



The Navajo Nation Council — Office of the Speaker

Contact: Joshua Lavar Butler, Communications Director

Phone: (928) 871-6384

Cell: (928) 255-2946

Fax: (928) 871-7255

joshualavarbutler@navajo.org

joshualavarbutler@yahoo.com

www.navajonationcouncil.org

February 27, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Navajo Council approves right-of-way for Desert Rock Energy Project

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The 21st Navajo Nation Council approved the Diné Power Authority's application to the Navajo Nation and the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the Desert Rock Energy Project during a special session on Friday, Feb. 27, at the Navajo Nation Council chamber.

Legislation No. 0721-08, sponsored by George Arthur (T'iistoh Sikaad/San Juan/Nenanezad), Roy B. Dempsey (Oak Springs/St. Michaels) and Norman John II (Twin Lakes) is related to economic development, resources and intergovernmental relations. The legislation was approved by a vote of 71-8, and was the final obstacle for Diné Power Authority to begin construction on a 1500-megawatt coal fired power plant near the Four Corners region of the Navajo Nation.

Elouise Brown, president of the Doodá Desert Rock committee, expressed her group's concerns of the power plant project to the Navajo Council during a work session held on Feb. 26, a day before the special session on Feb. 27. The work session was held to give Navajo Council delegates the opportunity to ask questions regarding opposition the project.

Opponents to the power plant contend that it will cause air pollution and contaminate the San Juan Basin while destroying thousands of acres of prime Navajo grazing lands. Supporters of the power plant argue that it will bring in much-needed revenues to the Navajo Nation coffers and will allow the Nation to become more independent, all while creating new jobs and income for Navajo people.

The power plant is expected to create at least 500 permanent union wage jobs on the Navajo Nation, an opportunity for skilled Navajo workers to gain employment in a region that has a 50 percent unemployment rate. The power plant is also expected to generate more than \$50 million a year for the Navajo Nation.

The Diné Power Authority, a subsidiary of the Navajo Nation, is partnering with Sithe Global LLC to build the massive power plant north of Shiprock N.M.

###