



Division of Social Service to administer Title IV-E foster program



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with representatives from the Division of Social Services to discuss the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' approval of the direct funding agreement for Title IV-E. The Nation is the first tribe in the country to administer this program. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

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 25, President Shelly met with representatives from the Division of Social Services today to discuss this historic achievement.

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

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 has qualified for this 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

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.

A signing ceremony for the direct funding agreement will take place at Window Rock Veterans Park on June 27 beginning at 8 a.m. and ending at 3 p.m.

The public is welcome to attend and encouraged to RSVP.

Information: 928-871-6851

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"Running the Title IV-E program is an exercise of tribal sovereignty. We will operate a Title IV-E program that is culturally sensitive."

are in foster care, adoption and guardianship. The Nation will also be reimbursed for training and administrative costs.

"Running the Title IV-E





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 25, 2014

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Budget and Finance Committee offers clarification over \$19 million appropriation to Navajo Chapters

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Budget and Finance Committee received a report regarding the Navajo Nation Council’s recent appropriation from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance in the amount of \$19 million for local level community needs, veterans assistance, and student employment to the Navajo Nation’s 110 chapters.

BFC vice chair Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin) expressed his concerns to the committee regarding the distribution and spending deadlines for the appropriation.

“I have heard concerns from the chapters regarding the deadline to expend funds by the end of this fiscal year on September 30. We need to clarify to the chapters how and when the money should be spent,” said Delegate Nez.

A directive was issued to the chapters and Local Governance Support Centers to expend the funds by the fourth quarter of the current fiscal year, intended to expedite the hiring process for high school and college students.

Citing the Navajo Nation Appropriation Act, Navajo Nation Controller Mark Grant said monies allocated to Navajo chapters could be carried over into the following fiscal year as needed.

Grant further explained that the funds cannot be utilized for stipends, per diem, or travel for chapter officials.

“Now that we have clarification, LGSC will be able to relay this information back to the chapters, but we still need the appropriate budget forms from all the chapters turned in as soon as possible so we can begin hiring students immediately,” said Delegate Nez, following the meeting.

According to the legislation passed by Council on June 6, \$15 million will be appropriated to address local level community needs, \$1 million for specific needs of Navajo veterans, and \$3 million for temporary summer employment for college and high school students.

President Ben Shelly signed the \$19 million appropriation into law on June 13. Distribution of the funds will be based on the number of registered voters in each of the Nation’s 110 chapters.

BFC members voted 4-0 to accept the report.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org



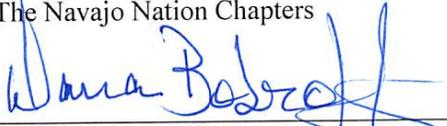
NAVAJO NATION DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

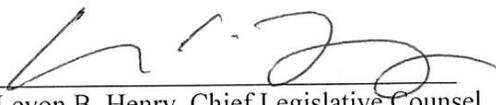
HARRISON TSOSIE
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DANA BOBROFF
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Navajo Nation Council
: The Navajo Nation Chapters

FROM: 
Harrison Tsosie, Attorney General
Dana Bobroff, Deputy Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General

FROM: 
Levon B. Henry, Chief Legislative Counsel
Office of Legislative Counsel

DATE: June 24, 2014

SUBJECT: CJN-33-14

This memorandum is issued to clarify an issue regarding the appropriation in CJN-33-14 of \$19,000,000 to Chapters, Veterans and Summer Youth Employment passed by the Navajo Nation Council and signed by the Navajo Nation President.

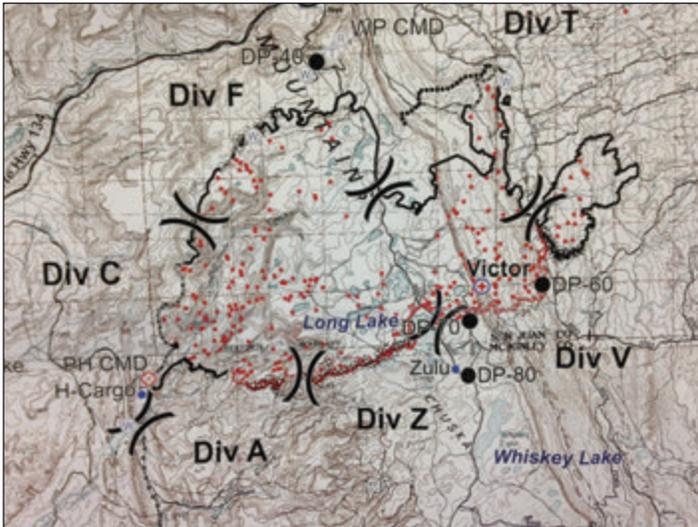
It is our understanding that a question has emerged on whether or not the appropriated funds to the Chapters will lapse at the end of this Fiscal Year. This question comes from a reading of the budget forms for Supplemental Funds attached to the legislation in which the Budget Form 2, Program Performance Criteria, stated "To distribute and use all funds by the end of 4th quarter for the intended purpose." This particular form, along with other appropriate budget forms, are explained in the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Instructions and Policies Manual, Section VIII., Supplemental Funding Request Policies and Procedures.

However, 12 NNC §820(N) states, "...Appropriations to the chapters of the Navajo Nation shall not lapse at the end of the fiscal year provided that the chapters shall budget those funds in subsequent year in accordance with the purposes and conditions set forth by the Navajo Nation Council in its appropriations." In this instance, Navajo Nation law controls over a policy or procedure. It was the intent of the Navajo Nation Council that the funds appropriated to the Chapters follow §820(N) and other laws governing appropriations to Chapters. So in response to the question of whether or not appropriated funds to Chapter lapse at the end of the Fiscal Year, the answer is no. These appropriated funds do not lapse provided that any unexpended funds are budgeted in Fiscal Year 2015 in accordance with the purpose and conditions set in the legislation.

xc: Mark Grant, Controller
Office of the Controller
: Leonard Chee, Executive Director
Division of Community Development



Asaayi Lake Fire donations tracked by Dept. of Emergency Management



On June 23, the Asaayii Lake Fire was reported to be 63 percent contained. The Type II incident management team is demobilizing and will transition the fire to a Type II team on June 26. There has been no loss of life for humans or livestock. Five structures were reported to be burned. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

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.

The Navajo Nation will continue to provide the necessary services to evacuees affected by the Asaayii Lake Fire, including the mandated authorities granted to the NNDEM by tribal law regarding accountability of donations.

The general public is encouraged to direct any questions or concerns to the Navajo Nation EOC Command Center for the Asaayii Lake Fire.

Information: 505-371-8416





Navajo Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 2520
Window Rock, Az. 86515
(928) 871-6647
www.NavajoNationParks.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 20, 2014

Navajo Nation Building Foundation for Success

By Roberta John

WINDOW ROCK, AZ. – A world champion.

That's an impossible dream for some, but for a certain breed of individual, that is a goal that can be achieved no matter how young or old you may be.

Case in point, Navajo Nation Fair Manager Genevieve Tshoularkis knows all too well just what it means to become a world champion because she is a two-time Indian National Finals Rodeo (INFR) Barrel Racing Champion.

However, it's not the fact that she is a two-time world champion that makes this story interesting, but the fact that she clinched her first world title at age 33 then captured a second world title in 1988 when she was only 53 years young.

Today, Tshoularkis wants to instill that excitement and dedication to become a world champion and also to learn about the unique relationship that one can only experience out in the range, pasture or rodeo arena.

Tshoularkis said it takes a lot of prayer, dedication and hard work to become a world champion.

"I want to instill pride, honor and dignity for our young people and rodeo is one way of helping to build that foundation," she said. "The Navajo Nation Special Events and Navajo Nation Parks and Recreation Department staff are working diligently to produce a great event for the entire family during the week of July Fourth. I just want to invite everyone here to Window Rock, Arizona. We hope you will enjoy your summer holiday here with us."

Navajo Nation Department Manager Martin L. Begaye echoed her remarks and said, "We know how difficult it is for many families to go on vacation so we are striving to bring events that are economical and enjoyable for everyone."

Accordingly, the Navajo Nation Special Events Office will provide several new incentives during the 68th Annual Navajo Nation Fourth of July Youth Celebration and PRCA PRORODEO on July 2nd-5th at the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds in Window Rock, Arizona. Some of these incentives include free parking, free admission at the main entrance to the fairgrounds, reduced admission fee to

the PRCA PRORODEO, entertainment before each rodeo performance, free admission to the rodeo slack performance on July 2nd, prizes and free autograph sessions with the PRCA PRORODEO contestants.

“We are at a pivotal point in time where we’re faced with increasing fuel prices and other financial challenges,” Begaye said. “We just want the public to know that they can enjoy their Fourth of July holiday here on the Navajo Nation. It is an honor to have so many outstanding champions from throughout the country to showcase their skills here on the Navajo Nation. We are also working with Pete Carr Pro Rodeo – one of the best rodeo stock contractor in the country.”

Pete Carr, the owner and CEO of the firm, was nominated for the 2013 Stock Contractor of the Year award based on voting by members of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. He owns more bucking stock than any other contractor in the association. Last year, Carr had 27 animals selected to buck at the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo, a PRCA record. This July marks the third straight season he and his staff have been part of the Window Rock rodeo.

“That rodeo has a very rich history, and I’m glad our crew can be part of it,” Carr said. “I know there are some great rodeo fans there, and I hope we can put on the kind of show that they want to see over and over again.”

Over the years, Carr’s great animal athletes have been top performers in the PRCA, including three world champion bucking horses: Real Deal, Big Tex and MGM Deuces Night. The past two seasons, the great bay gelding Dirty Jacket has been recognized as one of the top three bucking horses in the game.

“We work really hard all year to produce the rodeos and feature the stock that will draw the top cowboys,” Carr said.

It works. The PRCA PRORODEO will feature the top cowboys in the game. Not only will there be world champions, but each performance will be filled with regular NFR qualifiers.

“He’s not even going to have a B pen before long,” said saddle bronc rider Heith DeMoss, a five-time NFR qualifier from Heflin, La. “He’s going to have an A plus and an A pen. He’s got an eye for horses, and he’s surrounded himself with people who know what they’re talking about. You want to go to Pete’s rodeos, because you’re going to get on something.”

On Wednesday, July 2nd, there will be a rodeo slack beginning at 8 a.m. On July 3rd-5th, there will be PRCA PRORODEO beginning at 7 p.m. Admission to the PRCA PRORODEO will be \$10 for adults and \$5 for senior citizens and for children 5 to 12 years old.

More than 400 cowboys and cowgirls from throughout the country will vie for approximately \$204,000 in prize money. The Navajo Nation is the only tribe in the country that hosts a PRCA PRORODEO, which will feature several 2014 world champions such as team roping champion Trevor Brazile of Decatur, Texas. Brazile will be compete in the rodeo slack performance, which will be held

on July 2nd beginning at 8 a.m. Other top PRCA PRORODEO contestants who will compete in Window Rock include Jake Barnes, Kody Lostruh, Cody Ohl, Blair Burk, Clay O'Brien Cooper, Shane Proctor and Tustin Daye.

If you're looking for top caliber Navajo world champions and contestants, you will not be disappointed. Some of the top notch Navajo contestants who will vie for thousands of dollars include Derrick Begay of Seba Delkai, Arizona, who will team up with Will Woodfin from Marshall, Texas, on Wednesday morning during the rodeo slack on July 2nd; Erich Rogers of Round Rock, Arizona, who will team up with Cory Pataka of Marana, Arizona – Rogers and Pataka will compete in the third performance on Saturday, July 5th; Kassidy Dennison of Tohatchi, New Mexico, will run the barrels during the second performance on July 4th; Aaron Tsinigine of Tuba City, Arizona, will team up with Ryan Motes of Weatherford, Texas, during the third performance on July 5th and the Bates brothers of Tohatchi and Mexican Springs, New Mexico: Brando, Michael and Ben Bates Jr. will all compete for thousands of dollars in prize money during the rodeo slack on July 2nd along with New Mexico cowboys Ty Pablo of Standing Rock, Donovan Yazzie of Brimhall, Vince Tsosie of Shiprock and William Jim of Crownpoint. Also, keep your eyes out for Arizona cowboys Lyle Clark of Kayenta, Nate Benally of Steamboat, Wyatt Betony of Tonalea, Bryan Bitsui of Ganado, Craig Begay of Rough Rock, Calvin Begay of Steamboat, Kyle Charley of Lukachukai and Kaye Delvecchio of Round Rock.

“As you can see, we will have an array of prestigious world champions and many Navajo contestants that will be vying for thousands of dollars in prize money here on the Navajo Nation,” Begaye said. “It is especially exciting to see one of our own competing with the cream of the crop so to speak. We hope this will instill hope and pride in our young people to become a world champion or to become a successful leader in the future. The PRCA PRORODEO and the other events that we have planned are only a few activities that we hope entire families will enjoy.”

About 30 young barrel racers will have an opportunity to run with the pros. The entry fee is \$50 and there is an administrative fee of \$15. The entry deadline closes on June 25, 2014. The PRCA PRORODEO will also feature 16 wild horse race teams from throughout the country. The entry fee is \$350 and the entry deadline is June 25, 2014.

On Saturday, July 5th, a 10k run will be held beginning at the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds. The entry fee to enter is \$20.

Entry forms for the junior barrel racing, wild horse and 10k events can be obtained at www.navajonationfair.com or you can call the Navajo Nation Special Events Office at (928) 871-6478.

And what's Fourth of July without a carnival. Frazier Shows of America will have a host of thrilling rides for the young and old alike. The carnival will run July 2nd-6th.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 19, 2014

President Shelly, Gov. Martinez fly over fire and meet with residents



On June 17, N.M. Gov. Susana Martinez traveled to Window Rock and met with President Shelly and Vice President Jim before a briefing and aerial tour of the fire damaged areas. They also met with residents in Newcomb and Naschitti Chapters to provide an update. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

Emotions are 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.

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 once the fire is extinguished.

The fire is five percent contained right now. Five structures have officially been reported burned. There are no reports of any livestock fatalities or injuries by the incident command. 



President Shelly listens intently as Gov. Martinez offers assistance from the N.M. State Police or National Guard for the fire. However, the Southwest Incident Management Team 3 had all the necessary resources available to them to fight the fire. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Incident Commander Bea Day provides a briefing for President Shelly, Vice President Jim and Gov. Martinez at the command center in Ft. Defiance. Day said true information was important because of misinformation that went out by incredible individuals and spread like wildfire. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

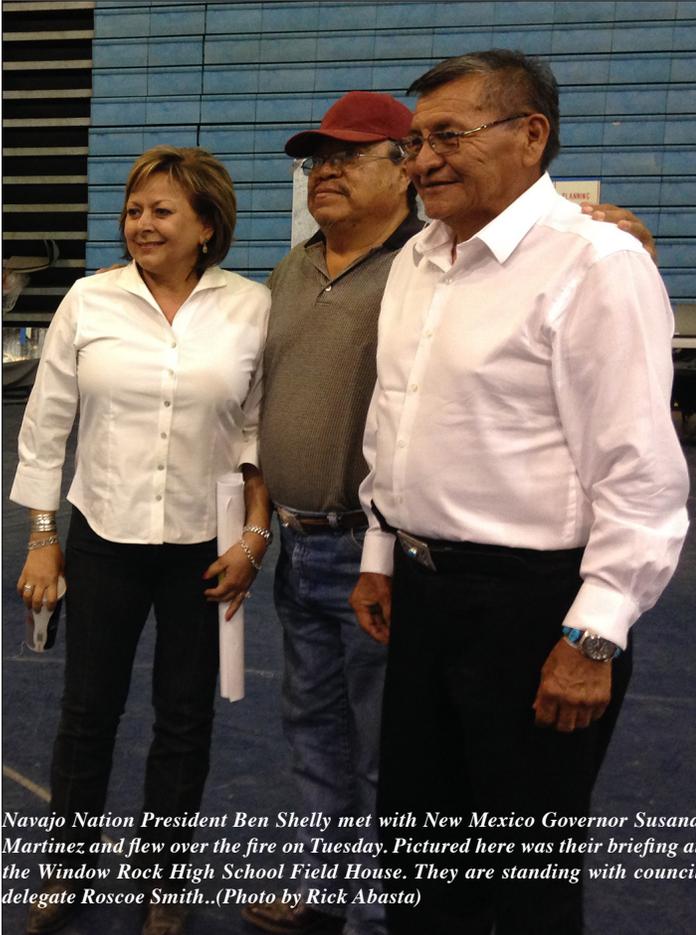


Gov. Martinez prepares to board the N.M. National Guard helicopter with Vice President Jim and President Shelly. They took an aerial tour of the Asaayii Lake Fire and provided an update to residents of Newcomb and Nashcitti Chapters. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 18, 2014

Asaayi Lake Fire donation center locations established for contributions



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez, and flew over the fire on Tuesday. Pictured here was their briefing at the Window Rock High School Field House. They are standing with council delegate Roscoe Smith... (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Donation centers have been established for the Asaayi Lake Fire.

Since the start of the fire, community members have been coming forward with donations of water, food and personal hygiene packages. The donated items have been distributed to the chapters affected by the fire, especially for the displaced residents.

“Ahe’hee to our Navajo people, tribal programs and the general public that have donated items to assist with this fire disaster,” said Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly.

He expressed appreciation and commended the tenacity and generous nature of Navajo people and programs that contributed items for the fire evacuees.

“This fire is a sad event for many families and communities, but to see the way Navajo people coalesced to help in the effort was very encouraging and a testament to our resilience as a people,” President Shelly said. “We must work together.”

Items needed for the donation drive include hand sanitizer, baby wipes, vinyl gloves, hand soap, shampoo, toothpaste,

toothbrushes, food, and water. Please check the expiration date on non-perishable food items before donating.

The Southwest Incident Management Team emphasized that no cash donations have been solicited from the public, including businesses and organizations. Instead, all monetary donations should go to the American Red Cross.

Utilization of the Red Cross eliminates the potential for fraudulent donation drives solicitation of monetary donations from fraudulent organizations.

The following information listing is for personnel assisting with the donation drive:

Donations: Coleen Bitsie at 505-263-1061

American Red Cross: Cassandra Roybal at 505-262-6175 or Michael Anaya-Gorman at 505-870-8303 or email michael.anayagorman@redcross.org

Media Permits: 928-871-7826

Wildfire Call Center: 928-871-8416 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Donated Items for Evacuees:
Ft. Defiance Chapter at 928-729-4352

Tohatchi High School Gym
John Brooks at 505-290-1628 or Craig Brooks at 505-870-0490

Newcomb School
505-368-5150 or 505-608-0449

Shiprock Chapter at 505-406-7269

Sheep Springs Chapter at 505-732-5408

Crystal Chapter at 505-777-2800

Information: Fire Information at 928-362-1482 or www.redcross.org/newmexico

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 17, 2014

June 17, 2014 MEDIA ADVISORY

WHO : Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly
THE NAVAJO NATION

Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim
THE NAVAJO NATION

Governor Susana Martinez
STATE OF NEW MEXICO

WHAT : Asaayi Lake Fire Tour and Fly Over

WHERE : Window Rock High School Field House
Ft. Defiance, Ariz.

WHEN : June 17, 2014
6:30 p.m.

CONTACT : Rick Abasta, Communications Director
Office of the President and Vice President
THE NAVAJO NATION
Phone: 928-871-7884
Fax: 928-871-4025
Email: rickyabasta@navajo-nsn.gov





CEM 14-06-16

RESOLUTION OF THE
COMMISSION ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR THE ASSAYII LAKE (BOWL CANYON) FIRE.

WHEREAS:

1. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C., § 881 the Navajo Nation Council established the Commission on Emergency Management, authorizing it to assess, verify, recommend and declare states of emergency with the concurrence of the President of the Navajo Nation, and
2. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C., §§ 883 (A) (C) the Commission is empowered to coordinate immediate emergency and disaster relief services with Navajo Nation and non-tribal entities in conjunction with the Department of Emergency Management to recommend and deploy appropriate resources regarding natural and man-made emergencies; and
3. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C., §§ 884 (B) (2), the Commission on Emergency Management may seek assistance from federal, state, other tribal governments, and local and private agencies to address emergency and disaster related situations; and
4. A fire started Friday, June 13, 2014 at Assayii Lake and has consumed approximately 1,100 acres in the Assayii Lake (Bowl Canyon) area; and
5. The Assayii Lake (Bowl Canyon Area) is a rich natural, cultural, and historical resource of timber of the Navajo Nation and lives and property of the local land users within the fire impacted area; and
6. In consultation with the Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management and the Southwest Incident Management Team – Team 3 that the fire in the Assayii Lake (Bowl Canyon Area) has grown to significant proportion impacting the natural, cultural, and historical resources as well as substantial human health and safety risk factors, the Commission on Emergency Management supports the coordinated efforts of the Incident Command of the Southwest Incident Management Team – Team 3, including but not limited to order of evacuations, closures of roads to and within the Assayii Lake Fire impacted area, until such time that said fire is fully contained.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management hereby declares a State of Emergency for the Assayii Lake (Bowl Canyon) Fire due to substantial impact to the natural, cultural, and historical natural resources as well as substantial human health and safety risk factors.

2. The needs of the Navajo Nation are to be addressed in a manner so as to provide the necessary resources required to address said Declared State of Emergency. This includes, but not limited to, resources of personnel, equipment, monetary funding, administrative disciplinary action and/or enforcement, and other resources as may be required to protect natural, cultural, and historical natural resources as well as substantial human health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Navajo Nation (see Whereas 2 & 3 above).

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management at a duly called special meeting in Window Rock, Navajo Nation, Arizona, at which a quorum was present and that the same passed by a vote of 4 approved, 0 opposed, and 0 abstained this 16th day of June 2014.

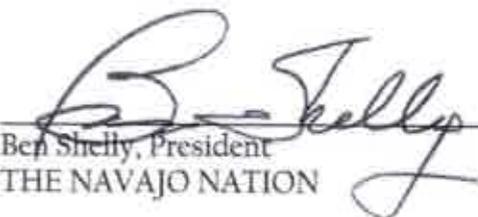


Herman Shorty, Chairperson
Commission on Emergency Management

Motion by: Lt. Emerson Lee

Second by: Dicky Bain

CONCURRENCE:



Ben Shelly, President
THE NAVAJO NATION



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 16, 2014

President Shelly declares state of emergency for Assayii Lake Fire



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—The Navajo Nation is on fire. More than 11,000 acres have burned after an unattended fire near Assayii Lake ignited on June 13 around 3:30 p.m.

Authorities are evacuating families in Sheep Springs and Naschitti due to fire danger and limited visibility from excessive smoke. Travelers are encouraged to avoid the area.

On June 12, Navajo Nation President issued an executive order calling for a fire restriction based on the advice of the Navajo Nation Forestry Department.

Forestry officials were preparing for the high fire danger due to low precipitation, high wind conditions, low humidity and high temperatures.

On June 16, the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management passed CEM 14-06-16, a resolution declaring a state of emergency for the Assayii Lake Fire. President Shelly signed the declaration and ordered applicable tribal resources to assist with efforts to contain and extinguish the fire.

"I direct all Navajo divisions, departments and programs to commit resources to the Assayii Lake Fire. We need to do all we can to stop the fire from spreading further," President Shelly said.

He said tribal employees have been working with the BIA Navajo Region to battle the blaze since the fire began. This included participation in several meetings over the past two days to mobilize forces to battle the blaze.

"Please use caution when traveling near the fire area. The heavy smoke makes it difficult to see and breathe," President Shelly said. "We are asking that the public comply with the fire restriction.

"This is especially important because of the Fourth of July holiday right around the corner and the prevalence of fireworks stands," he added.

On June 15, an initial meeting was convened at the Navajo Nation Museum in response to the fire, which was spread across 200 acres at the time.

Staff from the Office of the President and Vice President was in attendance along with the BIA Navajo Region, Crystal Chapter officials, and the Southwest Area Incident Management Team 3.

OPVP issued a public service announcement on KTNN restricted access to roads leading into Assayii Lake. Additionally, the Navajo Times Facebook warned area residents about the fire and smoke.

The same evening, a coordinators meeting convened at 7 p.m. at the museum to provide updates on the fire. During that briefing, the fire grew to more than 1,000 acres because of the high winds, which were in excess of 65 mph.

Hotshot crews from Arizona tied in with the Navajo Scouts to fight the fire, which increased the number of personnel to more than 250 people during the night. The winds pushed the fire again through the night.

The incident command team transition meeting convened at 6 a.m. at the Crystal Community Center on June 16. The jurisdiction for the fire was transitioned from the BIA Navajo Region to the Southwest Area Incident Management Team 3.

During the briefing, the fire burned more than 2,000 acres. A few hours later, during the daily cooperators meeting at 9 a.m., the fire increased to more than 10,000 acres.

Limited visibility and heavy winds have prevented crews from effectively fighting the fire. Wind gusts are currently between 60 to 70 mph, restricting any aerial crews from dropping flame retardant materials on the fire.

More than 700 personnel are expected to be battling the blaze tonight. Black Mesa, Blue Ridge, Ft. Apache, Globe, Mesa, Mormon Lake, Navajo, Payson, Prescott, Mt. Taylor and Zuni Hotshots are on location fighting the fire.

A community meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. at the Ft. Defiance Field House today.

-30-





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2014

President Shelly issues Father's Day message, cites responsibility



Happy Father's Day from Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and First Lady Martha Shelly. Fatherhood is about responsibility. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Fatherhood is the most important job in the world.

The duties of a father include teaching the difference between wrong and right, protecting family at all costs, and nurturing the lives of children looking to you for guidance.

“Happy Father’s Day to all the fathers across the Navajo Nation and the world,” said Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly.

“Being a father is about responsibility.

“You must be responsible for your family. Most of all, you must be responsible for yourselves because you have people looking up to you,” he added.

Fathers are important to the success their children, the stability of the family unit and this responsibility is easily the most important job in the world, he said.

“This Father’s Day, spend some time with your dad to

let him know how much you care. Go fishing with your dad. Buy him some new tools. Even simply spending some quiet time with your dad will make him happy,” President Shelly said.

At any given moment, fathers may step into the role of disciplinarian, homebuilder, master barbecue chef, or electronics guru. Other times they serve as style coach, guidance counselor,

mechanic and power lifter.

The responsibilities of a father are endless.

This Father’s Day spend some time with your dad and build something. Continue building that unbreakable bond that only exists between a father and his child.

Happy Father’s Day!

-30-





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2014

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Budget and Finance Committee endorses New Mexico H.R. 1645 to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act

WINDOW ROCK – On Tuesday, the Budget and Finance Committee approved Legislation No. 0114-14, seeking the Navajo Nation’s support of New Mexico House Resolution 1645. The bill aims to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, which would improve compensation to former uranium mining workers in the state of New Mexico.

Historically, the Navajo Nation uranium resources were mined by outside companies that did not warn or provide safety measures to the tribe regarding the dangerous side effects from mining the harmful mineral.

In support of the act, BFC vice chair Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin) urged committee members to endorse H.R. 1645 to remind the people that former Navajo uranium mine workers are not forgotten.

“As lawmakers for the Navajo Nation, it is our responsibility to continue advocating for past miners suffering from diseases and ailments caused by the uranium, they deserve the best that we can offer on their behalf,” said Delegate Nez following the meeting.

Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) said H.R. 1645 serves as another step forward in providing improved compensation to former uranium miners.

“I support this house resolution because former miners continue to suffer from the detrimental consequences of uranium mining,” said Pro Tem Bates. “It has caused long-term health problems and substantial emotional damage to the affected individuals and their families who observe their loved ones suffering in sickness, and sadly, in death.”

At the conclusion of the discussion, BFC members unanimously passed Legislation No. 0114-14 with a vote of 3-0.

The legislation was first considered by the Resources and Development Committee on June 3, which referred it to the BFC with a “do pass” recommendation with no amendments.

The legislation now moves forward to the Naabik’iyáti’ Committee for consideration, and has final authority on the legislation.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2014

President Shelly signs Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014 into law



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed the Adult Guardianship Act of 2014 into law on Thursday. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—
T'aa bi bohol 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.





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 11, 2014

President Shelly presents \$1.38 million reimbursement check to NTUA



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly presented a \$1.38 million reimbursement check to NTUA on Wednesday. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— It was the fastest processing for a FEMA reimbursement check by a tribal nation.

On Wednesday, 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 financially closed out the tribe’s oldest disaster, Operation Hastlish, which was on the books since Dec. 28, 2004. OOC is submitting the final financial status report.

“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, beginning at 10 a.m.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 11, 2014

President Shelly fights Sanders liquor license renewal, transfer



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with chapter officials from Nahata Dzil Commission Governance and the Renewal of Hope Task Force to discuss the recent decision by the Apache County Board of Supervisors to renew Gary MacDonald's liquor licenses in Sanders. (Photos by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— The meeting began with prayer.

The prayer was for smart decision-making, tribal leadership unity and most importantly, sobriety.

On Tuesday, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with the Nahata Dzil Renewal of Hope Task Force to discuss

a recent decision by Apache County Board of Supervisors to renew the liquor license for Gary MacDonald.

“I cannot believe they renewed his license,” President Shelly said. “The Navajo Nation stands in opposition to this decision.”

The task force members spoke of the liquor license

renewal with frustration, especially with the cloud of legal allegations looming over MacDonald.

On Jan. 23, 2014, MacDonald was allegedly arrested for the second time in a two-year period for drug charges. His first arrest was in Oct. 2012, when he was accused of operating a meth

lab and was in position of more than 20 firearms.

Ina Noggle, a member of the task force, said the real insult wasn't only the Apache County Board of Supervisors' decision to renew the license, but the fact that MacDonald sold it to acquaintance.

“He sold it to George Ryan, a man who is now managing

it for him, for \$10. He sold it to him for \$10,” Noggle said.

Wayne Lynch, vice president of Nahata Dzil Chapter Governance, said the community needs an attorney to speak on their behalf.

“We need them to request for a denial on this new license,” Lynch said.

He added that an attorney could also be used to speed up the criminal charges against MacDonald, which are currently at the Office of the Arizona Attorney General.

The group provided President Shelly with a copy of Resolution No. NDCG-2014-03-025, which requests for \$30,000 from the Navajo-Hopi Land Commission to assist with securing an Arizona Bar certified attorney.

It was passed by a vote of 3-0-1 on March 22, 2014.

Lauren Bernally has also been assisting the task force with their opposition to the liquor license renewals. She is a policy analyst with the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission.

“One of the things we’re looking at is the human rights violations and obviously, we believe that liquors being sold in this community that is inhabited by people who have been relocated is a gross human rights violation,” Bernally said.

The state of Arizona does not care with the concerns of Nahata Dzil community she said, and is instead pushing down statutes that are limiting the ability of community members to respond.

“When you look at those statutes and the burden of proof that must be met, there is now way we can do that without the help of the federal

government or someone interfacing with the state of Arizona,” she said.

President Shelly said he is sending a letter to Gov. Jan Brewer and state legislators regarding the issue with the license renewal and subsequent transfer. He is also going to contact Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick and Sen. Jeff Flake for support.

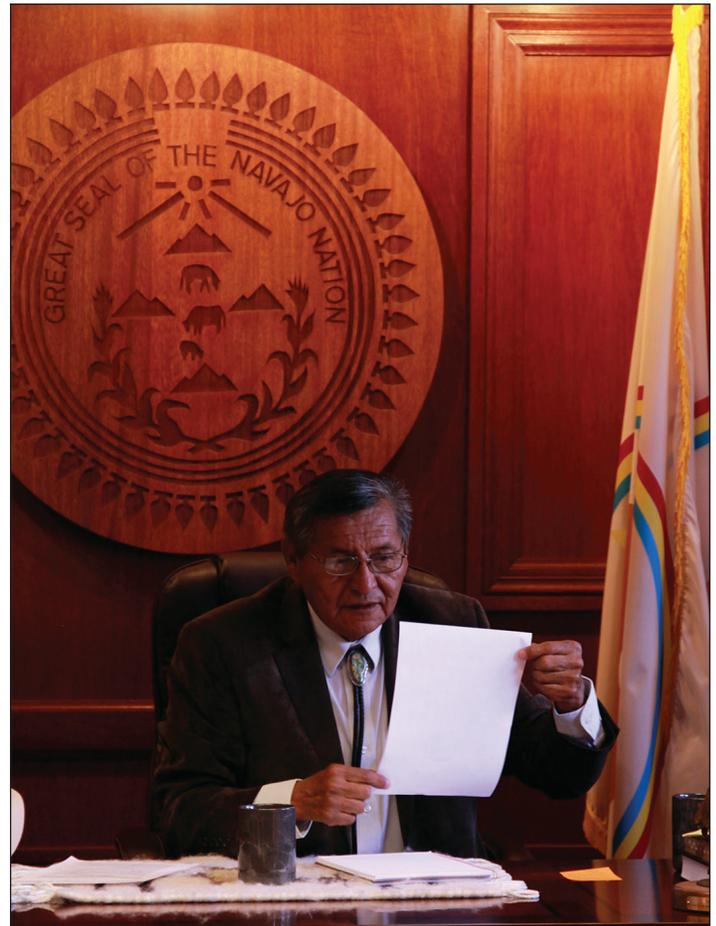
“We will look into the land status and how it was acquired,” President Shelly said. “A lot of these lands were acquired through the railroad right-of-way, which is 50 miles on each side. (The railroads) have been selling it to ranchers and private parties.”

“The President of the United States can issue an executive order, like the New York case when President Clinton gave back stolen land to the Indians. It could go that far,” he said.

On June 10, President Shelly received a letter from the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control stating that they received his letter from May 22 regarding the Sanders and Chambers, Ariz. liquor licenses.

“After a careful and thorough review, in coordination with the Arizona Attorney General’s office, the licenses have been renewed. At this point in time the department did not have sufficient cause to refuse to renew,” stated director Alan Everett.

President Shelly, the Navajo Nation Council, Nahata Dzil Chapter, and Renewal of Hope Task Force will continue their fight against MacDonald and the liquor establishments bordering the Navajo Nation.



President Shelly shared a copy of the letter currently being drafted for Gov. Brewer, Arizona legislators, and congressional members in opposition to the liquor license renewals and transfer. (Photos by Rick Abasta)



Task force member Ina Noggle was appalled at MacDonald’s actions when he sold the liquor licenses to one of his acquaintances for \$10. She said the Nation must protest the action. (Photos by Rick Abasta)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 11, 2014

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Resources and Development Committee to hold public hearing at Diné College for the proposed Navajo Rangeland Improvement Act of 2014

WINDOW ROCK – The Resources and Development Committee has scheduled a public hearing for the proposed Navajo Rangeland Improvement Act of 2014 on June 30, 2014, beginning at 9:00 a.m. at the Diné College Gymnasium, in Tsaile, Ariz.

The proposed Act would change the authority of the director of the Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture, to include the management of grazing permits, the appeals process, and supervision of the Range Technicians.

In addition, the proposed changes would establish the duties of the Range Technicians, replacing the District Grazing Committees and District Land Boards.

If the proposed changes take effect, the Department of Agriculture would manage the grazing permits, following a transition period that includes the review and reissuance of the permits.

Processes for permits in the Navajo Partitioned Lands and McCracken Mesa, seasonal permitting, and regulations to determine eligibility for grazing permits are also addressed.

Other areas include grazing fees, grazing district boundaries, fencing, range units and management, conservation management plans, improvements, recreational livestock, use of motor vehicle, burials, construction in livestock water development areas, wildlife assessment, and livestock trespass. Rules on enforcement, impoundment, and civil sanction and appeals processes are also covered.

The proposed Navajo Rangeland Improvement Act of 2014 may be accessed at www.navajonationcouncil.org under the “News” tab.

The public is encouraged to attend the public hearing and to submit comments prior to June 30. Written comments may be sent to comments@navajo-nsn.gov.

If you have questions regarding the public hearing, please contact the Office of Legislative Services at (928) 871-7254.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 11, 2014

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**Law and Order Committee receives report
regarding proposed project to assist in suicide prevention**

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee received a report regarding a proposed Suicide Surveillance System Project, a collaborative effort between the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety and the Navajo Nation Epidemiology Center, to gather and analyze data pertaining to suicides on the Navajo Nation, with the goal of creating strategies to decrease the number of suicides among Navajo people.

According to a report provided by epidemiologist, JB Kinlacheeny, the Epidemiology Center proposes a pilot-program that would identify risks and preventative measures related to suicides and suicide attempts using information provided by the NNDPS.

“There have been past attempts to create a suicide surveillance program due to public outcry,” said Kinlacheeny. “So what we have done is we developed a suicide surveillance workgroup in January of last year.”

Although suicide rates have decreased significantly on the Navajo Nation in the last few years, rates remain significantly higher in comparison to the national average, according to Kinlacheeny.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichii, Steamboat) spoke in support of the collaboration and encouraged both sides to pursue the project.

“The data that comes from this program can help the Nation understand the needs of Navajo youth, as well as adults, in understanding suicide and preventing it. It would also help create programs that target individuals at risk,” said Delegate Shepherd. “Both entities need to sit down and talk about how they can accomplish this.”

LOC members Council Delegate Russell Begaye (Shiprock) said the compiled information could then be shared with and benefit other entities on the Navajo Nation.

“Both entities need to work out an organized process to begin data sharing for the project because it will also aid Navajo Nation behavioral health organizations, youth, and adult programs, and the improved data sets enables them to understand suicide,” said Delegate Begaye.

NNDPS director John Billison, cautioned LOC members, pointing out that much of the information obtained by NNDPS is sensitive in nature. However, he also added that he is open to the collaboration, with the understanding that the effort is to promote research to aid in reducing suicide rates on the Navajo Nation.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Delegate Shepherd said the Navajo Nation should invest in its own research projects to provide readily available data to governmental and outside entities who may seek information related to the projects, research, and demographics.

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 10, 2014

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Council members pay tribute to late Navajo Code Talker Sidney Bedoni

WINDOW ROCK –Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) paid tribute on Monday, to Navajo Code Talker Sidney Bedonie who passed away on Sunday at the age of 87. Bedonie was born on March 10, 1927 in the community of Navajo Mountain in Utah.

“It is always disheartening to learn of the passing of a great warrior and protector of our people,” said Pro Tem Bates on behalf of the Navajo Nation Council. “We are grateful for his tremendous service and sacrifices for our country and our people.”

Code Talker Bedoni bravely enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps at the young age of 15 years old, proudly serving as a Navajo Code Talker from 1942 to 1946. He also served in the U.S. Army and received several medals including the Korean Service Medal, for his courageous defense of our country during the Korean War.

Following his military service, Bedoni was employed as an explosives operator at the Navajo Army Depot and for the State of Arizona before eventually settling in the community of White Cone with his wife Lena Bedoni, and four children.

Council Delegate Elmer Begay (Dilkon, Greasewood Springs, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone), who represents White Cone, also paid tribute and expressed his gratitude.

“On behalf of my communities, I would like to say ‘Ahe’hee’” to the family of Mr. Bedonie and to let them know that they are in our thoughts and prayers,” said Delegate Begay. “We are proud that he used our unique and great Diné language to defend our country.”

In 2001, he was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, and later awarded the Silver Medal of Honor for his outstanding and dedicated service as a Code Talker.

Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin) also extended heartfelt condolences to Bedoni’s family and expressed appreciation for his valuable service.

“Mr. Bedoni lived a proud and honorable life—a life in which he answered the call of duty when his country needed him the most and for which he sacrificed to shield our country and our Navajo way of life,” stated Delegate Nez.

On Monday, President Ben Shelly ordered all flags on the Navajo Nation to be flown at half-staff in honor of Code Talker Sidney Bedoni, from sunrise on June 10 to sunset on June 13. Funeral services are pending.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org



THE NAVAJO NATION

Proclamation

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF THE LATE NAVAJO CODE TALKER PFC SIDNEY BEDONI

WHEREAS, The Navajo Nation is greatly saddened by the loss of the late Navajo Code Talker Sidney Bedoni, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, The late Sidney Bedoni was a Navajo Code Talker who served the United States of America, the Navajo Nation, U.S. Marine Corps, and U.S. Army with courage, honor and distinction; and

WHEREAS, The late Sidney Bedoni service began on October 20, 1942 as a Private First Class in the U.S. Marine Corps and saw combat in the Battles of Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, Bougainville, Tinian, Guam, Hawaiian Islands, Saipan, Japan, Solomon Islands, Vella Lavella Island, New Caledonia, Okinawa, during World War II; and whereupon he was Honorably Discharged in January 18, 1946; he also served in the U.S. Army from April 21, 1948 to October 23, 1952 and saw combat in the Korean Conflict; and

WHEREAS, The late Sidney Bedoni, was a beloved member of the Navajo Code Talkers in the U.S. Marine Corps; and was also a member of the U.S. Army; 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 flags on the Navajo Nation shall be flown at half-staff in honor of the late Navajo Code Talker Sidney Bedoni, from sunrise on June 10 to sunset on June 13, 2014.

ORDERED THIS 9th DAY OF JUNE 2014


Ben Shelly, President
THE NAVAJO NATION



President Shelly orders flags at half-staff in honor of Sidney Bedoni



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—The Navajo Nation is in mourning.

On June 8, the Navajo Nation lost another American hero when Sidney Bedoni, a former Navajo Code Talker, passed at the age of 91 due to complications from influenza and pneumonia.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly ordered flags at half-staff in his honor from sunrise on June 10 through sunset on June 13.

“The Navajo Nation is greatly saddened by the loss of another warrior. Our

Navajo Code Talkers are not only living treasures for our Nation, but for the U.S. as well,” President Shelly said. “We must do more to recognize their sacrifices in the name of freedom.”

He noted that Bedoni was one of many Navajo men that didn’t hesitate to volunteer for service when the U.S. entered into World War II.

At age 16, Bedoni hitchhiked more than 80 miles to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps to serve as a Navajo Code Talker. During that time, he was

attending boarding school in Tuba City, Ariz. when the recruiters came calling.

Bedoni’s grandson, Eric Mantanona, grew up listening to his grandfather’s stories about defeating the enemy through the Navajo language. He was familiar with the story.

“(The recruiters) handed him a form for his father to sign. He hitchhiked from Tuba City to Navajo Mountain to get permission to serve his country,” Mantanona said.

After enlisting for service, Bedoni served in the 2nd, 4th, and 5th Marine Divisions during World War II.

He fought in the Battles of Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, Bougainville, Tinian, Guam, Hawaiian Islands, Saipan, Japan, Solomon Islands, Vella Lavella Island, New Caledonia, and Okinawa.

His service to the Navajo Nation did not stop there, however.

After receiving an honorable discharge from the U.S. Marine Corps on Jan. 18, 1946, Bedoni enlisted with the U.S. Army on April 21, 1948 and would serve through Oct. 23, 1952.

During his service with the U.S. Army, he again found himself in combat, this time on the icy battlefields of the Korean Conflict.

“While serving in the Marines, my grandfather’s rank was Private First Class. In 1988, he was promoted to Sergeant Major for outstanding service,” Mantanona said. “He also was a civil service employee at the Navajo Army Depot in Belmont, Ariz. for 35 years.”

Bedoni was a recipient of the Silver Congressional Medal of Honor, Korean Service Medal, Army of Occupation Medal, and Good Conduct Medal.

He was also the last surviving Navajo Code Talker paratrooper and served in the 1st Parachute Regiment.

Bedoni leaves behind his wife Lena, four children, seven grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will take place on June 16 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Winslow, Ariz. at 11 a.m. Bedoni will be buried at the Arizona National Cemetery in Cave Creek.



NAVAJO HEAD START
Department of Diné Education
PO Box 3479 / 1 Morgan Blvd.
Window Rock, AZ 86515
www.navajohs.org

Contact: Sharon Henderson-Singer
Assistant Superintendent
Department of Diné Education
(928) 871-6902

News Release

For Release: June 9, 2014

Navajo Head Start Passes Federal Review; Full Compliance Ensures Nation Will Receive an Estimated \$125 Million 5-Year Grant Award

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation Head Start on Friday received official notice from the Administration for Children and Families – Office of Head Start it was deemed in full compliance with strict federal mandates and will now be the recipient of a five-year non-competitive grant award estimated at \$125 million.

After more than 20 years of non-compliance, NHS successfully passed the comprehensive Federal Tribal Designated Renewal System. The notice came forth after a federal review team monitored the NHS and examined its management systems, policies and observed classroom instruction and health and safety compliance. From May 5-9, the federal review team visited 50 head start centers at random to make their assessments.

“The Navajo Nation was on the verge of losing Head Start after years of noncompliance,” said Assistant Superintendent Sharon Henderson-Singer. “There was a major need of reform to bring the Head Start program into compliance.”

Singer said the reform effort was a true collaboration between the NHS leadership team, staff, the Navajo Nation Council’s Health, Education and Human Services Committee, the Navajo Board of Education and the NHS parent policy council.

“I am grateful for staff and leaders who realized that higher standards and higher expectations needed to be set so that Navajo children and their families would receive learning experiences that would benefit them for a lifetime,” Singer said.

“We are moving forward to providing high quality early childhood programs for our Nation’s youngest children,” she said. “We now have a high quality workforce, highly stimulating, literacy rich learning environments, improved technology services, safe and healthy facilities, aligned curriculum to the common core standard, promotion of Navajo language and culture in the classroom, benchmark assessments and improved teaching.

“I am hopeful that the naysayers have gained an understanding of what is needed to ensure the NHS grant is not terminated and children are provided the best services possible,” Singer said.

Throughout the whole process, Singer said she was keenly aware that if NHS did not comply with federal mandates that not only would the children suffer, all NHS staff – administrators, teachers, cooks and bus drivers – would lose their jobs.

“The process of rebuilding the program was met with resistance by the public and leadership at times. Nevertheless, staff had to persevere and work through those challenges,” Singer said.

All Head Start programs, including the Navajo Nation’s, must meet more than 2,800 federal requirements including the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, which established a Sept. 30, 2013 deadline requiring all Head Start agencies to employ a highly qualified workforce.

For NHS, a highly qualified workforce meant that anyone who works with children must have at minimum a Child Development Associate credential. Teachers must have an associate’s degree, and be enrolled in a major with coursework related to early childhood education. Teacher assistants, and cooks are required to have a minimum of 24 credit hours towards an associate degree, and be enrolled in a program leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree.

“There is an ongoing effort within the NHS to make sure that staff entrusted with a Navajo child’s development and wellbeing are well qualified and are committed to their growth,” Singer said.

“There is still much work to be done to improve NHS services and open more centers,” Singer said. “The NHS must continue to build upon the progress made over the last two years to bring the program into compliance. Termination of the NHS grant for any reason is not an option.”

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 9, 2014

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Health, Education, and Human Services Committee commends Navajo Head Start for passing federal review

WINDOW ROCK— Health, Education, and Human Services Committee members on Monday, commended the Navajo Head Start program for successfully passing the comprehensive federal tribal Designated Renewal System. The announcement marks the first time in over 20 years that the program has passed the review process successfully.

HEHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) called the announcement a “remarkable accomplishment” for the program and the Navajo Nation, while also urging for the continued improvement of the program.

“Looking ahead, we must address systematic issues within our government and continue to develop solutions to maintain the Navajo Head Start program for future generations,” stated Delegate Hale.

The HEHSC serves as the oversight for the Navajo Head Start program.

In early May, NHS was monitored by a federal review team to assess management systems, policies and procedures, observations of instruction in the classrooms, and health and safety compliance

Following the review process, the Navajo Nation was notified by the Administration for Children and Families, under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, that the program is now in full-compliance with federal mandates, according to a press release from Navajo Head Start.

HEHSC member Council Delegate Joshua Lavar Butler (Tó Nanees Dizi) also expressed his appreciation for NHS staff and the program.

“This was well-received news by the Navajo Nation and I am very thankful the Nation was able to save a program that is vital to the needs of our young people. The program was at the verge of collapse and at risk was hundreds of millions of dollars being reverted back to the federal government. I commend Sharon Singer and her staff for doing what they needed to come into compliance. At the end of the day, we have to be reminded this program is for the children,” said Delegate Butler.

Assistant Superintendent Sharon Henderson Singer thanked HEHSC members, NHS leadership team, NHS staff, and the parent policy council for their guidance and continued support.

NHS will receive a five-year non-competitive grant award for approximately \$125 million, according to the NHS press release.

Additionally, NHS will be able to expand its services, educational opportunities, further develop and streamline its processes, and allows the program to become eligible for additional funding to benefit Navajo children, according to Henderson Singer.

EHSC member Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsiidi To ii) also commended the staff and its program for its continued progress.

“It is encouraging to see Head Start making progress, although these might appear incremental, they are no doubt significant,” Delegate Phelps stated.

Dr. Lamont Yazzie, Director of Educational Services stated, “In passing the review and securing funding for the next five years, we can now concentrate our efforts on training staff, building instructional leaders, and building capacity in carrying out the important work of educating children and empowering families across the Navajo Nation.”

Delegate Hale the EHSC will request a report from Navajo Head Start in the near future.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 9, 2014

President Shelly to tour and receive new Kayenta Justice Center



“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.

Information: www.bitco-kitchell.net.



Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim toured the Kayenta Justice Center in April. The project was still in construction at the time and many of the workers were Navajos. Bitco-Kitchell partnered to complete the construction for the \$34 million project, which was designed by Sloan Architects. (Photos by Rick Abasta)

KAYENTA—Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly will tour the new \$34 million justice facility in Kayenta on June 20, marking the substantial completion of the American Recovery Reinvestment Act funded project.

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

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.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 6, 2014

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Navajo Nation Council appropriates \$19 million for the Nation's 110 chapters, Navajo Veterans, and student employment

WINDOW ROCK – During a special session held on Friday, members of the Navajo Nation Council approved Legislation No. 0102-14, which originally sought \$5 million from the Navajo Nation's Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance to address local level community needs in the Nation's 110 chapters. Following the approval of five amendments, the overall amount approved by Council grew to \$19 million.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) explained that he worked with Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and his administration to develop the legislation in response to the growing needs of Navajo chapters.

"It's beneficial for the Navajo people when the President's Office and Council work together, and that's what occurred in this situation," stated Delegate Hale following Council's approval.

Council unanimously approved an amendment proposed by Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), which appropriated \$1 million from the UUFB, to assist Navajo veterans with emergency/medical expenses, home repairs, financial hardships, and scholarship/educational expenses.

In addition, Council approved an amendment proposed by Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake), which appropriated \$3 million from the UUFB for temporary summer employment for college and high school students.

Delegate Tsosie said he proposed the amendment after speaking with a Navajo mother, who explained that she wants her child — a student living off the Navajo Nation — to come home for the summer to continue learning the Navajo way of life, but is unable to do so due to the lack of student employment on the Navajo Nation.

Included with the amendment is a directive for all chapters and Local Governance Support Centers, to expend the funds by the fourth quarter of the current fiscal year, intended to expedite the hiring process for students.

On Friday, Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) proposed increasing the original amount of \$5 million to \$15 million, emphasizing that chapters are in great

need of additional funding to meet the demanding needs of Navajo people. The amendment passed with a 10-5 vote.

Pending approval by President Shelly, \$15 million will be appropriated to address local level community needs, \$1 million for specific needs of Navajo veterans, and \$3 million for temporary summer employment for college and high school students.

President Shelly will have ten calendar days to consider the resolution once it is sent to the Office of the President and Vice President.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 5, 2014

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Resources and Development Committee approves legislation supporting the Fort Wingate Land Division Act of 2014

WINDOW ROCK – On Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0122-14, accepting the Fort Wingate Land Division Act of 2014, a Congressional bill, sponsored by U.S. Rep. Ben R. Luján (D-NM) that proposes to divide approximately 21,000 acres of parceled land known as the former Fort Wingate Army Depot between the Navajo Nation and Zuni Tribe.

The former Army depot was constructed in 1870 and was used for storage and disposal of missiles and ammunition. The Army depot closed in 1993 and the land opposition between both tribes has ensued since.

The proposed land division would give the Navajo Nation approximately 50% of parceled land and the Zuni Tribe approximately 40% of the parceled land.

The remaining land would remain under the U.S. Department of Defense due to high levels of contamination in the area.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse’ii’ahi, Whiterock) urged the approval of the legislation, emphasizing that the proposed land division stalled for years because both sides have not reached a consensus.

“The Fort Wingate issue has been discussed since I’ve become a delegate and has probably been discussed prior to the 18th and 19th Council. Since the closure of Fort Wingate, as a whole, the

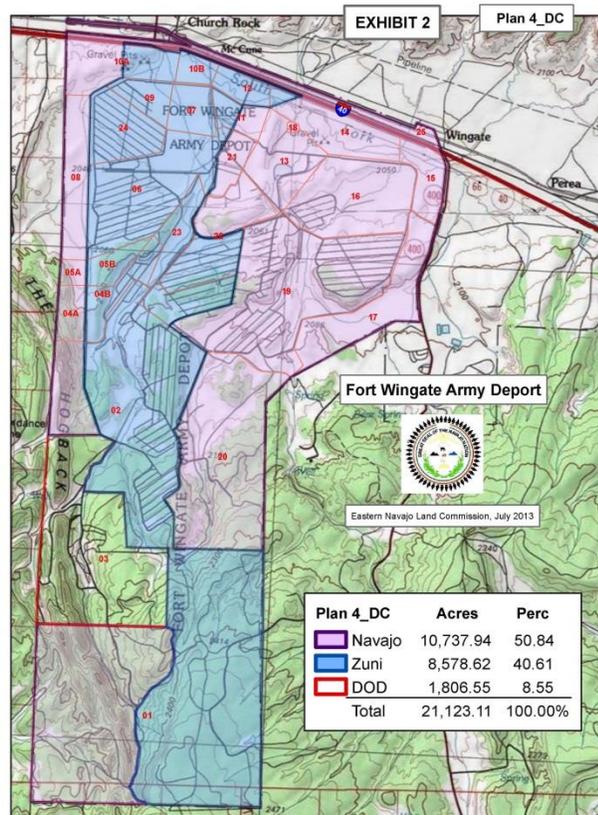


Photo: Exhibit 2 of Legislation No. 0122-14 shows the proposed land division between the Navajo Nation and the Zuni Tribe.

lands have become available and for many years this issue has been discussed by many delegates,” stated Delegate Simpson.

On July 8, 2013, a meeting in Washington, D.C. took place among Reps. Ben Ray Lujan (D-N.M.), Steve Pierce (R-N.M.), Don Young (R-Alaska), Pueblo of Zuni Governor Arlen Quetawki and members of the Fort Wingate Army Depot Task Force to negotiate a resolution that would divide the parceled land.

Negotiations concluded, however, Navajo people residing in nearby communities continue to voice their disagreement with the proposed land division, many of which have said the Navajo Nation should receive a larger portion or all of the land.

Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) voiced the concerns of his constituents.

“When this issue was first brought up for this land exchange, the Zuni tribe was supposed to get the southern part not the northern part of the land. Also, in a 1942 letter by the Army, it stated that once the Army is done with the land, they would give it back to the Navajo,” stated Delegate Yazzie.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) spoke in support of the legislation, adding that local community members are taking an “extreme position” by demanding that the Navajo Nation receive 100% of the disputed land, while offering no recommendations.

Following the discussion, RDC chairperson Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) said that the Navajo Nation needs to stand up against the Zuni Tribe.

“I want to see that letter that the land belongs to the Navajo Nation. Bring that letter forth, and I will stand with you,” stated Delegate Benally to Delegate Yazzie.

RDC members voted 4-0 to approve Legislation No. 0122-14.

The legislation now goes to the Naa’bik’iyati’ committee and to the Council for final consideration.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 5, 2014

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Council takes part in historic signing ceremony to bring successful end to litigation against the U.S. over mismanaged trust fund assets



Photo: From left, Council Delegate Walter Phelps, Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley, Deputy Attorney General Dana Bobroff, President Ben Shelly (sitting), Council Delegate Roscoe Smith, Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (sitting), Council Delegate Jonathan Nez, Attorney General Harrison Tsosie, Navajo Tax Commission director Martin Ashley, and OPVP Chief of Staff Arbin Mitchell.

WINDOW ROCK – Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) along with members of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council joined Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly on Wednesday, to take part in a historic signing ceremony of Council Resolution CMY-28-14.

The resolution, approved by the Council last Friday, will award the Navajo Nation a total of \$554 million, representing the largest recovery of any Indian Nation in any breach of trust litigation with the United States government.

In return, the Navajo Nation agrees to dismiss its pending lawsuit over the historical mismanagement of trust fund assets, which was filed on Dec. 29, 2006 in the United States Court of Federal Claims.

Pro Tem Bates thanked members of the Naabik’iyátí’ Committee Trust Mismanagement Litigation Task Force for guiding the legal team throughout the negotiations and also said the Navajo

Nation's success in negotiating the agreement sends a very strong message to other tribes that are currently in litigation over trust fund assets.

"The fact that the Navajo Nation is the largest tribe sends a very strong that there is hope at the end of the day," said Pro Tem Bates. "There is light at the end of the tunnel."

Pro Tem Bates and President Shelly praised the tremendous contributions of Navajo Nation Deputy Attorney General Dana Bobroff, who worked diligently for years to reach an agreement.

"I would like everyone to realize what an absolute historical landmark accomplishment this is for the Navajo Nation," stated Bobroff. "This is the largest trust responsibility award from the United States in the history of Indian Country. It will never completely address the wrongs done on prior generations, but it's going to allow some opportunities for future generations."

Bobroff also noted that under the terms of the agreement, the Navajo Nation will receive the \$554 million award no later than 120 days following President Shelly's signing of the resolution.

President Shelly expressed the need for careful planning and recommended that the Nation look to invest the funds in a manner that benefits the Navajo people.

"Let's put that plan together to help the people out there. There's so much we can do out there," said President Shelly.

Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins), who chaired the Naabik'iyátí' Committee Trust Mismanagement Litigation Task Force, was also on hand to express his appreciation to fellow task force members and to acknowledge their unified efforts that led to the successful agreement.

"We were all unified in our approach," Delegate Curley stated. "My hats off to the task force members for sticking together and making the United States [accountable]."

Task force members also thanked members of the 20th Navajo Nation Council and in particular former Council Delegate Ervin Keeswood, Sr., who introduced legislation in 2006 that led to the establishment of the Historical Trust Asset Mismanagement Litigation Trust Fund, and authorized the filing of the lawsuit against the United States on behalf of the Navajo Nation.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 4, 2014

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**Budget and Finance Committee
receives report regarding Branch Chiefs meeting**

WINDOW ROCK – The Budget and Finance Committee received a report on Tuesday, regarding an update of a Branch Chiefs meeting held on June 3, between Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates, President Ben Shelly, and Chief Justice Herb Yazzie.

Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland), who also chairs the BFC, said the Branch Chiefs discussed issues such as employee step-increases, the recent approval by the federal government to allow the Navajo Nation to begin land leasing, proposed indirect and fixed costs rates, and the Decentralization/Regionalization Initiative.

“Our ultimate goals of the meetings are to improve communication between each branch, and set priorities for the Navajo Nation for the upcoming FY2015 year, in respect to each branch’s responsibilities,” said Pro Tem Bates.

Pro Tem Bates said the U.S. Department of the Interior recently approved a streamlined process that grants the Navajo Nation the authority to approve land leases without the involvement of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, this excludes mineral and rights-of-way leasing.

Another key issue that was discussed is a proposed step increase for Navajo Nation employees. Bates said that the Navajo Department of Personnel Management reported that the Navajo Nation is 13% below the national average for salaries.

In support of the proposed employee step increases, BFC member Council Delegate Mel Begay (Coyote Canyon, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, Bahastl'a'a) said he believes the increase in Navajo Nation employee salaries would be beneficial, and reminded committee colleagues of the potential issues that may arise regarding the hiring of new personnel.

“If the salaries increase, then the Nation may have to limit the amount of persons hired annually by the Nation, because it is a possibility that we may run into a funding shortfall for personnel,” said Delegate Begay. “We cannot risk any type of potential instability.”

At the conclusion of the report, Pro Tem Bates said the Branch Chiefs also discussed the Decentralization/Regionalization Initiative, proposing that attorney's be provided at the local chapter levels to ensure their needs are being met with professional legal advice.

"[The Navajo Nation Department of Justice] did admit that they get a lot of requests from chapters and it gets caught up in the bureaucratic process, so they felt like they weren't giving the proper attention to their needs," said Pro Tem Bates.

BFC members voted 4-0 to accept the report.

The next scheduled Branch Chiefs meeting is set for June 9.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 4, 2014

President Shelly orders flags at half-staff in honor of Chester Nez



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Flags across the Navajo Nation will be flown at half-staff in honor of the last surviving member of the Original 29 Navajo Code Talkers.

Chester Nez, 93, passed in his sleep on June 4, 2014 in Albuquerque, N.M.

“The Navajo Nation has lost our last living treasure, Chester Nez, an original member of the Navajo Code Talkers,” said Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly. “We send his family and friends our deepest sympathy and condolences.”

President Shelly issued a proclamation to have flags

across the Nation to be at half-staff from sunrise on June 5 through sunset on June 8.

Nez saw combat as a Navajo Code Talker at the Battle of Guadalcanal, Battle of Guam, Battle of Peleiu, and Battle of Bogainville during World War II. He was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps in 1945.

Nez also served in the Marine Corps Reserves and again saw combat during the Korean Conflict, according to his son Michael.

The burial will be at the Santa Fe National Cemetery on Monday or Tuesday, Michael said.

In 2011, Nez wrote about his experience with co-author Judith Avila in the book, “Code Talker: The First and Only Memoir By One of the Original Navajo Code Talkers of WWII.”

“During a time in our Navajo history when our kids were shipped out to boarding school and forbidden to speak their native tongue, these brave men stepped forward to protect our country with their ability to speak Navajo,” President Shelly said.

Nez was a member of the U.S. Marine Corps 382nd Platoon. The Original 29 were the first Navajo Code Talkers

to serve and they developed the code that would bewilder the Japanese in World War II.

Nez was a member of Chichiltah and Manuelito Chapters. The respective chapters are saddened with the loss of a larger than life hero of the Navajo Nation.

President Shelly said the passing of Nez closes another chapter in the annals of Navajo history.

“Chester Nez and the rest of the Original 29 now belong to the ages. We salute their valiant service and memory,” President Shelly said.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 4, 2014

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**Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates and Navajo Nation Council
express condolences over the passing of Navajo Code Talker Chester Nez**

WINDOW ROCK – On behalf of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council, Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) extends his heartfelt condolences to the family and loved ones of the last original Navajo Code Talker Chester Nez, who passed away on Wednesday morning at the age of 93.

“It is with a heavy heart that I send my sincerest condolences to the family of the late Navajo Code Talker Chester Nez, a highly respected and distinguished warrior,” said Pro Tem Bates.

Code Talker Nez was born in Chichiltah, N.M. and at the young age of 17, he bravely answered the call of duty by enlisting in the U.S. Marines. As a member of the 382nd Platoon in the United States Marine Corp., he served as one of the 29 original Navajo Code Talkers who developed the secret military code using the Navajo language during World War II.

On July 26, 2001, Code Talker Nez was honored by former U.S. President George W. Bush and presented with the Congressional Medal of Honor along with the other members of the original Navajo Code Talkers.

“We will always be grateful for his sacrifice and brave service for our country, and more importantly, for his selfless actions to protect our people and the great Navajo Nation,” Pro Tem Bates stated.

On Wednesday, President Ben Shelly ordered all flags on the Navajo Nation to be flown at half-staff in honor of Code Talker Chester Nez, from sunrise on June 5 to sunset on June 8. Funeral services are pending.

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THE NAVAJO NATION

Proclamation

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF THE LATE NAVAJO CODE TALKER CORPORAL CHESTER NEZ

WHEREAS, The Navajo Nation is greatly saddened by the loss of the late Navajo Code Talker Chester Nez, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, The late Chester Nez 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; and

WHEREAS, The late Chester Nez served as a Corporal and saw combat in the Battle of Guadal Canal, Battle of Guam, Battle of Peleiu, and Battle of Bogainville, during World War II; and whereupon he was Honorably Discharged in 1945; and

WHEREAS, The late Chester Nez, was a beloved member of the Original 29 Navajo Code Talkers; and member of the 382nd Platoon in the U.S. Marine Corps; 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 flags on the Navajo Nation shall be flown at half-staff in honor of the late Navajo Code Talker Chester Nez, from sunrise on June 5 to sunset on June 8, 2014.

ORDERED THIS 4th DAY OF JUNE 2014

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ben Shelly".

Ben Shelly, President
THE NAVAJO NATION



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 3, 2014

President Shelly lauds U.S. Senate confirmation of Keith Harper

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—For the first time, a Native American has been selected as ambassador to the United Nations.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly praised the U.S. Senate confirmation of Keith Harper. Harper is a tribal member of the Cherokee Nation.

“Keith’s confirmation is of great accomplishment for all of Indian Country,” President Shelly said. “He will be the first citizen of a federally recognized tribe to serve as a U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

“We congratulate Keith and his family on his confirmation and thank the Senate for taking action on this important role,” he added.

Harper is a partner at the law firm of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP, where he is chair of the Native American Practice Group.

He currently serves as a member on President Obama’s Commission on White House Fellowships. Prior to his current role, Harper was senior staff attorney for the Native American Rights Fund from 1995 to 2006.

From 2007 to 2008, he served as a Supreme Court Justice on the Supreme Court of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, and from 2001 to 2007, he served as an Appellate Justice on the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court.

From 1998 to 2001, he was an adjunct professor at the Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law, and from 1999 to 2001, he was a Professorial Lecturer at the American University Washington College of Law.

Harper was a law clerk to Lawrence W. Pierce on the Second Circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals.

He began his career as a litigation associate with Davis, Polk & Wardwell in New York. Harper received a B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley and a J.D. from New York University School of Law.



President Shelly said the appointment of Keith Harper to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Council was a great accomplishment for all of Indian Country. He sent congratulations and well wishes to Harper’s family and colleagues on behalf of the Navajo Nation. (Photo by Rick Abasta)





President Shelly contrasts Treaty of 1868 to present day responsibilities



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly spoke during the Treaty Day Celebration in Ft. Defiance on May 31. He said the Treaty of 1868 changed the mindset of Navajo people, who previously employed the philosophy of T'áá hwó ájít éego, or self-reliance. He said the Navajo Nation must return back to those teachings from our Navajo elders and that the federal government must live up to their trust responsibilities outlined in the treaty. (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 it 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 Friday, 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

“With this half-a-billion dollar surplus, I will begin loosening these line item vetoes so that projects can be funded.”

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 when they returned from *Hweeldi*. Let’s continue moving forward with self-determination for our future generations,” President Shelly said.

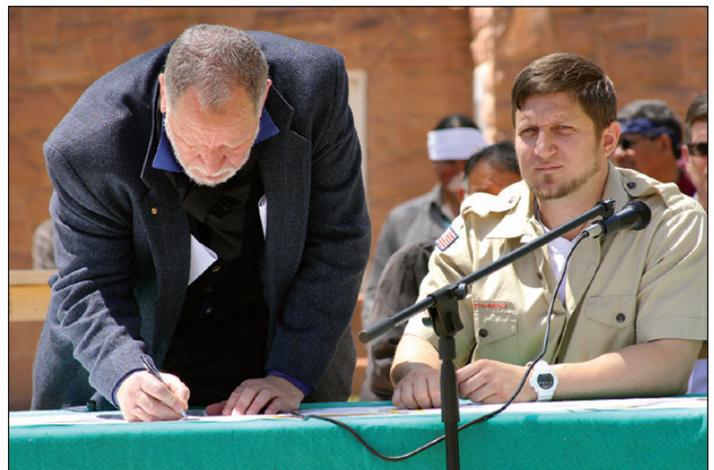
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Community members from Ft. Defiance and various parts of the Navajo Nation volunteered their time to participate in the reenactment of the treaty signing. They murmured and expressed happiness during the signing, as many of the Navajo chiefs did during the actual signing in 1864. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Performing in the role of Barboncito was Bronco Martinez, a Navajo musician and performer from Mariano Lake., N.M. His performance as the Navajo Chief Barboncito was a hit with the crowd. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Errol Valteau, a Ft. Defiance resident, played the role of Gen. Sherman. He’s pictured here signing the treaty, as witnessed by Stephen Fabina, another local resident playing the role of a government official. (Photo by Rick Abasta)