



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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President Nez addresses climate change at the New Mexico Climate Summit



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez speaks on the House floor at the New Mexico State Capitol during the 2021 New Mexico Climate Summit in Santa Fe, N.M. on Oct. 26, 2021.

SANTA FE, N.M. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez spoke on the House floor at the New Mexico State Capitol in Santa Fe, N.M. on Tuesday, about the impacts of climate change and the efforts to reduce the carbon footprint in communities located within the Navajo Nation. President Nez was invited by New Mexico House Speaker Brian Egolf (D-Dist. 47) to participate in the tribal leaders panel as part of the 2021 New Mexico Climate Summit.

The inaugural conference was hosted by Speaker Egolf and brought together national experts, state and community leaders, advocates, and concerned citizens to develop new policies and investments that address the growing climate crisis, as well as to ensure a just transition for all of New Mexico's diverse communities.

“As the first people of this land and this country, we have an inherent responsibility to be the stewards of the land and I thank you for acknowledging the reality and impacts of climate change. As seen across the world, climate change is real and the effects are directly impacting our way of life as Navajo people,” said President Nez.

In 2019, the Navajo Nation adopted a Climate Adaptation Plan that was developed by the Executive Branch in coordination with community leaders and representatives, and approved by the Naabik’íyáti Committee. The plan helps to identify and prioritize natural resources of concerns for communities, to establish timelines for action plans, and to allow for flexibility within the plan to adapt to the effects of climate change

“The Navajo Nation is experiencing the effects of climate change, more so in recent years, with hot and dry weather in the summers, low water levels in our rivers, and water shortages for irrigation and livestock. The extreme weather that’s becoming more frequent on the Navajo Nation, with long periods of little or no moisture leading to drought, wild fires, livestock and agriculture problems and mandated water conservation efforts in some areas,” added President Nez. “Mother Earth is not only a part of us, it is us. As five-fingered beings, we have a responsibility to understand what Mother Earth is telling us and to address it.”

President Nez also spoke about the Navajo Nation’s ongoing work to reduce its carbon footprint by prioritizing renewable energy development and support for the New Mexico Energy Transition Act, which established new carbon emission standards to eliminate carbon emissions for energy production for the state by 2045.

“In 2019, we signed the Navajo Hayoot’kaał Proclamation, which established a new vision and new standards focused on renewable energy development for the Navajo Nation. We have multiple solar facilities that are being developed and one that produces over 55 megawatts of electricity for homes in the western part of our Nation. The Navajo Nation is aggressively working on renewable energy projects in New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona,” stated President Nez.

Other panelists included the All Pueblo Council of Governors Chairman Wilfred Herrera, Jr., Mescalero Apache Tribal President Gabe Aguilar, Jicarilla Apache Nation President Edward Velarde, and Fort Sill Apache Tribal Secretary-Treasurer James Dempsey. The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President thanks Speaker Egolf and everyone who supported the 2021 New Mexico Climate Summit.

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