



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 7, 2022

**President Nez commends collaborative
efforts to complete the Wash Berm Project in Chinle**



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez led by the Navajo Division of Transportation's representatives at the Chinle wash berm project on February 3, 2022, in Chinle, Ariz.

CHINLE, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez joined Chinle Chapter officials and Division Directors to visit of the site the newly restored and improved wash berm project within the Chinle community. The project's primary purpose is to help prevent flooding in the local residential areas, which have experienced significant water damage in the past from monsoon rains and spring runoff from the Chuska Mountains. As of last week, the entities have worked together to complete 1.44 miles of the two-mile section along the west side of the Chinle wash.

President Nez commended the Chinle Chapter, Navajo Division of Transportation (NDOT), Division of Community Development (DCD), Division of Natural Resources (DNR), Navajo Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA), and Apache County, for establishing intergovernmental collaborations

to complete the project. During a site visit last Thursday, President Nez joined Chinle Chapter President Dr. Rosanna Jumbo-Fitch and NDOT crew members to see the progress in-person.

"I appreciate the time, dedication, and partnerships established with this project to prevent property damage and, most importantly, to save lives. I want to extend an appreciation to Chinle Chapter and the Division Directors, including Dr. Rudy Shebala, Dr. Pearl Yellowman, Valinda Shirley, and Garrett Silversmith, for their commitment. Working together, they



prioritized the community's safety concerns," said President Nez. "I'd also like to thank Apache County District I and 24th Navajo Nation Council Delegate Eugene Tso for their contributions to this new model of service we can use for generations to come."

With the partnership of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Apache County, NDOT anticipates finishing the construction by the end of next week.

"We at the Chinle Chapter sincerely appreciate the Office of the President and Vice President, Division Directors, NDOT, and all the other entities for their dedication in providing a safer environment for our Chinle community members. We have had a lot of flooding that has impacted our livelihood in the past, so we appreciate how they've taken the time to prioritize and protect our goals as a community," said Chinle Chapter President Jumbo-Fitch.

Dr. Jumbo-Fitch noted that the new two-mile berm stands at least six-feet tall and contains a broader base than the previous berms constructed under emergency circumstances in the past. NDOT and Apache County are also clearing trash from the area around the berm and strongly urge community members to refrain from illegally dumping trash in the community.

"Navajo DOT appreciates the involvement and coordination from all entities, also Chinle Chapter and Apache County have been noteworthy partners and have been key contributors to the success of this venture with their heavy equipment, resources, and staff. President Nez has also strongly supported this project and has periodically provided his guidance and encouraged us all to stay on task to complete this critical project. Additionally, I commend my Navajo DOT staff for their continued excellence, input, and hard work on a weekly basis to see this project to its completion stage," stated Navajo Division of Transportation Director Garret Silversmith.

The Nez-Lizer Administration thanks all of its partners and Chinle Chapter for being proactive and making the Chinle community safer for all residents.

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