



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

CONTACTS:

Jared Touchin, Communications Director
(928) 274-4275

Crystalyne Curley, Sr. Public Information Officer
(928) 274-2758

nnopvp.communications@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 3, 2020

Nez-Lizer congratulate newly-appointed Utah Division of Indian Affairs Director Dustin Jansen

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer congratulate newly-appointed Director of the Utah Division of Indian Affairs Dustin Jansen, who is a member of the Navajo Nation. Utah Gov. Gary R. Herbert and Lt. Gov. Spencer J. Cox announced the appointment on Jan. 31, following the retirement of former Director Shirlee Silversmith.

In his new role, Jansen will work closely with the Utah Tribal Leaders, which is comprised of elected tribal leaders from the Skull Valley Band of Goshute, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe/White Mesa, Navajo Nation, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Goshute Reservation, and the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation for the purpose of advocating for Native Americans residing in the state of Utah.

“Congratulations to Mr. Jansen on his appointment. We look forward to working together with his office and other tribes to advocate for stronger partnerships at the state level to improve roads, education, health, and many other issues that are important for many tribes,” said President Nez.

Recently, President Nez and Vice President Lizer met with Utah Gov. Gary R. Herbert’s Deputy Chief of Staff Michael Mower, Special Counsel on Indian Affairs Larry Echohawk, and the Executive Director of the Utah Navajo Trust Fund Board of Trustees Tony Dayish, to discuss options to deliver much-needed water and electricity for 26 Navajo families residing in a 120-acre area known as the Westwater Subdivision, near Blanding, Utah, which was purchased by the Navajo Nation in 1986. Last July, Gov. Herbert also met with President Nez and Vice President Lizer in Window Rock, to continue coordinating and building their partnership and efforts.

“We have many Navajo residents in the state of Utah that need the help of leadership, including Mr. Jansen, to bring resources to Navajo communities. The Nez-Lizer Administration is committed to working together with the Office of the Governor, Division of Indian Affairs, and the Utah Tribal Leaders,” Vice President Lizer stated.

In January, President Nez and Vice President Lizer also appointed former member of the Navajo Nation Council and former chair of the Utah Tribal Leaders, Davis Filfred, to serve as an Executive

Staff Assistant for the Office of the President and Vice President to focus on Navajo Utah issues. Filfred serves as the point of contact for President Nez and Vice President Lizer to coordinate and advocate on issues related to the state of Utah.

Prior to his appointment, Jansen served as an assistant professor at Utah Valley University where he taught American Indian Studies and Political Science, with a focus on federal Indian law and policy and tribal government. According to the Office of the Governor, he also served as a tribal court judge for the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation and with the Navajo Nation Office of Legislative Counsel and Navajo Nation Department of Justice. Dustin Janes will officially begin his new role as the Director of the Utah Division of Indian Affairs on Feb. 8, 2020.

###

For the latest news from the Office of the President and Vice President, please visit <http://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov/> or find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.