



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 30, 2015

## President Shelly meets with Land Buy-Back Program for Indian Nations



President Shelly met with federal officials Monday morning for the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations. The Navajo Nation has entered into a cooperative agreement to participate in the program. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Officials from the U.S. Department of Interior met with President Ben Shelly this morning to discuss benefits of the Navajo Nation’s participation in the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations.

Established by Interior Department, the Buy-Back Program is for tribal nations to implement the land consolidation provisions of the Cobell settlement agreement.

The settlement provided \$1.9 billion for the Trust Land Consolidation Fund to consolidate fractional land interests across Indian Country. Approximately 150 tribal nations are participating in the program.

Representatives from the Office of the President and Vice President, Navajo Land Department, Navajo Department of Justice, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Interior Department met at tribal headquarters for the two-hour presentation.

President Shelly said public outreach with Navajo allottees was necessary to provide

education and answer frequently asked questions.

The headquarters for the Buy-Back Program is in Crownpoint, with satellite offices in Farmington, Gallup and Winslow, Ariz. Approximately 150 tribal reservations with fractional interests are participating in the program.

President Shelly said, “The cooperative agreement is a product of significant planning and coordination with the Navajo Nation since 2013.”

Beyond the need for public outreach to allottees, President Shelly said other considerations looming in the horizon must be monitored.

“I opposed legislation during the recent New Mexico State Legislative Session where private interests attempted to form a group to study federal land,” he said.

The Navajo Nation, Apache Nations and Pueblos stood united against House Bill 291, which was related to public lands for the creation of the N.M. Federal Land Management

Commission.

“When you think about it, what land was the commission going to study? Probably a lot of (allotted tribal lands),” President Shelly said. “A lot of states right now want to eliminate federal lands.

“Arizona tried it. New Mexico tried it. Utah is thinking about it. They said federal land is costing too much. They want to turn it into private land for tax purposes,” he added.

According to the program website, “The Buy-Back Program allows interested individual owners to receive payments for voluntarily selling their land. All interests sold are restored to tribes, which helps to keep Indian lands in trust for tribal communities.”

Santee Lewis, senior advisor on tribal relations for the Land Buy-Back Program, said land fractionation is serious problem for Indian Country.

“Our program was created as a result of the Cobell settlement. We have a \$1.9 billion fund to purchase lands in 146 locations

in Indian Country,” Lewis said.

She said the program must follow five parameters for land purchases: the land must be from fractionated interests, held in trust or restricted land status, purchased at fair market value, and must be purchased from willing sellers within a 10-year period.

“We only purchase lands from willing sellers. Participation in our program is purely voluntary,” Lewis said.

The Navajo Nation’s participation in the program is outlined in the cooperative agreement.

“Land is something that I will always support. Purchase it whenever you can,” President Shelly said. “It’ll always be there. We’ll be gone, but the land will be there.”

The Buy-Back Program will be in operation for the next seven years working toward the goal of consolidating fractionated tribal lands.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 27, 2015

## President Shelly pays respect to fallen officer Alex K. Yazzie



FARMINGTON, N.M.—Thousands of people gathered.

The funeral services for fallen Navajo Police officer Alex K. Yazzie was emotional.

Police officers, fire fighters, emergency medical personnel and other first responders answered the call to pay final respect to one of their comrades.

They came from different states, different counties and different tribes. But the common thread was that they all worked to serve the public and the greater good.

Members from the U.S. Armed Forces were also in attendance, with many wearing the dress uniforms in honor of the departed.

A large American flag draped between two cranes fully extended marked the entrance to the Pinon Hill Community Church, which was filled to capacity. Police officers stood along the

walls of church interior in a protective circle.

For those unable to be seated, they stood in the back and watched the proceedings, while hundreds of other stood outside the church and waited.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly provided remarks.

He said the Nation is grieving and saddened by the loss of a tribal officer that gave his life to protect others.

“I would like to thank all the law enforcement officers that are here from the different agencies. Thank you for being with us and with the family,” President Shelly said.

Police officers face many challenges: stress and emotional toll, he said, adding that interaction with the public is usually met with a sharp eye and equally cutting words.

“The people you stop, they never have a nice word to say to (officers.) They chew on you, they give you a hard

time,” President Shelly said. “Domestic violence calls are the most dangerous.”

In spite of this, brave men and women don the uniform and protect their communities, he noted, with the understanding that they have only three to six seconds to react in dangerous situations.

Beyond those daily challenges, Navajo Police have to work with less. Whether it’s funding to purchase equipment, pay salaries or simple manpower, there’s not enough to cover the tremendous land base of the Navajo Nation, he added.

The times are changing.

“When I was growing up, I remember a non-Navajo, hungry or thirsty, another Navajo would pick him up, feed him and give him water,” President Shelly said. “What’s today’s world? Right now, if you’re in that situation, you get beat up or you get killed.

“These are Navajos I’m talking about. Society is changing,” he added.

With the increase population and changing social values, President Shelly said more funding is needed from the federal, state and tribal governments to properly equip officers for changing times.

“We are short-handed.

Believe it or not, the Navajo Police officers that are here, one officer has to cover 1,282 persons. Farmington has more officers as whole, than the Navajo Police as a force,” President Shelly said.

Upon concluding his address, President Shelly presented the family of Alex K. Yazzie the Navajo Nation Flag and saluted his brave service and tragic sacrifice.

Officer Alex K. Yazzie was buried at Memory Garden Cemetery.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 25, 2015

## President Shelly approves \$1.1 million for legislative district assistants program



President Shelly signed Resolution No. CMA-8-15 on March 24 and approved \$1.1 million for the LDA program. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Third time’s the charm.

On the afternoon of March 24, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed Resolution No. CMA-8-15 and approved FY 2015 general funds in the amount of \$1,151,811 for the legislative district assistants program.

Legislative district assistants are assigned to the 24 council delegates to provide “a wide range of legislative work of considerable difficulty in providing general support to council delegates and specifically addressing inquiries

from, and serving as a liaison to, constituents.”

“In the spirit of cooperation with the 23rd Navajo Nation Council, I have signed and approved more than \$1.1 million for the legislative district assistants program,” President Shelly said. “These funds will provide the council with assistance in constituency services.”

The president vetoed two other legislative resolutions requesting for more than \$3.5 million to fund the LDA positions.

During the FY 2015 comprehensive budget, the

22nd Navajo Nation Council took issue with politically appointed positions and said the funding for salaries would best be utilized to provide direct services to the Navajo people.

President Shelly agreed and subsequently vetoed Legislation No. CS-46-14 on Sept. 15, 2014. The legislation earmarked almost \$2 million for the LDA program, more than \$1.3 million of which was identified to fund travel expenses.

A few months passed before a second bill surfaced to fund the district assistant positions.

On Dec. 10, 2014, President

Shelly vetoed Legislation No. CN-58-14. The Navajo Nation Council proposed a \$541,946 budget for the LDA program.

President Shelly’s decision to approve the LDA program budget the third time around came after months of negotiations and discussions with members of the tribal council.

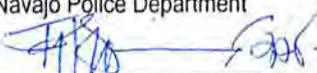




NAVAJO POLICE DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

MEMORANDUM

TO : All Departmental Personnel  
Navajo Police Department

FROM :   
Ivan G. Tsosie, Police Captain  
Delegated Chief of Police  
Navajo Police Department

DATE : March 24, 2015

SUBJECT : **Loss of an Officer**  
*Re: Senior Police Officer Alex Yazzie, Shiprock Police District*

As you may know through various media, Shiprock Police District lost an Officer on Thursday night, March 19, 2015, in a gun battle on the east side foothills of the Chuska Mountains, Red Valley, Arizona. Officer Yazzie was fatally wounded at the location. Senior Police Officers James Hale and Herbert Frazier III were also injured by suspect's fire. Officer Hale and Frazier are recuperating from their injuries and are with their families. Shiprock Police District continues to mourn the loss of one of our finest. Although, we may hear negativity from people who were not there we will continue to be vigilant in providing police services to the people – who are our only care. Those negative people are only bringing their personal issues to light at this time because they see an opportunity. So, I humbly ask that you join us as we help lay Senior Police Officer Alex Yazzie to rest. He was very proud to be a Navajo Police Officer and a United States Marine. The funeral will begin at 1000 hours, with the rest of the events falling-in thereafter. The funeral, burial and reception will be at the following locations:

**Funeral Services:** Pinion Hills Community Church,  
5101 North Dustin Avenue  
Farmington, New Mexico, 87401

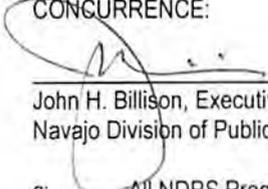
**Burial Services:** Memory Garden Cemetery  
6917 East Main  
Farmington, New Mexico, 87402, and the

**Reception:** National Guard Armory,  
1101 West Navajo Street,  
Farmington, New Mexico, 87401

\*Funeral services are on Friday, 03/27/2015

Navajo Police Personnel maybe excused to attend, subject to the approval of their immediate supervisor and Commanders. Officers wanting to participate in the motorcade and escort from the Desert View Funeral Home, Shiprock, New Mexico, into Farmington, New Mexico, should contact their immediate supervisor; in addition, the District Commanders will contact Police Sergeant Rory Atcitty with names and units of personnel who may attend. All police units shall be clean. Sergeant Atcitty may be contacted at (505) 368-1354. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact this office. Thank you, and may the holy people protect you and your families.

CONCURRENCE:

  
John H. Billison, Executive Director  
Navajo Division of Public Safety

3/24/2015

c: All NDPS Programs



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 24, 2015

## President Shelly signs tribal-state gaming compact, encourages DOI approval



President Shelly and other Navajo leaders listen to last week’s House of Representatives session before the close of the 2015 N.M. State Legislature. The Navajo delegation traveled to Santa Fe for weeks on end to ensure the gaming compact passed the legislature. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed the tribal gaming compact today during an impromptu signing ceremony at the Office of the President and Vice President.

Flanked by Speaker LoRenzo Bates and council delegates Nelson Begaye, Jonathan Hale and Leonard Tsosie, President Shelly signed the gaming compact for tribal approval. The compact now advances to

Gov. Susana Martinez and the U.S. Department of Interior.

“The Navajo Nation extends thanks to the tribes and pueblos that stood with us to get this compact passed,” President Shelly said. “I would also like to express appreciation for our counterparts at the Navajo Nation Council, Navajo Department of Justice and Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise.

“By working together,

we passed a historic gaming compact that will continue to impact our tribal economies for the next 22 years,” he added.

Karis Begaye, an attorney with Navajo DOJ, said this week, the five tribes will have their gaming compacts signed by their respective tribal leaders before submission to the governor’s office for approval and signature.

Another formal signing ceremony is expected to take

place in Santa Fe, when Gov. Martinez signs the compact and sends it forward to DOI, she said.

The goal is to submit the compact to the federal government next week for the start of the 45-day review period.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 24, 2015

## President Shelly cuts ribbon to open new Shiprock Youth Center



President Shelly provided the keynote address for the Shiprock Youth Center before the obligatory ribbon cutting ceremony. (Photo by Michele Morris)

SHIPROCK, N.M.—It’s for the kids.

This morning, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly attended the grand opening of the Shiprock Youth Center and snipped the ribbon to officially open the spacious facility to the general public.

On March 6, 2013, President Shelly broke ground for the new youth center. The grand opening comes almost two years to the day.

“Our Navajo kids need opportunities to do something constructive with their time. This new facility will give them the opportunity to play sports and have a safe and sanitary place to meet,” President Shelly said.

The \$6.6 million facility was funded by the U.S. Department

of Housing and Urban Development. Measuring 22,000 square feet, the center features rooms for art, games, learning, technology, media and the open ceiling gym.

The new facility is a welcome distraction for Navajo kids seeking recreational activities that don’t involve drug or alcohol abuse.

President Shelly said the war against drugs and alcohol on the Navajo Nation is a daily challenge.

“We need to teach our children about the dangers of these addictive lifestyles,” he said.

The new multipurpose building goes a long way toward addressing those dangers, in addition to replacing the

dilapidated old facility, which is more than 50 years old.

Our kids are the future leaders of tomorrow, the president said, adding that more youth centers like the one in Shiprock need to be constructed at chapters across the Navajo Nation.

“First Lady and I have dedicated our lives to protecting Navajo children,” President Shelly said. “It started at our home with our kids and grandkids.

“Our homes are the first learning centers for our kids,” he added.

Thanking the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development, Navajo Housing Authority, Division of Dine’ Education and the Office of Dine Youth, President Shelly said it

was a collaborative effort that made the project a reality.

Design and Engineering Services worked with Dyron Murphy for the architecture and design. Oakland-Arviso provided the construction.

President Shelly said the 2014 presidential election taught the Navajo people the most important lesson of all – the preservation of self-identity.

“(The election) taught us the importance of preserving our Navajo language and culture. I have great hope that this new facility will help us preserve those elements in our lives,” he said.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 24, 2015

## President Shelly provides welcome address at Navajo Land Summit



President Shelly said the Navajo Nation has grown by leaps and bounds with the Navajo Land Title Data System, which provides layers and layers of data ranging from infrastructure, grazing lands, home site leases, business site leases, water wells, roads, forests and other important data. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

TWIN ARROWS, Ariz.—Pay attention. Listen. Take notes.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly’s advice to the more than 800 registered attendees of the 2nd Annual Navajo Nation Land Summit was straightforward.

“Please be sure you attend the sessions and take good notes to take back with you to your offices,” President Shelly said. “There’s a lot of good information that will be shared with you over the next few days.

For a second year, the Navajo Land Department provided information on the rigors of tribal land management and the

numerous layers of data that will be available to Navajos and non-Navajos alike. Once again, the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort played host.

The Navajo Nation Land Title Data System, a new database with exceptional firewall protection and countless tiers of information providing real time data on everything from roads, infrastructure, forested areas, water wells and right-of-way areas, is the crown jewel of the Land Department.

President Shelly said, “This new database will automate services for chapter members,

tribal officials, and the general public. People no longer have to travel to Window Rock to find information.”

Data is literally at the fingertips of the general public, as the NLTDS will be accessible on desktops, iPads and even smart phones. The database works in tandem with the Navajo Nation General Leasing Act of 2013, which was enacted by the U.S. Department of the Interior in the summer of 2014.

“The Navajo Nation now has authority over all leases on the Navajo Nation, with the exception of minerals and

right-of-ways. Those two are still under the jurisdiction of the BIA,” President Shelly said.

The Navajo Nation is vastly different from the tribal government of 15 years past, he said, noting that technology savvy chapters are finding self-determination and transparency through online tools like the Woven Integrated Navajo Data System.

“Chapter officials attending the land summit will learn about creating the most effective Community Land Based Plans that serve as blueprints to their communities,” President Shelly

said. “Gone are the days of building anywhere on the land.

“Everything is now recorded, monitored and protected to ensure we are getting the most of our tribal lands,” he added.

### Paradigm Shift

“The Beginning of a Paradigm Shift that Promotes Independence” was the theme of the summit. Attendees included chapter officials, council delegates, tribal enterprises, community land use planning committees, grazing officials and land boards.

Moroni Benally, executive director of the Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources, provided the welcome address and encouraged the audience to realize that “land is life.”

“This is an incredibly important summit, not just for what’s happening now, but for the future of the Navajo Nation,” Benally said. “The information you leave with becomes power.”

He said it’s the power to change existing laws and policies, the power to change the way communities are organized, the power to change the way people use land.

Dissecting the theme of the summit, Benally explained that a paradigm is a set of rules or guidelines, whether it’s federal or tribal policies, school board directives or the Red Book that governs the Eastern Land Board.

Presently, a paradigm shift is occurring at DNR, he said, ever since he took over the reins to the division earlier this year.

“I began reviewing programmatic agreements with the federal government and realized that a lot of times, the Navajo Nation is in the back seat,” Benally said.

Updating outdated policies can be done with a little hard work and persistence, he said, because federal regulations are not carved in stone.

“There’s always creative ways around existing law. That’s what I kept telling the federal officials

and now, we are changing the criteria for selecting contractors that are working on the Navajo Nation,” Benally said. “This did not require Navajo Nation Council or Congressional approval.”

Benally challenged the attendees to take control of the land so cities, towns, schools, factories and hospitals could be created, all which create a tax base to draw money from for services to the people.

“Listen carefully. This is the beginning. It all starts with land,” he said.

### Navajo Nation Strategic Plan

Arbin Mitchell, chief of staff for the Office of the Speaker, said the land is our Mother.

“As Navajo people, we have a simple idea, a simple plan,” Mitchell said. “There are four items in our strategic plan: *Nitsáhákees*, *Nahat’á*, *Iiná*, and *Sihasin*.

“(The plan) goes around and around. You plant it out, you think it out,” he said.

The four concepts of thinking, planning, life and hope are the foundation for the Navajo Nation.

Mitchell said his decades of experience serving at the highest levels of the Navajo Nation Executive Branch has taught him that progress begins at the local level.

Citing Title 26 of the Navajo Nation Code, the Local Governance Act, he said certified chapters have an opportunity to issue their own business site or home site leases.

“Any plan that starts in Window Rock is hard to finish. If it starts from the community, it’s not that hard to complete. Local empowerment is about doing for yourself,” Mitchell said.



Moroni Benally, executive director of the Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources said, “Land is life.” Grazing officials, he said, are one of the most powerful groups on the Navajo Nation because they control the land. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Legislative Branch chief of staff Arbin Mitchell said traditionally, Navajos are taught to respect the land because she is our Mother. He said the simple Navajo plan of thinking, planning, life and hope hold the answer. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Mike Halona, department manager for the Navajo Land Department, provided an interactive history of land on the Navajo Nation. His presentation included land impacts, land use planning and chapter boundaries. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 23, 2015

## President Shelly meets with Democratic House leader Nancy Pelosi



President Shelly shares a moment with Wisconsin Congresswoman Gwen Moore at the conclusion of the meeting between congressional members and tribal leaders last Friday. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

SANTA FE—The minority leader of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and other congressional members met with Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and other tribal leaders in a private meeting in Santa Fe last Friday.

President Shelly met with Congresswoman Pelosi on March 20 at Buffalo Thunder Casino and shared issues from the Navajo Nation. He focused on energy development and stimulating the tribal economy.

“Today, the Navajo Nation has more than its fair share of poverty,” President Shelly said.

He said the tribe has an unemployment rate bordering on 60 percent and the average Navajo earns only \$7,200 annually. Forty percent of Navajo families lack running water and electricity, basic infrastructure most Americans take for granted.

“Dollars earned by Navajos are immediately spent in the

border towns circling the Navajo Nation. We have to break this cycle,” President Shelly said. “This means developing industries on the Nation that will attract business development.

“Bureaucratic red tape, delays in approvals, lack of basic business competence and a paternalistic view have created federal imposed poverty on the Navajo people,” he said.

Sponsored by the Tribal Engagement and Active Members Program (TEAM), the private event brought together tribal leaders and congressional members.

Congressman Ben Ray Lujan (D-N.M.), chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, facilitated the meeting discussions.

Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick (D-Ariz.), Congressman Xavier Becerra (D-Calif.), Congressman Derek Kilmer (D-Wash.) and Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-Wis.) also attended the

meeting to iron out issues facing tribes across Indian Country.

President Shelly explained that tribes were mired in a complex regulatory framework for the U.S., and often bogged down by the trust responsibilities of the federal government.

Nearly all the approvals to start a project on tribal lands require the approval of the U.S. Secretary of Interior, he said, adding that the U.S. EPA is another roadblock preventing tribes from executing projects.

“The delays imposed by these approvals can last for years and cost millions of dollars,” President Shelly said.

The time required to obtain federal regulatory approval discourages investors from spending their money on the Navajo Nation to fund projects and employment opportunities.

“Why in a time of decreasing federal budgets would the federal government want to limit the Navajo Nation’s ability to support itself?” President Shelly questioned.

The Navajo Nation economy is built upon coal, oil and natural gas.

With renewable energy the new battle cry on Capitol Hill, the Navajo Nation is left in a lurch because the tribe’s fossil fuel dependent economy must now move in the opposite direction.

He said this comes after the government pushed the Navajo Nation into a fossil fuel dependent economy in the early twentieth century to secure ridiculously low royalty rates for outside energy companies.

“So where does this leave us? We are even more dependent

on the federal government than we were yesterday. That is unacceptable,” President Shelly said.

The answer is energy generation.

Implementing new alternatives such as clean coal technology: Coal-to-gas, coal-to-liquid and government incentives to promote carbon capture and sequestration.

President Shelly said the federal government must give tribes the authority to approve leases, agreements and right-of-ways for the purpose of developing mineral resources and refining energy resources.

The ability for tribes to have true self-determination over their economic future is well worth the investment, he encouraged.

“For every energy job created, there are five to seven secondary jobs created to support that position,” President Shelly said. “Think about how many Navajos we can put to work, how many lives we can change.

“That is the beginning of creating a sustainable economy,” he concluded.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 20, 2015

## President Shelly orders flags at half-staff to honor officer Alex Yazzie



Navajo Police mourn the loss of one of their own. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—The flags across the Navajo Nation will be at half-staff to commemorate the service of a Navajo Police officer killed on duty.

On March 20, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly issued a proclamation in honor of the late Alex Yazzie, a 14-year veteran of the Navajo Police and former U.S. Marine Corps veteran.

“The Navajo Nation mourns the loss of Alex Yazzie, a dedicated Navajo Police officer that gave his life in the line of duty to protect the lives of others,” President Shelly said. “We are deeply saddened over his sudden departure.”

The president condemned

domestic violence and said the family disputes need to end, so tragedies like this are not repeated.

“We must continue to watch for the warning signs and report them before the violence escalates. Take care of one another,” President Shelly said.

Flags will be at half-staff from March 20 through 23, 2015.

On March 19, at 2:15 p.m., Jordon Fowler called the Shiprock Police District and reported his brother Justin Fowler for domestic violence.

Justin Fowler was pistol-whipping his wife Rayana Ramone and his mother Cecelia Begay.

The police dispatcher heard shots fired while on the phone with Jordon Fowler.

With his brother on the phone with the police, Justin Fowler subsequently fled the scene of the crime and Navajo Police officer Anderson Dez responded to the call.

About 200 yards south of the Littlewater store, Dez was directed toward U.S. Route 491, where the suspect, Justin Fowler, was parked. Justin Fowler began firing an AR-15 semiautomatic rifle at Dez.

Officer Dez took cover behind his police unit, which received damage from the gunplay. Justin Fowler then fled the scene.

The suspect returned to Littlewater at 8:20 p.m., near the location of the mobile police command center. He reportedly made a U-turn in an apparent taunt to police officers and led police on a car chase.

Navajo Police followed in pursuit, including Lieutenant Phillip Joe. While traveling on Navajo Route 13, five miles south of the Red Valley Trading Post, the suspect began firing upon approaching police vehicles.

Lt. Joe’s unit was hit and was disabled.

From that point, the suspect fled toward Lukachukai, Ariz. Approximately 11 miles south of Red Valley Trading Post, the responding officers came upon the suspect parked alongside the roadway.

He began shooting at the officers and they returned fire and subsequently killed the shooter, identified as Justin Fowler.

During the gunfight, officer Herbert Frazier was shot in the shin. Officer James Hale was shot in

the right leg. They were both transported to nearby medical facilities. Hale was eventually airlifted to University of New Mexico Hospital in Albuquerque.

Officer Alex Yazzie, a member of the Shiprock Police District, was shot and killed by the suspect.

Four Navajo Police vehicles were damaged, two of them are non-operational.

More than 30 Navajo police officers responded from the time of the initial call.

They were from the districts of Shiprock, Crownpoint, Window Rock, Chinle, and Kayenta. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is conducting the investigation with the Navajo Department of Criminal Investigation.

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## THE NAVAJO NATION

# *Proclamation*

### IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF THE LATE NAVAJO POLICE OFFICER ALEX YAZZIE

**WHEREAS**, The Navajo Nation is greatly saddened by the loss of the late Alex Yazzie, who served as a Navajo Police officer; and

**WHEREAS**, The late Alex Yazzie was a Navajo Police officer who served the Navajo Nation, and Shiprock Police District with courage, honor, and distinction from 2012 to 2015, when he reached the End of Watch; and

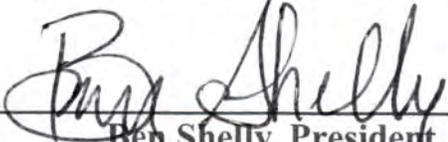
**WHEREAS**, The late Alex Yazzie served as a Navajo Police officer and joined his fellow Navajo Police officers with dedication to serving and protecting the Navajo people, in partnership with tribal communities, to enhance the quality of life within the Navajo Nation; and

**WHEREAS**, The late Alex Yazzie was a Navajo Police officer and a beloved member of the Navajo Division of Public Safety, continually striving to be professional, respectful, and responsive to the changing needs of the Navajo culture, people, and communities; and

**WHEREAS**, The Navajo Nation unites and offers prayers for his family and friends during this time of grief.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, BEN SHELLY**, President of the Navajo Nation, do hereby proclaim that all Navajo Nation flags shall be flown at half-staff in honor of the late Alex Yazzie, from sunrise on March 20 to sunset on March 23, 2015.

**ORDERED THIS 20th DAY OF MARCH 2015**

  
Ben Shelly, President  
THE NAVAJO NATION

**March 20, 2015**

**Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety - Latest news update on the shootings..**

On Thursday, March 19, 2015, at 2:15p.m., Jordon Fowler called the Shiprock police district and reported his brother Justin Fowler, who was beating his wife Rayana Ramone with a pistol. Suspect Fowler was also beating his mother Cecelia Begay with a pistol. The police communications operator heard shots fired while on the phone with Jordon Fowler.

Navajo police officer Anderson Dez responded after the suspect left the scene. Upon arrival, 200 yards south of Littlewater store, reporting party Jordon Fowler pointed to Officer Dez in the direction of U.S. Highway 491 where the suspect was parked. Officer Dez sees the suspect at his vehicle. The suspect then discharges his weapon, an AR-15 semi automatic rifle at Officer Dez, who took cover at his police vehicle causing damage, but Officer Dez was unharmed. The suspect flees in his vehicle.

At 8:20pm, the suspect returns to Littlewater to the location of the mobile police command center making a u-turn in an apparent taunt fleeing the scene with Navajo police lieutenant Phillip Joe in pursuit with several police officers.

On Navajo Route 13, five miles south of Red Valley trading post, the suspect discharges his weapon toward approaching police vehicles, disabling the police vehicle operated by Lieutenant Joe. The suspect entered his vehicle, fled scene two toward Lukachukai, Arizona. At approximately 11 miles south of Red Valley trading post, responding officers came upon the suspect vehicle, parked along roadway, scene three, when the suspect discharged his weapon at officers. The officers devised and executed a plan, engaged the suspect vehicle, as the suspect discharged his weapon from behind. The suspect was subsequently shot and killed by police.

Officer Herbert Frazier was shot in the shin, Officer James Hale was shot in the right leg. Both were transported to nearby medical facilities. Officer Hale was then airlifted to the University of New Mexico Hospital in Albuquerque, NM. Officer Alex Yazzie was fatally shot by the suspect.

Four police vehicles were damaged, two of them are non-operational.

More than 30 Navajo police officers responded from the first reported time at 2:15pm from five police districts, Shiprock, Crownpoint, Window Rock, Chinle, and Kayenta. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is conducting the investigation with the Navajo Department of Criminal Investigation.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 19, 2015

## President Shelly sends condolences to family of fallen Navajo Police officer

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Earlier tonight, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly received word that a Navajo Police officer was killed in the line of duty.

“We send our condolences to the family of the Navajo Police officer who gave his life in the line of duty tonight,” President Shelly said. “The family will be in our prayers.”

Reports of a shooting first came into President Shelly via phone, as he attended the N.M. House of Representatives session for the passage of Senate Joint Resolution 19.

John Billison, director of Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety, provided only basic details and said the case is under investigation.

The following details are limited.

Around 4 p.m., Navajo Police received reports of an armed man holding his family hostage with an AR-15 assault rifle. An officer responded to the domestic violence call and was fired upon by the suspect, who then fled the scene.

Other police officers responded to the manhunt from the Window Rock and Crownpoint police districts.

Around 10:30 p.m. tonight, we received word that the suspect was shot to death in Red Valley, Ariz.

The suspect shot two Navajo Police officers and one officer died at the scene. The other officer is at Shiprock Medical Center.

No names or further details available at this time.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 19, 2015

## President Shelly thanks N.M. Legislature for passing gaming compact



Above, Navajo leaders joined President Shelly and First Lady Martha Shelly in the rostrum for the House session. Bottom, Rep. Sharon Clahchischilliage introduced SJR 19 to the House floor and made a strong argument for its passage. She was flanked by expert witnesses Karis Begaye, left, an attorney with Navajo DOJ and Jessica Hernandez, right, from Gov. Martinez's office. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

SANTA FE—It came down to the wire.

With the 2015 N.M. Legislative Session expiring on March 21, Senate Joint Resolution 19 passed in the House of Representatives by a vote of 61-5 earlier this evening.

The gaming compact now advances to Gov. Susana Martinez for approval before

getting sent to the U.S. Department of Interior for final authorization.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly expressed appreciation for state lawmakers for approving the compact and not only saving thousands of jobs, but encouraging tribal economic independence.

"I want to say thank you to

members of both the House and Senate for approval of this compact," President Shelly said. "Gaming is independence and revenue for the tribes.

"Thanks are in order for the governor's office as well, they worked hard on this compact alongside us," he added.

Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, T'iistoh Sikaad, Tse' Daa' Kaan, Upper Fruitland) and council delegates Amber Crotty (Beclabito, Gadiiahi-To' Koi, Red Valley, Sheep Springs, Toadlena-Two Grey Hills, Tse'alnaozt'i'i') and Tuchoney Slim, Jr. (Bodaway-Gap, Coppermine, K'aibi'to, LeChee, Tonalea-Red Lake) joined President Shelly in the rostrum.

Rep. Sharon Clahchischilliage (R-San Juan) introduced SJR 19 to the House floor.

She described the joint resolution as a good bill and said five tribes united over the past three years to craft the compact with Gov. Martinez's office.

"The tribe's casinos have created thousands of jobs for New Mexicans and brings in millions of dollars every year in revenue sharing to the state of New Mexico," Clahchischilliage said.

Time was of the essence, she said, because current compacts expire on June 30 and non-approval of SJR 19 would cause severe economic setbacks for the tribes.

She reviewed the main provisions of the compact: increased revenue sharing,

limits on the number of gaming facilities for tribes, the extended 22-year expiration date, new provisions for comps and participation in the state self-exclusion program.

Many members of the House rose and stood in support of the bill, including Speaker. Ken Martinez (D-Bernalillo, Cibola, McKinley).

He said the negotiations were a long and difficult process, especially after last year's session that saw the Navajo compact stall in the Senate. The difference with the new compact is that the tribes worked together to create a compact in the interests of all.

"It affects everybody," Martinez said. "I rise in strong support of this gaming compact."

Rep. Debbie Rodella also rose in support of the compact on behalf of the Jicarilla Apache Nation.

She said in north central N.M., jobs are hard to come by.

"This compact will keep more than 200 people employed," Rodella said. "It provides stability for the next 22 years."

-30-





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 18, 2015

## President Shelly supports Navajo Head Start - CCDF partnership



President Shelly said the Navajo Nation is on a mission to recruit more than 700 students for Navajo Head Start. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

CROWNSPOINT, N.M.— It's all for the children.

Earlier this morning, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with representatives from the Navajo Nation Council, Navajo Head Start, Division of Social Services and the Child Care Development Fund to discuss a new initiative aimed at boosting enrollment.

"These young kids will

be our leaders some day. We must provide them with every advantage to succeed," President Shelly said.

He thanked the staff from Navajo Head Start and Child Care Development Fund for providing the educational foundation necessary for Navajo kids to succeed. Combining the programs together will only benefit the future generations, he added.

"The CCDF classrooms will be used for Navajo Head Start students. By partnering together, Navajo Head Start will have enough classroom space for the student recruitment drive," President Shelly said. "The Navajo Nation is on a mission."

That mission is to enroll more than 700 pre-school students into Navajo Head Start classrooms across the

Navajo Nation before March 31, 2015.

Navajo Head Start passed a federal review on June 4, 2014 and secured a \$125 million five-year grant award from the Administration for Children and Families. Although the program was in compliance with federal mandates, many of their classrooms across the Navajo Nation were in severe need



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 16, 2015

## President Shelly issues Navajo Nation Prayer Day Proclamation



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— The changing of the seasons is a holy time of year.

On March 20, the spring equinox will once again appear and signal the time of change ahead, as our weather warms and crops are planted for the coming harvest season.

In observance of this, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly has issued a proclamation in observance of *Il Hodayin Biji*, or Navajo Nation Prayer Day.

President Shelly signed the proclamation on the morning of March 16 at the Office of the President and Vice President.

“We have hosted Prayer Day and Spirituality Day events throughout our administration, in conjunction with the changing of the seasons,” President Shelly said. “The public is invited to join us for a day of prayer and reverence, as we welcome spring.”

President Shelly explained

that Navajo Nation Prayer Day is a time to spend with family and loved ones, to renew bonds and strengthen family ties.

Having a solid foundation of love and respect at the family level will only strengthen the Navajo Nation as a whole, he added, because those values set the tone for Navajo society.

“We must renew our traditional values and incorporate that into the lives of our children, grandchildren and future generations, or else we run the risk of losing those sacred teachings forever,” President Shelly said.

The proclamation speaks to *Dine’ Bi Beenahaz’aani*, Navajo Fundamental Law, and its importance in providing spiritual guidance to the Navajo Nation. It also states that the incorporation of Navajo teachings such as *Siihasin*, *K’é*, and *Sodizin* will help the Navajo Nation overcome substance

abuse and other social ills creating disharmony.

Navajo Nation Prayer Day activities will take place at the powwow grounds in Window Rock on March 19, beginning at 8 a.m. for the opening ceremony.

The Tsehootsooi Twin Warriors Society will provide color guard duties. Jesse Kaulaity and Leroy Becenti will sing a Flag Song in honor of the flags. Tom White, Sr. will provide the invocation.

The remainder of the day will be arrangement of the ceremonial grounds, as teepees are erected and prepared for the evening ceremonies.

Members of the Diné American Church and Azee’ Bee Nahagha will be in attendance for the peyote meetings that will be conducted in six teepees.

Conducting the peyote meetings will be Native American Church leaders Leroy Becenti, Kirk Arviso, Dale

Gonnie, Thomas Walker Jr., and Gerald King.

At 6 p.m., Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim will provide the welcome address and explain the importance and meaning behind the change of season. At 7 p.m., the Native American Church peyote meetings will begin.

On March 20, the event will conclude with a continental breakfast, keynote address by President Shelly and free lunch.

Navajo Nation Prayer Day is a drug and alcohol free event. Participants are asked to respect others during the event and no recording of prayer songs is allowed.

For more information, contact Cyndy Taylor, executive staff assistant at OPVP at 928-871-7914 or email [ctaylor@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:ctaylor@navajo-nsn.gov).

of repair and replacement in some instances.

By temporarily partnering with the CCDF to secure safe and sanitary classrooms for students, Navajo Head Start is recruiting students to meet enrollment numbers set by the federal Head Start Program.

“If we do not enroll more than 700 kids into Navajo Head Start in the next few weeks, some of that grant award will be returned to the federal treasury,” President Shelly said.

He said passing the federal review to secure the five-year grant award would not have been possible without the collaboration of the Navajo Nation Council Health, Education and Human Services Committee, Navajo Board of Election and the Navajo Head Start Parent Policy Council.

“None of this would have happened without the support of President Shelly,” said Sharon Singer, director of Navajo Head Start. “He continues to support our children and education.

“He also is committed before his term ends, to ensure that we’re able as a nation, to provide the best services for our children, she added.

Singer explained that benefits of the revamped Navajo Head Start ranged from having a highly qualified staff to a nutrition program promoting health. Working with the CCDF is building capacity for the Navajo Nation, she said.

The national effort for early education services is not new to Navajo.

Sharon Begay-McCabe,

director of the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services, said the CCDF building in Crownpoint where the meeting was held, housed four classrooms and 30 students enrolled in the program.

“The policy of the CCDF states that we are to increase the availability and quality of child care services for income eligible parents,” McCabe said.

Parents who are working, attending job training, or going to school qualify for CCDF services. Additionally, children with special needs or children in protective custody would also qualify.

“The bottom line is we want to have children (here) and help their parents (with child care services),” McCabe said.

Also in attendance at the meeting was Capt. Robert Bialas, regional program manager for Region XI of the Administration for Children and Families.

After living on the Navajo Nation for more than 23 years, 20 of which was spent serving with Indian Health Services, Bialas said he’s supportive of the Navajo people.

“It’s a desire across the Administration for Children and Families for the Office of Head Start and Office of Child Care to begin collaborating together,” Bialas said.

“We want to work with you to ensure this collaboration, this transition, will be successful,” he said.



*President Shelly said the time is now for Navajo Head Start and Child Care Development Fund to come together. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*



*Sharon Begay-McCabe, director of Division of Social Services, said the bottom line is enrollment of Navajo students. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*



*Sharon Singer, director of Navajo Head Start, said the program must recruit 700 students in less than 30 days. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*



## İŁ HODIYIN BIJÍ (PRAYER DAY)

# Proclamation

In Observance of the Change of the Seasons  
March 20, 2015

**WHEREAS**, *Hodeeyááddéé Diné* have used the laws of the *Diyin Dine'é'* (Holy Deities) and the Natural laws of the universe to guide our survival and prosperity; and

**WHEREAS**, the Navajo Nation enacted the *Dine' Bi Beenahaz'aani* (1 N.N.C. § 201-206) which uses the laws of *Diyin Dine'é'* as the Foundation of *Diné Law*, which incorporates the continued use of Spiritual guidance to ensure the health and richness of the Navajo Nation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Navajo Nation is an empathetic and compassionate nation. We understand the travails of all people including other nations, the United States, and the universe. We, the *Diné*, recognize and endure issues and problems created by *Bilá' Ashdla'ii* (Five Fingered People), and natural catastrophic events which we have no control over but are forced to address; and

**WHEREAS**, the Navajo nation has been plagued by numerous problems associated with various social ills, including substance abuse, which have been particularly damaging to our children, relatives, and communities, and which are contributing factors to the three leading causes of death: accidents, homicides and suicides; and

**WHEREAS**, there is *Siihasin* (Hope) in overcoming these social ills and bringing back prosperity to the *Diné*. The strength of *Diné* is rooted in *K'é* and Spirituality; hence we offer this proclamation to encourage all citizens of the Navajo Nation to offer *Sodizin* (prayers) for the health and well-being of all *Diné*, while addressing these issues through Prevention, Intervention, Treatment and Aftercare activities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Navajo Nation encourages all residents of all Faiths of the Navajo Nation to participate in *İł Hodiyin Bijí* (Prayer Day) on the first day of each season of *Daan* (Spring), *Shí* (Summer), *Aak'ee* (Fall), and *Hai* (Winter). Furthermore, we encourage each of you to continue to pray on a daily basis.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED**, that the Navajo Nation, Office of the President and Vice President, Office of the Speaker, and the Office of the Chief Justice hereby designate the first day of *Daan* (Spring), *Shí* (Summer), *Aak'ee* (Fall), and *Hai* (Winter) as *İł Hodiyin Bijí*, and encourage all residents of the Navajo Nation to offer *Sodizin* (prayers) for a better **Quality of Life for all Diné**.

Attest:

SIGNED AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE THIS 20<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH 2015

Witness My Hand & Great Seal of the Navajo Nation

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Shelly".

Ben Shelly, President

THE NAVAJO NATION



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 16, 2015

## President Shelly approves \$317,891 from UUFB to fund referendum



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— The decision whether or not to amend Navajo fluency requirements for the presidency of the Navajo Nation will go before the Navajo people through a referendum.

On standby to report before the N.M. House of Representatives on the gaming compact with the state, President Shelly's first order of business at the Office of the President and Vice President this morning was to address the legislation passed by the 23rd Navajo Nation Council to fund more than \$300,000 for the presidential election.

With a stroke of his pen, President Shelly approved funding to hold a referendum

vote on Navajo fluency requirements for the presidency.

"There is no easy fix to the on-going election issue than a referendum to the Navajo people," President Shelly said. "An issue as important and decisive as this, it is indeed in the best interest of the Navajo people for a referendum to begin the healing process.

"I urge the Navajo Nation Council and the Navajo Election Administration to promptly hold a discussion regarding election events to establish a new timeline," he added.

During a special session on March 13, the Navajo Nation Council passed Resolution No. CMA-06-15, for approving

supplemental funding from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance in the amount of \$317,891 for the Navajo Nation Election Administration business unit no. 101021 to fund the continuing 2014 Navajo Nation elections.

The legislation came across the street to the Executive Branch for approval the same evening.

Sponsored by delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill), the bill was amended by delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse

Lake), who proposed the funds be used for a referendum before the election.

The council voted to approve the amended legislation by a vote of 12-8.

President Shelly maintained that the decision to amend the Navajo language fluency requirements for the election code lies in the hands of the people, as it should.

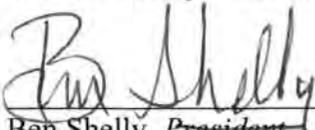
"I maintain that the Navajo people are the governing authority," President Shelly said.





MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Honorable LoRenzo Bates, *Speaker*  
The 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council

**FROM:**   
Ben Shelly, *President*  
THE NAVAJO NATION

**DATE:** March 16, 2015

**SUBJECT:** **Legislation CMA-06-15: Relating to Budget and Finance, Naabik'iyáti', and the Navajo Nation Council; Approving supplemental funding from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance in the amount of \$317,891 for the Navajo Nation Election Administration, Business Unit #101021, to fund the continuing 2014 Navajo Nation elections**

As I have stated in my October and December veto message that addressed a similar issue, there is no easy fix to the on-going election issue than a referendum to the Navajo People. An issue as important and decisive as this, it is indeed in the best interest of the Navajo People for a referendum to begin the healing process.

I urge the Navajo Nation Council and the Navajo Election Administration to promptly hold a discussion regarding election events to establish a new timeline, which needs to include the referendum. It is very important that notification of significant election dates is provided to the Navajo People as soon as possible.

RESOLUTION OF THE  
NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL -- First Year, 2015

AN ACTION

RELATING TO BUDGET AND FINANCE, NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' AND THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL; APPROVING SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FROM THE UNRESERVED, UNDESIGNATED FUND BALANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$317,891 FOR THE NAVAJO NATION ELECTION ADMINISTRATION, BUSINESS UNIT #101021, TO FUND THE CONTINUING 2014 NAVAJO NATION ELECTIONS

I. FINDINGS

- A. The Navajo Nation Council is the governing body of the Navajo Nation. 2 N.N.C. §102 (A); and
- B. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C. § 701 (A)(5), the Naabik'iyáti' Committee is the oversight committee for the Navajo Election Administration; and
- C. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C. § 301 (B)(2), the Budget and Finance Committee is authorized to recommend adoption of resolutions related to the expenditure of the Nation's financial resources; and
- D. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C. § 164 (A)(9), a proposed resolution that requires final action by the Navajo Nation Council shall be assigned to the Naabik'iyáti' Committee before it is heard by the Navajo Nation Council; and
- E. The Navajo Nation has an unmet need for continuing to conduct the postponed 2014 Navajo Nation Election; and
- F. The Supplemental Funding will be deposited with the Navajo Nation Election Administration; the Program Budget Summary is attached as Exhibit "A"; and
- G. There being so many Navajo voters who are claiming the disenfranchisement of their votes as a result of Navajo Nation Supreme Court decision and the President requesting that the question of "fluency of Navajo language" requirement be resolved by the Navajo people, it is

important to have the Navajo people decide whether to amend 11 N.N.C. § 8 (A) (4) or not; and

- H. The Navajo Nation hereby finds it is in the best interest of the Navajo People to approve this supplemental funding request.

**II. APPROVING SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FROM THE UNRESERVED, UNDESIGNATED, FUND BALANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$317,891 FOR THE NAVAJO NATION ELECTION ADMINISTRATION**

- A. The Navajo Nation, having received certification by the Office of the Controller of the balance in the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance, attached as Exhibit "B".
- B. This supplemental appropriation of \$317,891 shall be to the Navajo Election Administration, Business Unit # 101021 and from that amount of funds that exceeds the minimum fund balance of the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance as determined by the Office of the Controller, pursuant to 12 N.N.C. § 820(L). This appropriation shall be first used to have the Navajo voters vote on the referendum question to modify 11 N.N.C. § 8 (A.) (4.) as follows:

"§8. Qualifications for office

A. Qualifications for President and Vice-President are:

\*\*\*\*

4. Must fluently speak and understand Navajo and read and write English; Must be able to speak and understand the Navajo and English language; and this ability shall be determined by the Navajo voter when he/she casts a ballot."

- C. After the certification of the referendum vote by Navajo Election Administration, the Speaker shall call a special session to address the election for Navajo Nation Office of the President.
- D. Notwithstanding provisions of the Election Code, the Navajo Nation Council authorizes the Navajo Election Administration, with the advice and assistance of the Office of Legislative Counsel and the Navajo Department of Justice, to prepare and finalize the appropriate ballot language for purposes of this referendum.

E. The Navajo Nation hereby approves supplemental funding from the Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance in the amount of \$317,891 for the Navajo Election Administration, Business Unit #101021, to fund the postponed 2014 Navajo Nation Election.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the Navajo Nation Council at a duly called meeting in Window Rock, Navajo Nation (Arizona) at which a quorum was present and that the same was passed by a vote of 19 in favor and 1 opposed, this 13<sup>th</sup> day of March 2015.



LoRenzo Bates, Speaker  
Navajo Nation Council

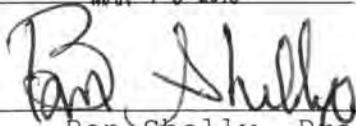
3-13-15

Date

Motion: Honorable Otto Tso  
Second: Honorable Tom Chee

**ACTION BY THE NAVAJO NATION PRESIDENT:**

1. I hereby sign into law the foregoing legislation, pursuant to 2 N.N.C. §1005 (C)(10), on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of MAR 16 2015 2015.



Ben Shelly, President  
~~Navajo Nation~~

2. I hereby veto the foregoing legislation, pursuant to 2 N.N.C. §1005 (C) (11), this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015 for the reason(s) expressed in the attached letter to the Speaker.

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Ben Shelly, President  
Navajo Nation

3. I hereby line-item veto the foregoing legislation, pursuant to 2 N.N.C. §1005 (C) (10) and 2 N.N.C. §164 (A) (17), on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015. The justification of my line-item veto is set forth by memorandum.

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Ben Shelly, President  
Navajo Nation



**Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources Administration**  
**P.O. Box 9000**  
**Window Rock, Arizona 86515**  
**(928) 871-6592 & 6593**  
**Fax# (928) 871-7040**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 16, 2015**

## **Navajo Land Department Hosting Land Summit to Promote Independence**

WINDOW ROCK, AZ. – Independence.

That’s a goal for the Navajo Nation Land Department.

And with approval on May 16, 2014 from the U.S. Department of Interior to approval all surface leases on the Navajo Nation, it’s achievable.

Accordingly, the Navajo Nation Land Department will host a Second Annual Land Summit on March 24-26<sup>th</sup> at Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort to address milestones within the Department, new policies and regulations that pertain to housing, business and community planning.

Navajo Nation Land Department Manager Mike Halona, stated, “The Navajo Nation is at a pivotal point in time where we are faced with many challenges to survive as a nation. This is also a historic time because we have an opportunity to demonstrate to the U.S. government that the Navajo Nation has the capacity and capability to administer our sacred land within the interest of Navajo people and their future in mind.”

Halona said the Department is working diligently with Navajo Nation chapters to help them develop comprehensive community land use plans that will help provide economic development opportunities for their communities.

Moreover, Halona stated there are more Navajo people wanting to move back to the Navajo Nation to live and to work, which is why it is important to develop a comprehensive land use plan that will benefit not only the individual land use owner, but communities as a whole.

Individuals are encourage to register early. The Navajo Nation Land Summit is free. For more information, you can log onto the Navajo Land Department website at [www..dinehbikeyah.org](http://www.dinehbikeyah.org) or call them at (928) 871-6401.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 13, 2015

## President Shelly approves \$3 million for Administrative Service Centers



*Division of Community Development staff meet with chief of staff Deswood Tome earlier this week regarding the appointment of Carl Smith, standing, as the new division director. (Photo by Rick Abasta)*

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— This week, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly approved a \$3 million appropriation for the Navajo Nation Division of Community Development decentralization project.

In 2013, the 22nd Navajo Nation Council Budget and Finance Committee issued a directive to NNDCD to begin decentralizing the Local Governance Support Centers at the agency level. The idea was to deliver services at the local through 16 Administrative Support Centers spread across the Nation at a district level.

“The Local Governance Support Centers did a remarkable job bringing transparency and accountability to the Navajo chapters,” President Shelly said. “The Five Management System was a means of bringing accountability to the local level.

“Before that, some chapters were in a state of disarray,” he added.

The \$3 million appropriation was carried over from the FY 2014 budget to FY 2015 for execution. Originally, the Local Governance Act, Title 26 of the Navajo Nation Code, mandated that LGSCs deliver technical services and training to the 110 chapters at the agency level.

The primary means of tracking chapter finances and related spending was the Five Management System, which provided management for the areas of personnel, fiscal accounting, procurement, records and property.

The FMS helped chapters to become financially sound and ensured the chapter’s funds were accounted for and properly budgeted. FMS certification meant chapters qualified for LGA certification

and more autonomy for their respective chapter government.

The FMS also raised awareness at the chapters for deficiencies in their accounting systems. Some chapters were audited and faced subsequent sanctions, but the LGSCs worked with them to improve their performance and implementation of the FMS through corrective action plans.

Recently, the Resources and Development Committee of the Navajo Nation Council approved the plan of operation for the Administrative Service Centers. The budget approved

Administrative Service Centers will be filled. The attorneys hired will work under the supervision of the Navajo Nation Department of Justice.

“Staffing the Administrative Service Centers within chapter houses was a safety concern. We must ensure our employees are working in a safe and viable workspace,” President Shelly said.

Repairs and other improvements to the Administrative Service Center sites will be funded by the \$3 million budget. The funds will also be used to purchase office

***“The LGSCs did a remarkable job bringing transparency and accountability to the Navajo chapters.”***

by President Shelly will fund 26 full time employees. The positions range from attorneys, accountants and planners.

The mission of the Administrative Service Centers is to provide technical assistance to chapters in the areas of project management, post-LGA certification, implementation of the FMS and capacity building.

NNDCD carried over the LGSC budget of \$1.2 million for FY 2014 into FY 2015. Combined with the \$3 million budget President Shelly approved, the remaining vacant positions for the

equipment, tribal vehicles and training for new staff.

“Our chapters need assistance with planning, whether it’s for the land use plans, feasibility studies or long range plans. These new service centers will cut out the bureaucracy of having to travel to Window Rock for planning assistance,” President Shelly said.

NNDCD wrapped up a two-day Navajo Nation Planning Workshop for all 110 chapters on March 10 through 12 at Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort.



# NAVAJO HEAD START

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**MEDIA ADVISORY**  
**March 13, 2015**

**CONTACT:**  
Rick Abasta, Communications Director  
The Navajo Nation Office of the President/Vice President  
928-871-7884 | rickyabasta@navajo-nsn.org

Adrian Dotson | 928-380-2158  
info@sandstonepr.com  
www.navajohs.org

## **Navajo President to tour Head Start Center, transfer CCDF facilities to Navajo Head Start**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly will tour the Head Start Center in Crownpoint, N.M., at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 18, to place an emphasis of high importance on early education. The president will be accompanied by the Navajo Division of Social Services, and the event is hosted by Navajo Head Start and the Navajo Department of Diné Education.

A press conference will follow where Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly will announce the transfer of facility ownership of several unutilized Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program facilities to Navajo Head Start.

The CCDF grant and services will also be transferred under the administration of Navajo Head Start. The transfer of buildings to Navajo Head Start will help address a dire need for facilities across the 27,000-square-mile Navajo Nation that sprawls across the states of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah.

Head Start centers are worn and outdated, and many are more than 30 years old. Despite the aging facilities, Navajo Head Start is forced to utilize such dilapidated buildings to provide early childhood development services to Navajo families.

**WHAT:** Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly will tour the Head Start Center in Crownpoint, N.M., and conduct a press conference where he will announce the transfer of CCDF facilities to Navajo Head Start.

**WHEN:** 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 18, 2015

**WHERE:** Navajo Head Start Center, Crownpoint, N.M.

For more information, contact Rick Abasta at 928-871-7884 or Adrian Dotson at 928-226-7275.

###

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.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 12, 2015

## President Shelly lauds N.M. Senate for passing gaming compact



President Shelly sat in the rostrum during the session and was joined by Speaker LoRenzo Bates and delegate Leonard Tsosie. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

SANTA FE—What a difference a year makes.

On the evening of March 11, Senate Joint Resolution 19 passed the N.M. Senate by a vote of 35-7.

For more than a month, Navajo leaders have lobbied state legislators for support of the gaming compact. On Feb. 28, the Committee on Compacts passed the compact by a vote of 15-1.

Passing the Senate was the second hurdle for the compact and three more remain: the House of Representatives, Gov. Susana Martinez and the U.S. Department of Interior.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly praised the state legislators, along with Gov. Martinez and the tribes for working together to get the gaming compact passed in the Senate.

“I am very pleased with the Senate vote this afternoon and would like to thank the New Mexico State Senate for your support,” President Shelly said. “This is a great day for the Navajo Nation.”

The president thanked all the negotiators for the time and effort crafting a compact that was agreeable to all.

“Together, we have produced a gaming compact that is fair, reasonable and will continue to benefit all of us, in the form of jobs and revenue for the tribes and state. The compact now moves to the House for vote and I respectfully ask for their support,” President Shelly said.

### Expiring Compacts

Sponsored by Sen. Clemente Sanchez (D-Grants), the gaming compact was for five tribes – the Navajo Nation, Jicarilla Apache, Mescalero Apache, Pueblo of Acoma and Pueblo of Jemez – that have gaming compacts expiring on June 30, 2015.

Another tribe, the Pueblo of Pojoaque, also has a gaming compact expiring on June 30. However, Pojoaque is currently in litigation to pass their compact through action by the Interior Department.

During the 2014 legislative session, the Navajo Nation stepped

out on its own to negotiate a gaming compact with the state, but was unsuccessful. The Navajo gaming compact passed the Committee on Compacts and the House of Representatives, but died on the Senate floor by a vote of 10-31.

Other tribes were in opposition of the Navajo gaming compact because they believed that it would be utilized as a template for future compacts. Since then, the Navajo Nation sat down at the negotiation table with the four other tribes that signed on to the 2015 compact and worked out differences before presenting their compact to the state.

### Economic Solvency

Sen. Sanchez’s opening presentation underscored the importance of passing the compact to prevent the tribes from having to close their gaming facilities in June and suffer loss of jobs and revenue for their respective nations.

“Tribal gaming currently generates about \$70 million a year in direct payments to the state. That figure does not include the spinoff economic activity generated by increased employment and tourism,” Sanchez said.

Revenue to the state will grow to \$77 million in 2019. Additionally, beginning July 1, 2015, the Navajo Nation, Acoma and Mescalero will begin paying a higher revenue sharing rate than what is currently being paid.

### New Provisions

While there are several key differences between the new compact and the 2001 and 2007 agreements, many provisions in the earlier agreements will remain the same. The same liability insurance coverage, maintenance and protections as the 2007 compact will remain in effect. The prohibition of alcohol on the gaming floor also stands.

New provisions include state operated horse track casinos that will affect the revenue sharing agreement between the tribes and the state.

Sanchez said if tribes agreed to allow state horse track casinos to expand beyond six, or increase the number of gaming machines and the hours of operation, the tribes would no longer have to make revenue sharing payments to the state.

Other provisions in the agreement mandate that the state can better enforce the arbitration provisions of the compact. Tribes also agreed to participate in the state self-exclusion program and report information on how money is spent for problem gambling programs.

A new development in the compact allows tribal casinos to remain open 24 hours a day, an effort designed to attract wealthy, out-of-state gamblers. Tribes will also have more flexibility in providing complementary rooms and food.

High roller gamblers that qualify and meet income guidelines and cash balances in their bank accounts will also be able to utilize a marker system for gambling.

The compact provides that the Navajo Nation could ultimately open a fourth casino in N.M., but only after six years from the passage of the agreement with the state.

Jicarilla and Acoma could open three casinos, but they must open their new facility before June 30, 2015. Mescalero will continue operating the three casinos it has open currently.

The so-called “Legacy Facilities” or third casino most tribes are allowed will be limited to 130 gambling machines and an opportunity to move their facility once, only if it is moved no more than 17 miles away and not located within 50 miles of another tribe’s casino.

Sanchez said there are 26 casinos in N.M. and that number could increase to 31, but not for several years.

### Rise and Stand in Support

Sen. Carlos Cisneros (D-Santa Fe) rose and stood in support of SJR 19.

He noted that negotiations and concessions from the tribes entering into the compact swayed his decision to support the resolution.

“Certainly, the art of good negotiation is the ability to make concessions,” Cisneros said. “In real life, when you negotiate a contract, there is going to be some give and take.”

Another senator that supported the compact last year proudly stood in support of SJR 19 during the current legislative session.

Sen. John Pinto (D-Gallup) rose in support and began by asking the body to recognize Navajo leaders President Shelly, Speaker LoRenzo Bates and council delegate Leonard Tsosie.

He described the compact as fair and reasonable and highlighted the economic incentives of passing the agreement.

Sen. Pinto said, “All nine casinos of the 2001 compact have created thousands of jobs for our people and revenue for the Navajo Nation, Pueblos and Apaches in the state of New Mexico.”

“We are facing loss of revenue and negative financial impact if this compact is not approved. I don’t think any of us want to see that happen,” he said.

### Legal Relief

Of the seven senators that rose in opposition to the compact, one concern was the liability issues arising from casino patrons over-served with alcohol and subsequently resulting in an accident outside the reservation.

Karis Begaye, an attorney with the Navajo Nation Department of Justice, said the Navajo Nation has insurance and a competent court system that address those issues.

As a responsible, sovereign entity, mechanisms are in place to ensure those injured have effective remedies, she said.

Eleven district courts are located on the Navajo Nation, four of which are in N.M. Serving as an appellate court is the Navajo Nation Supreme Court. Claims can be filed in courts where the action occurred.

“The Navajo Nation currently carries a \$50 million insurance policy for any personal injury and/or property damage claims filed against the Navajo Nation’s casinos,” Begaye said. “With these remedies, the injured party has relief.”

The language in Section 8, Protection of Visitors, in the gaming compact is the same as the existing compacts approved in 2001 and 2007. The 2001 and 2007 compacts currently govern all 14 gaming tribes.

The House will discuss the gaming compact when it is introduced to the floor early next week.



President Shelly and Speaker Bates listened intently to the debate and discussion on the gaming compact. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



President Shelly thanked Sen. Clemente Sanchez for his support with SJR 19 after the resolution was passed. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Supporters of SJR 19 convened on the east entrance of the Roundhouse after the resolution passed. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



# NAVAJO HEAD START

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 11, 2015

**CONTACT:**  
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www.navajohs.org

## **Singer announces 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Native American and Family Conference**

*Conference hosted by Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Programs Inc.*

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Assistant Superintendent Sharon H. Singer is pleased to announce the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Native American and Family Conference scheduled March 15-19 in Albuquerque, N.M. The conference is a four-day professional development and enrichment training for tribal early childhood development programs.

Singer serves as the chairperson of the board of directors for the Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Programs Inc., host of the conference.

The focus and goal of the conference is to help strengthen and improve quality programming with tribally-operated Head Start programs across the country. The conference provides the perfect platform for Head Start programs to discuss mutual concerns, establish and maintain contact with one another, encourage a network of regional tribal Head Start programs and serve as a resource to Head Start directors.

Singer explained the tribal consultation portion of the conference will be especially beneficial for those who attend because many of these programs face similar issues.

“The conference will attract attendees from throughout the country,” said Singer. “We are able to discuss challenges, program development, curriculum, program improvements and ideas in a tribal consultation format. It’s a great venue.”

The agenda for the conferences entails a plethora of events and workshops aimed at improving the quality of the various head start and early head start programs that attend the conference.

The entire conference is centered on three main objectives.

The first objective is to provide workshops to build the knowledge and skills of head start and early head start staff. The second objective is to increase the knowledge of head start and early head start management. And the third objective is to foster an environment for learning where head start leaders can also gain information and knowledge from other head start programs.

-More-

All of the workshops and strategies used at the conference are devised to help those who work within head start improve services to children.

Workshops range from information on child mental health, different strategies in dealing with difficult children and even workshops dedicated to basket weaving.

Navajo Head Start (NHS) will be in full attendance at this year's conference. This will be a very important learning experience for NHS as they are currently on an upswing and will only improve from the knowledge gained at this event.

"This is the perfect opportunity for Navajo Head Start to learn how to provide better services to the children and families we serve, and to gain information from other head starts to help improve our own program," Singer said.

To learn more about the Native American and Family Conference, visit [www.southwestconsortium.org](http://www.southwestconsortium.org).

###

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.



# NAVAJO HEAD START

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 9, 2015**

**CONTACT:**

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info@sandstonepr.com  
www.navajohs.org

## **Navajo Head Start now enrolling children from all income levels**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Navajo Head Start is now enrolling children from all income levels due to the program meeting its low-income quota. Parents and guardians can visit any one of the four regional offices for enrollment applications.

Navajo Head Start (NHS) will need the child's birth certificate, verification of income for parents or guardians, and the child's immunization records.

Early Head Start provides services to children from birth to 36 months and Head Start provides services to children 36 months to 5-years-old. The program offers early childhood education, child development, parental involvement and many more services with emphasis on Navajo language and culture.

Regional offices are located in Shiprock, N.M., Fort Defiance, Ariz., Chinle, Ariz., and Tuba City, Ariz.

For more information, contact the Central Administration Office at 928-871-6902 or access the website at [www.navajohs.org](http://www.navajohs.org).

###

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# NAVAJO HEAD START

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**March 9, 2015**

**CONTACT:**  
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www.navajohs.org

## **Navajo Head Start thanks Obama for federal budget increase**

*“An increase in funding will allow for NHS to not only serve more families, but also continue to make much needed improvements.” —Sharon H. Singer, Assistant Superintendent*

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Navajo Head Start thanks U.S. President Barack Obama for supporting the youngest of our population by increasing the Fiscal Year 2016 budget by \$1.5 billion for the national Head Start programs across the country. This brings the total annual funding amount to \$10.1 billion a year for all its programs.

Sharon H. Singer, assistant superintendent of Navajo Head Start, the largest Head Start Program in the nation, is excited about the increase in the federal government’s budget and said it was exciting news.

“The increase in the federal government’s budget for Head Start programs is exciting news,” said Singer. “Navajo Head Start will be able to continue to expand services to current families enrolled in the program and begin serving new families.”

Singer explained \$1.1 billion of this increase is to allow children to get the much-needed educational services they need.

“The program will be able to extend to a full school year,” she said. “This provides learning opportunities throughout the year.”

Experts say students lose about one month of learning during a three month summer vacation. Programs that have bigger gaps lead to more than one month of information being forgotten by children. These fund increases ensure children will be helped with the expanded school year.

According to the Administration for Children and Families’ (ACF) blog, only one-third of Head Start programs across the nation are running for a full school day the entire school year. The minimum requirement for Head Start programs is 448 hours of programming over an entire year. Students who go to school 180 days a year for six and a half hours a day receive 1,170 hours of instruction annually. By expanding the school day and school year, children will gain more knowledge and will lose less of what they learned over breaks.

The budget for Early Head Start is also increased by \$150 million for the next fiscal year for all programs across the country. The total amount will be \$650 million dollars, which will help provide the program to more families.

-More-

The ACF states that there were more qualified children than the program could support last year. With this increase, more children can be accepted into the program and so they receive the education they need to be prepared for school. These funds will also help to improve the quality of infant and child care, and obtain more Head Start-Child Care partnerships so children have a better opportunity to learn.

As part of the \$1.5 billion increase, there is \$284 million allotted for cost-of-living adjustments. This part of the budget will help offset inflation costs, retain high quality teachers and continue providing different services to families. Due to rising operating costs, this additional income will help to ensure money is not taken from programs to keep up with the cost of living increases.

Singer said there is a lot of potential with the increased funds.

“There is a lot of potential to come from this growth in the federal government’s financial plan,” said Singer. “Through President Obama’s support of Head Start programs, NHS will be able to serve and expand service for more families in need of quality early childhood development services.”

Singer said she has extensive plans and goals for the Navajo Head Start program including developing educational programs to prepare our Nation’s youngest children for the K-12 system.

“An increase in funding will allow for NHS to not only serve more families, but also continue making much needed improvements,” she added. “Navajo Head Start would like to recruit more highly-qualified staff and begin construction development plans for a new Head Start facility in the future.”

###

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.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 9, 2015

## President Shelly to report before N.M. Legislature on gaming compact



President Shelly whispers to Speaker LoRenzo Bates last week during the N.M. Senate session. They lobbied for passage of the compact. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

SANTA FE—For the past week, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly has been on standby to meet with state legislators at the Roundhouse on the renewal of the Navajo Nation gaming compact with the state of N.M.

The president and members of the tribal council met with legislators on March 5 and attended the session for the N.M. Senate to advocate for passing the gaming compact. The next day, President Shelly and other tribal leaders met again to discuss provisions in the compact and the need for tribes to reach an agreement with the state.

“The importance of passing this gaming compact cannot be stressed enough,” President Shelly said. “This has been a long and tedious negotiations

process with the state.

“Thousands of jobs are at stake for the Nation and we implore our state legislators to get this compact passed for the benefit of all New Mexicans,” he added.

The Navajo Nation stepped into the Indian gaming arena in 2003 with the state of N.M.

Five years later, Fire Rock Casino opened in Gallup. A year later, Flowing Water Casino opened for business, as the Navajo Nation’s only Class II gaming facility. Three years later, Northern Edge Casino opened in Upper Fruitland.

The term of the tribe’s initial contract with the state ends on June 30, 2015.

It has been more than seven years for the Navajo Nation to get to

this level of approval. In 2009, negotiations began with former Gov. Bill Richardson, but talks ended after his term of office concluded. In 2012, talks began with Gov. Susana Martinez.

The Navajo Nation has approximately 115,472 enrolled tribal members residing concurrently on the Navajo Nation and in the state of N.M., and more than 2 million acres of land within the state. With an unemployment rate above 50 percent, gaming has been crucial to providing jobs to Navajos.

There were 950 jobs created through gaming, 90 percent of which are Navajo employees. When the per capita income of the Navajo Nation hovers around \$8,000 per year, these jobs in the gaming industry make a difference for Navajo families struggling to survive.

Fifty-seven of the 110 chapters of the Navajo Nation are located within N.M. Gaming revenues in excess of \$75 million have been generated by the casinos in N.M.

Fire Rock makes \$35 million annually in revenue and Northern Edge generates \$40 million in

revenue.

President Shelly said, “The Navajo Nation has negotiated in good faith a gaming compact that would serve the needs of the Navajo Nation and the state.”

He said gaming jobs not only provide income and revenue from taxes, but an opportunity for tribal members to grow into an industry providing professional white collar careers in addition to the service industry positions associated with gaming.

“The revenue from our Navajo casinos funnel back into the tribal government to provide direct services to Navajo people. This was the intent of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act: Self-determination,” President Shelly said.

President Shelly and other tribal leaders are expected to report before the N.M. Legislature this week for consideration of the gaming compact. In addition to the Navajo Nation, the compact includes other “2001 Tribes” such as Acoma, Jicarilla, Mescalero and Pojoaque Pueblos.





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
 March 5, 2015

## President Shelly signs emergency declaration to address snowstorms



President Shelly encourages tribal members to be patient and allow time for muddy conditions to dry to prevent these type of scenarios. (Courtesy photo)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed CEM-15-03-04 early this evening and declared a disaster for the Nation from recent heavy winter storms.

“We take this action to bring relief to rural areas where storms have caused severe mud conditions left by melting snow that have caused hardship to many,” President Shelly said. “Our Department of Emergency Management is working overtime to ensure everything is documented properly.

“The Navajo Nation Emergency Operations Center is open and is providing assistance,” he added.

Resolution No. CE-15-03-04 passed by a vote of 3-0 by the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management earlier today.

The commission declared a state of emergency after heavy snow, high winds, excessive rains, flooding, power outages and muddy conditions were reported to have severely impacted tribal members living in remote locations.

The declaration stated, “The emergencies of the Navajo Nation are to be addressed in a manner to provide the

necessary resources required to the declared State of Emergency. This includes, but not limited to, resources of personnel, equipment, supplies, other funding and other resources as may be required to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Navajo Nation.”

Ten chapters got the ball rolling.

Chilchinbeto, Coalmine Canyon, Cove, Crystal, Hard Rock, LeChee, Oljato, Pinon, Sanostee, Sheep Springs, declared emergencies and passed resolutions for their respective communities.

Emergency declarations begin at the chapter level, as members pass a resolution to declare an emergency. The resolutions are forwarded to the NNCEM, which will take action on whether or not to declare an emergency. Finally, President Shelly signs the emergency declaration into action.

The NNCEM convened on March 4, but could not declare an emergency because confirmation from Speaker LoRenzo Bates and the 23rd Navajo Nation Council was needed for the commission to continue its function and responsibilities.

The functions of NNCEM membership can be found under Title 2 of the Navajo Nation Code, under Article 4, Section 882 (B).

The section states, “All members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council and confirmed by the Intergovernmental Relations Committee of the Navajo Nation Council and shall serve a term concurrent to that of the President of the Navajo Nation, or until replaced, whichever is longer.”

Because of the prolonged election season, NNCEM Chairman Herman Shorty said confirmation from the Council was necessary to ensure the commission was still a recognized entity.

Beyond the procedural considerations, one tribal department continued to answer calls and provide assistance.

NNDEM has received incident reports from 42 chapters that were affected by the storm. Many cited excessive mud and snow as issues that needed to be addressed. Others cited the need for food, water, firewood and accessibility through muddy roads for diabetic patients requiring dialysis treatment.

“The Emergency Operations Center is operational at the Navajo Transportation Complex,” said Rose Whitehair, director of NNDEM.

She encouraged chapters to provide names, locations and contact phone numbers for stranded individuals in need of assistance. Other members from her department were out at the chapters conducting assessments.

“CHR’s have been doing a great job out there on safety checks. Chapters have been delivering food, water, wood and hay in some cases,” Whitehair said.

She thanked the Office of the President and Vice President, Behavioral Health Services, Department of Health, Division of Public Safety, Division of Transportation and Special Diabetes Program for stepping forward and providing assistance.

Sanostee Chapter is providing shelter for those displaced by the weather. They are the only overnight shelter. Other resources can be accessed at Cove Chapter and Red Valley Chapter. NNDEM is coordinating with the Red Cross to provide supplies.

She said her team has been tracking events ranging from excessive mud, freezing conditions, power outages and safety checks on diabetic patients unable to navigate impassable roads.

Tribal members requesting mud removal for residential roads are encouraged to wait for the weather to dry up the muddy conditions. It is unsafe for heavy equipment to clear the roads, as they will only get stuck in the mud.

The weather is expected to clear and warm up for the next 10 days.

Information: 505-371-8415 or 8416. Forms can be downloaded at [www.nndcd.org](http://www.nndcd.org).





CEM-15-03-04

**RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSION ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR THE NAVAJO NATION: SEVERE INCLEMENT WINTER WEATHER CONDITIONS OF HEAVY SNOW, HIGH WINDS, EXCESSIVE RAIN, FLOODING, POWER OUTAGE AND SUBSEQUENT MUD CONDITIONS HAVE IMPACTED RESIDENTS LIVING IN ISOLATED AND REMOTE LOCATIONS OF THE NAVAJO NATION.

**WHEREAS:**

1. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C. § 881, the Navajo Nation Council established the Commission on Emergency Management authorizing it to assess, verify, recommend and declare state of emergencies with the concurrence of the President of the Navajo Nation; and
2. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C. § 883 (A) and (C), in conjunction with the Department of Emergency Management the Commission is empowered to coordinate immediate emergency and disaster relief services with Navajo Nation and non-tribal entities, to recommend and deploy appropriate resources regarding natural and man-made emergencies; and
3. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C. § 884 (B), (2), the Commission on Emergency Management may seek assistance from federal, state, other tribal governments, and local and private agencies to address emergency and disaster related situations; and
4. The communities within the Navajo Nation are experiencing the impact from severe inclement winter weather conditions, including but not limited to heavy snow, high winds, excessive rain, flooding, power outage and subsequent mud conditions, impacting residents living in isolated and remote locations of the Navajo Nation.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. The Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management hereby declares a State of Emergency for the Navajo Nation due to severe inclement winter weather conditions, including but not limited to heavy snow, high winds, excessive rain, flooding, power outage and subsequent mud conditions, impacting residents living in isolated and remote locations of the Navajo Nation
2. The emergencies of the Navajo Nation are to be addressed in a manner to provide the necessary resources required to address the declared State of Emergency. This includes, but not limited to, resources of personnel, equipment, supplies, other funding, and other resources as may be required to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Navajo Nation.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management at a duly called meeting in Window Rock, Navajo Nation, Arizona, at which a quorum was present and that the same passed by a vote of 3 approved 0 opposed and 0 abstained this 5<sup>th</sup> day of March 2015.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Herman Shorty, Chair  
Commission on Emergency Management

Motion by: Ben Bennett

Second by: Dicky Bain

CONCURRENCE:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Honorable President, Ben Shelly  
THE NAVAJO NATION



## Office of the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission

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P.O. Box 129  
St. Michaels, AZ 86511  
Phone: (928) 871-7436  
Fax: (928) 871-7437

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**March 2, 2015**

### **Navajo Nation files petition with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights against the U.S. Federal Government for violations of Navajo Human Rights**

**St. Michaels, Navajo Nation**— With no legal remedies under United States law for the protection of Doko’o’osłiid, also known as the San Francisco Peaks, north of Flagstaff, Arizona, the Navajo Nation has filed a petition with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights against the United States government for violating the Navajo people’s human rights. The Commission is the principal organ of the Organization of American States (“OAS”) whose mission is to promote and protect human rights in the American hemisphere. The United States has been a member of the OAS since 1948, and has agreed to abide by the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, a central human rights instrument of the OAS.

The petition addresses the violation of the Navajo people’s rights to religion, culture and judicial protection by the use of reclaimed wastewater for snowmaking for a commercial ski operation on the San Francisco Peaks, a site sacred to the Navajo. Anthony Lee, President of the Diné Hataałii Medicine Men’s Association states; “The sacred sites are continually being threatened and also desecrated and exploitation is taking place.” Lee further notes the delivery of treated sewage effluent or “reclaimed wastewater” is “all being done for the owners of the ski resort and they have a direct interest.”

The San Francisco Peaks are sacred to the Navajo people and 13 other southwest tribes. Navajo medicine people believe the use of the reclaimed wastewater destroys the spiritual purity of the vegetation that grows on Doko’o’osłiid and the herbs they gather for ceremonies. Lee further describes the ritual properties of Doko’o’osłiid; “it’s included in the medicine bundles and that is core of our concern. It’s inherent and it’s omnipresent in the medicine bundles.”

The Navajo Nation learned that the City of Flagstaff terminated the 5-year reclaimed wastewater renewal agreement with Snowbowl and replaced it with a new 20-year agreement from news accounts. The City of Flagstaff did not give any notice of the new agreement to the Navajo Nation, nor did it allow an opportunity for consultation or public comment.

**[WWW.NNHRC.NAVAJONSN.GOV](http://WWW.NNHRC.NAVAJONSN.GOV)**

**343 AZ HWY 264 • SAINT MICHAELS PROFESSIONAL BLDG., SUITE 112 • ST. MICHAELS • NAVAJO NATION (AZ) • 86511**

Henry Barber, President, Diné Medicine Men's Association, states "We want the United States to respect our spiritual beliefs and business entities should also have respect for us (Navajo people) to continue our spiritual beliefs." Barber has very strong concerns about the effects of United States laws on Native American sacred sites and religion, noting, "With the federal laws we want them to respect our spiritual beliefs in our perspective and to have freedom to practice, to continue our beliefs." Barber further stated that the Navajo people's human rights are not protected and respected by "the federal government which is very much being denied by commercialization and polices" This is why, he says, the Diné Medicine Men Association believes filing the petition with the Inter-American Commission is appropriate and absolutely necessary.

The petition with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights gives the Navajo Nation and its people a voice in the international realm to express their serious concerns respecting the lack of interest by the federal government to hear the Navajo Nation when it comes to sacred sites. "We have the obligation to take care of what was given to us by Diyin Diné." said Steven Benally, President of Azee Bee Nahagha of Diné Nation. Benally further states "there is a saying our grandfathers and grandmothers tell us that we 'should not lose hope' and there's always an opportunity to do something for ourselves and we have that chance." Benally noted Navajo are resilient and have the hope that the outcome of the petition will allow for redress from the United States respecting the human rights violations.

The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission has also engaged with UN treaty monitoring bodies and the UN Human Rights Council in hopes of further strengthening protection of Navajo human rights in the United States of America.

"The US needs to take full responsibility by committing to protect Navajo human rights in accordance with its obligations under the OAS Charter," said Leonard Gorman, Executive Director of the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 2, 2015

## President Shelly praises federal EB-5 immigrant investor designation



President Shelly said the EB-5 program is an opportunity to learn business from international businessmen and investors. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly is inviting foreign investors to create new jobs on the Navajo Nation through foreign investments passed through the U.S. Treasury Department.

The Navajo Nation is eligible to participate in the Immigrant Investor Program, also known as EB-5. Created by Congress in 1990, the program was

initiated to stimulate the U.S. economy through job creation and capital investment from foreign investors.

“It is time we use the EB-5 designation to create jobs and accelerate our tribal economy from outside investors,” President Shelly said. “This administration supports private businesses and job growth on the Navajo Nation.

“We need to find new pathways like this EB-5 initiative to grow business on the Nation,” he added.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services operate the program.

According to the USCIS, EB-5 investors must invest in a new commercial enterprise in the U.S., including Indian reservations. Investors participating in the program must also create or preserve 10 full-time jobs. In return, investors are granted conditional permanent residency status.

The Navajo Nation stands poised to become the first tribe to exercise the EB-5 initiative.

The Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development, headed by director Albert Damon, is taking the lead role in the EB-5 program on the Nation.

Damon said EB-5 promotes business and job creation, while foreign investors are afforded a green card issued by the federal government for U.S. citizenship.

Foreign investors have the option of starting a new business enterprise or rescuing a business that is in trouble by investing

capital resulting in a 40 percent increase in the net worth of the business or number of employees.

President Shelly said the EB-5 opportunity has the potential to stimulate economic development at the most basic level, capital.

“It’s always capital that is the stumbling block for the success of small businesses on the reservation. The EB-5 program gives us the opportunity to receive capital and the business acumen from foreign investors. This is a great program to be a part of,” he said.

The minimum investment for foreign investors looking participate is \$1 million or \$500,000 if they invest in targeting employment areas. Such areas include rural areas and high unemployment areas of the country.

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