



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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President Nez meets with Secretary Haaland and Assistant Secretary Newland

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez had the opportunity to present several issues to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Bryan Newland, during an informal gathering with several tribal leaders at the Department of the Interior in Washington D.C. last Friday. All attendees were required to have been fully vaccinated for COVID-19 prior to the event.



President Nez spoke about the Navajo Nation's efforts to build new public safety facilities in the communities of

Shiprock, N.M. and Window Rock, Ariz., to secure more funding to continue extending the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project to reach more Navajo communities and homes, missing and murdered Indigenous relatives, the federal infrastructure bill being considered by Congress, and the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2021.

PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez meeting with U.S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Bryan Newland in Washington D.C. on Oct. 8, 2021.

“Secretary Haaland has shown tremendous leadership in many ways including the recent restoration and expansion of the Bears Ears National Monument. We appreciate her and Assistant Secretary Newland for taking time to hear from tribal leaders about our efforts to improve our communities and develop more water infrastructure. Through the CARES Act, the Navajo Nation was able to provide electricity to over 700 Navajo families and water resources to others. We want to continue building off of that success with the American Rescue Plan Act, but we will need more support with other initiatives like the Navajo Gallup Water Project Supply. We need our federal partners at the table collaborating with us,” said President Nez.

He also thanked Secretary Haaland for creating a missing person unit under the Bureau of Indian Affairs and highlighted the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety's ongoing work to develop a

missing persons unit to provide more resources to help locate missing people on the Navajo Nation. He acknowledged the need for improved communication and coordination between the Nation and federal agencies to locate missing persons.

Regarding the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project, President Nez is working with U.S. Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández (D-N.M.) to secure additional funding to complete the project that is providing water to many homes in the Eastern Navajo Agency. Recently, Congresswoman Fernández helped to include \$67 million in an energy and water appropriations bill for the project that passed through the House and currently awaits approval by the Senate.

“The Navajo Nation Washington Office plays an instrumental role in all of these initiatives and congressional bills. They are tasked with tracking and advocating for many initiatives at the federal level. As leaders, we all need to support their work and plan for the future of our Nation and that requires us to work closely with our federal partners. We have to stay on a positive path and keep moving forward,” added President Nez.

The discussion took place prior to the signing of a proclamation on Friday by President Joe Biden at the White House, which restored the Bears Ears National Monument to the boundaries established by President Obama in 2016, totaling 1.36 million acres. Zuni Tribal Gov. Val R. Panteah, Sr., Ute Mountain Ute Chairman Manuel Heart, Hopi Chairman Timothy Nuvangyaoma and Vice Chairman Clark Tenakhongva were also in attendance.

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