



August 4, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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



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

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

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

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

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye is extremely

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

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

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

lifeline of the Navajo people.

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

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

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

on the tribal economy,” said President Begaye.

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

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