



NAVAJO NATION OFFICE OF THE  
PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT  
RUSSELL BEGAYE | JONATHAN NEZ

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Navajo Nation Thanks Donors for Support**

WINDOW ROCK – Reaching out to help the Navajo Nation.

That’s what individuals, tribes and entities are doing to assist Navajo chapters who have been impacted by the Gold King Mine contamination spill along the San Juan River.

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye stated, “On behalf of the Navajo Nation, we are very appreciative for the outpouring of love and support for our people who have been impacted by this recent incident on the northern portion of our reservation. It’s times like these when we all need to come together and help each other. We are honored and say a humbling ‘thank you’ from the Navajo Nation for your generous support to help our people who are in need of resources to sustain themselves.”

Some of the individuals, entities and tribes include the Cherokee Nation of North Carolina who will deliver a diesel truck full of hay to the Navajo Nation. A Water is Life Walk/Run was held on August 29<sup>th</sup> in Tempe, Arizona, which was sponsored by Waylon Pahona who is Hopi/Tewa and founder of Healthy Active Natives. Participants in the Walk/Run donated 10 pallets of bottled water, which will be delivered to the Navajo Nation Emergency Operation Center (NNEOC) on Friday, Aug. 4. Digital Air Strike of Phoenix delivered approximately six pallets of bottled water to Shiprock Chapter. The Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) will issue one relief convoy to donate 22-25 tons of hay for Navajo ranchers and they will also donate bottled water.

Begaye added, “I would like to say a special thank you to the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) for notifying the Navajo Nation that they will help provide relief for our Navajo farmers and livestock owners. This will be the second time in Navajo history that CRIT will truck hay from Parker, Arizona. As tribes we have much in common, which includes precious natural resources. It is with great gratitude that we accept the blessing of other tribes.”

CRIT Tribal Treasurer Valerie Welsh explained, “At a recent Five-Tribe Colorado River Coalition meeting, the CRIT Tribes all wanted to provide some relief to assist the Navajo Nation. We have a farm as do other tribes along the Colorado River and we are currently working on what we can provide. As tribal nations banded together, we could provide so much more. We may not meet everyone’s need, but as five tribes, we cannot sit idly by and do nothing. We are Pipah AhaMakaav, People of the River, and wish to share blessings received because of it, the Colorado River.”

NNEOC Director Rose Whitehair is encouraging the chapters and the public to work directly with NNEOC regarding the donation of water tanks, delivery of livestock water, hay and bottled water.

“We are requesting that everyone work directly with NNEOC to help us communicate and coordinate assistance to the affected chapters in an efficient manner and to alleviate any confusion,” said Whitehair. “We also don’t want the public at large to donate to entities that may not be legitimate. If you have any questions regarding whether a donation source is legitimate or not, please contact the NNEOC.”

More than a dozen chapters in New Mexico, Utah and Arizona are directly impacted by the spill. Individuals, tribes and entities who are interested in donating bottled water, hay or livestock water need to contact the Navajo Nation Emergency Operation Center in Tse Bonito, New Mexico at [\(505\) 371-8414](tel:5053718414) or 8408. For monetary donations, go to any Wells Fargo Bank and make your donation to the attention of Navajo United Way: Operation Yellow Water with the account ending in 3176. You can also donate online at [www.operationyellowwater.com/donate/](http://www.operationyellowwater.com/donate/)

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