



# THE NAVAJO NATION



## EXECUTIVE BRANCH QUARTERLY REPORT Oct. 2024



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# OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

## Administration Updates

Excavation of contaminated soil from seven abandoned uranium mine sites will begin October 9, 2024 - With over 40 years of uranium mining and milling, the Navajo Nation was left with millions of contaminated soils from mining waste, along with chronic diseases among some of its population.

U.S. EPA Region 9's Navajo Abandoned Uranium Mine Program was created to remedy the contamination, and as of today, it has committed to cleaning up over 2 million cubic yards of mine waste in the Navajo Nation. According to a U.S. EPA news release issued on Oct. 8, the seven mine sites are the Mariano Lake, Mac 1 & 2, Black Jack 1 & 2, and Ruby 1 & 3 mine sites.

According to the release, EPA announced on Sept. 27 to clean up over 1 million cubic yards of contaminated soil while aiming to restore 260 acres of land in the Smith Lake and Mariano Lake areas.

As President of the Navajo Nation, I am responsible for ensuring the safety of my communities and our homelands. Two weeks ago, I walked alongside families who continue to be impacted by the legacy of uranium mining and milling and who advocate for the passage of the amendments to the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2024. With them, we told Congress to listen to us and pass RECA amendments now.

Our people impacted by uranium mining need help, and so does our land. EPA is working tirelessly right now to ensure our land can begin its healing journey to return to what it should be. This is wonderful news for people in the Eastern Navajo Agency and beyond.

Link: <https://www.epa.gov/.../epa-decides-cleanup-plans-seven...>

### **Shiprock Flood Recovery: Navajo Nation and FEMA assess impact on families**

October 8, 2024 – Following the severe flooding on August 25, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren has prioritized repairing the roofing of the Shiprock Chapter House and assisting the 30 affected families. During the flood, leaks in the chapter house's roof prevented it from serving as a shelter for those impacted.

Local emergency officials have documented the property damage and personal stories of those affected. Currently, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 9 is verifying these reports. FEMA officials are in Shiprock from October 7 to 9 to conduct a joint preliminary damage assessment from the August floods.

The Navajo Department of Emergency Management and Shiprock Chapter requested this assessment as part of FEMA's process to potentially declare a national emergency disaster.

“I am grateful to our local authorities, including the Navajo Department of Emergency Management and Shiprock Chapter, for being on the ground to help our Diné citizens impacted by the August 25 monsoonal floods,” President Nygren said. “Our families are still in recovery.”

Sharen Sandoval, director of the Navajo Department of Emergency Management, explained that the affected areas have been divided into three zones: A, B, and C. Initial reports indicate that 30 families were directly impacted, but Sandoval noted that the full scale of the damage is still being assessed according to FEMA’s criteria.

On Tuesday, October 8, FEMA conducted assessments near the Baker Arroyo, including the homestead of Arnold Yazzie, Sr. Yazzie described the flooding’s impact on his home and gardens, which were inundated by floodwaters. He is uncertain about the health of the silt left behind by the floods.

### **Message from G2E conference is the protection of gaming is a protection of sovereignty**

October 8, 2024 – Four tribal leaders told 1,500 participants at the G2E gaming conference here Monday that what differentiates tribal gaming is it’s a modern and powerful expression of tribal sovereignty that continues to grow for the betterment of tribes.

Whether from the 417,000-member Navajo Nation or 1,700-member Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians of Wisconsin, the leaders said the beautiful thing about tribal nations is the unifying character of something so inherent, as complicated and complex, as exercising, upholding and protecting sovereignty.

“Tribal sovereignty should always be honored, when it's convenient and not convenient,” said Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren. “Because I know a lot of our partners love to work with us when it's convenient. But when it's inconvenient, they like to work against us.”

G2E stands for Global Gaming Expo. The conference is billed as a catalyst for gaming to foster innovation and drive growth in one place to get business done. It’s being held at The Venetian Oct. 7-to-10.

What is important to learn to grow tribal economies and protect sovereignty, said President Shannon Holsey of the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians, is that there are no shortcuts. “Especially for young people as they want to emerge into the industry,” she said. “They see what's forward facing, that you see the success of the likes of everyone sitting up here in their respective roles, and there's so much hard work that had to go into their success.”

Indian Gaming Association Chairman Ernie Stevens said the struggle to have sovereignty and treaties respected is what tribes have survived.

“It is who we are as governments, long before there was in the United States Constitution,” he said. “We've done this for a long time. The protection of sovereignty is our ultimate authority. It is what we live by.”

Today, there are many people in Indian Country and Indigenous communities who are willing to share their knowledge and experience, said Chairman Reid Melanovich of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. “They don't treat each other as their competition. They want everybody to succeed. They want everybody to be able to improve the lives of their citizens.”

Mark Trahan, ICT editor at large and moderator of the panel who is also celebrating 50 years as a journalist, said he vividly remembers reporting on the 1988 Indian Gaming Regulatory Act when it was a new federal law.

### **Building new Veteran homes for through the 1,000 Home Initiative.**

October 7, 2024 - For our veterans, who served us and continue to fight for the freedoms we enjoy, I thank them. My administration is working diligently with the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration (NNVA) to get more homes built or remodeled for our Navajo Veterans.

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In the Northern Navajo Agency, new construction projects are happening. Three turnkeys have been completed by The Sparrow Group, with more to come from them as well as other partners like BITCO. Turnkey status means that a veteran can move into their new home because water and electricity access is now connected to their new homes.

During the 111th Northern Navajo Fair, my team and I toured three turnkey homes. In the Hogback Chapter, we handed the keys over to the Benally family. Their four-bedroom, two-bath home is now ready for move-in. This home costs about \$280,000. Mr. Benally is a combat veteran.

In the Upper Fruitland Chapter, the NNVA and I handed keys to Juanita Sheak, an Army veteran who served six years in the military. Her two-bedroom, one-bath hogan is ADA-compliant and costs approximately \$400,000 to build.

The other turnkey home is in Shiprock, just off Mesa Farm Road. That is a three-bedroom home for an elderly Navajo veteran. This veteran now has a home to live on his farm and grow foods once again.

Moments like these remind me of how much a home, water, and electricity mean to our veterans and Diné people. Under my leadership, we have also shifted away from custom hogan designs for our veterans because modern, suburban homes are more functional and cost-effective. It is expensive to build on our homelands because some of our veterans live in remote areas and the shipment of materials to build the homes. However, I remain optimistic because we are getting it done.

There are more homes to come. As a construction worker, I know how integral homes are to living healthier lives. I'm humbled to help light the fireplaces for our Navajo veterans.

**At the 111th Northern Navajo Fair, the Diné people travel to celebrate the oldest fair**

October 5, 2024 - A heartfelt thank you goes out to the Northern Navajo Fair committee for their unwavering dedication and tireless efforts in organizing this cherished event.

The Northern Navajo Fair, renowned as the oldest and most traditional fair in the Nation, takes place in Shiprock, the largest community on the Navajo Nation. This fair holds a special place in our hearts, bringing us together to honor tradition, celebrate our vibrant culture, and renew important connections. This year's theme, "Into The Future, Our Children's Livelihood Will Be Strengthened," beautifully resonates with the work my administration is committed to for the Diné people.

We kicked off the parade this morning and wrapped up just before noon. It was a joy to be behind the grand marshals of this year's parade and the talented Navajo Nation Band. Congratulations to this year's grand marshals, Miss Indian World Cassie John and actor James June, for being such inspiring role models and trailblazers in our community.

I also extend my congratulations to Miss Northern Navajo, Damaris Yazzie from Teec Nos Pos, Arizona, and Miss Northern Navajo Teen, Kaydence Yazzie from Kirtland, New Mexico. Moments like these at the Northern Navajo Fair remind us of the profound power of community and the importance of our traditions.

Some of my division directors and staff rode alongside young cowboys and cowgirls from Western Navajo, while others walked the parade route, sharing goodies, T-shirts, water, apples, and oranges. I'm immensely proud of my team because their work directly impacts our Navajo people, from community outreach and legal matters to ensuring our government remains accountable to the people.

The fair is particularly meaningful to me as it is where I grew up helping my late mother provide for our family. Here, I learned about self-sufficiency and the basics of economics. Our fairs are not only about celebrating but also about providing a vital platform for pop-up markets, where our people can showcase their art, jewelry, and food. This fair isn't just for the Navajo; it's inclusive of everyone and offers something for everyone.

What a wonderful way to ring in the Navajo New Year! Ahéehee so much from First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren and I.

**Elder Fest and Kids Day truly celebrate our grandparents and grandchildren**

October 3, 2024 - Earlier this morning at the 111th Northern Navajo Fair, hundreds of bright eyes and bushy tails swarmed the Navajo Special Diabetes Program tent for a chance to get a free skateboard and helmet from the nonprofit 4Kinship.



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It was heartwarming to see our children from surrounding schools get bussed to the Northern Navajo Fair and be a part of the 1,500 skateboards and helmets giveaway. These skateboards are donations from Wells Fargo through a collaboration with the Office of the President and Vice President and 4Kinship with many partners who serve our Diné children with opportunities to connect with each other.

I want to thank Amy Denet Deal from 4Kinship, Loren Anthony from Chizh for Cheii, Allie Young from Protect the Sacred, and Shawn Harrison from the Shawn Shine Show.

Next on my must-attend list for today's Northern Navajo Fair events was seeing all my Masanis and Cheiis at Elder Fest! It's always refreshing to hear from our elders as a leader. I sang some vocals with Nataani Nez Singers, which was empowering and beautiful to hear.

I'm grounded hearing our elder's concerns. It drives me to continue pushing myself to best serve our Diné people. On my weekly radio address, I shared the completion of several renovated and new senior centers, including groundbreaking projects.

Our elders shape and nurture every one of us. It was amazing to see some of our grandparents mold their grandchildren and expose them to traditional social events like song and dance.

It was a great sight to see both our grandkids and grandparents have a day for themselves and together at this year's 111th Northern Navajo Fair. I can't wait to see all of you out and about tomorrow! Enjoy the fair everyone!

### **The \$22.5 million groundbreaking of the Shiprock Pinnacle Hotel**

October 10, 2024 - This long overdue project for the largest Navajo community, Shiprock, marks a significant milestone.

Today, the 25th Navajo Nation Council and I stand together to honor their work. Special thanks to Council delegates Eugenia Charles-Newton, Amber Crotty, Otto Tso, Rickie Nez, the Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprise and its CEO Stan Sapp, and the Division of Economic Development and its director Tony Skrelunas. We are here to celebrate new construction.

This four-story, 85-room hotel will keep dollars within the Navajo Nation and attract tourists and businesses to our beautiful lands. It reflects years of collaboration, with funding from the Navajo Nation Department of Economic Development Sales Tax (\$2.8 million), the Sihasin Fund (\$11.4 million), and the Permanent Trust Fund (\$8.3 million).

Local leadership played a crucial role in this vision, too. Thank you to Shiprock Chapter leaders Nevina Kinlacheeny, Dr. J Kaibah Begay, Debra A. Yazzie, and community leaders Duane "Chilli" Yazzie, and Betty Ojaye. Their dedication and community support made this project possible.

Yesterday, we also broke ground for the Shiprock Flea Market under the San Juan River Bridge. Together, these projects will foster a healthy economy for the Northern Navajo Agency. As Nevina said, we must unite as leaders for our Diné people. This hotel serves all who travel for business and pleasure.

A special thank you to Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprise, Dyron Murphy Architects, and Benally/Woodruff Construction for making this project a reality with their management, planning, design, and actual construction. Yes, this is the final groundbreaking for a hotel in Shiprock. Construction begins in a few weeks, a new chapter for Shiprock citizens. Ahéhee and Happy Diné New Year!

### **Shiprock Wellness Warrior 5k and 1 mile walk and run**

October 9, 2024 - We had over 75 walkers and runners participate in the Wellness Warrior Walk and Run series in Shiprock, N.M.

Each of you is a Wellness Warrior and through physical movement we continue to build and maintain healthy habits. I encourage my Diné people to take care of themselves daily. Whether you're at one of our Wellness Warrior events or not, do your best to exercise your mind, body and spirit.

At our second event in Shiprock, participants started off with stretches and completed 1 warm-up Zumba exercises to prepare and get excited for the walk and run.

It's very inspiring to see our Masanis and Cheiis running and walking at these events to promote healthy lifestyles for their grandchildren.

We had the Navajo Epidemiology Center, Diné College, Navajo Health Education Program, and Special Diabetes Program with Teec Nos Pos Wellness Center.

Shoutouts go to DJ Chris Keeswood who kept our walkers and runners upbeat and to Program Supervisor, Sharlene Begay. I hope to see all of you at the next Wellness Warrior Walk and Run.

### **We held the Grand opening of the Shiprock Flea Market**

October 9, 2024 - Passing through the community of Shiprock and Northern Navajo Agency, I have traveled U.S. Highway 64 many times and have always admired the dedication of our Navajo/Diné people, who set up along the roadside to sell food, jewelry, and clothing to support their families. This spirit of entrepreneurship reflects our community's resilience and commitment.

When Tony Skrelunas and community leaders in Shiprock approached me with the idea of developing the area near the iconic Shiprock Bridge into an RV park, vendor market, camping site,

and river walk trail, I was enthusiastic. The groundbreaking for this beautiful vision is now called the Shiprock Flea Market.

There are numerous plans and possibilities for this area, and I appreciate Tony's collaboration with local leaders, including Bobby Martin, Lucinda Frank, Rose Morgan and Betty Ojaye. I also want to thank Council delegates Amber Crotty and Eugenia Charles-Newton for their advocacy to help our entrepreneurs. Their collective vision underscores the importance of safe economic development for our Navajo community and highlights how these initiatives will benefit our people. I am excited about the potential of this project to enhance the experience of visiting Shiprock, a gateway community for the Four Corners region and the Navajo Nation. The vendor area will be ready in time for the upcoming Shiprock Fair, providing a secure space for our community to showcase their goods and services. Let's continue to work together to bring this vision to fruition!

### **President Nygren responds to allegations in Legislative Branch news release regarding continuing resolution**

October 2, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren today responded to inaccurate statements by the Navajo Nation Council in an Oct. 1 press release that questioned his reasons and use of his line-item veto authority applied to the Council's Sept. 16 continuing resolution.

The President provided the following statement:

In analyzing the budget and expenditures, I found that the Council lost sight of its role as lawmakers. Lawmakers serve the Navajo people by being at the Nation's capital to focus on drafting legislation. This includes budget legislation. They are responsible for updating the many outdated laws that are hindering progress for our Nation.

Instead, our analysis has found delegates of this Council have abused their travel while arguing that I have misused mine. For example, in FY2024 I cut my \$350,000 travel budget by 50% to fund other areas of my office. Meanwhile, the Council moved funds around to increase its travel. For FY2024, the Council spent \$1,415,971 on travel. Meanwhile, I cut my travel budget to enable the Office of the President and Vice President to continue to function. Had I not made these sacrifices, I would have been under my travel budget.

This is the reason I directed the Controller to include in his quarterly reports to the Council all travel, salaries, stipends, expenses and reimbursements for me, as President, the Vice President and all the Council delegates. Because I hear criticism of my travel, I am happy to make these reports public.

In my opinion, and that of my staff qualified to analyze it, the continuing resolution sent to me for my signature was botched. Consequently, it warranted my line-item vetoes. The line-item veto is a presidential authority granted to Navajo presidents by the Navajo people through the initiative process, not the referendum process. The continuing resolution I received is an example of the

Council not doing its job nor fulfilling its responsibility to prepare a comprehensive budget prior to the next fiscal year, which began on Oct. 1.

If our lawmakers were in Window Rock and made it a priority to discuss the continuing resolution, I wouldn't have had to make so many corrections to this continuing resolution.

The Navajo Nation Council's main duty and responsibility is to appropriate funds so that our government can function and so that the Executive Branch and Judicial Branch can continue to provide direct services to our people. The Navajo Nation Council does not provide direct services to the people.

The Executive Branch, including Chapters, provide social services, educational services and veteran services to our people, among others, while the Judicial Branch operates the courts that adjudicate claims being filed by and against our people. The Council needs to leave direct services to the Executive and Judicial Branch.

I am happy to reinstate the Council's off-reservation travel (which includes airfare, off-reservation car rentals, and the like) with the passage of a comprehensive budget. However, I must ensure that the Council, its committees and its support staff stay on the Navajo Nation and are focused on developing a comprehensive budget for FY2025.

The press release goes on to state that, "President Nygren zoned in on funding for the Legislative Branch by eliminating nearly \$1 million that is used to fund attorney positions, support staff, and other resources that support the drafting and delivery of critical legislations requested by constituents, chapters, and many others along with other critical legal support to the Legislative Branch."

In reviewing the FY2024 Comprehensive Budget, I discovered that the Legislative Branch has far more funding resources than it is leading our People to believe. It has several buckets of funding to draw from that allows the Council to continue its operations and to fund personnel.

For example, the Council's full-time in-house attorney positions and other staff positions have been preserved. I did line-item veto items for the Office of Legislative Counsel (OLC) such as outside contract attorneys (totaling \$634,585), outside consultants (totaling \$70,000), and \$4,000 for media. Even with these vetoes, OLC still has \$831,634 to operate. In comparison, the Office of the President and Vice President's legal office does not have its own budget. It is folded into the overall OPVP budget.

Even with the line-item vetoes for the Legislative Branch:

- the Speaker still has \$1,053,826,
- the full Council has \$1,086,849,
- the Naabik'iyáti' Committee has \$173,122,
- the four other standing committees of the Navajo Nation Council have a total of \$145,649,
- the Office of Legislative Services still has \$1,120,646, and

- the OLC still has \$831,634.
- These items total \$4,411,726 for six months. The Legislative Branch has sufficient resources to get a comprehensive budget in place.

The Council further states that the “... six-month Continuing Resolution (was) adopted unanimously by the Council on Sept. 16 in order to avoid employee layoffs and continue critical government operations...”

A continuing resolution is passed to maintain spending status quo while a comprehensive budget is being worked out. CS-39-24 – a confusing combination of both a continuing resolution and a comprehensive budget – was rushed and passed without debate or consideration by the full Council. All budget legislation should be vetted carefully to ensure that the Council is fulfilling its fiduciary responsibility and properly appropriating money. The Council failed to do this. CS-39-24 contained many errors that I was forced to correct using my line-item veto authority.

Our employees are now having to navigate and implement this confusing resolution. Again, some programs are being partially funded while others are being fully funded.

In addition, Speaker Curley stated, “President Nygren campaigned on working together with the Navajo Nation Council, but his recent line-item veto actions contradict his promises.”

The Council was fully aware and anticipated that line-item vetoes were possible if they chose not to do their duty to approve a comprehensive budget. The Council had to waive our laws in order to get a continuing resolution passed. I should not be forced to sign a resolution that waives our tribal laws in order to get a continuing resolution passed – especially one that is fraught with errors.

Further, I have maintained and publicly stated from the beginning of this budget process that I am willing to work with the Legislative and Judicial Branch, and I have. I have had countless meetings with the Speaker, Chief Justice, and the Budget and Finance Committee to figure out a path forward. When those repeated efforts failed, I called on the entire Navajo Nation Council to meet with me and the other branch chiefs on August 14, 2024, to discuss how to move forward with the comprehensive budget. For the one delegate who attended, she refused to talk about the budget.

The Council also questions whether I, as President of the Navajo Nation, “abused and overstepped the presidential line-item veto authority.”

It is the Council’s role to approve budgets and enact legislation. It is not the Council’s role to act as the jury and judge on whether any president “abused or overstepped the presidential line-item veto authority.” Line-item veto authority was given to the Navajo president by the People. It is within my authority as President to exercise my fiduciary duty over fiscal matters using my line-item veto authority.

The Council fails to point out that the reason why “local leaders and community members voiced their disappointment and disapproval of my line-item vetoes during a Central Agency Council held on Sept. 28,” is because the Speaker and members of the B&F Committee irresponsibly made – and continue to make – incorrect statements to the public and chapter officials.

For example, they state that chapter stipends were line-item vetoed – this is blatantly untrue. Chapter officials will continue to be paid stipends.

Lastly, people have asked why a comprehensive budget important?

We – as a Nation and government – cannot plan effectively without a comprehensive budget because there is no certainty for many of our programs. The current continuing resolution does not account for the rising costs of services and inflation that are impacting our families and communities. It also undermines strategic investments in critical areas such as infrastructure, education, and healthcare. All I am asking for is that the Council stay within the reservation and focus on getting me a comprehensive budget for FY2025.

### **Navajo Nation faces livestock overpopulation, seeks sustainable solutions**

October 1, 2024 — The Navajo Nation has about 600,000 livestock grazing its lands, exceeding the 185,000 animals the terrain can support.

According to the Navajo Department of Agriculture and Navajo Natural Heritage Program, this number includes domesticated animals like cattle, sheep, goats, and horses.

Additionally, there are approximately 80,000 feral horses, tribal officials report, up from 38,000 in 2017. The Navajo Nation Fish and Wildlife Department found that most feral horses come from domestic animals left uncared for by owners.

At a Sept. 30 meeting with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Director Terry Cosby, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, and tribal agency directors, discussed land management and sustainable solutions for Navajo producers.

“We’ve been trying to figure out how to be sustainable while respecting our traditions and culture, but the overpopulation of horses is tough on the land and natural resources,” President Nygren said. Jesse Jim, director of the Navajo Department of Agriculture, said the Nation plans to use its Agriculture Infrastructure Fund to reduce the feral horse population. Reclaiming the land through manpower and funding is a priority, Jim told NRCS.

Keisha Tatum, state conservationist for NRCS in Arizona, noted the USDA will open an office in Window Rock to help Navajo producers by reducing bureaucratic hurdles. She said the feral horse issue is a sensitive topic at both the tribal and federal levels.

The NRCS visit included field trips with Navajo producers in Western Navajo Agency, while also addressing concerns like ways to partner with the tribe to improve grazing lands and outstanding grazing permit issues.

Jim said the Navajo Nation plans to update its agricultural resource management plan for the 17 million acres that make up the Navajo Nation, which spans Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and parts of Colorado.

### **Leaders in public safety, education, and children and family services unite for safer schools**

October 1, 2024 – Over the past year and a half, the Navajo Department of Diné Education in partnership with the Navajo Department of Health – Public Health Emergency Preparedness have developed a new info-hub and website with the Navajo Division for Children & Family Services that enhances school safety for Diné children.

The launch of Operation Diné School Safety (ODSS) serves as a one-stop resource for information on school safety. The website includes a hotline for reporting concerns, an anonymous threat submission form, trauma support resources, and guidance for parents and school leadership to prioritize student safety.

“It’s not a matter of if it’s going to happen, it’s a matter of when it’s going to happen,” said Dr. Ferlin Clark, incident commander for Operation Diné School Safety with the DODE School-Community Safety Task Force.

With a recent rise in school threats and violence across the Navajo Nation, the task force emphasizes the importance of community involvement. They urge students, parents, and teachers to adhere to the principle: “If you see something, say something.”

The task force encourages parents to engage actively in their child's social media life. This involvement not only promotes healthier social media habits but also helps parents understand the reasons behind students' troubling behaviors, including threats.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren commends the efforts and highlights the bravery of students who speak up. He acknowledges the anxiety that threats can provoke, reminding parents and children to remain calm and informed.

### **Arrest made at Chinle High School Homecoming Dance**

September 29, 2024 – The Navajo Nation Police have reported an 18-year-old male was arrested at the Chinle High School’s Homecoming Dance after police received a report he had brought a Glock 17 pellet pistol to the dance.

No injuries were reported, and the scene was controlled. No names have been released.

Navajo Division of Public Safety Director Michael Anderson said all students at the dance were held in the Wildcat Den Gymnasium and then released to their parents.

Beginning Monday, the Navajo Police Department will assign an officer from each police district to serve as a school liaison with all schools on the Navajo Nation. These include all public, Bureau of Indian Education and charter schools.

As parents, my wife and I are deeply concerned about any actual or threat of violence in our Navajo schools. Our students deserve to learn and grow in a school setting that is safe and protected. No child should have to worry about being harmed in any way.

Working with our Navajo police officers and public safety officials, we will continue to encourage everyone to be vigilant and to report suspicious activity whenever you see it.

All potential threats shared through social media and other platforms will be taken seriously by our Navajo Police Department. Perpetrators will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Precautions will always be taken to prevent any violence.

The First Lady and I send our prayers of protection to the students and parents who experienced this traumatic event in the Chinle community last night.

### **President Nygren signs business site for Horseshoe Bend Development, a model for Navajo Nation tourism and economic development**

September 28, 2024 — Ground was broken Friday for a new Navajo resort at one of the country's most popular tourist destinations.

At the iconic Horseshoe Bend, a \$600 million project by Horseshoe Bend Holdings, LLC will help diversify the Navajo economy. On Sept. 27, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed and approved a business site lease for 421+ acres of land in the LeChee Chapter.

“There were times this project was long gone and each time we came back to it, we had to revive it,” said Chris Deschene, attorney for Horseshoe Bend Holdings, LLC. “We began the process in January when the new administration took office. I’m especially grateful for the administration for what they have done to get us to this point.”

Over 12 years in the making, Deschene and Otis Manson, founder and president of Horseshoe Bend Holdings, LLC, had been chipping away at the Horseshoe Bend Development (HBD) project. Under previous administrations, their pitch went nowhere.



After briefing President Nygren, Tony Skrelunas, director of the Navajo Division of Economic Development, Mike Halona, director of the Navajo Division of Natural Resources, and Michael Anderson, director of the Navajo Division of Public Safety, the project began its planning stage. According to Skrelunas, the HBD project has three phases: a five-star hotel and resort (pool, conference room, restaurant, hiking/horseback trails, etc.); a Diné cultural center (amphitheater visitor center, store, restaurant, conference rooms); and other commercial development space (3-star hotel, fuel station with convenience store, restaurants, etc.)

This project will bring about 1,000 jobs during construction and 3,000 jobs when it's fully operational. More than 2 million on average visit the Horseshoe Bend overlook, according to Deschene.

Horseshoe Bend Holdings, LLC will serve as the developer, lessor, and managing/operator of the HBD project. Approximately \$14 million in lease and taxes will be generated, said President Nygren.

### **President Buu Nygren signs a \$31.7 million contract with BITCO to build veteran homes**

September 23, 2024 - Many Navajo veterans reside in remote areas, and this initiative aims to meet their critical housing needs. We have 82,000 Navajo veterans who have served and sacrificed for the freedoms we all enjoy. Our Navajo veterans deserve homes built on the Navajo Nation to provide a place for them to return to. These three-bedroom homes under the Bitco contract will be built at a cost-effective rate of \$180 per square foot. Any cost savings on the homes by Bitco will be returned into the Veterans housing fund to give houses to additional veterans on the waiting list.

With this contract, all \$50 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for veterans' homes is now obligated. So far two contracts with SWIF have led to 22 homes already under construction. This new contract with BITCO will help meet the housing needs of Navajo veterans. Since 2014, veterans have had direct access to services from the Navajo Nation, thanks to the dedicated efforts of leaders like Bobbie Ann Baldwin and advocacy of veterans like Richard Claw, chapter commander for Black Mesa-Kitsilli, and Gabriella Mehl, Navajo Nation Veterans Advisory Council Chairwoman.

President Nygren has focused on home renovations and mental health support for Navajo veterans, including prioritizing Diné women veterans, the matrilineal bedrock of Diné society.

President Nygren assured the veterans of ongoing support and resources, saying, "Thank you for your service. We are supporting our veterans on a day-to-day basis."

### **Public safety message regarding the incident at Window Rock High School**

September 27, 2024 - Earlier today, our Navajo Nation Police Department reported that at approximately 9:20 A.M., a stabbing incident occurred between two students.

The 16-year-old male victim suffered a puncture wound to the chest region. While the wound is serious but not life-threatening, the student is in stable condition at a local health facility.

A 17-year-old male, who is in police custody, will be transported to the Crownpoint District Adult and Juvenile Facility.

For the protection of our Diné students, a lockdown was in place and has since been lifted. Our criminal investigators are working with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

My wife and I stand in solidarity with the community against any senseless violence in our schools. Our thoughts are with those impacted and with our students.

Please know that each of you is sacred and belong here on Mother Earth. Our kinship is what makes us unique to talk things out, including the prevention of hate and violence.

### **President Nygren line-item vetoes continuing resolution, asks Council for the comprehensive budget by November**

September 27, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren has line-item vetoed \$2.7 million from the Navajo Nation Council’s Sept. 17 continuing resolution, off-Navajo Nation travel, while retaining funding for veterans, elders, domestic violence shelters and scholarships.

He said the Council’s unprecedented and muddled continuing resolution, Legislation CS-39-24, provides only 50 percent of Fiscal Year 2024 Comprehensive Budget amounts for some Navajo programs, departments and divisions, while others are funded at 100 percent for a six-month period,

rather than approving the Fiscal Year 2025 Comprehensive Budget that complies with an established Three Branch Chiefs agreement approach.

“Though this legislation is being called a ‘Continuing Resolution,’ it is not a true Continuing Resolution,” the President wrote in his nine-page veto message to Council Speaker Crystalyne Curley and the 25th Navajo Nation Council. “Rather, it is a confusing combination of both a continuing resolution and a comprehensive budget resolution.”

He said the Council took attributes of a comprehensive budget and tried to apply it to a continuing resolution.

“This is important to note because this legislation may have consequences that no one can predict due to the arbitrary decision by the Council to select departments to be fully funded for the entire

fiscal year, while others are funded for only six months,” he said. “We must have one or the other as this is much like the analogy of trying to fit a square peg into a round hole.”

To resolve this and put the government “back on the right course,” President Nygren said the Council’s goal should be to deliver a comprehensive budget to him by the first week of November “so that we lose no more than one quarter of FY2025 with this unprecedented budget approach.”

He said the Council’s CR “leads to ineffective planning for many of our departments and takes away from government services we provide the Navajo People.”

The President said the Council’s CR, which passed unanimously without debate, deliberation or questioning, includes spending a significant portion of the Personnel Lapse Fund and the Permanent Trust Fund Income allocations.

“This is necessary in order to prevent layoffs, but also regrettable as there was not a full debate on how to spend these two funds, and we are potentially losing significant opportunities,” he said of Council’s Special Session held Sept. 17. “It is disheartening that the Navajo Nation Council did not address these errors or have meaningful debate before passing the legislation by a vote of 20 to 0. This is not how Navajo Nation legislation should be treated.”

The different approaches will lead to some employees shouldering the difficulty of figuring out which applies to them and navigating what President Nygren called a “confusing resolution.” Implementing this budget now will be left to the Navajo Office of Management and Budget.

“This legislation requires already overworked employees to take time away from serving the Navajo people and moving forward important initiatives as they will spend several days processing paperwork to ensure that there are no layoffs,” he said.

Without a comprehensive budget that follows a Three Branch Chiefs Agreement, “we cannot adjust allocations to meet these increasing demands, resulting in reduced services or program cuts,” he said.

On June 21, the President, Speaker and Navajo Supreme Court Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne signed a Three Branch Chiefs Agreement on the budget as branch chiefs have done since 1990. Using the Three Branch Chiefs’ agreement is clear under Navajo law and has been the practice of the government.

Then, on Sept. 12 in an unprecedented action, the Speaker rescinded her signature on the agreement.

President Nygren called upon the Speaker and Chief Justice to continue the Nation's long-standing practice of a Three Branch Chiefs Agreement rather than to allow a few delegates on the Budget and Finance Committee to dictate the budget process.

“The approach in the legislation undermines strategic investments in critical areas such as infrastructure, education, and healthcare,” the President added. “This all hinders progress and innovation.”

Candace Begody-Slim, the President's legal counsel who was part of the budget team that analyzed the continuing resolution and addressed its numerous errors, said President Nygren had hoped the Council would approve the Comprehensive Budget using the Navajo Nation's longstanding practice of the Three Branch Chiefs agreement.

The Three Branch Chiefs agreement was created in 1989 during government reform to respect the respective powers of the three branches and allow the three branch chiefs to decide the needs of their own branches.

“The President wanted to avoid furloughs, layoffs and a government shutdown,” Begody-Slim said. “As the President stated in his Presidential Budget Message, he wanted to ensure that education was funded, our veterans were taken care of, and that our employees benefited from the general wage adjustment. He expected to do that through the comprehensive budget. But obviously that did not happen.”

Put simply, a true continuing resolution for a six-month period would use the budget figures from the FY2024 comprehensive budget at 50 percent and fund the programs and continue operations, while a comprehensive budget is being worked out.

“That's what a clean, true, simple continuing resolution is,” Begody-Slim said. “It is a short-term fix. But this is the first time the Navajo Nation has seen a CR of this kind. Some are calling it a hybrid. We're calling it a hodgepodge.”

Some have referred to the Council's CR as a “hybrid,” implying that it's a good thing, Begody-Slim said.

“But as our team has said, this budget has been Frankensteined,” she said.

“In navigating the CR, our team had to understand the true impacts and consequences of this budget and its impact once it is implemented,” she said. “The President's priority is to ensure our government continues to function, direct services are not interrupted, and that any potential negative impacts are not felt by our people.”

President Nygren agreed that there are numerous errors in the Council’s CR, which he outlined in three pages of his veto message and were corrected through his line-item vetoes. His vetoes are intended to avoid layoffs and to ensure there is sufficient funding to operate until a comprehensive budget is developed within the next two months.

“The need to adopt a comprehensive budget through an open and transparent process is underscored by the need for me to line-item errors in CS-39-24,” he said.

To ensure the Council stays focused to develop a comprehensive budget that complies with Navajo law by November, the President said he vetoed funding for off-reservation travel which he is happy to reinstate in a FY2025 Comprehensive Budget.

In addition, the President said he asked Navajo Nation Controller Sean McCabe to report all travel, salaries, stipends, expenses and reimbursements for himself as President, the Vice President and council delegates in McCabe’s quarterly report to the Council.

“Having heard much criticism regarding my travel, I am happy to make these reports public,” the President said.

**One game, one goal, one mindset—that’s Rez Ball.**

September 27, 2024 - Last night, I had the privilege of watching the Netflix premiere of Rez Ball with the cast and director, Sydney Freeland. This film tells a story many Indigenous youth deeply resonate with. I invited over a hundred students from Chinle, Navajo Pine, Newcomb, Kirtland, Shiprock, and Career Prep.

As the buses arrived and students stepped out to see the basketball goals set up by the Navajo Nation Special Diabetes program, I felt a wave of excitement. Despite their long journey and school stresses, they picked up the ball and played, letting everything else fade away. That’s what Rez Ball embodies.

Together, we signed a proclamation declaring September 27 as Rez Ball Day. This proclamation honors the dedication and safe haven Rez Ball offers countless Indigenous people and our Navajo youth.

I am immensely proud of Sydney for showcasing our Díné language and lifestyle while addressing the deep-rooted challenges our communities face. Yet, through it all, basketball has nurtured the

resilience and spirit of many, reminding us of the strength we share. Today is Rez Ball Day - September 27, 2024.

## **Inspections keep public safety officials ready to respond to the community**

September 26, 2024 - Every quarter, inspections happen for Navajo Nation Police and first responders from the Navajo Nation Emergency Medical Service. Inspections ensure that public safety officials are equipped to respond to real life scenarios.

On Wednesday, Sept. 25, the Window Rock Police District held its quarterly inspection of 20 police officers and 18 police units. Outside Veterans Memorial Park, police and ambulance units had their doors opened for inspection.

“Our policemen and women are working 24/7 and keeping them safe is a priority of my administration,” said Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren. “Thank you to our public safety officers for keeping our homelands protected and communities safe.”

President Nygren said that public safety is critical to end the rampant property crime and drug investigations happening across the Navajo Nation’s seven police districts.

“This is for officer readiness,” said Navajo Police Lt. Tyler Lynch of the Window Rock Police District. “We inspect everything from officer’s boots to the ammo they’re carrying to the batteries in their tasers.”

Lt. Lynch said that if there are any deficiencies found during an inspection, then those changes occur to ensure officer and public safety. Sometimes equipment can be decommissioned because of expiration or being deemed unserviceable.

“We do that from head to toe on an officer,” Lt. Lynch said, adding the same inspection tests happen to the the police units, including their tires, window shields, and police lights. “We check every detail.”

In total, there are around 175 uniformed patrol officers with the Navajo Police Department, and 125 in criminal investigation and internal affairs officers, said Michael Anderson, director for the Navajo Division of Public Safety.

## **Navajo President Buu Nygren testifies at Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on critical water rights legislation**

September 25, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren testified before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (SCIA) on two key bills: the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Act of 2024 (S. 4633) and the Navajo Nation Rio San José Stream System Water Rights Settlement

Act of 2024 (S. 4998). He emphasized the urgent need to secure water rights and infrastructure for Navajo communities in Arizona and New Mexico.

Earlier in the day, President Nygren, Speaker Crystalyne Curley, and other tribal leaders met with Sens. Kyrsten Sinema, Mark Kelly, and Lisa Murkowski to discuss advancing the Arizona settlement through Congress.

“The Navajo Nation is the largest Indigenous nation in the country, providing critical governmental services to over 400,000 tribal members. Yet, roughly a third of Navajo households lack running water. This is how I grew up—without running water,” President Nygren said.

He noted the disparity in water costs: “Families that haul water on the Navajo Nation spend the equivalent of \$43,000 per acre-foot compared to \$600 for a typical suburban water user in the region.”

Nygren stressed the importance of S. 4633, involving the Navajo Nation, Hopi Tribe, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, the U.S. government, and Arizona.

“Once confirmed by Congress, this settlement will put to rest decades of expensive litigation and bring certainty to water users throughout the Colorado River Basin,” he said.

Regarding S. 4998, he highlighted its significance in resolving water rights claims in the Rio San José and Rio Puerco Basins.

“This agreement ends four decades of litigation and will provide a path toward water security for our eastern Navajo communities, as well as the Pueblos of Laguna and Acoma.”

Nygren concluded, “It is absolutely unacceptable that in 2024 more than one-third of our people do not have running water. These settlements represent the hope for a better and brighter future for my people.”

Senators questioned costs but agreed on the need for water access.

### **Navajo President Buu Nygren discusses value of sovereignty with federal Homeland Security secretary to have Navajo IDs recognized**

September 25, 2024 - Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren met with U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to advocate for the recognition of Navajo Nation-issued IDs for voting, travel and other essential services that require photo identity.

Recent congressional proposals aim to restrict tribal IDs for voting, including a requirement for Certificates of Indian Blood (CIB) to show place of birth, which will complicate the process for tribal citizens.

President Nygren explained the importance of Navajo sovereignty, proposing the issuance of Navajo REAL ID-compliant identification cards to minimize restrictive federal regulations. Beginning May 7, 2025, all U.S. citizens must present REAL ID-compliant identification for air travel and to enter certain federal buildings.

Secretary Mayorkas expressed interest in supporting this initiative and committed to exploring how Homeland Security could help develop the program.

Discussions also covered advanced law enforcement training, collaboration with TSA, U.S. Customs and Immigration Services, and cybersecurity support from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to protect Navajo infrastructure.

Nygren stressed the importance of safeguarding the Navajo language, Diné Bizaad, which is rapidly diminishing among younger generations.

Mayorkas, a native Spanish speaker, shared his concern about language loss, and both discussed ideas for preserving Indigenous languages.

“Our ability to issue tribal IDs that are recognized across the country is crucial to our sovereignty,” Nygren said. “We must ensure that our people can travel, vote, and access essential services without unnecessary restrictions placed upon them by outside authorities.”

President Nygren added that this autonomy is key to protecting the Navajo Nation’s self-determination and sovereignty.

### **Navajo Board of Election Supervisors vote on Tuesday to remove 192 candidates from general election ballot**

September 24, 2024 - the Navajo Nation Board of Election Supervisors unanimously voted to remove 192 candidates from the 2024 Navajo Nation General Election ballot.

The decision by the election board comes after these candidates - 192 - failed to submit their campaign expenditure reports within 10 days of the Navajo Nation Primary Election as required by tribal law. The Navajo Nation Primary Election occurred on July 30.

“Ultimately, elected leaders are held to a high standard of duty, responsibility, morals and ethics. These amendments to the election code ensure that those seeking public office are held accountable and are kept out of office if fraud or misrepresentation occurs,” President Nygren said.

Council delegate Danny Simpson sponsored the bill during the Navajo Nation Council Winter Session, and it was signed into law by Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren on February 2, 2024.



The campaign expense law penalizes candidates for not submitting their expenditures. Failure to do so results in removal from the ballot and a five-year disqualification from running for any elected office.

The election board has since reported that 99 grievances have been filed with the Navajo Office of Hearings and Appeals. Positions under dispute due to these grievances will be removed from the general election ballot to ensure the election proceeds smoothly and on time, according to a resolution signed by Melvin Harrison, chairman for the Navajo Board of Election Supervisors. Following the board's vote on Tuesday, the Navajo Nation Election Administration will now handle the process for candidates who submitted their campaign reports and were not disqualified during the upcoming General Election on November 5, 2024.

### **Navajo President Buu Nygren, Speaker Curley join D.C. march with uranium miners, families to seek RECA justice from Congress**

September 25, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren marched with over 50 people, including Navajos, Hopis, and other Indigenous groups, to urge the U.S. House of Representatives to pass the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) amendments.

Holding bright yellow banners and chanting, “Pass RECA now,” they advocated for Indigenous radiation victims.

“You can see it in our people, in our Native nations, that when there is work to be done, regardless if they've got their cancer treatment, regardless of what is going into their bodies, they want to put themselves out there that so that our people can be helped,” President Nygren said at a Capitol press conference.

Joining Nygren were Speaker Crystalyne Curley, uranium radiation victims, and sponsors of the legislation, including Senators Ben Ray Luján (D-N.M.) and Josh Hawley (R-Mo.). The proposed bill plans to extend RECA and expand benefits to more communities, including Alaska, Colorado, and parts of Arizona.

“Many of our veterans, our workers, our grandmothers, our elders that are here,” Speaker Curley said. “Some even marched in wheelchairs and also canes to get here. But it didn't stop them. It didn't stop them today.

The Navajo Nation Washington Office raised over \$40,000 to cover travel costs for the group. Director Justin Ahasteen emphasized the urgency, saying, “This is an issue that cannot wait.”

Sen. Luján criticized the delay in passing RECA amendments, attributing the lapse to U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson. “If allowed to come up for a vote, it would pass,” he said.

Phil Harrison, a longtime RECA advocate and cancer survivor, shared his personal story. “We were never told the dangers. We did it to provide for our families. We want that justice,” he added. “This work was done for national security.”

### **U.S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland: “This is the most important election of our lifetime”**

September 24, 2024 – Outside the Navajo Nation President and Vice President’s office, Diné voters held signs that read, “Skoden Vote,” while supporting U.S. Vice-President Kamala Harris and Tim Walz in their presidential campaign.

Arizona Democrats partnered with OPVP staff to bring out Secretary of Interior Deb Haaland for a quick visit to the Navajo Nation while the Harris and Walz campaign tours critical swing state Arizona.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren has met Vice-President Kamala Harris on various occasions and knows change cannot happen without women’s matrilineal leadership.

President Nygren grew up learning from his late mother and late grandmother. In his presidency, he leads with these lessons. He continues to honor the nation’s cultural values of matriarchy and has evolved with these teachings from the advice of women leadership and guidance.

“We as a Nation, as Diné, and as a people would not be here if it weren’t for our women who not only raised us as children but instill life lessons that make us who we are today,” said President Nygren. “Our people are a matriarchal society, where our Masani’s have the final say. They’re the ultimate decision makers. To see this country be led by strong women and a woman of color who knows the stories of many people of color, that’s empowering for millions of young people and future generations to come.”

### **President Nygren has made it a mission to give a voice to those who need and have been silenced for too long.**

A campaign organizer once herself, Secretary Haaland said the best way forward is a new way forward which is through Harris and Walz. She is also excited to see more youth involved in getting registered to vote. For others who have not registered, Haaland encourages them to do same, so they can vote for their future.

“I think colonization had a big part to play in why there weren’t a lot of women running for office,” said Secretary Haaland to an Executive Staff Writer for OPVP. “It’s been that way for centuries and I’m proud that more women are stepping up to run for office all over the country. It’s important women and women of color step up because our perspectives are important, and we think of things other people might not think of.

### **Diné persist in fight for water with the support of New Mexico leadership**

September 23, 2024 - U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) and U.S. Representative Teresa Leger Fernández (D-N.M.) introduced legislation to approve the water rights settlement for the Navajo Nation as well as participating non-Tribal parties in the Rio San José watershed. U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján (D-N.M.) and U.S. Representatives Melanie Stansbury (D-N.M.) and Gabe Vasquez (D-N.M.) cosponsored the bill.

The Rio San Jose Water Rights Settlement legislation represents hope and vital resources for Navajo communities in New Mexico. Water impacts health, sustainability and the future of the Navajo people.

If approved, S.4998 would quantify the Navajo Nation’s water rights in the Rio San José Stream System and the Rio Puerco basin. In May 2024, President Nygren signed the settlement agreement that will be approved by this federal legislation. The proposed settlement ensures prosperity for Eastern Navajo communities by closing the water gap that these communities currently face. This agreement acknowledges the Navajo peoples inherent rights and empowers communities to manage and sustain water resources for generations to come.

The bill is companion legislation to H.R. 8945 that was introduced by U.S. Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández of New Mexico in the House on July 9 and is co-sponsored by U.S. Rep. Gabriel Vasquez (D-N.M.) and U.S. Rep. Melanie Stansbury (D-N.M.).

The settlement is written as an addition to the Pueblos’ Local Settlement Agreement.

Under the introduced legislation, \$223 million is proposed for a settlement fund to benefit Navajo Nation communities in the settlement area. Funding is anticipated to go toward wastewater development, chlorination stations, water hauling stations, an operation and maintenance trust fund, a regional water system to import water, and a water acquisition fund.

Nine Navajo chapters are located within the Rio San José Basin and seven are within the Rio Puerco Basin. Many Navajo households in these basins have no running water and have relied on water hauling to meet daily water needs.

### **The Kirtland Central Broncos and Grants Pirates battle it out in a homecoming Game**

September 20, 2024 - It was a nail-biter between the Grants Pirates and Kirtland Central Broncos varsity football teams, showcasing the determination of the Broncos' student body.

Despite a tough loss—Broncos 19, Grants 28—both teams had equal wins, making the game on September 20 even more thrilling.

I enjoyed the homecoming game with First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren, and we were on the edge of our seats as the talented young athletes persevered through the intense game.

While losses can feel negative, I know these Broncos learn from their experiences.

I was also excited to see two dedicated students, Kylie Wargo and Denisa Julianto, Navajo and Pueblo, stepping up to lead their band class after learning they would not have a band director this year. Their initiative to keep music alive is inspiring.

### **NNVA orchestrated donation from the Arizona National Guard and Northern Arizona Veterans Affairs Health Care System**

September 17, 2024 - Over 500 military grade supplies were donated from the Arizona National Guard and Northern Arizona Veterans Affairs Health Care System so that Navajo veterans can get supplies needed for the upcoming winter. Through stand downs and requests at the tribal veteran's office, Navajo veterans can get the supplies they need for this upcoming winter.

These quality products consist of Gore-Tex military-grade fleece, thermal undergarments (top and bottoms), blankets, boots, arctic parka coats, backpacks, and duffle bags, and other donations.

Steve Sample, MS, CHC, VHA-CM, medical director for NAVAHCS, and Joshua Wear, rural health coordinator with NAVAHCS, traveled hundreds of miles to help our NNVA continue their vital assistance to our Navajo veterans. We are thankful for their dedication.

### **NTUA connects 588 homes to electric grid with ARPA funds**

September 18, 2024 – The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) has successfully connected 588 homes to the electrical grid, as detailed in its third quarterly report for the year. This progress stems from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated to the Navajo Nation in 2022.

The report was submitted to the Office of the President and Vice President on Sept. 18, shortly after President Nygren toured six homes in the St. Michaels and Fort Defiance Chapters. During the visit, he saw firsthand how ARPA funding has improved the lives of Diné families through water, electric, and bathroom additions.

“Providing electricity to homes is a priority of my administration,” said President Nygren. “It takes time to connect every home, but we are committed to bringing all Diné families up to 21st-century living standards.”

The \$1 billion ARPA funding was divided, with \$246.4 million allocated to water and wastewater projects and \$96.4 million dedicated to electric connections. President Nygren awarded the \$96.4 million to NTUA on March 31, 2023.

Since May 17, 2023, NTUA has worked on these electrical connections.

Currently, NTUA is handling 1,799 ARPA-funded electric connections, with 588 homes already connected. About 1,211 connections remain, in various stages such as planning, engineering, and rights of way approvals, according to the company's ARPA II Update Report #8.

During the president's tour on Wednesday, NTUA's assistant manager, Shannon Burnette, encouraged all Navajo families without electricity to apply for services. "There is funding available, even for those within the neighboring electric service area," Brunette said.

### **Bringing water, power, and bathrooms to Navajo families**

September 18, 2024 – Amid the towering ponderosa pines of the Fort Defiance Plateau, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren toured water, electricity, and bathroom addition projects funded to improve the lives of Diné families.

At the home of Gary Price, President Nygren saw firsthand the impact of a newly installed cistern and drain field constructed by the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) and a bathroom addition built by the Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority (NECA) and the Navajo Division of Community Development (NDCD). The improvements transformed Price's daily life.

"When we partner with enterprises like NECA and NTUA, they change people's lives," President Nygren said. "One house at a time. One family at a time. I'm here for people who don't have a voice, people who struggle every single day."

Inspired by his upbringing of growing up with no water or electricity access, President Nygren is changing that narrative for many of his people.

On Wednesday, Sept. 18, President Nygren visited six families in The Summit area of the St. Michaels Chapter and in Goat Springs, part of the Fort Defiance Chapter. These families received various upgrades, including electricity, cisterns, water lines, septic tanks, house wiring, and bathroom additions.

For Price, the addition of a bathroom meant the end of using an outhouse, along with its constant visitors—spiders.

"Having a pump for the cistern that activates the shower has made life easier," Price shared. "These projects greatly benefit the Navajo Nation." According to NTUA, the bathroom addition cost around \$60,000.

Casey Robinson, project manager for NTUA, reported 327 completed cistern and water line connection projects across the Navajo Nation, while Price's bathroom was among 309 projects funded by NTUA, NDCD, Indian Health Service, and NECA.

## **Radiation Exposure Compensation Reauthorization Act - S.3853, an extension for justice**

September 18, 2024 – The reauthorization of RECA is more than an extension of filing deadlines; for thousands of Diné, it's a crucial fight for their lives.

Since RECA expired on June 7, those affected by uranium mining, including mine workers and "Downwinders" from the Nevada Test Site, have faced uncertainty. RECA has been vital in monetarily compensating individuals for the harm caused by radioactive exposure.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, raised in Red Mesa in Northern Navajo Agency, knows the personal and community toll of radiation. The area, encompassing towns like Aneth, Beclabito,

Cove, Lukachakai, Red Valley, Round Rock, Sanostee, Shiprock, TeecNosPos, and Tolikan, contains 229 mines, according to the U.S. EPA.

On Sept. 22, these individuals will march from Albuquerque to Capitol Hill to demand RECA's reauthorization. Their march will culminate in a demonstration on the Capitol lawn.

Supported by over \$40,000 in donations from corporate sponsors and grants, the Navajo Nation Washington Office (NNWO) is spearheading this critical effort.

NNWO Director Justin Ahasteen said the Navajo Nation is at the forefront of the fight for radiation victims. So many have lost loved ones or are battling severe illnesses like cancer, lung disease and thyroid disorders. The Navajo people were disproportionately affected by uranium mining during the Cold War era, yet adequate compensation and healthcare access remain elusive.

## **President Nygren and New Mexico Indian Affairs Department prioritizes chapter projects**

September 17, 2024 – President Nygren is going to complete 347 projects worth \$141 million from New Mexico's Capital Outlay funds.

These projects will improve basic living conditions for many Diné people, especially in rural areas where electricity and other services are still needed. So far, only \$5.1 million of the \$141 million has been expended, and that needs to change, President Nygren said.

On Tuesday, Sept. 17, executive staff from the Office of the President and Vice President, Controller Sean McCabe, and the Division of Community Development held a meeting with New Mexico Indian Affairs Secretary Josett Monette and Senior Tribal Advisor James Mountain to prioritize community projects that need completion.

Most of the funding comes from New Mexico's general fund or tax bonds. The New Mexico Legislature authorizes these funds for tribes and the governor either approves or line-item vetoes capital outlay projects. The Indian Affairs Department notifies tribes of any funding awards.

One example of how the money is being used is Naschitti Chapter, which has four projects funded by the capital outlay funds. These projects include \$75,000 for electrical upgrades and \$100,000 for an HVAC installation for its chapter facility, \$500,000 for planning a multipurpose building, and \$750,000 for power lines. Since Naschitti Chapter is LGA-certified, it can work directly with New Mexico to secure funds.

The chapter, however, has not completed these projects in its entirety.

“It is important to make sure the Nation is on the same page about priorities so we can focus on key areas,” Monette said.

President Nygren will lead Secretary Monette and Mountain on a tour of capital outlay projects in New Mexico chapters in the coming weeks.

### **President Nygren thanks Council for passing Continuing Resolution**

September 16, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren thanked the Navajo Nation Council for addressing concerns outlined in his Presidential Message on the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.

On Monday, the Council passed a budget continuing resolution, 20-0, to continue operations of the Navajo Nation government from Oct. 1 to March 31, 2025. The six-month continuing resolution – Legislation No. 0206-24 – ensures uninterrupted service of the Navajo Nation government, according to language in the bill.

President Nygren now waits for the certified resolution from Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalyne Curley, who has 10 days to certify.

“It is reassuring to see that the urgency I conveyed in my Presidential Message is being met with necessary attention,” President Nygren wrote in a message to the speaker. “Legislation 0206-24 appears to address the concerns I raised including potential furloughs, layoffs and a government shutdown.”

He said that the general wage adjustment he advocated for seems to be addressed, among other items.

“This recognizes the hard work of our employees,” he said. “Once I receive a certified version, I will take appropriate action after thoroughly analyzing the certified resolution.”

### **President Nygren’s executive order to streamline hiring implements application portal**

September 16, 2024 – A decades old roadblock to apply for thousands of tribal jobs came down Friday with the launch of the Navajo Nation Jobs Apply Portal.

“In fact, we got two applications a few minutes ago,” said Reycita Toddy, executive director of the Division Human Resources. “We’re hoping to get the message out to more people. They’ll now be able to use their phones and won’t need to scan many documents for their applications.”

The online address is <https://apply.navajo-nsn.gov>

Toddy said a new benefit to job seekers is that they no longer will have to suffer the bureaucratic headache of submitting multiple applications and supporting documents to apply for multiple jobs at the same time when they apply online. Toddy said getting the portal up and running to bring the Navajo Nation application process into the digital age was made possible with the support of Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren who loves technology, uses it daily for countless tasks, and wanted to eliminate the hassle of applying for a tribal job.

Because of application difficulties and a huge backlog of background checks that led to 1,400 tribal job vacancies, on Jan. 9 President Nygren issued Executive Order No. 01-2024 to streamline the hiring process.

“Jobs are hard to find,” he said. “The Nation faces an unprecedented number of vacant positions that affect the ability to provide essential services to the Navajo people. The current employment application process is unnecessarily complex and difficult for applicants and hiring managers to navigate, creating disincentives for qualified applicants to seek employment with the Nation.”

The Jobs Apply Portal home page opens with “Job Search” that shows all the available tribal positions. Next is “Create Account” to make applying easy. “Returning Candidates” allows applicants to track the status of their applications.

### **Executive Branch reassures Northern Navajo Agency Council of a budget to prevent layoffs and government shutdown**

September 14, 2024 — Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren and his executive branch team are working hard to prevent the potential layoffs of tribal employees and a government shutdown.

During its Northern Navajo Agency Council meeting at the Nenahnezad Chapter on Saturday, representatives from President Nygren’s office provided an update of his administration’s work primarily focused on the budget process.

In response to Newcomb Chapter President David Randolph Sr.’s suggestion to adopt a continuing resolution, Deputy Chief of Staff Kris Beecher said such measures are only temporary solutions. Beecher emphasized the need for a comprehensive budget that addresses the needs of the 420,000 Diné citizens.

“We’re going to do whatever it takes to ensure that doesn’t happen,” Beecher said, referring to potential layoffs of tribal employees. “We are required by Navajo law in Title 12 to give notice of potential layoffs.”

Beecher emphasized to the chapters that tribal law requires a 15 day’s notice of a potential government shutdown.



“Please work together,” said Dr. J. Kaibah Begay, president of the Northern Navajo Agency and secretary/treasurer of the Shiprock Chapter. “These are our people, our children, and grandchildren who work within the Navajo Nation.”

President Nygren’s report also addressed the ongoing recovery efforts from flooding in Shiprock earlier this summer. The floods destroyed two homes and impacted 20 families.

Gervana Begay, community representative for Northern Navajo Agency, noted that executive branch personnel have been on the ground since the flooding and will continue providing relief to the impacted families. On Oct. 3rd, during the 111th Northern Navajo Fair, there will be a groundbreaking for the Shiprock Pinnacle Hotel, Begay said.

OPVP staff and division directors for the Navajo Nation Executive Branch were also at the Eastern Navajo Agency Council in Tohajiilee, N.M. and at the Western Navajo Agency Council in Kayenta, Ariz.

### **A brighter future starts with a road in the community of Dennehotso**

September 13, 2024 — Asphalt and gravel do not just build roads, they shape lives. For Dennehotso, it took 20 years.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren has seen the conditions of poor roads across the Navajo Nation, and knows for a community to be nourished, it needs improved roadways.

On Friday, President Nygren stood alongside Dennehotso Chapter officials and Council delegates Shandiin Parrish and Shawna Ann Claw, before masánís, cheíís, children, and community members, to celebrate the groundbreaking of a new road project.

In June, President Nygren signed a contract with FNF Construction for an \$18.8 million road project in Dennehotso. In August, funding was secured and in September, the construction broke ground with shovels. The construction team has 220 days to fix the 5.72 miles Dennehotso Loop Road, which local leaders say will lead to economic growth, reassurance, and safer traveling options.

“Let’s take care of this road, let’s make sure there are no accidents on this road, let’s tell our children to take care of this road,” said Katherine Benally, former Council delegate for Dennehotso. “This road will take care of them and their future families.”

The improvements include grading, installation of drainage structure, a geosynthetic reinforced Soil-Integrated Bridge System, placement of aggregate base course, and hot asphalt pavement. Construction will also include a box culvert, gabion wall, waterline relocations, and other miscellaneous work, according to the Navajo Department of Transportation.

The funding comes from the Federal Highway Administration, Tribal Transportation Program, and Tribal Transportation Facility Bridge Program.

“Yesterday we celebrated the completion of a road project in Pinedale, and now we’re celebrating the groundbreaking of a new road project,” said President Nygren. “NDOT Director Tom Platero and I are trying to fix as many roads as possible and it’s happening right before our eyes. I’m thankful for everyone who is getting projects done for our Navajo people, we heard how much this loop is used and the improvement of it will be a huge step forward.”

### **President Nygren warns of a government shutdown if the Council delay passing a comprehensive budget**

September 12, 2024, – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren’s office notified the tribe’s executive branch divisions, departments, and employees to prepare for layoffs or a government shutdown because of the lack of a Council-approved comprehensive budget.

On Tuesday, Patrick Sandoval, chief of staff in the Office of the President and Vice President, explained to the Nation’s 20 division directors, program managers, and department employees that the Navajo Nation Council is responsible for adopting the comprehensive budget by Sept. 10.

“This mess is the result of the Budget and Finance Committee refusing to honor a longstanding tradition of following the Three Branch Chiefs Agreement on the budget allocation,” Sandoval said Wednesday.

By law, President Nygren should have received the budget by Sept. 10. He then would sign it into law before Sept. 30 to ensure a comprehensive budget is in place by Oct. 1.

On Aug. 7, Navajo Nation Attorney General Ethel Branch issued a legal opinion that said in light of Navajo fundamental law, the B&F Committee must consult with the three branch chiefs through meaningful consultations to ensure the sanctity of náat’aaniis – Navajo leaders – coming together to discuss the needs of their branches.

“As Navajos, we must comply with our Navajo laws – this is the fundamental principle of Navajo sovereignty,” President Nygren said.

Sandoval said President Nygren made repeated attempts to urge the B&F Committee to work with the Council to pass the Fiscal Year 2025 comprehensive budget before Sept. 10, but no budget has been passed, nor has OPVP received notice of a council session to address it.

“Call your delegate. Call the speaker’s office,” Sandoval said. “Let them know the Navajo people need their budget. The President said he would sign the budget if he had it, but the council has not done its job and passed the legislation.”

In the “Presidential Budget Preparation Message on the FY25 Comprehensive Budget,” allowed by the Appropriations Act and issued on Aug. 26, President Nygren said the B&F Committee is putting the Nation at risk of a government shutdown by not passing the comprehensive budget agreed to by the Nation’s three branch chiefs.

Both the executive and judicial branches provide direct services through human resources, social services, housing, road construction and maintenance, scholarships, courts and other projects.

When the Nation has a continuing resolution instead of a comprehensive budget, President Nygren said, full scholarships may not be paid out, students may have to withdraw from or delay classes, items that require annual payments, like insurance premiums, cannot be paid in full, and the allocations for proprietary and fiduciary funded programs may be jeopardized, among other disadvantages.

“Our long-serving and dedicated employees, who are non-lawyer experts on the budget, have repeatedly advised OPVP that there is still time for a comprehensive budget,” Chief of Staff Sandoval said. “We urge the council to hear their voices.”

“I would like the Navajo Nation government to continue moving forward to ensure the needs of the Navajo people are met,” President Nygren said.

“This includes ensuring that there are no interruptions to the services the Navajo people receive and/or to the projects being developed to meet their needs,” he said. “As such I need to sign a comprehensive budget into law before the end of September.”

**In collaboration with OPVP, the Division of Children and Family Services, and Azée’ Bée Nahághá of Díné Nation District 17 we hosted a youth Peyote Meeting**

September 21, 2024 - we encourage our Díné youth to take initiative, set goals, and persevere in their educational pursuits.

Many Díné youth face unique challenges that others in cities and off the Nation do not. We must be there to support them. Before the prayer service tonight, Díné youth sat outside the ceremonial teepee and listened to speakers who told them to stay strong and make the right choices. Not just for education but for their spirit and their mental well-being.

As Navajo Nation President, I am, along with Thomas Cody, executive director for the Division of Children and Family Services, and various faith leaders, are committed to helping in any way we can.

It is essential for us as Díné to recognize and respect other people’s choice of faith. We may not know their stories or challenges, but their faith often serves as a lifeline.

Our Díné youth learned what Azéé' Iiná means - how to use it, pray with it, and treat it properly. Thank you to Everson Sam, Board of Director for District 17 ABNDN, and Victor Denny, educator for ABDND Youth Committee, who came out to share and teach these important lessons.

### **President Buu Nygren moderates panel on Clean Energy at RECESS24**

September 11, 2024 — Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren led a panel at the RECESS24 Clean Energy Summit, focusing on Indigenous communities' role in advancing the clean energy economy. The panel, titled “Indigenous Communities Expediting the Clean Energy Economy,” explored opportunities and challenges faced by tribes transitioning to renewable energy.

Panelists included Diana Fuller from the Illinois Department of Commerce, Brittany Turner of Elevate, and Paul Dearhouse of the DOE Loan Program Office.

In his opening remarks, President Nygren highlighted the Navajo Nation's energy-driven economy, which has thrived for over a century, and emphasized the need for tribes to adapt to renewable energy. He encouraged the panelists to discuss ways tribal communities could accelerate this transition.

Key challenges included access to contractors and funding for clean energy projects in tribal regions. Turner noted higher contractor fees for remote areas, which complicates progress. President Nygren raised concerns about mistrust stemming from historical energy sector abuses, such as the impact of uranium mining. The panel agreed on the importance of understanding each tribe's unique needs and respecting their timelines.

The discussion also addressed aligning technology with tribal needs. One panelist stressed the necessity of balancing emission reductions with affordability, focusing on practical solutions like insulation improvements.

President Nygren closed by advocating for ongoing collaboration, noting the Navajo Nation's efforts to build a manufacturing base for solar panels.

“Clean energy isn’t just about technology; it’s about trust, equity, and ensuring our communities benefit,” President Nygren said.

### **President Nygren advocates for sovereignty and justice in Wááshindoon**

September 10, 2024 — Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren participated in the U.S. Department of the Interior's Secretary Tribal Advisory Council (STAC) meeting this week. Representing the Navajo BIA Region, Nygren addressed key issues alongside Speaker Crystalne Curley, who served as the alternate representative.

Nygren raised the transportation of uranium across Navajo lands as a primary concern. Despite the Nation's 2012 ban, a mining company is using state and federal highways to transport uranium,

violating Navajo law. He called on the Department of the Interior to enforce federal regulations that respect tribal sovereignty.

President Nygren also highlighted the need for improved tribal consultation, noting inconsistencies in the process. He emphasized the importance of clear, consistent guidelines to ensure tribal voices are heard on policies affecting their communities.

Water rights were another focal point. President Nygren urged continued support for the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Settlement Agreement, which seeks \$5 billion for infrastructure, as many Navajo households still lack running water.

President Nygren also pushed for the cleanup of abandoned uranium mines, the resolution of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) crisis and streamlining federal regulations for infrastructure projects on tribal lands.

Nygren's advocacy at the STAC meeting underscores the Navajo Nation's ongoing fight for sovereignty and justice, urging immediate federal action on these critical issues.

“We are confronting issues that go to the heart of our sovereignty and the well-being of our people,” President Nygren said. “From uranium transport to water rights, and the tragedy of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons, these are not just policy discussions — they are matters of life and death for the Navajo Nation. We need stronger tribal consultation and real respect for our laws within our lands.”

**76th Annual Navajo Nation Fair Rodeo: All-Indian Rodeo First-Place Winners Announced**  
September 8, 2024 – The Navajo Nation Fair rodeo showcased over a hundred winners across 14 categories.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren recognized the dedication of the Nation's cowboys and cowgirls, who are committed to their sport and the care of their animals.

President Nygren assured the rodeo community, many of whom manage their own farms, that their needs are being addressed.

“The agriculture infrastructure fund supports improvements in farming infrastructure. We've also aided sheep owners through our mohair drive, repaired 62 windmills in the Northern Agency, and are working extensively for our farmers,” said President Nygren. “This rodeo is vital for supporting our cowboys and cowgirls, helping them maintain the farms and ranches that benefit the Navajo Nation. Congratulations to all the winners, and I look forward to seeing you at the 2025 Navajo Nation Fair.”

## **September declared Navajo Nation Recovery and Suicide Prevention Month**

September 7, 2024 — Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren announced September as Navajo Nation Recovery and Suicide Prevention Month.

During the 76th Annual Navajo Nation fair, inside the Dean C. Jackson Memorial Arena, President Nygren told the crowd that every Diné person is cherished and significant.

President Nygren signed the suicide awareness proclamation before the start of the rodeo and the headliner concert group, Bone Thugs-N-Harmony.

The Navajo Nation Mortality Report shows suicide as the eighth leading cause of death among Navajos from 2015 to 2017. The 2020 report, based on data from Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah, highlights risk factors like mental health issues, alienation, alcohol abuse, and a history of physical and sexual abuse. The day also marked Navajo Department of Health Day, celebrating the health, well-being, and resilience of Diné people.

## **Ranisha Begay, crowned 2024-2025 Miss Navajo Nation**

September 7, 2024 — Embracing the image of Changing Woman, that's what the six contestants felt during the week-long 2024-2025 Miss Navajo Nation competition.

Ranisha Begay worked her hardest to not only embrace Changing Woman, a Diné deity but showed she could be an ambassador for the entire Navajo Nation.

Begay is Nát'oh Díné'é and born for Ta'neezhanii. Her maternal grandfather is Kinyaa'áanii and her paternal grandfather is Yé'ii Diné'é Tachii'nii. Begay is from Rock Point, Ariz.

“Our Navajo women are the backbone of the Nation,” said Speaker of the Navajo 25th Navajo Nation Council, Crystalyne Curley, explaining that every young Diné woman can achieve what they put their mind to.

Throughout the week, Begay won Best Traditional Foods and Best Essay categories. The now-former Miss Navajo, Amy Reeves-Begaye, wished Begay well and reminded her to stay true to who she was as the new ambassador of the Miss Navajo Nation.

## **Song and Dance attract young and old at 76th Annual Navajo Nation Fair**

September 7, 2024 — Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren and First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren joined elders for a weekend of song and dance at the 76th annual Navajo Nation Fair.

The event, which remains popular among Diné elders, has its roots in healing ceremonies such as the Enemy Way Ceremony, or Nidaa, held throughout the summer.

“Dancing with our elders is my favorite pastime because it reminds us of our connections to Mother Earth and Father Sky and how our feet need to remain grounded and in rhythm,” Nygren said. “Our elders are the backbone of our culture, and dancing shows how deeply our physical, mental, and spiritual health is tied to it.”

The annual song and dance, a key event of the fair season, was hosted by the Chinle Swingin’ Echoes, who led three song and dance sessions over the weekend. The event featured two-step and skip dance categories for participants of all ages.

As part of the celebration, Elder King Ernest Smith and Elder Queen Emily Nelson-Wauneka, both from the Sheep Springs Chapter, were crowned Fort Defiance Agency royalty.

“Congratulations to Elder King Ernest Smith and Elder Queen Emily Nelson-Wauneka,”

President Nygren said. “They remind us of the importance of our elders to our communities and will represent them with honor in the coming year.”

### **Navajo Nation Fair Pow Wow awards a total of \$77,500 to dancers**

September 7, 2024. – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren congratulated all the dancers who participated in the 76th annual Navajo Nation Fair Contest Pow Wow.

The event had a collective payout of \$77,500 to participants, according to Wanda Nelson, the contest pow wow coordinator.

"I received good compliments throughout the weekend," Nelson said. "Everything was on time. There were no delays, and we finished early."

Nelson noted that dancers traveled from as far as Oklahoma, Nebraska, and North Carolina to compete, drawn by the event’s substantial payouts.

Miss Shayla Yellowhair, from the Central Agency, was crowned the new princess royalty, Nelson added.

A highlight of this year’s pow-wow was the use of a turf ground at Veterans Memorial Arena, which made dancing more comfortable than in previous years. Nine drum groups participated in the event.

“Each year, we sponsor one of the premier contest pow-wows across the Navajo Nation, and I’m glad to hear the dancers received their payouts,” President Nygren said. “I enjoy watching pow-wow dancers because of their ability to showcase both skill and stamina.”

This year's pow-wow contest was sponsored by the Navajo Department of Health, Navajo Oil and Gas, Building Nations, Zion Enterprises, and Navajo Nation Parks and Recreation.

## **Bone Thugs-N-Harmony electrifies Dean C. Jackson Arena**

September 7, 2024. – The Dean C. Jackson Memorial Arena was packed to the rafters as Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, the legendary 90s hip-hop group, took the stage.

On the second night of concerts at the 76th annual Navajo Nation Fair, fans swarmed the arena, causing the gates to close early due to maximum capacity.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren collaborated with many partners to bring the iconic band to the Navajo Nation. Bone Thugs-N-Harmony is known for songs like “Ghetto Cowboy,” “1st of the Month,” and “The Crossroads” among other banger songs.

The Dean C. Jackson Memorial Arena, known for its dual role as both a concert venue and rodeo ground during fair season, transformed into a pulsating hub of music and excitement. As the rodeo lights dimmed and the stage lights blazed, fans eagerly surged forward, scaling the gates to get closer to the action.

The night was a blast from the past. Fans relished the chance to see their favorite band perform live. With memories of their youth flooding back, the atmosphere was charged with nostalgia and energy. “We always strive to offer a diverse lineup that everyone can enjoy,” President Nygren shared with enthusiasm. “Seeing the crowd so thrilled to witness one of their favorite bands was incredible. It’s

truly remarkable to host such monumental events, and it’s a testament to the unity and spirit of our Nation. Having these great bands come out here makes these events truly special for all of us.”

## **76th Annual Navajo Nation Fair Parade brings smiles to fairgoers**

September 7, 2024 — On Saturday, September 7, hundreds of Diné people rose early to witness the much-anticipated 76th Annual Navajo Nation Fair Parade. This beloved tradition celebrated the strength and unity of the community.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren joined the festivities, eager to engage with his fellow community members. First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren and representatives from various local organizations, including the Tuba City Indian Jr Rodeo Association accompanied him.

President Nygren welcomed a diverse group of participants, including the American Indian Movement, Diné Bikeyah Inc., Haul No Grand Canyon Mining, Four Corners Family Advocates, Apache County Search and Rescue DEM, the Byron Ramone Band, the Aravaipa Band from San Carlos, White Mountain Apache Queen Charity Johnson, and Fade To Black Window Tinting.

Together, they walked alongside the President, each group highlighting important causes and messages close to their hearts.



## **DDC presents \$700,000 dividend to the Navajo Nation**

September 6, 2024. – On Friday Sept. 6, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren was presented with a \$700,000 dividend check from the Diné Development Corporation (DDC).

During a brief intermission at the 76th Annual Navajo Nation Fair Rodeo, inside the Dean C. Jackson Memorial Arena, President Nygren proudly held the oversized check alongside DDC officials, including CEO Austin Tsosie.

This substantial dividend will be allocated by the Navajo Nation to support various initiatives as deemed necessary. DDC is known for providing high quality information technology services to governments and businesses.

President Nygren expressed his gratitude for the DDC’s efforts in fostering self-sufficiency and advancing the Nation’s economic independence.

“I am deeply committed to sovereignty and business development,” said President Nygren. “As the largest tribe with sovereignty, it is imperative that we take proactive steps towards self-sustainability. The success of enterprises like DDC provides a powerful example and motivation for us to achieve greater self-reliance. I am immensely proud and thankful for their innovative and dedicated work.”

## **Night One of Navajo Nation Fair concert kicks off with Joe Nichols**

September 6, 2024 - The Navajo Nation Fair’s concert series began with a bang when Joe Nichols, 47, took the stage on a sunny 75-degree evening.

A sea of cowboy hats filled the Dean C. Jackson Memorial Arena as Nichols, a country star from the early 2000s, performed after the rodeo. Captivated fans sang along to Nichols’ iconic songs, like “Sunny and 75” and “Gimme That Girl.”

This year’s fair featured Nichols as the opening act for its two annual concerts, a choice that reflects the diverse audience of Diné concert-goers.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, alongside Zion Enterprise, worked diligently to bring a nostalgic and impactful performance to the community.

Nichols, who has openly discussed his struggles with alcohol addiction and entering rehabilitation treatment many times, resonates with President Nygren’s mission to address substance abuse. 79.6% of American Indians aged 12 and older have consumed alcohol, highlighting the critical need for support and recovery programs.

President Nygren knows alcohol has impacted the Navajo Nation and has since allocated \$780,000 in ARPA funding to the “One Day At A Time” organization in Fort Defiance, Ariz., to combat alcoholism and substance abuse.

### **Wellness Warriors series promotes a healthy lifestyle for all Diné people**

September 5, 2024 — Amid the stunning red rocks and beneath the iconic Window Rock, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren led participants in his exciting new fitness initiative, Wellness Warriors.

Building on the success of the summer walking and running events across the Navajo Nation, this series continues through the fall with support from the Navajo Department of Health.

On Friday, dozens of enthusiastic walkers and runners gathered outside the Navajo Nation Museum, ready to take part in a windy trail along the ridges of the surrounding sandstone cliffs.

The first Wellness Warrior event kicked off with vibrant Zumba sessions and dynamic stretching exercises led by the Navajo Nation Special Diabetes Project to warm up the participants.

The event also launched the release of the Wellness Warrior tee-shirts, which list upcoming challenges this fall.

- October 2, 2024 at 6 p.m. in Shiprock, N.M.
- October 16, 2024 at 6 p.m. in Tuba City, Ariz.
- November 9, 2024 at 8 a.m. in Crownpoint, N.M.
- November 16, 2024 at 8 a.m. in Chinle, Ariz.

### **President Nygren welcomes Utah Valley University on cultural experience tour**

September 5, 2024 – President Buu Nygren welcomed eight Navajo and Native students from Utah’s largest university to his office to experience Navajo culture. The students were from Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah’s largest with more than 43,000 enrolled students.

Justin Allison, director of UVU’s Native American Excellence Program, told President Nygren that the Utah Legislature recently awarded UVU a \$2 million grant to develop programming for student success and hire staff. An annual award of \$500,000 will follow.

President Nygren said their program reminded him of the closeness he felt as a new student at Arizona State University being away from home for the first time. The students said they were majoring in engineering, nursing, aviation, and political science and some had law school goals.

### **Navajo Nation streamlines reimbursement process for New Mexico projects**

September 5, 2024 – Before the Navajo Nation receives New Mexico capital outlay money to build projects, it often pays costs first and waits for reimbursements.

The money is used to build roads, and power lines and make cemetery upgrades, among other community-driven projects.

Delays in construction readiness and waiting for reimbursements cause inevitable problems.

To find a resolution, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren on Thursday met with New Mexico Indian Affairs Secretary Josette Monette, Senior Tribal Policy Advisor James Mountain and Navajo Nation Council Delegate Amber Crotty.

Key points from the discussion were the need for:

- a master intergovernmental agreement
- better project management tracking
- leveraging Navajo Nation enterprises for quicker project completion

President Nygren said Navajo Nation enterprises like the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority can mobilize faster than government agencies. Tribal enterprises often subcontract projects funded by capital outlay.

Currently, the Navajo Nation has 45 local governance certified chapters. These include 16 in New Mexico. Between 2021 and 2024, these chapters have 307 projects with funding worth over \$83 million in projects.

### **President Nygren honors 2024 Parade Grand Marshal Jack Ahasteen**

September 5, 2024 – President Buu Nygren joined 60 admirers, work colleagues, friends and family to honor Grand Marshal of the 2024 Navajo Nation Fair Parade Jack Ahasteen.

Mr. Ahasteen, the decades-long editorial cartoonist, was showered with love and appreciation during his honorary dinner at the Quality Inn here Thursday evening.

Mr. Ahasteen said he began to draw editorial cartoons in the 1970s as a way to ease the pain felt by his own parents, siblings and thousands of other families ensnared by the Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute.

It was the late Bill Donovan, who served as editor of the Navajo Times, who told him to draw more cartoons to be published in the Navajo Times.

Although it is an honor to be selected as parade Grand Marshal for this year's parade, he said the first, real grand marshals were the Navajo leaders who guided the Diné home from Hwéeldi after the Long Walk.

### **“That’s our President,” said a Masani as she danced at Elder Fest Day**

September 5, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren danced with Diné elders today at a social song and a dance, and he told them, “We are here for you.”

Sept. 5 was Elder Fest Day at the 76th annual Navajo Nation Fair. One of the premiere events at the fair that honors Diné elders is the song and dance, held at the Annie Wauneka Arena.

President Nygren danced alongside Masani’s and Cheii’s, honoring the value of K’é and reminding them they’re the backbone of Diné society.

In Diné Bizaad, he told the many grandmas and grandpas that the Division of Aging and Long Term Care Services (DALTCS) and the Navajo Department of Health (NDOH) are providing care to hundreds of elderly across the Navajo Nation. These departments are opening senior centers, including renovating existing ones, President Nygren said.

New senior centers have been established in Pueblo Pintado, Cottonwood, and Ganado, with additional centers in To’nanees’dizi, Smith Lake, and Thoreau nearing completion, according to the Division of Community Development.

DALTCS and NDOH have ensured the elders will be taken care of in times of need, especially during extreme weather.

### **2,000 skateboards distributed at Ashkii Happy Kids Day, an ambitious plan to keep kids healthy**

September 4, 2024 — Children eagerly lined up inside Naakai Hall at the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds during "Ashkii Happy Kids Day," each waiting for their turn to receive free skateboards and helmets.

This event marked the beginning of a significant collaboration involving Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, 4Kinship, Wells Fargo, the Monarch Project, and the Diné Skate Garden Project. Together, they aimed to distribute free skateboards and helmets to promote health and resilience among Navajo youth.

On September 3, Wells Fargo announced its partnership with 4Kinship, a clothing brand known for its support of the Navajo community and its promotion of skateboarding. The partnership began with a grant that facilitated the purchase of 5,000 skateboards and helmets.

Amy Denetdeal, owner of 4Kinship, collaborated with President Nygren to distribute these skateboards across three different fairs.

The first distribution took place during the 76th Annual Navajo Nation Fair, which featured a special "Kids Day" event. President Nygren, Denetdeal, and representatives from Wells Fargo were on hand to distribute 2,000 skateboards to children from various schools.

Many kids hugged President Nygren, expressing their gratitude for their new skateboards and helmets.

### **President Nygren signs \$24.2 million contract to replace playground equipment at 16 childcare centers**

September 4, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren today signed a \$24.2 million contract that is certain to make some of his favorite constituents happy.

On Ashkii Happy Kids Day at the 76th Annual Navajo Nation Fair, the President awarded the contract to Exerplay, a company that sells landscape playgrounds to Navajo-owned and operated Speedy Sales and Services.

The contract allows the installation of playground equipment at 16 childcare centers across the Navajo Nation managed by the Department of Child Care and Development.

He said the value of play is critical, multifaceted and extends across all aspects of human development and well-being.

Play is necessary to stimulate learning, creativity, problem-solving skills and other forms of cognitive development in children. It enhances a child's social skills, emotional well-being and expression.

Speedy Sales and Services, based in Chinle, Ariz., has installed playgrounds across the Navajo Nation for the past 30 years. The beautification of the childcare centers will feature state-of-the-art playground equipment, he said.

Other upgrades are new basketball courts, shade structures, fencing, concrete sidewalks, pavement and bleachers.

Some of the centers receiving the new equipment are the Alchini Nizhoni Child Care Center in Shiprock, Crownpoint Childcare Center, Fort Defiance Child Care Center, Hogback Child Care Center, Leupp Early Learning Center, Little Miss Muffet Child Care Center, Many Farms Child Care Center, Rough Rock Child Care Center and Tuba City Child Care Center.

### **Wells Fargo, 4Kinship, and President Nygren to Distribute 5,000 Skateboards**

September 3, 2024 — Six Wells Fargo team members have taken the initiative to support the Navajo Nation, with a focus on its youth.

President Nygren met with Jeremy Johnson, Bonnie Wallace, Lauren Hornett, Katie Campana, Flor Tolley, Nicole Noto, and Zaor Palma. Their goal was to empower the Navajo people through financial support and resources.

The Wells Fargo team briefed President Nygren on three key projects. They had previously announced a \$100,000 grant to the Inspiring Children's Foundation and 4Kinship for a new skate park. Additionally, they planned to create a financial literacy kit with the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES).

In their latest meeting, they shared that, thanks to the full grant amount, they would distribute 2,000 skateboards at Ashkii Happy Days. Their goal is to give out 5,000 skateboards at three fairs. Furthermore, they have begun developing a financial literacy kit in collaboration with AISES, designed by Native people for Native people. The kit will feature two sections: one for youth to connect with STEM and culture, and another for adults, introducing digital financial counseling.

President Nygren emphasized the importance of integrating financial empowerment tips into weekly radio addresses, which are crucial for reaching a broad audience, especially those living off the reservation.

The collaboration aims to elevate the Navajo language and create culturally relevant toolkits, ensuring financial literacy and empowerment for all ages. President Nygren's support reflects his commitment to both cultural preservation and financial education.

### **Miss Navajo Nation contestants wow with their sheep butchering skills**

September 2, 2024 – Stir sticks whisked away as this year's Miss Navajo contestants worked on their Chihth chin, some perfected the mixture of their blood sausage, and others finished kneading their dough.

A large crowd gathered to cheer and show support for the six contestants as they participated in the Sheep Butchering and Traditional Foods competition. This year is the 72nd year of the prestigious pageant where many resilient Diné women vie for the honorary title that is known around the world.

Over the next week, the contestants will be judged for their business knowledge in an interview session, their traditional and contemporary skills knowledge, and comprehension of the sacred Diné language.

The competition will continue through the week in the Window Rock area. The new Miss Navajo Nation 2024-2025 will be crowned during a coronation at the Window Rock fairgrounds and be introduced by President Nygren at the Dean C. Jackson Memorial Arena later Saturday night.

## **Faith and family key themes guiding the 2024 Ranch Church Gathering**

August 31, 2024 — Under a large revival tent at the base of the San Francisco Peaks, President Buu Nygren assured Christian Díné families that he understands their right to practice their faith.

Last month, the president recently signed legislation in Fort Wingate, N.M., under a revival tent that supports the legal operation of churches and missions. This legislation ensures that all places of worship, whether permanent churches or tents like this one, receive the official recognition they need to thrive,” he added.

The legislation, sponsored by Council Delegate Casey Allen Johnson, allows churches and missions to continue their operations without needing endorsement from a council delegate or chapter. The Ranch, organized by Ranch Hand Ministries, hosts an annual gathering with trail riders traveling to a small valley outside of Leupp and Flagstaff, Arizona, to worship together as a community.

Drivers heading toward Flagstaff will see a newly designed sign for "The Ranch," featuring an outline of cowboy Tom Chee Sr., designed by Jim Cody in 2004.

This year's theme is preserving and strengthening families. This is the initiative President Nygren launched last year to send a profound message to families to have hope and to be resilient.

The division is now working to launch a new initiative - Family Preservation - that is aimed to preserve and strengthen family structures through faith and prayer.

## **Presidential signs 7 IDIQ housing in pursuit of housing initiative**

August 30, 2024 - President Buu Nygren is 300 homes closer to his goal of building 1,000 homes for Navajo families.

On Friday, the President signed contracts for seven home-building companies that starts spending \$128 million in APRA funds towards new housing.

To celebrate the contracts, the President invited staff members from the departments and divisions that helped usher them through the cumbersome tribal authorization maze known as the 164 process.

The President credited the staff for making the seemingly impossible possible. They represent the Division of Community Development, Regional Business Development Office, Office of the Controller, Navajo-Hopi Land Commission, Fiscal Recovery Fund Office, the Division of Children and Family Services, Department of Justice, and Department of Personnel Management.

The value is in Navajos receiving homes they’ve waited years for and the expected ripple effect of jobs and career development that will result from building and manufacturing hundreds of new

homes. There are going to be a lot of young, seasoned people that are going to learn how to build for the first time.

Mike Halona, executive director of the Division of Natural Resources, said the homesite lease process is becoming faster and easier.

957 applicants have been assessed and close to 60% already have home site leases. The Navajo Nation is focused on the future and to provide the basic needs for our grandmas, grandpas, and families. The construction of new homes is the first step to self-sufficiency, and we are behind it.

### **NECA welcomes one of their own with open arms**

August 30, 2024 – Before President Nygren was elected, he served as the Chief Commercial Officer for the Navajo Engineering & Construction Authority (NECA).

Earlier today, President Nygren sat alongside NECA employees and their families in Wheatfields, Arizona for their annual company picnic.

The president shared his gratitude to everyone for their hard work and dedication to meet the needs of the Navajo people. This includes a readiness for the company to complete 1,500-bathroom installations across the Navajo Nation, with 200 additions already constructed.

NECA is the Navajo Nation’s premier construction company, and they have are focused on building for the future and getting work done. They’re making progress for our people and Nation.

General Manager Garret Silversmith shared that NECA will finish a major highway road project in Sweetwater, Arizona, this year, and over 38 projects are underway in partnership with the Indian Health Service for new residential water and sewer lines, water storage tanks, sewer lagoons, and water pumps.

### **2012 Radiation Materials Transportation Act strengthened**

August 29, 2024 - In 2012, former Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed into law a ban on uranium transportation. Twelve years later, President Buu Nygren worked alongside Attorney General Ethel Branch, Speaker Crystalyne Curley, and Council Delegate Casey Allen Johnson to unanimously pass Legislation No. 0198-24, now known as CAU-37-24 into law that strengthens the previous ban.

One way the legislation makes transportation of uranium on the reservation difficult is by extending the notification time from four days to seven days.

Stephen Etsitty, Executive Director of the Navajo Environmental Protection Agency, said during that time, the company and Navajo leaders will be working out a plan so that the Navajo Nation is respected as a sovereign nation.



On Aug. 2, President Nygren walked with First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren and Delegate Johnson in solidarity to boldly say “No to Uranium Transportation!”.

### **Tribal Leaders in Arizona engage in energy discussions with DOE and corporate utilities**

August 28, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren joined tribal leaders in a roundtable discussion with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and utility companies in Arizona to explore how they can become major electricity suppliers to the U.S. market and their own communities.

At the Native American Cultural Center at Northern Arizona University, President Nygren highlighted the Navajo Nation’s two key challenges: reliability and access to transmission. He also suggested potential solutions, such as leveraging the tribe’s water resources, including the water rights of the San Juan River, for energy and economic development.

The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) is the sole utility provider for most of the Navajo Nation. When issues arise with its systems, it can take up to 12 hours to receive assistance from non-NTUA utilities or non-local cooperatives.

Currently, the Navajo Nation holds 500 megawatts of transmission rights from the Navajo Generating Station. Approximately 100 megawatts of these have been acquired by NTUA. The tribe continues to work on securing power access with Arizona Public Service, a corporate utility.

Joining President Nygren in the discussion were U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm; Jigar Shah, Director of the U.S. Department of Energy Loan Programs Office; Wahleah Johns, Director of the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Indian Energy; Ann Marie Chischilly, Vice President of Native American Initiatives at Northern Arizona University; Terry Rambler, Chairman of the San Carlos Apache Tribe; Leroy Shingoitewa, Chair of the Water and Energy Committee of the Hopi Tribe; Austin Nunez, Chairman of the San Xavier District of the Tohono O’odham Nation; Stephen Roe Lewis, Governor of the Gila River Indian Community; Jeff Guldner, CEO of Arizona Public Service/Pinnacle West Capital Corporation; Susan Gray, CEO of Tucson Electric Power; and the General Manager and CEO of Salt River Project.

### **A partnership between Navajo Power and Qcells will bring more solar power to Diné families**

August 28, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, alongside U.S. Deputy Secretary of Energy David Turk, recently assessed the energy needs on the Navajo Nation.

The answer is clear: clean energy.

Navajo Power Home, a for-profit company, is the only residential solar panel installer in the Navajo Nation. To date, they have provided electricity to 900 people across 270 homes, generating 600 kilowatts of peak solar energy.

Their mission is to deliver clean energy to off-grid homes throughout the Navajo Nation. On August 28, Navajo Power Home announced a new partnership with Qcells, a global clean energy supplier.

To celebrate this partnership, U.S. DOE Deputy Secretary David Turk announced a \$5 million grant to Navajo Power Home to support their ongoing efforts to provide solar energy to the Navajo people.

Chanse Foster, General Manager of Navajo Power Home, recalled a childhood memory of stealing her grandma's candy bar from the fridge—a memory that underscores the significance of electricity in daily life.

For some, solar energy is merely about construction and maintenance. But for Navajo people like Foster and President Nygren, it represents the ability to store food and create new memories. President Nygren has been in discussions with Deputy Secretary Turk for several months, emphasizing his goal to transition the entire Navajo Nation to clean energy.

### **President Nygren takes action to advance \$250 million Echo Cliffs Health Care facility**

August 28, 2024 — To ensure the timely completion of the \$250 million Echo Cliffs Health Care facility in the Bodaway-Gap Chapter, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren mandated tribal agencies to streamline processes and expedite the installation of a crucial water line.

President Nygren convened a meeting with key figures from Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation (TCRHCC) at the Sacred Peaks Health Center, a satellite clinic of the TCRHCC system. Attendees included CEO Joette Walters, COO Julius Young, and Franklin Fowler, the TCRHCC board president. The Sacred Peaks Health Center serves as a vital component of the larger health care TCRHCC network.

During the meeting, COO Julius Young highlighted the significant costs associated with the project, noting that transporting 120,000 gallons of water daily incurs an expense of approximately \$150,000 per month. He also pointed out that the project is currently facing delays due to power supply issues.

The discussion also addressed complications with the right-of-way clearances known as the Tribal Authorization Access (TAA), which require approval from the Navajo Nation and Navajo Tribal Utility Authority. These approvals are necessary to ensure that utilities are provided to the pumphouse for the facility's water supply.

The construction of the Echo Cliffs Health Care facility, which includes healthcare services and 92 staff living quarters, is projected to have a substantial economic impact of \$1 billion on the Western Navajo Agency region. Construction is expected to be completed in 2026.

## **Navajo Nation Departments Collaborate to Address Horse Problem**

August 21, 2024. – The Navajo Nation is facing an escalating challenge with feral horses, and efforts are being intensified to find a solution. On August 21, Gloria Tom, the manager of Navajo Nation Fish and Wildlife, organized a meeting between her department and the Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture to strategize a new approach to the issue.

Earlier this year, in response to the increasing numbers of feral horses, President Nygren and the Natural Resources Department reinstated the equine reward program, encouraging the capture of these animals. This recent meeting was aimed at reevaluating a plan originally developed during the Russell Begaye Administration, with a focus on adapting it to the current situation.

Fish and Wildlife is involved in this strategy is because we're seeing a decline in our wildlife, particularly in mule deer, which hold significant cultural importance for us. The overgrazing by these horses is displacing the mule deer and degrading their habitats.

President Nygren expressed his commitment to working closely with Natural Resources and other departments to find lasting solutions. "If our departments are seeing a decline in our wildlife and a disruption in our plants, this is bigger than just feral horses," Nygren remarked.

"These horses are overpopulated, and it's impacting us. I'm committed to continuing our work with the departments involved in this strategy so we can revitalize our land and wildlife."

## **40 families impacted by torrential floods in Shiprock**

August 26, 2024 – A day after torrential rain flooded homes here, families remain homeless because of their septic tanks breaching.

Elsie Dan and her sister had to evacuate their 93-year-old mother to Gadii'ahi, just west of Shiprock. Dan lives out in Gadii'ahi where her mother remains safe from the three feet of water that remains. "The whole house is flooded," Dan said. "Most of my mom's belongings are damaged inside the house. Dishes, clothes, bedding floating around."

Dan said that her mother was yelling over the phone that water was coming into her house, prompting her to evacuate her mother immediately. Navajo Department of Emergency Management removed Dan's mother out of the house. Just down the street, the Dobeys remain outside of their house because of possible sewer contamination.

"The drainage over flooded our house and it just took everything from us," Beverley Dobeys said. "My house is flooded out inside and outside. My daughter's car is ruined." Dobeys said her house had its septic tank upended by the rising waters.

Shiprock Chapter Vice President Debra A. Yazzie said that the floods in Shiprock are preventable if the accountability of the ditches and irrigations is consistently cleaned up by the proper Navajo Nation agencies.

“A lot of areas did recede,” Yazzie said, adding that Apache County and the Navajo Department of Emergency Management had made 2,300 sandbags. “We need to get the Navajo Nation out here to prevent these breaches.”

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren said, “I have a few people from my office on the ground in Shiprock aiding the community as best they can right now. I pray for the safety of the community members as the water is contaminated. This is an urgent matter, and we are working with officials to ensure help is getting where it’s needed.”

### **President Nygren announces cartoonist Jack Ahasteen as 2024 Navajo Nation Fair Parade Grand Marshal**

August 26, 2024 - Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren has announced that renowned editorial cartoonist Jack Ahasteen has been selected to serve as Grand Marshal of the 2024 Navajo Nation Fair Parade on Sept. 7.

“It’s my pleasure to let Jack’s thousands of fans know he’ll be this year’s parade Grand Marshal, and rightly so,” President Nygren said. “All of us have loved Jack’s cartoons, wit, and especially his political arrows. Many of us turned straight to the editorial page every week to see what he had to say and how he drew it.”

The parade is the centerpiece of the 76th Navajo Nation Fair, “Honoring Heritage: Celebrating Harvest, Livelihood and Kinship.” The fair will run from Sept. 4 to 8, 2024.

Mr. Ahasteen began his 52-year-long career at the Navajo Times as an illustrator. He was hired by the late reporter and editor Bill Donovan, who asked him for a cartoon week after week. He is known for his perceptive caricature, timely, funny and acerbic political wit portrayed with a distinct Navajo flavor.

“My dad proved his commitment to the Navajo people and beyond with his unwavering advocacy through his illustrations that were, and are, well-researched,” said his daughter Calandra Allen.

On June 12, 2024, President Nygren proclaimed “Jack Ahasteen Day” on the Navajo Nation.

The President said the proclamation was a humble way to honor Mr. Ahasteen’s outstanding contributions to the Navajo Nation and his enduring legacy as an artist, storyteller and cultural ambassador.

## **Statement By President Buu Nygren on Monsoon Flooding in the Shiprock Region and across the Navajo Nation**

August 25, 2024 - While we appreciate the much-needed moisture this monsoon season, I send prayers of safety to our impacted communities throughout the Navajo Nation. Some experience excess flooding, impassible muddy roads and destruction to their homes.

In the Northern Agency area, around 30 to 40 families who live along the banks of the San Juan River in the Shiprock area are impacted by extreme floods. The heavy rains have flooded and destroyed homes.

Office of the President and Vice President staff, the Navajo Department of Emergency Management, along with the Shiprock Chapter leadership, American Indian Movement Diné Bikéyah branch, and the American Red Cross are on the frontlines responding to this emergency and finding safe shelter for our families.

Along with the organizations helping are our Navajo police and Emergency Medical Service personnel, who have been working around the clock the last 72 hours.

As President, I have mandated the Navajo Nation Department of Transportation, Department of Health, and Navajo Environmental Protection Agency to be onsite and on standby for any help. They will be also there to offer immediate assessments of the damage with our on-the-ground partners like the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority and Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority.

Some of our communities have experienced nonstop rain for over a week, with some areas flooded in knee-deep waters, making it impossible to pass through. Some communities have been without water or electricity for days. We are here for you.

In Shiprock, the concern is the lack of electricity, homes being flooded, and septic tanks washing out underground that can lead to possible environmental contamination. Our emergency personnel, executive staff, and governmental departments are addressing these immediate concerns.

With more rain forecasted this week across the Navajo Nation, I urge our families to stay safe, check on those most vulnerable, and follow the guidance from the Navajo Department of Emergency Management:

- Avoid walking, swimming, or driving in flooding waters.
- Stay off bridges, determine your best protection, and move to higher ground.
- Stay still until emergency services arrive.
- Stay informed through local alerts.
- Stay in the car in fast-moving water.

Please stay tuned to local radio stations and any emergency alerts forthcoming should floods and muddy road conditions persist.

### **Ramah Navajo celebrates its annual fair and parade with Navajo Code Talker Thomas H. Begay as its grand marshal**

August 24, 2024 - The 29th Annual Ramah Navajo Fair and Rodeo Parade unfolded under partly cloudy skies, drawing community members together from among the Ramah Band of Navajos and nearby Pueblo of Zuni

This year's event was particularly special, with Navajo Code Talker Thomas H. Begay serving as the Grand Marshal, an honor bestowed upon him for his heroic contributions during World War II. Begay's role as a Navajo Code Talker was instrumental in the Allied forces' victory, and his presence underscored the significance of the fair's theme: "Carrying the strength and resilience of our ancestors through a healthier, self-sufficient lifestyle."

The parade featured over 100 entries, including the Navajo Nation Band, Native dance groups, and royalty from various schools and communities. Among the participants was a founding member of the Ramah Navajo School Board, highlighting the deep roots of community involvement and the region's history of self-determination.

The fair, which began with a blessing of the grounds by Marvin Begay, included community walks, rodeos, pageants, dances, and a wide array of vendors. Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren walked the parade route, reaffirming to Ramah Navajo community members that he remains committed to supporting them. His presence resonated deeply, where residents often feel overlooked by the larger Navajo Nation.

One elderly resident expressed heartfelt gratitude for President Nygren's dedication, noting that she had never seen such commitment from any previous administration.

"It's important we are helping each Navajo community, all the way out here, up north, and to the west," President Nygren said. "Our Ramah and eastern checkerboard communities have felt neglected, and we can't have that happen anymore. I was elected by the people, and I will be here for each Navajo community."

### **Sage Memorial Hospital opens its doors to Diné in need**

August 23, 2024 – The nearest Level 1 Trauma hospital in Flagstaff is 141 miles away for residents in Ganado and surrounding communities.

Now this long commute is shorter. The new \$177 million Sage Memorial Hospital opened its doors to the public August 23, 2024.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren has supported the new construction because it will improve access to healthcare for many Diné people from the Ganado area.

“There are so many obstacles Navajo people face and one is the barrier of getting proper health care and treatment,” said President Nygren. “With the Ganado area getting a new hospital facility, our people will no longer need to travel far distances for primary care.”

Since 2023, President Nygren’s administration has been a part of meetings to advise in the construction of Sage Memorial Hospital and nearby road construction planning for easier and safer access to the health facility.

The original Sage Memorial Hospital was built in the early 1930s, according to Christian Bigwater, director of public relations for Sage Memorial Hospital. Like many hospitals throughout the Navajo Nation and across Indian Country, Sage Memorial Hospital was becoming rundown and outdated. Along with its new construction, the hospital comes with state-of-the art technology to help with primary care services.

New health care systems are part of President Nygren’s priorities and Sage Memorial is one of many.

### **Golden Grans Day in Red Valley honors Diné elders**

August 23, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren says that Diné millennials and Gen-Zers are shaped by their elders.

“I know I could not have made it this far without my grandmother's teachings and prayers,” said President Nygren. “Our elders teach us lessons they’ve learned out of love, and it stays with us. We pass those down to our children. Our elders are our past, present, and future.”

Around 200 people, from babies to great-great-grandparents, gathered at the Red Valley Chapter house last Friday, Aug 23 for Golden Grans Day. The event focused on celebrating Diné elders with speakers and social events like food scramble and song and dance.

Outside the Red Valley Chapter, information booths lined up ready to help the elderly in the community. One booth emphasized the importance of diet and supplements, so elders properly care for their bodies.

Among the crowd was Senior Olympic Gold Medalist, Woody Lee. Lee competed in the 2014 Arizona Senior Olympics. He won two gold medals and a silver medal for powerlifting.

Lee is from Sweetwater, Ariz., and 67-years-old. As the special speaker at the Golden Grans Day, he emphasized the need to eat healthily and to take care of bodies through physical activities. Lee stressed the importance of physical health and encouraged elders not to be discouraged by medical diagnoses. He urged them to stay active and take pride in their strength.

“People my age, we need to start getting physical, we need to start taking pride in who we are,” Lee said. “Instead of saying, ‘Oh the doctor said I can’t do this. I can’t do that.’ We as Navajos have the strength and will. We can do this.”

### **Navajo Nation represented at the Democratic National Convention**

August 22, 2024 - Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren returned from a three-day trip to the Democratic National Convention with a long list of contacts that will help advance the Navajo Nation’s interests.

“I really took advantage of every hour I had out there,” President Nygren said. “I tried to tell people, ‘Let’s build a strong Navajo Nation.’ When the Navajo Nation is strong, the four states that we sit in, are strong.”

President Nygren attended the DNC as a delegate of the Arizona Democratic Party, a privilege that comes with being Navajo Nation president. He was among other PLEO delegates – Party Leader or Elected Officials.

“To be a delegate, was an honor. It’s going to be exciting to see what happens over the next several months.”

As President of the Navajo Nation, he said, it’s necessary to work with officials on both sides of the political aisle.

“Just look at the Arizona water rights settlement. It’s introduced on the House side by Republicans, and then on the Senate side it’s introduced by Democrats.”

President Nygren said his days began at 6:30 a.m. and lasted until midnight. Time spent in the convention center was shoulder-to-shoulder. So, he attended many breakfasts and receptions to meet President Biden’s Cabinet members, federal officials, senators, members of congress and countless state and tribal officials.

### **Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project’s San Juan Lateral is 60% complete**

August 20, 2024 – Water is coming from the San Juan River to thousands of Navajo homes. The Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project’s San Juan Lateral is 60% complete.

The Cutter Lateral in Eastern Navajo Agency has been delivering water to 6,200 people in eight chapters since 2020. With water soon to be on its way, now is a time for families to plan for their home sites and business owners to take out their business plans.



“They should be dusting off any economic development plans they have,” said Bidtah Becker, chief legal counsel for Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren. “And if they don't have any, they should be developing them because there is a water supply coming to them.”

On Tuesday, the Bureau of Reclamation sponsored a construction update of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project with the Office of the President and Vice President, Navajo Nation Division of Water Resources, Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, the Navajo Nation Water Rights Commission and Department of the Interior officials.

BOR is the federal agency responsible for constructing the 300-mile pipeline, two water treatment plants, 19 pumping stations and various water storage tanks that will deliver water to approximately 250,000 Diné by 2028.

“We are hooking up Navajo communities as we’re building the pipeline, so this water will go to all Navajo communities,” said Bart Deming, a construction engineer managing the project for BOR. The San Juan Lateral is a water pipeline that runs from Nehahnezad to Shiprock and along the U.S. Highway 491 corridor to Yatahey, N.M. At this point, the pipeline continues south into Gallup for the Gallup Regional Supply Project and west toward the Navajo Code Talkers Sublateral.

That link will connect water from New Mexico to chapters in Arizona. The chapters in Arizona include St. Michaels and Fort Defiance.

Day two of the water project tour begins with visits to the Frank Chee Willetto Reservoir. That’s where water will be stored and pumped down the San Juan Lateral and Navajo Code Talkers Sublateral.

Dr. Crystal Tulley-Cordova, principal hydrologist for the Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources, said the water project serves 43 chapters in New Mexico. It diversifies the water portfolio for hundreds of thousands of Diné and provides a secure water future for them.

“The Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project brings clean, safe drinking water into Navajo homes, and that's important for me, especially as someone who was a former water hauler, being able to have generations into the future have access to clean water,” Tulley-Cordova said.

Becker said the Navajos need to know that water is coming. She said projects of this scale require many levels of government from chapters to state and federal partners.

I want them to see how authentic we are,' Miss Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial Queen Natiana King August 20, 2024 – It may seem like a surprise that Natiana King, 19, was once a shy girl, her great-grandma’s tail.

Growing up, King was often by her great-grandmother's side, Ruth Mike, going with her around Gallup as she sold jewelry.

"She would chase me into Earl's restaurant and say, 'Go sell,'" King recalls. "I'd say, 'No, I don't want to.' I was shy, but now, looking back, I wish I had appreciated those moments more."

When King decided to run for the Miss Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial Queen, it was to honor the memory of her great-grandmother and the lessons she had learned from her. On Aug. 9, she was crowned the queen.

President Nygren was moved by King's platform, it resonated with his childhood, where he learned values, language, and culture from his late grandmother.

### **President Nygren focuses on elders at the 38th Annual Central Navajo Fair**

August 17, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren attended the 38th Annual Central Navajo Fair and Parade on Saturday, where he connected with elders along the parade route. The elders shared their concerns about the need for basic services like water and electricity.

President Nygren assured them that he would follow up through his community representative team to address their needs.

The theme of this year's event, "Íina Ba' Hozho," aligns with President Nygren's commitment to ensuring that the Diné people have access to essential services that contribute to a quality life.

Reflecting on the fair, Nygren stated, "The Central Agency Fair is a good reminder of why I ran for Navajo Nation President, and that is to bring basic services to our people. I am continuously thinking and planning for our future."

As part of his ongoing efforts, President Nygren highlighted recent achievements, such as the upgrades to the Chinle Airport's runway and upcoming improvements to the N8095 route in the community.

He also noted the Navajo Department of Transportation's partnership with Apache County to manage the effects of recent monsoon floods that have brought much-needed moisture to the region. Throughout the parade, President Nygren and his administration provided updates on various government initiatives. One key focus was the Navajo Division of Children and Family Services' partnership with churches, Native American Church leaders, and traditional healers. This collaboration aims to offer healing and support to families within the community.

Dr. Rosanna Jumbo-Fitch, Chinle Chapter Manager, emphasized the significance of this year's theme and the importance of celebrating the achievements of the Central Navajo Agency's people.

“We’re celebrating the lives of all of our people in the area, whether it’s their accomplishments, their education, or their athletic achievements,” Jumbo-Fitch said. “It gives us the chance to highlight those achievements today.”

### **Chinle’s N8095 road to receive gravel upgrade**

August 14, 2024. – The N8095 road in the Chinle Chapter is set to receive 670 tons of gravel, marking a significant improvement for the 250 residents who rely on this dirt road.

This project has been identified as a priority by Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, who emphasizes the importance of road enhancements for many Navajo communities’ quality of life.

Johnny Bahe, Jr., the owner of Damon-Bahe Boxing, is well-acquainted with the condition of N8095. Through his wood delivery program, Bahe interacts with many elderly residents living along this road.

He drives on it at least three times a month, he said. He describes the road as challenging, particularly when harsh weather arrives.

“It gets very muddy during the winter and monsoon season,” Bahe said. “Right now, there are water puddles across the whole road, some of which get quite deep.”

The road’s improvement will be handled by Clawson Excavating, Inc., a Diné women-owned construction firm. The project involves shaping the road, ensuring proper drainage, and laying down 670 tons of aggregate base, commonly known as gravel. New signage will be installed along the route.

“We shape the road and give it proper drainage so when it rains, water can run off rather than pooling and causing ruts,” said Elizabeth Clawson, president of Clawson Excavating, Inc. President Nygren highlighted the broader significance of this \$247,563 project.

“Roads like the N8095 in Chinle are priorities for my administration because they improve access for our families,” he said. “Any type of road improvement enhances the quality of life and contributes to the beautification of our communities.”

Bahe is optimistic about the future of road improvements in his community. He acknowledged the impact these changes will have on the elderly residents who primarily drive cars on this rough road. The N8095 road upgrade is one of a series of ongoing infrastructure projects to improve the Chinle area.

### **Lt. General Michael Cederholm honors Navajo Code Talkers Day**

August 14, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren told a visiting Marine Corps Lt. General that the language that saved the South Pacific 82 years ago needs to be honored and revitalized.

On Navajo Code Talkers Day, the President met with United States Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Michael Cederholm during his visit as the keynote speaker during the annual Navajo Code Talkers Day event in Window Rock.

“Today is about honoring our Navajo Code Talkers, our men and women in uniform and their families,” President Nygren said. “It is a day to honor the unbreakable code in our sacred Navajo language that saved the world.”

Lt. Gen. Cederholm commands the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force. During a sunrise meeting outside Veterans Memorial Park, he expressed admiration for the Navajo Code Talkers and the enduring legacy they represent on behalf of the Commandant of the United States Marine Corps. “We in the Marine Corps love to honor our past,” Lt. Gen. Cederholm said. “By honoring our past, we strengthen our future. That past is full of beauty. It is full of history and heartbreak. All these things make us stronger.”

Navajo Nation Veterans Administration Director Bobbie Ann Baldwin said as a fellow Marine she was honored by the lieutenant general’s visit.

“Our people show their patriotism with honor, not just in the service, but back here at home,” Baldwin said. President Nygren and Lt. Gen. Cederholm talked about the importance of blending cultures.

“When we work together, when we coexist, we come up with great and beautiful things like the Navajo Code,” President Nygren said. “This includes our continued commitment and partnership to build the National Navajo Code Talker Museum to honor all our warriors.”

“Our language is sacred,” he added. “We need to fight for our language. We should not shy away from speaking it. Today is a day to be proud to speak Diné Bizaad.”

### **Diné Bizaad saved the world during World War II**

August 14, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren told the audience at Navajo Code Talkers Day that he would not be here on Mother Earth if it was not for Navajo veterans who fought for freedom during World War II and the Vietnam War.

On Wednesday, President Nygren recognized and thanked the families of fallen and former Navajo Code Talkers for their sacrifice. He also bestowed prestigious Awards of Commendation to the last remaining Navajo Code Talkers: John Kinsel, Sr., 107, Thomas Begay, 99, and Peter MacDonald, 96.

President Nygren signed a proclamation to pay respect and tribute to the approximately 400 Navajo Code Talkers, who were recruited from Diné Bikéyah by the United States Marine Corps. Most enlisted at the age of 15- to 17-years-old, like MacDonald.

MacDonald, who served as tribal chairman between 1970 and 1986, shared some of his journey of being a Navajo Code Talker. He said that Diné Bizaad is a weapon that saved the world during World War II.

“Little did we know that the language that they wanted us to forget was one of the big weapons in the Pacific,” MacDonald said. “The code that they developed, not even a Navajo would know what in the world we are talking about. We were radiomen and kept quiet until 23 years later when we could tell our story.”

President Nygren drew comparisons to MacDonald; both grew up in Red Mesa and were shepherds growing up.

“We honor a warrior and protector of the Navajo people who we hold as sacred,” said President Nygren. “My father was Vietnamese, and he fled as a refugee for freedom. Because of the valor and bravery of our Marines, I am here today as President.”

### **President Nygren honors living Code Talkers on Navajo Code Talkers Day**

August 14, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren honored the renowned legacy of the Diné Code Talkers on their special day – Navajo Code Talkers Day.

Since 1982, by proclamation of President Ronald Reagan, every August 14th has been celebrated as Navajo Code Talkers Day. This day observes the storied military service of the Navajo Code Talkers and other Native American veterans. It recognizes their sacrifice and valor for creating an unbreakable military code using Diné Bizaad – the Navajo language – during World War II.

He paid special recognition to the three remaining Code Talkers – John Kinsel, Sr., 107, who he referred to as War Chief, Thomas Begay, 99, and Peter MacDonald, 96.

Between 1942 and 1945, more than 400 men from Diné Bikéyah joined the U.S. Marine Corps and were recruited to form a special group of radiomen because of their ability to send secure and fast classified messages coded by the Navajo language.

Code words like “wol-a-chee,” which means ant, and the letter E, which stood for “dzeh” or elk, were some of the 800 coded words that were transmitted among Navajo Code Talkers without error. President Nygren spoke about the need to keep Diné Bizaad alive and how valuable it was during World War II.

“We call upon all citizens to celebrate the sacred Diné language as a living language for future generations of Navajo people,” he said entirely in the Navajo language. “Let us never forget the sacrifice of our Navajo Code Talkers. Without them, most of us would not be here today.”

Joining the President for the signing of the proclamation was Arizona Representative Eli Crane, Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalyne Curley, Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne and Lieutenant General Michael S. Cederholm, Commanding General of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force.

### **Navajo Nation and U.S Department of Energy partner to identify orphaned wells to plug**

August 13, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren believes to keep a nation healthy; he must keep the people healthy.

Plugging orphaned wells is one way to improve the health outcomes of approximately 400,000 Diné people – a priority of his administration to protect the Nation’s people, animals, lands, water, and natural resources.

President Nygren signed a memorandum of understanding to start a process between the Navajo Nation and the U.S. Department of Energy’s Office of Fossil Fuel Energy and Carbon Management and Office of Resource Sustainability.

The MOU states the parties involved are willing and intend to work together to carry out plugging orphaned wells. Orphaned wells are abandoned uranium wells and/or oil and gas wells. According to the Department of Interior website, orphaned wells can lead to health problems from methane emissions and safety concerns from old rusty equipment.

This MOU is another step in the right direction to keeping our families safe here on the Navajo Nation. We need initiatives like this MOU to start to help us rehabilitate and restore our territory and reduce the health burdens associated with orphaned wells.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in 2021 allocated \$4.5 billion in funds to plug abandoned wells on tribal, state, and federal lands.

### **Worship and prayer service unites all faiths to combat social ills across the Navajo Nation**

August 10, 2024 – Under the canopy of a revival tent, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren called for the unity of prayers and diverse religions.

On Friday and Saturday, the Office of the President and Vice President and the Navajo Division of Children and Family Services sponsored an interfaith prayer and worship event for children and families.

At the prayer event, President Nygren announced the launch of the Family Preservation Initiative to restore faith and prayer across the Navajo Nation.

“The goal of the prayer and church service is to offer prayers to our relatives who need love, support and healing,” said President Nygren. “An important priority of my administration to preserve and keep family structures intact.”

On Friday, Pastor Daniel Chee of The Ranch Hands Ministry and Apostle Harrison Mann Ministries held prayers for tribal leadership. Chee, who is a principal at Leupp Elementary School, said that prayer along with trauma-informed care is critical to helping build healthy families.

The Navajo Division of Children and Family Services also hosted a Native American Church convention in Dilkon, Ariz., for children and families over the weekend, as part of its Family Preservation Initiative.

“It’s not up to me to make everyone believe in one spiritual practice,” said President Nygren. “I think it’s beautiful when we can come together, respect one another’s belief and equally stay strong against the challenges of this world. Without our beliefs and prayers, we wouldn’t be here.”

### **Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial Parade is a time for action by President Nygren**

August 10, 2024 – During the Day Parade of the 102nd Annual Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial on Saturday, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren ran from family group to family group to take selfies with parade-goers.

Throughout the parade, community members heard from President Nygren’s priorities such as hearing updates about the status of the uranium ban, Missing and Murdered Indigenous relatives, and even taking reports from community members along the parade route needing basic help.

Parades like the 102nd Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial are an opportunity for President Nygren to engage with the people.

“The 102nd Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial is direct action and community response from my administration,” President Nygren said. “It is also an opportunity to let the Diné people and our neighbors know that we are here, visible and accountable. And it is also a fun time to catch up with relatives and enjoy the blessings of the various Indigenous dance groups.”

The Day Parade on Saturday is generally much larger. Iconic dance groups like the Aztecs, Comanches, Apache Crown Dancers, and Zuni Olla Maidens highlight the parade.

The parade on Saturday also featured the newly crowned Miss Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial Queen Natiana King, of Tsaile, Ariz.

“Congratulations to Natiana King, the new Miss Inter-Tribal Ceremonial Queen,” President Nygren said. “She is one of our queen ambassadors from the Navajo Nation!”

### **Chinle Airport receives \$8.1 million upgrade for emergency flights**

August 9, 2024 – Chinle Airport’s runway, once riddled with potholes and cracks, has undergone a significant transformation. Its recent \$8.1 million upgrade ensures safer landings for the roughly 1,200 flights the airport handles each year, many of which are crucial emergency flights.

The improved runway at Chinle Airport directly supports the Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility, enhancing access to off-Navajo Nation healthcare facilities during emergencies. The project, an infrastructure priority for Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, was completed in just 120 days, from March to July.

“Many of us are familiar with the rural challenges on the Navajo Nation, especially when accessing medical care,” said President Nygren. “In critical situations where air transport is necessary, the previous runway conditions made it nearly impossible. This upgrade brings much-needed efficiency and safety.”

Funding for the project was a collaborative effort, with contributions from the Federal Aviation Administration, the Arizona Department of Transportation, and the Navajo Nation. Sunland Asphalt and Construction, LLC, was the contractor, and they made a point to hire residents as laborers, according to Navajo DOT Director Tom Platero.

The project’s completion marks the end of a two-decade-long journey to secure funding, said Chinle Chapter Manager Dr. Rosanna Jumbo-Fitch.

“There were multiple potholes, cracks, and it was just deteriorating to the point that it was unsafe for people to land,” Jumbo-Fitch said. “To have the airport repaved and resurfaced to where we have a fully functional airport for all purposes is a benefit to our community. It mainly assists our people with their medical treatment and care.”

### **World famous night parade unites families at the 102nd Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial**

August 8, 2024 — Over a century ago, Indigenous tribal nations would ride on horseback or travel in wagons, bringing tents and camping out to participate in what is now the Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial.

This gathering became an annual tradition, evolving into a significant cultural event that attracts both Indigenous communities and tourists. The entire week of ceremonial consists of parades, powwows, art shows, rodeos and many more cultural activities. It began on Aug. 2 and ends on Aug. 11.

One of the highlights of the ceremonial event is the iconic night parade, held on Thurs., Aug. 8. The night parade draws thousands of spectators who come to witness diverse Indigenous dance groups, contestants for the Miss Ceremonial Queen title, the famous Navajo Nation Band, political leaders, and more.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren and First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren participated in the night parade, receiving praise from the crowd for their leadership.



“The night parade is one of the coolest attractions the Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial does annually,” President Nygren said. “It’s an experience that you can’t get anywhere else. We have the Hopis, Kiowas, Zunis, Aztecs, our Diné people and other Indigenous groups sharing their cultures. Where else can you see these tribes honor and love their culture the way they do here.”

The Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial began as a place for tribes to trade food, art and cultural items with each other. The gathering eventually caught the eye of tourists riding the train that stops in Gallup, helping it become what it is.

“It’s always exciting and rewarding for me to be out in the community,” said President Nygren. “I am honored to have been part of the parade and I look forward to Saturday.”

### **Navajo taxes, dollars, and labor build the \$5 million Tuba City Senior Center**

August 7, 2024 - When the \$5 million Tuba City Senior Center opens its doors next spring, grandmas and grandpas will finally have a place to eat and enjoy home-cooked meals.

The new senior center, which is funded by the Navajo Nation Sihasin Fund and sales tax collected by Tónaneesdizí Local Government, is about 30% complete. Keyah Construction, Inc., is the construction builder for the project.

Terry McCabe, the center’s supervisor, said she and her staff drive to Cameron Senior Center in Cameron, Ariz., to cook meals and then they drive the meals back to Tuba City to deliver to elders in the community.

McCabe cannot wait for the new senior center to open with a full kitchen and office space and calls the project a “godsend” by Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren.

“My elders can come in and sit down,” McCabe said. “They come in every day to look at the building, saying, ‘It is going up,’ They’re excited that it’s finally becoming a reality.”

More than ten years ago, the old senior center was condemned. By 2016, the senior center operated out of a modular building. Today, it only has office space but no kitchen. The kitchen is very important to McCabe and her staff because it would bring the elderly into their facility for social connections and bonding.

Last week, President Nygren visited the construction site for a status update.

“The minute they secured the funds, they started construction,” President Nygren said while praising the leadership of the Tónaneesdizí Local Government.

Since his tenure as chief commercial officer of the Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority, President Nygren kept his pulse on this project. Through his campaign and election victory to tribal president, he has since made this construction project a priority.

Then as president, with access to tribal funding mechanisms, he ensured the groundbreaking for construction began in February 2024.

Duran Begay, chapter manager for Tónaneesdizí Local Government, said that the new senior center will provide a vital support system for the community's elderly.

"It's a gathering place where they can socialize — something that has not happened in years," Begay said. "It's been a long time coming."

Begay noted that \$370,000 in local sales tax collected by the chapter contributed to the project. For McCabe, the new center represents the completion of work that honors the elderly who have since passed and advocated for a senior center in the first place. She looks forward to the project's completion in spring 2025.

"Like many senior centers, we are open to serving other elderly visitors from other areas as well," McCabe said. "If they need to go to the hospital for an appointment, they'll have a place to gather here."

### **U.S. Department of Labor Acting Secretary Julie A. Su visits the Navajo Nation**

August 7, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren looked to Acting U.S. Secretary of Labor Julie A. Su to express the need for a better relationship.

"We can't effectively plan for the future if we can't accurately identify the problem," President Nygren said. He said a federal labor office in Window Rock would help solve technical labor issues.

The acting secretary is considered the first federal official from the U.S. Department of Labor to visit the Navajo Nation. At a packed Tuba City Chapterhouse on Wednesday, the acting secretary spoke about her work with the federal agency as part of the Biden-Harris Administration's Investing In America initiative.

She said visiting the Nation is an opportunity to put money where it needs to go.

"When we're building infrastructure in communities," Acting Secretary Su said, "those communities are the ones getting the jobs to build them. I see our workforce as infrastructure, too." With proposed construction projects happening, President Nygren said that partnership with federal and tribal OSHA needs to strengthen to keep work sites safe. One project is the new Tuba City Senior Center

“We need to make sure people are safe and go home to their loved ones,” he said. “We want our people, whether climbing the beams or on the roof, to provide for their families.”

The Department of Labor could collect better data on labor across tribal lands, he said. Approximately 35% of Navajo households have incomes below the federal poverty line, according to the Department.

However, the President said the figure is actually much higher, with unofficial data reporting a Navajo unemployment rate of 61%.

President Nygren acknowledged and thanked Acting Secretary Su for her visit and for allocating \$9 million through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act for the Navajo Nation Department of Workforce Development.

### **Every child must be loved and supported through Navajo Nation Child Support Awareness Month**

August 7, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren knows that Diné children are precious gifts from the Creator.

To further protect them, he signed a proclamation Tuesday designating August as Navajo Nation Child Support Awareness Month.

Tuesday’s proclamation brings more awareness to child support services for single moms, dads, and grandparents across the Navajo Nation.

Child support is a Navajo Nation, state, federal, and international effort to provide financial security to children, according to the Navajo Department of Child Support Services.

President Nygren’s proclamation states that Diné children must be loved and receive care, and it is the responsibility of the parent to establish a child’s parentage for identity and clan relations.

“Economic conditions may disproportionately affect the ability of some parents to meet their responsibility,” said President Nygren. “However, the Navajo Nation is working diligently to help parents nurture, support, and provide for their children as they are our future.”

President Nygren said he could think of how his late mother would have benefited from child support services if she knew this existed as a resource to help single-family units.

“Just reading the proclamation into the record touches my heart,” President Nygren said. “Our focus is building that strong family unit. I’m very happy that this is happening. Thank you to everyone behind the scenes making sure our children are cared for.”

## **56th Annual Ééháníih Day celebrates Díné families and traditional values with stories**

August 4, 2024 - Below the majestic Naatsis'áán, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren attentively listened to constituent concerns and enjoyed his first Ééháníih Day celebration.

Every year, hundreds of people across Dinétah gather to celebrate beneath the shadow of Navajo Mountain/Paiute Mesa in Utah, the highest point in the Navajo Nation at 10,347 feet. The event features activities such as trail riding, trekking through Narrow Canyon, and camping under the mountain. Ééháníih Day allows everyone to experience the sacred and traditional way of life their ancestors and elders once lived.

President Nygren expressed his pride in seeing families, from eight-month-old babies to Masání's and Cheiis, cooking and laughing together.

“This year’s theme, ‘Every family has a story,’ and that story is alive and well right here,” said President Nygren. “Our grandmas are getting after the little ones and then embracing them. That’s

the power of our Díné women. They’re our storytellers and they bring us together to places like this, it’s beautiful.”

After thanking Hank Stevens, the event organizer, President Nygren, along with First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren, made their way up and down the horse raceway that separates the camp. President Nygren asked each constituent about their problems and ensured his community representatives collected contact information to address their concerns.

“I see all these horses and their riders taking care of each other. We need to do that as government to community,” said President Nygren. “There’s still work that needs to be done if our families out here aren’t getting water, they’re having road problems, livestock issues, and other problems that need fixing.”

President Nygren applauded the organizers, families, and Council Delegate Herman Daniels Jr. for their efforts to keep Ééháníih Day alive.

## **President Nygren, NDOH, U of A, and Navajo Epidemiology Center, sign MOU to collaborate on COVID-19 infection data**

August 5, 2024 - The MOU is to identify risk factors and increase community preparedness should a future pandemic strike.

“In Navajo, we have a saying,” President Nygren said. “Yideeskáadi Nitsákees. Prepare for the future. Never wait around for things to happen. This MOU embodies this philosophy.”

Dr. Karletta Chief, director of the Indigenous Resilience Center at UA, said communities that speak more English have lower rates of COVID-19, whereas communities that speak more Navajo have higher incidence of COVID-19 infections.

The MOU will help to understand how factors like language, socioeconomic conditions, and even lack of access to water impact Diné health across the Nation. “We are Indigenous led,” said Dr. Chief. “We have a unique perspective, and through our work a deep commitment to Native communities. Factors like food security, food insecurity, electricity and lack of electricity all impact public health.”

This agreement enhances public health initiatives and research benefiting thousands of Diné people. Analyzing socioeconomic risks like insufficient household infrastructure and education levels are essential to understanding their impact on health.

“We are a family now,” said Sherylene Yazzie, who is newly appointed as the executive director of NDOH. “Let’s move swiftly to collect and analyze the data and integrate solutions that serve the wellbeing of our people.”

Dr. Robert Robbins, president of the University of Arizona, said he was honored to begin this work. “I am proud to work with the Navajo Nation,” he said. “I am proud of University of Arizona in its work to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in our communities.”

President Nygren responded, “My hope is that the findings from this partnership will enhance the lives of our Navajo people, building on our cultural beliefs and traditions to better prepare for future challenges.”

Miguel Flores Jr., chief executive officer of Holistic Wellness Counseling & Consultant Services, LLC, concluded the signing when he presented President Nygren with a bundle of sage and a necklace of white shells from the Pascua Yaqui and Tohono O’odham people.

“We ask that our Creator bless our body, mind and spirit,” Mr. Flores said. “I pray that our medicine, from the earth, the plants and the water, allows you to continue to do this important work for our people.”

### **Navajo Preparatory celebrates a new nest on campus: a student home to study, relax, heal and pray**

August 5, 2024 – Inside the brand new \$10 million student home at Navajo Preparatory School, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren shared thoughts of how collaboration from family to elected leadership is vital to create healthy student learning environments.

“We’re always thinking about your future,” President Nygren said today to the students, faculty, state and tribal leaders at the grand opening of Navajo Prep’s new student home celebration.

From his brief tour with Navajo Prep’s Head of School Shawna Allison Becenti, President Nygren experienced the open floor plan of the building.

The residence hall is a shift from boarding school-style living arrangements and includes a prayer room, common living space, suite-style rooms, washers, dryers and kitchenettes, Ms. Becenti said. Haylei Redhouse, student ad hoc board member, said, “We made this happen. I love that I come from Navajo Prep. We are one of a kind.”

Among the dignitaries at the celebration were Navajo Nation Vice President Richelle Montoya, N.M. Sen. William Sharer, N.M. Rep. Wonda Johnson, New Mexico Indian Affairs Secretary Josett Monette, former Navajo Nation Council Speaker Seth Damon, and Navajo Prep’s Board of Trustees Anderson Yazzie, Sr., among others.

Yazzie, who represents Central and Western Agencies as the board president, said that as global thinkers, Navajo Prep students are receiving 21st century education that shares Diné cultural values. “We think of you as the forefront,” Yazzie said to Navajo Prep students. “That shared voice and shared wisdom. We want to ensure that we hear what our students are saying.”

Navajo Prep welcomes back its students on August 12 for the new academic year. Funding for the new school home comes from the New Mexico Capital Outlay and Navajo Nation Sihasin Fund.

### **Protestors swarm U.S. 89 and 64, saying: ‘Shut down uranium mines now!’**

August 2, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren and First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren marched with protestors here today to oppose the illegal transport of uranium across Navajo land. On Aug. 2, The First Lady organized a rally with dozens of Diné community members to voice their concerns and opposition to the dangers of uranium exposure.

“Respect our sovereignty, respect our laws,” said First Lady Blackwater-Nygren. “And we say, ‘no.’”

Before they began the walk, Navajo Nation Council Delegate Casey Allen Johnson credited President Nygren for collaboration with the Council to demand President Biden stop the transportation of uranium across Navajo land.

He said the Navajo people do not want uranium being transported across Navajo land.

Energy Fuels Resource, Inc., began to transport uranium ore from Pinyon Plain Mine south of the Grand Canyon on Tuesday, July 30. Both routes to move the uranium from the mine pass through

tribal communities on its way to the White Mesa Mill in Blanding, Utah. These include Navajo, Hopi, Havasupai and Ute Mountain Ute lands.

As the walk began from the roundabout on Hwy 89 to the Cameron Chapterhouse, Navajo Nation Division Director of Public Safety Michael Anderson and Navajo police officers stayed close to the walkers to ensure their safety.

Thursday evening, President Nygren spoke with Ariz. According to an executive order the president signed earlier this week, Gov. Katie Hobbs to collaborate and pause uranium transport for six months.

While holding a sign to protest uranium, President Nygren encouraged walkers to keep pushing themselves for a good cause as the sun beat down on them.

“Just a quarter mile left,” President Nygren yelled. “We can do this.”

When the President and First Lady arrived at the chapter house, President Nygren answered community concerns about the uranium threats and gave all credit to the First Lady.

“The company said they followed all the rules and regulations. But what about our rules and regulations?” President Nygren asked. “What about us, our health, our communities? They’re not only harming us, they’re harming other tribal communities. Did they follow their rules and regulations? This is absolutely unacceptable.”

### **Same logs, new home for Navajo Code Talker John Kinsel Sr.**

August 1, 2024 — John Kinsel Sr.’s home renovation is the official start of a campaign by Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren to build new homes and renovations for veterans.

Along with the Sparrow Group and the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration, Kinsel Sr., 107, now has running water and electricity in a home he built himself.

“Mr. Kinsel Sr. fought for all of us,” said President Nygren. “He used our language to protect us and keep us alive to this day. He deserves these upgrades to his home. The renovations needed to happen a long time ago.”

Ronald Kinsel, Kinsel Sr.’s son, said he asked former administrations for help but those conversations went nowhere.

On May 20, President Nygren joined Kinsel, his family, and Sparrow Group for the groundbreaking to start the renovations. An all-Navajo construction crew completed Kinsel’s home in eight weeks, just shy of National Navajo Code Talkers Day on August 14.

Kinsel Sr. did not want a new home. Kinsel Sr. built his home using logs of wood from the Lukachukai Mountains. Instead, he wanted renovations.

The Sparrow group did just that. What was Kinsel Sr.'s entryway now holds a running bathroom and kitchen area. The Sparrow group also provided a new bed for the oldest war chief.

According to Olin Kieyoomia, OPVP Executive Staff Assistant, Kinsel's upgraded home is completely ADA compliant for his safety.

"I push my administration everyday so more veterans can have a home that will protect them the way they protected us," said President Nygren. "I am just glad we were able to come together, myself, everyone from Sparrow Group, the construction workers, NNVA Director, Bobbi-Ann Baldwin and Executive Staff Assistant for Veteran Affairs Olin Kieyoomia."

### **I have deployed Navajo Police to stop the illegal transport of uranium across the reservation.**

July 30, 2024 – "I am very disappointed that uranium is being hauled across our Navajo Nation right now," President Nygren said. "I was notified 30 minutes ago, and I have ordered the Navajo Nation Police to escort the transport vehicles off our land. The lack of notification to the Navajo Nation is a blatant disregard for our tribal sovereignty and exposes our Diné people to toxic uranium, a substance that has devastated our community for decades."

"As president, I do not approve of this transport and will continue to fight to ensure our people are protected from the actions of Energy Fuels," Nygren said. [#NoHaul](#)

### **Navajo Technical University supports Navajo Students through research opportunities**

July 29, 2024 - President Buu Nygren, NTU President Elmer Guy, and Vice President Jason Arviso address economic development through research-led initiatives by the university

The university plans to expand its advanced manufacturing, training, and sustainable energy program to offer training for the space industry, to build vertical windmills, and battery production. NTU is one of the top research institutions in the area.

President Nygren told Guy and Arviso he supports the proposed legislation to expand the college's research with top research institutes, including Sandia National Laboratories and Los Alamos National Laboratories.

"Let's invest in our communities, in our nation, so that we can work with universities like NTU and Diné College, and expand," President Nygren said. "Our students need more resources for scholarships and housing."

NTU President Dr. Elmer Guy said the president's support of the tribal university fosters economic development and enhances the college's role as a leader in advanced manufacturing and education.



Our leaders additionally discussed the renewal of the Diné Higher Education Grant Fund for an additional 20 years. This fund distributes \$4.2 million to NTU, \$4.7 million to Diné College and \$3.5 million to the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance.

NTU is leading the reauthorization of the Diné Higher Education Grant Fund, which expires in 2025, Dr. Guy said. The new legislation would equally distribute \$30 million among NTU, Diné College, and the scholarship office.

### **Eastern Navajo Fair Parade honors legacy of kinship, k'é with legacy of service**

July, 27, 2024 – Every few steps, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren ran from family to family alongside the parade route of the Eastern Navajo Fair Parade to take hundreds of selfies and share his message of “Think for the Future.”

While he was behind the Think for the Future OPVP float greeting Diné, grandpas, grandmas and young kids yelled for him to take photos with them. The 46th Annual Eastern Navajo Fair, organized by the Eastern Navajo Fair Board, kicks off the official fair season across the Navajo Nation.

This year’s theme, “Honoring Our Diné Legacy of Service,” includes every Navajo person – young and old, veterans, health providers, mental health providers, hospitality service providers and, most importantly, the Diné themselves.

“When I think of the fair’s theme, I think of all of us and I think of k’é,” President Nygren said. “We serve our families, relatives by clans and each other. Honoring Our Diné Legacy is who are as Diné.”

The President said the season of Navajo fairs is a time of reunion with old friends and relatives you’ve missed through the year. It’s a time of shared unity, k’é, handshakes and laughter.

He said Navajo fairs is to renew and appreciate shared traditions, carnival rides, fun food performances and creation of memories. The Eastern Navajo Fair and parade renews a sense of community engagement and pride where families connect with neighbors and meet new people, and everyone can support local vendors and artists.

Sunday at the Eastern Navajo Fair will be Armed Services Day with the day’s colors of red, white and blue. The day is in line with the fair’s theme, and one to honor all active-duty servicemen and servicewomen and military veterans.

### **Navajo President Buu Nygren celebrates Chief Manuelito scholars, signs \$2.2 million legislation for summer youth employment**

July 26, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren told 119 new 2024 Chief Manuelito Scholarship recipients earning this honor is more than financial support for the next four years.

“It recognizes your hard work, dedication and commitment to academic excellence,” he told Thursday at Diné College. “Congratulations to all 119 of you!”

The President took the opportunity to sign legislation to allocate \$2.2 million for summer youth employment at local chapters or within the tribal government this winter and next summer. The Navajo Nation Council approved the funding during its summer session from July 15-19.

“This initiative is crucial to develop practical skills, gain work experience and ensure that our brightest minds contribute to our community's growth and development,” President Nygren said. Amya Hillis is one of 119 Diné high school graduates to be awarded the prestigious 2024 Chief Manuelito Scholarship.

Hillis is among several students who are college-bound this fall. Also honoring them was Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalyne Curley and the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance.

Hillis will attend Columbia University in New York. She said the cumulative hard work she put in as an alumna of Farmington High School helped her earn her Chief Manuelito scholarship. “It is an honor and a privilege to even have this significant scholarship,” said Hillis, who is Kinyaa’aanii, Towering House People, and born to Na’ahilii, African American People. “It is a definite testament to hard work.”

She said she will use the \$7,000 per academic year to study financial economics at the Ivy League school. Her goal is to end economic inequities in the Navajo Nation. Having a curious mind is vital to finding solutions, she said.

### **President Nygren attends revival to sign legislation to help churches, missions operate legally, thrive on Nation**

July 26, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren attended a tent revival service here Friday evening to sign legislation to help churches and missions operate legally on the Nation to thrive and grow.

“As someone who grew up in the church, I understand deeply the significance of the legislation we are enacting today,” he said. “It’s a crucial step to ensure that all places of worship, including permanent churches and tents like this one, receive the official clearance and legal recognition they need to operate.”

The President acknowledged the Pastor Julius Begay, Pastor Winnie, Pastor Lorenzo Jenson, Pastor Thomas Arviso and Pastor Larry Furcap.

The legislation sponsored by delegate Casey Johnson and passed by council 16-0 amends the Navajo Nation Code for a mission site permit. Previously, the Navajo General Land Development

Department required an application, a chapter resolution, proof of a church’s incorporation, all land clearance documents, and a council delegate’s endorsement. Now, that endorsement is not needed as long as there is community support.

The law change will ensure churches are supported and regulated properly, the President said, because it streamlines the lease process required. “This will help many churches and missions that have been operating without proper recognition for years to become legal and thrive,” the President said.

He told the 50 worshippers that he directed Navajo divisions and departments to work with all faiths, whether they’re NAC, traditional or Christian communities.

“We recognize the diversity of our people and the need for spiritual healing to guide us in serving our Nation, he said. “Today, we take a significant step toward recognizing and supporting the spiritual work done by these churches and mission sites.”

### **23 Leupp families receive electricity for the first time**

July 25, 2024 – Near the beautiful chocolate Grand Falls, 23 Diné families now have power to light up their homes. They’re able to connect microwaves, refrigerators to store food and medicines, and use outlets to charge their cell phones. It took three decades to get here, said Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, who credits local leadership from the Leupp Chapter for making this dream a reality.

“As a person who grew up without any running water or electricity, I understand the basic value of this project,” President Nygren said. “This will be the beginning of healthier families for this amazing part of Diné Bikéyah.”

Known as the Grand Falls Power Line Project, it is funded by the Indian Community Block Grant Program under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Navajo Nation competes for these federal funds with other tribes across the U.S.

The project began in 2014 when Leupp Chapter heard community concerns for electric needs. In 2019, the chapter submitted its proposal under HUD’s Indian Community Development Grant Program.

In 2020, the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority received notice of \$1.7 million from HUD's Indian Community Development Block Grant. Between 2022 and 2024, the Navajo Nation requested approval from HUD to use these funds. It took NTUA six months to complete the power line with 23.68 miles of electric lines.

According to NTUA, the chapter will have more projects funded by ARPA that are currently in the right-of-way process. “More homes will be connected,” President Nygren said.

Angela Horseherder-Cody, Leupp Chapter vice president, said many years of planning to seek funding made the power line project possible for her community.

### **Fort Defiance Youth visit President’s office for the first time**

July 25, 2024 - While many executive staff members walk by a copy of the Treaty of 1868 on the daily, youth employed with the Ft. Defiance Chapter barely got to see it for the first time in their lives.

From their tour, the youth got a taste of some high-level government meetings among the Navajo Nation, U.S Department of Energy, and U.S. Department of Transportation. Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren has always welcomed youth to tour the Office of the President and Vice President and to learn and be curious about their government.

“When I took office, I’ve always emphasized learning the language and with that comes learning the culture and history,” said President Nygren. “When these young people come on, they see history face-to-face, they walk the same halls previous presidents have and I know it interests them because it’s a part of who they are.”

Along the tour route through the office, the youth stopped by the media department and learned how the team bridges a connection between the community and President Nygren. These Diné youth are a part of a summer employment program with the Navajo Nation Division of Behavioral Health and Mental Health Services. Over their two-week employment, they learned about mental health among their Diné people.

President Nygren knows summer youth programs are a vital component to learning and becoming leaders.

“A lot of our chapters have summer youth employment programs and I’m excited that they exist so the students continue learning through summer break but also get to see what they may like to do in the future.”

The chapter held a community celebration on July 25 and had a drawing for community members to win televisions, coffee makers and lampstands. “I am so thankful to have power in my home,” an elderly said. “Now I can have a refrigerator and air conditioning.”

President Nygren credits the lobbying work of Navajo Nation Council Delegate Casey Allen Johnson for getting this project funded. “It’s taken years of teamwork to get here,” President Nygren said.

## **Silver Stallion Bike Repair Pop-Ups offers free bike repairs to get families out on bikes**

July 24, 2024 – Nate Holiday dropped off six bikes to get repaired by the Silver Stallion Bike Repair Pop-Up here at Navajo Nation Veterans Memorial Park.

He drove two hours from Monument Valley to the tribal capital just to fix a gear on his daughter’s bike and to repair the tires on the other bikes because he likes the service so much – and it’s free. “I came all the way just to get my bikes serviced,” Holiday said. “I know they’re equipped to take care of whatever issue arises, especially with the maintenance of the bike.”

Holiday said that the Silver Stallion Bike Repair Pop-Up, a mobile service, provides crucial bike repair for families like his who enjoy riding on bike trails everywhere on the Navajo Nation.

“We need organizations like Silver Stallion Bicycle and Coffee Works,” said Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren. “They promote healthy lifestyles on the Nation.”

Scott Nydam, founder, and board president for Silver Stallion Bicycle and Coffee Works, hopes conversations with the Nygren Administration led to a possible partnership to get more kids and families out on bikes.

The pop-up operates out of a mobile truck with a team of coaches and mechanics. They are readily available to help Diné families improve wellness through challenging their minds and bodies. Nydam said today’s mobile service is part of his nonprofit’s mission to empower and develop kids and young adults’ vocational skills in bicycle repair and specialty coffee industries.

Over the last several years, Silver Stallion has partnered with health promotion programs and local school districts to bring out more bike riders across the Navajo Nation. So far, Silver Stallion has connected with social workers and counselors at four middle schools from Gallup McKinley County Schools.

## **Navajo President Buu Nygren welcomes Sharen Sandoval as Emergency Manager for the Navajo Nation**

July 24, 2024 – With years of military and homeland security experience in the U.S. Air Force, Sharen Sandoval could work anywhere in the world – and has.

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She’s lived and traveled to Asian countries, the border of North and South Korea, and to Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam for anti-terrorism exercises.

Sandoval, 32, said she listened to her intuition, a call to action to return back to the Navajo Nation to serve her people. That came with the opportunity to apply as the new director for the Navajo Department of Emergency Management.

“It’s really the military concept that has helped me with emergency preparedness and response, at all levels you can imagine,” she said. “I’ve developed a love for structure, for organization, for seeing things through, from the very beginning to the very end.”

Sandoval was hired by Division of Public Safety Director Michael Anderson on July 1.

“She was selected, interviewed and hired based on all those standards,” Anderson said. “We have high expectations of her to fill a position that has been vacant that nobody else has really wanted to do or wasn’t qualified or found not qualified to do.”

From 2012 to 2015, Rose Whitehair served as the emergency manager when John Billison was the director for the Division of Public Safety. Between 2016 to 2023, interim delegated directors were Harland Cleveland, Lyla Smallcanyon and Commander Rory Atcitty.

Sandoval served in the Air Force for nearly 14 years, with 11 years active-duty and 2.5 years in the reserves. She is a 2022 graduate from Arizona State University and earned a bachelor’s degree in public service and public policy with a focus in Emergency Management and Homeland Security. Sandoval was raised in Ganado, Ariz.

### **President Nygren testifies before House Natural Resources Subcommittee joins tribal leaders to pass \$12 billion in settlements**

July 23, 2024– Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren testified here today before the House Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries on four water rights bills that will bring water to the Navajo Nation and other tribes.

“Roughly a third of Navajo households lack running water, including the home I grew up in,” the President told the subcommittee. “Thousands of our people continue to haul water over 30 miles roundtrip to meet daily water demands. Congress must act to end the water crisis on the Navajo Nation. This made the pandemic devastating to my people and holds us back from the that other Americans take for granted.”

President Nygren presented testimony on:

- H.R. 8940 – Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Act
- H.R. 3977 — Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project Amendments Act of 2023
- H.R. 8945 – Navajo Nation Rio San José Stream System Water Rights Settlement Act of 2024.
- H.R. 6599 – Technical Corrections to the Northwestern New Mexico Rural Water Projects Act,

### **Taos Pueblo Indian Water Rights Settlement Act, and Aamodt Litigation Settlement Act.**

Other tribal leaders testifying on the bills during the three-and-a-half hour hearing were Hopi Tribal Vice Chairman Craig Andrews, Yavapai-Apache Nation Chairwoman Tanya Lewis, Taos Pueblo Governor Fred Romero and Acoma Pueblo Governor Randall Vicente.

This purpose of the hearing was to examine several proposed Indian water rights settlements in Arizona, New Mexico and Montana which collectively total more than \$12 billion, the committee stated.

President Nygren said H.R. 8940 will ratify the historic Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Act among the Navajo Nation and 38 other parties. “This settlement will resolve the water rights claims for three Indigenous nations,” President Nygren said. “It will also invest in desperately needed water infrastructure that will deliver safe and reliable drinking water to these communities.”

### **President Buu Nygren, First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren honor Miss Indian World with a contest powwow**

July 20, 2024 – Inside the Shiprock Chieftain Pit, dancers of all ages danced across the basketball court to honor 2024-2025 Miss Indian World, Kassie John. In total, 221 danced to the rhythm of the powwow drums.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren was proud to help First Lady, Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren, and Wanda Nelson, pow-wow coordinator, bring to life a contest powwow to honor John. “To show our appreciation and our support, the First Lady wanted to hold an event for Miss Indian World, Kassie John,” said President Nygren. “It started as maybe a luncheon, but we thought why not honor who she is and that led us to working alongside her family.”

Along with the Office of the First Lady, several executive branch agencies helped make the powwow a reality. The Navajo Nation Division of Social Services, Division of General Services, Office of Miss Navajo Nation, Navajo Petroleum, Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority, BITCOInsurance, and Office of the President and Vice President, showed their appreciation and support for Miss Indian World alongside her family.

Kassie John brought the Miss Indian World title back to the Navajo Nation after 10 years. From Chilchinbito, Ariz., John is To’ahani and born for Bitahnii. Her maternal grandfather is Ashii’hi and her paternal grandfather is Kinlichiinii.

John wanted to honor a dance she was raised in, jingle dress, and held a specialty dance for all jingle dress dancers who showed up. “I’m proud of the collaborations that took place to get us to this point,” said President Nygren. “This idea to honor Kassie grew and we were able to all come together to even help with making the pow-wow a competition. I wish each dancer the best and I wish Kassie a continued beautiful reign.”

### **Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren Signs \$6.7 Million Water Line Contract**

July 19, 2024 - Today, President Nygren signed a significant \$6.7 million contract agreement to construct 6 miles of water line through the Navajo Engineering & Construction Authority (NECA). This pipeline will serve Navajo residents as part of the Coyote Canyon region of the Navajo-Gallup

Water Supply Project (NGWSP), marking one of the first such projects following decades of development on the main waterline.

The signing ceremony was attended by NECA Chairman, Benjamin Bennett, Water Management Branch Sr. Contract Analyst Lucinda Davis, WMB Programs & Projects Specialist Jesse Hillis, WMB Office Specialist Sherry Dineyazhe, and Eastern Navajo Agency Council President Johnny Johnson.

Benjamin Bennett reflected on the project's long-awaited realization, stating, "I recall talking about these projects in the 80's. I'm glad NECA's involved."

Jesse Willis described the contract preparation as a "long process," but expressed satisfaction that it had reached "the finish line" with President Nygren's signature.

Lucinda Davis, whose experience was crucial in navigating the contract through the Navajo Nation's internal approval process, emphasized the project's impact, stating joyfully, "This [project] will help a lot of people."

For Sherry Dineyazhe, a resident in the NGWSP construction area, the project holds personal significance. "My people are finally getting water," she said, expressing gratitude for the progress under the Nygren Administration. She drives by the major construction of the mainline everyday like many Navajo people in the communities surrounding the NGWSP.

Johnny Johnson, representing the Eastern Navajo Agency Council, highlighted the project's importance. "Six miles is progress, and it means everything in the community. This is getting water to the community."

This contract signing represents a crucial step in improving water access for Navajo Nation residents—the process for which the administration has worked to streamline and shorten. WMB staff said President Nygren can expect more water projects to reach his desk for signature currently in the works.

### **Department of Agriculture's Wool/Mohair Purchasing event extended through Friday to serve the hundreds of vehicles lined up each Day**

July 18, 2024 – Trucks, trailers, and even cars loaded down with large bags of wool backed up to the doorway of Nakai Hall waiting for their wool to be unloaded and weighed. In the background, burlap sacks and plastic trash bags covered the floor waiting to be sorted. The Navajo Department of Agriculture is separating wool based on coarseness and texture to sell it to wool distributors.

"Herding sheep and cultivating wool has always been part of the Diné way of life," said President Nygren. "This event is the first of its kind and a promised kept to our elder shepherders who shared



with me the importance of sustaining wool. Our sheep are sacred because they provide us with the food we need, clothing, and an income for us to survive.”

This event was created to solve a long-standing issue for sheep producers. For many years shepherders have not had a place to sell their wool or the market prices were not worth the cost to haul the wool in. This event allows families to reinforce our cultural practices of sheep herding and create fond memories for future generations.

This was a collaborative effort with agents from the USDA on-site to complete purchase requests, and interns from Dine’ College Land Office packaging and sorting wool into burlap sacks.

“I want to use this event as a teaching tool and to gather data on the breeds of sheep currently on the Navajo Nation” Director Jessie Jim continued “There are certain breeds of sheep used for meat production, some are for wool, and it just depends on what you want to do with your herd.”

She noted much of the wool was transported in trash bags and hopes to use future workshops to educate the public on wool storage. Plastic bags do not allow the wool to breathe and may result in rotting of the wool. Wool has been traditionally stored in burlap bags, but now breathable mesh or plastic bags are available for their storage.

### **President Nygren appoints Reycita Toddy director of the Division of Human Resources**

July 17, 2024 – Reycita Toddy has seen it all in the world of Navajo human resources.

She comes close to having held every job in the Navajo Nation Division of Human Resources in her 30 years on the job. She’s held roles in personnel management, recruiting, employee relations and as the acting human resources.

Now she’s in a job she hasn’t had before. Last week, on July 8, she was appointed division director by Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren.

“We have so much work to do,” said President Buu Nygren. “When we work together, we can make historic changes. I believe that Ms. Toddy is the right person who can begin to make those changes in our division of human resources. Right now, we have a high unemployment rate across the

Navajo Nation and over 1,000 job vacancies at the Navajo Nation. This is unacceptable. We need to put our people to work.”

Toddy, who is Tewa and originally from Polacca, Ariz., brings decades of institutional knowledge about the Navajo Nation and human resources experience to the job. Her clans are Tewa Corn Clan, born for the Tewa Bear Clan.

Her appointment will require her to implement President Nygren’s executive order to fast track the hiring process to fill the estimated 1,500 tribal job vacancies.

“Our vacancies fluctuate from day to day,” Toddy said. “We may hire 50 people, and the same number are retiring or resigning. Right now, there are jobs people can apply for.”

One important change resulted from President Nygren’s 2024 executive order to fill vacancies. Rather than having to submit complete packets of credentials, transcripts, and certifications for each job an applicant wants to apply for, one is now sufficient and is available online for staff to evaluate. She said most important is to increase the number of staff in her division and the Division of Public Safety that is needed to conduct background checks for each new job applicant.

The high number of tribal job vacancies has been attributed to that roadblock, requiring as much as three to six months to have the checks completed. By that time, many applicants have moved on to jobs elsewhere.

“My job is to make things happen,” Toddy said. That will be possible, she added because President Nygren’s administration is aware of the problem and has assure her it will work to allocate more resources and support to the division, especially now since she has submitted her budget for the next fiscal year.

Toddy said one of her concerns is that some tribal employees must travel as far as Shiprock, Tuba City and Albuquerque for their jobs here in the tribal capital. Because of that, she will advocate on behalf of the President’s priority to build more affordable housing and tribal housing for employees’ convenience, safety, happiness and financial security – the foundation of human resources.

### **Navajo President Buu Nygren signs historic Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement with Hopi and Paiute leaders**

July 17, 2024 - Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren joined leaders from the Hopi Tribe and Southern San Juan Paiute Tribe to sign the historic Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement at the Heard Museum here today.

The agreement proposes to bring reliable, safe and clean drinking water to the tribes. It ensures a permanent homeland for Diné, Hopi and Southern Paiute peoples.

The signing ceremony included President Nygren, Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalyne Curley, Hopi Tribal Vice Chairman Craig Andrews and San Juan Southern Paiute President Robbin Preston, Jr.

Flagstaff Mayor Becky Daggett, Central Arizona Water Conservation District Board President Terry Goddard and Associate General Manager and Chief Water Resources Executive for the Salt River Project Leslie Meyers joined the tribal leaders for the ceremony. In total, at least 39 parties are involved in the settlement.

“We’ve come together and put our differences aside,” President Nygren said. “In Navajo, one of these things I like to say, ‘Yideesk’áadi Nitsáhákees’ – think for the future. And that’s what we are doing today. We have come together today to reflect and put our differences aside and plan for the next 100 years.”

Congress needs to pass legislation to approve the settlement that includes \$5 billion for water infrastructure projects for the three tribes. On July 8, the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Act of 2024 was introduced in Congress. The settlement addresses the tribes’ water settlement claims in Arizona.

Hopi Vice Chairman Andrews said the settlement ends decades of litigation and the uncertainty of water for tribes, towns and cities in northern Arizona.

“This is not just an Indian water settlement,” Andrews said. “It is an Arizona water settlement.” He explained that unity and collaboration has been a key strategy for all 39 parties to make this “Herculean” agreement possible. President Nygren said this water settlement ensures that the Southern Paiute Tribe gets water and land set aside for its own territory.

In total, the Navajo Nation will secure its water claims and build water infrastructure that will connect Navajo communities in Arizona. Those projects include the Iiná Bá - Paa Tuwaqat’si Pipeline, Southwest Navajo Regional Project, Ganado Area Project, Code Talker Lateral, Black Mesa Project, Four Corners Project, Kayenta Area Project, Lupton Area Project and local ground water projects.

“Most importantly, what this settlement secures is a permanent homeland for our children,” Speaker Curley said. “We got to protect what is theirs for the next 100 year, 200 years, 300 years.”

Next week, tribal leaders will lobby congressional leaders for the passage of the Arizona water settlement, President Nygren said. “Let’s keep the momentum going and let’s get this across the finish line. Water is life and there is nothing we can’t do without water.”

### **President Buu Nygren advocates for Navajo people in White House meeting on Office of Navajo-Hopi Indian Relocation**

July 16, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren met with White House officials this week to seek the appointment of a commissioner for the Office of Navajo-Hopi Indian Relocation in Flagstaff.

"The Nation does not want ONHIR to close," he said. "We seek its reform and proper funding to achieve our goals."

Speaking to White House Senior Domestic Policy Special Assistant Anthony “Morgan” Rodman and Director of Tribal Affairs Rose Petoskey here Tuesday, President Nygren thanked them for their

continued commitment to work in advocacy for thousands of Navajo people impacted by forced relocation resulting from the 1974 Navajo-Hopi Relocation Act.

President Nygren reiterated three key requests to the White House: the approval of an appointed commissioner by President Biden, the future status of the ONHIR office, and a potential visit from President Biden or Vice President Harris to the Navajo Nation.

He provided a historical context on the creation of relocation office. The Relocation Act mandated the removal of Navajo and Hopi families from their ancestral lands.

"This was the largest removal of U.S. citizens since the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II," President Nygren said. "Nearly 16,000 Navajos and 100 Hopis were relocated." He said the position of relocation commissioner has been vacant since 1994, with the agency being led by Executive Director Chris Bavasi ever since.

"Me, my predecessor Jonathan Nez, and other Navajo Nation Presidents have repeatedly called on the White House to appoint an ONHIR Commissioner, he said. "It is time for this call to be answered."

The President said he would like to see action on current efforts and requests, including pursuing another report by the Government Accounting Office on why the U.S. President has not appointed a commissioner. He said a need continues for the relocation office to remain operational.

"We request that the President appoint a commissioner with a mandate to faithfully carry out the relocation with care and humanity, working closely with the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe," President Nygren said.

He asked that funding for the office continue for the next 10 years to ensure the relocation process is brought to a just and humane conclusion. President Nygren reaffirmed his commitment to work collaboratively with the White House until relocation impacts are addressed and resolved.

"Together, we can address these longstanding issues to ensure that the Navajo people affected by the relocation receive the justice and support they deserve."

### **President Nygren Met with Top Leadership of the U.S. EPA**

July 16, 2024 – President Nygren told the federal EPA that the Navajo Nation stands firm against the transportation of uranium on its lands except for cleanup purposes.

"Our commitment is to protect the health and well-being of the Navajo people," President Nygren said. "We cannot allow any transportation of uranium that is not directly tied to the crucial cleanup efforts of abandoned mines."

The President spoke Tuesday to Janet McCabe, deputy administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9 Administrator Martha Guzman, Region 6 Administrator Earthea Nance, Deputy Assistant Administrator Clifford Villa, and Assistant Administrator Jane Nishida. Part of the meeting focused on establishing the first federal EPA office on tribal lands in Window Rock.

Cleaning up abandoned uranium mines is something the President said the Navajo people need to understand. He said that means improving how complex scientific, statistical, legal and regulatory information is explained and presented in the Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis documents related to abandoned mine projects.

The President also inquired about the verification and approval of High-Pressure Slurry Ablation technology by the USEPA in December 2023. This innovative technology reduces the volume, toxicity and mobility of contaminants.

The technology is seen as a promising solution to uranium mine cleanup. President Nygren said support is good for a Phase 2 Verification study at a larger scale to confirm the technology's efficacy and effectiveness. He said he would like to see the study start within the current construction season.

The President and deputy administrator McCabe talked about the need to clarify the post-remedy selection process. President Nygren asked for additional accountability and transparency during the pre-construction and design phases.

He asked for written confirmation from the USEPA on continued collaboration with the Navajo Nation EPA, DURAC and the communities. In a significant development, the President committed to work with USEPA to establish the first EPA office on tribal land, potentially in Window Rock. The creation of an office would mark a historic step toward improving communication and cooperation between the Navajo Nation and federal authorities.

"Having an EPA office in Window Rock would facilitate better coordination and faster response times," President Nygren said. "Ultimately, it would benefit our community's health and environment."

He said he hoped EPA would quickly identify optimal sites for waste repositories and develop a meaningful way to create proper disposal facilities.

### **President Buu Nygren Fights for the continuation of Dilkon NTIA grant in meeting with NTIA Associate Administrator Douglas Kinkoph**

July 16, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren met the National Telecommunications and Information Administration here Tuesday to try to save a \$33 million Dilkon Chapter grant from being pulled.

In October 2022, the Dilkon Chapter was awarded \$33,246,806.32 by the NTIA for a broadband project. The project is to connect 3,643 unserved households, anchor institutions and businesses. The connection would have a minimum of 25/3 Mbps wireless service.

This project spans an immense 1,637 square miles of the Navajo chapters of Dilkon, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone and Greasewood Springs Chapters in Legislative District 7.

But since then, the chapter has faced many personnel changes, and a lack of resources needed to get the grant off the ground.

On Tuesday, President Nygren discussed the problem with Douglas Kinkoph, associate administrator of the NTIA to try to extend the deadline and other issues putting the NTIA and Dilkon grants in jeopardy.

Navajo Nation Council Delegate Cherilyn Yazzie and Teresa Hopkins of the Navajo Nation Digital Equity Initiative Team were at the meeting to convey the efforts taking place to ensure the success of the needed vital projects.

The President's office stepped to provide support when it was made aware of the problems. Key issues include leadership turnover, community awareness gaps, unresponsive subrecipients, census discrepancies, and unresolved technical and financial assumptions. Delegate Yazzie told Mr. Kinkoph that internal issues are being addressed with President Nygren's help.

Mr. Kinkoph raised concerns about the possibility to achieve the original grant purpose, particularly given missed deadlines and incomplete responses by the Dilkon Chapter. He said notice have been given that the grant has been suspended pending termination if the chapter neglects to make substantial changes and provide requested information.

President Nygren acknowledged the miscommunication by the chapter. He proposed a collaborative effort to submit the necessary documentation to the NTIA promptly. "Due to miscommunication, we will work diligently to provide the required information by next week," he said.

President Nygren said he recognizes the potential of connecting thousands of Navajo households to improve their lives.

"This grant is crucial for our community's connectivity and overall development," he said. "We cannot afford to lose this opportunity."

He suggested that the Navajo Nation serve as a fiduciary agent to ensure the project's successful completion.

He said he would encourage the Navajo Nation Council to expedite and finish amendments to Title 26 of the Navajo Nation Code. The amendments would establish proper control and accountability regulations, prevent future issues, and ensure significant projects are managed efficiently.

### **President Buu Nygren advocates for enhanced collaboration with HUD and NHA to address critical housing needs in Navajo Nation**

July 16, 2024 – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren told federal Housing and Urban Development officials he would work with them to get the Navajo Housing Authority back on track to build more homes.

On Tuesday, the President heard concerns of Heidi J. Frechette, deputy assistant secretary of HUD's Office of Native American Programs, about NHA's high turnover rate and its substantial amount of unspent funds.

"We are committed to address this head-on," he said. "We're actively working to create a more stable and supportive work environment."

President Nygren told Ms. Frechette he appreciated HUD's critical support through the years, and said how important it's been for housing, hospitals and schools on the Navajo Nation. He said his commitment coming into office has been to provide affordable housing.

"Our long-term vision is to establish sustainable housing for the Navajo Nation," he said. "I look forward to continued partnership with HUD to reach this goal and to improve living conditions for our people."

NHA has a substantial amount of unspent Indian Housing Block Grant CARES and ARPA funds. Approximately \$13.1 million, or 59%, of the IHBG CARES funds, and \$48.6 million, or 98%, of the IHBG ARPA funds remain unspent.

President Nygren acknowledged the urgency to use this money because housing is needed and to avoid Congress asking NHA to return it to the treasury. "We recognize this problem," he said. "We have a strategic plan to expedite spending in a way that maximizes its impact on our community."

The deadline to spend \$1 million to avoid impacting fiscal year 2025 funding is of Sept. 30, 2024. This unspent amount spans three years. It raises concerns about potential non-compliance with HUD requirements.

President Nygren assured HUD officials that prioritizing projects and initiatives is already underway. He said new leadership at NHA is committed to improve employee retention with competitive benefits, better training and a supportive work culture.

"I'm confident these programs will significantly improve our productivity with the right support and guidance," he added.

President Nygren proposed holding quarterly meetings with himself, NHA and HUD. The meetings would serve as a way to discuss priorities, timelines and progress as a way to stay aligned, address challenges quickly, and celebrate successes.

**Statement Against Political Violence:**

July 13, 2024 - On behalf of the Navajo Nation and our people, I wish former President Donald Trump a speedy recovery from the apparent attempt on his life this afternoon at a campaign rally. I join leaders around the country and around the world to condemn political violence in any form. Our U.S. system of government allows for disagreement and political debate, but the line is always drawn at violence of any kind.

I ask our Navajo people to offer prayers for former President Donald Trump, his family and their safety, regardless of politics. Offer prayers for our leaders and our country to adhere to peaceful political debate and to reject violence of any kind.

Despite our different points of view, we are all five-fingered, intelligent beings and we live by the rule of law, not violence and fear.

**Statement on the San Carlos Fire**

July 13, 2024 - We send our thoughts and prayers to our relatives in San Carlos. The Navajo Nation and Navajo people stand with you in this time of tragedy and disaster. News of the devastation of the Watch Fire has reached us, your northern relatives.

We will be sending mutual aid and support. We are grateful for some of our local chapter governments and individual Diné people for mobilizing resources. As a government, our Navajo Emergency Medical Service Department is ready to deploy. The Office of the President and Vice President will be accepting donations to send down to San Carlos.

**Miss Navajo Nation contestants encouraged as representatives of their communities and families.**

July 12th, 2024 - The President told the Miss Navajo Nation contestants at the Navajo Nation Veterans Memorial Park here Friday that they are excellent representatives of their communities and families.

He said they're role models who are going to be challenged and pushed to the limit of their skills during the competition. This experience will help them with character development, the President said.



Each will be tested on their command of Diné culture, language, various talents, and what it means to be Diné. This year's competition consists of the biggest field of contestants in years. The Miss Navajo Nation pageant is one of the most popular attractions during the annual Navajo Nation Fair which this year is from Sept. 2 to 8, 2024.

This year's contestants are Quandinna Cheyenne Begay, 23, of Many Farms, Ranisha Chrislyn Begay, 23, of Rock Point, Niaomi Ranae Benally, 18, of Kayenta, Taneesha Francis, 19, of Chinle, Kiana Omi Toadlena, 24, of Window Rock, and Dayhenoa Ch'ikeeh Nizhoonii Yazzie, 20, of Monument Valley.

Each young woman briefly described who they are and shared one unique trait with President Nygren. Their interests range from fashion, running, softball, competing in collegiate sports and being inspired by former Miss Navajos and contestants to run for this year's title. Their academic interests include business, chemistry and health science, environmental health and public health, mathematics and veterinarian tech.

2023-2024 Miss Navajo Nation Amy N. Reeves-Begaye told the contestants that sportsmanship and sisterhood are values to the competition and beyond.

# DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## Administration

### Major Accomplishments

#### 30 Day Accomplishments

- Job Posting, Application, and Screening: Job postings occur via community engagement and the DPM website, open until filled or for two weeks. Applications are accepted from May to August 2024, with 97 received and 43 positions assessed. Screening follows E.O. No. 01-2024, and 79 applicants qualified.
- Published DCD Newsletter (September 2024).
- Assisted 25 chapters with IT technical support including WIND, passwords and login issues, network support, desktop and software support, printing, scanning, Google support, website training and support, etc.
- Weekly online tech support calls Tuesdays and Thursdays - Training and support on chapter websites, WIND support, Google support, general desktop computer and software support, etc
- Developed the budget for the FY 2025 Continuing Resolution budget for the 110 chapters and published it in the WIND.
- Black Mesa Land Use Plan certification, 09/03/2024 # RDCS-37-24 , the land use plan has been certified by the Resources and Development committee.
- For the month of September, a total of **59** Documents were signed.
  - 8- OR's were signed for ARPA
  - 1- Work Order
  - 32- Receiving Records
  - 5- Budget Revision Request
  - 4- Expenditure Authorization Signature Forms
  - 9- 164 Documents

#### 60 Day Accomplishments

- Interview Process and Current Status: Interviews occur within 15 days of referral, involving a panel of three department employees. All 79 qualified candidates are interviewed in person. The selection process is currently at the Division of Community Development level.
- Published DCD Newsletter (August 2024).
- Assisted 20 chapters with IT technical support including WIND, passwords and login issues, network support, desktop and software support, printing, scanning, Google support, website training and support, etc.
- Weekly online tech support calls Tuesdays and Thursdays - Training and support on chapter websites, WIND support, Google support, general desktop computer and software support, etc.

- For the month of August, a total of **56** Documents were signed
  - 15- 164 Documents
  - 17- Receiving Records
  - 7- Budget Revision Request
  - 3- Request for Payment
  - 4- Budget Authorization Signature Form
  - 4- Expenditure Authorization Signature Form
  - 3- Budgets
  - 2- Training Request Forms
  - 1- Contract Modification

## **90 Day Accomplishments**

- Published DCD Newsletter (July 2024).
- Assisted 34 chapters with IT technical support including WIND, passwords and login issues, network support, desktop and software support, printing, scanning, Google support, website training and support, etc.
- 2024 Navajo Chapters Tech Conference July 1- 3, 2024
  - Prepared and distributed conference materials, both printed and online
  - Coordinated with sponsors and gathering door prizes for conference
  - Coordinated with DCD staff for daily registration and sign-in activities
  - Ensured conference presenters were in their correct location and had proper equipment set up and collecting presentation materials
  - Coordinated with college support staff to address various issues with equipment and facilities
  - Coordinated with catering to ensure food was delivered at proper locations
  - Provided training on chapter websites for 8 sessions over two days
- Weekly online tech support calls Tuesdays and Thursdays - Training and support on chapter websites, WIND support, Google support, general desktop computer and software support, etc
- For the month of July, a total of **433** Documents were signed:
  - 354- Summary of Change Forms
    - 3- Budget Forms
    - 8- Budget Revision Requests
    - 10- Receiving Records
    - 6- 164 Documents
    - 23- Training Request Forms
    - 2- Budget Authorization Signature Form
    - 1- Expenditure Authorization Signature Form
    - 22- Request for Payment Forms
    - 4- Modification of Grant Agreement

## **Major Projects**

### **30 day Projects**

Continue to complete screen reviews of the WIND to prepare for necessary upgrades to the WIND to improve functionality and fix outstanding issues.

Currently, quality assessment, interview process and selection of applicants is a Division of Community Development level. All applications are forwarded from the Department of Personnel Management. DPM has launched a new website for hiring and assessments. DCD staff will be undergoing training to learn the new system.

### **60 Day Projects**

Complete WIND gap analysis to prepare for screen mockups.

### **90 Day Projects**

Complete WIND gap analysis and screen mockups and move to coding.

## **DCD ARPA Office**

### **Major Accomplishments**

Section 3, Council Delegate Regional Allocations

- All Section 3 projects were put on hold due to the enactment of CMY-28-24 on June 17, 2024. The DCD ARPA Office has begun coordinating with the Fiscal Recovery Fund Office, Office of the Controller, Office of Management & Budget, and the Department of Justice to plan for the implementation of this new legislation.
- The DCD ARPA Office has prepared a General Fund/Revenue Replacement Reserve (GF/RRR) transition plan for over 308 projects to be transferred to the Capital Projects Management Department, Administrative Services Center, Navajo Addressing Authority Department or Community Housing & Infrastructure Department.
- The DCD ARPA Office has met with the four IDIQ firms to close out projects under the IDIQ contract for Section 3 projects. Close out and status of Section 3 projects were obtained to utilize in the transition plan.
- The Council Delegate Regional Allocations, Section 3, projects were successfully removed from the external (federal) funding account lists and established under the General Fund with a N-account number. Some N- account numbers still need to be “activated” by the Office of the Controller.
- The DCD ARPA Office continues to maintain and monitor 48 projects which are on subrecipient agreements with LGA certified chapters/local governments. These projects remain under the ARPA/FRF funding source. Technical support continues to be provided to the fourteen (14) LGA certified chapters/local governments with SRAs under the administrative oversight of the DCD.

## Section 11, Bathroom Additions

Work Order 1 and Work 2 are complete.

- Twenty-seven (27) bathroom additions were constructed.

Work Order 3 – Fifty-six (56) names submitted for bathroom additions.

- Ten (10) were removed.
- Thirty (37) are 100% Complete
- The remaining units are at different stages of construction, most near completion.

Work Order 4 – Three Hundred Thirty (330) names have been submitted for assessments. As of this quarter:

- 86 have been removed
- 12 require additional research
- 133 are moving forward to construction work orders
- 32 qualify, but are on hold due to limited funding available for Delegates
- 29 are under review by NTUA Power
- 38 still require assessments

Work Order 5 – Fifty-six (56) names submitted for bathroom additions. After additional review:

- One (1) has a generator added to the scope.
- Seven (7) have been removed.
- Thirty (30) are complete.
- The remaining units are at different stages of construction.

Work Order 6 – Issued in June for forty (40) names to receive bathroom additions.

- Seven (7) have been removed.
- Ten (10) are complete.
- Remaining units are at different stages of construction

Work Order 7a – 105 names have been issued

- 25 units are at different stages of construction
- Remaining units are on the schedule for mobilization

Work Order 7b – 28 names

- Issued on 9/12/24

Work Order 8 – 42 names

- 5 have been removed
- The remaining units are at different stages of construction

Work Order 9 – 36 names

- Work order issued to NECA the week of 9/23/24

These bathroom addition projects continue to move forward through collaboration with HIS, NECA, and NTUA.

## **DCD Administrative Service Centers**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Vacancies**

For the quarter, ASC hired 5 new staff at the chapter level and ASC department. We still are looking to hire chapter staff. A challenge being presented is the implementation of a new software for DPM. The new portal is presenting challenges unforeseen, so it did slow hiring a bit, but hopefully the technical issues get handled quickly.

#### **CPS/Sanctions**

Successfully kept two chapters from going into sanctioned and receiving extensions on their CAPs. Completed 2 CAPs successfully. Continuing to work with Auditor Gen and chapters to address other audits and plans for those chapters that are now fully staffed.

#### **Chapters Daily Assistance**

ASC logged approximately 785 Technical Assistance Data Sheets for chapters for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. These Data sheets outline the type of assistance that ASC provides their chapters daily. Each ASC staff member logs which chapter they assist and what type of technical assistance given.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Assist with Chapter Budget Completion**

Focuses are on assisting chapters with their year end close outs and drawdowns. Once the new fiscal year starts, the focus is shifted to carryovers and completing allocations that weren't completed before Sept 30. Also, is the beginning of the year budgets for the chapters.

#### **Get up to date on EPAFs**

Goal is to have 100% completion of EPAFs for all BUs. The EPAFs are essential in approving bonuses and step increases for staff. We are currently at approximately 70% completed to be up to date with all.

#### **Uniform Training and Help Videos**

Develop and update critical training topics at the chapter level. Topics like FMS, Title 26, Travel Policy and Procedures, Officials training. Creating uniformed training materials to be used by all ASC offices. Also, creating reference videos for DCD website. The trainings will be

used for training Chapter staff and officials. Videos will be a reference for anybody to use. Videos ex. Navigating WIND system, DIBBS, How to get resolution on chapter agenda, etc.

## **Goals**

### **February 2025**

Preplan and prepare for New official's training. Begin booking and planning agenda with stakeholders. Prepared brainstorm session at the last ASC in-person meeting.

### **December 2024**

Prepare and plan for end-of-year and new-year budgets at the chapter level. Ensure everyone is ready for the end of the fiscal year and the beginning of the new Fiscal year.

### **March 2025**

Bring Vacancies to under 10% vacant for chapters. This includes being fully staffed at the ASC level.

## **DCD Capital Projects Management Project**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Eastern Agency Project Activity**

- IGA "I" -Red Rock Chapter Land Use Plan: \$75,000 NM CO
- The Scope of Work and the budget has been completed and ready for this project and forwarded it for the 164-review. Meeting scheduled with the Chapter in August had to be rescheduled. This meeting was scheduled on Sep 24, 2024.
- Counselor Chapter - \$ 558,000.00 to purchase and install home solar units for (30) homes and (2) off grid homes. The chapter has identified the homes to be served. Scope of Work and procurement pending.

#### **Northern Agency Project Activity**

- Nenahnezad Chapter Roof Repair - \$ 160,000.00 Roof assessment completed, design of new roof pending by contractor.
- Shiprock Veterans Center - \$ 343,000.00, Project referred to N.N. Veterans Office. IGA fully executed. Project is for the design of a new veteran's center.
- Shiprock Incident Command Center - Project sponsor is N.N. Public Safety. Project under construction.
- Red Valley (Navajo nation) Scattered Powerline Construct (NMCO - H2620\$300,000.00) received chapter resolution with 2 clients listed. Home Assessment is completed and being reviewed & question on status of homes.

## **Central Agency Project Activity**

- Tsaille Senior Center- Renovation is under construction. Few of the project scope of work are; New Gazebo, driveway asphalt repair, flagpoles and cooling unit repair, etc. project is near completion. Pre final inspection date and time will be set as the contractor notifies CPMD office of project completion.
- Indian Wells Senior Center- Four Seasons Contract amount \$306,348.68 for the SC Renovation. Notice to proceed signed and construction is 85% COMPLETE. This is a renovation of an existing Senior Center building. Contractor completing the project and a pre-final inspection will be set up and final close out.

## **Major Projects**

### **Western Agency**

- Tolani Lake Senior Center Design Phase – September 9, 2024-Architect IDSA - Selected for new building design. Draft Contract under review with DOJ office. In a meeting with Hon. Johnson this project has been revised to a building renovation of the existing facility. CPMD will proceed to stop the design of the new facility. CPMD will proceed to select a vendor for a building renovation. CPMD will contact the Senior Center to set a day to visit the site and compile a scope of work for a project advertisement.
- Tolani Lake Community Land Use Plan (CLUP) was recertified on May 18, 2022. Follow up will be made on the Implementation Plan.

### **Northern Agency**

- Two Grey Hills Bldg. # 8 Renovation - \$ 1,039,500.00, Building assessment to be scheduled, work order pending.
- Two Grey Hills Economic Infrastructure - \$ 200,000.00, Funding is for Plan & Design for the (60) Acre site.
- Red Valley Transfer Station - \$75,000.00, Project will be referred to on-call architect for design.
- REAUTH - TseDaaKaan Chapter Powerline Extension (H4187 \$442,144.74) There are contracts that need to be extended to 6.30.2025 and regain the NOO's. This Project is still ongoing.

### **Central Agency**

- Hardrock Vehicle Sihasin CAP-35-18 - Need to get approval from the Motor Vehicle Review Board in October and schedule solicitation for late October or November. Information requested by the MVRB has been received from the chapter. Unsure if the chapter will match it with their other funds or if it will be a separate item. This procurement will be prioritized in October.
- Lukachukai Welding Machinery - In contact with the chapter to refine the specifications for the equipment. Solicitation will likely occur in October. Shortfall is likely the chapter will need to identify match funds. This procurement will be



prioritized in October.

## **DCD Community Housing and Infrastructure Department, Community Development Block Grant, and the Housing Improvement Program**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Infrastructure Projects**

- CDBG: HUD/SWONAP extended FY21 ICDBG ARPA funds to December 31, 2025.
- CHID: Staff attended Administrative Assistant training.
- CDBG: Submitted Underwriting Exposure for 2025 to Risk Management (September 16, 2024).
- CDBG: Staff Contract/Grant Extension PAFs signed (September 4, 2024).

#### **Restoration and Assessments**

- CHID: Conducted 15 home assessments under ARPA and general funds.
- CHID: Completed 3 home restorations and started 2 more.
- CHID: Assisted with building materials for 2 homes.
- CHID: Issued 7 award notices to contractors for ARPA housing projects.
- CHID: Completed interior framing, flooring, insulation, drywall, painting, electrical, bathroom, and kitchen installations.
- CHID: Accomplishment: Charles Clark (7/25/2024) Completed renovation of bathroom and kitchen, including plumbing, electrical, and walk-in shower installation.
- CHID: Accomplishment: Alice Ashley (8/2/2024) Rebuilt and replaced dilapidated living room addition with new flooring and door installation.
- CHID: Accomplishment: Karen Holona (8/30/2024) Demoed and renovated bathroom and kitchen, including sub-flooring, drywall, and plumbing.

#### **Housing Improvement**

- HIP has been conducted presentation and outreach throughout the month of April, May and June 2024. There were a total of (22) chapters completed. About (500) applications given out and about (377) have been returned, with (215) completed files.
- (2) homes completed in Pinon and Dilkon in March 2024. Both keys handed over to clients in March. (2) new homes have started construction, both to be completed in July.
  - renovation project in Rock Point, AZ.
  - Eligibility Techs hired, for Crownpoint and Chinle agency offices. (2) Eligibility Techs and (2) Office Assistant positions are vacant. Also, (2) carpenter positions

vacant.

## **Major Projects**

### **Powerline Project**

- CDBG: Leupp (North Grand Falls) Powerline project for 23 homes completed on June 28, 2024. Final inspection conducted July 2024, pending final invoice payment.
- CDBG: Indian Wells Powerline project for 3 homes completed and energized in September 2024. Project closed out.

### **Restoration Project**

- Genevieve Tsosie (Not Started) Roof repairs on 300 sq. ft. area. Materials received, awaiting project start.
- Norma Begay (30% Completed) Window and shower replacements, bathroom repairs.
- Sarah Yazzie (Not Started) Repairing 450 sq. ft. of roofing. Materials received, awaiting project start.

### **New Housing Construction**

- HIP: Housing assistance for Janet Hatahley in Rock Point who was homeless and being living with relative therefore as one of the approved applicants for FY2021 her home will be completed on July 3, 2024 and the key will be given to her the same day.
- HIP: Housing assistance for Jessie Hammit in Lukachukai, who was living in a dilapidated hogan. She was approved for a new home for FY2021 therefore her house is being completed and timeline is July 26, 2024.
- HIP: Housing assistance for Lucy Begay in Rock Point will be assistance with renovation and addition to her house that just need a kitchen and additional room for her son who she lives with as a caretaker. Her assistance will be the last project for FY2021, which will be completed at the end of July 2024.

## **DCD Navajo Addressing Authority Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Shiprock Rural Addressing**

Intersection sign installation for Shiprock LRAC (local rural addressing committee) representatives continued ; also met with a lawyer (Chapella consulting) from Shiprock consolidated school district who was hired by DPS for ARPA section 4 under CJN-29-22 ; coordinating with Spatial Data Research (SDR) who is another contractor to DPS asking about spatial information that they can use toward a contract that DCD is not over-seeing for rural

addressing tasks ; however, none of that \$35-M is not going toward DCD's rural addressing program yet we still provide supporting information because DPS do not have datasets

### **US Census Bureau Partnership**

US Census Bureau partnership team members participated in the Navajo Chapter Technology conference in Farmington ; pilot project team member was co-presenter at the conference for over 200 participants ; census team is also conducting some fieldwork for address canvassing and includes part of Navajo Nation ; fieldwork involves test runs for validity of datasets and to encourage more reliable decennial count that is advantageous for both Navajo Nation and the federal government ; all chapters are encouraged to participate in the rural addressing phase for their community as part of additional support with census dataset

### **Sawmill Rural Addressing**

Sawmill chapter hired a Rural Addressing Technician to focus on the field data collection updates so that he can move onto road/street centerlines and identify BIA Roads that will need Right-Of-Way (R-O-W) packet approvals ; Clarence Tsosie from BIA Roads is reviewing the ROW packets signed by Sawmill chapter president ; LRAC Technician also took the lead role to organize the public hearing and the chapter passed resolution for the road/street names ; since this chapter is part of the group that chose to use ARPA funding under CJN-29-22, an IDIQ contractor was selected (LAM) but later, the Chapter elected to conduct their own work ; Sawmill LRAC also conducted field training during the Shiprock sign installations

### **Major Projects**

#### **Sweetwater Rural Addressing**

Sweetwater Chapter chose to take advantage of CJN-29-22 for ARPA funding section 3 ; IDIQ contractor was chosen for Sweetwater chapter to be JSRa through the sub- recipient agreement ; NAAD continues to meet with Parsons, the sub-contractors to JSRa of Tucson ; in addition to the rural addressing project that JSRa is assisting with, heavy equipment purchases with mobile home is also included ; feasibility assessment is being revised by the company after learning that they must assess existing road/streets of the community based on the distribution of addressable structures ; NNAA staff continues to provide additional guidance

#### **Proof of Residency Documents**

Staff provided orientation on the proof-of-residency (p-o-r) document at the DCD Navajo Chapter Technology Conference ; conference participants were given information about how the public can request for proof-of-residency documents and can be used to renew driver license or purchase vehicles ; Navajo Addressing Authority Department staff are doing their best to continue with this support to the Navajo Chapter membership without additional funding ; supplemental funding request was submitted as part of the unmet needs ; staff is seeking support so that NAAD can operate as a department ; there is no secretarial support staff at this time except the existing DCD administration staff

## **IDIQ Contractors Under ARPA**

due to recent legislation, ARPA funding section 3 under CJN-29-22 monitoring has changed ; the US Treasury deadline under ARPA funding guidelines appear to have been lifted and the ARPA funds are in transition to General Funds (RRR/GF) ; NAAD staff continue to meet with IDIQ contractors for planning the rural addressing implementation ; DCD, with ARPA staff guidance, will implement an internal team to work with IDIQ contractors and generate policies as part of engaging with the RRR/GF transition for the chapters

## **DCD Solid Waste Management**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Survey**

Our first major accomplishment was completing a comprehensive assessment from all 110 chapters. We compiled the data into a detailed analysis, supported by graph charts, to better understand the solid waste management needs across the reservation.

#### **Invoice Payments**

Our second accomplishment is working with the chapters to assist them in paying their solid waste invoices, ensuring they can meet their obligations for waste management services.

#### **Major Projects**

- Ensure that all chapter invoices are paid and to assist chapters without solid waste bins by helping them acquire bins from local sanitation services.
- Conduct an on-site illegal dumping assessment for all chapters and to seek a consultant who can assist with cleaning up the identified dumping sites.
- Conduct a detailed illegal dumping assessment across all 110 chapters, pinpointing the sites and documenting them with photos. We will also look for a consultant to assist with the cleanup of these sites.

## **DIVISION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Administration**

## **DED Business Regulatory Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **NBOA Compliance and Weights & Measures compliance**

- Attended 102 bid openings, reviewed 200 164 review contracts, certified 77 measuring devices with weights and measures.

- Attended meeting with Chief of Staff and other Navajo Nation entities to assist with compliance issues on contracts and initiatives from the Nygren Administration

### **Navajo Corporations Code and Uniform Commercial Code**

- Registered and Recorded 30 Corporation documents registered and recorded per quarter. Registered and recorded 105 Corporation Financial Statements.
- Assisted stakeholders and Navajo Nation departments with inquiries on the Navajo corporation's code and Uniform Commercial code.

### **Assisting Division of Economic Development**

- Bridging Tech + Tradition Conference (August 22-23, 2024)
- Assisted in organizing 2-day event in Bernalillo, NM, featuring discussions on Advanced Manufacturing, AI, Digital Finance, and Future Education. Engaged over 150 attendees, including educators, industry professionals, and government representatives. Success of the conference has encouraged the partners to beginning planning a follow up conference to be hosted at ASU.

### **Navajo Small Business Credit Initiative**

- Actively engaged in marketing and promotion of the Navajo Small Business Credit Initiative loan program. Maintained the NSBCI.org website Facilitated communication with NSBCI partners Developed a social media presence to encourage adoption of the program by Navajo Businesses and to provide channels of communication for potential borrowers.
- DED Website NavajoEconomy.org
- Maintain the DED website with Department Information, NBOA source listing, Contract Opportunities, Conferences, and News & Announcements. Manage the contact forms for the Division Departments.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Expenditure of Revenue Plan**

This is still pending with Legislative council despite my efforts to move it forward. Waiting on reply from Luralene Tapahe with Office of Legislative Services on moving this initiative forward.

#### **BRD Database**

Project is currently seeking funding and will seek ARPA reallocated funding as this was the original source of the funding. However, it was reallocated per the 25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council with ARPA.

#### **NCC and UCC Amendments**

Currently working with Department of Justice on this and its on-going. BRD will be amending the Navajo Corporations Code, and Uniform Commercial Code.

## **DED Chinle Regional Business Development Office**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Professional Service contract for HVAC Services**

Professional Service Contract 164 Doc. 021405 HVAC Services for Chinle Regional Business Development Office has completed the 164 Review and is pending a Notice to Proceed at Purchasing Dept. Our accomplishment would be successful if we get a contract number to encumber the funds.

#### **PSC Environmental Assesment**

Professional Service Contract for Environmental Assessment FY 2024, the contracted firm was able to obtain necessary information to move forth with the project to near completion. CRBDO provided technical assistance to support the fruition of these EA reports by corresponding closely with NNEPA.

#### **CO 15862 Environmental Assesment**

Professional Service Contract for Environmental Assessment for four business sites from FY 2023 was completed, CRBDO received the reports and reviewed them. It was sufficient and the invoice was paid out. The company has confirmed the receipt of their payment on this invoice.

#### **Business Site Lease Assignment/Training**

A meeting was initiated to process an Assignment of Lease for FUELCO US dba: Many Farms 7 to 11 Convenience store. Assignor will be FUELCO US and Assignee will be UPOP. The accomplishment was identifying the strategy to process the lease assignment in collaboration **leasing procedures, this involved lengthy discussion with much questions from both sides.** Both leases are BIA leases and pertinent information will be gathered for this lease transaction between both RBDO Offices while ensuring **both parties were orientated on the** with Lessee Mark Stowers and Andrew Day. Jobs created has not been determined yet.

#### **Business Plans**

Two individuals were assisted with business plan services. Mr. Jarrett Barton is planning to open a coffee Hub with a small deli in the Pinon area. Laurie Vanwinkle wishes to embark on his deceased brother's business of tire & auto glass recycling. Both parties were assisted with details of the business plan and its components. Templates were provided to two individuals and follow up appointments were made.

#### **Business Site Leasing and Land Withdrawl**

A total of two business site leases were transacted in the fourth quarter. A business site lease was issued to Burger King to renew its lease for 25 more years. B & C Towing, LLC was

issued a Revocable Use Permit. Burger King is located in Chinle while B & C Towing is located in Many Farms, AZ

## **Major Projects**

### **Total Renal Care – Four Corners Dialysis Clinics, LLC**

A new Business Site Lease for TRC – Four Corners Dialysis Clinics, LLC is being negotiated and finalized for the NN 164 Executive Review Process and approval by the DED Approving Committee. Legal representative of TRC has amended several portions of Part 1 Business Site Lease and now being reviewed by Chinle RBDO/DOJ for sufficiency.

### **Baldwin’s Lease Novation**

Lease Novation for a BIA Lease in Chinle, Arizona where Lease was recently assigned from a former Lessee, Sybil Baldwin, to another family member, Walter Baldwin, who requested Lease Novation to be governed by the Navajo Nation Business Site Lease regulations. The legal team representing the Lessee is in negotiations with DOJ for information and other lease matters. Letter of intent for Lease Novation has been received and now pending the completion of the process.

### **BSL Unilateral Termination-Jumbo**

After months of working on unilateral termination of BSL No. CH-02-125; Emerson Jumbo, dba, Jumbo Automotive located in Chinle, Arizona. DOJ has forwarded to the Attorney General for surname.

### **BSL No. CH-04-127; Request for Lease Compliance-Howard Smith**

Chinle RBDO requested to the BIA Realty Chinle Agency for lease compliance on Business Site Lease No. CH-04-127; Howard W. Smith, dba, Spider Rock Campground & RV Park in Chinle, Arizona. The active lease is in serious rental default with no development. Chinle RBDO will be working with BIA Realty to terminate the lease.

### **PSC- Re-survey Business Sites**

Professional Services Contract with Goldtooth Precision Solutions, Inc. is pending approval for 164 Review at the DOJ. These six (6) business sites in Chinle need to be re-surveyed for negotiating business site leases.

### **Baskin Robbins/Dunkin Donuts**

Chinle RBDO received a letter of intent to apply for a business site lease for a Baskin Robbins and Dunkin Donuts business development in Chinle. Entrepreneur, Reuben Mike, was orientated and requested to submit a business plan, a proposal with schematic and financial projects. He will update his business registration with the Business Regulatory Office and continue to work with CRBDO to obtain a lease.

## **Bashas**

Chinle RBDO met with Eddie Bashas for their interest for a new site. They would like to be the lessee with at least a 20 acre site for other businesses to develop on this plaza and Bashas would be the lessee to either sublease or use internal tenant agreements to house other businesses. Land withdrawal procedures are in review.

# **Eastern Regional Business Development Office**

## **Major Accomplishments**

### **Training and Workshops**

ERBDO goal for this quarter was to provide 3 workshops, we exceeded our goal of delivering 8 training sessions/workshops in the fourth quarter. Seven were from ERBDO's Wednesdays *Business Growth Workshops* and one the ERBDO sponsored. By actively engaging with the eastern Navajo community, ERBDO increased awareness of the valuable services we offer, both directly and indirectly. This expanded exposure will likely attract more individuals interested in pursuing business ventures and leasing sites on the Nation's land.

### **Assist clients with Business Plans, pursue Certification or Corporate Applications**

ERBDO's goal for this quarter was to provide assistance to 3 clients, we exceed our goal of assisting 7 clients with business plans, pursue certification, and/or corporate applications in the fourth quarter. By providing guidance and support, you increase the likelihood of clients achieving their goals. This could mean more businesses successfully launching. The assistance can empower clients, giving them the confidence to take on new challenges and pursue their ambitions. This can lead to greater self-efficacy and a willingness to take calculated risks.

### **Identified and/or applied clients for funding resources**

ERBDO's goal was to identify 2 clients to pursue funding applications, ERBDO exceed this goal by identifying 3 clients. With the influx of capital, the business can invest in expansion, hire additional staff, increase marketing efforts, and ultimately generate more revenue. This contributes to the local economy and creates opportunities for others. By facilitating funding for local entrepreneurs, we play a part in fostering economic development and improving the quality of life for everyone.

### **Job monitoring and/or creation**

ERBDO's goal was to generate 6 jobs, potentially including positions within our lessee's company/companies. This quarter, a total of 8 jobs were created and filled. More people working means more spending, which stimulates businesses and leads to further growth. Increased employment leads to more income tax and sales tax revenues for governments, including our own.

## **Major Projects**



### **Crownpoint Convenience Store**

The lessee was granted an extension to meet the stipulations of Department of Justice for a lease amendment. This is a crucial step outlined in the recently amended Business Site Lease (BSL) agreement. The lessee is determined to work with the Navajo Small Business Credit Intuitive to a business loan. Once the loan review is complete and the bank generates a commitment letter, the BSL packet will be presented to the BSL Approving Committee for final consideration. We remain committed to keeping you informed about the progress of this project. We appreciate your continued patience and support. The building infrastructure has been successfully delivered to Crownpoint, New Mexico. Project lead is Stephany K. Skeets, Senior Economic Development Specialist.

### **Crownpoint Hotel**

The Eastern Regional Business Development Office (ERBDO) resubmitted the Business Site Lease (BSL) packet back to the 164 Executive Reviews. Currently, the packet is at the Department of Justice. Thereafter, it will make its way to the OPVP. Two Navajo Nation Council committees have passed legislation to provide the shortfall monies from the Sihasin Fund. Before it moves to Naa'bik'iyati' Committee and full council, a BSL must be approved. We are committed to providing regular updates on the progress of the lease agreement. We appreciate your understanding and patience as we navigate this process. Project lead is Stephany K. Skeets, Senior Economic Development Specialist.

### **Pueblo Pintado Market**

Red Mesa Trading Co. has taken the helm as the store operator, and we are excited to see them thrive in this new venture. This reopening marks a significant accomplishment for the Eastern Navajo Agency and the Division of Economic Development (DED). It signifies our dedication to fostering economic growth and creating a vibrant community within the Navajo Nation. The Pueblo Pintado Market will bring a multitude of benefits to the region:

- **Job Creation:** New employment opportunities will be available for tribal members, contributing to a stronger local economy.
- **Increased Sales and Tax Revenue:** The market will generate sales tax revenue that can be reinvested in vital community programs and services.
- **Improved Quality of Life:** Residents will now have access to essential goods right in their own backyard, eliminating the need for long trips and associated costs.
- **Enhanced Convenience:** Local access to food and other necessities will improve the overall quality of life for tribal residents.

The reopening journey wasn't without its challenges. The building sustained fire damage several years ago, requiring extensive reconstruction and upgrades to infrastructure, walls, flooring, and ceilings. We commend the dedication and perseverance of all involved parties who made this day possible. We encourage everyone to visit the Pueblo Pintado Market and support this exciting new chapter for the Eastern Navajo Nation. ERBDO is working with Red Mesa

Trading Co. to continue renovating the property. Project lead is Edgar Tohtsoni, *Senior Economic Development Specialist*.

## **Ft. Defiance Regional Business Development Office**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **30 Day Accomplishments**

1. Seeking (02) grants from Department of Commerce and Small business

#### **60 Day Accomplishments**

- Business Site Leasing: all five are still ongoing due to many issues that came up this past quarter due to the following: procurement clearances timeline expired, EA, surveys not accurate by survey reports, EA not complete. All five leases are in process now and will plan on having 2-3 approved within the quarter.
- Ft Defiance Mobile Home Park, Ft Defiance, AZ
- REZ Solutions Animal Shelters, Ft. Defiance, AZ
- AND Fitness, Window Rock, AZ
- Red Mesa Trading, Ft. Defiance, AZ (lease mod)
- Red Mesa Trading, Ganado, AZ (Emergency Permit for new store) - begin BSL Process
- GPWest – Ganado, AZ (Emergency Permit for new Post Office) - begin BSL process so construction can commence

#### **90 Day Accomplishments**

- Ii'na Marketing Place, Tohatchi, New Mexico
- New Business owners coming in for assistance:
  - -New BSL technical assistance x 5
  - -New Business asking for training on small business x 7 (await new training format)
- Training of Small Business with Entrepreneurs. Trainers-SBA/NPC & WESST Total participation was averaged at 14 sessions with 7-10 attendance. The number of participants varied due to scheduling. Up to 10 participants are ready for the last loan orientation on 9/17/24. Noted that two weeks per month was a bit much for the participants, next training model will be monthly for 3-4 hours on each topic per trainer.

### **Major Projects**

#### **30 Day Projects**

- Seek funding for RBDO's projects/Training
- Develop a new training for next round of participants. (Estimate at least 15)

- Begin working with NSBCI for new lending program, expect more training on the processes for loan processing by RBDO's.

There were (02) two completed contracts for the following

- Contracts are for Land Survey and Appraisal for new and existing business site leases
- Land Designation submitted for the business just waiting for General Land Leasing Office to get the Business Site Lease in process for REZ Solutions Animal Shelters, Ft. Defiance, AZ
- AND Fitness, Window Rock, AZ Res Solutions, Ft Defiance, AZ

## **Shiprock Regional Business Development Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Burger King Business Site Lease**

The Shiprock Regional Business Development Office (RBDO) renegotiated a new lease for the Burger King franchisee in Shiprock. This renewal will ensure the continued operation of the popular fast-food restaurant in the community

The Burger King franchise has been a valuable member of the Shiprock business community for over 20 years, providing convenient and affordable dining options for residents and visitors alike.

### **10 Lease Transactions Approved**

- New Lease - Giant Four Corners, Inc
- New Lease - ONMIKE Enterprise
- New Lease - Wells Fargo
- New Lease - Sanders Fuel Center
- EOA - Virgil Kirk Jr. and Virginia Kirk
- EOA - San Juan County Federation of Democratic Women (SJCFDW)
- RUP - Progressus Development
- RUP - Lula Jackson
- RUP - Arval McCabe
- RUP - Northern Navajo Fair Board

### **10 Trainings and Workshops completed in Second Quarter**

- 2024-08-08 Indianpreneurship - Marketing
- 2024-08-09 Indianpreneurship - Financials
- 2024-08-07 Utah Resource Fair-Chapter Visits
- 2024-08-19 BSL Management Plan - SBDD Meeting
- 2024-08-30 Land Surveys - SBDD Meeting
- 2024-08-07 Leasing Authority - Ft. Defiance Chapter
- 2024-08-29 Leasing Authority - Eastern RBDO
- 2024-08-09 BSL Management Plan/Leasing Authority - Teec Nos Pos CLUPC

- 2024-09-18 Dine College Career Fair
- 2024-09-12 BSL Management Plan/Leasing Authority - Beclabito CLUPC

## **Major Projects**

### **Nataani Nez Restaurant**

Shiprock One, LLC took over the former Redd/Lechee NAPA Auto Parts business site. The lessee is remodeling the space for a restaurant. The Shiprock RBDO has requested funding to run a gas line to service the future restaurant. The grand opening was pushed back to November 2024.

### **Business Site Lease Management Plan Amendments**

Our office is looking to streamline the business site lease management plan to incorporate best practices since the last update in 2009. Our office worked with the Small Business Development Department and Project Development Department before the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposed amendments were submitted to DOJ. Our office is assisting in the presentation of the amendments to the Resource and Development Committee for adoption. Working with RDC to incorporate amendments to present to the RDC for action.

### **Recruit New for Prime Former Shiprock Speedway Business Site**

The Shiprock RBDO is working to recruit new lessee for the development of the former Speedway Convenience store business site. The underground fuel storage tanks have been removed and the business site is being prepped for a new lease. The Shiprock RBDO will advertise for proposals to develop the business site in November 2024 pending the final clearance from the Navajo Nation EPA of the site from contamination.

## **Western Regional Business Development Office**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Presentations**

Western RBDO did to presentation on Business Site Leasing, business planning, business certification, and land withdrawal/Land Designation to two Chapter during the fourth quarter of FY 2024; Luepp Chapter September 4, 2024 and Oljato Chapter July 19, 2024.

#### **Grand Openings**

Horseshoe Bend Holdings signing of the Business Site Lease and Grand Opening on Friday, September 27, 2024

#### **Jobs**

Thirty-two jobs and on to the list during the fourth quarter of FY 2024 for Western Navajo Agency-eighteen Chapters. Half of the employment being reported coming from Horseshoe

Bend Holdings Grand Opening, and more jobs will come from the development. Currently they have about fifteen to twenty employees and this will increase over time.

## **Major Projects**

### **CHilchinbeto Convenient Store**

Project will be moving forward, funding in the FRF for One million, two hundred and fifty thousand, and three million from Abandon Land Mines (AML) and other source of funding to complete the project.

### **Abandon business site cleanup**

Project were considered eligible for FRF funding, no funding allocations for the project from the FRF funds, and the site are; Tseyi-Anasazi Inn, Black Mesa Shopping Center/Trailer Court, Cowsprings Trading Post, and Van's/Kerley Valley Trading post. Three of the sites; Tseyi, Black Mesa, and Vans have the potential for redevelopment. Continue looking for an alternate funding source.

### **Proposed Hotel**

The Tuba City Proposed Hotel had a major shortfall in funding the hotel. About twenty-five million dollars is required to build a one hundred room hotel. The shortfall of about seventeen million dollars. The site is still being considered for development; hold off on the hotel and to move forward with restaurants.

## **DED Support Services Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **NSBCI Business unit Set Up**

The Navajo Small Business Capital Initiative (NSBCI) budget was established on the FMIS as K241500 totaling \$26,189,941.00.

#### **Implemented the ARPA K211516 Economic Relief Program**

The Division completed the K211516 Small Business and Economic Relief Program on August 17, 2024. The contractor, HN4 Solutions LLC, provided economic relief to 100 small businesses and 441 Artisan businesses totaling \$6,269,329.00. Mr. Spencer Willie, (owner), hired Navajo speaking employees, implemented major community outreach through social media & events, and accounted for funds using a CPA.

#### **Hired a Department Manager**

The Division hired, Mr. Theo Shorty, as the Support Services Department Manager.

- Duties include oversight of the annual budget process with the ASO and Senior Accountant.

- Overseeing the Human Resources responsibilities of the Division such as employee evaluations, timely processing of PAFs, employee hiring and separation, and employee discipline.
- Oversee the Karigan Professional Office Complex including repair and maintenance, improvements, and safety work place.
- Oversee the IT network, server, telephone system and fiber optic internet connectivity.
- Oversee the small business financing programs including the BIDF and NSBCI programs.

## **Major Projects**

### **NSBCI Positions**

- The Division hired a Program Manager, Ms. Patricia Slim, and Senior Accountant, Ms. Yolanda Gene. A third position is currently being reclassified to be a Senior Auditor
- The Program Manager, Ms. Slim, will oversee the implementation of the \$88.7 million Navajo Small Business Credit Initiative Program.

### **NSBCI partner Change Labs**

- The sub recipient agreement (contract) was signed by President Buu Nygren establishing the partnership between the Nation and Change Labs.
- The Division Director, Tony Skrelunas, on behalf of the Nation signed three lender participation agreements between Change Labs and 3 bank lenders.
- The first tranche payment of \$7 million to Change Labs is in progress at the OOC Cashiers Office.
- After Change Labs receives their payment of \$7 million, the Partner will be 100% operational. Their first small business loans will be distributed to Navajo entrepreneurs during November 2024.

### **Computer Inventory**

- An inventory worksheet is being distributed to each department manager to update their current computer inventory.

## **DED Project Development Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Technical Assistance and Training**

- Staff attended Project Management Principles Training
- Shiprock Pinnacle Hotel Development groundbreaking
- Development of the 2025 FY Budget
- Bashas/Raley's proposed major development within the Chinle, AZ area
- Horseshoe bend Groundbreaking

## **Major Projects**

### **Shonto Hotel**

- 164 for mod#5 to extend the contract term to November, 2024.
- Project is 90% complete and scheduled to open in November 2024.
- Medallion Hospitality will be the management company under LaQuinta franchise.

### **Round Rock Convenience Store**

- Contract with Dyron Murphy Architects to provide design and engineering services for the 6,500 square foot convenience store in Round Rock, Arizona
- Contract with ETD, Inc. to conduct and Environmental Assessment for the withdrawn 4.11 acres commercial site.
- Contract with Arviso Construction Company for Phase I – site development for Round Rock

### **Former Navajo Generating Station Redevelopment Plan**

- Contract with Indigenous Design Studio+ for the Redevelopment Plan of the former NGS site in Leupp, AZ

### **DED 5 Year Plan 2023 - 2028**

- The 164 review completed all reviews and is with RDC for review and approval.
- PDD coordinated with RBDO staff, Tourism and SBDD department on the project listing.

### **EDA Grant: Department of Commerce**

- The EDA fund will be used to fund the contract for the NGS Redevelopment Plan.
- The EDA grant is extended to June 2025.
- Met with EDA Seattle on planning grant on projects for Planning and Public Works Grants Submission

### **Church Rock Industrial Park**

- The CMAR contract with NECA is 80% complete with the construction of the facility.
- Inspection Services Contract Modification #2 executed with Eagle Flight Development, LLC. This includes the Shonto Hotel Construction Project.
- Emergency Operating Agreement with Nourican Portfolio 1, LLC dba Ameri Gloves Manufacturing, LLC was executed for Building 1 and Expansion.

### **Business Site Lease Approved /Executed**

- Navajo Oil and Gas, Propane Distribution Center in Montezuma Creek, Utah.
- Navajo Tribal Utility Authority – Fort Defiance District Office in Fort Defiance, Arizona.
- Permit for Dine’ Introspective was executed in September 2024 in Shiprock, NM
- Met with IKG on BSL items for a Helipad at NGS Site in LeChee, AZ

- Met with NNOGC on items for C-store at Lupton, AZ
- Renewed THE Realty EOA for the industrial building in Fort Defiance Industrial Park, in Fort Defiance, Arizona

## **DED Real Estate Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Intertribal Workshop and Consultation**

RED held a team workshop in Scottsdale, Arizona, to outline goals for the new fiscal year, focusing on settlements, lease expirations, and the resolution of pending disputes. Additionally, the department met with the Salt River-Pima Indian Community to gain insights into their business site lease management, sharing best practices and discussing challenges specific to Navajo's leasing process.

The accomplishment of networking with other tribes, particularly the Salt River-Pima Indian Community, to enhance the current process within the Navajo Nation can be described as a strategic collaboration aimed at leveraging best practices. By engaging in meaningful dialogue with a successful tribal nation that has effectively managed and developed its business site leases, the Real Estate Department (RED) gained invaluable insights into more efficient procedures and systems. This collaboration provided an opportunity to compare challenges, share knowledge, and explore innovative solutions to improve the Navajo Nation's business site lease management process, potentially leading to more streamlined operations, improved regulatory compliance, and enhanced economic growth within the Nation.

This effort also underscores RED's commitment to building intertribal relationships and fostering an environment of shared learning that can drive long-term development and sustainability for the Navajo Nation's economic initiatives.

#### **AI Forum Assistance and Organization**

For this quarter, the successful organization and contribution to the AI Forum Part 1 held in August, a key event that positioned the department as a leader in technology innovation and collaboration. This event fostered future opportunities and collaborations, marking a significant milestone for the department in facilitating forward-thinking initiatives.

RED assisted in organizing and facilitating the first Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, and AI Forum Part 1, held in Santa Ana, NM. Weekly coordination meetings ensured a smooth event, with RED contributing to various roles including registration, ushering, and assisting guest speakers. The success of this event led to a follow-up forum being scheduled for January 2025.

#### **AI Conference Presentation:**



A RED staff member presented at the AI Forum, demonstrating how to build a custom computer to save money. This presentation sparked collaboration opportunities with the DIT Department to explore cost-saving strategies for the Nation's technology infrastructure

### **Business Site Lease Settlements**

RED made significant progress in resolving business site lease and permit defaults. Many of these settlements had been pending for nearly a year, but through collaboration with the Agency RBDO's, DOJ's ECD Unit, RED was able to expedite and resolve these issues, ensuring compliance and proper movement on each case.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Business Site Lease and Permit Filing**

The Real Estate Department has been actively working to ensure all business site leases, permits, and agreements are properly filed, organized, and digitized within the department. This includes all expiring Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) leases that will soon be novated and transitioned under the control of the Navajo Nation, making them ready for future leasing opportunities. This project is in response to a legislative directive from the Resources and Development Committee, a key oversight body for the Division of Economic Development (DED).

The project involves cataloging vital documents that predate the establishment of the Real Estate Department, containing crucial background information on business sites that have since been vacated, expired, novated, or abandoned. Many of these sites are currently under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) restrictions due to contamination, requiring thorough cleanups before they can be repurposed. Some of these buildings have the potential for renovation and future use, pending EPA abatement, cost assessments, and contract procurement for the necessary cleanup.

By scanning and organizing these documents into the Real Estate Department's system, the department will be able to conduct more effective analyses of each project, determining the level of priority based on the status of the site and its potential for redevelopment. This project ensures transparency, readiness for future leasing, and better oversight of Navajo Nation business assets.

#### **NNBSL Management Plan Amendments**

The Real Estate Department (RED) is close to completing the amendments to the Navajo Nation Business Site Lease Management Plan. RED worked collaboratively with the Economic and Community Development Unit (ECDU) attorneys, engaging in weekly meetings to ensure the requested changes align with current policies and procedures, as the last amendments were over a decade old. This effort is driven by a request from the oversight committee to bring the regulations up to date.

### **Addressing long-term EPA holds**

The Real Estate Department (RED) has acquired a comprehensive list of business sites across the Navajo Nation that are under the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency (NNEPA) hold due to contamination. These sites, which have been vacated, expired, novated, or abandoned, are currently restricted from further use until environmental cleanups are completed.

Many of these business sites have the potential for renovation and future business development once EPA-mandated cleanups are finalized. However, before any redevelopment can occur, each site requires an abatement process, cost assessments, and contract procurement to secure the necessary cleanup services. RED is taking proactive steps to review the cost analysis for each of these business sites, which will help prepare them for future leasing and business opportunities.

Though this is a long-term project, RED is committed to resolving these longstanding environmental issues. Addressing these unresolved sites is critical to repurposing them for productive business use, ultimately contributing to economic growth and sustainable development on the Navajo Nation.

## **DED Small Business Development Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Administrative Review Documents**

- Executive Official Review No. 023120 Business Site Lease Modification One Adventurous Antelope Canyon Photo Tours, LLC, Sponsored by Western Regional Business Development Office.
- Executive Official Review No 23121 Business Site Lease Modification One Blackstreak Holding. Western Regional Business Development Office.
- Executive Official Review No 23174 Business Site Lease Novation FD-01-204 (R.H. Mike Enterprises, Inc), Shiprock Regional Business Development Office.
- Executive Official Review No 022567 Reissued: 8.6.2024. BSL for CSB Enterprises, LLC., Eastern Regional Business Development Office.
- Executive Official Review No 022503 New Lease-Shiprock Windows & Glass, LLC., Shiprock RBDO

The Department initiated One Section 164 Review Document:

- Document No. 023474 Design/Build Agreement Keyah Construction, Inc., SBDD

#### **Permits (EOA, COA, & RUP)**

The Department reviewed and signed Six (06) Emergency Operating Agreements:

- RAC Shiprock, LLC for a 1.12-Acre site located in Shiprock, NM. Sponsored by Shiprock RBDO.

- Darla Whitney-Wekkes, San Juan County Federation of Democratic Women (SJCFDW), Shiprock, New Mexico. Sponsored by Shiprock RBDO.
- Emmet Fowler, Old Red Lake Trading Post, Red Lake, Arizona. Sponsored by Western RBDO.
- S&S Wolf Sheds, LLC. Sponsored by Western RBDO.
- TRC-Four Corners Dialysis Clinics, LLC. Sponsored by Western RBDO.
- Terraform Development, LLC., Tuba City, Arizona, Sponsored by Western RBDO.

The Department reviewed and signed Three (03) Revocable Use Permits:

- Northern Navajo Fair Board. One (1) month for \$100.00. Sponsored by Shiprock RBDO.
- Arval T. McCabe, Northern Navajo Nation Fair, October 3-6, 2024. Former Shawn Redd, \$200/month. Sponsored by Western RBDO.
- Lula Jackson, Campaign Headquarter, Former William Badoni business site, Shiprock, NM. 3 months. Sponsored by Western RBDO.

### **Business Site Lease Approving Committee Meetings**

Scheduled Six (06) Regular Meetings for the Business Site Lease Approving Committee for the fourth quarter:

Tuesday, July 02, 2024; Regular Meeting:

- Proposed Resolution No. 0232-2024
  - Sponsor: Sally Yabeny, Senior Economic Development Specialist
  - An Action Relating to Economic Development: Approving the new Business Site Lease between the Navajo Nation and Giant Four Corners, Inc, c/o 7-Eleven, Inc. on lands located in Newcomb, Navajo Nation, New Mexico.
  - Approved by Resolution No. DEDA-207-2024.
  - Proposed Resolution No. 0233-2024
  - Sponsor: Sally Yabeny, Senior Economic Development Specialist
  - An Action Relating to Economic Development: Approving a new Business Site Lease between the Navajo Nation and ON MIKE ENTERPRISE, INC., dba: Burger King, Shiprock, Navajo Nation, New Mexico.
- Approved by Resolution No. DEDA-208-2024.

Monday, August 05, 2024

- Proposed Resolution No. 0234-2024
- Sponsor: Sharlene Begay-Platero, Industrial Development Specialist
- An Action Relating to Economic Development: Approving a Business Site Lease Agreement between the Navajo Nation and Navajo Nation Oil & Gas Company, Montezuma Creek, UT.
- Approved by Resolution No. DEDA-209-2024.
- Proposed Resolution No. 0235-2024
- Sponsor: Sally Yabeny, Senior Economic Development Specialist
- An Action Relating to Economic Development: Approving a new Business Site Lease between the Navajo Nation and Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., Shiprock, New Mexico.

- Approved by Resolution No. DEDA-210-2024.
- Proposed Resolution No. 0236-2024
- Sponsor: Anslem Harvey, Senior Economic Development Specialist
- An Action Relating to Economic Development: Approving the Business Site Lease between the Navajo Nation and D.P. Mike Enterprise, Inc., Chinle, Navajo Nation (Arizona).
- Approved by Resolution No. DEDA-211-2024.

Thursday, August 15, 2024

- Proposed Resolution No. 0234-2024
- Sponsor: Sharlene Begay-Platero, Industrial Development Specialist
- An Action Relating to Economic Development: Approving a Business Site Lease Agreement between the Navajo Nation and Navajo Nation Oil & Gas Company, Montezuma Creek, UT.
- [The proposed resolution was conditionally approved on August 5, 2024]
- Approved by Resolution No. DEDA-202-2024.
- Proposed Resolution No. 0237-2024
- Sponsor: Sharlene Begay-Platero, Industrial Development Specialist
- An Action Relating to Economic Development: Approving a Business Site Lease between the Navajo Nation and Navajo Tribal Utility Authority.
- Approved by Resolution No. DEDA-212-2024.

Tuesday, September 03, 2024

- Proposed Resolution No. 0238-2024
- Sponsor: Genevieve Keetso-Bighorse, Principal Economic Development Specialist
- An Action Relating to Economic Development: Approving a Business Site Lease between the Navajo Nation and Horseshoe Bend Holdings, LLC., LeChee, Navajo Nation, Arizona.
- Approved by Resolution No. DEDA-213-2024.

Monday, September 23, 2024

- Proposed Resolution No. 0239-2024
- Sponsor: Sharlene Begay-Platero, Industrial Development Specialist
- An Action Relating to Economic Development: Approving a Business Site Lease Modification #2 between the Navajo Nation and Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise.
- Approved by Resolution No. DEDD-214-2024.

Monday, October 07, 2024

- Proposed Resolution No. 0240-2024
- Sponsor: Genevieve Keetso-Bighorse, Principal Econ. Deve. Spec
- An Action Relating to Economic Development: Approving the Business Site Lease Modification One for Adventurous Antelope Canyon Photo Tours, LLC., LeChee, Navajo Nation, Arizona.
- Approved by Resolution No. DEDD-215-2024.

**Performance Measures, 5 Regional Business Development Offices**

Goals and Objectives:	Chinle RBDO:	Eastern RBDO:	Ft. Def. RBDO:	Shiprock RBDO	Western RBDO:	TOTAL:
Number of Work Shops and/or trainings completed:	3	8	8	10	8	29
Number of business site lease transactions/land withdrawals/land use agreements completed:	2	2	11	10	11	25
Number of clients assisted with their completed business plans:	2	7	3	6	3	18
Number of clients identified and applied for additional non-Navajo funding resources:	1	3	107	4	107	115
Number of jobs created:	65	16		78	17	175

**Major Projects**

**Chilchinbeto Market and Gas Station**

The department is in process of procuring an Architectural firm to design the Chilchinbeto Market & Gas Station in Chilchinbeto, AZ. The contract is currently in the NN 164 Review Process, awaiting DOJ’s review and approval.

**Indian Wells Convenience Store & Gas Station**

The department is working with Red Mesa Trading Company to develop a C-store in Indian Wells, AZ. The department selected a Design/Build firm to design and build the store. the department packaged the contract documents and supporting documentation and submitted it for review/approval through the NN 164 review process.

**Dookoosliid Commercial Development Building**

The department received Request for proposals to conduct an evaluation of the Dookoosliid Commercial Development buildings and site in Tuba City, AZ. the department forwarded the proposals to the NN Shopping Centers, Inc. For further action.

**Tuba City Hotel / Restaurant / Fast Food Development site**

The department advertised Request for Statement of Qualifications for all qualified and experienced General Contractors for a design-build project for site analysis & infrastructure assessment for Tuba City project in Tuba City, AZ.

**Antelope Point Marina Operations and Management Oversight**

The department issued Statement of Qualifications (RSQ) letter of invitation to all Navajo-owned enterprise or entity that have the fiscal means and capability to provide/take-over the Operations and Management Oversight of the Antelope Point Marina property.

## **DED - Navajo Tourism Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Marketing**

Applied to Arizona Office of Tourism Co-Op Marketing Grant

Filled out the application for the Arizona Office of Tourism Rural Co-Op Marketing grant for Fiscal Year 24-25. The due date for this application was on July 26, 2024. Marketing selections were made to support our marketing efforts from March to July 2025. Marketing includes print, digital, and promotional marketing opportunities.

**Our contribution totals:** \$32,185. AOT contributes 50% of the total cost of \$64,370 – **AOT pays \$32,185. Awarded:** 09/2024

New Mexico Tourism Co-Op Marketing

Applied for the New Mexico Co-Op Marketing plan for FY 24-25. Made selections according to the marketing needs of the program. Included selections such as, video production, still photos, meta digital advertising, OOH digital ad in Dallas, TX.

New Mexico pays for 2/3 of the total cost.

**Our contribution is \$44,423.00, whereas New Mexico Tourism Dept pays \$88,846.00.**

**Awarded:** 09/2024

Utah Office Of Tourism Co-Op Marketing Attended the Cody Jesus Invitational Event as sponsors. I captured photos and video of the event for social media promotion : Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. Captured a short video invite of Cody Jesus inviting the general public to his event and placed that as a video, reel and TikTok. It generated a great response:

**Post Reach:** 32,265 / **Reactions (like, etc):** 972 / **Comments:** 18 / **Post Shares:** 86 / **Saves:** 16 = **Interactions:** 1,000

**UOT Awarded:** 08/2024 in the amount of \$7,700.000 (reimbursement style)

Covered the Grand Opening of Antelope Air in Page, AZ - 07/31/2024 Attended the grand opening of the 100% Diné owned aviation business, Antelope Air in Page, AZ at the municipal airport. Captured some photos and video of the momentous occasion. Also a 20 minute interview Q&A with the Bigthumb family: mother, daughter and son. Placed photos and a short description of the occasion on our social media channels: Facebook, and Instagram.

**Post Reach:** 131,957 / **Reactions (likes, etc):** 1,471 / **Comments:** 132 / **Post Shares:** 227 / **Saves:** 8 = **Interactions:** 1,821

Travel & Adventure Show

The Tourism Staff is preparing for the 2025 Travel Adventure Show series. The staff will travel to 4 or 5 states to promote Navajo Tourism to potential tourist from around the world. The series sees hundreds of thousands of attendees and is a great resource to enhance tourists numbers on the Navajo Nation.

## **Development**

### RFP for Open Market in Shiprock, NM

Processed a grant to establish an Open Market in Shiprock, NM. Wrote Request for Proposals; participated in the process, contract went out; work got completed.

### Contracts for the clean up and demo of the Shiprock RV project

164 process submitted and completed, Demo and clean up of project site will begin in October and be completed by December.

### Horseshoe Bend Resort

The Tourism Department attend the Horseshoe Bend Ground Breaking Ceremony, the Shiprock Vendor Market Robbin Cutting and the Shiprock Hotel Ground Breaking. At each event the Tourism Department was able to go live and stream all events. This is a highlight because in the past, we did not have cell data available to go live. We now can showcase all events live in remote areas. The Tourism Department has also posted a new blog, and has been posting photos and information regarding all tourism events.

### Meeting with Microco

Hosted a meeting with Divisions and Delegates to introduce them to Microcom. Microcom is a company that sells and provides Starlink services. The Tourism Department was very interested in utilizing Starlink for very remote areas that we travel to. We were able to get a Starlink Mini for our future events. The unit was utilized to go live at numerous events without interruption.

### Veterans Park Enhancements

The Tourism Department is reaching out to the Land Department, Parks and Recreation and Division of Natural Resources to determine the status of the Veterans park. The goal is build shade houses or vendor booths for the local artists. We also plan to help enhance the park with additional picnic tables and bathrooms.

## **Outreach/Promotion**

### Antelope Point Marina

The Tourism Department has been collaborating with the Antelope Point Marina in Lechee, AZ to assist with marketing and Advertising on a Nation and International level. Since meeting and distributing marketing material APM has reached increased new data numbers from East coast tourism markets and with some international markets.

### Arizona Governors Conference on Tourism

The Navajo Tourism Department attended the 2024 Arizona Governor's Conference on Tourism. The staff sponsored a luncheon where we showed one of our promotional videos to the room full of Arizona Tourism Professionals. The staff also attended current workshops on issues affecting the Tourism industry. We were also able to network with the top Tourism Officials in Arizona, including Lisa Urias, CEO of the Office of Arizona Tourism.

## Black Streak Canyon Tours in LeChee, AZ

Navajo Tourism has been assisting this new tour operator business with Marketing, Advertising, and promotions on a state and National level. Distribution of marketing material has shown an increase in the travel markets from the East to the West Coast.

## Major Projects

### Strategic Planning

The Tourism Department is currently planning a staff retreat to create a new Tourism strategic plan, which will include restructuring the department.

### Travel and Adventure Show

The Tourism Staff is preparing for the 2025 Travel Adventure Show series. The staff will travel to four or five states to promote Navajo Tourism to potential tourists from around the world. The series attracts hundreds of thousands of attendees and is a great resource for enhancing tourist numbers on the Navajo Nation.

### Shiprock RV and Open Market

164 process was completed for 2 contracts to begin the demo and cleanup of the Tooh RV park site in Shiprock, NM. An Open market was opened on part of the clean-up site for the vendors of Shiprock to sell during the Northern Fair. Full demo and clean-up will be completed by Dec 2024

# DIVISION OF GENERAL SERVICES

## DGS Administration

### Major Accomplishments

#### VoIP Project

Navajo Nation Telecommunications and Utilities embarked on a desktop phone replacement program for local Navajo Nation offices. The program's approach is to break this up into 3 phases. Phase 1 was completed this quarter totaling 332 telephone lines being converted to VoIP. The classic dial tone/network phones required monthly cycled payments; these VoIP phones are internet-based and are already built into the NN's infrastructure. This should in the interim reduce the NN's monthly service charges for phone service.

#### Network Security

Department of Information Technology successfully implemented layered security tools for government data and end-user collaboration with both internal and external users. Over the last six months, these measures have significantly enhanced the protection of government data. The Cisco suite of security tools, including Cisco Secure Email Threat Defense, Cisco Umbrella,



and Cisco Duo (two-factor authentication), has played a crucial role in this improvement. These tools provide layered security approaches, enhancing our visibility and end-user protection through collaboration with stakeholders. Both end-users and the business are shielded from internet threats, malware, and unsafe internet connections. Cisco Secure Email Threat Defense safeguards our business against the primary threat vector- email- within Microsoft 365, ensuring complete visibility for inbound, outbound, and internal user-to-user messages. Additionally, we secure user access with two- factor authentication, enabling our government to verify user identities, establish device trust, and provide secure connections to government networks.

### **Employee Safety – Fleet Management**

Fleet Management Department completed inspections and maintenance of all 5 agencies Fleet Service Centers' lifts. These lifts provide an adequate amount of space for technicians to service vehicles without getting into awkward positions or fear of vehicles falling off their jacks. The inspections focused on any discrepancies with the lifts and addressed corrective action/repairs to the units. This is primarily for the safety of the technician and vehicles.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Missing Persons Webpage**

Navajo Nation Department of Information Technology. Supported the Division of Public Safety in the developing of a "Missing Persons" webpage, as requested by Navajo Police Department. This would help the public to quickly see missing persons and assist the NNPD and other law enforcement agencies with their investigations. By implementing these features, the "Missing Persons" webpage can become a valuable resource for the Navajo Police Department and the community, helping to bring missing persons home safely.

#### **HVAC Project**

Facility Maintenance Department. HVAC Replacement for Administration Building No. 2. HVAC replacement took place from July 8-12, 2024. The vendor from Phoenix has identified the issue and has ordered the equipment. Additional HVAC projects will be taking place once the contracts have completed the process. There are 14 locations/sites that are slated for repairs. This should be completed before the upcoming fall months to ensure that each of the 14 sites will have a working HVAC.

#### **Equipment Replace Project**

Small Equipment Replacement. This is a project being undertaken by DGS to replace small equipment for several programs within the division. Programs that will receive small equipment are Records Management, Facility Maintenance, and Airports. Equipment includes dollies, forklifts, pallet jacks, compressors, and portable stairs. Total: \$128,000.

Heavy Equipment Replacement. The Purchase Order has been issued and we are awaiting final approval from OOC. The Equipment Replacement is utilizing funds from LATCF and replaces

equipment for Facility Maintenance, Employee Housing, and Airports Management. Total: \$978,900.

## **DGS - Department of Information Technology**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Microsoft 365 Cloud Migration Completion**

We migrated all on premise Microsoft Exchange users to the new cloud Microsoft 365 cloud environment using the Navajo-nsn.gov account.

#### **End User Training Video for MS 365/Internet**

Navajo Nation Department of Information technology created custom videos for our end users dealing with office.com sign in as well as our new internet set up. Each video was created for our end user's needs. Completing these videos lower our help desk calls and ticketing system consumption.

#### **New Hopi Land Commission Website**

Completed a complete overhaul of the old Hopi Land Commission website that included and new layout, new content,

### **Major Projects**

#### **Pen Testing Project**

Searching for vendor to conduct another Penetration Test. This something that needs to happen on a yearly basis. The results help us improve our security measures we have in place. These test scan for weaknesses in our network and servers. They let us know which devices need to be updated or if they have no protection on them.

#### **Missing Persons Website NPD**

Navajo Police Dept approached DIT to create a website for the public to view Missing Persons and aid the police department in investigations. The website will consist of images and info regarding the missing person. It will also allow for name search for faster inquiries.

#### **Microsoft Intune Device Management Project**

Installing Microsoft Intune software on Navajo Nation Property/Devices to manage devices and apps securely. This can protect Navajo Nation data on mobile devices, simplifying system setups, and securely using personal devices at work. This has better security, more productivity, and lower costs.

# DGS - Employee Benefits Program

## Major Accomplishments

### Modification PSC NN & VAL

The Contract Modification for the vendor name change from Hawaii Mainland Administrators, LLC, to Verdegard Administrators, LLC, was completed and approved through the 164 Review process and Contract Administration with Office of the Controller.

### 2025 Life 3-year Rate Guarantee Bids

The life insurance carrier for the Navajo Nation has been determined for a three-year rate guarantee after bidding for competitive rates was completed by the third party administrator on the Navajo Nation Employee Benefit Program's behalf. A rate increase will be implemented for Plan Year 2025 for the Basic Employee Basic Life and Dependent Basic Life due to increased claims experience over the past three years.

### 2025 Benefit Rate Setting

The actuary report was completed and presented to the Navajo Nation Insurance Commission for Plan Year 2024. The recommended health, disability, administrative fees, and benefit user fees will be incorporated with the life insurance rates and stop loss reinsurance rates for a final rate to be determined following a work session scheduled in October 2024 with the actuary, third party administrator, Navajo Nation Insurance Commission, and the Plan Administrator.

## Major Projects

### Bid for Actuary Consultant

Per Project Schedule, a Request for Proposal was advertised through newspapers and through the Navajo Nation Office of the Controller, Bid No. 24-09-3467LE, from August 22, 2024, through September 27, 2024. A bid opening was conducted on October 1, 2024. Interviews are scheduled October 10, 2024, for a final selection of an Actuarial Consultant to begin January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2027.

### Direct Source for Program Consultant

A Direct Source Contract for a Program Consultant went through the 164 Review Process and was found sufficient to proceed with a one-year contract to begin October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025. The consultant will serve as a liaison between the third party administrator and the Plan administrator to ensure a productive transition for account management and to assist in developing a plan for the Navajo Nation to establish a self-insured and self-administered benefit program.

## Open Annual Enrollment Period

Annual Enrollment Period allows two months for employees to elect dependent coverage for dependents who were not added to the health and life policies at the time of employment or at the time the dependent became a dependent to the employee. The Program provides virtual and in-person orientations on benefits which extends to participating Enterprises and Chapters who also have employees and dependents participating in the Navajo Nation's employee benefit plans. Communications are scheduled at all agencies to ensure mass participating. Any dependents enrolled during the Annual Enrollment Period will be effective on January 1 of the following year.

## **DGS - Fleet Management Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **OPVP Vehicles**

Released OPVP new vehicles to the respective drivers, a total of eight (8) vehicles, two (2) Crew Cab Pick-Up Trucks and six (6) SUVs – Expeditions. With the assistance of Ms. Amanda Kindle from the Arizona Department of Transportation – Motor Vehicle Division, we were able to expedite the vehicle registration and receive the plates. Due to the vehicle dealership's (Phil Long) along with other dealerships throughout the country IT network being compromised the necessary paperwork – sales documents and most importantly the MSO were delayed.

#### **Disposition Vehicle Sale (Chinle)**

Through coordination with the Property Management Department and Chinle Service Center a total of fifty-four vehicles were sold to various individuals throughout the Navajo Nation. A grand total of forty-four thousand & six hundred dollars was generated from the vehicle sale. The property management staff did the in-person bidding method of the sales, previously they were utilizing the GOVDeals online auction bidding methods, however, for this sale they resorted back to the in-person method.

#### **Vacant Positions**

We were fortunate this 4<sup>th</sup> quarter to fill three (3) vacant position within our department, primarily for the Window Rock Body Shop & Service Center. For the body shop an autobody repairer and auto parts technician were filled, thus filling all of their vacant positions. Now for the WR service center, the vacant vehicle service worker position was filled, which was vacant for awhile now. Therefore, we have a total of eight (8) positions vacant now for Fleet, so we hope to fill these positions in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the new fiscal year.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Motor Vehicle Handbook Revision**

The Motor Vehicle Review Board members, along with Fleet Management Admin. staff have been working on revising the motor vehicle handbook. Additionally, we had individuals from

the Risk Management Department (Ms. Dorothea Dedman), Highway Safety (Mr. Orlando Bowman), Department of Justice Attorney (Ms. Navalyn Platero) take part in the revisions, therefore, they were all very instrumental in completing the handbook revision. Now, Ms. Platero is finalizing the handbook, so we can get our oversight committee (HEHSC) review and approve the handbook. However, before doing so, we would need to go through the 164 reviews.

### **WEX Fuel Card Contract**

The Wright Express fuel card contract is in its final stage of getting approval with their attorneys, along with our designated attorney Ms. Navalyn Platero. Ms. Platero has been working diligently with the WEX attorneys in not allowing their attorneys to remove the Navajo Sovereign clause in the contract, and now they working through the arbitration stipulations. Although the vendor has been the designated vendor for over twenty-five (25) years, however, due to the Covid Pandemic, all major corporations including WEX, have made extra provisions in the execution of their corporate contracts.

### **Abeita Fuel Delivery Contract**

Our bulk fuel delivery contract is in its final stage of approval with Risk Management & DOJ, our designated vendor, Abeita Fuel has provided all of the necessary documents for Risk and DOJ to review. This particular contract will provide fuel to all of agency bulk fuel stations (Crownpoint, Shiprock, Window Rock, Chinle, Tuba City), along with the Kayenta bulk station.

## **DGS – RECORDS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **RMD Accomplishments**

RMD disposed of 1,408 lbs. of shredded documents. A total of 26 bags (50 lbs. ea.). RMD scanned 108,525 documents and archival records. RMD researched hours of records of 76 hrs & 32 mins.

#### **Duplicating Services**

Duplicating Services retrieved 16 copier units from various departments and agency offices. Duplicating Services purchased 10 desktop copiers for low volume: 4 mid-size copiers and 1 high to mid volume for the duplicate office in Tse Bonito. Completed the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter report to the Tax Commission  
Completed the FY2024 Year End Closing timelines on ORs, Pos, and the Cash Deposits.

### **Major Projects**

## **Gamerco NM Site Building**

DGS Admin., and RMD have been trying to acquire the Gamerco Building Site, since March of 2024. This is where RMD is scheduled to temporarily relocate for approximately two years, so the RMD Warehouse in Fort Defiance can be demolished and rebuilt the RMD Warehouse. The current infrastructure of the RMD Warehouse is in poor condition and unsafe. The Lease Agreement is to be drawn up for the RMD to occupy the Gamerco Site Building, though, currently waiting on the Land Department. RMD cannot have the utilities connected until an Agreement is accomplished, moving forward.

## **Former ONEO Building**

The former old "ONEO" building was condemned by Facilities Maintenance Department, in FY'23, due to the unsafe conditions of the building. However, there are approximately 658 boxes and 12 binders of permanent files stored at this building that have yet to be relocated to the current RMD Warehouse. Though, lack of manpower is what is contributing for the staff to move forward, plus lack of space due is an overall factor.

## **Procure New Copier Equipment**

The Duplicating Services Program has paid most of the outstanding invoices that have accumulated during the "Transition Period" between two Vendors (Konica Minolta to All Copy Products). Transition impacted on the RMD/Duplicating Services from having Maintenance Services performed on copier equipment that was leased from Konica Minolta, and All Copy Products could not give us a true Service Agreement amount to have services performed on equipment. Also, the vendor, All Copy Products, will not service the former copier equipment, due to parts and supplies are now obsolete. RMD/Duplicating has no alternative though to replace and procure new copier equipment with another vendor.

# **DGS – Risk Management Department**

## **Major Accomplishments**

### **FY – 25 Binding of Insurance Renewals**

Insurance Renewals for FY – 25 – Binding of Insurance Policies are actively being updated and sent as the Carriers are placing coverages

### **FY – UES NN Gov't & Chapters**

FY – 25 yearly Underwriting Exposure Summary Application in process on behalf of NN Gov't Divisions, Departments, Programs and Chapters for Insurance Coverage.

## **Major Projects**

### **UES – Invoices/Billing**

Not determined a Project, identifying the topic, as it is a tough project to complete. Submittals of UES from Insured's, reviewing process, premiums charges, Invoices.

### **FY – 25 Vehicle Insurance Cards**

Topic is in progress, release of FY – 25 Insurance Cards, based on submittal of FY – 25 UES Applications (complete or incomplete) card are released, primarily for proof of Financial Responsibility. Coverage is not enforced, until actual premiums are paid

### **Enterprises – Invoice/Billing**

All Stand Alone Policies will be sent to all the Enterprises for payment. Master Policies to include all self-insured coverages will following and be issued in November/December 2024.

## **DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **DNR – DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **30 Days (September)**

- Hosted a work session with 20 Eastern District Land Board Members to discuss eastern agency bonding requirements, fund management planning for Navajo escrow account development, and tri-party agreement.
- Improved 4-H Barn facility by replacing the roof with metal panels and upgrading the electrical system for exhibitors and program to utilize throughout the year.
- The Horse Management Program coordinated 10 Equine Rescue Operations in various communities in Eastern Agency, Fort Defiance, Northern Agency, and Western Agency. There was a total of 563 horses that were rescued during the fourth quarter, a total of 2,233 horses have been rescued during the 2023-2024 fiscal year.
- Assisted with Navajo Nation Fair Horticulture Exhibit set up, receiving entries, premium payments and judging. Attended Navajo Nation Fair Junior Livestock Show auction sale with buyers, including Cholla Livestock and Greenstein & Company. Staff assisted buyers to transport purchased animals to off-Reservation meat processing locations and to Big Boquillas Ranch.
- Continued meeting with Department of Water Resources (DWR) on windmill repairs, earth dam repairs, installation of solar pumps at tribal ranch wells, and utilization of equipment for ranch infrastructure work. Met with DWR on AIF projects, including bidding for Yellowman Siphon Repairs along San Juan River irrigation system, Newcomb Farm water diversion and water delivery from Captain Tom reservoir to farm fields, purchase of bulldozer with trailer and operator for Northern Agency chapters, and installation of solar pumps at priority tribal ranch locations. Continued pressuring DWR

on approved AIF projects with unexpended budget balances and advising of recommendations to Resources and Development Committee to cancel project budgets and reallocate AIF funds to other project-ready AIF project proposals.

- Met with Water International LLC about an AIF pilot project proposal to import water and possibly hay bales by rail car from Midwest to rail siting in Thoreau or El Segundo Mine area north of Prewitt to benefit tribal ranches, including establishing central watering locations for ranchers. Further logistics are being formulated to lessen pressures on failing windmills and drought-stricken water supplies.
- Preparing to initiate and manage phase 2 of the NPL heirship grazing permit issuance.
- Veterinarian Management Program hired an office specialist and began offering spay and neutering surgeries to the public.

### **60 Days (August)**

- The Tribal Ranches Program met with OOC accounts receivable to strategize on collections of past due lease payments, renewing lease agreements for tribal ranches in 2025, and developing a MOU between the tribal ranches program and accounts receivable.
- Provided project narrative amendments to USDA Agriculture Marketing Service for Local Food Purchase Assistance Program (LFPA) offer of an \$5,550,000 grant. Finalized food purchase arrangements, budgets and delivery schedules with NAPI to distribute 49,333 food boxes to 110 chapters from October 2024 to August 2025 using the 50/50 formula from Division of Community. We are striving to change the offer into an award that will be accepted by Navajo Nation Council Committees. Due to meat processing equipment repairs through Labatt Foods, meat products were removed from food boxes. NAPI completed delivery schedules utilizing their trucks to deliver food boxes. We continue to address project narrative questions and concerns by USDA staff. Participated in USDA webinars on LFPA implementation.
- Met with Division of Social Services staff of Navajo Treatment Center for Children & Their Families who work with Navajo Hatathlii to perform Boundaries Protection Prayers at sacred mountains. NTCCF requested authorization for prayer ceremony on the Peaks Ranch. Conducted site visit with NTCCF and Dine' Rancher Association representative to select ceremony site near ranch headquarters. Hatathlii performed the Ceremony on evening of September 31. Similar ceremonies were held at Wolf Springs Ranch in Colorado and near Mount Taylor. An upcoming ceremony will be held in September at Dibe Nitsaa near Cortez, CO. Met with U.S. Forest Service in Flagstaff for consultation and ensure compliance with any applicable permits required by USFS for the Peaks ceremony.
- Continued AIF project discussions with Remote Well Solutions on planning, design and costing to convert additional tribal ranch windmills to solar water pumping, storage and distribution systems for 4 or 5 additional ranches. These patented systems were installed on 4 ranches in 2023 using the AIF. Due to budget constraints, we are scaling back scopes



of work for the proposed projects. Establishing central watering locations to serve our tribal ranches is also being evaluated to meet demands for more water for livestock.

- Collaborating with Bureau of Indian Affairs and Joint Land Board on final resolution with recommended amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding on Grazing Administration in Eastern Navajo Agency between Navajo Nation, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Land Management. Joint Land Board scheduled training in September to finalize the recommended amendments. Met with BIA and Office of the Controller on more proactive participation on transfer of Escrow Funds to Navajo Nation and bonding requirements for Eastern Navajo grazing permittees. Met with Department of Justice to invite participation in upcoming meetings on the MOU, Escrow Fund, bonding requirements and related meetings in expected legislative review documents.
- Met with Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) on additional leases on Big Boquillas Ranch for six more wind generation projects. For the Big Boquillas, responded to DOJ to proceed with Legislative Counsel's office and Arizona State Land Department to obtain Navajo Nation Council approval for Arizona State Leases on Big Boquillas Ranch and the Winslow Tract. The new leases will include language for a limited waiver of sovereign immunity by the Navajo Nation Council. Subsequently, Council approval will also be required of the Cholla Livestock lease of the Big Boquillas Ranch and Sublease of State lands to Cholla Livestock will be required. In this process, we provided information to the State Land Department attorneys on leasehold improvements made by Cholla Livestock on State lands.
- Provide technical assistance for the District Grazing Committees, District Land Boards and Major Irrigation Farm Boards. Requests include: HSL acknowledgement, HSL investigation assistance, cancellation of ALUPS, resurveying of farmlands, water user association matters.
- Program reorganization, DLB is now included with the Range and Farmland office.
- The Veterinarian Management Program began scheduling appointments and performing exams on small and large animals. Attended meet and greet for sponsorship of organization of Animal Protection New Mexico. Every year Animal Protection New Mexico (APNM) dedicates the month of August to highlighting issues the organization is involved in. This year's August for Animals (A4A) theme is our work with Indigenous communities throughout New Mexico and beyond. We will be sharing with supporters about what APNM is doing in partnership with Tribal and Pueblo communities to address local animal issues in humane ways, and by doing so we intend to raise money for future work. Hosted University of Arizona Extension Agent Livestock First Aid. Attendees learned about the importance of vaccination and basic first aid to cattle and horses.

## **90 Days (July)**

- The Horse Management Program obtained an indefinite livestock round-up chapter resolution from Tohajiilee Chapter to conduct equine rescue operations quarterly throughout the year. This resolution is the first since the beginning of the equine rescue operation began in 2018.

- The Department of Agriculture collaborated with Diné College Land Grant Office and USDA Farm Service Agency to host the Navajo Nation Wool and Mohair Buy for sheep and goat producers. The wool buy program provided 641 producers with approximately  
  - \$65,000 in incentive payments for over 165,000 pounds of wool and mohair.
  - This was a response to local vendors not purchasing wool for the second year in a row.
- The Tribal Ranches Program conducted ranch assessments on 13 ranches to determine fence and water infrastructure and range condition feasibility for renewal or deferment. Eight (8) ranches were suggested to defer due to lack of adequate precipitation.
- Met with numerous ranchers and Department of Water Resources on ranch infrastructure needs, windmill work orders to Department of Water Resources, providing adequate windmill materials and supplies to Crownpoint and Pueblo Pintado offices, coordinating use of heavy equipment for tribal ranches work, including ranch road repairs, erosion control and installation of solar pumping, storage and distribution systems or simple solar pump installations
- In coordination with BIA, Bureau of Land Management, Eastern Navajo Land Commission, and Land Board officials, Horse Management Program conducted feral horse entrapments in Nageezi, White Rock and Standing Rock chapters. Met with Navajo Fish & Wildlife Department on proposed AIF funding for consistent annual aerial horse surveys on Navajo Nation. We expect an AIF project proposal soon.
- Participated with DWR at Delegate Dr. Andy Nez' regional meeting of his chapters of Fort Defiance, Sawmill, Red Lake and Crystal Chapters. Discussed windmill/earth dam updates, mapping and AIF project proposal templates for future AIF funding proposals in the chapters. Reviewed AIF funding categories approved by Navajo Nation Council Resolution CO-57-16.
- Conversated with Navajo Nation Washington D.C. office on USDA consultation papers on program funding opportunities for food & nutrition, U.S. Forest Service and meat processing projects. Obtained input from Navajo Forestry Department in submitting supporting letters for various programs. Discussed updates on U.S. Farm Bill which has not been approved by Congress. The House and Senate versions of the Farm Bill are completely different from each other. Hopefully, Congress will address the Farm Bill in upcoming sessions, which may be delayed until after the November elections.
- The Veterinarian Program Hosted Cristian Veterinary Mission. CVM has been helping the Navajo Nation yearly for the past 50+ years by providing animal health and surgeries to small and large animals.

## **Major Projects**

**Will be completed in the next 30 days**

- Eastern Agency bonding requirement waiver letter submission to BIA for two years from the Navajo Nation President.
- Bureau of Indian Affairs no longer collects grazing fees from Bureau of Land Management grazing permittees in Eastern Navajo Agency. The BIA will continue collecting grazing fees for grazing permittees utilizing grazing lands in Eastern Agency, except for grazing permittees utilizing Navajo trust lands in District 15. In the past, grazing fees collected were placed into an Escrow Fund administered by the BIA through the federal TAMS. The Escrow Fund has grown to over \$1,000,000. The BIA will soon transfer Escrow Funds to the Navajo Nation. The Office of the Controller has not participated in discussions on how the Escrow Fund will be managed by the Navajo Nation. The Office of the Controller, the OPVP, Division of Natural Resources and OMB need to proactively participate in these meetings and provide guidance on how the Escrow Funds will be managed and administered by the NNOOC. The Joint Land Board will be providing a Fund Management Plan outlining their recommendations how the Escrow Funds will be utilized within the Eastern Navajo Agency. The current MOU states that Escrow Funds can be utilized for “conservation” projects only in Eastern Navajo Agency. An orientation for the RDC and NNOOC by the BIA and NNDA can be arranged.
- Redesign and reallocate 17 Unapproved AIF Projects of \$9.2 million to reach farmers and ranchers at the local level.
- Completion of Tribal Ranches collection notice memorandum letter with DNR and DOJ assistance to lessees.
- Obtain crop insurance for AIF funding and mortality insurance for Tribal Ranch Bulls with Risk Management Department.
- NPL permit issuance, work sessions with DGC to complete applications.
- The Veterinarian Management Program will begin the process of ordering equipment for the Veterinary Clinic (Xray equipment, blood machines, program software) and begin the process of hiring Extension Agents (Veterinary Technicians).

**Will be completed in the next 60 days**

- Revising standard operation procedures for district grazing committee members, farm board officials, and district land board members.
- Revising standard operation procedures and organizational structure for department of agriculture.
- Submit land lease payments for Tribal Ranch Leases to State of New Mexico and Arizona.
- Tour Alamo Tribal Ranches (Henderson and Slash B) to assess range condition and feral horse issue.
- Prepare applications for NPL reviewing committee.
- The Veterinarian Management Program will start providing more veterinary services as equipment and supplies are ordered and received. Continue the process of hiring extension Agents (Veterinary Technicians) and continue the process of road

improvement to the Tse Bonito Clinic.

**Will be completed in the next 90 days or longer**

- Revising Navajo Grazing Permit template to include GPS coordinates and revised CFR language.
- Developing basic maps of Tribal Ranches to determine tax and land lease payments for individual ranches.
- Develop Livestock Enforcement Brand Office programs standard operating procedures and positions.
- Schedule application review for precinct 1, precinct 2, and precinct 3.
- The Veterinarian Management Program will begin the process of getting Shiprock Clinic maintenance. Provide more veterinary services as equipment and supplies are ordered and received. Continue the process of road improvement.

## **DNR. - Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Canyon Vista AML Project**

NAML utilized AML funds to develop the project by surveying and drafting plans for three sites and estimating the overall construction costs, including Coalmine Subsidence, Chilchinbeto, and Burnham. Coalmine site was selected for submission for a BIL grant in December 2023, meeting the BIL funding criteria. An award letter was received in June 2024, and the project is currently in progress through the Navajo Nation. By June/July 2023 a topographic survey of the Coalmine site was underway, with initial site drawings completed by mid-July. In the fall, estimates for each site were discussed along with the design and scope of work. NAML used AML funds in developing the project in surveying and drawing the three project sites and getting an estimated overall construction cost.

#### **AMLER-OSMRE Headquarters Visit**

OSMRE Headquarters appointed Biden Administration, Principal Deputy Director Sharon Buccino, visited the Navajo Nation, Navajo AML program. Project site visits were conducted for the Abandoned Mine Lands Economic Revitation projects at Kayenta Township-Industrial Park Project \$3.2 Million; Shonto Government-Shonto Hotel Project \$3.1 Million; and the Chilchinbeto – Division of Economic Development proposed new Chilchinbeto Convenient Store project \$3 Million. Ms. Buccino recognized the 1<sup>st</sup> completed Kayenta project as a project completed in the Western States under the AMLER program.

#### **Public Participation and Outreach**

Engaged with the Cove Community, a remote and isolated area that is unique and special to the Navajo way of life, on the hazards of abandoned mine sites and their relationship with the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields on. This event helped to assist the

community with achieving their vision of leading healthy productive lives in harmony with beliefs and environment.

## **Major Projects**

### **OSM: AMLER Shonto Hotel**

An administrative agreement between AML and DED has been established for \$3.1 million, with a professional contract in place between DED and Medallion/Woodruff Benally Construction. The \$3.1 million portion from AML has been disbursed, with only the retainage remaining for payout. The hotel project is funded with \$10 million from NN Sales Tax and \$3 million from FRF/ARPA. The estimated project completion is October 2024, with the AMLER Grant ending in March 2025. Construction is currently ongoing.

### **OSM – FY22 BIL Grant – Projects**

#### **Coalmine Canyon AML Coal Subsidence Project**

- Over the past few years, three subsidence areas have developed at the Coalmine Canyon site due to the collapse of underground mine workings. The project to address these issues began in the summer of 2021. Currently, the project design is complete, and construction is pending the availability of funds from the FY23 BIL Grant. With the awarding of these grants, the final scope of work and design will be finalized, allowing for the procurement of construction services. The environmental assessment report is also pending the final scope of work and 401 determination.

#### **Chilchinbeto AML Coal Project**

- The Chilchinbeto Coalmine Subsidence project is currently on hold due to a lack of construction funds. The site has been surveyed and mapped, and the initial scope of work has been developed.

#### **Burnham AML Coal Fire**

- The Burnham Coal Fire project is currently on hold due to a lack of construction funds.

#### **Network Enhancement / IT**

- On March 4, 2024, an order (42455 OR) was placed with Navajo Technology Services, Inc. for various equipment and accessories. The procurement included three Ubiquiti Network Access Points, a Samsung Galaxy Tab S9 Ultra, a Samsung Galaxy Keyboard Cover, a Samsung Galaxy Tab S9 Pen, a Samsung Screen Protector, and 20 Samsung 2TB T7 Portable SSDs. The total cost for this order amounted to \$8,020.81, which includes the Navajo Nation Tax and shipping
- On May 20, 2024, an order (43252 OR) for Adobe Acrobat Pro Licensing was placed with Insight Public Sector. The procurement included 35 units of the software, amounting to a total cost of \$3,913.68, which includes the Navajo Nation Tax.

- On May 16, 2024, an order (44337 OR) was submitted and are pending shipment via Navajo Technology Services, Inc. Notable items ordered include a Tripp Lite Rack cabinet, 1.8 W Single Phase equipment, 50 Port Gigabit Poe devices, and Synology Sliding Rail Kits. The total order amount is \$40,875.64, including Navajo Nation Tax and shipping; shipment received on July 1, 2024.
- Workstations for administrative and technical staff totaling \$63,035.18 are still in progress. We are working with Insight Public Sector, Inc. to get quotations on Surface Pro, iPad Pro, MacBook, and all accessories. The quote will increase once these items are included. Note: Surface Pro 11 will not ship out until mid-September.
  - The following equipment and software were procured or are pending procurement for Window Rock, Shiprock, and Tuba City:

## **DOE – UMTRA / DRUM**

### UMTRA Field Activities

#### Tuba City, AZ - Disposal Site

- On April 24, 2024, Jennifer Harris from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Office of Legacy Management (DOE-LM) announced the annual inspection of the Tuba City Disposal Site, which was scheduled for Tuesday, May 7, 2024. The inspection commenced at 9 a.m. MDT (8 a.m. MST), and the site gates were securely locked once the inspection began. Tribal partners and community members were invited to participate, with an RSVP deadline of noon on May 1, 2024. Participants were advised to wear long pants and sturdy hiking shoes or boots, and bring additional personal items such as sunglasses, a wide-brimmed hat, sunscreen, lip balm, electrolyte drinks, and snacks. For more information, attendees were instructed to contact Bill Frazier, Site Manager, or Hallie Katz, Site Lead.

#### Mexican Hat, UT – Disposal Site

- From April 22 to April 29, the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management conducted a sampling event at the Mexican Hat Disposal Site, beginning on Monday, April 22, 2024, and expected to conclude around May 10, 2024. The purpose of this work is to check for internal erosion on the disposal cell cover and provide data for future remediation and prevention actions.
- Additionally, a virtual collaborative working group meeting was held to discuss climate and HYDRUS model status, channel instruments update, the phase II work plan, and annual inspection.

#### Monument Valley, AZ – Processing Site

- DOE/LM scheduled sonic drilling to install monitoring wells and collect borehole samples from April 29, 2024, to May 10, 2024. This project aims to enhance understanding of subsurface geology and gather data on groundwater levels, soil, and water chemistry. However, the sampling was halted due to equipment failure and will be rescheduled at a later date.

#### Shiprock, NM – Disposal Site

- March 28: DOE/LM conducted the semi-annual well sampling at the Shiprock disposal cell site. This sampling event aims to monitor changes and trends in groundwater chemistry, track plume migration, and determine the overall distribution of contaminants within the Shiprock UMTRA site.
- June 6: RSI contractors and DOE carried out the annual inspection of the Shiprock UMTRA site. The inspection's purpose was to confirm the integrity of visible features, identify any condition changes affecting compliance with the LTSP, and assess whether maintenance or follow-up inspections and monitoring are required. Additional inspections included the evaporation pond and the northwest drainage channel that flows into Bob Lee Wash.

#### Defense Related Uranium Mines (DRUM) - Verification and Validation Activities

- Week of April 02-05, completed V & V Fieldwork w/ DRUM Team #3, led by Gwynnelle Nishimura, Team Lead - 4 sites were completed: Black Rock Mine (NA-0209), Sally Mine, Alma Mine (NA-0233), and Bootjack Mine (NA-0201).
- Week of April 16-19, completed V & V Fieldwork w/ DRUM Team #4, led by John Stanfield, Team Lead – 6 sites were completed: Mitten 2 Mine and Golden Crown Mine (NA-0210), Radium Hills 1 Mine and Utah St. Sch. Section 36 Mine (NA-0208), Fren Mine (NA-0202), Sunlight Mine and Sunlight South Mine (NA-0220).
- Week of April 30-May 03, completed V & V Fieldwork w/ DRUM Team #3, led by Gwynnelle Nishimura, Team Lead – 2 sites completed: Binale 1 and Binale 2 Mine and Mitchell Mesa Mine.
- Week of May 14-17, completed V & V Fieldwork w/ DRUM Team #4, led by John Stanfield, Team Lead – 4 sites completed: Big Four Mine (NA-0219), Horsetrail Mine, Tract 2B Mine, and Joe Rock #7-9 Mine.
- Week of June 11-13, completed V & V Fieldwork w/ DRUM Team #5, led by Rachel Marez, Team Lead – 5 sites completed: Tract 24 Mine A, Tract 24 Mine B, Starlight 1 Mine (NA-0207), East Starlight Mine, and Big Chief Mine (NA-0206).

## **DNR – Department of Fish and Wildlife**

### **Major Accomplishments**

- The Navajo Zoo Program completed another big year of construction/renovation projects with several very large improvement projects completed, along with a number of smaller ones.
- The Research and Management Program completed the Fall Big Game Hunt Proclamation.
- The Research and Management Program completed two RFPs for a new Fish Hatchery & improvements to the San Juan River.
- The Navajo Natural Heritage Program issued 178 of 180 BRCFs and 1288 of 1472 HBCFs (177 waiting for payment) to project applicants.

- The Navajo Natural Heritage Program improved the permitting process resulting in faster issuance of BRCF and HBCF to project applicants.
- Dine' Native Plants Program Planner successfully organized 4 restoration volunteer days at our Crystal Creek restoration site in the Chuska Mountains, where volunteers assisted DNPP staff with constructing in-stream erosion control structures and planting of native willow and other wildflower species.
- Dine' Native Plants Program staff worked with our architect and general contractor to finalize the design and construction documents of our new seed bank. The general contractor began work on the foundation now, and estimates finishing the facility early 2025.
- Dine' Native Plants Program staff, along with several volunteers from our department and other organizations, successfully planted out 8,000 grass plugs into our need seed increase expansion field in Ganado, AZ. The out-planting was a culmination of weeks of site preparation, weed control, pest control, irrigation, and fencing. This new field is the largest field we operate, at 1 acre, and was planted with native alkali sacaton grass. Furthermore, DNPP staff had a partial harvest of our 0.5-acre field in Leupp, AZ.
- Wildlife Law Enforcement performed patrols on NN Lakes and San Juan River for permits and fishing/boating compliance, and Game Hunt Patrol for Fall Bear, Archery Deer, Archery Elk, Pronghorn Antelope, Trophy Elk, Auction Hunts.
- WCO Manygoats, in-person Hunter Education classes for Youth Hunt Class- 12 students.
- WCOs Montjoy, Nez, and Sandoval attended 40 in service training with Navajo Police .
- WCO Manygoats and WCO Sandoval attended the 2024 National Fish and Wildlife Society Conference and participated in the Law Enforcement Shooting Competition on the Southwest Regional Team. They both made the Southwest Regional Shoot Team; also WCO Sandoval attended the Conference and was awarded Conservation Law Enforcement Officer of the year.

## **Major Projects**

### The Navajo Zoo Program:

- Completed replacement of its old, failing exterior fence with a new 10' high fence with a decorative front facing the visitor parking lot.
- Completed a project with NECA to asphalt-pave the Entry Road to Navajo Zoo, and its Employee Parking Lot, along with complete repaving of the Museum Parking Lot.
- New Visitor Restroom is 98% completed, now just awaiting NTUA electrical service.
- Completed the installation of wire mesh front to the Mule Deer Enclosure.
- Completed the installation of four new signs at the Zoo providing detailed information on the habitats and bioregions of the Navajo Nation.
- Completed a Coloring Book project with a local artist to create and print a unique one-of-a-kind coloring book for the Navajo Zoo.

### Research & Management Program:



- Completed a contract for Navajo Nation Fish Hatchery for \$3,861,515, which is being reviewed by NNDOJ now.
- Completed the Morgan Lake Boat Dock Construction Project.
- 30 Pronghorn antelope were captured on the New Lands and fitted with satellite radio collars to study the effects of solar energy development on pronghorn as part of a SolWEB grant.
- Professional Service Contract was approved for a wildlife veterinarian to develop wildlife disease monitoring and response plan for the Navajo Nation.
- Professional Service Contract was approved for West, Inc. to develop a Mule Deer Management Plan on the Navajo Nation.
- Professional Service Contract in process for replacement of the Hogback Irrigation Diversion water pumps with All American Technical Team.

#### Navajo Natural Heritage Program:

- The Zoologist completed Annual golden eagle surveys across Navajo/Hopi Compact Area, was an active participant in CO river management meetings, and continued field work for Black-footed Ferret Reintroduction Program.
- Wildlife-Timber Coordination Handbook: The current Wildlife-Timber Coordination Handbook has not been approved by the RDC committee and needs to be updated. Information to add to the handbook is still being reviewed as it relates to other ongoing projects and edits are being made before submission for peer review.
- Navajo Forestry Department has submitted for 10 forest thinning projects, NNHP is performing surveys for project approval. Seven of these projects will be issued a BRCF while the other three need more surveys before approval.
- DNPP staff participated in several outreach events in quarter 4 including presenting and setting up an information booth at the 2024 Plant and Animal Summit in Twin Arrow, AZ; setting up a booth for Kids Day and Elder Day at the Navajo Nation Fair; attending and presenting at the Intertribal Nursery Council Meeting in Grand Ronde, OR; and hosting a wool dyeing workshop at our greenhouse in Fort Defiance. Through these events we have been able to reach hundreds of people to educate, advocate for, and promote our work with native plants and communities on the Navajo Nation.
- DNPP staff began scouting springs as potential restoration sites for next season. Staff conducted rapid assessments of water availability, quality, vegetation, livestock pressure, infrastructure, and viability for restoration at each spring. Out of 13 springs visited, they selected 4 as having potential for restoration.

## **DNR - Navajo Forestry Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Infrastructure Tree Cutting Permits**

The Navajo Forestry Department's ARPA section issued 13 infrastructure project permits to NTUA, for both powerline and waterline. Work entailed visiting each project location, counting

and marking trees within the designated project right-of-way and developing the permit for the project. A total of 135 trees, 105 juniper and 30 pinyon, were removed in order for the 13 infrastructure projects to be constructed.

### **Forest Product Permit Issuance**

During the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of FY2024, a total of 3,648 forest product permits were issued by all the designated locations across the Navajo Nation, including the Navajo Forestry Department and 46 chapters/senior centers.

### **El Paso Firewood Harvesting**

For the last quarter, around 50 cords of firewood were produced from this project area. The firewood harvested is green pinyon trees, that have been selected for harvest, to reduce the thick dense structure of the area.

### **Major Projects**

#### **El Paso Firewood Harvesting**

El Paso #1 Project is a 189-acre thinning area along the El Paso natural gas pipeline. It was selected to protect the natural gas line from catastrophic wildland fire from dense pinon-juniper woodlands. Forestry's small thinning crew cuts selected trees down, cuts the wood into smaller pieces, loads the wood onto a trailer, piles the branches, transport the wood back to Forestry, split the pieces into firewood size, and finally stack the wood. Crews have to maintain all equipment and tools utilized, in top condition to perform this intense process. Over months the wood will cure (the moisture leaves). When the moisture content is low enough, it is finally available for sale to the public. All proceeds are returned back into Forestry's external funds.

#### **Forest Carbon Offsets Initiative**

This initiative was initiated to generate revenue for the Navajo Nation and the Navajo Forestry Department for the management of the Navajo forest. In addition, the potential for job creation to conduct forest management activities was determined as a beneficial component of this initiative. Forest inventories were conducted to determine the amount of carbon offsets that may be available for sale/trade, thus generating revenue for the Nation.

#### **Oak Ridge Timber Sale**

This project is currently ongoing and is being developed as a component of the Navajo Nation's forest management plan, protect the forest from stand replacing wildland fires and forest insect mortality, and improving the habitat for wildlife. Areas of treatment have been selected, forest inventories have been completed, and biological surveys are ongoing. Cultural resource surveys are needed for the project area.

## **DNR – General Land Development Department**

## Major Accomplishments

The table depicts the exact number of projects approved, processed, reviewed, and assistance provided to chapters, incoming walk-in applicants, chapter officials, project developers, other government departments, divisions, programs and Navajo entities for the months of July, August and September, 2024 (4<sup>th</sup> quarter).

<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Approved/Totals</b>
Projects Approved in 164:	
- TAAs = 13	
- Telecom = 2	
- ROW = 4	
- Leases = 3	
- Land Withdrawals = 6	
- TCEs = 4	
- APDs = 3	
	<b>35</b>
Projects Reviewed/Processed	<b>111</b>
TAAs Received	<b>31</b>
ECDs for SLAs	<b>76</b>
ECDs for Homesites	<b>206</b>
ECDs for TAAs	<b>14</b>
ECDs for APDs	<b>8</b>
ECDs for ROW/TCE	<b>7</b>
ECDs for Leases	<b>9</b>
ECDs for Land Withdrawals	<b>8</b>
Grazing Consents Gathered	<b>58</b>
Project Files Uploaded into NNS	<b>56</b>
Records Request	<b>26</b>
In-Person Inquiries	<b>310</b>
Permission to Survey Requests	<b>12</b>
Land Status Verification/Review	<b>69</b>
Map Requests	<b>24</b>
EORs Issued	<b>48</b>

Deposit Total (surface damage, escrow, filing fees, ROW, Land Rental	<b>\$4,177.66</b>
IHS MOAs Processed/Total	<b>4/\$636,888.94</b>

## Major Projects

### 30 days

- Continuation of processing of TAA, ROW, land withdrawals, leases, map requests, permittee consent, environmental compliance determinations, records request, archiving, meeting requests, community outreach on regulations for all developmental actions on tribal trust and fee lands.
- GLDD/Navajo Nation and the Vertical Bridge contract will expire and those processes will now be handled by Navajo Nation OOC/cashier's section and accounts receivable section and the issuance of a Vertical Bridge contract number will be completed, along with the Navajo Nation set to officially receive the \$2,000,000+ fees collected by Vertical Bridge, in addition to the Vertical Bridge, LLC retaining their fees during the contract period from November 2019 to October 2024.
- GLDD will have a complete listing of all Navajo Nation approved community cemeteries to distribute to the 110 chapters, along with steps to take to request land withdrawals for either expanding existing cemeteries and assisting with receiving approved community cemeteries.
- GLDD will have the programmatic agreement DRAFT completed, as per RDC directive issued on Monday, October 7, 2024 for review and finalization and eventual implementation into the homesite review process.

### 60 days

- Continuation of processing of TAA, ROW, land withdrawals, leases, map requests, permittee consent, environmental compliance determinations, records request, archiving, meeting requests, community outreach on regulations for all developmental actions on tribal trust and fee lands.
- GLDD will assist with the implementation and usage of the final programmatic agreement into the homesite lease approval process.
- GLDD will proceed with seeking a council delegate sponsor for the amendment to the burial and cemetery regulations delegation of authority to the land department manager.

### 90 days or longer

- GLDD will seek information and assistance from DOJ-NRU on the need for a recreational lease for activities such as, rodeo arenas, mountain biking tracts, mud bog locations, or other similar unknown outdoor activities throughout the Navajo Nation.

- GLDD will provide outreach to surrounding mortuaries, chapters, land boards, district grazing officials, and community land use groups on the process to obtain family cemetery leases and becoming into compliance with the land laws.
- GLDD will initiate the APS uploader into the NNS in coordination with all applicable departments and APS for all SLAs received to process for approval.

## **DNR-Heritage and Historic Preservation Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

- HHPD reviewed and issued cultural resources compliance for 250 undertakings on the Navajo Nation subject to the Section 106 review process of the NHPA or under the Navajo Nation Cultural Resources Protection Act of 1988 (NNCRPA).
- Issued Compliance for 147 Homesite Leases and 16 Residential Leases applications; and 87 miscellaneous other projects.
- Inventoried 5,297 acres.
- Recorded 91 archaeological sites, 10 traditional cultural/sacred places, and 4 burials.
- Bears Ears National Monument (BENM) Planning Activities. HHPD continues to attend both the Bears Ears Commission (BEC), and the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition (BEITC) meetings. HHPD works with the BLM and the US Forest Service to ensure the interests of the Navajo Nation and the Navajo people are presented and incorporated into all management decisions for the BENM, including participating in all actions related to the identification and preservation of cultural resources.
  - Miss Cassidy Morgan, Programs and Projects Specialist, has produced two monthly newsletters for the program and has distributed them to various Navajo Nation programs and the public.
- HHPD was awarded \$75,000 from the First Nations Development Institute's (FNDI) Stewarding Native Lands grant program for two projects. The first is to develop a cooperative management agreement between the Navajo Nation and the National Park Service for Chacoan Protection Sites on Navajo Nation trust lands and Individual Indian Allotments. The second project is to create a curriculum for a future site steward program that will be aimed at protecting historic properties on the Navajo Nation.
  - HHPD is issuing a contact to Dinétáhdóó Cultural Resources Management (DCRM) to conduct the work on behalf of HHPD. HHPD does not have the staff or the expertise to conduct ethnographic work. DCRM will work with residents in chapters surrounding Chaco Culture National Historical Park to develop a draft of the

management plan as well as the curriculum. The contract is currently in the Section 164 review process.

## **Major Projects**

- The Burial and Cemetery Documentation Project using the allocation from the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) from the Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture is progressing as planned. The project is working directly with Chapters and local communities to identify and record community cemeteries, family burial plots, individual gravesites, etc. for community planning and development purposes. The information will be useful to plan infrastructure (roads, utility lines, etc.), and provide statistical and locational information to the Navajo Nation Council and others in developing and implementing legislation related to cemeteries. So far over 300 cemeteries/family burial locations from across the reservation have been documented and mapped.
- Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project (NGWSP) Programmatic Agreement Workgroup. HHPD continues to attend all meetings related to the project and the PA. HHPD, as well as other DNR departments, has been working closely with Reclamation, and others, on the overall installation of the waterline by monitoring the construction to protect cultural resources, addressing local concerns, and reviewing and approving compliance for Section 106 activities related to the project.
- The BLM-Farmington Field Office and the BIA-Navajo Regional Office are in discussion now on how to proceed with the Programmatic Agreement since the EIS has been cancelled. No progress has been made on a new agreement.
- HHPD received funding from the Bureau of Reclamation in 2022 to fund activities related to the PA and the NGWSP including funding for one full-time archaeologist position. HHPD advertised a Sr. Archaeologist position several times but has not been able to hire a qualified applicant. HHPD continues to advertise the position

## **DNR – Navajo Land Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Navajo Land Department**

Provided direct services for homesite lease packets, 523 homesite leases were signed, 691 homesite lease application were disseminated. And nine homesite dispute investigations were completed. All Agency offices 3,814 customers visited our offices for services and questions. Navajo Land Department sponsored the Navajo Nation Fair BBQ. Conducted two public outreaches at the NN Fair and the Shiprock Fair.

## **Navajo Land Title Data System**

On the database, ArcGIS, plotted 16 LWD, produced 56 maps, and uploaded and recorded 82 records, homesite, etc. Process 27 Land Status maps for verifications for RBI, NNCI, and all other Public Safety Entities for judicial purposes. Develop and plot all livable structures in five Chapters.

## **Land Acquisition Trust Fund**

Review and respond to all land offers and/or land transactions, received and started correspondences to 12 land offers. Perform field assessments on the Rolling Mesa F2T project. Successfully completed the purchase of Goulding's Monument Valley Lodge and Tours. Compiled listing of all land in AZ for water settlement. Paid 17 payments (15 Counties and 2 BLM Leases) property taxes and annual lease payments. Participated in the Public Outreach at the NN Fair and Shiprock Fair.

## **Major Projects**

### **Navajo Land Title Data System**

Navajo Land Departments new homesite lease & Section 9 lease uploader. We are running our tests with staff currently to make sure they are confident in using this automated service for the lease process. Other departments showed they are confident in the uploader and are ready for the roll out.

### **Navajo Land Department**

We are working on a separate Homesite web page with more information and links.

Continuing our public outreach on the homesite lease process for each chapter.

Working on social media sites for the Navajo Land Department for updates and information for the public

### **Land Acquisition Trust Fund**

We have several acquisitions we are currently working on with sellers for property. Closing a possible sale soon as well and submitting a purchase agreement to seller in the next couple days. Securing a real estate agent through the RFP process in a few weeks.

## **DNR – Parks and Recreation**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **NN Museum Parking Lot**

The parking lot for the Museum was repaved after removal of old pavement which had deteriorated over the years. In addition, the department assisted the Navajo Nation Zoo in installing a sewer line from its new restroom to the NTUA sewer line.

## **Temporary Vending Booths**

Ten temporary vending booths were constructed and installed for arts and crafts vendors at Little Colorado River Gorge Tribal Park first viewpoint. The old vending area will be demolished and reconstructed which is why the vendors had to be temporarily relocated. The location is suitable for visitor access to vendors.

## **Waterless Restrooms**

A consultant completed the environmental assessment for two locations at Monument Valley Tribal Park which will facilitate the construction of the restrooms. They are located at key tourist traffic areas and will be more sanitary for use by visitors.

## **Major Projects**

### **New Office Building**

The new modular building for the central office operation is set up and the electrical and water hookups need to be made to allow occupancy. The building will have 12 offices and will be able to accommodate staff that now are located at the NN Museum. Occupancy is projected for November 2024.

### **Vendor Booth Rehabilitation**

The vending booths at Four Corners Monument are in need of stabilization due to ground movement which has created cracks in the booths. Seepage of water under the booths has increased the instability. Construction crew will work with the park maintenance to work on the foundation to prevent continuing deterioration. The work will be completed during early spring 2025.

### **Access Road and Parking Lot**

The access road and parking lot will be redesigned to the Lower Antelope Canyon. The project will require the approval of the BIA Roads which maintains the highway that goes to Antelope Point Marina. Currently the access road turnoff is in a hazardous location which created safety issues for visitors entering. Preliminary engineering has been completed and construction plans will be submitted for approval.

## **DNR – Department of Resource Enforcement**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### ***30 Days (September)***

1. **Animal Health Requirements:** The Department of Resource Enforcement as a collaborative effort with other districts conducted an animal health checkpoint for the



Navajo Nation and Central Navajo Fair. Natural Resource Enforcement Officers checked each rodeo contestant if they were in compliance with Navajo Nation Code Title 3, a certificate of brand inspection (annual hauling permit), certificate of animal health from a licensed veterinarian, with a negative Coggins test results. The health certificate also indicates the animal is free from any visible signs of diseases and illnesses. NRE Officers verified the documents to ensure the correct animals were being transported into the rodeo grounds. Total amount of livestock haulers checked: 392 Total amount of horses checked: 654 Total amount of cattle checked: 321 Total amount of sheep checked: 73 Total amount of goats checked: 29 Total amount of pigs checked: 13 Total amount of chickens checked: 2 Total amount of llamas checked: 3 Total amount of steers checked: 7 Total amount of bulls checked: 40

### ***60 Days (August)***

1. **New Officer Hired:** On August 19, 2024, Officer Wyndean Largo is now part of the Navajo Nation Department of Resource Enforcement, Eastern District. Officer Largo is assigned to a Field Training Officer (FTO), Sergeant Billy will train officer Largo for approximately 8-to-10-week FTO program. When officer Largo successfully completes the FTO and will be solo to respond to any Calls for Services.
2. **Assistance to Other Agency:** Two District 2 Officers assisted the Fish and wildlife Animal Control to conduct a dogs sweep at the two Gray Hills NHA housing. The operation went well and approximately 25 canines were picked up within the housing area. Another incident involved a Search and Rescue with Shiprock Police Department of a couple along the San Juan River. The male subject was found and later a female was also found deceased.
3. **DRE collaborated with OOC and began the spay/neuter incentive program.** The program pays Navajo Nation residents \$40.00 for ever spay and \$30.00 for every neuter of each pet that is surgically altered. There have been several submissions and in FY 2024 the Department paid out approximately \$3,000 for the program.
4. Natural Resource Enforcement Officer Jonathan Nez attended training in Albuquerque, N.M. on August 27 to August 29, 2024. He is certified to instruct and certify personnel with the use of Taser as a self-defense instrument and certified as a background investigation adjudicator.
5. Officer Jonathan Nez and Sergeant Darryl Billy both attended the Basic Tactical Medical Instructor course in Bear Lake, North Dakota on August 9 to August 13, 2024.
- 6.

### ***90 Days (July)***

1. **Monsoon Season Roads Assessments:** District 2 Officers assisted the Department Emergency Management (DEM) by conducting dirt road assessments after each heavy rain in various Chapters. Officers worked with local Community Health Representatives (CHR's) to identify high-risk elderlies and patience to ensure their roads were assessable. Any damage roads were documented and photographed to be relayed to DEM for the

Navajo Department of Transportation (NDOT) to coordinate and schedule repairs of these roads. About three roads were reported damage in TseYaToh, Naschitti and Sanostee.

2. To start the quarter the Department of Natural Resource Enforcement conducted job interviews on July 2, 2024 at the Division of Natural Resource office in Window Rock, Arizona. Our department currently has several positions that are being advertised that are still vacant. There have been two selected that have passed all phases required and are waiting to attend the Federal Police Academy.
3. On July 4, 2024 We assisted the Navajo Parks and Recreation in Monument Valley, Arizona with a cruelty to animal complaint. Lorraine Black a horseback riding tour operator had a horse that was badly injured the horse did receive medical assistance, but was not recovering and its condition got worse. Mrs. Black did not wish to put the animal down but to let it suffer, hoping that it would recover. On our arrival the horse had been put down and Mrs. Black was advised of the laws regarding animal cruelty. Her Tour Operators Permit was also suspended for other violations found at the business site of operation and corrections were made prior to her reopening her tour operation. It is unknown why the incident was not processed by the Park Rangers instead of requesting assistance.
4. The Department of Natural Resource Enforcement met with the Chief Prosecutor Vernon Jackson on July 8, 2024 regarding livestock theft issues on the Navajo Nation. More complaints are being reported and due to the current high prices being paid for cattle the livestock theft violations are on the rise.
5. Natural Resource Enforcement Officer Jonathan Nez attended the Indian Country Jurisdiction training on July 22 to July 24, 2024.
6. The Eastern Navajo Fair was held on July 25 to July 27, 2024 due to lack of participants and spectators at this relatively small fair only the Officers from the Eastern district was assigned to provide assistance. No major incidents were reported.
- 7.

#### **ONGOING RECURRING CALLS FOR SERVICE (JULY – SEPTEMBER 2024)**

- **Investigations:** There are three investigations being conducted by the Department and DRE will continue to work with the Office of the Prosecutor.
- **Right of Way Removals:** Central District Natural Resource Enforcement Officers while on daily patrols encounter livestock and equine roaming or grazing in the Right of Ways of roadways. The officers will remove livestock from the Right of Way in regard to motorist and livestock or equine safety. Central District Officers have encountered 22 incidents of livestock and equine being within the Right of Ways. Officers removed 112 horses, 47 cattle, and 19 sheep from within the Right of Ways.
- **Navajo Nation Chief Prosecutors Meeting:** On July 8, 2024 Sgt. Billy, Sgt. Tsosie, Sgt. Phillips and Officer Scott met with Vernon Jackson, Navajo Nation Chief Prosecutor regarding outstanding livestock theft cases. After meeting with Mr. Jackson the information was forwarded to the Navajo Nation Attorney General, Ethel Branch and requested that Chief Prosecutor to provide training and for Natural Resource officers to have the accessibility to

- conduct background checks of all individuals who were involved with livestock theft. Several case reports were submitted to the Chief Prosecutors for their review for prosecution.
- **New Officer Hired:** On August 19, 2024, Officer Wyndean Largo is now part of the Navajo Nation
  - **Animal Cruelty Investigations:** District 2 Officer Mark responded to a neighbor not feeding their goats in Alamo, New Mexico. Upon arrival the goat owner had already sold their goats and therefore the evidence of cruelty was not available for further investigation.
  - **Wildland Fire Investigations:** District 2 Officer Lapahé assisted the BIA Forestry Department to locate and monitor wildland fires that ignited from lightning. These fires were immediately extinguished before burning out of control. The fires occurred in remote areas of the Chuska Mountains and no residential structures were damaged. Sergeant Billy also assisted the BIA Forestry Department to locate a fire within the St. Michael's private allotments. No major structure was burned.
  - **Woodland Violations Investigation:** District 2 Officer Mark responded to a call involving several male subjects harvesting firewood without a valid wood harvesting permit. Mark's investigation led her to an elderly female who requested her male grandchildren to gather her firewood. Officer Mark educated the elderly and her grandchildren about obtaining a Senior Personal Use Firewood permit.
  - **Grazing Disputes Investigations:** District 2 officers investigated three grazing disputes of neighbors allowing their sheep and goats and cattle to graze in residential areas. These incidents were referred back to the local Grazing Official to work with livestock owners to better manage their livestock.
  - **Illegal Activity:** District 2 officers responded to 2 Calls for Services involving illegal trash dumping and trash burning. The Reporting Person for the trash dumping informed officer that a Beige Ford, F-150, 4 door truck dumping trash in a gully. The driver of this vehicle was unknown to the Reporting Person and did not know who owned the vehicle. The trash burning was located in an area with several homes surrounding the site and no one in the area knew who started the trash burning. The residents in this area were informed of the Stage One Fire Restriction. One Call for Services involved several male subjects shooting firearms in residential area. Upon arrival the male subjects had already left the area and the Reporting Person did not know these individuals and where they were from.
  - **Livestock Death Investigations:** District 2 Officers investigated 2 livestock death incidents involving firearms. There were no suspects and witnesses for these incidents. The livestock owner found their livestock dead several days later.
  - **Land Dispute Investigations:** District 2 Officers investigated 2 land disputes. One involved a neighbor not allowing NTUA to connect a water line to a resident with an approved homesite lease. The officer made contact with several neighbors and informed them that the resident has all proper documents and for them not to interfere with the waterline. The other incident involving a neighbor reporting an individual constructing a fence line around their homesite without proper documentation. This homesite was in probate and therefore wanted to preserve the homestead.

- **Livestock Dispute Investigations:** District 2 officers responded to four calls for services involving livestock disputes. Two calls for services were already handled by the local Grazing Official because they were ongoing issues and needed to be address and it District Grazing Meeting. One involved an individual chasing of cattle with their vehicle. Neighbors and local livestock owner did not recognize the driver or the vehicle's owner and therefore knows suspect was located. The area was monitored for several days in the vehicle that was involved was never located.
- **Livestock Theft Investigations:** District 2 Officers investigated 10 livestock theft throughout the eastern and northern districts. Beginning with relatives taking cheap without permission that took place two years ago that was never reported to Department of Resource Enforcement. Another incident was a suspicious motorcycle seen in an area where most cattle were reported missing and turned out to be that the individual was searching for his missing cattle. Another incident involved missing cattle that was suspected to be stolen. When the Officer make contact with the livestock owner, the officer was told the Missing cattle was found. Three incidents, the livestock owner suspected an individual taking their livestock and upon questioning suspect(s) and checking areas and corrals where the livestock may be kept with no indication of livestock tracks. Two incidents involved non-natives taking livestock. The reporting person did not know the type and color of vehicles and trailers used, the location of where the livestock were taken from and did not actually witness the incidents. Another incident involved a neighbor chasing livestock. The officers made several attempts to contact the Reporting Person and later contact the local grazing official and they had no knowledge of the reporting person nor the person chasing livestock. The last incident, one cow was recovered and several others are still missing. Investigating Officer had interviewed witnesses and suspects in this case. The case will be forwarded to their prosecutor for possible prosecution.
- **Predator Damage Investigations:** District 2 officers responded to 4 Calls for Services for predator damage involving dogs attacking livestock. The first incident involving a stray German Shepherd dog attacking a colt roaming by itself without a mother. The stray German Shepherd was not located within the area. The reporting person told the officer that the stray German Shepherd rarely comes around. This case was referred to Animal Control to set traps. The second incident involves a dog that was shot owned by the Reporting Person. The dog was not leashed and had roamed into the neighbor's sheep corral. The dog owner requested the incident to be documented. The third incident involves stray dogs that attack several sheep. The sheep owner suspected the dogs belong to her neighbor. The officer talked with the neighbor and owns no dogs that was described by the sheep owner. This case was referred to Animal Control to set up traps. Last incident involves a pig that was attacked by several dogs owned the pig and dog owner. The neighbor witness that dogs attacking the pig. The pig and dog owner did not want to surrender their dogs and the loss of the pig was fine with them. No further action was taken.
- **Livestock Seizures:** Stray Livestock Seizure that were a nuisance in residential areas. 20 horses, 5 cattle and 3 goats were seized.

- **Regulatory Permit Checks:** About 20 to 60 Livestock Hauling Permit and Health Certificate were checked daily at the checkpoint during the Eastern Navajo Fair. Only one citation was issued during this time. District 2 officers also participated and a Livestock Checkpoint during the Navajo Nation Fair.
- **Trainings:** Sergeant Billy attended a two-day training regarding Skeletal Remains Recovery at the Show Low Police Department sponsored by the White Mountain Apache Tribe. Sergeant Billy and Officer Jonathan there is also attended a Basic Tactical Medical Instructor Training in Devils Lake, North Dakota sponsored by their Indian Police Academy.
- **Livestock on the Right-Of-Way:** Due to the recent heavy monsoon season in various highways and routes, sediment filled cattleguards and allowing livestock to graze within the right-of-way's. 18 horses and 22 cattle were removed off the right-of-way on Highway 134, 64, 491, 160 ran Navajo route 13 and 9.

## Major Projects

All Department of Resource Enforcement Officers were registered for the Special Law Enforcement Certification Class and they were denied and informed the Navajo Police Department has to conduct the investigation. We are all aware all law enforcement agencies on the Navajo Nation are short staffed. Natural Resource Enforcement Officer Jonathan Nez was able to contact the SLEC legal team and they allowed him to attend the training. He completed the training and passed the exam. He started to obtain his SLEC and then was informed there was no agency agreement in place. The Division of Natural Resource and Division of Public Safety Directors were both notified and neither of them has reached out for comment or clarification on what is to occur. I am requesting a meeting with President Nygren and Chief of Staff Patrick Sandoval to address the need for an agency agreement between DRE and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to address Natural Resource violations on the Navajo Nation by Non-Navajos.

## DNR – Water Resources Department

### Major Accomplishments

#### *30 Days (September)*

- Completed majority of Cameron Livestock Watering Point at livestock well 3T-551. A new pump was installed at well number 3T-551 and the well was connected to two 4,000 gallons water tanks. The well is pumping 45 gallons per minute (GPM) in the tanks and both the tanks are full. The watering point is working, and the livestock water haulers are hauling water for their livestock. The large 24,000 gallons livestock water tank will be connected to 4,000 gallons tank. In addition, 25 feet tall 25,000 gallons livestock water tank is on order to be installed next to the 24,000 gallons livestock water tank.
- Mandatory pre-bid meeting for contractors bidding on Western Navajo Pipeline Project for water treatment plant, pipelines at Lechee Chapter.

- Provide update of the Utah Water Rights Settlement to the Navajo Utah Commission.

### ***60 Days (August)***

- Pre-Construction meeting held for Navajo – Gallup Water Supply Project Reach 10.1.1 (first section of Crownpoint Lateral) on August 8, 2024. NECA is the construction contractor.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Project awarded planning, design and construction application for Birdsprings Chapter bridge project across the Little Colorado River with no required cost share.
- Bid requests released for Western Navajo Pipeline Project for work on Lake Powell intake, construction of water treatment plant, pipelines at Lechee Chapter.
- Tuba City field office Dilkon field office and Leupp field offices provided repair and maintenance to 31 livestock windmills.
- Crownpoint, Pueblo Pintado and Canoncito field offices provided repair and maintenance to 34 livestock windmills.
- Grant for \$255,000 from Haury Program, a University of Arizona Foundation, issued a business unit for Update of the Navajo Nation Water Development Strategy Document.

### ***90 Days (July)***

- On July 8, 2024, U.S. Congressional Senate Bill 4633 introduced by Senator Mark Kelly (D-AZ) and co-sponsored by Senator Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ) for the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Act of 2024. The bill is to provide for the settlement of the water rights claims of the Navajo Nation, the Hopi Tribe, and the San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, and for other purposes.
- Department of Energy pre-awarded planning funds to New Mexico State University and others for the Carrizo Pumped Storage Hydro Project near the Four Corners on the Navajo Nation. The details of the award and the funding agreements are being drafted.
- Submitted final report for New Mexico funded project for Iyanbito Chapter Water and Drainage System Construction (NN Account K213076) for \$140,000. All funds expended.
- Submitted final report for New Mexico funded project for Regional Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) (NN Account K213083) for \$700,000. All funds expended. Work included construction of a new microwave tower at Mount Powell and remote telemetry units at existing Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) sites to expand NTUA's SCADA network and connect NTUA's existing water infrastructure, including tanks, wells, and pump stations, to the SCADA network to improve maintenance and reduce water waste.
- Submitted final report for New Mexico funded project for Chichiltah Chapter Vanderwagen Water System (NN Account K213069) for \$660,000. All funds expended. The project water supply constructed included an initial pilot test borehole, followed by seven production groundwater supply wells.
- Submitted final report for New Mexico funded project for Naschitti Chapter (NN Account K213065) for \$599,000. All funds expended. The project was to contribute toward the design of a waterline connection from the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project San Juan Lateral pipeline to the Naschitti Chapter community water system.

- Submitted final report for New Mexico funded project for Two Grey Hills (Toadlena) Chapter (NN Account K213066) for \$100,000. All funds expended. The project was to contribute toward the design of a waterline connection from the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project San Juan Lateral pipeline to the Two Grey Hills Chapter community water system.
- Submitted final report for New Mexico funded project for Mexican Springs Chapter / Navajo Nation Water Management Branch (NN Account K213068) for \$779,000. All funds expended. The project was to contribute toward the design of a waterline connection from the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project San Juan Lateral pipeline to the Mexican Springs community water system.
- Submitted final report for New Mexico funded project for Navajo Nation, Counselor Chapter (NN Account K213099) for \$687,200. All funds expended. The funds were used to complete the Counselor Chapter Lybrook Water System Improvement, including waterline replacement design and tank repair construction.
- Submitted final report for New Mexico funded project for Regional BBN9 Lateral Water Project – White Rock Extension (NN Account K2130101) for \$550,000. All funds expended. The funds were used to complete planning-phase engineering for the project. Work included land status research, permission to survey, archaeological and biological field surveys and reports, environmental assessment, and topographic and legal surveying. During the course of the work, the project was realigned to avoid two archaeological sites and to provide water to White Rock Chapter’s economic development zone.
- Submitted final report for New Mexico funded project for Smith Lake Water System Improvements Project (NN Account K2130103) for \$200,000. All funds expended. Smith Lake Water System Improvements Project initiated a new water treatment plant project to improve water quality from two water supply wells supplying the Smith Lake Community Water System.
- Submitted final report for New Mexico funded project for Lake Valley Chapter Water System Improvements Project (NN Account K2130121) \$500,000. \$250,000 expended to design and bid out the drilling of water wells. Construction contract could not be approved in time to expend the remaining funds.

## **Major Projects**

Will be completed in the next 30 days

- Establish a business unit for \$137 million for NTUA Centralized Wastewater Treatment for communities of Shiprock, Kayenta, Chinle and Ganado which was approved through Resolution CMY-28-24.
- Approval of construction contract for Smith Lake Water System Improvements Mod #8 with Stewart Brothers Well Drilling.
- Approval of \$4.9 million construction contract with Clawson Excavating for Naschitti Chapter San Juan Lateral Connection.
- Approval of \$4.2 million construction contract with Dooley Construction Solutions for Chichiltah-Vanderwagen Water Supply Project.

Will be completed in the next 60 days

- Approval of NECA contract for \$6.9 million for Tse'ii'ahi Waterline Extensions.
- Approval of Canyon Construction Co. contract for \$5.6 million for Carson Burnham Regional Water Project.

Will be completed in the next 90 days or longer

- Construction of the water wells will be underway for the Lake Valley Chapter Water System Improvements Project and once the project is complete, the quality of life of families in the Lake Valley Chapter will be improved.
- New P.L. 93-638 Model 108 Contract for Water Monitoring Inventory Program to be approved by Navajo Nation Council.

## **DNR – ARPA Funds**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### ***30 Days (September)***

- GLDD Projects for the beginning of the month APD Elk Petroleum for McElmo Creek and Aneth, Educational Lease for Chinle School District, all moved to DOJ.
- NLD continue to work with community members this month (07) terminations, BRCF processed applications is (25), Fish & Wildlife review (17), completed ECD (09) completed homesite leases (04), CRCF completed (02), and ECD/ROW review (02).
- Minerals Department staff continue to review Teir 01 and 02. Department Manager and assigned staff review Teir 03.
- The administration staff continue to work with the programs, follow the legislative branch on various legislations, working closely with Division of Community Development, ARPA-FRFO, Department of Justice and the Budget and Finance Committee.

#### ***60 Days (August)***

- GLDD the ROW for the Gallup waterline project as well as those for road improvements, health care facilities, powerlines, waterlines, and bridge improvements have been processed.
- NLD worked closely with community members on application process for homesites, this month the staff served 476 community members by phone, email, or in person.
- Forestry received ARPA projects and permitted tree cutting projects to be done.

#### ***90 Days (July)***

- Administration staff working on reporting formats for the reporting section of the ARPA/FRFO funding.



- GLDD worked diligently on TAA for powerline & waterline extensions. Also, worked on road improvement projects for N5001, US 64 for NMDOT, NDOT, BIA and other areas.

## Major Projects

### *Will be completed in the next 30 days*

- Continuation of approvals, surveys, and closing of proposed land use applications for business, homesites or other purposes continue daily.
- NLD processes applications with BRCF, ECD, CATEX4X, BIO, & PLATS and working with communities and grazing officials.
- Minerals Department processed new EOR's totaling \$3,319,799.55. These are within the communities of Kayenta, Black Mesa, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills and Shiprock.

### *Will be completed in the next 60 days*

- Forestry will continue to receive and review the tree cutting permit request and do follow ups on the sites to make sure the compliances are followed.
- NLD, GLDD, and Minerals Department will continue to review, process and forward all applications to the designated areas for approval.
- The GLDD, NLD will be working with Resources Development on implementation of Programmatic Agreement between the following programs General Land Development and Heritage & Historic Preservation in partnership with Navajo Land Department which will expedite homesite lease requests.

# DIVISION OF DINE EDUCATION

## Dine College

### Major Accomplishments

#### Waterline assessment, design and repairs o(residential dorms, cafeteria, library (Tsaile Campus).

The project went to bid and the request for proposals were sent to nine contractors listed on the Navajo Nation Source List published by the Business Regulatory office. As of the due date for this RFP which was, Wednesday, September 18, 2024, there were no bidders. There have been little to no replies to all bids being advertised by our institution as of late and this project is no exception. The College is once again working to put this RFP back together and formulate a bid schedule for bidding on this project for the second time following the

Navajo Business Opportunity Act and Business Regulatory guidelines pertaining to Navajo Preference.

**Continue to expand educational programs offering many credentials & stackable programs.**

The School of Transformation (SoT) at Dine College continued its efforts to expand physical space and acquire necessary equipment to support its growing programs and initiatives. Equipment acquisition and space expansion have been prioritized to accommodate new program offerings and student needs.

**Increase student and staff access to mental health resources**

Dine College Student Affairs established the Student Wellness Center at Tsaile Campus. The Center employees 4 full time personnel. Focus of services for Quarter 4 (July, August, September) was to promote, deliver, and monitor students' physical, mental, physical, and spiritual health. Mode of service delivery included face-to-face, virtual, and group meetings. Students utilizing the mental health services on campus increased by

23% from Spring 2024 to Fall 2024 semester. Summary report of program performances and outcomes documented in Student Affairs' bimonthly Board of Regent reports. Dine College Employee Wellness Program has been implemented and will include Employee Financial Literacy within the Wellness Program.

**Upgrade & improve educational equipment & teaching space throughout the college**

Placement of equipment & disposition of equipment, student satisfaction survey report: Department of Capital Projects to compile an inventory of needs (based on campus visits and surveys) and post an RFP for equipment.

**Continue on-going renovation of residential Willow Hall & others as prioritized.**

The residence life program provided a list of deficiencies with all ten dormitories and after further review with operations and maintenance, the list was given to operations and maintenance. Currently, there is an initiative to update ADA standards for those dormitory rooms which are ADA but need to be upgraded to meet unmet or changed ADA Standards, both inside the individual dorm rooms and the dormitory as a whole. The last statement "dormitory as a whole" statement refers to those dorms which have ADA rooms in them; it would be appropriate to ensure the commons areas of the dorm also incorporates ADA features since there are ADA rooms inside them.

**Explanation - Supporting Information Reported Above:**

- 1. Fourth QTR Goal (100% Met). RFP processed and bid request sent out to contractors on NN Source list.
- Fourth QTR Goal (100% Met). School of Transformation is acquiring equipment & space expansion for growing programs.

- Fourth QTR Goal (100% Met). Dine College Student Wellness Center and Employee Wellness Program established. Students utilizing services and employees have financial literacy in the program.
- Fourth QTR Goal (100% Met). inventory needs compilation and request for proposal for equipment was processed.
- Fourth QTR Goal (100% Met). ADA upgrade to current ADA identified dormitories at the commons area and within the ADA rooms.

## **DODE – Cognia Navajo Nation**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **2024-25 Upcoming Reviews**

Our Cognia Office has been working diligently on collaborating with Schools who are preparing for their upcoming review. Direct services from the Cognia NN office have been rendered to schools' professionals with trainings, workshops, technical assistance support and weekly progress follow-ups.

6 School Reviews

1 Systems Review


2 Monitoring Review

#### **Navajo Nation Cognia Evaluator**

We have a Cognia Navajo Nation Lead Evaluator leading for the upcoming Reviews slated for this year. This individual remains in direct contact with schools on their ongoing preparations for their upcoming Accredited Engagement Review.

We are also in the process to recruit for a Part-Time Lead Evaluator to serve Navajo Nation School for Accreditation Engagement Reviews.

#### **Added New Cognia NN Team-Member**

We have filled the vacant position of two years of Principal Education Specialist with our newest team member. We would like to welcome Darrick Franklin to Team Cognia Navajo Nation 

As the educational realm increases to various demands of post pandemic, trauma, etc.... Mr. Franklin brings a great amount of knowledge and expertise as a former educator, counselor, and educational advisory to dignitaries which expands our office dynamics to better serve schools

### **Major Projects**

#### **2025 Spring Cognia Conference**

We plan to host a Navajo Nation Cognia Spring Conference, as the last conference was held Fall 2018.

#### **Re-establish Cognia Advisory Council**

Cognia Regions should have an Advisory Council established consisting of a minimum of eight members. We are in the process to re-establish active members to fulfill these positions. We anticipate to fill all eight positions for the Advisory Council and host the first meeting in November 2024.

### **Next Year Upcoming School Reviews**

We are going to take a jumpstart working with 2025-2026 Schools ahead of time to prepare for their upcoming Accreditation Engagement Reviews. We have eleven schools slated for that year (2025-2026).

## **DODE – Navajo Nation Johnson O’Malley Program**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### ***30 Days***

- NNJOM attended and represented the Navajo Nation at the NJOMA conference.
- NNJOM met with Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission and Utah Navajo Human Rights Commission with a subcontractor.
- Close Open Commitments for FY 2018, 2019 and 2020.

#### ***60 Days***

- NNJOM has provided technical assistance to 5 subcontractors regarding IEC policies.
- NNJOM had the program’s annual monitoring visit from the BIE. BIE provided feedback and recommendations for NNJOM.

#### ***90 Days***

- NNJOM completed negotiation visits with 6 subcontractors this quarter.
- NNJOM completed 25 monitoring visits with subcontractors.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Planning of NNJOM Youth Conference**

NNJOM has begun to plan a youth conference for all the Navajo Nation JOM subcontractors.

#### **Internal Standard Operating Procedures**

NNJOM is looking at internal processes and developing SOPs to help the program

## **DODE – Office of Dine School Improvement**

### **Major Accomplishments**

- Developed and presented the Navajo Nation and Bureau of Indian Education Data Sharing Agreement to the Navajo Nation Board of Education for approval, including

providing specific student data indicators that fulfill the Dine School Accountability Plan-Phase II. This was then provided back to the BIE – Window Rock program. Once they approve it the document will be processed through the 164 SAS approval process.

- Developed with the Department of Health Public Health Emergency Preparedness program the Navajo Nation School Community Safety Task Force, including developed a coalition from the states of New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah, as well as the Bureau of Indian Education, the various counties, the various public schools, colleges, and Navajo tribal programs.
- Facilitated and presented the Navajo Nation – Arizona State University Intergovernmental Agreement/Memorandum of Agreement that expired over six years. This document was facilitated through DoDE administration and was presented to the Navajo Nation Board of Education for their approval.

## **Major Projects**

- Achieve State Education Agency for the Navajo Nation Department of Education.
- Establish a Navajo Education Information System and populate it with Student Data from Navajo Nation Tribally Controlled Schools.
- Provide information on School Safety to the school leaders that operate on the Navajo Nation to protect students.

## **DODE – Office of Dine Youth**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### Accomplishments Administration;

- Attended HEHSE Committee Meeting regarding our FY 24-25 Budget for Dine Youth
- Attended the Chinle and Tuba City Chapter Meeting regarding the Youth Complex on 7/1 & 7/2. Chinle Chapter Meeting was the planning meeting and to request to be on the regular chapter meeting, which was held on July 15th. Our request for land tract withdrawal was passed with a vote of 44-0. Tuba City Chapter Meeting was also to get approval for 2.3 acres of which was also approved
- Traveled to Camp Pendleton to retrieve Devil Pups Participant from a ten (10) day encampment. We also attended the Graduation with all eleven (11) Pups Graduating. Everything was successful.
- Continue to have Program Supervisors Meetings on a regular basis to receive updates on program activities and expenditures
- Continue to attend meetings with the President’s Office, NN Council Delegate Claw, GLDD Office, Program Supervisors from Tuba City and Chinle Agency. So far we have been able to secure Land Tracts for both Agencies.

Chinle:

### Afterschool Program

The challenge is that we don't have a facility, but we try to go out to the chapters and schools to provide afterschool activities, such as homework help and other fun activities. Summer is harder because school concentrates more on credit recovery during summer schools, and residential are closed.

### Recreation Program

345 Youth Served, 24 Schools Served, 8 Chapters Served The recreation program served a series of outreach events where they serviced three hundred and forty-five (345) youth, serving sixteen (16) schools, eight (8) Head Start programs, and eight (8) chapters. The recreation staff served youth with teambuilding projects & exercising; Devil Pups program; Youth Running Camps; JMI; Youth T-Ball & Baseball League; Chapter summer youth employment programs; and attended chapter meetings regarding supporting resolutions for Youth Complex in Chinle.

### Prevention Program

166 youth served. Prevention program continuously provide prevention presentation at the beginning of each activity, i.e., eating healthy prevents obesity and diabetes; stretching out before running and/or playing prevents injuries; wearing proper sporting gears prevent concussion and other serious injuries; staying away from substance abuse prevent healthy living; complying with school rules prevent drop out rates, etc. A total of one hundred and sixty-six (166) were served, no schools were served however (5) five chapters were served with prevention program.

### Youth Employment

14 youth served, 6 schools served, 7 chapters served.

Fourteen (14) youth applied, interviewed and hired under the youth employment program for Summer 2024. On June 28, 2024, we started off with orientation and students were assigned to their prospective worksite to start on July 1, 2024. With the 14 students hired we serviced six (6) college institution and (2) two high local high schools. With those same students, we serviced seven (7) chapters.

### Other Accomplishments

Chinle Dine YOUTH obtained supporting resolutions from four (4) neighboring chapters for our Youth Complex project. Chinle Chapter approved a resolution in support of land withdrawal of 30 acres within Chinle Chapter parcel. This is a major accomplishment

after so many years of attempting.

Crownpoint

**Summer Program, accomplishments, 1440 of Youth Served, 3 of Schools Served, 7 of Chapters Served**

- Summer Program in Crownpoint, NM started on June 10, 2024, and will continue Monday - Thursday until July 18, 2024. Activities include Gardening, Life skills (cooking, snack making, sewing, public speaking), Exercise, Arts & Crafts, Spark games, Scrapbooking. We prepare lunch and snack for them.
- Summer Program in Huerfano, NM started on June 5, 2024, and will continue Monday - Thursday until August 1, 2024. Activities include STEAM, SPARK games, Beauty Way, Arts & Crafts, Character Counts, Physical Education, Diabetes Education, Project Adventure, Dare to Be You and PAK activities. Lunch is served at the site to all children.
- 4-H Programming provided Intro to Ceramics on July 1 & 15, 2024. Project was completed

**Recreation Program, accomplishments, 438 Youth Served, # 0 Schools Served, 14 Chapters Served**

- Tee Ball League began on June 3, 2024, and will continue until July 10, 2024. The league has four (4) tee ball teams. The teams practice on Mondays and play games on Wednesdays each week. Practice sessions include instruction, and they receive a snack at the end of each session. Juanita Martin is the project leader.

Basketball Fundamentals Skills began on June 4, 2024, will continue until July 16, 2024. They meet each week on Tuesday nights from 5:30-7:00pm.. They go through the basic skills and practice at the ODY complex gym. They have learned basic dribbling, ball handling, defense, court markings, conditioning, health/nutrition, and conditioning. Jimmie Toledo is the project leader.

- Kickball fun nights began June 6, 2024, will continue until July 18, 2024, at the ODY Baseball field. This activity will get students out of the house to get some exercise. Students are learning the skills of kickball, focus, coordination, and following directions. Karlishia Craig is the project leader.

**Prevention Program, accomplishments, 112 of Youth Served, #0 of Schools Served, 4 of Chapters Served**

- Girl Scout Troop 2489 participated in STEM Camp in Tsaille, AZ on June 21-23, 2024. Provided home safety, money matters and anger management at the chapters. Provided Rugrats camp for the younger children of the community.

**Youth Employment, accomplishments, 7 Youth Served, 0 Schools Served, 5 Chapters Served**

- The Office Specialist hired five (5) high school students and two (2) college students for Summer Youth Employment. The high school students will work 2 weeks and the college

will work 5 weeks. We have additional money to hire more students as they come in and complete their application process, interview, and orientation.

### **Fort Defiance:**

- Fort Defiance Dinè Youth implemented its 2024 Summer Program. The enrolled participants was provided program sessions in Recreation, SPARKS, PAK, Academic Success, Dine Language & Culture, Character Development, Prevention programs, Arts & Crafts, Funky Fun Days, 4H Project Day, Gardening & Greenhouse, Holiday events & celebration and Awareness Events. ***(31 youth served/8 schools served/8 chapters served)***
- Fort Defiance Recreation Program Activity consist of the following: Devil Pup Tryouts, Devil Pup Bag Check, 2024 Devil Pup Program, Tee Ball Skills Challenge, Ages 5-6, Tee Ball Skills Challenge, Ages, 7-8, Instructional Tee Ball League, Ages 5-7, Summer Program Gardening, Tee Ball Camp, Chapter Outreach Teambuilding Activities, Skate Competition, Baseball Camp, 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Benefit Car Show, Summer Open Gym, Ages 5-8, Open Summer Basketball, Ages 9-17, Open Summer Volleyball, Ages 9-15, Putt Putt Golf, Chapter Outreach Recreational Activities & Arts & Crafts Activity, Summer Program Recreational Activities. In addition, youth and community members utilized the FDODY playground, Skate Park and athletic fields. ***(556 youth served/8 schools served/19 chapters served)***
- Fort Defiance Prevention Program Activity consist of the following: Chapter Prevention Outreach & Presentation, Youth Cake Decorating Activity, Kid's Movie Night, Chapter Outreach Movie Day, Kid's Karaoke Activity, School Outreach Prevention Outreach & Presentation, Parenting Class, Daycare Center Prevention Outreach & Presentation, Ice Cream Social, Snow Cone Social and Youth Hiking. ***(648 youth served/1 schools served/20 chapters served/2 daycare center served)***
- Fort Defiance Youth Employment Program: ***(4 youth served/0 schools served/3 chapter served) In addition we served 4 additional youth, who worked under the Workforce Development Office.***
- Fort Defiance Diné Youth continued to conduct School (BIE, Public and Head Start Schools) outreach. Our office served one (1) School Outreach at Ganado Elementary. Served seven (7) Chapter Outreach at Teesto, Greasewood, Indian Wells, Nahata Dziil, Crystal, Red Lake and Naschitti. Served two (2) Daycare Center Outreach at Little Folks Daycare and Little Miss Muffet Daycare. Our office provided prevention presentations, character development, SPARKS/PAK, recreational activities, interactive games, teambuilding activities, literacy, educational activities, nutrition, arts & crafts and parent presentation.
- Fort Defiance Dinè Youth implemented its Girls Scout program. Hosting monthly meetings and Schedule Activities- Volleyball & Healthy Choices and Zoo Sleepover Camp. Girls Scout program also participated in the 2024 Girls Scout Shadow Rim Troop Camp.
- Fort Defiance Diné Youth had two youth participate in the 2024 Devil Pup Program, from July 11- 20, 2024. Our office had two qualifier, a female and a male.



### **Shiprock Agency**

- Afterschool Program, accomplishments, # of Youth Served, # of Schools Served, # of Chapters Served. Shiprock Dine Youth afterschool program was cancelled on May 06, 2024, by Ms. Virginia Nelson Delegated Department Manager I.
- Recreation Program, accomplishments, # of Youth Served, # of Schools Served, # of Chapters Served. Shiprock Dine Youth does not have any direct staff for programming or direct services since May 10, 2024. All programming and activities are suspended until vacant positions are filled.
- Prevention Program. accomplishments, # of Youth Served, # of Schools Served, # of Chapters Served. Shiprock Dine Youth does not have any direct staff for programming or direct services since May 10, 2024. All programming and activities are suspended until vacant positions are filled.
- Youth Employment, accomplishments, # of Youth Served, # of Schools Served, # of Chapters Served 20 youth (18 high school, 2 college students) participated in the Summer Youth Employment program. June 17 through July31, 2024. Students are enrolled in Central Consolidated Schools, Cortez HS, Whitehorse HS, Navajo Preparatory, Aztec HS, Red Mesa HS, Red Valley HS. Farmington HS, San Juan College and Fort Lewis College. Chapters: Shiprock, Aneth, Red Mesa, Newcomb, Red Valley, Cove, Sanostee, Nenahnezad, Upper Fruitland, Gadiahi and Hogback Chapters.
- And other accomplishments for the month. • Completed the hiring process to fill two vacant Programs and Projects Specialist positions. • Secured volunteer workers to pull weeds and cleanup around the Shiprock Youth Complex. • Finalized FY 2025 budget for Shiprock Agency.
- Two Shiprock Agency youth successfully participated and completed the 2024 Devil Pups encampment. Graduation was held on Saturday July 20, 2024 at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton in Oceanside, CA. 2 • Attended NHA Subrecipient Training on July 18, and 19, 2024. Covered; Sub- Recipient Agreements, Annual Performance Reports, HUD reporting requirements, Program Income, Land Use Restriction Agreements, Maintenance and Inspections, and Essential Families.

### **Tuba City:**

**Afterschool Program, accomplishments, #0 of Youth Served, 0# of Schools Served, 0# of Chapters Served:**

- Zero numbers were recorded due to no school in session.

**Recreation Program, accomplishments, #246 of Youth Served, #3 of Schools Served, #10 of Chapters Served**

- The following schools were provided programming and services: Leupp Elementary School, Kayenta Boarding School, and Cameron Headstart, with programming involving, SPARK Project Adventure, PAK (Physical Activity Kit) Character Development, Cultural presentation: advice and directions given from Navajo Elders, SYE: Consumer Credit Counseling, Job Readiness Training.
- A total of 79 youth were provided recreational and cultural services, involving teamwork,
- leadership, motor skill development, cognitive development, culture lessons on the value of native corn to the Dine people.
- 10 Chapters were provided Summer Youth Employment (SYE) services with a total of 118
- youth workers. Recreational activities were provided for the youth workers. The following Chapters were provided services: Cameron, Dennehotso, Tolani Lake, Kaibeto, Leupp, Navajo Mountain, Tonalea, Gap/Bodaway, Coalmine.
- Chapter summer youth employees were given recreational activities and Job Readiness
- Training (JRT), lessons in budgeting, resume writing skills, application skills, letter of interest, interviewing skills, searching for employment locations

#### Prevention Program

- 276 of Youth Served, #7 of Schools Served, #11 of Chapters Served
- Tuba City Dine YOUTH Prevention Specialist have not received any formal trainings with the
- scope of Prevention: such Student Assistant Training (SAP), Dare to be You (DARE). Numerous attempts to acquire training were not approved, therefore, staff have been researching programming and activities related to Prevention. Youth Safety, Summer outdoor safety hazards, Summer weather related hazards, Character Development: self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, interpersonal skills, Team building, non-verbal communication.
- A total of 276 youth obtained programming and services with the scope of prevention.
- 6 Schools received services: Cameron Headstart, Kayenta Boarding School, Tonalea Day School, Leupp Elementary School, Navajo Mountain Elementary School, Kayenta Elementary School.
- 11 chapters received services: Tolani Lake, Cameron, Tuba City, Tonalea, Dennehotso,
- Kaibeto, Navajo Mountain, Gap/Bodaway, Shonto, Leupp, and Coalmine.
- Chapter visits were in association with Chapter summer employment, TCDY provided services and programming with Prevention, Recreation (Wellness), and Cultural activities

#### Youth Employment

- 24 of Youth Served, #6 of Schools Served, #3 of Chapters Served
- Successful Dine Youth summer youth employment with 18 High School, 6 College students
- employed. Serviced 4 chapters, Navajo Mountain, Tonalea, Cameron and Tuba City.

**other accomplishments for the month:**

In collaboration with Navajo Nation TANF program provide Navajo Culture programming with skirt making for Children of TANF recipients.

**DODE - Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services**

**Major Accomplishments**

VR and IL staff provide service to individuals with disabilities on a daily basis. Daily accomplishments include conducting presentations to the community at events or schools; home visits to referrals received or follow-ups with consumers to ensure a successful employment outcome and to live independently.

Early Intervention - Az. Received 18 new referrals. Completed 11 initial intakes with families. Evaluated 2 children for eligibility. Completed 6 IFSP's with families. 13 Transition activities were completed with Cedar, Winslow, Flagstaff, Chinle, Holbrooke and Page school districts. Four Child Find events were completed at Winslow and Chinle. 7 parent trainings completed with families.

NM Growing Beauty Early Intervention completed the following meetings: met with the Gallup Inter-Agency Case Review Team to review referrals, weekly case reviews, Reflective Supervision transition team meetings, and GIB collaborative meetings. NM GIB EI continued with Partnership With Native American's (PWNA) to provide goods and products to families on caseloads. Each FSC distributed and provided early childhood information to families as a part of partnership with PWNA. NM GIB EI completed interviews for Developmental Specialist's positions and made one selection for the Crownpoint office. The individual will need to complete Navajo Nation background check requirements. NM GIB EI staff collaborated with New Mexico School for the Deaf (NMSD) Impaired to complete telehealth-audiology with monthly appointments. Staff completed training at various workshops including FIT Office Hours and NW Regional Summit. GIB collaborated with local agencies to complete health fairs at Mariano Lake, Window Rock, Crownpoint, and Torreon. Public Awareness completed at Atsa Biyaazh Child Find, The following totals reflect the 30-day activities; 6 new referrals, 5 CMEs, 3 assessments, 5 determined eligible, 4 IFSP meetings, 6 IFSP support and services, 3 Transition conferences, & 1 IEPs.

The Navajo Nation Home Visiting program's accomplishments for the first 30 days of the quarter include providing services to 93 Navajo families and enrolling 8 new families into the program. The program exited 11 children who graduated & transitioned into enrollment in Pre-K/Kindergarten. The program conducted 6 family group connections that supported family social engagement and receiving appropriate parent training about child development home safety, and family well-being. The program completed 20 routine developmental screenings with enrolled children. There were 235 outgoing referrals made for families to mental health, dental care, childcare, nutrition,

housing, and workforce. Families initiate connection because of receiving a referral.

Early Childhood Program (30 days): The accomplishments for the Early Childhood Program during the first thirty days of the quarter were completing 40 developmental screenings, 37 hearing screenings, and 38 vision screenings for children under the age of 5 years old. Referrals were made to appropriate resources for child screenings that resulted in developmental, vision, or hearing concerns. Additionally, one Child Find event was conducted at Sage Memorial Hospital Child Care Center in Ganado, AZ along with Early Childhood Screenings done in partnership with non-profit Yocama. This resulted in numerous child developmental, vision, and hearing screenings.

Also, the program attended six outreach events to recruit for their respective services. The outreach events included: Navajo Head Start Recruitment Series (Tuba City, AZ), Youth Wellness Conference (Dilkon, AZ), Navajo Head Start Recruitment Series (Denehotso, AZ), Sage Memorial Hospital Screening event Ganado, AZ, Back to School Blessin:s Health and Resource Exoo·Window Rock, AZ), and KTNN radio advertisement. Additionally, two families were enrolled into family support coordination services. As for the Navajo Nation Early Childhood Collaborative, the program was planning for the strategic planning session in conjunction with the Dine' Early Childhood Summit to take place in August 2024. The program created strategic planning session booklet, presentation slides, discussion questions, invitations, and secured venue for the session. Lastly, the program conducted an in-person Positive Dine' Parenting class at the UNM Toy Lending Library in Gallup, NM. Five participants successfully completed both days of the sessions to receive a certificate of completion.

VR/IL daily accomplishments also include collaboration with service providers such as schools and organizations like ODD, state VR, colleges/universities/Job Corps, Navajo Nation programs such as Behavioral Health, Scholarship, Social Services, etc. Determining eligibilities, developing plans with consumers to obtain/maintain employment and to live independently. Early Intervention (AZ) received 18 new referrals, completed 7 initial intakes with families, evaluated 4 children for eligibility. Completed 17 IFSP's (Individual Service Plan) with families. All visits were completed at the family's home. 23 Transition activities were completed with Chinle, and Page schools. Four (4) Child Find events were completed at Tuba City, Winslow, and Chinle. 10 parent trainings completed with families.

NM Growing Beauty completed the following meetings: weekly case reviews with GIB team and GIB collaborative meeting. Telehealth-audiology with NMSD continues monthly at Gallup GIB office. Public Awareness completed at Dine College Resource Fair. Child Find Activities and screenings were completed by Gallup GIB at St. Francis School where team completed vision and hearing screenings. Staff completed training at various workshops including FIT Office Hours, ECEP training, reviewed GIB Policies and Procedures, reviewed transfer information, Reciprocal Imitation Training, and Birth Cohort. The following totals reflect the

60-day activities; 7 new referrals, 5 assessments, 35 CMEs, 4 determined eligible, 6 IFSP meetings, 10 IFSP support and services, & 3 Transition conferences.

The Navajo Nation Home Visiting program's accomplishments within the 60 days of the quarter include servicing 101 Navajo families and enrolling 15 families into the program. Although there was a decrease in dis-enrollment from the previous month the program had 13 dis-enrollment due to children who graduated the program and were appropriately transitioned into Head Start and Kindergarten. The program completed 30 routine developmental screenings for enrolled children and had no concerns with all 30 children who were screened. There were 7 family group connections held within the program that focused on child developmental awareness, home safety, and family well-being, and nutrition. The continuation of 161 outgoing referrals made for families to connect them to appropriate resources of WIC, Mental Health, Nutrition, Adult Education, Food Banks, and Medical/Dental services.

Early Childhood Program (60 days): The accomplishments for the Early Childhood Program during the initial 60 days of the quarter were completing 41 developmental screenings, 38 hearing screenings, and 38 vision screenings for children under the age of 5 years old. Referrals were made to appropriate resources for child screenings that resulted in developmental, vision, or hearing concerns. Also, the program attended two outreach events (eight cumulative) to recruit for their respective services. The two events were Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) Clinic (Tuba City, AZ) and Wellness Center Health Fair Expo (Window Rock, AZ).

Additionally, six families were enrolled into family support coordination services totaling eight families from the start of the quarter. As for the Navajo Nation Early Childhood Collaborative, the strategic planning session and early childhood summit was conducted in Tuba City, AZ at the Moenkopi Legacy Inn & Suites. There were 40 participants in attendance for the planning session and about 60 people were in attendance for the Dine' Early Childhood Summit. The events took place over two days, August 5-6, 2024. Both events were attended by various early childhood and family program providers and stakeholders supporting the Navajo Nation.

VR & IL: As of September 30, 2024, VR has an overall caseload of 229; 34 referrals received, 17 individuals determined eligible for VR service, and 13 successful closures. IL caseload is 139, 15 referrals received, 22 plans developed, 7 determined eligible for IL, and 9 successful closures. VR service is provided to individuals with disabilities to obtain/maintain employment and IL is provided to individuals with disabilities to live independent. In addition, VR is also working with the Shiprock Project Search, currently; there are 4 consumers enrolled and collaborating with NMDVR to work towards a successful employment outcome.

Early Intervention (AZ) received 12 new referrals, completed 7 initial intakes and 3 evaluation. 11 IFSP's (Initial, 6 months, annual) were completed with families. 11 Transition activities were completed with schools' districts (Winslow, Pinon, Chinle, Flagstaff, Page). Five (5) Child Find

activities were conducted with families and children birth to 5 years old in Tuba City and Chilne. Eight (8) Parent Trainings were conducted with families.

NM Growing Beauty Early Intervention completed the following meetings met with the Gallup Inter-Agency Case Review Team to review referrals, weekly case reviews with GIB team, transition team meetings, and meet with new regional team support, Suzanne Pope. Child Find Activities and screenings were completed by Gallup GIB at Chichiltah BIE school where team completed vision and hearing screenings. NM GIB El continues to work and collaborate with Nizhoni Network (GMCS), CCECT, and Children Onward (San Juan County School District) for the new school year. The school district's Transition MOUs are completed, signed, and will be implemented into new year. NMSD tele-audiology project continues to progress with children completing evaluations. Staff completed training at various workshops including FIT Office Hours, RIOS Framework for Reflective Practices, Trauma and the Developing Brain. The following totals reflects the 90-day activities; 3 new referrals, 3 CMEs, 1 assessments, 3 determined eligible, 1 IFSP meetings, 8 IFSP support and services, 2 Transition conferences, & 2 IEPs

The Navajo Nation Home Visiting program's overall 90-day accomplishments of the reporting period have ended with the continuation of servicing Navajo families and their children to provide support through direct home visits, family lesson plans, routine development screenings, and referrals. The program has also initiated program outreach by conducting CHILD FIND at many locations within both the AZ & NM Navajo reservation. This activity has allowed the program to capture children who are not receiving any services and were able to support and connect the families to appropriate services for their child(ren). Within the program dynamics of operation, the program has 7 home visitors implementing home visiting initiatives on the Navajo Reservation. The program selected to hire one more staff for the Tribal MIECHV for the Shiprock-Farmington office and will be onboarding when NN OBI clearance is made.

Early Childhood Program (90 days): The accomplishments for the Early Childhood Program during the comprehensive 90 days of the quarter were completing 45 developmental screenings, 40 hearing screenings, and 42 vision screenings for children under the age of 5 years old. Referrals were made to appropriate resources for child screenings that resulted in developmental, vision, or hearing concerns. The target screening number to meet for the quarter was 42 which was surpassed for developmental screening, just meeting the goal for vision screening, and shy of 2 screenings for hearing. Additionally, one Child Find was conducted in White Cone Chapter House in White Cone, AZ. Also, the program attended three additional outreach events (eleven cumulative) to recruit for their respective services. The three additional events were Navajo

Pediatric Clinic Quarterly Staff Meeting (Fort Defiance, AZ), and White Cone Chapter House (White Cone, AZ). Additionally, one family was enrolled into family support coordination

services totaling nine families from the start of the quarter. As for the Navajo Nation Early Childhood Collaborative, the group met to summarize the priority areas discussed during the session which included Dine' Culture & Traditions, Mental & Behavioral Health, Child Care, Wrap Around Services, Community Support & Engagement, and Parent Support & Engagement. The group plans to create SMART goals for the NNECC utilizing the discussions and findings during the strategic planning session. Lastly, the program created a children's book called, "The Calming Countdown" to guide early childhood providers and parents on how to use their five senses to connect to the present moment. The book has Navajo translations and will be offered to Early Childhood centers throughout the nation as a teaching tool for social and emotional development.

## **Major Projects**

- VR/IL: Project Search in Gallup provides service to individuals with disabilities with training to obtain/maintain employment; it is collaborated with Gallup McKinley County Schools, Hilton Garden Inn, NM DVR, DD waiver and Navajo VR. Currently, there is another Project Search located in Shiprock; it is collaborated with Central Consolidated School, NM DVR, DD waiver and Navajo VR in providing service to individuals with disabilities to obtain/maintain employment. This service is specific to individuals with developmental disabilities. Possible Project Search to begin in AZ, still in the very early stages. Attended meeting with DVR, discussed training opportunities and how to collaborate in working together for successful outcomes.
- Early Intervention (AZ) on base, where all our AzEIP documents will be downloaded into data system.
- The Early Intervention program in New Mexico continued to received referrals
- on a weekly basis. This first 30 days focus was wrapping up transitions from Part C to Part 8 for the summer. Collaboration with various local programs for health fair the week of July 15-18 was completed. Children received developmental, hearing, and vision screenings. This was reported in Child Find and Public Awareness reports. Team met with new NW regional support lead, Suzanne Pope.
- The Navajo Nation Home Visiting program projects for the first 30 days of the
- quarter include conducting outreach events to promote enrollment and participation. Another project the program facilitated is family group connections that help support parents/caregivers in obtaining knowledge & understanding about their child's development.
- Early Childhood Program (30 days): The project of the Early Childhood program is providing comprehensive early childhood screenings, family support coordination, early childhood systems building through the Navajo Nation Early
- Childhood Collaborative, and remote social-emotional development.
- VR/IL: Collaborating with schools and service provider to provide Pre- Employment Transition Service (Pre-ETS) to potentially eligible students with disabilities to prepare for employment; services include job exploration counseling, work-based learning, counseling on post-secondary and training opportunities, work readiness training and instruction in self-advocacy. Service providers that are providing the service is Elite Vocational and

Tutoring Service and Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities with U of A. Currently, a job developer/coach has been working with Window Rock High School in providing service to students towards employment.

- VR/IL: Orientation and mobility service needed for visually impaired individuals on the Navajo reservation. Individuals are receiving service in collaboration with State VR, Navajo VR and service providers such as ACBVI, SAAVI, etc. off the reservation but not on the Navajo reservation. We are in the early stages of collaboration with SAAVI in providing service to Navajo individuals with visual impairment to obtain service needed for daily living skills such as cooking, mobility, home management, etc. Some consumers would like to stay on the Navajo reservation to receive service needed to learn skills to be independent or employed.
- Early Intervention (AZ) will be monitored for the months of April, May, June
- .2024. Monitoring will be on the following: Indicator 1a (Timely Service) on all IFSP's completed, Inform Written Consents and contact logs. Indicator 7a (45 day timeline) on Initial IFSP's. 7b (Prior Written Notice) on Eligibility. Indicator 8 (Transition Activities) on Transition Planning, PEA Notification Conference. In September 2024, AzEIP will complete an onsite validation and complete a case review on the case selected for monitoring.
- The Early Intervention program in New Mexico continued to received referrals and provide services for families. Transition team meetings continue with school districts. Team collaboration with NW Region support team, Suzanne Pope to review policies, procedures, and onboarding plan is initiated with progress.
- The Navajo Nation Home Visiting program project for this reporting period has
- continued and monitored project status through ongoing data review and monthly meetings with the Navajo home visitors. Each month the process of each project has increased and challenges were noted and addressed through ongoing review and collaboration to address barrier concerns.

## Phoenix Indian Center

### Major Accomplishments

#### *30 Days*

The Phoenix Indian Center concluded a summer children and youth *Diné Bizaad* (Navajo Language) class that was delivered in a hybrid format. Most class sessions were held virtually via Zoom with the last class celebration held in-person in Phoenix, AZ. The class target audience included Navajo children, adolescents, and young adults ages 0-18. Family engagement and learning was encouraged. The instructor for the online course was Albert Chase of Navajo Pollen Trail. Registration opened on May 20, 2024, and reached capacity of 50 homes within 2 hours. Twelve 1-hour sessions began on June 11, 2024, and ended on July 18, 2024. In total, 149 individuals and 51 family units initially enrolled in the community-based classes. In summary, 39 families or 71



youth and 40 parental figures joined the course. The circular lesson plan for the course was sectioned into 4 portions: *Nitasáhákees*, *Nahat'áh*, *Iiná*, *Siihain* and *Hat'iilá Nanishtxin*. Main topics included Navajo sound pronunciation (i.e. *Zah'áán dóó zahlt'ah*), self-introduction using the Ké clan system, and learning the Navajo Flag song. PIC utilized online registration reports to track family units in attendance.

## **60 days**

- The Phoenix Indian Center (PIC) is currently hosting a Coming-of- Age series that will prepare Navajo youth for their upcoming Kinaaldá and Tachééh ceremonies. There will be 2 separate cohorts with 10 girls and 10 boys. Series sessions span from August to December 2024. Family engagement and learning is encouraged. There are multiple cultural consultants contracted for each cohort. The target audience is Navajo youth transitioning into womanhood and manhood that reside in Phoenix metro area. Navajo youth not accepted into the cohort, as well as community members are invited to attend the Virtual Kinaaldá and Tachééh Teachings webinar series that ranges from September 7 – December 14, 2024. PIC is utilizing online registration report and sign-in sheets to track individuals in attendance.
- The Kinaaldá cohort information session was held on August 24,2024, in a hybrid format. In total, 147 registered and 78 attended online and in-person. The agenda included an overview of the cohort requirements, a virtual “Words of Encouragement” panel by Former Miss Navajos and a “Kinaaldá Preparation” cultural presentation by Navajo practitioner, Paul Long Sr. The event evaluation surveys concluded that 14 participants out of 15 surveys collected felt their Navajo cultural knowledge had increased.

## Financial Assistance

In August, one (1) family received emergency rental assistance from the Phoenix Indian Center.

## Navajo Voter Registration

In August PIX registered 13 voters.

## **90 days**

- PIC continued the Coming-of-Age series that aims to prepare Navajo youth for their upcoming Kinaaldá and Tachééh ceremonies. There were 24 applicants for the Kinaaldá cohort, 10 applications were selected. There were 8 applicants for the Tachééh cohort, 7 applications were selected. PIC has and will continue to contract with multiple cultural consultants to facilitate workshops for the youth cohort and community members that reside in the Phoenix metro area. Traditional Navajo cultural teachings and storytelling are embedded into each session.
- The initial meeting for the Kinaaldá cohort occurred on September 7,
- 2024. Ten (10) girls and 10 parent/guardians participated in a Tłaaaká (Traditional Skirt) Making workshop facilitated by Navajo Nation member, Wynonna Fulgham. In addition, a “Significance of Navajo Attire” cultural presentation was facilitated by Former Miss Navajo, Marla Billy. This cultural sharing was the first session in the Virtual Kinaaldá

Teachings webinar series. We received 131 registrations, and 48 attendees logged on via Zoom. The event evaluation surveys concluded that all 7 participants out of 7 surveys collected felt their Navajo cultural knowledge had increased. Skills or knowledge that were learned or improved responses included: “the meaning behind Changing Woman.”

- The Tachééh cohort information session was held on September 11, 2024, virtually via Zoom. In total, 86 community members registered and 62 people attended online. The agenda included an overview of the cohort requirements, a virtual “Words of Encouragement” panel by male mentors and a “Diné Tachééh: Sweat Lodge Origin Story” cultural presentation by Navajo practitioner, Steven C. Darden. The event evaluation surveys concluded that all 12 participants out of 12 surveys collected felt their Navajo cultural knowledge had increased. Skills or knowledge that were learned or improved responses included: “The importance and encouragement of having a Tachééh for young males,” and “I learned of the story origin of Tachééh and some of the values set forth by our holy ones.”
- The second session for the Kinaaldá cohort occurred on September 14, 2024. This meeting was a continuation of the Tłaaakał (Traditional Skirt) Making workshop. Ten (10) girls and 11 parent/guardians were in attendance. In addition, a “Sodizin: Significance of Navajo Prayer” cultural presentation was facilitated by Former Miss Navajo, Joceyln Billy-Upshaw. This cultural sharing was the second session in the virtual Kinaaldá Teachings webinar series. In total, 164 registered and 43 attendees logged on via Zoom. The event evaluation surveys concluded that 7 participants out of 9 surveys collected felt their Navajo cultural knowledge had increased. Skills or knowledge that were learned or improved responses included: “The significance and definition of prayer/song. Presenter spoke well to the young girls, providing examples.”
- The initial meeting for the Tachééh cohort occurred on September 21, 2024. Six (6) boys and 7 parent/guardians participated in a “Bow and Arrow Making and Navajo Warrior Teachings” workshop facilitated by Freddie Johnson.

#### Financial Assistance

- In the month of September, zero families received emergency rental assistance from the Phoenix Indian Center.

#### Navajo Voter Registration

- In the month of September, Phoenix Indian Center registered 53 eligible voters.

## **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

### **Office of the Attorney General**

#### **Major Accomplishments**

## **Advanced Water Settlements in Congress**

The Navajo Nation's water settlements legislations continue to be a major priority to get completed. We continue to shepherd our 4 major settlement measures through Congress, including legislation to approve NAIWRSA (our AZ water settlement), the Rio San Jose Stream System Water Rights Settlement, the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project Amendments Act, and a technical corrections bill that will allow the Nation to recoup \$6.3 million in foregone interest earnings on its San Juan River settlement dollars. This quarter we were able to (1) get NAIWRSA and RSJSSWRSA introduced in both the House and Senate, (2) secure a hearing in the House for NAIWRSA, RSJSSWRSA, NGWSPAA, and the Interest Fix Bill, (3) secure a hearing in the Senate for NAIWRSA and RSJSSWRSA, (4) prepare testimony for President Nygren for both the House and Senate hearings, and (5) prepare President Nygren for successful delivery of his testimony before both houses.

This quarter there were daily Law & Technical Team meetings and every-other-weekend Negotiation Team meetings to strategize on Congressional passage of and appropriation for NAIWRSA. Public outreach events occurred this quarter at the Navajo Nation Fairs and reached over a thousand people in an effort to continue to keep the Navajo people updated on the progress of our settlements.

## **1000 Homes Initiative**

Housing contracts continue to be a priority. The Economic Community Development Unit (ECDU) successfully drafted and reviewed the IDIQ housing contracts for Department of Community Development under the Fiscal Recovery Funds (FRF). Additionally, The Health Services and Government Unit (HSGU) completed legal review for Navajo Veteran's Housing FRF \$32 Million contract, which obligated the FRF funds before the deadline of December 2024.

## **Chapter Policies**

The Chapter Unit (CU) completed Community Land Use Planning Committee (CLUPC) Plan of Operation (POO) Template. This project was completed this quarter. Chapters will create their own plan of operation which has a complication that results in inadequate process. Therefore, providing a template assures adequate operation process. Example of the template includes provisions for removal of CLUPC members with due process and expresses that Chapter Officials/Staff are eligible to serve on the CLUPC but warns to be watchful of conflicts of interests.

## **Major Projects**

### **Uranium Transport Negotiation with Energy Fuels**

This quarter Energy Fuels Resources, Inc. commenced transport of uranium ore from the Pinyon Plain Mine to the White Mesa Mill in Blanding, Utah. We assisted leadership in

successfully shutting down their transport operations and drafted emergency legislation for Council to pass that would strengthen the Nation's Uranium Transport Ban and authorize regulations re the same. Council passed this legislation and President signed it into law. Meanwhile, along with NNEPA, we commenced negotiations with EFRI for a uranium transport agreement. We have met three times and have had constructive and meaningful negotiations. We have also toured the Pinyon Plain Mine and the White Mesa Mill to observe the process for loading, unloading, and decontaminating the trucks so we can better draft agreement provisions that will maximally protect the Navajo people. We will meet again later this month to hopefully finalize terms of agreement,

### **Amendments to the Nation's Criminal Laws**

Chief Prosecutor has worked closely with the Public Defender to develop proposed amendments to the Nation's criminal laws (primarily Titles 17 (Criminal Code) and 14 (Natural Resource based)). The draft amendments were presented to LOC at a work session in Albuquerque on June 24-25, 2024. There has been some delay in reviewing the draft since this work session. The Chief and Deputy Chief Prosecutors are actively reconvening the stakeholders from law enforcement, detention services, and legal representatives, to continue the process of finalizing the amendments. The goal is still to finalize and present again to LOC for sponsorship and move forward through the Navajo legislative process.

### **Chapter Policies**

**Amendments to the Local Government Act and the Five Management System (FMS).** The finalized drafts were shared via email on July 18 with OPVP, the 25<sup>th</sup> NN Council, and 110 Chapters. There are plans to try to get referendum on the November ballot but this was not successful. However, the LGA amendments can still move forward without a referendum by using the same legislative process that was used to amend the LGA to allow Chapters to have virtual-hybrid Chapter meetings.

**Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) Template for Chapters.** CU has completed a draft template for weather related emergencies. It is based on FEMA template and coincides with the trainings received during COVID regarding the National Incident Command System. CU hopes to finalize the draft and share it with Chapters by the end of October.

**Rules of Order for Chapter meetings.** Section 1003(C) of LGA allows Chapters to create and adopt standard rules for conducting Chapter meetings. The goal of this rules of order is to work with the uniqueness of Chapter governments and their meetings. CU goal is to complete this by end of year.

## **Diné Uranium Remediation Advisory Commission**

### **Major Accomplishments**

**Appointment of Uranium Commission members**

The draft plan of operation amendment and draft rules of order were approved on June 14, 2024, by Naabik'iyati' Committee of the Navajo Nation Council to reauthorize the Uranium Commission and its plan of operation. Upon approval of the plan of operation amendment, the Navajo Council was to appoint 6 AUM Regional Commissioners within 90 days of the plan of operation amendment approval. Since the Navajo Council did not appoint the Commissioners, the President may appoint the six (6) AUM Regional Commissioners and the Commissioner At-Large. We need to get the Commissioners appointed so the work of the Commission can resume and spend down on our FY25 budget. We returned unspent FY 2024 funds because we did not have expenditures for a working Uranium Commission.

### **Uranium Leadership Team Meetings**

Chief of Staff Patrick Sandoval directed for departments to work together regarding uranium remediation. Representatives from OPVP, NNDOJ, DURAC, NEPA, NAML, and Eastern Land Commission have started monthly meetings to work on uranium remediation issues.

### **High-Pressure Slurry Ablation (HPSA)**

DURAC reviewed and provided recommendations on the use of High-Pressure Slurry Ablation (HPSA) technology to remove metal and radionuclides from waste rock at unremediated Abandoned Uranium Mines. HPSA technology uses a mechanical process to produce two solid media outputs: coarse fraction and fines fraction (Principal Threat Waste- PTW). The finer fraction which is the higher level of radioactive PTW would be transported off the reservation. It was determined by DURAC Commission there may be benefits to use this technology to reduce the amount of volume of radioactive materials to be removed off the reservation. Navajo EPA director has determined to expand the use of the pilot project information and for DURAC to start preparing regulations. The Navajo Nation regulations would protect human health and the environment.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Engineering Evaluation & Cost Analysis Technical Reviews**

DURAC conducted Technical Reviews of Engineering Evaluation & Cost Analysis for the Quivira mines and Section 32/33 mines and submitted comments to the USEPA. DURAC does not support any proposed Alternatives by USEPA that does not minimize human and environmental exposure to radioactive substances now and for future generations. Additional research was conducted to provide USEPA with information on cover design, groundwater and selected remedy/alternative issues with each of these mines.

#### **Policy Development – Waste Disposal Methods Regulations**

Development of the Navajo Nation, Comprehensive Environmental Regulations, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), Abandoned Uranium Mine, Remediation and Repository Regulations (NN-AUM-RR Regulations) is ongoing. The development of these regulations requires a lot of research time, and with the limited staff, we are spending as much time available on this project.

#### **NAUM Risk Assessment Methodology**

Reviewing the USEPA Environmental Protection Agency Region 9 Navajo Abandoned Uranium Mines Program Risk Assessment Methodology (March 2024)., which will need to approve by the Navajo Nation.

## **NAVAJO NATION FISCAL RECOVERY FUND OFFICE**

### **FRF Administration**

#### **Major Accomplishments**

##### **Finalized the Veteran Admin Housing**

After a year of working on the contract between NN Veterans Housing and the NN programs, FRFO is glad to see that the contract passed all the 164 reviewers and signed by the NN President. This effort was from three FRFO staff members as each one of them made extra

effort to get it corrected by working together and asking questions. The hard work and extra effort were demonstrated when the contract was signed and knowing that the veterans home building can now start.

### **Provide the amount between ARPA/FRF and RRR/GF for the Delegate Regions**

The FRFO Finance Team worked on identifying the amounts for each Delegate Region chapter projects that went to RRR/GF and what stayed with ARPA/FRF. After it was identified, the staff worked on summary of change forms to de-obligate the funds from FMIS so the funds could be transferred. FRFO had to work with OOC and OMB to get the new business units established and it was decided to use the “N- accounts” (N for non-capital) for the RRR/GF projects.

### **Completed the ARPA/FRF Personnel**

The FRFO received the personnel listing from DPM and used the information to complete the \$15 million budget for ARPA personnel and kept some extra for operating for the programs mentioned. The programs mentioned in CMY-28-24, Exhibit 4, are Division of Economic Development, Division of Community Development, Dept of Water Resources, Broadband Dept and the Fiscal Recovery Fund Office as the administrator. The \$15 million budget ensures that the ARPA/FRF personnel will continue working up to December 31, 2026.

### **Major Projects**

#### **De-obligating the 521 Funds**

FRFO staff finished the chapter project de-obligations and now we are working on de-obligating the funds for the central support and administrative support costs from the non-chapter business units. These funds will go into the 521 fund balance and can be spent with the 521 Trust Fund is established. FRFO is currently working on providing the worksheet to show how much will be going into the fund balance. This is a little more work because personnel in some of the business units and we want all the ARPA/FRF staff to continue working for their respective programs.

#### **Templates for Project amendments**

FRFO has initiated templates for project amendments so the changes can be done administratively so it’s quicker and we can update the project so the funds can be expended on other approved projects.

FRFO has also completed the monitoring and reporting template so our staff can start working with the chapters and assist them in meeting the reporting requirements.

FRFO just needs to get information from DOJ if these template need Oversight Committee approval which would be BFC for us.

#### **Finalize \$15 M budget**

FRFO finalized the \$15 million budget for personnel and operating, but mainly personnel funds and also had to get the MOA in CMY-28-24, Exhibit 4, signed by the Speaker of NNC and the

NN President to make it effective. This was completed on 9/30/24 and now the budget was finally entered into FMIS and a new business unit was issued by OMB.

# **NAVAJO NATION GAMING REGULATORY OFFICE**

## **Administration**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **NNGRO General Staff Conference**

We had our first ever NNGRO General Staff Conference on August 19 through August 21, 2024 in Page, Arizona at the Courtyard Marriott. We had 32 staff and 12 presenters. We had our DOJ attorney also attend, she also presented on the History of Gaming on Navajo Nation and was able to go into several of the session that were presented by the NNGRO Managers. I provided a presentation to all the frontline staff on the "past, present and future of NNGRO". This presentation provided them with the FY 23 goals and FY 24 goals and beyond. I explained my outlook for NNGRO as a whole and what will be striving for in the future. I did not get any questions. The initial feedback from staff were good. We are reviewing all the evaluations and will complete a report for presenters and use information to improve the next conference.

#### **Title 5 Gaming Regulations Revision**

We completed the final revisions of the Title V gaming regulations on September 25, 2024 after a year of review. Upon final review by the Department of Justice it will be promulgated and implemented. This will affect the Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise the most because it contains the minimum internal control standards for gaming activities. We submitted our revisions to the Navajo Department of Justice on September 30, 2024 for their final review through the High Q portal.

#### **NIGC Site Visit**

The National Indian Gaming commission completed their site visit at all three Navajo Casinos in New Mexico, Flowing Water, Northern Edge and Fire Rock on September 11 and 12, 2024. A licensing file review was also conducted and no major findings were announced. The preliminary exit meeting stated there was no major findings.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Small Bingo Games and Raffles**

We have started to create the new regulations regarding bingo games and raffles conducted outside of a the licensed Navajo Casinos. This was brought to the attention of the Navajo Nation and NNGRO in 2018, however, no movement was made on this. Beginning 2023 we have begun to discuss and plan how these regulations will be developed and implemented.

#### **Total Gaming Regulations Revisions**

After completing the Title V regulation revisions, we notice a lot of section that were outdated as well as contradicting other sections, so we will do a total revision of the Navajo Nation Tribal Gaming Regulations, this document is about 300 pages long. We will break each section into phases.

### **Develop a Problem Gambling Prog.**

We initially had started to look at developing a problem gambling program in early 2023 however, this idea was moved around and eventually was given to the Division of Social Services. At this time, with no further development we decided to reinitiate this project and work with DSS and DOH on creating it.

# **NAVAJO DIVISION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

## **Office of the Executive Director**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Dine Action Plan**

The **Diné Action Plan (DAP)** is a roadmap for Navajo Nation programs and partners to coordinate public safety and social services in addressing the social ills of violence, alcohol/substance abuse, suicide, and coping with the effects of missing and murdered Diné relatives across the Navajo Nation, in accordance with Resolution CS-51-21. Task forces were created and assigned to collaborate, design, implement, and measure specific tasks and strategies that would be responsive to the needs of those coping with these social ills. DCFS assumed lead facilitation responsibilities and is assisting the DAP Advisory Group with its implementation.

The **2024 DAP Data Summit** was held in Flagstaff, Arizona on July 23 and 24 where representatives from the Navajo Nation convened and discussed data needs pertaining to the work being carried out by the different task forces. The first day of the work session focused on laying the foundation and building the baseline of data, strengths, and needs. Each task force developed asset maps and discussed accessibility of data, limitations, missing information, challenges, and improvements to data management. The Navajo Nation Epidemiology Center presented how their department's data collection and sharing efforts can benefit the task forces as they respond to and address the identified social ills. Day two of the summit entailed planning and putting together the task forces' ideas to identify potential solutions to overcome data challenges and capacities that can be built together.

DCFS hosted the **DAP Advisory Group Fall Quarterly Meeting** on September 12 – 13, 2024 in Window Rock. Discussions revolved around goals, objectives, and timelines with each task



force outlining these components and reporting back to the Advisory Group. Other discussions involved changes and updates at DCFS, capacity building efforts in consultation with One Fire Associates and Eaglesun Systems, the future of the DAP, review of roles and responsibilities of Advisory Group members, and education awareness plans. Representatives from the Division of Public Safety were in attendance to share updates, statistics and provide more insight into the challenges they encounter, trends, needs, and protocols in responding to and handling reports, educating young recruits, and following up with high-profile cases. The next meeting will be held December 4-5, location to be announced.

The Navajo Treatment Center for Children and Their Families continues to sponsor the **DAP: Suicide Surveillance and Prevention Task Force**, meeting every Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. The task group encourages everyone to conduct welfare checks on relatives, friends, coworkers and if anyone is feeling sad, lonely, or hopeless to seek services at the nearest mental health clinic. Ms. Sonlatsa Jim, Sr. Programs and Projects Specialist, will continue to serve as the Co-Chair for the Task Force and facilitate the direction of the DAP on behalf of NDCFS.

### **P.L. 102-477**

On June 27, the DCFS submitted the **P.L. 102-477 Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Consolidation Act of 2017 Plan** to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The 477 Plan will allow DCFS to consolidate federally funded employment, education, training, and related programs and services into a single, comprehensive plan to align priorities, reduce administrative burdens, and enhance services throughout the Navajo Nation. The Department for Self-Reliance received approval to transition to 477. DCFS awaits a written decision from the BIA for other programs to transition to 477, which should be received no later than October 10, 2024.

### **Preserving Navajo Families Initiative**

Under the **Preserving Navajo Families Initiative**, the DCFS invites cultural and religious groups to partner with the Navajo Nation in a collective effort to empower and connect Navajo families to spirituality and healing. Partner faith-based organizations, led by the Diné Hataaʼii Association, Inc. (DNA) for traditional, Navajo believers; the Azee Bee Nahagha of Diné Nation (ABNDN) and the Council for Peyote Way of Life Coalition for Native American Church (NAC) members and followers; and Christian churches and groups for Christians and other members, are assisting DCFS in carrying out the goals and objectives of sharing information, facilitating faith-based activities, connecting families to the practice of prayer, promoting healthy lifestyles, and engaging communities with healing and recovering from trauma and social ills.

**Boundary Protection Prayers** were conducted over the summer at each of the Four Sacred Mountains and concluded September 2024. The Department of Family Services, Navajo Treatment Center for Children and Their Families, and the Department for Self-Reliance played a critical role in carrying out the prayer ceremonies with the Diné Hataaʼii Association. Other programs from the Division of Public Safety were also helpful in carrying out the prayers.

NDCFS staff also assisted the Azee Bee Nahagha of Diné Nation and the Council for Peyote Way of Life Coalition to conduct youth conventions, NAC ceremonies, prayer services, resource/outreach fairs throughout the Navajo Nation. These activities served as platforms to educate the communities of the history, rituals, beliefs, and healing purposes, and to bring families and communities together to teach young children how to pray, how to use their faith and beliefs to sustain a healthy and successful life. The ABNDN held the **24<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Appreciation Day** on September 21-22 at the James Sheep Camp in Summit. The Council for Peyote Way of Life Coalition also held an event to honor the **30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Passage of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act Amendments of 1994** on October 11 at Twin Arrows. This event was to also promote awareness and prevention of domestic violence, dating violence, family violence, sexual assault, and child abuse. Through prayer and the peyote way, individuals and families can find a source for recovery and healing

A **Camp Meeting and Trail Ride** event was held in Page on June 14-16 with representation from Shonto, Kaibeto, and Twin Hills. A6 Ranch Family Speakers welcomed attendees Friday evening with songs, offerings, messages, and recognition of support. Saturday started with a prayer offered by James Cody followed by a trail ride and ranch hike followed by a presentation of the Preserving Navajo Families Initiative. Guest speakers shared comments with emphasis on supporting youth. The DCFS Principal Accountant Brenda Tsosie was in attendance and discussed how the Initiative promotes healthy lifestyles and healing and that faith-based teachings contribute to youth success. Ms. Tsosie elaborated on the partnerships the DCFS is making with faith-based organizations to bring the Initiative to communities and schools to perform outreach, education, and facilitate engaging dialogue with parents. Messages emphasized healthy living, building self-esteem, suicide prevention, and coping with dating/domestic violence and bullying. Family time was also encouraged when families had an opportunity to participate in a tour of Antelope Canyon. Other church conventions, prayer services, camps, and information fairs were also held throughout the summer and brought families and communities together to engage in prayer, recovery, and leading a healthy lifestyle.

## **Major Projects**

### **Homeowner Assistance Fund**

On September 11, 2023, the Native Community Capital (NCC) of Phoenix, AZ, rolled out its **Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF)** grant in the amount of \$55 million, awarded to the Navajo Nation by the U.S. Department of Treasury. A subrecipient agreement with the Navajo Nation, NCC implemented the HAF program to urban Navajos in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado. The Navajo HAF Project is set up to fund five (5) eligible activities, including:

- ✓ Monthly Mortgage Payment Assistance for those who are delinquent in payments or at risk of foreclosure due to a loss of household income.
- ✓ Mortgage Reinstatement Assistance for those who are in active forbearance, delinquency, or default status and at risk of losing their home.

- ✓ Mortgage Principal Reduction Assistance for those who find the Fair Market Value of their home is less than the price at which the homeowner purchased the home and may result in a financial loss.
- ✓ Home Repair Assistance Loan for those who require significant, emergency home repairs.
- ✓ Clear title assistance. To date, approximately 200 applications are currently being reviewed.

The Office of the Executive Director continues to meet with the Navajo Housing Authority (NHA) to coordinate a referral process for Navajo homeowners who are delinquent with their mortgage loans and who are eligible for assistance with subsidized housing payments and/or emergency home repair.

### **Operation Rainbow Bridge**

Last year, many Diné relatives were lured to urban cities to get treatment and sobriety for their alcohol and/or substance abuse addictions. Upon their arrival at the treatment facilities, however, our relatives learned the offers were empty promises. In May 2023, President Nygren activated an incident command headquarters in Phoenix, AZ for **Operation Rainbow Bridge**, and appointed Executive Director Cody as the incident commander. This was in response to the enforcement actions against fraudulent sober living homes and predatory rehabilitation facilities related to the AHCCCS billing scheme. Field and technical teams were activated and assisted with transitioning displaced Navajo members to legitimate service providers or transported our relatives back to the Navajo Nation. To date, approximately 175 relatives have returned home to the Nation and the mobile unit located 10 Navajo relatives from the missing persons list. A support phone line (1-855-HELPORB) and website were launched to increase awareness and to share contact information for those seeking help. DCFS continues to provide support and assistance with basic needs, including transportation and case management services for individuals affected by fraudulent activities and practices of sober living facilities. The response team will be meeting with AHCCCS on October 28 to discuss plans to scale back services due to the decline in the number of cases.

### **Outreach and Resource Fairs**

In addition to reaching out to urban Navajos, DCFS spearheaded outreach efforts by hosting the **Navajo Family Resource Fairs** in Albuquerque, Flagstaff, Tucson, Gallup, Farmington, Salt Lake City, and Denver. The resource fairs were designed to showcase, educate, and inform our Diné relatives of the available programs and services provided by the Navajo Nation. We are excited to have this opportunity to provide our urban Diné families with helpful information. This also was a great opportunity for us to network and strengthen our kinship ties, especially after learning that many urban Diné relatives sometimes become victims of fraud or exploitation.

Across the Navajo Nation, chapter communities are joining Navajo leadership to tackle social ills and community problems through outreach and education. On April 24, the DCFS departments and programs were in Ojo Encino, NM at the request of honorable Council Delegate George Tolth who represents Littlewater, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake, Baca/Prewitt, Casamero

Lake, Ojo Encino, and Counselor, and who serves on the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee of the 25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council. Delegate Tolth and the Ojo Encino Chapter expressed the need for **Community Intervention** as they were experiencing a high rate of alcohol and drug addiction impacting children and families. Over the course of the two-day event, DCFS delivered prevention and educational information about domestic violence prevention, child and adult protective services, adoption programs, foster and kinship care, traditional healing services, suicide prevention, and mental health services. The Indian Health Services Crownpoint Unit and the Navajo Division of Behavioral and Mental Health Services were also onsite to provide information about health care, behavioral and mental health services, outpatient and residential services, sober living centers, opioid responses, traditional-based services, and substance abuse care.

The Developmental Disabilities Program (DDP) is a comprehensive case management system to ensure medically necessary services are delivered timely to the Medicaid-eligible developmentally disabled members. In collaboration with the Arizona Department for Economic Security - Division of Developmental Disabilities, DDP provides support and services to eligible Arizona residents within the Navajo Nation who are diagnosed with one of the following developmental disabilities prior to the age of 18:

- Autism
- Cerebral palsy
- Cognitive/Intellectual Disability
- Down Syndrome
- Epilepsy
- Individuals under the age of 6 and at risk of having a developmental disability

The Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS) provides long term case management services for Arizona Medicaid recipients who are elderly and living with a physical disability. DDP/ALTCS has also been conducting outreach at the Navajo Nation Fairs and recently participated in the Northern Navajo Fair. They will be participating in the Western Agency Fair along with other NDCFS departments and programs.

## **NAVAJO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

### **Administration**

The Navajo Department of Health oversees 14 programs employing 633 employees funded by various agencies. NDOH's central office is in Window Rock, Arizona, however NDOH branches out to all of the agencies rendering customer services at the grassroots level. NDOH delivers a variety of health services in the area of Nutrition, Aging, Substance Abuse, Outreach, and Emergency Medical Services. The office of the Executive Director has direct oversight over the following three divisions:

Division of Behavioral & Mental Health Services  
Division of Public Health Services  
Division of Aging & Long-Term Care Support Care

## **Major Accomplishments**

### **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)**

- Completed management evaluation (nutrition services) exit meeting with USDA /Southwest region.
- WIC food package committee meetings each month with consortium (ITCA, AZ WIC, Guam, CNMI, Washington).
- Johns Hopkins University research to enhance WIC food delivery systems.
- Outreach activities: Navajo Nation Fair, local chapter health fairs, WIC 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary walks and health fair.
- Budget for FY2025 completed and approved through OMB with new K-account established prior to October 1, 2024.
- USDA FNS Southwest Region provided additional funding to Navajo Nation WIC in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.
- All Navajo Nation WIC employees were approved for ‘other’ bonus payments.
- Navajo Nation WIC implemented agreement with AZ WIC to begin WIC-In-A-Click online nutrition education for participants who cannot travel to the WIC clinic to attend nutrition education class.

### **Navajo Uranium Workers Program**

Successful outreach for RECA claim Section 5 and Section 4 enrollment

· Impacted NUWP accomplishment ensured that former Navajo uranium workers and Downwinder victims and their families will receive compensation, who have met the June 10, 2024, RECA SUNSET.

Category of claims: July, Aug, Sept. 2024 NO. Each paid Total Paid

RECA Uranium workers claim 6 \$100,000 ea \$600,000.00

RECA Downwinder claim 15 \$ 50.000 ea \$75,000.00

EEOICPA Part B” claim 3 \$ 50.000 ea \$150,000.00

Total # of NUWP claimants paid 24 Total: \$1,500,000.00

NUWP RECA Uranium workers and/or their surviving families where applicable who have received Section 5 award are now enrolled for Part “B” and Part “E” claim and be process

· Additional benefits to eligible claimants with monetary and medical benefits

–  
Community Education Outreach

· NUWP conducted a series of outreaches across the Navajo Nation to educate tribal members about the RECA and EEOICPA

· Impact: Increased awareness and knowledge among the Navajo Nation Tribal members have led to a successful enrollment for RECA claim up to RECA SUNSET JUNE 10, 2024.

### **Food Distribution Program**

- Warehouses are ordering more food to avoid no food on the warehouse floor.
- Submit our recommendation to SYGNAL on our requirement so they can build our new software
- The warehouse managed to deliver and provide services to most of our clients for July, August and September.

### **Navajo Office of Environmental Health and Prevention Program**

July- OEH presence for July Celebrations in Gallup/Crownpoint, Chinle/ Ft. Defiance, Shiprock/Kayenta area.

- Food handler training in ALL service units
- Started Fair season strong
- Staff Development

August: Responded to the Shiprock Flood

- Stayed consistent with celebrations and our regular duties
- Staff Development

September-

- Continue to track compliance Navajo Nation wide.

Staff Development

- Inspected food vendors at Annual NN Fair
- Attending safety meetings and served on various commissions
- EASF up to date
- PCQ was approved
- 90% staffed
- Accomplishing program goals

### **Navajo Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program**

- **Accomplishment 1:** Successfully navigated through months of extreme heat without having to declare an emergency event. The efforts of NDOH were critical as our CHR staff maintained and increased their efforts in ensuring that their clients were monitored closely and kept resources available and deployed. NDOH DALTCS and EPI were also critical in ensuring we had identifiable cooling stations and were able to message those out through local media. Our Health Education team was also instrumental in sharing Heat information through their educational efforts. Navajo PHEP also coordinated directly with the Navajo Department of Emergency Management for the deployment of resources such as water and food boxes. We also worked closely with the Navajo

Division of Community Development in having them provide a direct line of communication with the Navajo Nation Chapters and on to their constituents. The impacts from our collaborative efforts ensured that Navajo residents were safe during months of extreme heat. Adequate planning ensured we did not have to declare an emergency declaration.

- **Accomplishment 2:** Successfully managed flooding events in the North Eastern and Northern Navajo areas. This summer saw two separate waves of extreme rain events that resulted in heavy flooding. Navajo Commission on Emergency Management did declare an Emergency Declaration to ensure the highest level of response was provided by all Navajo Emergency Responders. Along with providing resources like temporary shelter, food boxes, and water were also deployed. Efforts from Navajo DOH, DEM, NDOT, NDPS, NNEPA, and American Red Cross were all needed to effectively address these issues without loss of life and no reportable injuries. Failed Septic Systems and washed-out roads were the most impactful events. The communities are now stable and moving forward.
- **Accomplishment 3:** Navajo PHEP was able to successfully cover Emergency Response efforts, utilizing the NIMS-ICS structure, for the 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Navajo Nation Fair in Widow Rock, AZ. The structure allowed the Public Safety personnel (NPD,NFD,NEMS) to be focused on Fair events. Coverage included all Fair activities, as well as the parade. Success were notable as public safety personnel shared that their were lower numbers of critical events. NDOH presence ensured latrine facility's were available in higher numbers and thus providing safer, hygienically cleaner events. Our Unified Command and Emergency Operations Command will be completing and submitting an after action report.

### **Navajo Health Education Program**

Since the onset of the Syphilis campaign, "*Syphilis Awareness: Protect You, Protect Navajo,*" began in March to the present reached 361,934 individuals through social media platforms that include Podcast, Instagram, FaceBook, WeRDine (text messaging service) and local radio station Forums, Live Remotes and PSAs (e.g. KGAK, KNDN and KTNN); and Rapid HIV Screening targeted events were addressed at tribal correctional facilities, community presentations at health fairs, booths, tribal fairs, outreach events, and the like; Health Education staff presence at the tribal correctional facilities conducted 124 Rapid HIV Screenings among the inmates with no reactive results to the HIV virus. The goal is to reduce the transmission of syphilis and HIV and decrease the incidence of HIV and syphilis.

### **Navajo Special Diabetes Program**

Navajo Special Diabetes Program

Radeanna Comb, Program Manager III

10/11/2024

## Major Accomplishment

- The NSDP educated the public and promoted awareness of diabetes prevention by hosting community outreach events, presentations, and booths at local chapters, schools, government departments, and other venues. A total of 14,461 participants (5,146 female, 9,189 male, 117 non-binary) took part in diabetes education, nutrition education, and physical activity education. In the 4th quarter, the NSDP data indicated that the highest age group represented was 18-54 years old at 33%, followed by 10-17 years old at 24%, 55-64 years old at 13%, 5-9 years old at 13%, 65 and older at 12%, and 5% unknown.
- This past quarter, the NSDP enrolled 266 new participants at one of our five wellness centers. Participants can take group fitness classes and work with one of our fitness specialists to live longer and healthier lives.
- NSDP hired two new staff (Health Planner and Custodian) and promoted two staff to Senior Office Specialist and Program Supervisor 1.
- NSDP has executed two contracts (Navajo Sanitation and HVAC), and they are currently waiting for the contract number.

## Challenges

- The process of hiring NSDP staff takes more than 3 months. Although there were individuals interested in the program, the background check clearance and finalizing their personal action form took too long, causing them to decline the offer. As a result, NSDP had to readvertise the position.
- The Office of Controller (OOC) does not provide guidance or solutions when returning documents. For example, when we are asked about construction cost analysis, the OOC staff does not provide the templates or documents they are requesting. Instead, they simply inform us that the documents are insufficient.
- The 164B process for reviewing documents takes a very long time. There are instances where the OOC has our documents for more than 5 days for review. To address this, the OOC should consider expanding their team to specifically review documents for the NDOH department, or alternatively, return the documents to our finance department for internal approval.



- The Kayenta and Shiprock Modular Building Project for infrastructure service design plans contracts are still in the process of 164 reviews. As of today, the documents were resubmitted to OOC for review due to Capital Project Management Department (CPMD) errors. CMD has to revise the error before moving forward.

### Community Health Representatives (CHR) Program

Current Top Three Priority Projects and the status of each project (include timelines):

- Gourd Dance Back to School Health Event Planning since February 2024
- Commercial Tobacco Cessation Education and Prevention through health fairs, school presentations, etc.
- High Blood Pressure Education and Prevention through health fairs.

Top three Accomplishments between (July, August, and September) – provide a brief description and impacts on the clientele:

- Wings of America Running Camp Series **166 participants** total for the 4 camps. Partnered with DBMHS & Wings of America to provide 8 total running camps throughout the Navajo Reservation. Educated on High Blood Pressure Prevention and Anti-Vaping Education during the running camps with CHRs at the service areas running camps took place.
  - July, 8-9 Window Rock H.S., 49 participants
  - July 15-16 Monument Valley H.S., 36 participants
  - July 22-23 Crownpoint ODY, 40 participants
  - July 29-30 Tuba City H.S., 41 participants
- –DBMHS Operation Veteran’s Wellness and Back to School Youth Event July 19, 2024. **105 participants** received brochures/education on High Blood Pressure Prevention
- Men’s Health Conference July 19, 2024 White Cone, AZ. **58 Participants** received education on high blood pressure prevention through hand-outs.
- GHWIC Gourd Dance Back to School Health Event, July 24, 2024. **117 participants** that received school supplies and participated in the Health Fair Event. 20 Navajo Nation Programs participated in the Health Booths and provided information to participants on Program goals.
- Youth Mentorship Gourd Dance August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024: **35 participants** received school supplies and received education on high blood pressure prevention through hand-outs.
- Back-to-School Run & Walk Job Fair, August 9, 2024: **90 participants** received education on high blood pressure prevention through hand-outs.

- Back to School Health & Fitness Day Red Lake Chapter August 17, 2024: **67 participants** received school supplies and received education on high blood pressure prevention through hand-outs.
- Fall into Fitness Series of Zumba Dance fitness classes and Strength Conditioning fitness classes offered to the surrounding communities to demonstrate that exercise can lower Blood Pressure. August 13 – September 19, 2024. **19 participants** from August 13 to September 17, 2024, 8 out of that 19 participants got their blood pressure screened.
- Navajo Nation Fair September 4<sup>th</sup> Kids Day a total of 86 participants and 5<sup>th</sup> Elder Day a total of 139 participants, **225 participants** total altogether that received High Blood Pressure Prevention Education, Anti-Vaping/Commercial Tobacco Cessation Prevention and Basic Nutrition Education via Health Jeopardy Board.
- **Total: 882 participants** received High Blood Pressure Prevention Education, Anti-Vaping/Commercial Tobacco Cessation Prevention Education.

Areas NDOH Programs need help from the local Chapters:

- Need help with communication of events.
- Need support with scheduling events with the community, need support from the Chapters to host activities outside of 8-5.

Other Information you want to share:

- Notice of Award for the next 5-year funding for GHWIC received on September 16, 2024.

Contact information:

Shawnmarie Billiman, Sr. Program & Project Specialist, CHR-Outreach Program - GHWIC,  
shawnmarie.billiman@navajo-nsn.gov

### **Cancer Prevention Program (NCPP)**

- Outreach at Ramah Navajo Fair Elder Day saw 110 people from area.
- Outreach at Navajo Nation Fair Elder Fest saw 363 people with 40% within program's age population.
- An agreement with Presbyterian Medical Services (Gallup) to partner on mobile mammography services will begin services in October 2024.

### **Navajo Public Health Nursing Program (NPHNP)**

- July 2024: Scope of Work – Immunization = 3 Cases; Maternal Child Health Services = 3 Cases; Chronic Disease & Conditions = 216 Cases (STI 96 Cases and COVID-19 73 Cases); 4 Outreach Events = 139 Participates
- August 2024: Scope of Work – Immunization = 48 Cases; Maternal Child Health Services 1 Case; Chronic Disease & Conditions = 102 Cases (STI 37 Cases and COVID-19 51 Cases); Elder Care & Special Services = 9 Cases; 6 Outreach Events = 773 Participates
- September 2024 – 2 Outreach Events = 206 Participates; Upcoming Events included for National Suicide Prevention Week are Out of the Shadow Walk, World Sepsis Day: Mini Health Fair, and Prevention & Awareness Health Fair hosted by NPHNP. This event is to provide information to the public about suicide prevention and awareness.

**NDOH Administration – Navajo Epidemiology Center (NEC)**

**Navajo Epidemiology Center (*Naalnijh Naalkaah*)**

<https://nec.navajo-nsn.gov>

**Accomplishments (July-Sept 2024):**

- Hired new epidemiologist on September 23, 2024.
- Leading efforts for infectious disease modeling and forecasting with partners.
- Hosted 3 interns from the University of Arizona:
- Quote: ““My experience as an intern at NEC has propelled my academic and professional journey in Public Health. During my internship, I learned the ins and outs of policy development, implementation, and evaluation, which influenced my decision to pursue a Doctorate in Public Health Policy and Management. My goal is to apply what I have learned throughout my academic journey to provide expert analysis, advice, and guidance to senior and political leaders on policy, regulatory, and legislative issues that have significant and direct impacts on the health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples.”
- Epi support for sexually transmitted infection/syphilis outbreak on Navajo Nation.
- Hosted epi informational booth at Eastern, Navajo Nation and Northern fairs.
- Public health messaging for vaccination, STI prevention, hantavirus prevention, cancer, etc. via OPVP Lunch n Learn platform, newspaper, radio and social media.
- Represented Navajo Nation at CDC Tribal Advisory Committee meeting in Cow Springs, OR.

- Hosted invasive group A streptococcus disease disparity on Navajo Nation meeting with partners from CDC, Johns Hopkins and New Mexico Department of Health.
- Continue to surveil COVID-19 cases on a monthly basis.
- Leading efforts to renew the Navajo Nation/NDOH and ADHS MOU for STI data sharing – MOU currently under review at NDOJ.

Other Information can be found on NEC website:

- Visit our website for more information: <https://nec.navajo-nsn.gov>

Contact information:

- Navajo Epidemiology Center | Telephone: 928-871-6539 | Email: [navajoepi@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:navajoepi@navajo-nsn.gov)

### **Division of Behavioral & Mental Health Services**

- DBMHS was awarded the new 5-year Tribal Opioid Response (TOR) Grant beginning September 30, 2024, and ending September 29, 2029. Grant is around \$2 million per year. In addition, DBMHS Center of Healing and Recovery received a one year no-cost extension for the current TOR grant (2022-2024) to expend the remaining funds and complete grant objectives.
- DBMHS' Comprehensive Policies and Procedures was approved by the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee on July 25, 2024. The initial DBMHS Outpatient Services Policy and Procedures Manual was approved in December 2005. The amendments reflect updated services, current trends, and changes in clinical terminology. DBMHS will be working on amendments and updates on an annual basis.
- Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren announced September as Navajo Nation Recovery and Suicide Prevention Month and signed a proclamation during the 76th Annual Navajo Nation Fair on Saturday, September 7, 2024. President Nygren told the crowd that every Diné person is cherished and significant. The Navajo Nation Mortality Report shows suicide as the eighth leading cause of death among Navajos from 2015 to 2017. The 2020 report, based on data from Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah, highlights risk factors like mental health issues, alienation, alcohol abuse, and a history of physical and sexual abuse. Office the President and Vice President and Navajo Department of Health shared messages about resiliency and support.

### **NDOH/Division of Aging & Long-Term Care Support**

Priority Projects and the status of each project:

- Building Maintenance Report and Seeking Funds: DALTCS has been focusing on internally assessing the senior center facilities and determining an estimated cost to address the building deficiencies and building closures. DALTCS will continuing seeking funds

into the new fiscal year through the tribal, state, and federal funding to address the building deficiencies.

- Low Food Inventory: DALTCS has also been experiencing low food inventory not due to funding but due to understanding the proper procurement processes, and only working with two main food vendors. DALTCS leadership has given option to Agency Offices to issue multiple purchase orders and contracts to give options to senior centers to purchase food. DALTCS leadership also gave options to Agency Offices to allow more than one buyer from each agency, and to allow buyers to purchase food on days that food is convenient for them. The projected date to get an updated contract is April 2025 or earlier.
- Food Menu: DALTCS is seeking to revise the food menu and has met with internal Nutritionist, however, a Registered Dietitian is required to approve the food menu. DALTCS will be seeking a Registered Dietitian to assist with food menu revision, review and approval of the menu. The projected date to get an updated and approved food menu is March 2025.

Top three Accomplishments between (July, August, and September):

- Employee Orientation: DALTCS hosted an employee orientation after many Covid-19 restrictions and gave an opportunity for staff to get reacquainted with one another, get to know a little more about DALTCS services, and be reminded and/or know of the personnel policies.
- Elder Fest Activities: Crownpoint, Chinle, and Fort Defiance Agency offices hosted the Elder Day Fest during the Navajo Nation agency fairs. The activities gave opportunity to seniors to experience and engage in socialization which is part of DALTCS required services. Moreover, it gives many Navajo Nation programs and its partners to provide outreach on healthy living, senior benefits, assistance for housing, heating and cooling services, caregiver, ombudsman, nutrition, hearing and vision, and many more services.
- Agency Meetings: The newly hired Health Services Administrator (Director) met with all five agency staff including the senior centers supervisors to go over the importance of addressing building deficiencies and providing updates from each central level staff: foster grandparent coordinator, human resources coordinator, budget and contracts administrator, ombudsman, and caregiver coordinator. The agency meetings were beneficial for staff to get updates from the central staff about current and upcoming projects.

Areas NDOH Programs need help from the local Chapters:

- DALTCS requests for coordination and communication from the Chapters in regards to new Senior Center facilities being proposed through the New Mexico Capital Outlay projects and through other funding sources such as UUFB or Sihasin funds.

- DALTCS will be hosting agency meetings between Chapters, Division of Community Development – Capital Projects Management Department (CPMD), and Senior Centers to discuss the importance of having and putting in place the Intragovernmental Office Space Usage Agreement (IOSUA) between the Chapter and DALTCS/Senior Center. The meeting scheduled will be released this Fall.

Other Information to share:

- Tri-State Agreement: DALTCS is working with Administration for Community Level (federal agency) to work on renewing the Tri-State Agreement. This agreement is used to channel funds to the Navajo Nation for all three states (Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah). The agreement will be developed based on data and statistics and therefore, DALTCS will be reaching out to internal staff and external stakeholders to collect pertinent data relating to senior and caregiver services.

Contact information:

Marlinda Littleman, Health Services Administrator  
Division of Aging and Long Term Care Support  
[Marlinda.Littleman@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:Marlinda.Littleman@navajo-nsn.gov)-  
(928) 871-6869

## **NAVAJO DIVISION OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Administration**

#### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Hired Personnel**

The Administration Department hired 7 staff to fill the vacant Office Assistant, Office Specialist, Custodians, and Fleet Coordinator positions to assist with the daily scheduling and cleaning of the conference rooms, the daily cleaning of the buildings, and to monitor the servicing of all NDOT fleet vehicles and monthly fuel purchases.

#### **NTUA Internet**

The IT team which is under the Administration Department renewed the NTUA Internet contract which includes internet services for NDOT staff, conference room Wi-Fi access, and NDOT field offices located in Crownpoint, Dilkon, Pinon, Tuba City and Shiprock. This contract is for 5 years.

#### **General Fund Balance**

With the assistance of the NDOT Budget Team the Navajo Nation General Fund Budget for the Administration Department was completed and submitted and awaiting formal approval.

## **Major Projects**

### **Social Media Policy**

Executive and Administration staff worked on drafting and finalizing a social media Policy for NDOT staff. It is currently awaiting approval from the Division Director on implementing the policy.

### **Office Interior Lighting**

We are working with vendor, Hosteen Wade Electric, to replace the light bulbs for the lower and upper-level front desk area. We searched through several vendors for the light bulb replacement. However, we were unsuccessful in finding replacements as the light bulbs are no longer available.

### **Elevator Certificates**

We are working with the vendor, KONE to provide the building elevators with phones and a camera for safety purposes

## **Navajo Division of Transportation**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **N7054**

Navajo Division of Transportation (DOT) played a vital role in the successful completion of Project N7054 in Pinedale, New Mexico. This project, which had a total cost of approximately \$7.7 million, involved the paving of 2.79 miles of roadway and the resolution of a number of drainage issues, thereby enhancing infrastructure and improving water management in the area.

#### **Northern Navajo Fair**

Navajo DOT Transit and Transportation Planning team conducted a successful community outreach event during the Northern Navajo Fair in Shiprock. This initiative aimed to raise awareness about the services provided by Navajo DOT. The event attracted a significant turnout of community members, reflecting its effectiveness in engaging the public and fostering greater understanding of the department's offerings.

#### **Chinle Airport**

Chinle Airport underwent reconstruction of the runway, this upgrade significantly enhances the safety and efficiency of medical transportation for hospital patients, ensuring timely access to healthcare services, especially in emergencies. It demonstrates Navajo DOT's commitment to improving critical infrastructure and prioritizing the health and well-being of the community.

## **Major Projects**

### **Dennehotso Community**

The project involves the construction of 5.7 miles of road improvements, which will encompass grading, drainage enhancement, pavement installation, and the construction of a new bridge, along with necessary utility relocations. This upgraded roadway is anticipated to significantly enhance community safety and transportation efficiency. Residents are enthusiastic about this well-deserved enhancement, which is expected to reduce vehicle wear and tear.

This initiative underscores our commitment to improving road safety and connectivity for the community.

### **Navajo DOT – Hopi IGA**

Navajo DOT and the Hopi Department of Transportation (Hopi DOT) are in the process of finalizing an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) that will authorize Navajo County to assume responsibility for the maintenance and repair of all roads that traverse the boundary between the Navajo Nation and Hopi Nation. This collaborative approach will effectively eliminate jurisdictional restrictions between the two nations, allowing Navajo County to undertake the necessary roadwork without encountering legal impediments.

### **Navajo DOT Project Tracking**

Navajo DOT is actively engaged in implementing comprehensive tracking systems aimed at facilitating project development. The system will enable members of the Navajo Nation Government, local communities, and other stakeholders to monitor project progress through a user-friendly website portal. This initiative is designed to keep all parties informed and up to date with the latest developments and updates regarding ongoing projects.

## **Department of Highway Safety**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Defensive Driving Classes**

The DDC provides a detail understanding through discussion, Powerpoint and videos of safety requirements when operating a moving vehicle. The DDC is required to obtain NN Drivers Permit; to provide authorization for government vehicle operation with a valid state issued driver license.

There was a total of 193 individuals who attended & obtained NN Driver Permits. There were 82 no-shows, individuals who signed up but did not attend.

The number of personnel updating their NN Driver Permit is 677.

### **Program Federal Highway Administration Budget**



With guidance and coordination from *I* with NDOT fiscal personnel, the K account budget was completed for Navajo Department of Highway Safety. At this time with limited corrections and follow-up.

### **Program General Fund Budget**

With guidance and coordination from and with NDOT fiscal personnel and funding allocation, the NN General Fund for Navajo Department of Highway Safety tentatively established. The NN Executive Branch approved budget is waiting on formal approval.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Crash Accident Data Reports**

Continue to communicate & coordinate with NDPS/NPD-IMS on an agreement to have IMS provide the crash data and/or access to the NPD crash data. At least 5 memorandums & 3 meetings have transpired. NDOJ reviewed Data User Agreement copy to be provided to NPD-IMS. NPD also plans to review their internal crash data directive of 2013 & update. In the interim NDOT/DHS will continue to request specific crash data based on# of inquiries, i.e., Highway & NN Route numbers and time frame.

#### **Crash Accident Data w/FHWA and DOT**

Submitted FHWA/DOT Go-Team Application has been approved. Action objective is under formal planning with FHWA/DOT to have contractor selected to address "Strategic Planning" with NDOT/DHS and with possible inclusion of state DOT and state DPS, depending on how crash data is submitted, received, from NN. Currently, there is no to limited data is being sent to respective State DOTs and/or State DPS.

#### **Driving History Record**

Increase communication and coordination with AZ, NM, and UT, on the process of obtaining an individual's state driving history. We are working out the details with ADOT on their process. We hope to have an established effort by end of Oct.

In the interim have communicated with NMDOT on similar effort. However, NMDOT has indicated will most likely coordinate with NMDPS. Brief communication with UT is similar, possible coordination, communication with Utah DPS.

## **NAVAJO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **NDPS - Department of Corrections**

#### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **30 Days (September)**

- September opening of the 100' x 60' ft. detention modular to be located in Ft. Defiance, Arizona in the business district just past the Navajo Nation Transit yard. The total cost of these modulares to design, construct and to set them up on location is \$2,023,543. This modular will be a temporary holding for new arrestees by the Window Rock Police district for individuals who require detainment up to 18 hours. 75% of all arrestees are held for 18 hours and released unless the arresting officers complete an investigation and file a criminal complaint with the Office of the Prosecutor. The opening of the detention modular will support the Navajo Department of Corrections (NDOC) from having to continually transport arrestees out to Crownpoint daily bringing the cost of NDOC operations down. This includes eliminating liabilities by taking the high mileage transport vans off the road and fatigue of Corrections Officers from continuously driving between Window Rock and Crownpoint districts.
- A team of Public Safety personnel, a member of the Law and Order Committee along with the Parson's project managers to begin to lay out the floor plans for the Dilkon temporary modulares to house the Dilkon Public Safety personnel. The DPS substation personnel have been working from two residential modulares which have outlived their usefulness. The buildings are old and run-down, contributing to operational inefficiencies. For instance, the administrative building's sinking floor presents safety risks and may cause delays or closures, further straining already limited resources. The lack of jail facilities individuals arrested must be transported to other locations, which takes up valuable time and resources. This could reduce the time officers are available for patrols and response, and increase the chance of escape or other security issues during transport. Further without proper interview rooms, officers are forced to conduct interviews on the front deck of the police department, which is not ideal for privacy, security, or the integrity of investigations. The transportation of arrestees and the general patrolling of the district are likely hampered by these infrastructure and resource shortages. This could mean longer response times, fewer patrols, and a reduced ability to enforce the law effectively.
- September 30, 2024, a meeting was held with the Corrections District Supervisors to cover the recent Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services reviews and the effect on the detention program following the dismissal of the 1992 Consent Decree. The department will be able to move forward in developing new operating procedures, policies and programming. Some of the areas covered with the districts include; more focus on rehabilitation and restorative practices instead of punishment using evidence-based rehabilitation strategies to reduce recidivism; provide vocational opportunities that align with the modern job market; create clean, well-thought-out transitional facilities that include space for education and work. Develop best practices for leadership development and assess the adequacy of training for new supervisors. Improve data sharing and service coordination. Increase access to services related to housing, employment, health/addiction, and social reintegration.

## **60 Days (August)**

- August 3, 2024, provided an update report at the Ft. Defiance Chapter Planning and CLUBC meeting on the status of the temporary modulars and the Tsehootsooi Justice Center. In doing this report, we used placard boards displaying the lay-out of the Tsehootsooi Justice Center and the detention modulars, the costs for full build out of the Justice Center and the current short falls. We also provided the expected opening of the temporary detention modulars and proposed plans for these modulars after the larger Justice Center Complex is built. The only questions and concerns from the community leadership was on the Medical examiner's facility and why it was necessary to have such a facility on the Justice Center campus. Overall, the community members were pleased with the work being done and understood the time due to costs of the new facilities.
- The Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services and the Navajo Regional Office did a site visit with Crownpoint Corrections districts to do a program review. The Corrections Program Specialist (CPS) took this opportunity to provide updates on new policies and guidance as NDOC embarks on developing new operating procedures and offered training in these areas. In addition to this, recommendations were made by the CPS to bring policy training to the Navajo facilities to assist with post orders and etc.
- During the month of August 2024, four individuals from Navajo DOC attended the BIA Law Enforcement Training in Albuquerque to renew their certifications to conduct background training and adjudication. All four personnel were successful in passing the certification test at the conclusion of the training. In addition to this they also received training on the new policies and procedures on detention services.

### **90 days (July)**

- During July 2024, site visits were made to the Phoenix metropolitan area to tour state of the art public safety substations that include police, emergency medical services and the fire departments. The Gila River Indian Community recently opened a 55,000 square foot facility which includes all these services. The Queen Creek Fire station unfortunately had only the fire department. The Gila River Indian Community leverage the construction cost using the 105(l) leases on buildings that recently built.
- A fencing contractor was selected to fence in the detention modulars located in Ft. Defiance, Arizona and Shiprock New Mexico. NDOC fully executed the contract and work was completed during this quarter. This is one of the fastest contracts that was executed and work completed with a 45 day period.

### **Major Projects**

During quarter the BIA/OJS review there were certain policies that were recommended beyond the policies under the Consent Decree of 1992. The BIA/OJS provided training on policy and procedure development. Since the dismissal of the 1992 Consent Decree, Navajo DOC will working with the Bureau of Justice Services to development new policies and procedures. This is necessary since the BIA provides program funding and is also requiring that the program

must follow the BIA Detention Handbook policy. In addition to this, the BIA/OJS uses this policy and procedures to do the annual program reviews.

## **NDPS - Navajo Nation Fire Rescue Service**

### **Accomplishments**

#### **Rope Rescue Operations Course**

A total of 17 students attended and completed the first in series of technical rescue training. This operations training opened many opportunities such as rope rescue, confined space, swift water, and structure collapse rescue courses.

This also allowed four personnel to complete and receive certification as rope rescue technicians in the department. These four attended the annual AZ State Fire School in Mesa, AZ.

#### **Fire Chief Swearing In**

Chief Williams was delegated as interim fire chief since October 2023. On March, 11, 2024 Chief Williams' PAF was completed. After taking office, the swear in ceremony was held at Fire Rock Casino along with other Police Department command. The ceremony was held on August 22, 2024.

#### **Mutual Aid – Outreach**

Navajo Nation Fire Rescue has been working to complete and update mutual aid agreements with:

- McKinley County
- Gallup Fire Department
- San Juan County- Utah
- Kayenta Township Fire Department
- Flagstaff Fire Department
- Arizona Tribal Fire Departments

### **Major Projects**

#### **UTV/ATV deployment**

The new utility and all-terrain vehicles were recently deployed for the fairs, events, and search and rescue assistance. The units proved to be versatile and very effective. During the Navajo Nation Fair, they were able to respond safely, quickly, and firefighters were able to assist police and EMS.

On September 18, 2024, a search and rescue were requested by police and Ganado Fire Department. The victim was quickly located within one hour upon arrival. This was the first time a victim was located in record time.

## **Fire Leadership training**

- All supervisors were notified and have been completing necessary fire leadership training. The eight supervisors attended and completed 2 of 3 series of (Supervision in Leadership).
- Four supervisors have completed the Fire Inspector I course.
- Three supervisors attended and completed the Rope Rescue Operations course in Twin Arrows.
- One supervisor in the Paramedic program in Flagstaff, AZ.
- Six supervisors will be attending the Fire Investigator I course in Tucson, AZ
- Four supervisors will be attending the Plans Review Examiner course.

## **Mutual Aid agreement**

The following fire departments have been given the updated MOA draft from Navajo Nation Fire and Rescue Service:

- Puerco Valley Fire District
- San Juan County – Utah, Fire Rescue
- Kayenta Township Fire Department

We also will be submitting to McKinley County, Gallup Fire Department, and San Juan County – NM.

## **NDPS - Navajo Police Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Establishment of NPD Field Office (East)**

Due to the significant increase of illegal criminal activity within the far Eastern Navajo Agency communities, including the lack of police services and presence. The department has created the Eastern Area Field Operation using the Dzil Nahoodilii (DZ) NPD Substation facility located near Nageezi, (Navajo Nation) NM.

#### **Establishment of NPD Field Office (North)**

Due to the increase in criminal activity within the Utah/Navajo communities, the Navajo Police Department has created the Northern Area Field Operations using an unoccupied Aneth Chapter Facility, including renovation of mobile home for use by commission personnel assigned to patrol within Utah/Navajo communities.

#### **Re-establishment of Police Motorcycle Unit**

The Navajo Police Department has reinstated the **Police Motorcycle Patrol Unit** in order to deter traffic crashes and to decrease the significant increase in motor vehicle traffic violations throughout the Navajo Nation, i.e., excessive speeding & reckless driving.

## **Major projects**

### **Development of District 8**

Due to the significant increase of illegal criminal activity within the far Eastern Navajo Agency communities, including the lack of police services and presence. The department created an Eastern Field Office using the Dzil Nahoodilii (DZ) NPD Substation facility located near Nageezi, (Navajo Nation) NM. This project will evolve into implementation of a District 8 police operation under the Navajo Police Department, which will be fully staffed with police commanders, patrol personnel and administrative support personnel.

### **Plan of Operation Amendment**

#### **Project Description:**

Due to concerns of lack of police presence, manpower and recruitment, the Navajo Police Department is reorganizing upper and middle management staffing levels in order to increase police personnel at the frontline levels. This includes reduction of commission personnel serving in administrative management roles within auxiliary and support services programs within the department. To realign appropriate levels of duties and responsibilities for both commissioned and civilian administrative personnel.

### **Navajo Regional Training Center**

Secure a lease agreement with Navajo Division Economic Development for the former Navajo Generation Station-Administrative Building located in Page, Arizona so as to establish the **Navajo Regional Training Center** under the Navajo Division of Public Safety for use by Fire, Corrections, Police and EMS Programs.

The former NGS facility will also be used as a field office for above mentioned NDPS programs, including Criminal Investigations.

## **Navajo Department of Criminal Investigations**

### **Major Project**

Navajo Department of Criminal Investigations- working toward the suppression of crime utilizing License Plate Recognition (LPR), aka License Plate Readers.

## **Navajo Department of Emergency Management**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Navajo Nation Fair Task Force:**

Training and implementation of ICS structure in emergency preparedness, NDEM took a proactive step by establishing a joint interdepartmental task force (NFD, NEMS, NPD and NDEM) specifically focused on large scale event preparedness and mitigation. This task force brought together the expertise and resources of all public safety, fostering a more

comprehensive approach to addressing a pre-planned large-scale event and unpredictable emergencies for 2024 Navajo Nation Fair.

Results:

- **Combined Expertise:** The task force leveraged the unique knowledge and experience to establish a holistic approach towards emergency preparedness.
- **Shared Resources:** By working together, the task force strategically allocated resources, shared equipment, personnel, and some funding to navigate operations more effectively.
- **Enhanced Communication & Coordination:** The task force fostered open communication and collaboration between all departments within public safety, streamlining information sharing and ensuring a unified response during emergencies.
- **Impact:** The establishment of this joint task force had significant impact on NDEM's ability to address overall emergency management through improved preparedness, more effective response and stronger relationships, partnerships. Overall, this collaborative effort signifies NDEM's commitment to working alongside department partners ensuring a more prepared and resilient effort.

### **Shiprock Flooding Emergency Response:**

NDEM effectively and swiftly responded to flooding disaster in Shiprock, New Mexico affecting local neighborhoods, local businesses, and local schools. An all inclusive EOC established for quick tactics and strategies to ensure thorough communication.

Results:

- **FEMA Level Coordination:** By working with FEMA, NDEM demonstrably strengthens its workforce, fostering a more prepared and capable program to respond effectively to any emergency event.
- **Whole Community Approach:** NDEM enforced strategies across several departments and enhanced partnerships through disaster assistance.
- **Stronger Team Leadership:** By taking the lead and coordinating several ICS teams, NDEM empowered its personnel with the leadership skills necessary to effectively manage teams during emergencies.

## **Emergency Medical Service**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **EMS Academy – EMT Basic Course**

EMS Recruiters hosted information sessions for EMS Academy in Sawmill, AZ that will commence on November 4, 2024. 45 applicants applied with 12 applicants selected and recommended for Academy. Orientation and EMT Basic program will be ongoing.

#### **DEA Licenses**

EMS renewed all DEA Licenses for all EMS to maintain the use of controlled substances for patient care use.

### **Dash Cams**

EMS installed approximately 25 dashcams in the ambulances for quality improvement and quality assurance. This has aided EMS to ensure we are providing the most safest and efficient ground transportation.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Expansion**

EMS is working weekly and monthly to expand EMS services into areas not currently being provided by EMS. This includes additional personnel, vehicles, and buildings. Active with Tohatchi First Responder and Dilkon building.

#### **Ambulance and Equipment Proposal**

EMS is working with NDPS administration and standing oversight committees to procure the replacement of ambulances and equipment for the Department.

#### **Community Paramedic Program**

Planning and development of a model for the Navajo Nation, innovative, proven solution to provide high quality primary care and preventative services by employing a currently available and often underutilized healthcare resource.

## **NAVAJO NATION ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

### **Navajo Superfund Program**

#### **Major Accomplishments**

##### **Move Out/Close Out Lease for Old NSP building**

Completed the move-out of office equipment, records and furniture from the Old Navajo Superfund Program building located in St. Michaels, Arizona. The NSP occupied a leased building for over twenty years, leasing from the same lessor.

NSP is now relocated to the main NNEPA Administration building in Window Rock, Arizona as a temporary work site.



Also, archive the NSP files/documents and prepare to digitally scan for future research & historical use. Other duties include removing the two of the four sheds; moving the trailer down to NNEPA Admin. building.

### **AUM Presentation at 14<sup>th</sup> Annual National Tribal Lands Environmental Forum**

NSP staff presented status reports on the on-going work at the Quivira and Section 32/33 Abandoned Uranium Mines in Eastern Navajo Agency and Abandoned Uranium Mines and Voluntary Alternative Housing on the Navajo Nation.

Navajo Nation EPA contract attorneys from the Jill Grant Law Office presented Issues in Radioactive Materials Transport Across Indian Country.

Over 470 people attended in person, and over 170 people attended virtually. The TLEF took place in Eugene, Oregon.

### **Successful Advocacy for AUM Treatment Technology – High Pressure Slurry Ablation**

On September 25, 2024, the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC) completed a Notification Vote on the Options for Licensing Emerging Technologies Used For Remediation of Mine Waste (SECY-23-0005). The USNRC voted 4-0 in favor of Option 2-B, the preferred option of the technology owner, DISA Technologies. The vote approves the licensure of emerging technologies such as DISA's High Pressure Slurry Ablation technology under the source material framework in 10CFR, Part 40.

In coordination with NNDOJ, Navajo Nation EPA Executive Director submitted a letter in January 2024 urging the USNRC to complete the vote and to decide in favor of DISA's preferred option. The relationship between Navajo Nation EPA and DISA produced a favorable treatability study final report in December 2023, verified/approved by USEPA for the use of the HPSA treatment technology. NNEPA will continue to work with DISA to advocate for its appropriate use in the AUM cleanup projects.

## **Major Projects**

### **Interview of Candidate for Supervisor Position**

On July 10, 2024, a three person NSP Interview panel and the Executive Director conducted an interview for the Superfund Program Supervisor position. Only one person met the qualifications for the supervisor position. The candidate was not selected due to insufficient number of years in supervisory experience and no prior experiences with federal grants management and experiences with Navajo Nation or federal CERCLA.

Position was re-advertised.

### **September Monthly Meeting with Red Water Pond Road Community Association**

On September 11, 2024, NSP personnel attended the Red Water Pond Community Association monthly meeting with Mr. Etsitty, NNEPA Executive Director and Mr. Dan Mouquin, NNDOJ.

Executive Director was specifically invited to present updates to the community on the question of Quivira waste materials being transported to the White Mesa Mill in Blanding Utah, and advocacy against the proposed cleanup alternative to create a low-level radioactive waste repository at Red Rocks Landfill in Thoreau, NM. Answers clarified that the Navajo Nation is only in discussions with Energy Fuels Resources, Inc. on the issues related to uranium transport across Western Agency from Pinyon Plains uranium mine near Grand Canyon, AZ to White Mesa, Utah. Executive Director did explain that Energy Fuels proposed accepting Navajo Nation AUM waste materials in 2019 and that this issue is still being explored.

### **Continued Training for NSP Technical Personnel**

Superfund 101, Training in Denver, Colorado July 22-25, 2024: staff attended the Superfund 101 course to enhance capabilities as Navajo EPA Superfund RPM and to improve comprehensive understanding of the CERCLA and the National Contingency Plan. The training deepened our knowledge of the Superfund program's legal framework, response procedures, and enforcement tactics; improved our ability to manage site cleanups and enforce environmental regulations effectively. Additionally, the networking opportunities with other professionals in the field have provided valuable insights and potential collaborations, further strengthening our efforts to protect and restore the environment within the Navajo Nation.

## **NEPA - Air & Toxics Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Promulgated NN Minor Source Program Regulations**

09/09/24, participated as a panel member on the National Tribal Air Association (NTAA) hosted webinar "Tribal Roles in Implementing EPA Methane Rules", geared toward environmental professionals, tribal leadership, and community members. The panel included Navajo Nation, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, USEPA Office of Air Quality Planning Standards (OAQPS), Environmental Defense Fund, and the National Tribal Air Association. The panelists explored various roles Tribes could take in implementing oil and gas programs in Indian Country and to learn about resources available to support Tribal air programs.

09/19/24, Legislation #0202-24: An Action Relating to Resources and Development Committee; Approving the Navajo Nation Clean Air Act Minor Source Program Regulations, sponsor: Honorable Brenda Jesus. The regulations were approved by the RDC Committee of the Navajo Nation Council.

#### **Minor Source Permitting Enforcement**

NNEPA AQCP provided a review of the Navajo Nation's interests in the USEPA's enforcement against Fann Contracting. USEPA completed a settlement agreement with Fann Contracting. The company was found to be operating a portable hot mix asphalt plant on the Navajo Nation near Kayenta, Arizona, without a Tribal Minor New Source Review (NSR) permit to control air pollutants.

As part of the settlement, Fann Contracting will pay a civil penalty of \$72,128.00 to the USEPA. The AQCP/OPP programs assisted USEPA with the collection of information and interviews which USEPA used to finalize the Consent Agreement and Final Order (CAFO). Related: under the Navajo Nation Minor Source Permitting Regulations, the Navajo Nation EPA will be able to conduct the same enforcement actions, but the NNEPA AQCP will have to first apply for and receive a delegation of authority from USEPA for the Tribal Minor Source Permitting Program.

### **Completion of Technical/Project Reviews**

Completed four (4) qualification assessments in the 3rd quarter. Vacancies continue to be advertised through the DPM JVA. Applicants meeting the minimum qualifications for the vacant positions were referred to the programs, and those not meeting the minimum qualifications were formally notified of the non-referral(s).

Completed twenty-five (25) environmental reviews in the GLDD prismsolutions.net electronic database. Participation in the reviews assists with the effective monitoring of potential emissions and pollution sources that pose risks to human health and the environment. No projects were subject to compliance with Tribal Minor New Source Review Permitting Program under 40 CFR 49.152.

Received and completed one (1) DHUD, 24 CFR, Part 50 environmental review for Air Quality and Explosive and Flammable Materials, for a DHUD funded project at Cameron Chapter, AZ. Participated in reviews/approvals of three (3) emergency projects needing approval to meet construction deadlines and safety concerns. (1) TCE: NNDWR Hogback Canal Steel Siphon, EOR 23144, (2) TAA: West Tsayatoh Road Improvement C193363, EOR 23238, (3) ROW Amendment: City of Gallup NGWSP Reach 27.7B, EOR 23236.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Pesticide Applicator Inspections**

Two (02) Certified Applicators Records inspections were conducted during the 4th quarter of FY2024, including the following: 1) Navajo Mesa Farms is involved with the production of potato crop, and 2) NMSU Agricultural Science Center conducts agricultural experiments in crop, soil and farm chemical; and assist NAPI growers and contractors; both operations are situated on NAPI lands under lease with NN and NAPI. No potential violation was noted during the compliance inspection.

Inspection of Certified Applicators includes 1) certification and licensing to verify that the applicator is appropriately certified and/or licensed to apply restricted-use pesticides; 2) recordkeeping, maintaining detailed records of pesticide use, including the name of the pesticide, the date and location of application, and amounts used. These records must be kept for at least two years; and 3) Application compliance, checking that pesticides are applied only in areas where the applicator is certified. The inspections help ensure that pesticides are used safely and effectively, protecting both the environment and public health.

## **Indoor Radon Testing and Outreach**

On-going quarterly coordination with Navajo Head Start to test various Head Start facilities, including training maintenance staff on how to correctly deploy and retrieve radon test kits. This quarter, New Mexico locations were visited to provide information regarding protocols for selection of locations to deploy test devices, use of floor plans to design testing schematics, notification, interpreting laboratory results, re-testing, long-term testing, mitigation options. Coordinated with Cyrus Davis of Navajo Head Start to test several of their facilities on the New Mexico side of the reservation. Tested a total of 4 head starts with results all under the action limit of 4.0pCi/L. No further action is required at this time.

The Navajo Radon Program is the sole resource on the Navajo Nation for Radon education, testing, measurement, and mitigation. Every school on the Navajo Nation has been tested, including child care facilities, Head Start centers, senior citizen centers, and testing of public buildings continues. Mitigation is encouraged and facilitated through testing and mitigation workshops held in conjunction with hands-on mitigation of structures.

All Navajo Nation Chapters should be tested for Radon. Free radon test kits are available from the Radon Program (928-871-7703/6790/7800).

## **NNEPA-AQCP Air Monitoring and OPP Major Source Inspections**

On the Navajo Nation, the air monitoring network maintained by the AQCP, collects gaseous, particulate and meteorological data that are uploaded to the Air Quality System database as part of its structure to maintaining a highly reliable, continuous ambient air monitoring network and/or special studies that meet the requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), particularly but not limited to Title 40, Part 58, Appendix A of the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR Part 58, Appendix A).

The Air Quality System (AQS) contains ambient air pollution data collected by EPA, state, local, and tribal air pollution control agencies from over thousands of monitors. AQS also contains meteorological data, descriptive information about each monitoring station (including its geographic location and its operator), and data quality assurance/quality control AQS data is used to:

- assess air quality,
- assist in attainment/non-attainment designations,
- evaluate State Implementation Plans for non-attainment areas,
- perform modeling for permit review analysis, and
- prepare reports for Congress as mandated by the CAA.

No areas of the Navajo Nation are in non-attainment for the NAAQS.

Operating Permit Program (OPP) completed all ten (10) 2022 compliance inspection reports for El Paso Natural Gas White Rock, Gallup, Window Rock, Navajo, Dilkon, and Leupp compressor stations, Transwestern Pipeline – Leupp Compressor Station, Western Refining Terminals – Wingate Facility, Silica Services and Elk Operating Services - Aneth Unit, each of the facilities are in compliance with the respective Title V permit terms and conditions.

OPP completed seven (7) 2023 Annual Compliance Inspections for El Paso Natural Gas (EPNG) White Rock, Gallup, and Window Rock Compressor Stations, Transwestern Pipeline – Leupp Compressor Station, Western Refining Terminals – Wingate Facility, Silica Services and Elk Operating Services (Aneth and McElmo Creek Units). All facilities are following the respective Title V permit terms and conditions.

## **NEPA - Surface and Ground Water Protection Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Primacy Reporting Requirement**

For the first time since the Navajo Nation received Primacy under the Safe Drinking Water Act, the NNEPA Public Water Systems Supervision Program submitted the 2023 Annual Compliance Report to USEPA-HQ and placed on a national database, The report is also available to the public at <https://navajoepa.org/public-water-systems-on-the-navajo-nation>.

This report outlines all noncomplying public water systems on the Navajo Nation, with identified compliance issues from January 2023 to December 31, 2023.

The data submitted include, but are not limited to, PWS inventory information, the incidence of Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL), Maximum Residual Detection Limit (MRDL), monitoring and reporting, and treatment technique violations, and information on enforcement activity related to these violations. Section 1414(c)(3) of the Safe Drinking Water Act requires states to provide USEPA with an annual report of violations of the primary drinking water standards. This report provides the numbers of violations in each of six categories: MCLs, MRDLs, treatment techniques, variances and exemptions, significant monitoring and reporting, and significant consumer notification. The USEPA regional offices report the information for Wyoming, the District of Columbia, and all Indian lands - but the Navajo Nation. USEPA Regional offices also report federal enforcement actions taken. Data retrieved from SDWIS/FED form the basis of this report.

#### **Public Notice Regulations Primacy**

Staff submitted a revised application for Primacy to the USEPA; this application is for the public notice regulations specific to Safe Drinking Water Act (40CFR, Part 142).

In 2009, the first application was not considered due to information lacking for Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring requirements. NNEPA PWSSP adopted UCM public notice regulations in 2017.

USEPA is reviewing the revised application and will publish its decision in the federal Register and open a 30-day public comment period. If there are no issues with the decision USEPA will provide a notice of Primacy approval.

### **Fish Tissue Study – San Juan River/Gold King Mine WIIN Grant**

Completed the field work (including, tissue sampling, water quality monitoring at 13 stations, sediment samples) for the fish tissue study of the San Juan River and metals source tracking study in the San Juan watershed. This work was supported by a USEPA Water Infrastructure Improvement for the Nation Act (WIIN) grant which ended September 30, 2024.

Data interpretation and analysis was completed by the contractor; NNEPA WQP is reviewing Draft Final reports. Data gathering, sampling, and quality control oversight started in Spring 2023.

Two Final Reports (Fish Tissue Findings; and Metals Source Tracking) will be issued October 31, 2024; public meetings to disseminate the information and study findings will be scheduled.

## **Major Projects**

### **Gold King Mine Settlement/Many Devils Wash Cleanup**

Staff selected a contractor to conduct a Phase 1 Assessment of the Many Devils Wash trash dumps and the watershed; waste volume and types will be characterized for removal action.

On September 18, 2024, NNEPA-WQP held meetings with the Shiprock Chapter and USEPA to update stakeholders on the project.

The site of multiple trash dumps are 1,800 feet from the San Juan River. Many Devils Wash is a tributary to the river, from the south side of the watershed.

Related: On September 20, 2024 the Proposed Expenditure Plan for the San Juan River Mitigation Fund was placed into the 164 Review Process, the Navajo Nation Council Resources and Development Committee will sponsor the legislation for the Budget and Finance Committee final approvals.

### **NNEPA-UIC Grant Award**

NNEPA-UIC received a five-year grant award from USEPA to develop a Class 6, Carbon Sequestration Program, that relies on injecting carbon dioxide gas into deep aquifers to mitigate carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere.

Program development is underway starting with recruitment of personnel: Geologist and Environmental Specialists. The UIC program has been advertising these technical positions for the past two years without receiving any applicants. A contract to address the technical aspects of this project will be developed, meanwhile job vacancy announcements will continue to be posted.

### **ARPA – Revenue Recapture Reserve/ Septic Systems Improvements**

On September 30, 2024, ten (10) contracts were placed into the 164 Review Process. The contracts will provide septic system improvements, such as cleaning, pumping and disposal of septic sludge at individual homes across ten chapters (non-LGA certified). These Projects were initially developed as ARPA-Chapter Approved Projects. The Chapters now have newly assigned business units for each of these projects.

NNEPA-DWW Program selected Iina’baa, Inc. as the contractor to deliver the septic system improvement projects.

The original workload for these projects consisted of thirty-three (33) chapters, LGA and non-LGA certified.

## **NEPA - Waste Regulatory Compliance Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **TCRA at Former Sawmill in Sawmill, AZ**

The USEPA Region 9 is performing a Time Critical Removal Action (TCRA) at the Navajo Tribal Sawmill Enterprise (NTSE) site located in Sawmill, AZ. The contaminate of concern (COC) that is being removed is asbestos. The request came from NNEPA in March of 2023. The project began on September 3, 2024 and is expected to be completed by October 18, 2024. Prior to the project, NNEPA provided assistance by working with Navajo Nation Fish and Wildlife, Navajo Historic Preservations Department, and Navajo DOJ to process the necessary clearances. All asbestos containing material (ACM) identified on-site have been stock piled and prepared for transport to the Painted Desert Landfill Facility in Joseph City, AZ. The kiln building has been demolished. It was a major concern because it entirely consisted of ACM, except for the foundation. Currently, 18 trucks have transported ACM off-site and USEPA anticipates another 22 trucks to complete the removal of the waste. USEPA is monitoring the dust with real time air monitors set up around the construction site to prevent/minimize air borne migration of ACM. In addition, USEPA and their contractor are controlling the dust by applying water to all earth moving activity with heavy equipment. The USEPA has been providing outreach to the community to inform them of the removal process. USEPA and NNEPA both attended regular chapter house meetings on 8/12/24 and 9/9/24 to give updates on the project. The public can visit the USEPA website for updates on the project at <https://response.epa.gov/oldsawmillasbestos>. This removal action only addresses any ACM

identified on-site and does not address any other COC. A Phase II ESA would be required to identify any other COCs, if the chapter or Navajo Nation should seek redevelopment of the site.

### **AUM Phase 2 Expanded Trust**

Legislation # 0173-24 went before the RDC and it was approved to transfer the funds from the Hazardous Substance fund to the Phase 2 Trustee. The Phase 2 Settlement Agreement requires the transfer of funds leftover from the Phase 1 Trust (which completed its work) to the Phase 2 Trust for use to carry out the work of the Phase 2 Trust. The leftover Phase 1 Trust funds are currently being held in an account in the Hazardous Substances Fund. They amount to \$514,456.87.

This transfer is required pursuant to the Phase 2 Settlement Agreement between the United States and the Navajo Nation addressing 46 Orphan Abandoned Uranium Mines on the Navajo Nation. The Office of the Controller/ General Accounting is currently processing the transfer from the Business Unit Number N01347 to BU# 511007 in the amount of \$102,862.78. Thereafter, General Accounting indicated that when the transfer is complete, a Request for Direct Payment (RDP) can be processed for payment to the Phase II Trustee's Account.

The AUM Phase 2 Expanded Trust completed their quarterly meeting on July 24 and 25, 2024. The quarterly meeting discussions included the technical portion of the project and administrative (budget) aspect. Furthermore, the discussion included the Claim 28 Water Study, Addendum 1 Stage 2 and Addendum 2 Stage 3 agreements, new Risk Assessment Methodology, Background Methodology discussion. Field work on the Addendum 1 Stage 2 began on September 18, 2024.

### **RCRP/LSTP**

Resource Conservation Recovery Program (RCRP) has secured a Rental Lease on a Professional Service Contract with the Saint Michaels Association for Special Education (SMASE) for office space. The RCRP is currently housed and functioning out of their new office quarters in a Modular building (64'X30' (1,920 SQ. FT.)) located at 100 Mustang Rd. St. Michaels, St Michaels, AZ 86511, Apache County, Arizona.

The Leaking Storage Tank Program (LSTP) has issued No Further Action Letters to the following three (3) sites: NAV211 Chief Conoco in Shiprock, NM; NAV122 Speedway in Shiprock, NM; NAV401 Chinle Hay Sales in Chinle, AZ. The contamination at all three (3) sites has been remediated to meet the NNEPA Soil and Water Clean Up Standards.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Brownfields Environmental Justice Grant**

The Navajo Townsite Community Development Corporation requested to utilize the remaining funds in the Environmental Justice Grant Business Unit #K211108. A professional service



contract is in the process of completing the 164(B) Review. It is currently at the Office of the Controller for review and the next step is the Navajo DOJ. The contract will be utilized to develop a Community Development Plan for the former NFPI facility.

This plan will provide a vision for the community and the Navajo Nation on the expectations on what the redeveloped site will look like once it is remediated. The NNEPA did approach the USEPA to request for approval to utilize the remaining funds in the grant. The USEPA approved the request from NNEPA. The NNEPA is working with USEPA R9 Project Officer on the progress of the grant. The expiration of the Environmental Justice grant is October 30, 2024.

### **Resource Cons.Rec.Program-RCRP**

The NNEPA RCRP Senior Environmental Specialist and Environmental Specialist completed second year of test pilot project to validate Open Dumps using IHS Field Maps mobile application in partnership with U.S. EPA ORCR and IHS. This project continues leads to performing assessment at open dumps on the Navajo Nation to reach an overall goal to perform remediation with assistance from the federal partners, Indian Health Service and the USEPA R9.

The highlight project activity for RCRP worth mentioning is continued ongoing dialogue from US EPA Washington DC Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery with Navajo EPA Resource Conservation and Recovery Program regarding tribal solid waste in: (1) Navajo Nation inventory of illegal trash dump site greater than 0.5 acres using Indian Health Service mobile app; (2) national tribal task force in solid waste transfer station operation and maintenance costing technical assistance and infrastructure development; (3) illegal trash dumping prevention education outreach development and launch.

### **Releases of Hazardous Substances**

Round Rock Diesel Fuel Spill:

NNEPA was notified on the morning of 2/18/24 of a diesel truck accident on US Highway 191 at mile marker 480 in Round Rock, AZ. The vehicle was transporting gasoline fuel and the accident caused a release of the hazardous substance into the environment. The vehicle was not transporting Diesel fuel. After the pump truck recovered the remaining fuel in the tanker, it was estimated approximately 1,500 to 2,000 gallons of gasoline was released on the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) right of way and Navajo Nation Tribal Trust land. As of March 21, 2024, Emergency Environmental Services (EES), LLC. has completed the removal of the petroleum contaminated soil at Mile Mark 480 on US Highway 89 in Round Rock, AZ. The volume of material that was removed is estimated to be 36 to 40 cubic yards and was transported to San Juan County facility located in Monticello, UT. The backfilling of the excavation pit was completed on 3/29/24. The samples that were collected on 3/21/24 at the bottom of the excavation have been provided to NNEPA in a final report and indicated no threat to human health and the environment. NNEPA will issue a no further action letter to the responsible party.

### **Kayenta IHS:**

A release in the amount of 400 gallons of Diesel fuel occurred at the facility on 9/16/24. The responsible party has hired a contractor, Emergency Response Company, to address the contamination at the facility. The release occurred at the emergency generator tanks due to an overfill from the primary aboveground storage tank storing the diesel fuel. The remediation is currently being performed by the contractor to remove the petroleum contaminated soil. It will take several weeks to remove the contamination at the facility. The company will work in three different phases to perform the clean-up. After the remediation is complete, a report will be submitted for review by NNEPA to ensure the contaminants of concern are addressed. The Environmental Program Supervisor responded to the release of the substance shortly after it was reported on the same day. The EPS communicated to the Kayenta IHS facility personnel to identify one contact person to prevent any miscommunication.

### **Rough Rock Roll over:**

On 9/19/24, a truck hauling liquid asphalt was reported to have rolled over on HWY 59 at Mile Post 15 near Rough Rock, AZ. The truck was carrying liquid asphalt at the time of the accident. The name of the company that was transporting the liquid asphalt is Seal Master Company, LLC from Albuquerque, NM. The company did hire a HAZMAT team to mobilize at the site of the accident for cleanup. The company did remove the wreckage from the scene of the accident including the liquid asphalt and any obvious staining on the soil. The release of diesel fuel from the vehicle is estimated to be approximately less than 25 gallons and the fuel stained soil has been removed from the location. The liquid asphalt that remained in the tanker was successfully transferred to another transport vehicle. The site was stabilized hours after the accident occurred. NNEPA informed the Seal Master Company, LLC. to provide a report and after review, NNEPA will make further recommendations for more cleanup or no further action.

## **NEPA – Criminal Enforcement Department**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Community Protest Walk**

Under the direction of Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice-President, successfully and safely conducted a peaceful ½ mile protest walk in Cameron, Arizona

#### **Oath of Office**

Completion of all necessary documents needed in becoming an active Peace Officer for the Navajo Nation. Arizona POST received and certified all documents. Profile has changed to “Active Peace Officer”.

Navajo Nation Judge Victor Clyde in Window Rock administered the Oath of Officer at the Veteran’s Park.

## **Close and personal tour of mine**

Firsthand and closeup of the process of the Uranium Hauling Transport. Witnessing the process of documents and inspections prior to departure from the mine site. All necessary protocol to perform and gear needed for every driver.

Travel route has not changed with the company. Every load will be closely monitored as the load is transported across major freeway, highway, city and towns.

## **Major Projects**

### **Pinyon Plain Mine**

NNEPA-CED will continue to be part of the discussion of the Pinyon Plain Mine. The uranium mine is located about 6 miles southeast of the Town of Tusayan. Discussion of transport and routes is the center of discussion. The hazard category, haul route and start date.

Coconino County Emergency Management working closely with all First Responder on training needed along the travel route

### **First Responder Notification**

NNEPA-CED has been actively making notification with Navajo First Responders along the route of the Uranium Hauling. Recommendation to all departments to actively refresh with Hazardous and Radioactive topic training.

### **Hiring additional Officer**

Working to hire and fulfill additional officers to open positions needed to effectively run the department to its full potential. Additional officers need along with department supervisor.

## **Navajo Nation Washington Office**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Senate Water Rights Hearing**

On Wednesday, September 25, President Nygren testified before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. The testimony focused on both S. 4998 - Navajo Nation Rio San José Stream System Water Rights Settlement Act of 2024 and S. 4633 - Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Act of 2024. With both chambers having now held hearings on these two vital bills, we look forward to a favorable reporting so that both bills may be voted on in the full House and Senate.

### **Internship Program**

In August, NNWO's first-ever internship program wrapped up with rave reviews from participating students. NNWO brought on three *Diné* students in our in-house program, who lived in Washington and worked closely with our staff and visiting Navajo leadership. NNWO also hosted four Arizona State University "Capitol Scholars", and once again participated in The Fund for American Studies program, bringing a total of eight interns this summer. Each of the students were able to attend Congressional hearings, meet with President Nygren, Speaker Curley, and visiting Council Delegates, and toured the White House and US Capitol. The *Diné* students also met with Congressional members and accompanied Director Ahasteen and Deputy Director Crank to meetings on Capitol Hill

### **RECA Advocacy Week**

The Navajo Nation Washington Office successfully organized an advocacy week for the reauthorization for the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act. The advocacy week included: the participation of exposed miners and relatives that drove to Washington, DC from the Navajo Nation in a bus, a march from the NNWO office to the Senate buildings, a press conference that included Senator Hawley and Congresswoman Leger Fernandez, and a vigil before the Capitol Building.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Farm Bill**

NNWO will continue to monitor the Farm Bill and advocate for an extension or reauthorization before the bill lapses at the end of calendar year 2024.

#### **ONHIR Consultation with the White House**

Due to the Navajo Nation Washington Office's continuous efforts, the White House has agreed on holding an ONHIR consultation in October 2024. As of right now, NNWO is preparing testimony from the affected in order to deliver detailed written comments to the White House.

#### **RECA Reauthorization**

The Navajo Nation Washington Office is committed to continuously work on the reauthorization campaign for RECA. NNWO is collaboration with organizations such as the Union of Concerned Scientists to keep advocating in the Hill in favor of an extension of the bill.

## **Office of Miss Navajo Nation**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Miss Navajo Nation Pageant**

The former Miss Navajo Nation 2023-2024, Amy N. Begaye and OMNN staff successfully hosted the Annual Pageant with primary pageant sponsor, Navajo Arts and Crafts Enterprises ("NACE"). OMNN and Miss Navajo Nation successfully recruited six (6) young ladies

between the ages of 18 through 25 years to compete for the title of Miss Navajo Nation to help us continue preserving the Navajo language, traditions and culture.

We are proud of this achievement because we did not spend any money from program allocations or pageant sponsorship funds for Advertising fees. OMNN met with each potential candidate to provide a thorough explanation on the Miss Navajo Nation's Pageant Application, and created a better dialogue with each potential candidate regarding any concerns or questions that they had on the pageant events and activities.

### **2024 Summer Olympics**

The Office of Miss Navajo Nation has made history by being invited to attend the 2024 Opening Ceremony and the Summer Olympics Games. Miss Navajo Nation and I attended several Olympic games throughout the week. Miss Navajo Nation was interviewed by several local radio stations and network television broadcasting stations. Miss Navajo Nation provide thorough information to all French citizen, who had questions about her clothing, hair buns, jewelry, language, and customs.

This trip highlighted the significant importance to eliminate the "Invisibility of Native Tribes", it was important that we shared our culture, language and traditions with Europeans because they believe that we've been all extinct or dead during the American Wars. The French citizen were very impress with Miss Navajo Nation sharing the knowledge and important role that our Navajo Code Talkers regarding World War II. I believe we left French citizen with more profound insights on the important role of our Navajo language in saving millions of young men and women from all different countries during the World War II.

I believe the position of Miss Navajo Nation as the Goodwill Ambassador is relevant, and traveling to another country is catalyst of eliminating the "Invisibility of Navajo Nation tribe" among other countries. Navajos and our voices are strong in United States of America, our Navajo presence is known and recognized but in other countries, "We, Navajos are Unheard of, We, Navajos are Unknown" and we need to change that narrative. We need to continue reminding and let all ethnicity of other countries, know that we are more than our performances, and clothing.

### **Miss Navajo Nation Featured in the Smithsonian Museum Institute in Washington DC**

The Office of Miss Navajo Nation has been working with Mary Savig of Renwick Gallery of Smithsonian Museum Institute in Washington DC for the past year. The Miss Navajo Nation will be feature for one year throughout the United States of America and also as a part of traveling exhibits. Miss Navajo Nation, Amy Begaye donated several clothing for this project. Former Miss Navajo Nation, Shaandiin Parrish donated a pair of Moccasins to the Navajo Nation Museum, which will be feature as well, and a former Miss Navajo Nation Crown will be featured in Smithsonian Museum. The unveiling of the Miss Navajo Nation articles will be in May of 2025.

## **Major Projects**

### **Miss Navajo Nation Contestants Orientation Day**

The Office of Miss Navajo Nation and seven (7) Pageant Committee Members, who also served as Pageant Coordinators in seven pageant competition categories. Our group provided a detailed and informative orientation to the six (6) contestants on Friday, July 12, 2024. Each contestant was allowed to invite only (2) guests to Contestant Orientation. Our group held weekly meetings to ensure that each committee members participate in development of new rubric scoring sheet for each competition categories. Each committee member was provided a task punch list, such as recruited pageant judges, volunteers, entertainers, and additional pageant sponsors.

### **Miss Navajo Nation Run Series**

The OMNN and Miss Navajo Nation, Amy N. Begaye collaborated with Navajo Special Diabetes Program on running and biking series that was completed August 16, 2024. Miss Navajo Nation, Amy Begaye promoted this project to encourage Navajo to start a healthy listyle.

### **Miss Navajo Nation Contestants Introductory Video**

The Office of Miss Navajo Nation provided an Introductory Video of each contestants. A majority of the scenes were at the contestants' residences. Instruct each contestant to provide a 3-minute length video about their hobbies, interests, educations, and athletic talents, that will not be feature during competition week.

This is the second time, we completed a feature Contestant Introductory Video for all audience. We successfully completed this filming and editing prior to the Pageant week.

## **Office of the Navajo Tax Commission**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Revenue Collections**

ONTC had projected to bring in \$111 million dollars in tax revenue. As of September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, ONTC had collected \$134,650,938 million. Our largest contributor to the revenue was our Sales Tax- non-retail. This would be from construction companies and other service providers. In addition, we exceeded our Hotel Occupancy Tax by an additional million.

#### **Moving IT Services to NNDIT**

We were able to move all of our IT services to Navajo Nation Department of Information technology. This will allow for our office to save on personnel costs and to have our data

secure and archived. This was not being addressed last year, but I made it a priority to get our information secure.

### **Personnel movements**

ONTC had three vacant management positions. I was able to fill three of them with qualified personnel. One of which is our Senior Tax Compliance Officer position and the other I reclassified as a Senior Accountant position.

Both of these individuals were deemed qualified by DPM and both were promoted in-house. With these two positions filled, I believe we will be able to increase tax revenue collections for the upcoming FY 2025. I anticipate a 100% increase in issuing assessments. This was lacking with the unfilled position.

### **Major Projects**

#### **Solar/Renewable Energy Legislation**

I have been working diligently with DOJ and outside counsel on creating a tax that will be beneficial to all stakeholders. This is a huge undertaking as that I am trying to balance external, non-Native businesses with the current Native entrepreneurs and Navajo Enterprises.

My approach was to use the BLM calculations as a guidance, while taking into consideration the applicability of the Possessory Interest Tax and the Business Activity Tax. This is still an ongoing project that I hope will get resolved soon.

#### **Tobacco Products Tax**

This project was introduced by a health advocacy group and sponsored by Delegate Slater. The initial proposal was to increase tobacco tax rates, include e-cigarettes/vape pens and nicotine products. I do not favor any of the changes except the tax rate increase. The group failed to recognize that ONTC and the Navajo Nation has an IGA with the state of NM and AZ on tax rates.

This has been rescripted multiple times and it is back at the drawing board. I hope this one will get resolved soon also.

#### **DOJ Cases**

I have many DOJ cases pending. I am working diligently with Chad Yazzie on getting a firm understanding of the status of our request for service.

When I came on board a year ago, ONTC's cases were being handled by Rudy Anaya. He unfortunately resigned and left DOJ a month or two after my arrival. He's records were not complete and I am taking on the project with Chad Yazzie.

This is a priority right now as that there are statute of limitations involved in the requests that were made. We need to complete this very soon.

## **Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission**

### **Major Accomplishments**

#### **Commission Reestablishment**

We are proud to announce that the Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission has been officially reestablished following the confirmation of its fifth commissioner. This marks a significant turning point in our ability to fully execute our regulatory duties and advance telecommunications initiatives across the Navajo Nation. With the successful appointment and confirmation of our fifth commissioner, we have reached the quorum necessary to reestablish the NNTRC as a fully functioning regulatory body. The reestablishment allows us to resume our critical role in overseeing all aspects of telecommunications within the Navajo Nation, including telephone, radio, television, and broadband services. The Commissioners so far are as follows:

- Chairperson B. Alex Montoya
- Vice Chairperson Nadine Clah
- Commissioner Orlando Bowman
- Commissioner Brent Nelson
- Commissioner Norbert Nez

With quorum, we have begun the process of updating our strategic plan to address current telecommunications challenges and opportunities in the Navajo Nation. We have also initiated renewed dialogue with key stakeholders, including service providers, community leaders, and other governmental entities in order to assess the current state of the Navajo Nation's regulatory environment and needs. The Commission has started reviewing pending regulatory issues and applications that were on hold during the period of limited operations, moving to approve its first FCC comment submission of 2024 regarding the 5G Fund for rural connectivity. We are scheduling public hearings to address critical telecommunications matters that require community input and Commission decisions, including a worksession with to understand the Commission's authorities in the new term.

This reestablishment represents a new chapter for telecommunications regulation in the Navajo Nation. We are fully equipped to address the evolving telecommunications needs of our people, ensure fair practices by service providers, and work towards closing the digital divide in our



communities. We look forward to serving the Navajo Nation with renewed vigor and a commitment to advancing telecommunications services that respect our sovereignty and culture while embracing technological progress—the key mission and purpose of the NNTRC’s establishment.

Note: A sixth commissioner appointment has been made by President Nygren and is awaiting final confirmation action by the Naabik’íyáti’ Committee.

### **Successful Submission of Comments to FCC on 5G Fund for Rural America**

The Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NNTRC) approved the successful submission of our comments to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regarding the 5G Fund for Rural America. This marks a significant step in our ongoing efforts to ensure that the unique needs and sovereignty of the Navajo Nation are considered in federal telecommunications policy.

The Commission emphasized the critical importance of requiring 5G Fund bidders to engage with Tribes early in the process, well before the long-form application stage. We also stressed the need for proper Tribal approval processes to respect and reinforce Tribal sovereignty in telecommunications deployment. The Commission urged the FCC to consider the "checkerboard" nature of Navajo lands and apply our approval requirements to the outer recognized boundary of our reservation. The NNTRC also highlighted the importance of obtaining approvals from the correct entities with the authority to bind the nation, specifically identifying the NNTRC as that entity for the Navajo Nation. The comment also drew attention to historical issues like "Twilight Towers" to illustrate the importance of proper Tribal engagement and approval.

This submission represents our commitment to actively participating in federal policy-making processes that affect telecommunications on Navajo lands. By providing our unique perspective, we aim to shape policies that will truly benefit our communities and respect our sovereignty.

The NNTRC remains dedicated to bridging the digital divide on the Navajo Nation and ensuring that our people have access to advanced telecommunications services. This FCC comment submission is a crucial step in the work the Commission is doing towards that ongoing mission.

### **Successful Delivery of Executive Director's Status Update Report at NNTRC's Inaugural Meeting**

The Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NNTRC) successfully convened its first official meeting since reaching quorum with five confirmed commissioners. As part of this milestone, the executive director delivered the inaugural report on the work of reestablishment and program operations.

The report emphasized the importance of this first meeting as a major accomplishment in reestablishing the NNTRC's full functionality. The acting executive director provided updates on budget status, facilities, and ongoing efforts to support staff and operations. Additionally, he reported on crucial external matters, including:

- The FCC's 5G Fund for Rural America NPRM;
- Developments in Verizon's acquisition of Frontier and its potential impact on Navajo Nation interests;
- Ongoing matters related to NTUAW and tribal lifeline benefits;
- SBI's waiver application and related legislative actions that mark uncertainty that needs to be addressed when it comes to authorities.

As a critical highlight, the report addressed the issue of the NNTRC's authority in developing telecommunications regulations, emphasizing the need for Commission deliberation on this matter. The report outlined the need for reviewing and potentially revising the NNTRC's plan of operation and the Navajo Telecommunications Regulatory Act through careful discussion and leadership input.

This report demonstrates our commitment to transparency, effective governance, and proactive engagement with telecommunications issues affecting the Navajo Nation. It sets the stage for the Commission to take decisive action in its regulatory role and reinforces our dedication to advancing telecommunications services for our people.

With its first meeting under its belt, the program is reestablishing its priorities and major projects for the coming quarter. The acting executive director intends to follow the Commission's lead in shaping the priorities of the program, which so far look to include 2.5GHz licensing opportunities, plan of operation revisions, reestablishing and expanding the Commission's authorities, and key programmatic initiatives and outreach opportunities.