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President Shelly Outlines Job Saving Measures to Senators

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with two senators in efforts to protect Navajo jobs Tuesday afternoon.

With recent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requirements to address regional haze in the Four Corners area that could cost the plant \$750 million, President Shelly met with the New Mexico Senators Tom Udall and Jeff Bingaman to express his concern for jobs relating to the power plant.

“We need to protect our Navajo people who have jobs directly and indirectly as a result of San Juan Generating Station,” President Shelly said.

The EPA recently ruled that the San Juan Generating Station, near the Navajo Nation, would have to install technology that PNM estimated could cost \$775 million, which Shelly says, puts Navajo jobs at risk.

San Juan Generating Station employs more than 600 Native American workers, nearly all of who are Navajo. Also, San Juan Mine, which provides coal to the power plant, employs 484 people, of which 220 are Native American.

In August, the EPA ruled and required that San Juan Generating Station install selective catalytic reduction to address regional haze. Shelly said a better plan exists that wouldn’t pose as much risk to jobs.

President Shelly said the EPA overlooked New Mexico’s plan addressing regional haze which would use selective non-catalytic reduction, which would cost about one-tenth of the EPA’s mandates.

Also, the EPA stated their mandates wouldn’t adversely affect the Navajo Nation. Shelly said they could.

“While San Juan Generating Station is not located on Navajo land, that does not mean there will not be negative impacts to our economy and people. On the contrary, hundreds of our people are employed

at the plant and the mine next door that produces its fuel. The wages they earn help to feed, house and clothe an even greater number of Navajo people,” he said.

In addition, Shelly said the Navajo Nation already has a position regarding selective catalytic reduction.

“The Navajo Nation has had a clear position regarding using SCR determined by the EPA, and our position is that we support the lowest cost of retro fit technology that meets the requirements of the regional haze rule, and not to impose higher cost solutions that jeopardize the jobs and economic stability to the both the Navajo Nation and state of New Mexico,” said Shelly told the Senators in two separate meetings.

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