



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

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President Nez highlights the Navajo Nation’s “Just Energy Transition” to support post-coal economies at the Arizona Student Energy Conference

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez served as the keynote speaker at the 10th Annual Arizona Student Energy Conference held virtually last Wednesday, in which he focused on the Navajo Nation’s ongoing efforts to secure resources from the state of Arizona and utility companies to recover from the closing of coal plants and to support post-coal economies.

The conference is an annual symposium that brings together graduate students and post-docs from the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, and Northern Arizona University with Arizona’s leading renewable energy experts and researchers.

Between 2010 and 2018, Navajo Generating Station (NGS), Four Corners Power Plant, and San Juan Generating Station, which are all on or near the Navajo Nation, provided thousands of good paying jobs and acted as a dependable source of revenue for the Navajo Nation for decades, while providing cities such as Phoenix and Tucson with cost-efficient electricity. The Nation has already experienced significant financial losses due to the closure of NGS, ranging from \$30-\$50 million annually. In the next 10 years, the Four Corners Power Plant, the Cholla Power Plant and the San Juan Generating Station will also be closed.

The Navajo Nation and Arizona Public Service (APS) worked diligently to establish a Just Transition agreement that would provide \$100 million to the Navajo Nation over 10 years to help address the effects of the closure of power plants. Key aspects of the agreement are now subject to approval by the Arizona Corporation Commission, which is meeting this week to hear APS’s rate case that includes the proposed agreement.

“The Navajo Nation is taking action to ensure that our communities can make a sound transition through the closure of these power plants. However, we need increased action from the Arizona Corporation Commission and the state’s electric utilities to prevent further economic downturn and to act justly and expediently in approving Just Transition funding for the Nation,” said President Nez.

The agreement includes \$100 million dollars to go toward general economic recovery, an additional \$10 million dollars specifically for electrification efforts on the Navajo Nation, alongside

a commitment to conduct or fund an assessment of the Nation's unelectrified homes and businesses, and an assurance that APS will procure 600 megawatts of renewable electricity generation from the Nation or nearby communities. APS will also provide all of their employees at Cholla and Four Corners with job redeployment offers at least six months prior to closure.

“We appreciate our partnership with APS and are working to see more of this kind of collaboration and funding to address the closure of coal plants which is occurring far faster than was ever predicted by Arizona utilities. This transition away from coal is an unprecedented and tremendous challenge, but the Nation looks forward to being an enthusiastic partner in ensuring this transition is one that creates the best outcomes for utilities, ratepayers, the state of Arizona, and the Navajo Nation. We would like to continue our role as an Arizona energy generator, but through the renewable energy projects that will make our shared clean energy future possible,” added President Nez.

The Navajo Nation continues to work with APS to address the need for Just Transition support and resources through the agreement that was developed in 2020. The Arizona Corporation Commission meetings are available online at: <https://www.azcc.gov/live>.

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