



THE NAVAJO NATION OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

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Navajo Nation gains \$9 million second-year return on agricultural insurance investment



PHOTO: (left to right) Council Delegates Paul Begay, Kee Allen Begay, Jr., Charlaine Tso, Speaker Seth Damon, CKP Insurance, LLC official Chuck Hemphill, Vice President Myron Lizer, President Jonathan Nez, and First Lady Phefelia Herbert-Nez in Phoenix, Ariz. on Feb. 2, 2019.

PHOENIX – Navajo Nation President Jonathan, Vice President Myron Lizer, and members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council gathered on Saturday, to mark the successful second-year return of \$9 million on agricultural insurance coverage for select portions of the Navajo Nation based on rainfall levels. To date, the Navajo Nation has received approximately \$45 million overall from its initial investment.

The Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture applied for the insurance coverage through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Pasture, Rangeland, Forage Insurance Program. In 2016, the

23rd Navajo Nation Council adopted the Síhasin Fund Pasture Rangeland and Forage Expenditure Plan, which reserved \$20 million from the Nation's Síhasin Fund for insurance premiums to the USDA through CKP Insurance, LLC.

"We are very grateful for the moisture that our lands continue to receive, but we are also thankful that this investment offers great opportunities for agricultural production, land management, farming and irrigation, grazing lands, drought contingency planning, and other initiatives that will benefit our communities," said President Nez.

Speaker Seth Damon and Council members Paul Begay, Kee Allen Begay, Jr., and Charlaine Tso were also present for the check presentation.

Speaker Damon thanked the previous 23rd Navajo Nation Council for having the foresight to insure the Navajo Nation during periods of time that the Navajo Nation receives little to no rainfall resulting in drought conditions. He added that the current Council will work hard to implement projects that benefit many communities and people.

In addition to the \$9 million, the Nation also received \$17 million in February and \$1 million in July 2018. The Department of Agriculture has since developed a listing of agricultural projects that would benefit irrigation systems, windmills, livestock improvements, drought contingency plans, and others.

"We see the potential of the funding that's coming from this initiative. We are thankful to previous leaders for laying the foundation and now it's in our hands to work together to move these projects forward," said Vice President Lizer.

Council Delegate Charlaine Tso said she intends to advocate for funding for projects in the Navajo Utah chapters that she represents including Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, and Red Mesa.

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