



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Delegate Tom Chee and Congressman Lujan visit families affected by flooding



PHOTO: Council Delegate Tom Chee and U.S. Congressman Ben Ray Lujan (D – N.M.) speak with the Woody family who lost their home due to flooding in Shiprock on August 9, 2016.

SHIPROCK, N.M. – Council Delegate Tom Chee (Shiprock) invited U.S. Rep. Ben Ray Lujan (D – N.M.) on Tuesday, to visit with families in the community of Shiprock who lost homes or sustained damage to their homes due to flooding caused by heavy rain last week.

Delegate Chee and Congressman Lujan spent over two hours walking through the impacted area known as Salt Creek Wash and visiting with families, including the Woody family who lost their home and two vehicles in the flood that occurred in the northern portion of Shiprock.

On Aug. 8, the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management declared a state of emergency through resolution CEM-16-08-08, which states that the flooding poses a substantial risk to property damage, loss of life, and significant impact to public health and community infrastructure and recommends that all branches of the Navajo Nation begin planning and

implementing for their respective emergency responses and emergency funds pursuant to their respective emergency plans.

On Tuesday, Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority continued to volunteer its workers and heavy equipment to assist in clearing the areas for local residents. Officials from Navajo Tribal Utility Authority and the Bureau of Indian Affairs had also been in the area to assess the damages caused by the flooding and to begin determining how to proceed with repairs.

Residents said they were thankful that there were no deaths as result of the flooding, but damaged power lines, sewer tanks, and the loss of livestock have also affected many.

“It’s important for officials from all levels of government to see the damages and devastation that families are faced with so that we can coordinate and try to help them with all possible avenues of assistance,” stated Delegate Chee, who represents the community.

Some residents said they have been staying with relatives or sought shelter at the Shiprock Chapter since the flooding occurred, while they await assistance with temporary housing.

One family reported that nearly four-feet of water rushed through their fields when the flooding occurred, damaging their crops, roads, and leaving heavy farming equipment under approximately one-foot of silt. The silt also ran under the family’s mobile home, jeopardizing the stability of the mobile unit.

Congressman Lujan consoled the families and said his office would communicate the needs of the community and families to federal entities to secure assistance.

The Shiprock Chapter officials have established a “GoFundMe” account to assist the families. Please search the “Shiprock Flood Emergency” on the GoFundMe website to donate.

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