



## The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Navajo Nation set to acquire rights to 500 megawatts of transmission lines

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Saturday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer were joined by Council Delegates Herman Daniels, Jr. and Wilson Stewart, Jr., both members of the Resources and Development Committee, at the Office of the President and Vice President in Window Rock, Ariz. as they approved \$1.9 million to secure the rights to 500 megawatts along the Navajo Generating Station transmission lines that will allow the Nation to earn revenue from the use or marketing of transmission of electrical power.



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, First Lady Phefelia Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, Second Lady Dottie Lizer, Council Delegate Herman Daniels, Council Delegate Wilson Stewart, Jr., and others during the signing of CD-53-19 at the Office of the President and Vice President in Window Rock, Ariz. on Dec. 28, 2019.

The rights to the transmission lines were part of the extension lease negotiated between the Navajo Nation and the owners of the Navajo Generating Station in 2017, which also included the terms of decommissioning and remediation of the power plant.

President Nez said the acquisition of the 500 megawatts places the Navajo Nation in the driver seat to determine its own energy future in accordance with the Nez-Lizer Administration's Háyoołkááł Proclamation, which was issued in April and states that the Nation will pursue and prioritize renewable energy development for the long-term benefit of the Navajo people.

"It's the beginning of a new era for the Navajo Nation — the start of new opportunities. We recognize that NGS provided many benefits for the workers and their families, but times are changing and energy development is changing. The demand for coal-based energy is no longer at its peak, not only in our region but across the country. As Diné people, we have always been resilient in times of change, and that's what we are doing by pursuing renewable energy options. We are looking to become the leader in renewable energy throughout the Southwest and Indian Country," said President Nez.

The Háyoólkááí Proclamation also created the Háyoólkááí Work Group comprised of officials from the Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources, Department of Justice, Environmental Protection Agency, Division of Economic Development, Division of Community Development, Navajo Nation Washington Office, and the Office of the President and Vice President.

Háyoólkááí Work Group member and Executive Director of the Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources Dr. Rudy Shebala was also in attendance and stated that since its creation, the work group has served as the Nation's clearinghouse for energy development proposals and continues to meet on a regular basis to strategize and plan for the long-term vision and priorities related to energy development of the Navajo Nation.

President Nez and Vice President Lizer said the Háyoólkááí Work Group will continue serving as the primary clearinghouse for energy projects along with the Navajo Nation Energy Office when it is established. The office was funded in the current year's budget, however, enabling legislation to officially create the office was previously tabled by the Council.

"Our administration is ready to move forward with renewable energy projects. With the addition of this ability to use and market up 500 megawatts of electricity, it's a big win for the Navajo people in terms of long-term energy development and the revenues," said Vice President Lizer.

Council Delegate Herman Daniels, Jr., who represents several communities that are impacted by the closure of the Navajo Generating Station, said he fully supports the initiative and that he believes it will benefit the Navajo people in the long-term.

"I believe that the 500 megawatts is good for the Navajo Nation. It's providing the Nation with the capability to lead the Nation and the western portion of the United States with energy that will be a need now and in the future. This transmission signing is the first brick in building our resources and our revenues for the next seven generations to come. We are very fortunate to have acquired the transmission line for the Nation," stated Council Delegate Wilson Stewart, Jr.

The \$1.9 million from the Nation's Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance will be paid to the Bureau of Reclamation for the annual capital costs associated with the 500MW. The resolution also calls for the creation of an account to hold all revenue generated from the 500MW to be used to repay the \$1.9 million, to pay for future annual costs, and to fund energy-related projects.

The Nez-Lizer Administration thanks Speaker Seth Damon for sponsoring the legislation and the members of the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council for supporting the \$1.9 million funding request.

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