



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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Local elders celebrate “a dream come true” with the approval of funding to pave roadways between Pinon and Hard Rock communities

HARD ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, and Council Delegate Jimmy Yellowhair joined community members and local leaders at Hard Rock Chapter on Thursday, to finalize a resolution that appropriates \$19.5 million to pave existing dirt roads between the communities of Hard Rock and Pinon – an initiative that many leaders and local residents have supported for many years.



Former Hardrock Chapter President and Navajo County Supervisor Percy Deal, current Pinon Chapter President Bessie Allen, former Navajo County Supervisor Jesse Thompson, and current Hard Rock Chapter President Jay Begay, Jr. called the approval of the funding a “dream come true” for local residents. Both leaders have long advocated for road improvements and the paving of 15-miles of BIA Route N8031 from Hopi Route 4 to BIA Route N4.

“Thanks to the support and determination of the people of the Hard Rock and Pinon and through the persistence of our leaders such as Bessie Allen, Percy Deal, Council Delegate Jimmy Yellowhair, and many others, we are finally going to see the paving of these roadways for the benefit of elders, students, first responders, and many others. This shows that when leaders work together, support one another, and collaborate, we get things done for the people. It took time, but we are excited and happy for all of the residents who will benefit from the road improvements. I also extend my appreciation to the members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council who supported the legislation,” said President Nez.

Former Hardrock Chapter President Percy Deal recalled that as a former elected member of the Navajo County Board of Supervisors years ago, President Nez met with the Dzil Yijiin Regional Council on a regular basis and brought officials together to plan for the road improvements.

“There is a phrase that President Nez said to us time and time again and that was ‘it’s time to go to the next level.’ Today, with the signing of the Legislation 0313-20 I’m reminded of that phrase and I say it’s time to go to the next level, not only Hardrock and Pinon, but all communities in Dzil Yijiin. The next level is better education, adequate access to health care, economic development, and many other essential opportunities. We thank President Nez, Vice President Lizer, and members of the Navajo Nation Council for making our dream come true, many of us worked on this issue for many years and today we are witnessing our dream come true,” said former Hard Rock Chapter President Percy Deal.

Pinon Chapter President Bessie Allen spoke about the transportation challenges that residents have experienced for many years, due to the rough dirt roads that many residents rely on to secure basic services and goods and to commute to and from work and school.

“This is going to help everyone. Thank you, President Nez. This is happening during your presidency and it will be quite a historical event. It’s a big accomplishment. Thank you Delegate Yellowhair for sponsoring the legislation,” said Pinon Chapter President Bessie Allen.

Vice President Lizer also recognized past and present leaders for their support and spoke about the economic opportunities that the paved roads will create.

“Improved roads bring new business, increase trade, help tourism, and boost the economy. You’re part of the bigger economy of the Navajo Nation. This road will provide immediate impacts and improve the quality of life for residents. We have to continue to support and build on the idea of Buy Navajo, Buy Local by stimulating the economy so that more of our people stay on the Navajo Nation and buy goods here. When we have quality roads, we can increase economic opportunities for our people,” said Vice President Lizer.

Council Delegate Elmer Begay, Navajo Division of Transportation Executive Director Garret Silversmith, Division of Community Development Executive Director Dr. Pearl Yellowman, Navajo Hopi Land Commission Office Executive Director Robert Black, and Division of Natural Resources Executive Director Dr. Rudy Shebala were also in attendance to show their support for the communities and residents.

The project also received \$22.3 million through the Tribal Transportation Program for road construction, however, a shortfall of \$19.5 million was needed to complete the project’s scope of work. The Nez-Lizer Administration thanks the Hard Rock and Pinon Chapters for your support.

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