In the summer of 2012, President Shelly and Navajo Nation Attorney General Harrison Tsosie testified in New York City for the court case. Etsitty and Perry Charley were selected as

witnesses.

President Shelly said that tribal former leaders were instrumental in providing guidance. My administration never gave up and we ultimately prevailed, he added.

“I am proud to say ahe’hee to the Navajo people for your patience and prayers,” he said. “The settlement will be a great help in restoring the abandoned uranium mine sites, but we must not forget about the 460 other sites still in need of cleanup funds.”

The Navajo Nation’s litigation team included attorneys from the Chicago firm of Kirkland and Ellis, the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, U.S. Justice Department, and representatives from the U.S. EPA in San Francisco.

On June 20, the students from the Navajo Nation Environmental Workforce Development and job training program graduated after weeks of learning abandoned uranium mine cleanup techniques.

In the summer of 2012, President Shelly met with the U.S. EPA in San Francisco, where he requested for training to prepare a Navajo workforce for the cleanup efforts.

“I would like to thank the U.S. EPA Brownfields Program, NAU, Navajo EPA and the instructors who provided the hands on instruction,” President Shelly said.

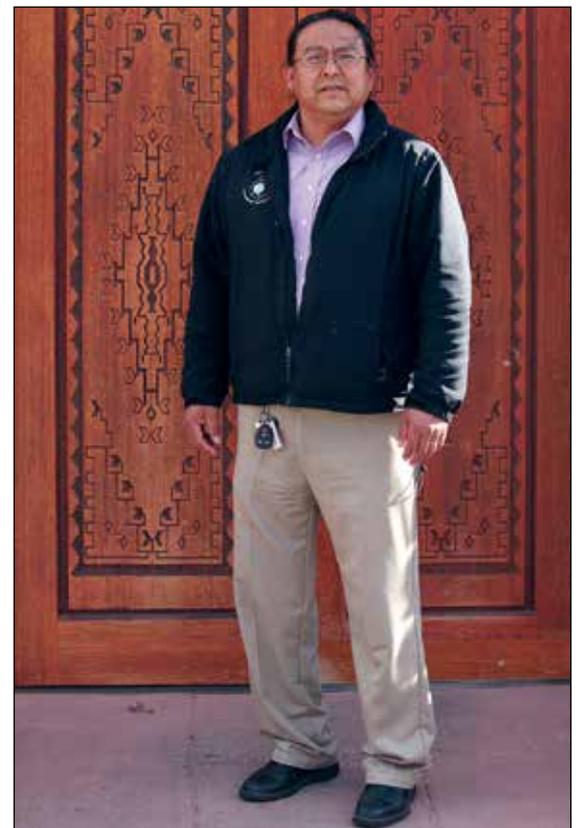
He added, “I want to express my sincere appreciation to each of you graduates for your decision to participate in this program. I expect you will do wonderful things for the Nation.”



During a meeting a Dzil Yizhiin Chapter, President Shelly made the initial announcement of the \$1 billion settlement to a large acuidence of residents. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Navajo Nation Attorney General Harrison Tsosie said the litigation was won in court by Navajo Nation attorneys and outside legal counsel working together. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Navajo EPA director Stephen Etsitty said the \$1 billion settlement will provide the necessary cleanup for 49 abandoned uranium mines. He is currently promoting training Navajos. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

## President Shelly continues to advocate on behalf of veterans



During a report at Tolani Lake Chapter in April 2014, several veterans were in attendance and asked President Shelly for support on various issues. He shared his record of staunchly supporting Navajo veterans from his days on the Council to his role as a father and grandfather of veterans that served on the frontlines. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

# NMDOT to complete four-lane construction on 491



Standing atop a makeshift stage off U.S. Route 491 in Sheep Springs, N.M., the announcement was made that Gov. Susana Martinez and the New Mexico Department of Transportation will complete four-lane construction on U.S. Route 491, formerly known as one of the most dangerous roads in New Mexico. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

SHEEP SPRINGS, N.M. — It was a celebration.

Although there was no groundbreaking, no ribbon cutting or any other ceremony indicative of commemoration, the announcement by N.M. Gov. Susana Martinez that four-lane highway construction for the completion of U.S. Route 491 improvements would be funded was enough cause for celebration.

On March 26, a crowd of 50-plus people gathered alongside U.S. Route 491 while commercial trucks and other vehicles sped by. A makeshift stage on a tractor-trailer bed faced an audience seated on folding chairs.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly spoke first and began by giving recognition to Sen. John Pinto.

“I’d first like to start by recognizing the hard work and dedication of a man that made the four-

lane construction of U.S. Route 491 a priority in his service to the State and the Navajo Nation: Senator John Pinto,” President Shelly said.

He said Sen. Pinto got the ball rolling for the four-lane construction on U.S. Route 491, which was formerly named U.S. 666 and called the “Devil’s Highway” because of the large number of fatalities on the road.

President Shelly also thanked Gov. Martinez for her commitment to working with the Navajo people, which he said was “unquestionable.” He presented a letter of appreciation for her recent approval of capital outlay funding to the Navajo Nation.

He recalled how the importance of U.S. Route 491 was underscored on July 5, 2013, when a portion of the road between Naschitti and Sheep Springs was closed after heavy flooding

damaged a portion of the roadway.

“The rest of the country quickly realized how vital this road is to travel in the Four Corners region,” he said.

Sen. Pinto spoke next and was assisted to the podium by Gov. Martinez.

He gave thanks for those in attendance and remembered how he and others began advocating for widening the roadway more than 20 years ago. Funding was a constant concern.

“There were years when the money could have been taken away from us for other use. After asking for money year after year for almost 20 years, we are here today,” Sen. Pinto said.

He expressed sadness for those that lost their lives on the highway and said completing the four-lane construction would put an end to the destruction and make the road safe for Navajo

families and all visitors.

Sen. Pinto said, “This is an important highway. It brings all of the Navajo people together. We all drive great distances to keep connected with families and work.”

Tom Church, cabinet secretary and director of New Mexico Department of Transportation, said he has worked for the highway department for more than 21 years.

“During my entire career, we have talked and promised that this highway improvement to the people of northwest New Mexico would be completed and I am proud today that Gov. Susana Martinez will keep that promise,” Church said.

The funds were generated from the sale of bonds with a triple-A rating, he explained.

“Three years ago, the state transportation department could not have done this project. We were operating at

about \$100 million in the red,” Church said. “It’s been the sound financial and fiscal policies of the governor and the transportation commission that really turned the department around.

“Now, we’re operating \$100 million in the black,” he added.

Gov. Martinez agreed with Church and gave him praise for his leadership in turning the department around.

She credited him with being smart about the money that taxpayers paid to the state government and making it stretch, making the best of it and completing a project as big as U.S. 491.

“Today, we’re here to talk about an important project that will of course make U.S. 491 more safe and accessible,” Gov. Martinez said. “This road is an essential highway for commerce and tourism in the area, with local families and businesses depending on it on a daily basis.”

In 1982, the state widened 21 miles of the two-lane road into a four-lane highway, which saw an immediate decrease in the accident severity and fatality rates on that stretch of road.

The remaining two-lane road from Shiprock to Gallup was listed in the top 10 most dangerous highways in the U.S. and had a fatality rate six times higher than the rest of the state. Sixty percent of those fatalities were alcohol related.

“In 2003, the highway designation was changed

to (U.S. Route) 491 and that same year, the legislature approved more funding for more areas of the corridor to be reconstructed,” Gov. Martinez said.

She noted that 21.8 miles remain to be constructed at a cost of \$78 million.

“The New Mexico DOT recently issued \$80 million in new money revenue bonds to fund certain eligible highway projects, including U.S. Route 491,” Gov. Martinez said. “Today, I am pleased to announce that much of that money will be spent to improve this road and the safety of those who travel upon it.

“The proposed improvements to this corridor will improve safety, efficiency and drive economic development along the highway in surrounding communities,” she added.

Major improvements include two additional lanes to increase capacity, a median separating northbound and southbound lanes, plus development of acceleration and deceleration lanes in congested and high traffic areas.

Improving drainage to prevent water from flooding the roadway is another important safety feature.

“I am proud of all the hard work that has gone into this vital project,” she said.



In Feb. 2014, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and Vice President Rex Lee Jim traveled to Santa Fe to meet with Gov. Martinez on concerns with Tribal Infrastructure Funds, capital outlay and road construction on main arteries crossing through the Navajo Nation. Several cabinet members from the administration were also present to ask specific questions. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



President Shelly has a strong government-to-government relationship with Gov. Martinez. They spoke at length on several issues facing the Nation. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Gov. Martinez also has a strong relationship with Sen. John Pinto, the most senior ranking member of the N.M. Legislature. Sen. Pinto brought up the need to continue construction on U.S. Route 491 for the safety and welfare of all travelers in the area and the state of New Mexico. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

# Diné Binaat'áanii Bił Da'ínííshjí T'áá Náás Diné Yá Deílníísh

At the Navajo Nation Executive Branch, we continue to work on behalf of the Navajo Nation. It is our responsibility to carry out the administrative functions of the tribal government.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and Vice President Rex Lee Jim extend thanks and gratitude to our divisions, departments and programs for your loyal service on behalf of the Navajo people.

Our employees are the greatest natural resource for the Navajo Nation. By providing direct services to the Navajo people, you are at the seat of power for our tribal government.

We continue to work together with our partners at the Legislative and Judicial Branches. Together, we can achieve great things for our Navajo Nation. Ahe'hee!

## Navajo Nation Divisions and Offices

Division of Community Development  
Division of Dine' Education  
Division of Economic Development  
Division of Finance  
Division of Public Safety  
Division of General Services  
Division of Health  
Division of Human Resources  
Division of Natural Resources  
Division of Social Services  
Division of Transportation

Navajo Environmental Protection Agency  
Navajo Nation Gaming Regulatory Office  
Navajo Nation Washington Office

Office of Miss Navajo Nation  
Office of Management and Budget  
Office of the President and Vice President  
Office of the Navajo Tax Commission  
Office of Telecommunication Regulatory Commission

### THE NAVAJO NATION

### OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

P.O. BOX 7440

WINDOW ROCK, AZ 86515

PHONE: 928-871-7000

FAX: 928-871-4025

[WWW.PRESIDENT.NAVAJO-NSN.GOV](http://WWW.PRESIDENT.NAVAJO-NSN.GOV)



## THE NAVAJO NATION

**BEN SHELLY** PRESIDENT

**REX LEE JIM** VICE PRESIDENT



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 7, 2014**

## **Navajo Nation Fish and Wildlife Hosting Summit to Bridge Communication Gaps**

WINDOW ROCK, AZ. – Bridge communication gaps.

That’s the goal of a Navajo Nation Fish and Wildlife Summit that will be held at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort on August 5-6, 2014.

Navajo Nation Fish and Wildlife Department Manager Gloria Tom said the purpose of the summit is to educate and inform local chapter leadership about wildlife management.

Tom stated, “Most interactions at the local level between people and wildlife have been negative. For example, livestock losses to predators, big game conflicts with farmers and prairie dog conflicts in rangelands, etc. The department is hosting a summit in an effort to inform and educate the local communities and to bridge communication gaps that currently exists between the department and local governments especially grazing communities.”

Tom added, “We want to accomplish this by educating local officials on wildlife and the various projects we are initiating on behalf of the Navajo people and to also educate them on the importance of our wildlife resources. They provide economic benefits to the tribe as well as being ecologically important to our landscape.”

Rather than sponsoring workshops or a conference, Tom said the Navajo Nation Fish and Wildlife Department wants to host a summit to obtain input from the local communities.

“We do not want to be the only ones talking at the summit,” she noted. “We want the people attending the summit to bring forth their perceptions, viewpoints, questions, issues and concerns. We also want people to tell us what is working in their communities in regards to wildlife management on the Navajo Nation.”

The public is invited to the free event; however, Tom said they specifically want local chapter officials, grazing committees, land boards and farm board representatives to attend.

“There are many obstacles and barriers that we face when it comes to balancing our needs with the needs of our wildlife. Many people don’t see the benefits of properly managing our wildlife. Many people automatically see the competition between humans and wildlife,” Tom said. “The goal of the summit is to educate and inform our local leaders so we can all work towards overcoming these barriers and establish partnerships with local communities. We also want to work together to develop sound local management strategies that not only benefit us, but benefit our natural resources as well.”

For more information about the Navajo Nation Fish and Wildlife Summit, call (928) 871-6450. There are sponsorship packages available to set up a booth; however, booth spaces are limited. For more information about booth space, call (928) 871-6595 or email contact at [jcole@nndfw.org](mailto:jcole@nndfw.org)

Registration forms are available online at [www.nndfw.org](http://www.nndfw.org) – the deadline to register is July 18, 2014 and is limited to 600 attendees.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 3, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.380.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

**Law and Order Committee receives update on Dilkon Justice Center**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee received an update report regarding the Dilkon Justice Center, which will include a correctional facility, juvenile services, law enforcement and patrol, and criminal investigations.

According to the report provided by the Navajo Nation Department of Corrections director Delores Greyeyes, schematics are completed for the Dilkon Justice Center, which allows the design and planning phase to begin.

“We will need about \$2 million to complete the planning and design phase of the 54,000 square foot building,” said Greyeyes. “It will cost an estimated \$38 million to complete the project in its entirety.”

Greyeyes added that the high-price is due to the construction of the correctional facility, which will require additional building material and metal components, as compared to a standard office building that does not require such.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat) expressed support for the Dilkon Justice Center project and inquired as to when construction will begin.

Greyeyes said that once the \$2 million is secured to complete the planning and design phase, the project will be construction-ready. In the meantime, NNDOC is seeking additional funding to begin construction.

LOC member Council Delegate Elmer Begay (Dilkon, Greasewood Springs, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone) who represents the Dilkon community, requested the committee’s involvement in the efforts to obtain the \$2 million.

“Is there a way we can involve the LOC with this project? This justice center is being built in my district and I want to help get funding so construction can begin,” said Delegate Begay.

Delegate Shepherd recommended that the committee seek funding from the Navajo Nation’s Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance. He added that the NNDOC and NNDDE should begin the SAS process to initiate the legislation process.

LOC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)



## President Shelly reaffirms fire restriction, prohibits fireworks



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said there will be no fireworks allowed on the Navajo Nation in light of the recent Asaayii Lake Fire. He reaffirmed his fire restriction that was ordered on June 12. The restriction includes fireworks during the Fourth of July celebration at the fairgrounds. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—There will be no fireworks display this year during the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Fourth of July Youth Celebration and PRCA Pro Rodeo.

Navajo Nation President reaffirmed the Navajo Nation fire restriction and encouraged tribal members not to attempt lighting any fireworks due to the extreme drought conditions and potential for fire.

“Because of the dry conditions of our land and the recent challenges associated with the Asaayii Lake Fire, I have given the directive to restrict all fireworks on the Nation, including the Fourth of July celebration at the fairgrounds,” President Shelly said.

He noted that prevention of forest fires must be exercised during this holiday weekend.

President Shelly issued an executive order on June 12, mandating the fire restriction to be observed across the Navajo Nation.

The next day, a human caused fire near Asaayii Lake fanned the flames for the largest forest fire in Navajo Nation history, charring over 14,000 acres of land in the Chuska Mountains.

The cost of the Asaayii Lake Fire is in excess of \$8 million.

In addition to fireworks, the fire restriction includes provisions that any traditional ceremonies involving fire must be done through proper permitting with the tribal forestry department.

“The Nation cannot afford another fire,” President Shelly said.





**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
July 1, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603  
nlnb.communications@gmail.com

## **Health, Education, and Human Services Committee approves report from the Center for Native American Health (CNAH)**

**WINDOW ROCK** – Last Wednesday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received a report regarding the Center for Native American Health (CNAH), presented by founder and director, Dr. Gayle Dine’ Chacon from the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center.

CNAH was founded in 2002 and established to develop partnerships between tribal communities in New Mexico and the UNM School of Medicine. CNAH aims to provide Native American student outreach, recruitment and retention into health professions by interacting with tribal and off-reservation schools and communities.

“Since the 12 years that CNAH has been in operation, we have provided outreach, technical assistance education, cancer education, research development, behavioral health needs and student development recruitment retention with American Indians into medicine,” stated Dr. Chacon.

EHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) shared his encouragement and stressed the importance of the program for Navajo students.

“The assistance comes back to us as a committee to have that dialogue with UNM to ensure that this program still survives with the information that was given because there is a significant number of Navajo students attending UNM,” stated Delegate Hale.

EHSC member Council Delegate Kenneth Maryboy (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa) expressed his appreciation to Dr. Chacon, noting that she has overcome turmoil and change within her career.

“I admire the University because your students and departments have done some research regarding the contaminants of water regarding the Utah water issues,” stated Delegate Maryboy.

Currently, CNAH has a budget of approximately \$486,000 and receives the Indians into Medicine (INMED) Grant, funded by IHS. The program is currently seeking a five-year grant renewal, which will continue to fund the majority of Native American students.

“Right now, given the situation of our organization, due to funds with a grant with IHS [INMED grant], we are not sure whether our organization is going to be able to continue to support our health care students to make sure they graduate,” stated CNAH Program Specialist, Mikaela Crank Thinn.

Despite a decrease in funding and staffing this past year, CNAH continues to deliver educational and training sessions to communities on the Navajo Nation.

According to the report, nearly 5% of students of UNM Health Science Center are Native American and the majority of them are Navajo. In the 2013-2014 academic year, UNMHSC had approximately 130 Native American students seeking various degrees in medicine, pharmacy, nursing, physical therapy and public health.

“We hope that Navajo Nation is able to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with UNM to ensure that Native American students’ developmental programs are appropriately funded and continues to support CNAH and the goals and objectives of student development,” stated Dr. Chacon.

HEHSC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

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July 1, 2014

**MEDIA CONTACTS**  
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253  
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174  
Chrissy Largo | 928.871.7160  
nrlb.communications@gmail.com

## **Resources and Development Committee approves the establishment of Administrative Service Centers as part of the Nation's decentralization initiative**

**WINDOW ROCK** – Last Thursday, the Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0139-14, amending the plan of operation for the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development to establish 16 new Administrative Service Centers across the Navajo Nation. The centers will replace the five Local Governance Support Centers as part of the ongoing decentralization initiative.

The purpose of the Administrative Service Centers is to provide planning services, technical assistance, and guidance to chapters relating to project planning, infrastructure development, community land use planning and provide guidance to the Five Management System and policies.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts'ah Bii Kin) expressed his support of the continuing efforts dedicated to the decentralization initiative.

“The overall initiative is to bring more jobs to the local chapters and bringing knowledgeable professionals to help build our Nation and to decentralize some of the authority here in Window Rock to these 16 centers so that service deliveries to our constituents will be efficient,” stated Delegate Nez.

In 2013, the Budget and Finance Committee directed the DCD to carry out the decentralization initiative. In August 2013, the Navajo Nation Council approved \$3 million for the decentralization effort.

The DCD conducted a series of public hearings regarding the initiative at various chapter houses and received overwhelming support for the initiative, according to Delegate Nez.

DCD executive director Leonard Chee stated in January that the initiative will place emphasis on developing staff positions to operate the new centers.

“The LGSC's will be phased out, so this is a decentralization transition. The new positions will be created and current positions will transfer. However, some positions require [college] degrees and a certain amount of experience,” stated Chee.

The new centers will include a director to develop and implement policies and procedures for effective management. Each center will be staffed by a senior planner, administrative assistant, accountant, and plans are underway to hire attorneys for the centers as well.

According to the legislation, the existing LGSC's will continue to operate during the transition period.

"My wish is to transfer LGSC staff into 16 administrative centers and to continue their tenure and benefits. We are also hoping to recruit some highly-educated people and we hope to build upon bringing in some young and educated people. Overall, it is to provide better services and to have an efficient government," stated Delegate Nez.

RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) expressed support for the legislation and urged her committee colleagues to do so also.

"It is time to implement this legislation and make the necessary changes. I believe that this is part of the vote—the vote of the people when they reduced the Council to regionalize," stated Delegate Benally.

RDC members voted 3-0 to approve Legislation No. 0139-14.

The Resources and Development Committee serves as the final authority for the legislation.

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