



THE NAVAJO NATION

RUSSELL BEGAYE PRESIDENT
JONATHAN NEZ VICE PRESIDENT

August 3, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chinle woman found in aftermath of flood, Navajo Police end search



President Begaye and Vice President Nez encourage the public to remain safe during the rainstorm and not attempt to cross flooded washes, like this one located west of Gallup, N.M. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

CHINLE, Ariz.—A person who was swept away during flooding in Chinle on August 2 was found.

Jesse Delmar, executive director of Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety, said a female individual was swept away while inside her vehicle during flash flooding last night. The body was recovered earlier today.

“The female individual was recovered. We are concluding

the search and rescue,” Delmar said. “Please be safe out there, don’t attempt to cross flooded areas.

He thanked division personnel, Arizona Department of Public Safety and community members who helped in the rescue and recovery efforts.

The helicopter crew from ADPS evacuated nine people from Canyon de Chelly, in addition to providing air support for the search and rescue.

More than two inches of hailstorm was reported. Canyon de Chelly and the main community were flooded, including schools and several public buildings.

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye urged the public to be careful when traveling through flooded areas.

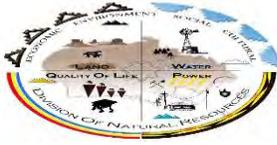
“The Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety is working with other resources to ensure Navajo residents are safe in the

aftermath of the storm,” said President Begaye.

He added, “The nation is being blessed with a lot of moisture, but that also comes with flash floods. The public needs to respect Mother Nature and not take any chances, especially with floods.

Vice President Nez said, “There is still rain in the forecast. Be careful out there, don’t cross flooded washes.”

-30-



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 3, 2015

Planning Underway for Grand Daddy of Tribal Fairs

WINDOW ROCK, AZ. – A host of coordinators are quietly working behind the scenes to produce the grand daddy of all tribal affairs....the Navajo Nation Fair, which will be held on September 6-13th here in the capital of the Navajo Nation.

And they are looking at launching new events and activities to make the 69th Annual Navajo Nation Fair a cultural celebration to remember.

Navajo Nation Fair Production Director Martin L. Begaye said, “Planning the Navajo Nation Fair takes months of preparation by many different individuals. It takes a dedicated team to produce a cultural celebration of this magnitude.”

The theme for the 69th Annual Navajo Nation Fair is “Nihima Nahasdzaan baa’ ahayago naasgoo bee hiniin a doo,” which means “Protecting Mother Earth for Future Generations.”

Begaye noted, “We are promoting the concept of protecting Mother Earth and we all need to do our part as individuals to protect our environment. We are doing this for the future generation.”



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In fact, Begaye said the grand marshal for the Navajo Nation Fair parade is a strong advocate for protecting our environment and educates about climate change – Dr. Karletta Chief.

“The Navajo Nation Fair is the Largest American Indian Fair in North America and is a great venue to showcase the many talents of the Navajo people,” Begaye explained. “Many people from all walks of life look forward to participate in or attend the Navajo Nation Fair. It is definitely an event for visitors from throughout the world to also attend. The Navajo Nation Fair is a great way to experience the unique beauty of the Navajo people.”

The Navajo Nation Fair will kick off with CBR Bull Riding, which will be held on Sunday, September 6th at the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds beginning at 8 p.m. Advance tickets are \$30 and \$35 the day of the event, which includes a concert by Country Music artist Aaron Watson immediately after the CBR Bull Riding performance. Advance tickets will be sold up to 5 p.m. Saturday, September 5th. Children six and under will be free.

Mark your calendar for September 11th if you’re a country music fan. Popular Country Artist Clay Walker will take center stage on Friday, September 11th at the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds beginning at 9 p.m. The concert will be held after the 7 p.m. Indian rodeo performance. Advance tickets will be \$30 and \$35 the day of the show – the ticket price includes the Indian rodeo. It will be \$15 for children six to 12-years-old. Advance tickets will be sold up until September 7th.



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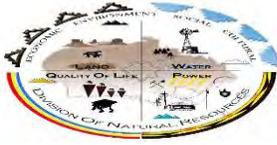
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There will be four Indian rodeo performances beginning Thursday, September 10th through September 13th. It will cost \$15 for adults to attend the Indian rodeo on September 10th and on September 12th and 13th. However, it will cost \$30 to attend the Indian rodeo on Friday, September 11th because it will include a Clay Walker Concert, which will be held immediately after the 7 p.m. Indian rodeo.

Cultural Showcase...that's the name of the Night Performance, which will be held on Saturday, September 12th from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Tickets to attend the Cultural Showcase will be \$8 for adults – there will be no advance tickets. Attendees at the Cultural Showcase will also have an opportunity to win \$1,000 – their entrance tickets will be entered for a drawing at the end of the cultural showcase.

General admission to attend the Navajo Nation Fair will be \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 12-years and up and \$3 for senior citizens 65 years and older. Designated parking will be \$5 and no vehicle passes will be sold. Overnight camping will be \$20.

Rodeo fans will have a chance to win \$500, \$1,000 and \$1,500, which will be held during the Indian rodeo performances – winners must be present at the Indian rodeo in order to win.



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Something new this year will be an opportunity to win \$10,000. Tickets for a mega beeso cash raffle will be \$20 a chance and purchasers of this mega cash raffle do not have to present to win. Tickets will be on sale at the Navajo Nation Special Events Office in Gorman Hall on the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds beginning August 17th.

Begaye noted, “We have had a cash raffle for the past couple of years and it has created a lot of excitement so it is an activity that will continue. In fact, we want to make it even more exciting for everyone, which is why we want to add a \$10,000 cash raffle.”

Individuals interested in participating in the Navajo Nation Fair parade can download the entry form from the Navajo Nation Fair website or pick up an entry form at the Navajo Nation Special Events Office at the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds. General entries are \$325 and \$1,500 for political entries.

Also new this year, cowboys and cowgirls will no longer be able to enter the rodeo as a walk-in. Entry forms can be downloaded on the Navajo Nation Fair website. Entries will close on Friday, August 14, 2015. Contestants must mail in their entries to: Navajo Nation Special Events Section, P.O. Box 2370, Window Rock, Arizona 86515. The deadline to enter the rodeo is Friday, August 14, 2015.



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For more information about the Navajo Nation Fair events, contact the Navajo Nation Fair Special Events staff at (928) 871-7833 or 6647 or via their website at www.navajonationfair.com



August 4, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

President Begaye issues statement regarding U.S. EPA Clean Power Plan ruling



President Begaye said transitioning to a more balanced energy portfolio, including renewable energy, will not happen overnight. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— On Aug. 3, 2015, the U.S. EPA released its final Clean Power Plan. This final rule would cut carbon dioxide emissions at a national level by 32 percent from 2005 levels. This would be achieved by 2030.

Included in the plan are carbon reductions for Indian Country, for Indian nations with existing power plants, like the Navajo Nation. The final rule affects both Navajo Generating Station and Four Corners Power Plant.

There are only two other power plants on tribal lands that are also impacted.

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye is extremely

interested in any federal regulation that impacts these two power plants because of their importance to the tribal economy, and the Navajo families who earn their living working at these power plants.

“The final Clean Power Plan is voluminous and complex. The Navajo Nation is currently reviewing the final rule and a thorough review will take some time,” said President Begaye.

Transitioning to a more balanced energy portfolio, including renewable energy, will not happen overnight. The coal-strengthened economy of the Navajo Nation includes the two power plants and associated mines in place as the economic

lifeline of the Navajo people.

The economic considerations are paramount, especially when considering the Navajo Nation’s 52 percent unemployment rate, when the national average is 5.8 percent.

In addition to the financial benefits, the skilled jobs at NGS and FCPP must also be taken into account. These jobs are generally high-skilled, high-paying jobs with benefits including health insurance and retirement options.

“These jobs are extremely difficult to obtain on the nation and are almost irreplaceable. Any negative impacts on the power plants and mines will have a severe and direct effect

on the tribal economy,” said President Begaye.

The potential end result is a significant decrease in the general funds, which would weaken government services to the Navajo people. Tribal sovereignty is also weakened because the nation will be dependent upon the federal government for additional funding.

An official statement from the Navajo Nation that fully addresses the Clean Power Plan is forthcoming after a thorough review of the rule by Navajo EPA and Department of Justice.



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President Begaye elected vice president for Coalition of Large Tribes



This week, President Begaye was in Albuquerque with the Coalition of Large Tribes and Vice President Nez was in Spokane, Wash. with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (Photo by Ramona Antone-Nez)

ALBUQUERQUE—The Coalition of Large Tribes, or COLT, convened in Albuquerque on August 4 at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center.

Comprised of members from large Indian tribes throughout Indian Country, the coalition serves as an advocacy group for issues facing American Indian tribes with land bases exceeding 100,000 acres.

These tribes include the Navajo Nation, Crow Nation, Blackfoot Tribe, Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, Colville Confederated Tribes, Spokane Tribe, Ute Indian Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, Ceyenne River Sioux Tribe and others.

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye was elected as COLT Vice President on Tuesday afternoon.

“I am very excited with the opportunity to serve as vice president for COLT,” said President Begaye. “I appreciate the opportunity to work with other large land base tribes to find solutions for issues from our

communities.

“From transportation to law enforcement to housing to economic development, larger tribes have unique challenges that stem from geographic distances,” he added.

President Begaye is also attending the Tribal Interior Budget Council meeting this week in Albuquerque, hosted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Vice President Jonathan Nez was also elected as co-chairman of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry Tribal Advisory Committee.

He was elected during the tribal consultation session in Spokane, Wash. on August 4.

The advisory committee establishes policies and guidelines for tribal consultation, focusing exclusively on tribal sovereignty and government-to-government relations.

“It is a privilege and an honor to serve in this capacity. I look forward to working with my colleagues from across Indian Country on behalf of our respective nations,” Vice President Nez said.

The Navajo Nation provided testimony and recommendations on the budget priorities and formulation process. Vice President Nez advocated for direct funding, overall disease prevention and the wellness of Navajo citizens.

Tribal leadership from around Indian Country respect the newly elected top two leaders of the Navajo Nation and want to work with them nationally.

-30-



August 5, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

President Begaye invites Gov. Ducey, Sen. McCain to Navajo Code Talker Day



President Begaye and Vice President Nez honored Navajo Code Talkers on July 4, during Navajo Code Talker Appreciation Day. President Begaye invited Gov. Doug Ducey and Sen. John McCain to Navajo Code Talker Day on August 14. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Honor the legacy and heroism of the Navajo Code Talkers.

That was the message from Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye to Arizona Governor Doug Ducey and Senator John McCain on Aug. 4, 2015.

President Begaye invited Gov. Ducey and Sen. McCain to Window Rock on Aug. 14 for Navajo Nation Code Talker Day at Window Rock Tribal Park, beginning at 10 a.m.

“Navajo Code Talker Day was initially proclaimed by President Ronald Reagan on

July 14, 1982. Since 2006, Navajo Code Talkers Day has been celebrated by the living Navajo Code Talkers and their families in Window Rock, Arizona, Navajo Nation,” President Begaye stated in his letter.

The Navajo Nation Council, during the 2007 winter session, passed a resolution that designated Aug. 14 as a Navajo Nation Holiday. Since that time, Navajo Code Talkers and their families have been celebrating the holiday in Window Rock.

The Navajo Nation Office of

the President and Vice President is working with the Navajo Code Talker Day Planning Committee for various events scheduled for Aug. 14, including a parade that begins at 9 a.m. at the Navajo Nation Museum.

The main event will commence at 10 a.m. at the Window Rock Tribal Park.

“You will be given an opportunity to speak to our Navajo heroes and their families,” President Begaye stated.

A private meeting inside the Office of the President and Vice

President is also planned later in the day for President Begaye, Vice President Jonathan Nez, Gov. Ducey and Sen. John McCain.

There will be a 5K run to serve as a fundraiser for the Navajo Code Talkers on Saturday. On Aug. 16, the Code Talker 29K run will also take place and will be a part of the Navajo Parks Race Series.

OPVP and Navajo Nation Special Diabetes Program are co-sponsoring the Code Talker 29K.



August 7, 2015
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President Begaye demands U.S. EPA release information on contaminants



President Begaye and Vice President Nez encourage the public to remain safe after the Animas River was contaminated with toxic waste from the Gold King Mine in Silverton, Colo. on Aug. 5, 2015. (KOB-TV courtesy photo)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—An environmental catastrophe.

That is how many people are describing the Gold King Mine incident that occurred on August 5, around 10:30 a.m.

A team working for the U.S. EPA released more than 1 million gallons of wastewater containing acidic water and other unknown contaminants into the Animas River. The incident occurred in Silverton, Colo.

The river water immediately changed to an orange color and the city of Durango shutdown water pumping from the river. The river was also closed to the general public for safety concerns.

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye has called for the release of information by the U.S. EPA on the contaminants that were discharged into the river.

“We are demanding from the U.S. EPA an

immediate release of detailed information on the type of contaminants that is flowing into the river from the Gold King Mine,” President Begaye said. “This is an all too familiar story on the lax oversight responsibility of the U.S. government.

“It is unfortunate that we have to once again tell our people to stay away from the river due to the release of dangerous chemicals into our water,” he added.

Thomas McNamara, emergency management coordinator for La Plata County, said the sheriff ordered closure of the Animas River until further notice.

“The material has made it within about two to three hours of the Durango city limits. Much of the material is dropping out through the slow meanders in the valley. We are waiting for the results of the water tests by the EPA,” McNamara said.

He said that drinking water and the aquatic wildlife are the biggest concern right now.

Vice President Jonathan Nez said farmers along the San Juan River must be cautious.

“The contamination will probably hit Lake Powell soon. And to the community of Mexican Hat, which pumps drinking water from the river, please proceed with caution. We need to monitor the water to ensure it is potable,” Vice President Nez said.

President Begaye has put several tribal programs on standby to monitor the river for the safety of tribal members.

“We have alerted Navajo EPA, Department of Health, and Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program to inform our people about the dangers of using contaminated water. Be on alert, take care of your children, pets and livestock near the river,” President Begaye said.

The community hotline for the La Plata County Emergency Operations Center is 970-382-8700.



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PRECAUTIONARY NOTICE

Re: San Juan River

MINE WASTE HAS BEEN RELEASED FROM THE GOLD KING MINE (Colorado)
AND IS EXPECTED TO ENTER THE SAN JUAN RIVER

AS OF THE MORNING OF AUGUST 7, 2015 **DRINKING WATER IS UNAFFECTED**
FOR THE COMMUNITIES OF NENAHEZAD, SAN JUAN, UPPER FRUITLAND,
HOGBACK, SHIPROCK, CUDEII AND BECLABITO.

SURFACE WATER SAMPLES ALONG THE RIVER ARE BEING COLLECTED.

UPDATES WILL BE PROVIDED ON AN ONGOING BASIS.

AS A **PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE** THE PUBLIC SHOULD TAKE THE FOLLOWING
STEPS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:

- **PREVENT LIVESTOCK FROM DRINKING FROM THE SAN JUAN RIVER**
- **AVOID DIVERTING WATER FROM THE SAN JUAN RIVER**
- **DO NOT ENTER THE RIVER**

CONTACT NAVAJO NATION INCIDENT COMMAND CENTER
AT (505) 368-1081

Russell Begaye, President of the Navajo Nation

ISSUED: August 7, 2015



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August 7, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

President Begaye approves NCDFI operating funds, alcohol tax



On Friday, Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye signed two legislations before the close of business. One was for the Navajo Community Development Financial Institution and the other for the alcohol tax. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— With a stroke of his pen, Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye approved Resolution No. CJY-35-15.

President Begaye approved \$200,000 from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance for the Navajo Community Development Financial Institution.

The NCDFI is a corporation that provides funding and financial products on favorable terms to Navajo tribal members who have been underserved by mainstream institutions.

“This NCDFI was created by the Navajo Nation Council to provide startup monies for Navajo owned businesses. I’m really privileged to be a part of the agreement,” said President Begaye.

The funding opens the door for small businesses to receive money to get their businesses started, he said, adding that one such business was created to sell Navajo Tea.

“You can buy Navajo Tea

across the Navajo Nation and across the country. When Navajo businesses grow, it impacts all of us,” President Begaye said. “It provides employment and provides a stronger tax base for our Navajo people.

NCDFI required operating funds to deploy capital into the market place. The funds were necessary to employ staff to distribute and administer loans to the community.

Three staff positions for chief executive officer, loan officer and administrative assistant will be funded by the \$200,000.

In addition to personnel expenses, the funding will provide for travel, meetings, supplies, lease and rental, communications, utilities, repairs, maintenance, and contract services.

The Navajo Nation Council established the NCDFI on February 8, 2010, as memorialized through Resolution No. CJA-02-10.

NCDFI has capital to lend the community, but required

operating funds to employ staff and administer loans to the community.

The goal of NCDFI is to be self-sustaining through acquisition of external funds and interest collection to continue operations after the expenditure of the initial operating funds.

Their mission is to provide capital to tribal members, individually owned businesses, tribally owned entities, local governance agents and chapters to further the economic development interests of the Navajo Nation and its people.

CEO Tom Gordon said, “This will go a long way toward helping Navajo small business people and eventually, we’re hoping to help chapters with capital development projects.”

President Begaye also signed Resolution No. CJY-31-15.

“Today, I signed a legislation that will raise taxes on alcohol consumed on the Navajo Nation,” President Begaye said.

He noted that alcohol consumption has been a huge problem for the tribe, especially with accidents and domestic violence related crimes.

The resolution amended Title 24 of the Navajo Nation Code (taxation), to include the alcohol tax.

The tax is for engaging in business activity within the Navajo Nation and for defraying necessary governmental expenses incurred in providing for the public welfare.

The rate of tax is to be not less than two percent, nor more than six percent, which shall be specifically established by the Navajo Tax Commission.

Until the rate is established, the rate will be 3.25 percent of all alcoholic beverages sold.

This alcohol tax will not be done in conjunction with the Junk Food Tax.

The Navajo Tax Commission was charged with the administration of the tax. The office will retain a quarter percent of all gross sales for administrative expenses.

Alcohol beverages include distilled or rectified spirits, potable alcohol, brandy, whiskey, rum, gin, aromatic bitters, blended or fermented beverages, beer, cider, wine and more.

The net revenue from the tax will be retained in the Navajo Division of Public Safety Alcohol Tax Fund and will be administered by the executive director of NDPS.

“The tax is going to be used by the Navajo Police to address the alcohol consumption,” President Begaye said.

NDPS will work with the Budget and Finance Committee for development of a fund management plan for the tax.

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President Begaye announces U.S. EPA will be accountable for toxic spill



On Saturday evening at the Shiprock Chapter, President Begaye and Vice President Nez encouraged the public to remain safe and stay away from the San Juan River as the plume of contamination nears. President Begaye said the Nation will pursue legal action. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye announced that he intends to take legal action against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the massive release of mine waste into the Animas River near Silverton, Colorado.

President Begaye made this announcement Saturday evening at the Shiprock Chapter House, which was packed to capacity with concerned community members living along the San

Juan River.

“They are not going to get away with this,” President Begaye said of the destructive impact to natural habitats and ecosystems that traditional Navajo culture relies on.

He said the sludge has migrated into the San Juan River and is wending through the Navajo Nation. The plume is expected to reach Lake Powell by Wednesday.

President Begaye said, “The EPA was right in the middle of the disaster and we intend to

make sure the Navajo Nation recovers every dollar it spends cleaning up this mess and every dollar it loses as a result of injuries to our precious Navajo natural resources.”

“I have instructed Navajo Nation Department of Justice to take immediate action against the EPA to the fullest extent of the law to protect Navajo families and resources,” he added.

“The EPA also needs to fund an independent lab onsite for real time monitoring of

chemicals that may migrate into our irrigation or public water system,” said President Begaye.

Stories of struggle and survival

The chapter members were very appreciative that President Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez met with them in this moment of crisis as the plume of contamination approached their community.

The community shared their stories of struggle and survival along the river and underscored just how important farming and ranching is to their way of life and the economy of the region.

Shiprock is one of the largest farming communities on the Nation and it relies heavily upon irrigation from the San Juan to supply its many farms with water.

Navajo EPA will be conducting independent tests on the water and sediment quality and the Nation will utilize the data that is gathered for their own investigation on the contamination. The plume is estimated to be traveling at four miles per hour.

Harlan Cleveland of Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management said the contaminated water plume reached Farmington at 8:10 a.m. on August 8 and joined the San Juan River.

The plume is more than 80 miles long.

Several communities have stopped pumping water from the river and San Juan County has issued an emergency declaration and closed the river until further notice.

Rex Koontz, deputy general manager of Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, stated in a press release that NTUA water systems from Farmington to Beclabito are “fed from a different system isolated from the San Juan River.”

The Navajo Nation irrigation systems ceased pulling water from the river earlier this week.

San Juan River is their Lifeline

President Begaye said the U.S. EPA must provide affected tribal members water for drinking, irrigation, and livestock. In addition, hay and feed will also be needed for livestock.

“The San Juan River is their lifeline. We want full disclosure on what chemicals were released into the river. We understand cleanup will take decades. We demand cleanup of this water and the sediments of our affected rivers immediately,” President Begaye said.

Navajo farmers pumped water for their cattle, sheep and horses. Others fished the river and explored it recreationally.

“We’re not talking about a small population or area like Farmington. We have Navajo families affected from Upper Fruitland all the way to Lake Powell,” President Begaye said.

The Navajo Nation is larger than 10 U.S. states and is the size of West Virginia. The San Juan River courses through much of the northern region of the Nation and feeds into the Colorado River, which also traverses the vast tribal territory.

Childhood memories of contamination

During his childhood, President Begaye lived along the banks of the San Juan River. One year, he remembered the fish were dying and floating to the surface. He jumped into the river with others to investigate further.

“The river smelled for weeks. Fish were dying along the riverbank. No one ever told us what happened, how the fish died or if it would impact our health years later. To this day, nobody told us. That will not happen this time,” President Begaye said.

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President Begaye signs the Navajo Nation Declaration of Emergency for the San Juan River contamination. He said this will ensure the Navajo Nation resources are available to the emergency response team. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Vice President Nez also signed the emergency declaration on Saturday evening at Shiprock Chapter. Council Delegate Amber Crotty looks on and was in attendance along with Delegate Tom Chee and Speaker LoRenzo Bates. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



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Gallup Intertribal Ceremonial Parade provides opportunity to hear Navajo concerns



Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye makes his way to the Ceremonial parade entry point alongside Navajo Nation Vice President Jonathan Nez. (Photo by Mihio Manus)



Both Navajo Code Talker Thomas H. Begay and Navajo President Russell Begaye accommodated interviews with journalists and podcasters as they walked the parade route. (Photo by Mihio Manus)



Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye greeted everyone along his path during the 94th Annual Ceremonial Parade. (Photo by Mihio Manus)

GALLUP, N.M.—For Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez, walking the Gallup Ceremonial parade route was an opportunity to stay connected with the Navajo people.

Along the route, the President and Vice President shook hands with the crowd while listening to concerns brought forth by the people.

One pillar of the Begaye-Nez administration is to enhance services for Nation veterans. President Begaye said many veterans spoke with him about housing.

“Housing for our veterans is a big request. It’s a consistent concern,” he said. “As a member of the 22nd Council, we did set aside monies to build 75 houses a year. We are going to be aggressive in making sure those houses are built.”

President Begaye said veteran’s health services were a concern as well.

“Veterans aren’t getting the services they deserve. We are going to try and bring services for them by declaring the Navajo Nation a veteran’s service center. Then they can have their own VA.”

The President and Vice President stopped to speak with local radio stations that were broadcasting live from the Ceremonial parade. They also fielded questions from journalists in brief intervals.

Vice President Nez said he heard concerns regarding streamlining the regulations within many Navajo Nation policies.

“Some people mentioned how tedious our home site leasing process is,” he said. “People want homes on the Navajo Nation but our internal process takes a long time.”

Vice President Nez said there needs to be a reevaluation of some of those policies regarding home site leasing.

“People want to build their own homes and they have the resources to do it. Many are just waiting on a home site lease.”

Other concerns included education and the need for more scholarship resources for Navajo college students.

This year’s 94th Annual Gallup Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial hosted a night parade, night performances, an INFR Tour Rodeo and a queen pageant among many other events.

Parade attendees were treated to performances by the Fernando Cellicion Traditional Zuni Dancers, The White Mountain Apache Dance Group, the Azteca Dance Group and the Zuni Olla Maidens.

Among the dignitaries and representatives in the Ceremonial parade were New Mexico District 3 Senator John Pinto (D-N.M.) and Navajo Code Talker and Silver Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Thomas H. Begay.



NAVAJO HEAD START

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 9, 2015

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MEDIA ADVISORY

Navajo Head Start celebrating 50th Anniversary with banquet

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Navajo Head Start is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year and will be celebrating during a banquet for its employees scheduled on Wednesday, August 12, 2015, during their School Readiness Summit in Albuquerque, N.M.

The banquet will be attended by Navajo Head Start (NHS) employees, former directors, elected tribal leaders and elected state leaders.

The program was established in 1965 and has benefited the Navajo People with early childhood educational services since. In 1965, NHS opened its doors after being created as part of a much-larger project launched by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). Then-U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson announced "Project Head Start" in 1964 as an effort to fight poverty in the U.S.

Keynote speaker will be Peter MacDonald Sr., former director of the Office of Navajo Economic Opportunity (ONEO) and former chairman of the Navajo Nation. MacDonald is considered the founder of Navajo Head Start.

WHAT: Navajo Head Start's 50th Anniversary Banquet for employees

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, August 12, 2015

WHERE: Crown Plaza Hotel Ball Room, Albuquerque, N.M.

If you plan to attend, please contact Joshua Butler at 928-380-2158.

###

Navajo Head Start is the largest federally-funded grant program in the country. Head Start and Early Head Start services are provided within the geographical area of the Navajo Nation, an area approximately the size of West Virginia that spans more than 27,000-square-miles across the states of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. The Central Administration offices are located in Window Rock, AZ, capital of the Navajo Nation.



THE NAVAJO NATION

RUSSELL BEGAYE PRESIDENT
JONATHAN NEZ VICE PRESIDENT

Declaration for State of Emergency

WHEREAS on August 5, 2015 the United States Environmental Protection Agency negligently caused a release of contaminants from the suspended Gold King Mine near Silverton, Colorado into the Animas River.

WHEREAS on August 8, 2015, the contaminants entered into the San Juan River, south of Farmington and entered into the water system of the Navajo Nation;

WHEREAS the toxic spill will cause a long-lasting and unknown impact to the Navajo Nation's water system and wells near the San Juan River to Lake Powell and impacting several surrounding Chapters on the Navajo Nation; and

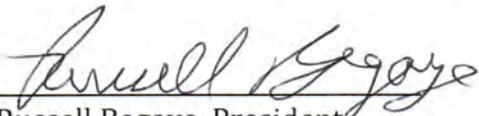
WHEREAS the contaminants release by the mine are toxic, contaminating our water and is causing unknown health risks to our people, and water used by the Navajo people for irrigation, livestock and free roaming animals, disturbing the Navajo way of life.

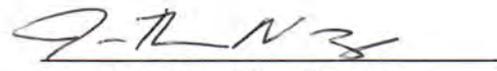
NOW THEREFORE, I RUSSELL BEGAYE President of the Navajo Nation issue this Executive Order, effective immediately, to respond to the spill caused by the U.S.E.P.A. at the Gold King Mine near Silverton, Colorado.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. The Navajo Nation Divisions specifically the Navajo Environmental Protection Agency, Division of Natural Resources, Division of Public Safety, Emergency Management Department, Office of Attorney General and Department of Health shall coordinate efforts and resources to address the impact to the Navajo Nation by the Gold King Mine spill.
2. The Navajo Nation President may require and direct other Navajo Nation Divisions to assist in these efforts, as needed

IN WITNESS THEREOF, this date August 8, 2015:


Russell Begaye, President


Jonathan Nez, Vice-President

ATTEST:


Ethel Branch, Attorney General



CEM 15-08-09

**RESOLUTION OF THE
COMMISSION ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY DUE TO AN UNEXPECTED RELEASE OF
CONTAMINATED WASTEWATER FROM THE GOLD KING MINE NEAR SILVERTON,
COLORADO

WHEREAS:

1. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C, §§ 881 and 883 (A) (C), the Navajo Nation Council established the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management to coordinate emergency and disaster relief service by Navajo Nation and non-tribal entities in conjunction with the Department of Emergency Management; and to recommend to the Navajo Nation Council legislation or other appropriate activity regarding natural and man-made emergencies; and
2. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C., § 884 (B) (1), the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management is responsible for declaring a state of emergency with the concurrence of the President of the Navajo Nation; and
3. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C, § 884 (B) (2), the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management will assist in seeking assistance from federal, state, and other tribal governments, local and private agencies to address emergency and disaster related situations; and
4. On August 5, 2015, an unexpected release of contaminants occurred from the Gold King Mine near Silverton, Colorado and entered the Animas River; and
5. Since August 5, 2015, the contaminants have entered into the San Juan River and the plume of contaminants continues to travel towards the Navajo Nation; and
6. The contaminants are comprised of several potentially harmful chemicals, such as heavy metals, with unknown risks to human health, environment and terrestrial wildlife; and
7. The contaminants from the release of mine wastewater has further caused risks to free roaming livestock, wildlife, irrigation practices and other uses by the Navajo people; and
8. The duration of future impacts to the Navajo Nation are still not fully known and as a result, there is a continued need for an increased level of multi-agency efforts to resolve all issues related to this release; and

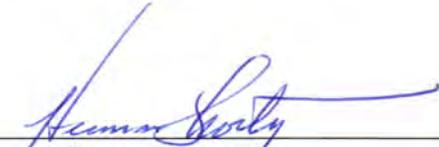
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management declares a State of Emergency due to an Unexpected Release of Contaminated Wastewater from the Gold King Mine Near Silverton, Colorado; and

2. The Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management finds it is necessary for appropriate Navajo Nation entities to continue and/or immediately begin and maintain coordination and collaboration with relevant agencies, e.g., Federal, State, Counties, and Municipalities, for use of resources to meet the needs of the Navajo Nation public. This includes, but not limited to, resources of personnel, equipment, monetary funding, and other resources as may be required to protect natural, cultural, historical natural resources as well as substantial human health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Navajo Nation; and
3. The Navajo Nation shall activate available emergency resources such as community education, assistance, and other means as determined fit and feasible to restore and sustain vital community infrastructure.

CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that the foregoing declaration was duly considered by the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management at duly called meeting in Tse Bonito, Navajo Nation, New Mexico, at which a quorum was present that the same was passed by a vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed and 0 abstained, this 9th day of August 2015.

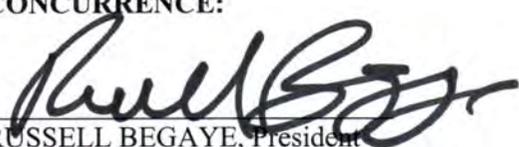


Herman Shorty, Chairperson
Commission on Emergency Management
Navajo Nation

Motion: Dicky Bain

Second: Eugenia Quintana

CONCURRENCE:



RUSSELL BEGAYE, President
THE NAVAJO NATION



JONATHAN NEZ, Vice President
THE NAVAJO NATION



EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 02-2015

**ESTABLISHMENT AND EXECUTION OF OPERATION TÓ ŁITSO
("YELLOW WATER")**

**THE NAVAJO NATION
EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 02-2015**

August 11, 2015

WHEREAS:

1. The President of the Navajo Nation serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation government with full authority to conduct, supervise, and coordinate personnel and programs of the Navajo Nation. 2 N.N.C. 1005 (A).
2. The President shall have the enumerated power to issue an executive order for the purpose of interpreting, implementing or giving administrative effect to the statutes of the Navajo Nation in the manner set forth in such statutes. 2 N.N.C. 1005 (C)(14).
3. An executive order shall have the force of law upon receipt. *Id.*
4. On August 5, 2015, the United States Environmental Protection Agency caused the spill of the Gold King Mine, which released over 3 million gallons of toxic waste into the Cement Creek. The contaminants have flowed into the Animas River and have now entered the San Juan River and will soon flow into the Colorado River.
5. The scope of contaminants in the Nation's waters remain unknown, but U.S. EPA has warned counties, cities, municipalities and the Navajo Nation to stay away from the water and to stop any diversion of the San Juan River.
6. On August 8, 2015, the Navajo Nation President and Vice-President issued an Executive Order to Declare a State of Emergency to immediately pool all the resources of the Navajo Nation Divisions to begin preparing for the impact to the Navajo Nation and to address the immediate needs of the Navajo people.
7. The sludge has now entered the waters of the Navajo Nation, and the Navajo people along the San Juan River now have uncertain access to clean water to drink, water for their sheep and cattle and water to irrigate their fields. The Nation's public water reserve is quickly depleting and our people will no longer have access to water within a few weeks. The many Navajo people who live along the river no longer know whether their well water is usable, and many are without water because they are abstaining from using their water as a precautionary measure.
8. The Navajo Nation has deployed its Executive Division resources to immediately respond to this disaster. We are patrolling the San Juan River to ensure our people are not entering the water. Navajo Tribal Utility Authority has water tanks deployed and stand ready to ensure our people have access to clean water. Our Emergency Management Department is coordinating

with the U.S. EPA, but as the sludge courses along the 215-mile-long riverbed of the Navajo Nation, the impact will be catastrophic, and thousands of our people will be affected.

9. To effectively address the immediate needs and impact, we must establish an organized and coordinated effort within the Navajo Nation Government so as to utilize our resources efficiently and wisely.
10. The Navajo Nation President will create an Operation Team to coordinate the efforts of all the Divisions, Enterprises and Entities of the Navajo Nation to ensure a chain of command and organized team to do all things necessary to mitigate the impact from the Gold King Mine toxic spill.

NOW THEREFORE,

We, Russell Begaye and Jonathan Nez, by the authority vested in us as President and Vice-President of the Navajo Nation, hereby order:

1. The establishment of Operation Tó litso.
2. Operation Tó litso shall operate pursuant to the Navajo Nation Strategic and Operational Management Chart. (Exhibit "A").
3. All Divisions, Enterprises and Entities to immediately comply with Operation Tó litso and re-organize within each Division as necessary to be able to carry out its appropriate role within the Strategic and Operational Management Chart. Each Division Director shall make staff available as requested and as necessary to carry out and execute Operation Tó litso.
4. Consistency with law. The provisions of this order shall be implemented consistent with the laws of the Nation and shall consider the highest welfare of the Navajo people.

Executed on this 11th day of August, 2015.

THE NAVAJO NATION:


Russell Begaye, *President*


Jonathan Nez, *Vice-President*

ATTEST:

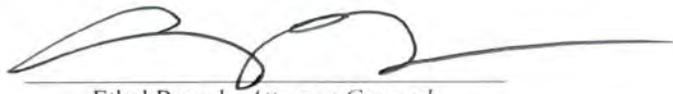

Ethel Branch, *Attorney General*
THE NAVAJO NATION

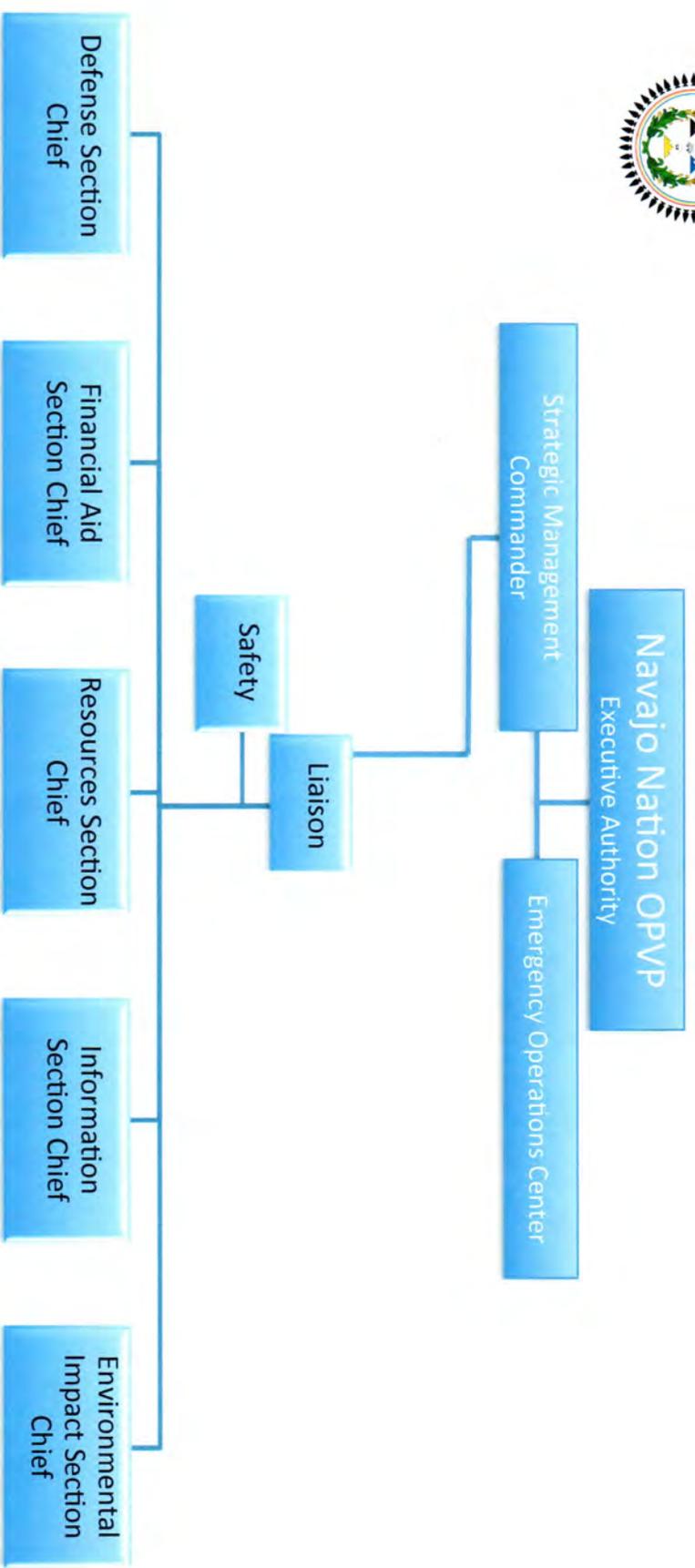
Exhibit - A



Operation Tó Itso (Yellow Water)

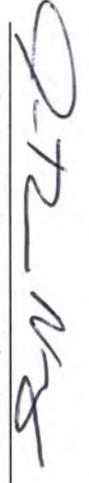
Navajo Nation Strategic Management Command

August 12, 2015; 1:00 p.m.



NAVAJO NATION:


Russell Begaye, President

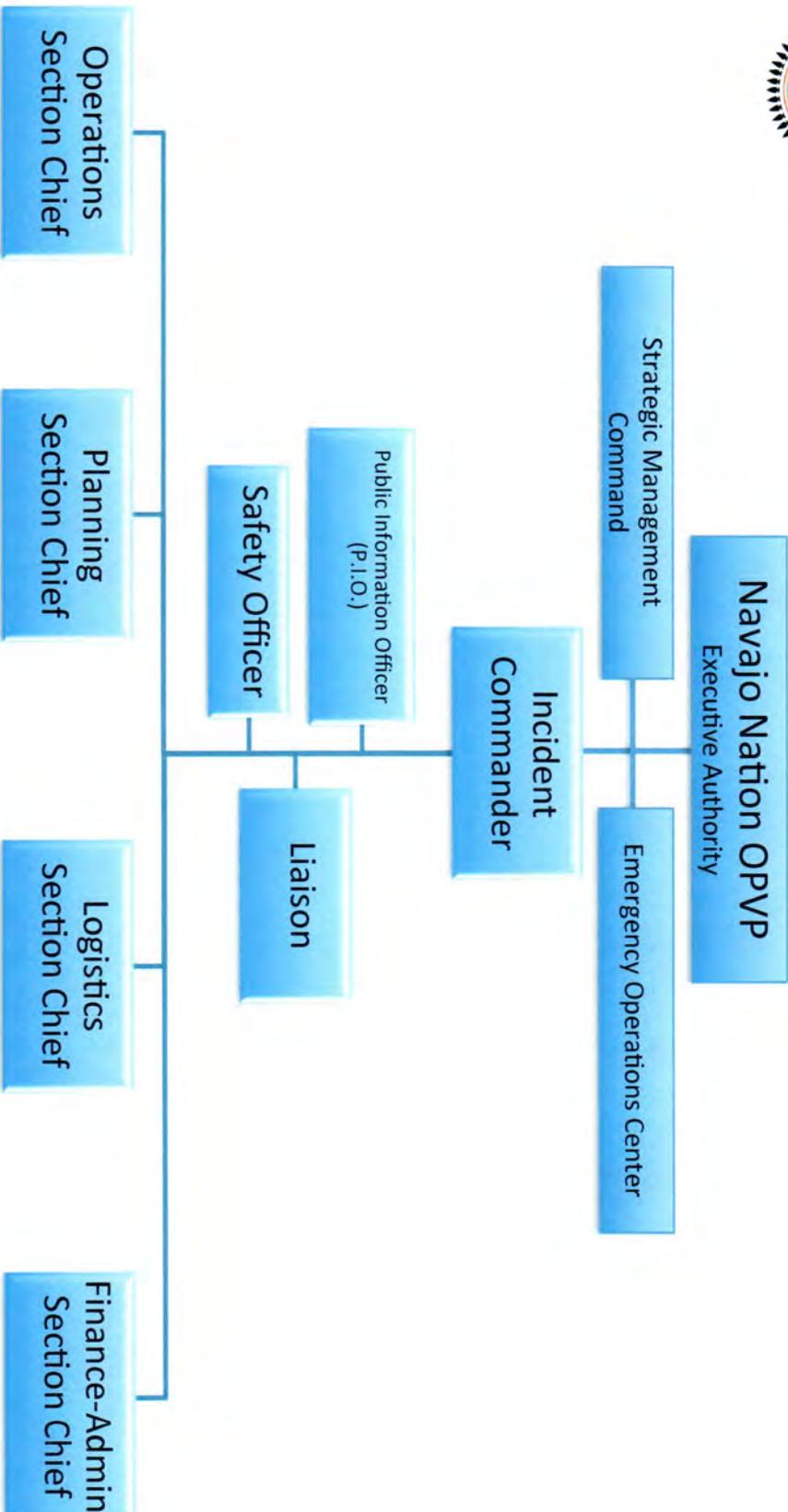

Jonathan Nez, Vice-President



Operation Tó litso (Yellow Water)

Northern Agency Partnership Shiprock Incident Command Post

August 12, 2015, 1:00 p.m.



NAVAJO NATION:


Russell Begaye, President


Jonathan Nez, Vice-President

August 12, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT : *Rick Abasta, Press Officer*
Office of the President and Vice President
THE NAVAJO NATION
Phone: 928-871-7925
Fax: 928-871-4025
Email: rickyabasta@navajo-nsn.gov

U.S. EPA urges Navajo people to waive rights to future reimbursement claims

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye warns tribal members against signing reimbursement claim forms being distributed by the U.S. EPA.

On August 11, the Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President received reports that the EPA has actively been distributed Standard Form No. 95, which, if signed will waive future claims for damages or injuries.

“The federal government is asking our people to waive their future rights,” said President Begaye. “They know that without the waiver they will be paying millions to our people.

“It’s simple: they are protecting themselves at the expense of the Navajo people and it is outrageous,” he added.

The form states the following, “I certify that the amount of claim covers only damages and injuries caused by the incident above and agree to accept said amount in full satisfaction and final settlement of this claim.”

President Begaye is especially concerned for Navajo elders, some of whom many not know what they are signing, except for the fact that will receive money.

Navajo Nation Attorney General Ethel Branch said all signors will be limited to the specific claims filed, and any future claims for injuries caused by the Gold King Mine will be waived.

“Form number 95 will settle for current claims and preclude all future claims from the spill,” Branch said.

“The U.S. EPA has admitted they are at fault and stated this disaster will last for decades. This is unacceptable. The damages to our people will be long term and the Navajo Nation will not settle for pennies. I have consistently stated that the Navajo people deserve to be compensated for every penny lost. I will not allow fine print to let U.S. EPA off the hook. The Navajo people deserve better from the federal government,” said President Begaye.

During local public hearings across the Navajo Nation, specifically in Shiprock, Aneth and Olijato, the EPA has distributed the form and urged tribal members to sign.

“We are also concerned for our neighbors and whether this form is being circulated in other communities. Not only is this effort hurting Navajo people, but all those in the Four Corners. Think twice before you sign this form. We must hold U.S. EPA fully accountable for their negligence,” said Vice-President Nez.

August 11, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT : *Rick Abasta, Press Officer*
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President Begaye clarifies and stands against U.S. EPA reimbursements

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is offering immediate reimbursements for damages from the Gold King Mine water contamination in exchange for waiving rights for future claims.

On August 11, the Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President received report that EPA representatives were in the Utah communities of Aneth and Oljato to encourage Navajo people to agree to the reimbursements.

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye said, “The Navajo people need to know that they should not file for reimbursement until the injuries and costs related to the contamination have stopped.”

For individuals who sign the claim, they will not be eligible for claims in the future, if additional injuries or damages arise from the long-term effects of contamination.

On Wednesday, during the 7 a.m. briefing with the executive incident management team, President Begaye said Navajo people must be properly educated on what they are signing, especially the elders.

President Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez will be meeting with U.S. EPA administrator Regina McCarthy on Thursday, who will spend one hour on the Navajo Nation to view the contamination of the water.

“We are also concerned about our neighbors and whether this form is being circulated in their communities. This is not just hurting the Navajo people, but all those in the Four Corners region. Think twice before you sign the form,” Vice President Nez said.

Operation Tó Litso (Yellow Water)

Operation Tó Litso, or Yellow Water, is officially underway.

The Navajo Nation is activating the Emergency Operations Center at the Navajo Transportation Complex in Tse Bonito, N.M. later today. The EOC will be the hub for all calls, dispatch of services and other resources as needed.

There will also be regional Incident Command Posts established in Shiprock, Aneth and Oljato. The Shiprock ICP, located at the chapter house, is already in operation. The other two are set to come online in the next few days.

There will be a follow up meeting by OPVP at Aneth Chapter House on Friday at 10 a.m. and at Oljato Chapter House at 3 p.m.

Vice President Nez said, “Łeezh łitso, or yellow dirt, is the Navajo word for uranium, the cause of another contamination of Navajo water wells and sources decades ago, from which Navajo residents are still suffering repercussions.”

Public Meeting Updates

During the August 10 public information updates in Aneth and Oljato, Navajo citizens voiced their concerns about the water contamination.

This isn't the first time the government left behind contaminated water sources on the Nation, they said.

Representatives from OPVP, Department of Justice, Navajo EPA, Division of Public Safety and members of the Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management joined Vice President Nez to provide updates.

Attorney General Ethel Branch said the Upper Animas Mine District is a 140-square mile area north of Durango, Colorado with 300 mines, all of them abandoned after being mined from the late 1800s to 1991.

She said the Navajo Nation will pursue legal action and that it is important for residents affected by the contamination to begin documenting their damages.

U.S. EPA

Two community involvement representatives from EPA Region 9, David Yogie and Secody Hubbard, provided an update on the spill.

“The EPA is taking this very seriously and it's working to control this, first and foremost,” Yogie said.

He said two EPA contractors have been sampling the water along the San Juan River with representatives from the Navajo EPA Surface Mining Program. Their focus is from Shiprock to Mexican Hat.

Four additional contractors were dispatched to support two teams doing sampling at the river. There are also 12 on-scene coordinators, two public information officers, two

community health coordinators and 21 employees and contractors from Denver responding to the spill.

No Apologies

At the Oljato meeting at the Monument Valley Visitors Center, Dr. Peterson Zah gave some background on the resiliency of the Navajo people, from the Long Walk to the uranium contamination to the disaster of the San Juan River contamination.

“Many years from now, the Navajo people will still be here on our tribal lands,” Zah said in Navajo. “They keep trying to get rid of us, but we’re still here surviving.”

Turning to Yogie, the senior EPA official that reported, Zah said he was no different than all the other Navajo elders in attendance.

“What I was looking for (from the EPA) was an apology. We didn’t even get one. I wanted to hear from the U.S. government that they were sorry,” Zah said. “Maybe you should include that in the first part of your presentation at your next meeting.”

OPERATION TÓ ŁITSO (YELLOW WATER) RELIEF FUND



**Please direct all donations and
contributions for the Navajo Nation to:**

***NAVAJO UNITED WAY, INC.
Navajo Nation Operation Yellow Water
Relief Fund***



**Wells Fargo Bank
Account No. Ending 3176**



August 14, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT :

Rick Abasta, Press Officer
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Statement By President Begaye Concerning Governor Ducey and Senator McCain's Visit To [Window Rock](#)

"On behalf of the entire Navajo Nation, I want to thank Governor Ducey, Senator McCain, Secretary of State Regan, Arizona Speaker Gowan, Senate President Biggs and Senator Begay for coming to Window Rock to celebrate our Code Talkers as well as to discuss the San Juan River crisis caused by the Gold King Mine. Governor Ducey and Senator McCain are once again demonstrating their commitment to every member of the Navajo Nation by coming here. Today is a national day of celebration and pride for the significant role that our Navajo Code Talkers played during World War II and we are pleased that the Arizona political leadership was here to join us in honoring our Nation's greatest warriors.

##

August 14, 2015
PRESS ADVISORY
CONTACT :

Rick Abasta, Press Officer
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Email: rickyabasta@navajo-nsn.gov

BOTTLED WATER TO BE DELIVERED TO MULTIPLE COMMUNITIES

Window Rock- NTUA is delivering two trucks of bottled water to the chapter houses of Halchita, Aneth, Montezuma Creek.

To report issues, donate supplies or request supplies, please contact Lt. Phillip Joe, Incident Command Center at 505.320.7424



THE NAVAJO NATION

RUSSELL BEGAYE PRESIDENT
JONATHAN NEZ VICE PRESIDENT

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August 14, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

President Begaye Urges Senator John McCain to Appropriate Funding to Construct Navajo Code Talkers Museum



President Russell Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez celebrated Navajo Code Talkers Day in Window Rock and urged Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) to appropriate funding for the construction of the museum. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Hundreds gathered today to celebrate the beloved Navajo Code Talkers, Navajo warriors and national heroes who created the radio code that could not be broken during World War II.

Several dignitaries joined this year's parade, including Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye, Vice President Jonathan Nez, Senator Carlyle Begaye (D-Ariz.), Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.), Arizona Governor Doug Ducey, Speaker David Gowan (R-Ariz.), Senate President Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.), Arizona Secretary of State Michele Reagan, and Speaker LoRenzo Bates.

Festivities began with a parade from the Navajo Nation Museum to the Window Rock Tribal Park. Eight years ago, when the parade first began, there were only four floats in

the parade.

Today, there were more than 20 entries, with the Navajo Code Talkers sitting on a float to receive the heroes welcome they never had when World War II ended. American flags with placards of names from the Original 29 Navajo Code Talkers lined Morgan Boulevard.

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez marched in the parade, shaking hands with spectators, talking with elders and accommodating photo opportunities along the route.

They walked alongside Navajo Code Talker and Iwo Jima survivor Thomas H. Begay, a Congressional Silver Medal recipient from Chichiltah, N.M.

The celebration continued at the Window Rock Park, under the shade of a white tent erected for the festivities. The smell of burning sage filled the

air and purified all who entered the tent.

The Ira Hayes American Legion Post No. 84 posted the colors and Miss Northern Navajo Teen, Alexandria Holiday, sang the National Anthem in Navajo.

During the welcome address, President Begaye, speaking in Navajo, said, "Thank you to the Navajo Code Talkers, they bring strength and resiliency to the Navajo people, including the leadership."

"You made this day! We designated this day for the Code Talkers," President Begaye said, which was welcomed with cheers and applause.

"How will we remember them? Where is the museum for the Navajo Code Talkers? It hasn't happened yet and we want a museum for the Navajo Talkers, we want them to see it in their day," President Begaye said.

Turning toward Sen. McCain, a veteran and formal Naval pilot, President Begaye said the Navajo Nation and the Navajo Code Talkers needed his support to fund construction of the museum.

"I want to give him a proposal from the Navajo Nation for Congress to do an appropriation to build this museum. I have it broken down to the last penny, the last cent," President Begaye said. "They fought for the United States flag, the United States of America.

"It is time for the leaders of

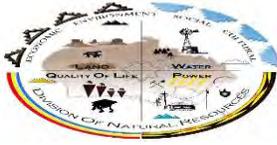
this country to put this money forward and build that museum to recognize our Code Talkers. Senator McCain, make it happen, make it happen," he said.

On July 28, 1982, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed August 14, 1982 as Navajo Code Talkers Day. It was the first time that such a day was designated to honor the proud Navajo Marines that were told to never speak of their service because the code was top secret.

Proclamation 4954 states, "The Navaho Nation, when called upon to serve the United States, contributed a precious commodity never before used in this way. In the midst of the fighting in the Pacific during World War II, a gallant group of men from the Navaho Nation utilized their language in coded form to help speed the Allied victory.

"Equipped with the only foolproof, unbreakable code in the history of warfare, the code talkers confused the enemy with an earful of sounds never before heard by code experts. The dedication and unswerving devotion to duty shown by the men of the Navaho Nation in serving as radio code talkers in the Marine Corps during World War II should serve as a fine example for all Americans."

The Navajo Code Talkers continue protecting the legacy and strength of Dine' bizaad, the Navajo language, which ended the war in the Pacific more than 70 years ago



Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 18, 2015

Country Music and Indian Rodeo A Winning Genre for the Navajo Nation Fair

WINDOW ROCK, AZ. – Country music and Indian rodeo.

There's nothing like a lot of rockin country music and gang busting broncs and bulls to quicken most anyone's pulse. Here on the Navajo Nation, rodeo fans show their love for country music and Navajo's number one sport....rodeo...Navajo style in high-spirited fashion. It has been a winning combination for excitement and success for the Navajo Nation Fair and it will continue for many years to come.

And that is why the 69th Annual Navajo Nation Fair will have two award-winning country music artists making their debut at the Navajo Nation Fair along with Championship Bull Riding (CBR) and an Indian Pro Rodeo. Aaron Watson will take center stage immediately after the CBR on Sunday, September 6th and Country Music Sensation Clay Walker will make his second debut on the Navajo Nation on Friday, September 11th after the Indian Pro Rodeo at 9 p.m.

Cowboys from throughout the country will showcase their skills to make an eight second ride on a 2,000 pound bull on September 6th at 8 p.m. at the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds. The eight seconds of glory is a second stop on the CBR season schedule to qualify and enter the finals in Cheyenne, Wyoming.



Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources

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Window Rock, Arizona 86515

(928) 871-6592 & 6593

Fax# (928) 871-7040

dnrpr@navajo-nsn.gov

Navajo Nation Fair Production Director Martin L. Begaye, stated, “We are very honored to host a CBR) event on the Navajo Nation. We will have professional bull riders from throughout the country here in Window Rock on their way to the finals in Wyoming including the top two bull riders in the CBR. Bull riding has always been very popular on the Navajo Nation. We are also very excited to support our own Navajo cowboys who aspire to become a world champion in the professional rodeo circuit. This CBR event is our way of acknowledging and supporting our Navajo bull riders. We hope one of our own will one day become a world champion. We wish them the best.”

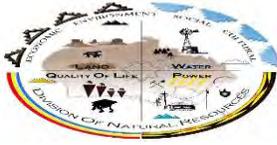
The top four Navajo bull riders from four different Indian rodeo associations have been specifically invited to participate in CBR. They include 24-year-old Justin Granger of Tuba City, Arizona who will represent the Southwest Rodeo Association; 26-year-old Spud Jones of Twin Lakes, New Mexico who will represent the All Indian Rodeo Association; 20-year-old Ty Toadlena of Gallup, New Mexico who will represent the Navajo Nation Rodeo Association and 19-year-old Clay Wagner of Round Rock, Arizona who is the leading Navajo in the PRCA Turquoise Circuit.

There will be 24 bull riders from CBR and four Navajo bull riders totaling 28 bull riders who will kick off the 69th Annual Navajo Nation Fair.

The Navajo Nation Fair Special Events Office will sponsor a presentation to honor the Navajo bull riders followed by an autograph session with World Champion Bull Rider Tuff Hedeman on September 6th at 6 p.m., which will be held at the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds.

Advance tickets are \$30 and \$35 the day of the CBR event, which includes an Aaron Watson concert. Advance tickets will be sold up to 5 p.m. Saturday, September 5th. Children six and under are free. Tickets will be sold at Gorman Hall on the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds.

For more information about the CBR event, please contact Abe Wilson at (928) 797-2408 or Wanda Nelson at (928) 871-7833.



Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources

P.O. Box 9000

Window Rock, Arizona 86515

(928) 871-6592 & 6593

Fax# (928) 871-7040

dnrpr@navajo-nsn.gov

Begaye added, “There are many people working hard behind the scenes to make this a very exciting and enjoyable event for everyone. The Navajo Nation Fair is a cultural event that many people from throughout the world look forward to attending every year. We hope you are able to share the cultural beauty of the Navajo people.”

In regards to the Indian Pro Rodeo, the entry deadline has been extended to Friday, August 21, 2015 at 6 p.m. Contestants must send in their money order payment by mail. However, the Navajo Nation Fair Special Events Office will accept walk-in entries on Friday, August 21st only. Rodeo entry applications can be downloaded at www.navajonationfair.com

Tickets for the Friday, September 11th Indian Pro Rodeo and Clay Walker Concert will be \$30 for advance tickets and \$35 the day of the show. The ticket price includes the Indian rodeo and Clay Walker Concert. It will be \$15 for children six to 12-years-old. Advance tickets will be available for both events beginning August 24th and sold until September 7th at Gorman Hall.



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August 19, 2015

Kirkpatrick vows to fight for the Navajo Nation

FLAGSTAFF, AZ - President Russell Begaye and Vice-President Jonathan Nez met with Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick on the Gold King Mine spill.

President Begaye told Kirkpatrick that the Navajo Nation needs President Obama to declare the San Juan River a federal disaster area so that federal funds can be immediately released to the area.

“The Navajo people need clean drinking water and hay, feed and water for livestock and agriculture.” said Begaye.

The Navajo Nation and the current federal agencies are depleting in their resources in providing water, hay, equipment and feed.

“Contacting President Obama will be my priority, what is happening to the Navajo People is disheartening.” said Kirkpatrick “Tell me what you need and I will start working on this today.”

Vice-President Nez expressed his appreciation for Kirkpatrick’s support to the Navajo Nation in this time of need and raised the issue of Standard Form 95. USEPA has been distributing Standard Form 95 along the San Juan River to our People, telling the people to sign the form.

“That has been quashed, the EPA was not suppose to issue Standard Form 95, I am glad the Navajo Nation’s leadership immediately notified the people to not sign the forms, because it is pre-mature,” said Kirkpatrick.

President Begaye brought to Kirkpatrick’s attention the General Mining Act of 1872 as outdated and lack of regulation for Mines.

Kirkpatrick agreed and stated she will make contact with Senator Heinrich and Representative Lujan on revamping these outdated laws.

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August 19, 2015

**BEGAYE APPLAUDS MCCAIN AND UDALL REQUEST FOR OVERSIGHT
HEARING ON EPA SPILL**

Window Rock – President Russell Begaye today applauded Senator John McCain (R-AZ) and Senator Tom Udall (D-NM) for requesting that the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs hold an oversight hearing on the impact of the EPA Gold King Mine spill on the Navajo Nation:

“I applaud Senators McCain and Udall for requesting for an oversight hearing on the EPA mine spill and their continued efforts to hold the agency accountable. This is a positive first step towards addressing the devastating impact of this disaster on the Navajo Nation.

“More action is needed and Washington must move quickly to mitigate the dangerous affects of this spill. Congress must appropriate funding to address this crisis and the EPA must set up a response fund to clean up the toxic chemicals in our water. We need a mobile lab for ongoing monitoring and the federal government must designate the mine area as a Super Fund site.

“I appreciate Senator McCain and Senator Udall’s support look forward to working with them to stand up for the best interests of the Navajo Nation.”

Senator McCain’s letter can be found here: <http://operationyellowwater.com/?p=248>

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August 20, 2015

President Begaye and Vice President Nez Lauds Council's Support

WINDOW ROCK, ARIZONA - President Begaye and Vice President Nez applauded delegates for assisting their constituents during the current Gold King Mine contamination crisis.

“Thank you Council Delegates for coming alongside your chapter officials in securing basic human and livestock needs for your communities,” said President Begaye.

Delegate Amber Crotty worked with Gadiiahi Chapter in securing over 300 bales of hay for livestock, numerous water troughs for cattle, and 10,000 gallon tanks to provide water for livestock.

President Begaye and Vice-President Nez launched Operation Tó Łitso over a week ago and presented the Operation to the Division Directors Monday morning. Operation Tó Łitso is the strategic management operation addressing the Gold King Mine contamination spill.

President Begaye and Vice-President Nez invited the Navajo Nation Council to participate in Monday's update.

Timeline and Announcement of the Operation

President Begaye presented a timeline of events that has occurred since the Gold King Mine spill on Wednesday, August 5, when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) accidentally released upwards of three million gallons of contaminated water into Cement Creek.

President Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez traveled to Silverton on Sunday, August 9, to see the spill firsthand. President Begaye issued a Declaration for State of Emergency addressing

the Gold King Mine spill on August 8 and an Executive Order establishing and ordering execution of Operation Tó Łitso on August 11.

Operation Tó Łitso addresses the immediate impacts of the Gold King Mine toxic spill and addresses the larger contamination issues facing the Nation, such as long-standing uranium contamination.

"It might seem like a simple term but it's a strategic title to raise awareness in addressing broader issues of contamination on the Navajo Nation, including of our over 500 abandoned uranium mines," President Begaye said.

General Updates

President Begaye has prioritized the health of the people over any economic benefits that might come from prematurely opening up the San Juan River.

Director of the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency (NNEPA), Dr. Donald Benn, told the Council that the Nation is awaiting the results of river sample testing.

Harland Cleveland, Emergency Operations Center Manager, said there are 6 locations along the Nation's reach of the San Juan River where emergency water tanks have been placed for livestock and irrigation purposes. The water tanks range from 2,000 to 12,000 gallons in size and are the result of the Nation's coordination with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

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August 24, 2015

Navajo Nation President Begaye keeps restrictions in place for San Juan River

WINDOW ROCK – Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye has not lifted restrictions on opening the San Juan River for irrigation purposes.

“I am furious that the USEPA has placed the Navajo Nation into this position. Our farms will not last much longer without water and our resources are depleting,” said President Begaye. “These past few days I have visited with the farmers along the San Juan River because they are part of this decision.”

On Thursday, Aug. 20, Office of the President and Vice-President (OPVP) held a public meeting for the impacted chapters to give farmers and chapter officials a forum to express their concerns. During the meeting, five of seven San Juan River area chapter officials spoke against opening the river for irrigation.

The farmers were overwhelmingly concerned about contaminating their fields and crops.

“It was heartbreaking to hear farmer after farmer tell us they have said goodbye to their crops and made peace,” said Vice-President Jonathan Nez.

President Begaye asked community members to put a resolution before their respective chapters to vote on whether or not they want to open the river for irrigation.

On Friday, Aug. 21, through resolution, Shiprock Chapter voted 104 in favor, 0 opposed and 9 abstaining to keep the canals closed for a period of one year. Shiprock area farmers utilize the Hogback pump, which affects Tse Dah K’aan, Shiprock and Gadii’ahi chapters.

During this meeting a concerned farmer said he was against opening the irrigation. The farmer said he would instead save as many crops as he could by hauling water. Most of the crops on his 33 acres have not matured.

Having been raised a farmer himself, President Begaye realizes the impacts that keeping the water shut off will have to area farmers as they depend on crops for subsistence and income.

The Shiprock vote against opening the canals represents the community's concern to use precaution and not risk possible contamination to irrigation canals and crops.

The Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency (NNEPA) has reported that initial data from their water samples concurs with data from neighboring jurisdictions in supporting that water from the San Juan River is safe for irrigation purposes.

The USEPA has given initial reports on the soil, but the Navajo Nation will rely on the NNEPA for final test results. These soil samples are critical in identifying levels of metals that have settled along the river banks.

"I'm glad the water samples indicate the water is safe for irrigation use but I remain concerned over the soil and sediment that lines our river bank," said President Begaye. "Every time a heavy storm hits or the soil is disturbed it can recontaminate the water."

The NNEPA will have final results from their soil samples this week.

"The health of our Navajo people will always come first. As such, we must be diligent and cautious in making this decision," said Vice-President Nez.

President Begaye and Vice-President Nez remain firm in holding the USEPA accountable for releasing contaminants into the Animas and San Juan Rivers during the Gold King Mine spill.

While the river remains closed, the Navajo Nation will continue to work with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to provide water for irrigation, livestock and drinking purposes.



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AUGUST 28, 2015

President Begaye opens irrigation to Upper Fruitland, San Juan and Nenahnezad Chapters

NENAHNEZAD - Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye has lifted restrictions on the San Juan River for irrigation purposes for the Chapters of Upper Fruitland, San Juan and Nenahnezad.

President Begaye informed farmers during a meeting at the Nenahnezad Chapter House on Thursday, Aug. 27. His announcement was met with applause from local farmers who have been under significant duress as a result of the Gold King Mine disaster.

"I wanted to hear directly from the farmers that they are comfortable using the water from the San Juan River for irrigation purposes," President Begaye said.

District 13 Council leaders put forth a resolution asking that the declaration of emergency be lifted for irrigation purposes in an effort to address, in part, the devastating economic impacts of the contamination of the San Juan River.

Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency (NNEPA) Director Dr. Donald Benn has determined that water from the San Juan River meets the Nation's water quality standards for the limited use of irrigation. This conclusion is based in part on NNEPA's test results, which are consistent with those of other agencies testing the river. The NNEPA intends to continue testing and monitoring the water quality.

After receiving the Resolution from District 13 Council, President Begaye signed a directive to the Division of Natural Resources (DNR), ordering DNR to immediately flush the irrigation canals. After hearing from the farmers, President Begaye opened the canals for irrigation purposes for Upper Fruitland, San Juan and Nenahnezad Chapters. Restrictions are not lifted for

livestock. Vice-President Jonathan Nez said that these steps must be taken to protect the farmer's livelihood but it is unjust that the Nation has been put in this situation.

According to Marlin Saggboy, Irrigation Supervisor for the Department of Water Resources, the canal system is flushed it should reach San Juan by sundown.

At Thursday's meeting Upper Fruitland Chapter President, Hubert Harwood, talked about the urgency of lifting the restrictions.

"The drier things get, the harder it is to bring things back," he said. "What we need to do is turn the water on and save what we have left. Everybody is shooting for time here."

Moving forward, President Begaye said the NNEPA will continue to monitor the water from the San Juan River and test soil along the canal banks and river beds.

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August 31, 2015

**ATTORNEY GENERAL BRANCH SELECTS HUESTON HENNIGAN LLP TO
REPRESENT NAVAJO NATION IN GOLD KING MINE SPILL LAWSUIT**

Window Rock - Navajo Nation Attorney General Ethel Branch announced today that she has selected the law firm of Hueston Hennigan LLP to represent the Navajo Nation in its claims relating to the release of hazardous substances from the Gold King Mine north of Silverton, Colorado. The initial release of approximately three million gallons of water contaminated by acid mine waste, including arsenic, lead, and cadmium, created a plume that traveled 215 miles through the San Juan River, one of the Navajo Nation's primary water sources.

"Mr. Hueston and his team of skilled litigators will work tirelessly to secure justice and equity for the Navajo Nation and the Navajo people as we address the aftermath of the disastrous Gold King Mine spill. The impact has been devastating to our culture and economy, as well as to the peace of mind of our people. With unknown amounts of this fine sediment in our water we now we face the risk of reliving this nightmare with every major increased water flow event affecting the river," said Attorney General Branch.

The litigation team at Hueston Hennigan LLP will be led by John Hueston, who is most well-known for his role as lead prosecutor in the Enron trial against Ken Lay and Jeff Skilling. Most recently he represented the Navajo Nation and a number of other governments in securing the \$5.15 billion Tronox settlement, the largest environmental recovery settlement in United States history.

"My firm is fully committed to this case, and we will make this matter a number one priority. Working alongside the Attorney General of the Navajo Nation, our team will be relentless in our efforts to secure justice and fair treatment for the Navajo people," said Mr. Hueston.

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye announced shortly after the Gold King Mine spill that the Nation would sue the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other potentially responsible parties. The Navajo Nation Department of Justice conducted a nationwide search of top litigation and environmental law firms and ultimately selected Hueston Hennigan LLP out of a group of five highly qualified finalists.

Navajo farmers and ranchers and the Navajo community in Northern Navajo have been significantly impacted by the mine spill that has shut down the San Juan River for the past three weeks. Farmers have had to abandon large portions of their fields in the hopes of salvaging limited plots, and livestock has become dehydrated due to lack of water. Many of these Navajo farms are organic farms and grow heirloom fruits and vegetables. Many Navajo families along the River also grow corn pollen and special types of corn for ceremonial purposes, but many of those crops have already dried up.

Meanwhile the over 300 abandoned hard rock mines from the Upper Animas Mining District continue to pose a threat to the Nation's water source, and contaminated water from the Gold King Mine continues to spew forth at a rate of 610 gallons per minute—thus taking the aggregate spill amount to over 22 million gallons.

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