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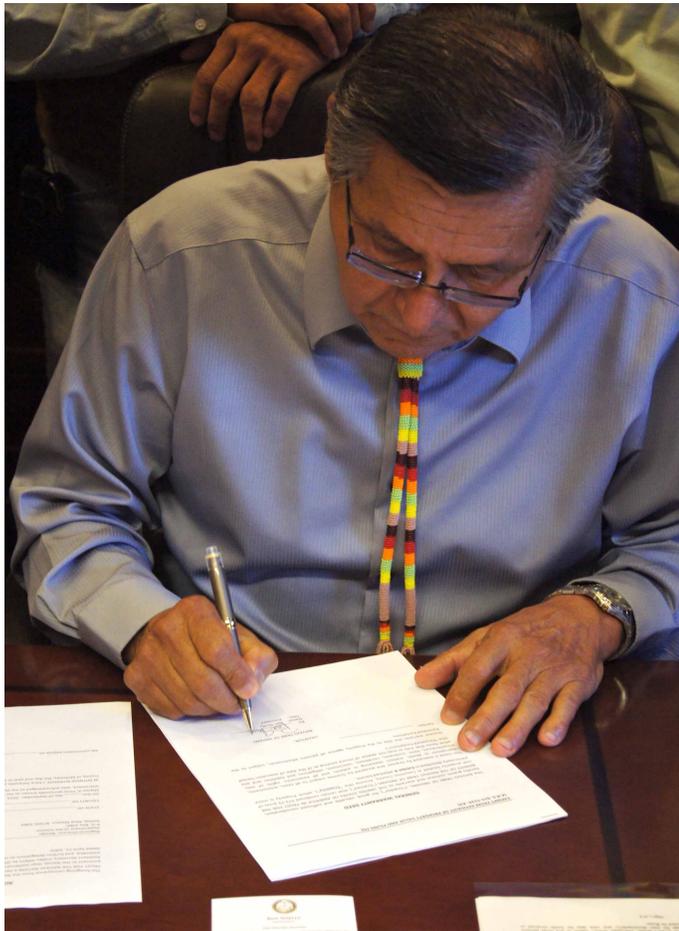
Navajo President Signs Deed For To Put Turquoise Ranch Into Navajo Trust

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed documents to put 373 acres near Winslow, Ariz. into Navajo trust at a signing ceremony Monday morning.

The Navajo Nation bought the land, commonly referred to as Turquoise Ranch, for \$1.5 million last year.

“With today’s signing of these documents, we are not just signing land deeds into trust, we are establishing a firm pathway for Navajo families to start a new life after being relocated,” President Shelly said before signing the General Warranty Deed, which granted four parcels of land to the United States Government to put into trust.

Bureau of Indian Affairs’ Navajo Regional Director Sharon Pinto signed the deed accepting the land into trust.





(Left to right) Council Delegates Elmer Begay, Walter Phelps, Lorenzo Curley, and Alton Joe Shepherd, joined (front left) BIA Navajo Regional Director Sharon Pinto and (front right) Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly for the signing Monday morning.

“I’m signing to accept the land into trust,” Pinto said.

Former Hopi Land Commission Director Roman Bistui said the land would likely be used for home development for relocatees.

Bistui serves as an advisor for the Navajo-Hopi Land Commission.

More than 4,000 families have been relocated since the 1974 Navajo-Hopi Land Settlement Act, and decedents are entitled to homes under the act, Bistui added.

Two water wells exist on the land already, but a master land use plan needs to be composed before any usage of the land becomes final, Bistui stated.

Nonetheless, President Shelly said developing the land would produce jobs.

“We now have the capability to manage this land as our own. We can build new homes for our people. And with construction of homes, we will create jobs for our local people,” President Shelly said.

President Shelly added that having Navajo families living in close proximity to the Navajo Nation helps preserve Navajo culture and language.

“It is important to have our Navajo people in homes that are on our reservation. Within our Navajo boundaries, our culture is the strongest. Our children have a better chance at learning their language and culture when they live within our boundaries. Our children are our greatest resource,” President Shelly added.

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