For Immediate Release  
Jan. 19, 2012

President Shelly, State and County Agree to Use Police Sub Station

SANTA FE – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly in collaboration with New Mexico public safety officials and the San Juan County Sheriff’s Office came to a collaborative agreement to use the Dzilth-Na-O-Dith-Hle Police Substation after meeting Wednesday.

“This agreement will increase patrols along Hwy. 550 from Bloomfield to Cuba, and this will strengthen safety for travelers and residents along the roadway,” President Shelly said.

The parties agreed that the Navajo Police Department, New Mexico State Police and the San Juan County Sheriff’s Office would share the police substation within the next seven days.

In the agreement the Navajo Nation would continue paying for the utilities for the building, while the three law enforcement agents would staff the facility.

The Navajo Police Department will also patrol Hwy. 550 and enforce New Mexico state laws using a 1981 cross-commissioning agreement with the New Mexico State Police.

“I firmly believe the path we are on is the right path,” New Mexico Secretary Public Safety Gorden Eden said about the plans.

However, Shelly advocated that this agreement is only the beginning. Navajo Nation law enforcement and others need to seek federal commissioning, which would lessen jurisdictional issues.

Joining President Shelly in the Wednesday discussions were Billison, Sec. Eden, State Indian Affairs Secretary Arthur Allison, New Mexico State Police Chief Robert Shilling, and Deputy Chief Pete Kassetas were present for the discussions.

Wednesday’s agreement came after a Sunday community meeting at Nageezi, in which residents and Navajo leaders expressed their concerns to the President. The meeting was called after the Nageezi
Chapter passed a resolution asking for a meeting with the President and Navajo Division of Public Safety Director John Billison.

“I want the people to know that I am listening to them and making sure we find viable solutions to ensure the safety of our people,” President Shelly.

###