



## The 21<sup>st</sup> Navajo Nation Council

Contact: Alastair L. Bitsoi, Public Information Officer

Phone: (928) 871-7228

Cell: (928) 255-2943

Fax: (928) 871-7255

[navajocouncil\\_pio@yahoo.com](mailto:navajocouncil_pio@yahoo.com)

[www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org)

January 26, 2010

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

---

### Navajo Council appropriates \$1 million of emergency relief funds to Navajo Nation chapters

*"Water has been the main issue, as well as the snow packed road conditions."  
-- Katherine Benally, Navajo Nation Council delegate*

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – The 21<sup>st</sup> Navajo Nation Council appropriated \$1 million of emergency relief funds to the Navajo Nation's 110 Chapters from the Personnel Lapse Fund on day two of the Council's 2010 winter session.

Council Delegate Young Jeff Tom (Mariano Lake/Smith Lake), sponsor of the legislation, explained how this money will provide relief to all chapters specifically those who have experienced the impact of the latest wintry weather. Muddy roads and freezing conditions are commonplace for chapters affected by the weather with the most need concentrated in isolated areas of the Nation.

"I have sponsored legislation for our chapters to receive \$1 million to meet the needs of their constituents," Tom said. "It's up to the chapters to facilitate how monies are spent. Each chapter has their own emergency plans that require specific action."

"Not only is the allocation of funds to be used for the current emergency, but for other emergencies that may occur down the road. There is another storm said to be coming later this week and it is up to the chapters who have their own action plans to fulfill the needs of our people," added Tom.

Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Dennehotso) spoke for the need of this legislation to pass and said, "In the state of Arizona, the Governor has declared a state of emergency and is helping out. The Federal Emergency Management Agency or FEMA has visited families. We appreciate all the help we are getting and remain patient for extra help."

Benally stated her chapter declared an emergency on Friday, Jan. 22, as did most other chapters, and noted the action plan at Dennehotso was implemented and effective in meeting the demands of the frozen water sources from the recent snowstorm.

"Water has been the main issue, as well as the snow packed road conditions," Benally said. "The snow hit the northern border of the Navajo Nation first, which has caused Dennehotso and other areas to experience frozen conditions. We have \$37,000 for existing emergency plans and have spent \$25,000. Yesterday, hay was delivered, as well as food for relief."

The Council passed the legislation with a vote of 73-11. Funds to the chapters will be allocated as soon as possible.

Day three of the 2010 Winter Session will continue tomorrow. You can download a copy of the full agenda at [www.navajonationcouncil.org](http://www.navajonationcouncil.org).

###