



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Resources and Development Committee approves sand and gravel leases

LEUPP, Ariz. – During a special meeting held on Monday, the Resources and Development Committee approved two separate legislations that will allow Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority to extract sand and gravel from areas located in Teecnospos and Nazlini.

Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority is a wholly-owned enterprise of the Navajo Nation that engages in the engineering and construction business for and on behalf of the Nation, which includes road construction and maintenance.

Legislation No. 0407-18 sponsored by Council Delegate Davis Filfred (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa), approved the leasing of over 16 acres of land in the Teecnospos Chapter vicinity along with an additional two acres for an access road to the sand and gravel site.

According to Delegate Filfred, the environmental and archaeological studies and clearances are completed, and the land user has given their consent for the lease. The mining lease is also support by the Teecnospos Chapter through a resolution passed in February 2017, and through a separate resolution approved by the NECA board of directors in March 2017.

During Monday's discussion, RDC vice chair Council Delegate Benjamin L. Bennett (Crystal, Fort Defiance, Red Lake, Sawmill) motioned for an amendment to the lease to increase the royalty rate of \$1.50 per ton of material removed and sold from the lease premises to \$2.00 per ton. RDC members approved the amendment by a vote of 3-1.

RDC members also approved Legislation No. 0409-18 sponsored by Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle), which leases 50 acres of land in the Nazlini Chapter vicinity to allow NECA to mine sand and gravel along with an access road to the site.

According to the bill, environmental and archaeological studies and clearances have been completed and the land user has given their consent for the lease as well.

Delegate Bennett commended Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority for pursuing the mining leases in order to improve and construct roads in Navajo communities. He stated that allowing NECA to mine sand and gravel locally would reduce the overall cost of road maintenance

and construction, and hopefully allow projects to be completed faster than having to import sand and gravel from outside companies.

The Resources and Development Committee approved both legislations with a vote of 4-0, and serves as the final authority for both bills.

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