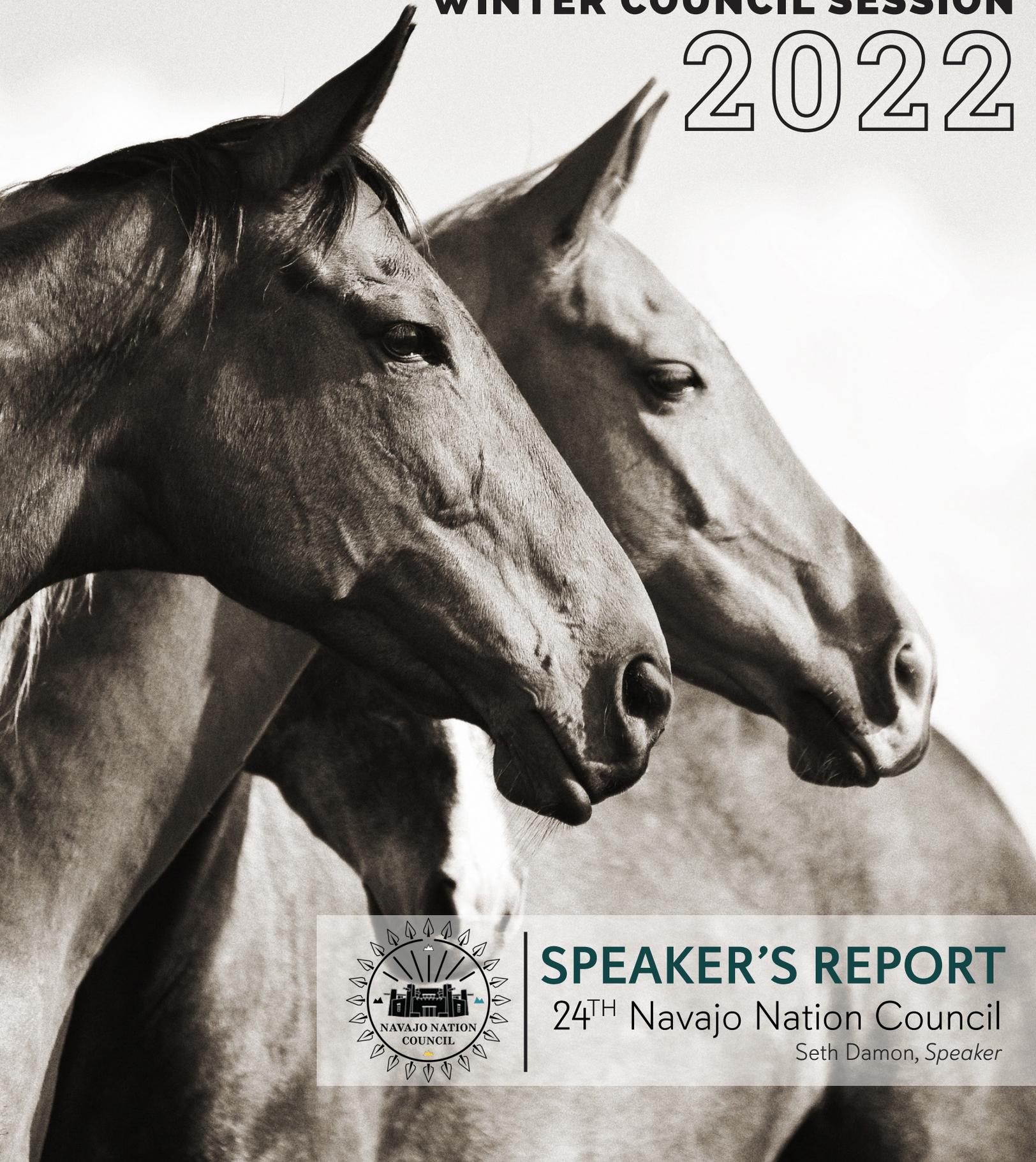


# YASNILT'EES

WINTER COUNCIL SESSION

2022

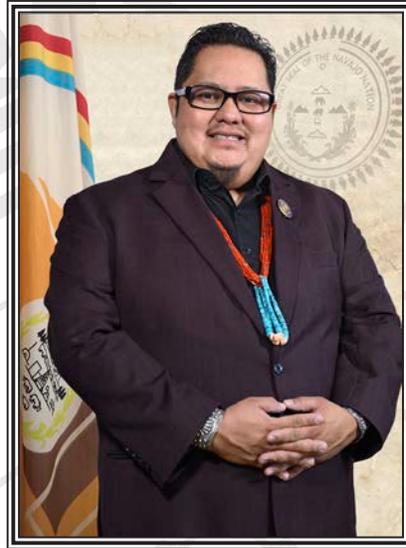


## SPEAKER'S REPORT

24<sup>TH</sup> Navajo Nation Council

Seth Damon, *Speaker*

# 24<sup>TH</sup> NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL



**Seth Damon, Speaker**



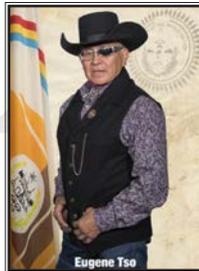
Eugenia Charles-Newton



Otto Tso



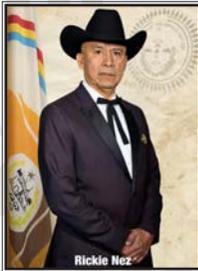
Vinco R. James



Eugene Tso



Edmund Yazzie



Rickie Nez



Thomas Walker, Jr.



Kee Allen Begay, Jr.



Herman M. Daniels



Mark Fretland



Wilson C. Stewart, Jr.



Jamie Henlo



Raymond Smith, Jr.



Elmer P. Begay



Nathaniel Brower



Amber Kanazbah Crotty



Tony Yellowhair



Daniel E. Tso



Carl R. Slater



Paul Begay



Ferrell Hatona



Charlene Tso



Edson J. Wauneka



WELCOME

# The Governing Body of the People

## OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Chief of Staff

**Donovan Hanley**  
Legislative Staff Assistant

**Melinda Arviso-Ciocco**  
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**Regina Shorty**  
Legislative AMS

**Jacquelyn Morgan**  
Senior Office Specialist

**Emerson Notah**  
Computer Operations Manager

**Eugene Jarvison**  
Network Manager

**Ernie Silversmith**  
Maintenance Technician

Yáát'ééh shikéi dóó shidinéé. The 24th Navajo Nation Council welcomes you, our family and relatives, to the 2022 Winter Session in beautiful Window Rock, Arizona. These sacred Council Chambers are where legislative decisions are made that impact the lives of our people and it is a heavy responsibility - we respect every day. On behalf of my colleagues, welcome to the largest Sovereign Nation in the United States.

We now extend our gratitude to Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne, our chapter leaders, state and federal officials, visiting dignitaries, and our Diné citizens for virtually joining us this week.

Every quarter we convene in the People's House to discuss and plan for the future of our great Nation. We invite everyone to acknowledge and wear the colors of each day to bring awareness to the issues impacting families around Diné Bikéyah.

The economic recovery of the Navajo Nation is shared between all our branches of government. We only thrive when the other does too, and that is important to remember as we move forward as one Navajo family. The last two years, we have heard from our communities, who need immediate help and we must deliver for the people. We expect the second hardship assistance checks to be delivered soon and I commend my colleagues for their steadfast leadership in making sure this was done effectively.

Since the Fall Session, we have done our duty to listen to the people and to effectively advocate for them at the local, state, and federal level. We are all feeling the economic impact this pandemic has caused and that experience connects us. From small business owners, wood haulers, sheep herders, and to our tribal enterprises - we will survive this time together.

As we honor our traditional way of life, let us remember the last two years and the blessings bestowed upon us by the Holy People. We will overcome the challenges and traumas ahead, and with the teachings of our elders, be guided by Hozhó.

On behalf of the 24th Navajo Nation Council, thank you for your resilience and outspoken leadership to hold us accountable for the work we do. K'é brings us together to do this hard work for the people we represent. May we all walk in beauty into this new year as one Navajo Nation.

Ahe'hee,

Seth Damon, *Speaker*  
24<sup>TH</sup> Navajo Nation Council

# LEGISLATIVE REPORTS





## \$557 Million approved for Second Hardship Assistance Checks for the Navajo People

During a Special Session last month, the Navajo Nation Council approved Emergency Resolution No. CD-62-21 that was sponsored by Councilwoman Amber Kanazbah Crotty allocating \$557 million of Navajo Nation Fiscal Recovery Funds (NNFRF) to send a second hardship assistance check for over 345,000 qualified Navajo people. I appointed Madam Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton to serve as Pro Tem Speaker during this virtual meeting.

The Office of the Controller will provide financial hardship assistance, directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, for eligible Navajo people over 18 years old not to exceed \$2,000 per applicant for up to 250,000 qualifying individuals. Emergency Resolution No. CD-62-21 also provides \$600 in hardship assistance to minors below 18 years old for up to 95,000 qualifying individuals. It is our hope the Navajo people utilize this financial assistance to purchase personal protective equipment, pay utility bills, for rental and mortgage payments, and any educational related expenses for students.



Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty advocates for Navajos with disabilities outside the Navajo Nation Council Chambers in Window Rock, AZ.

*“It has been over 8 months since President Joe Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act and our Navajo people should not suffer another day without knowing how their government will assist them as they suffer from grief, mental health and financial hardship. We have all been affected by the devastating impacts of COVID-19 and the people appreciate their Council Delegates standing up for them. A second allocation of hardship assistance payments of \$2,000 per adult and \$600 per child will allow our relatives to purchase essential winter supplies like gasoline, firewood, and food now.”*

- Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty

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## \$1.16 Billion allocated in American Rescue Plan Act funding

Earlier this year, the Navajo Nation received approximately \$2.1 billion in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from the Biden Administration to respond to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since October, the Naabik'iyáti' Committee of the 24th Navajo Nation Council has hosted several work sessions with the Executive Branch to discuss Legislation No. 0257-21 to allocate \$1.2 billion of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for construction of new water and electric lines, broadband internet connections, and road infrastructure projects for the Navajo people.

We then passed Resolution CYJ-41-21 establishing the Navajo Nation Fiscal Recovery Fund (NNFRF) Office as the official headquarters to oversee and approve all ARPA projects during the pandemic, with Mr. Tom Platero serving as interim executive director.

In October, the Legislative Branch met

*“We will work with our Executive Branch divisions and programs to invest over \$958 million in new water and electric lines, broadband infrastructure, and housing construction projects that will employ a Navajo workforce. The Navajo Nation Council will introduce several more legislations to address the ongoing needs of the Navajo people during this pandemic. It is important we carefully allocate ARPA money that will uplift our small businesses and immediately begin chapter projects.”*

- Speaker, Seth Damon

with President Jonathan Nez and Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne to finalize the funding amount addressed by Legislation No. 0257-21 for over 10,000 infrastructure and economic development projects.

Working alongside both branches, the bill will allocate the following:

- \$250 million for housing and bathroom addition construction
- \$208 million for internet broadband connections
- \$301 million for water lines and wastewater projects
- \$200 million for power line projects
- \$207 million for hardship assistance

The Navajo Nation Fiscal Recovery Fund Office with the Controller's Office created a website to share all ARPA updates and information with the Navajo people: [www.NavajoNationARPA.org](http://www.NavajoNationARPA.org)

## New Mexico Task Force for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women

Our Chairwomen of the Missing and Murdered Diné Relatives (MMDR) Task Force, Honorable Amber Kanazbah Crotty, joined New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, Indian Affairs Secretary Lynn Trujillo, and Bernalillo County District Attorney Raúl Torrez for the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to establish a Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Task Force sub-unit within the 2nd Judicial District Attorney's Office.

In 2019, House Bill 278 was passed by the New Mexico Legislature and signed by Governor Lujan Grisham creating the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force (MMIW) for New Mexico. This new sub-unit will operate within the Crime Strategies Unit and assist the statewide task force to address jurisdictional gaps, MMIWR data-sharing and analysis, and case investigations. It is concerning to us that there are 660 missing person cases for Indigenous people in the Albuquerque area. Of these case numbers, 287 were women and 373 were men.

The MOU ensures the MMIWR Unit will work to improve the collection, consolidation, and exploration of MMIWR data, and

develop a criminal network analysis software platform to interpret, save, and share information. This is a major project for our colleague Honorable Amber Kanazbah Crotty, and we support her as she continues to hold state and federal agencies accountable for the work they do on tribal land.

*“Our Indigenous women are plagued by high rates of violence and in response, there continues to be a lack of government support to meet the growing needs of our families. To restore harmony and begin the healing process, criminal cases must fully be prosecuted, and our Indigenous relatives must be found. The lives of our missing Navajo relatives are sacred, and their stories must be told.”*

Every family in some way has been affected by domestic violence, systemic racism, and some form of injustice. The Navajo Nation Council created the Missing and Murdered Diné Relatives task force to increase resources for reporting and identifying cases, to work with Navajo law enforcement to identify any barriers and improve the reporting and investigation of MMDR cases. The violence must end, and the stories of our survivors must be told. It is my belief that ac-

countability at all levels is important for families to heal.

## Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW)

Several rural Navajo communities are experiencing an increase in crimes that include murder, homicide, bootlegging, and driving under intoxication accidents. Madam Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton has been working closely with the Law and Order Committee and the Navajo Police Department to address these growing issues.

In September, we welcomed the Diné Sáanii for Justice organization that brought hundreds of marchers to the Council Chambers to speak on the injustice's women on the Navajo Nation face. Support for the re-allocation of funding for the Chief Prosecutors Office was loud, bringing to light the lack of funding for marginalized communities that include our women, elders, children, and the LGBTQ+ community. The march truly uplifted the voices of our Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. The Council is working alongside several non-profit organizations to bring forward comprehensive legislation that will better protect their rights within the Navajo Nation.

Council Delegates Eugene Tso, Paul Begay, Edison Wauneka, and Herman Daniels joined by OLC Staff Chad Abeyta during the ARPA work session held at Twin Arrows Casino Resort.



# Navajo Department of Health Command Operations Center

This year was a trying time for our people and since the Omicron Variant before Christmas, we have seen a spike in COVID-19 cases impacting many of our loved ones across the Navajo Nation. This is unfortunate as many of us have been safe according to CDC standards and followed Navajo health orders. This pandemic is not going away anytime soon, and we must come back together to be fully prepared.

As we operate in the Orange Status, this is reminder that around 72 percent of the Navajo population received their first vaccinations and 61 percent are fully vaccinated. The Navajo Nation is proud of our record for high vaccination rates and self-testing kits have helped tribal offices continue their operations because all our employees are vaccinated or have tested negative recently.

Moving forward, continue to adhere to CDC guidelines for social distancing and sanitizing commonly used areas. Please continue to remain cautious of your surroundings and interactions other in the workplace. The Navajo Nation Council continues to adhere to all Public Health Orders that can found at: <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>

The federal government has launched a website for free at-home COVID testing kits, so please register for yours now: <https://www.covidtests.gov/>

## Removal of the derogatory name of Christopher “Kit” Carson across New Mexico

In November, our colleague Honorable Mark Freeland sponsored Resolution No. NABIN-44-21 that unanimously passed the Naabik’iyáti’ Committee requesting the State of New Mexico to remove the name of Christopher ‘Kit’ Carson from all monuments, state parks, government buildings, highways and streets within the state. This was an historic action for the Navajo people who have only known this derogatory name that should have no place in our history.

The Navajo people have inhabited this land since time immemorial, and in the year 1863, Kit Carson led a formal “Scorch the Earth” campaign against the Navajo people. The United States Army terrorized us by burning our crops, homes, and slaughtering hundreds of livestock that lead to the immediate starvation of our families during that time. Kit Carson and his troops forcibly removed over 8,000 of our family members on a long walk of 300 miles from our ancestral lands. Our Navajo people were imprisoned in a concentration camp known as ‘Hweeldi’ in Bosque Redondo, New Mexico.

During this encampment, our people endured slavery, starvation, prostitution, and disease. This and other detailed accounts lead to our request from the Navajo Nation for the immediate removal of the disgraced Christopher ‘Kit’ Carson name within the Land of Enchantment.

Navajo Nation leadership will advocate for the name change during the upcoming New Mexico Legislative Session this month.

We thank Council Delegate Mark Freeland for his steadfast leadership as we hold history accountable and bring some healing back to the Navajo people. The injustices that our people endured at that time impacts us today. We must overcome it together and this name change for all public places is the first step in the right direction.

## Carbon Credit Development and Marketing Agreement

The Navajo Nation continues to protect our land, air, and water. This has led us to participate in the California Cap-and-Trade Program for the U.S. Forests, which was authorized by the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. This new initiative will allow us to utilize our commercial forest natural resources to create a carbon sequestration project where the Navajo Nation will be able to register and sell carbon offset credits to reduce or sequester greenhouse gasses. Sponsored by Resources and Development Committee Chairman Rickie Nez and co-sponsored by our colleague, Honorable Wilson Stewart Jr., the Naabik’iyáti’ Committee passed this legislation that will be fully presented for final consideration by the entire Council.

There have been numerous teleconference meetings regarding this initiative in partnership with the Department of Agriculture and the Office of the Speaker to establish a “Carbon Credits Team” to move this process along. Currently the team is scheduled to have public hearings with the surrounding Navajo chapters within the project area that may be affected.

The Navajo Forestry Department and

Division of Natural Resources have now procured a carbon sequestration credits sales manager and agent through the procurement process required by Navajo Nation law. We have negotiated an acceptable Carbon Development and Marketing Agreement with Bluesource, L.L.C to bring this environmental project into reality soon.

The following communities will be included in the public comment period this month, which are Cove, Lukachukai, Tsaile, Mexican Springs, Tohatchi, Twin Lakes, Ft. Defiance, St. Michaels, Oak Springs, Lupton, and Kinlichee.

## Critical Minerals Designation

We continue to pave the way across Indian Country for responsible energy and resource development on the largest Sovereign Nation in the United States. Our Navajo Nation Energy Policy directly guides us so that companies and outside entities respect our environment – the air, water, and land – as we seek additional ways to generate revenue for our Navajo communities.

In collaboration with the Resources and Development Committee, the Office of the Speaker has provided written statements to the White House Science and Technology Critical Minerals Subcommittee for the inclusion of our Navajo energy position.

The hard work of our colleagues is important as we plan to meet the future energy needs of Indian Country. We look forward to the future dialogue with our federal partners as we responsibly make decisions on the next major energy project that will impact the future of our great Nation.

## ADA Compliance for all Navajo Nation Government Buildings

Our elders and relatives with disabilities are a priority for the Navajo Nation Council and since the beginning of our term, Council Delegate Eugene Tso has been an outspoken advocate. Through his leadership, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) was strengthened through tribal law and policies that now require Navajo Nation government buildings, offices, and programs to be ADA accessible. Since 2015, the Facilities Management Program has requested over \$11 million in funding for 168 projects for restroom renovations, sidewalk replacements, hardware upgrades, ramps, and stair replacements.

The program has reported that it has completed 50 of the 168 projects which include the installment of handicap ramps, double doors, ADA signage, and safe parking for our people. Our colleague, Council Delegate Eugene Tso, continues to work with the Native American Disability Law Center and internal Navajo departments to complete these proposed projects in a timely manner. We commend his advocacy for shining a light on the issues most affecting our elders and disabled family members. Their safety and equal access to the Navajo government is a top priority.

## Navajo Transitional Energy Company CEO departs

Longtime Chief Executive Officer of the Navajo Transitional Energy Company (NTEC) has announced his official retirement and departure from the company. Mr. Clark Moseley has served the Navajo people since 2014 and we honor his hard work to ensure our Sovereign Nation was at the forefront of energy development for Indian Country.

Under his leadership, Mr. Moseley and the NTEC team provided over 12,000 tons of coal to over 10,000 recipients to keep Navajo families warm last year and have already provided 5,000+ tons the last few months. 32 Navajo students have been awarded college scholarships and over \$40 million in revenue has been returned to the Navajo Nation. This year, round 2,200 acres of reclaimed land will be returned to the Navajo people, the first in United States history.

The Navajo Transitional Energy Company has been at the forefront leading the way for the Navajo Nation and we appreciate the innovative leadership of Mr. Clark Moseley. We send protection prayers and our best wishes to a good leader that is retiring in the next few weeks.



Council Delegate Eugene Tso handing Cracker Jacks out to children during the 54th Annual San Carlos Apache Veterans Parade.

# Agricultural Infrastructure Funds

Since October, members of the Resources and Development Committee along with the Budget and Finance Committee have received updates on the status of the Agriculture Infrastructure (AI) funds for the Navajo Nation. The program continues to benefit ranchers and farmers with incentives to encourage proper livestock management to revitalize Diné agriculture practices and to promote the proper management of grazing and farming on Navajo land.

AI funds also allows for our resource managers to reduce sedimentation and improve rangeland conservation and the sustainability of natural resources. The Farms and Garden Program offers farmers and gardeners to produce Navajo crops. This in turn helps to increase food production while AI funds are used to improve and maintain planting areas.

Another beneficial program housed with the Navajo Department of Agriculture is the Livestock Management Incentive initiative. This project was designed to support and promote quality production of livestock in the competitive marketplace. This is a financial incentive, so producers are following Navajo grazing regulations. It is important we provide equal access to these opportunities to our Navajo relatives who care deeply about ranch life, farm work, and the cultivation of crops.

Last March, the Council approved Resolution No. RDCMA-07-21 to ensure all Navajo livestock owners receive support to purchase hay, grain, and feed during the pandemic. We commend Honorable Wilson Stewart Jr. for sponsoring this resolution and his leadership advocating for all our families who are ranchers, livestock owners, and those participate in rodeo. Delegate Stewart has been diligently working with our Executive Branch divisions to ensure the funding process is streamlined and available.

*“This funding must get to chapters quickly. We need to help our families during these cold winter months. Our ranchers and livestock owners are frustrated and have been waiting for this emergency assistance from their Council Delegates. This resolution provides all chapters with \$4 million dollars to provide grain, feed, and hay to our livestock owners impacted daily because of this pandemic. They need help now during this harsh winter.”*

- Wilson C. Stewart, Jr.

Council Delegates Mark Freeland, Edison Wauneka, Jamie Henio, and Wilson Stewart, Jr. gather outside Legislative Branch offices before visiting their Chapters for the Holiday Season.



## Electricity for Ramah Navajo Schools

Established in 1970, the Ramah Navajo School Board Inc. has operated as a private non-profit organization to provide an equitable public education to more than 900 Navajo families. Today, Pine Hill School has more than 750 students graduating from high school and is fully accredited by the State of New Mexico.

*"It has been years since our Ramah Navajo families have seen significant improvements to our school buildings and facilities. Our children have every right to have access to a high-quality learning experience, even in the most rural areas of the Navajo Nation. We will continue to work together to meet the needs of our parents, elders, and educational institutions during this pandemic."*

- BFC Chair, Jamie Henio

Ramah Navajo is proudly represented by our colleague, Budget and Finance Committee Chairman Jamie Henio, whose chapter government, school district, and community are nationally recognized as a model for 'Indian Self-Determination.'

Since last year, Chairman Henio has advocated for the replacement of the high voltage electrical system for Pinehill Schools. Once completed, it will upgrade the operation of all electrical systems to ensure schools have electricity while students and teachers have adequate access to the internet and computers.

## Sovereignty and Resources Management Plan Amendments within the Eastern Agency

Our colleagues of the Eastern Agency have been working in partnership with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Land Management to oversee the process of the Resources Management Plan Proposed Amendments (RMPA). If approved, the RMPA will be utilized as a managing tool for the planning process of both federal agencies for natural and cultural resources that may be impacted.

Federal guidelines in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) provide an outline for how decisions are made before federal action within the aboriginal territory of tribal nations. The Navajo Nation Council continues to protect our sovereignty and wants to ensure all federal agencies consult with the 570+ Sovereign Nations across the United States.

We are working with local community members and allottees to ensure that the Department of Interior (DOI) is hearing directly from the Navajo people most affected by the proposed RMPA and its proposed amendments. The proposed Environmental Impact Statement for the planning area has been delayed but it will continue this year.

The DOI agreed to fund a Cultural Resources Ethnographic Study of the Chaco Canyon National Historical Park and its significance to the Navajo people and our living landscape. The Office of the Speaker in collaboration with the Executive Branch will continue to work diligently with Congressional representatives and federal officials to ensure they respect Resolution No. NABI-JA-05-20 setting a five-mile buffer zone surrounding the Chaco Cultural National Historical Park.

## Navajo Police Department - Cross Deputy Program

At the beginning of this month, we offered our congratulations to newly appointed Navajo Nation Chief of Police Daryl Noon, who served previously as the Deputy Chief of Police since 2019. Before taking on this responsibly after former Chief Phillip Francisco departed, he worked for the Farmington Police Department for more than 23 years.

The lack of manpower within the Division of Public Safety is a concern for the Navajo Nation Council and the seven Navajo Police Districts that spread across the 27,000 square-miles that make up the 110 communities our police officers, detention officers, and criminal investigators oversee.

Chief Noon and his department are addressing the Cross Commission Deputy Program by working with the Navajo Department of Justice on a Cross Commission Agreement with other public safety agencies off Navajo land. This is a standardized agreement that outlines the roles of how law enforcement officers respond to a crisis on or off tribal land. Although outside agencies have jurisdiction and legality challenges, this working relationship ensures everyone is protected.

The Navajo Nation Police Department has established a 16-hour training curriculum that provides knowledge on the Navajo Nation Court System, sex offender registry, the Navajo Nation Bill of Rights, criminal jurisdiction law, and on the Navajo Codes.

Today, we have 65 certified-cross commissioned police officers serving in the following areas - Navajo County, Apache County, San Juan County, McKinley County, Coconino County, Socorro County, Utah

State County Patrol, Page Police, New Mexico Police, and the Gallup Police. We commend the Law and Order Committee, under the leadership of Madame Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton, for their hard work to hold every perpetrator accountable and for working with our Navajo law enforcement to keep our families safe.

## Protecting Navajo Tourism

As the Navajo Nation becomes more of a year-around destination, we must offer all our guests an experience that highlights our culture and the diverse landscape we all love. We have a long and storied history to share with the world and tourism will allow us to share more. The Navajo Nation Council has been working to reach new markets to bring international tourism back home. Our convenience stores, restaurants, food stands, and artisans along the tourist roadway must remain open as we overcome this pandemic together.

Tourism is a major revenue source for the Navajo Nation and as it may be limited right now for many of our local business owners, it has potential to thrive into the future. As our Navajo tribal parks opened last year, we have seen some economic growth, but we must realize that the lives for many of our business owners has changed. They have either departed to urban areas, shut down completely, or are trying to survive right here in our communities. Either way, it is important the Navajo Nation Council support our Indigenous small businesses.

## The Navajo Nation is Open for Business

The economic recovery of the Navajo Nation is shared between all our branches of government. As the world marketplace moved online, the struggle for many of our local Navajo businesses to regain the momentum they were making has slowed or halted.

Our surroundings and environment have taught us that we must survive and that it connects us to one another. We join our Executive Branch divisions and programs in making strides to economically uplift the lives of our relatives. Buying Navajo products and services from our local owners, artisans, and businesspeople should be a main goal this year. The Navajo Department of Health continues to recommend businesses to operate at 50% occupancy, in the orange status. We are open for business - so please visit our tribal parks to see what the Navajo Nation has to offer.



AZ Senator Mark Kelly visited the Navajo Nation to listen to members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council on issues affecting the Navajo people.

## Support for the 2021 Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Amendments

Since 1944, the United States government has used Navajo land for the mining of uranium ore to support the Manhattan Project within the U.S. military. This uranium was utilized to develop the nuclear weapons against the Japanese Empire where our Navajo Code Talkers fought bravely to end. Following World War II, uranium mining on the Navajo Nation increased because of the Cold War and the United States Atomic Energy Commission was our main purchaser.

Over the last 42 years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that 30 million tons of uranium ore was extracted during mining operations that brought health defects and death to many of our Navajo communities. Around 520+ uranium mines are left abandoned today and this must change.

In November, our colleague Honorable Kee Allen Begay Jr. sponsored Resolution No. NABIN-45-21 that unanimously passed through the Naabik'iyáti' Committee officially supporting the passage of the "Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments". The Council applauds his leadership as we come together to bring healing to our Navajo families most affected by radiation sickness and the lives we lost.

Our Diné RECA committee now consists of Councilwoman Amber Kanazbah Crotty, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, representatives from the Navajo Washington Office, Navajo Department of Justice, Navajo Department of Health, Navajo Environmental Protection Agency, and Attorney Greg Smith with Lisa Meissner of Hobbs Strauss, LLP. We also are working closely with New Mexico Representative Teresa Leger Fernandez and United States Senator Ben Ray Lujan to ensure every family is heard and cared for.

# Honoring our Navajo Warriors and Local Veteran Organizations

Back in November during Veterans Day, three members of the Navajo Nation Women Veteran's Group traveled to Washington D.C. as our official delegation of our warriors to participate in the national recognition of our Women in Military Service for America (WIMSA). U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Ruth Kawano received a Service Tribute during the national ceremony, while U.S. Marine Helene Anthony and U.S. Navy veteran Linda Onesalt were part of honoring ceremonies commemorating the legacy of Navajo veterans throughout United States military history.

*“Through all foreign conflicts, hundreds of our Navajo men and women have enlisted without hesitation to serve our country and to defend our way of life. Many of our warriors joined the Marines, Army, Navy, Air Force, and other branches of the Armed Forces to serve honorably to protect our freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and the freedom to protect our Navajo homeland. We owe a great debt to the families of our veterans and must ensure our warriors are taken care of every day,”*

*- Speaker, Seth Damon*

President Jonathan Nez recently administered the oath of office to several new members of the Navajo Nation Veterans Advisory Council (NNVAC) at the beginning of the month. The six new members include Tim Johnson, Linda Onesalt, Elouise Brown, Gabriella Mehl, Gilbert Platero, and Olin Kieyoomia who previously served on the advisory council. The Navajo Nation Council sends its congratulations to the election of Chairman Tim Johnson from the Central Agency, Vice-Chair Elouise Brown of the Northern Agency, and Secretary Elciena Baker.

The Navajo Nation Veterans Administration has begun construction on traditional two-bedroom Hogan's for our veterans and while the project has experienced a slight delay due to limited resources from this pandemic, it is a top priority for the Navajo Nation Council.

## Appointment of Dr. Harold G. Begay as Superintendent of Diné Education

Earlier this month, we unanimously approved the appointment of Dr. Harold G. Begay as Superintendent of Schools for the Department of Diné Education. We commend the foresight and leadership of Health, Education, and Human Services Committee (HEHSC) Chairman Daniel Tso for sponsoring the bill, along with co-sponsors Council Delegate Otto Tso and Delegate Edison Wauneka. In November, the Navajo Nation Board of Education (NNBOE) passed a resolution recommending his confirmation as Superintendent of Schools. He will now lead the Department of Diné Education and work with the board on its overall direction as its Chief Administrative Officer.

Dr. Begay has served as the community manager for the Tuba City Chapter and is a visiting scholar for the University of California - Berkeley. In 1994, Greyhills Academy High School named him an 'Administrator of the Year' and he has since served as the Tuba City Unified School District Superintendent from 2011 to 2019.

We welcome Superintendent Harold G. Begay, who brings over 40 years of experience as an educator, principal, school administrator, and district superintendent advocating for Indigenous students. With this in Doctorate in Philosophy from the University of Arizona, it is our belief that this former Tuba City school bus driver and United States Marine will lead Diné education forward.

*“The Navajo Board of Education as the leaders of our local schools made a critical decision to recommend the appointment of Dr. Harold Begay. The Navajo Nation believes he will be an effective advocate for our teachers, students, parents, and school districts across the largest Sovereign Nation in the United States. Dr. Begay is a proven education leader who is now working with Stanford University to prepare Native students for college by linking them with Indigenous students from Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Japan. He brings decades of classroom experience and has published scholarly articles to preserve Native American languages and to uplift Indigenous cultures. We have full confidence Superintendent Harold Begay will make sure our Navajo students are prepared for college, trade schools, and more.”*

*- Speaker, Seth Damon*

*“Our collective history as Navajo people has been a basis for the retention of our language and forms the basis of maintaining and protecting our sovereignty in the world. The outdated education policies of the United States government have shown us that our culture, language, and history is important to the future of our Indigenous people. Sovereignty in the classroom is the first step to protecting our future as Navajo people. Diné Superintendent Harold Begay believes in our students and through his decades of experience, will hold the education departments of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah accountable. His leadership as our Superintendent will transform classrooms and get hard work done now.”*

*- HEHSC Chair, Daniel Tso*

## Dook'óoshííd – Protection & Designation

The first week of this month, we met with the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission and the Navajo Historic Preservation Department (NHPD) to discuss the possible designation of our sacred mountain Dook'óoshííd – the San Francisco Peaks – as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP).

As preliminary talks are ongoing, this group is working with our colleague, Honorable Thomas Walker Jr., to create an Intertribal Coalition of 14 Tribal Nations that consider Dook'óoshííd a sacred site. Further discussions have led to the possibility of including all four mountains held sacred by our Navajo people to the TCP listing. Tribal consultation with Navajo chapters and other Sovereign Nations will move forward as we make sure our scared sites are recognized and protected.

Dook'óoshííd continues to be vandalized as the Arizona Snowbowl expands. The use of reclaimed water to create snow for recreational purposes on our sacred site is

unacceptable. The recent expiration of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the U.S. Forest Service has afforded the Navajo Nation to state its position that our scared sites will not be desecrated.

## Navajo Nation applauds Appointment of Arizona State Senator Theresa Hatathlie

At the beginning of January, we heard the good news and applauded the appointment of Ms. Theresa Hatathlie as Arizona State Senator for Legislative District 7 by the Coconino County Board of Supervisors. She was joined by several of our colleagues and her oldest brother Freddie Hatathlie, a retired Master Sergeant in the United States Army, for a formal swearing-in ceremony by Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert Brutinel.

Originally from Coalmine Mesa Chapter, she serves as the Logistics Coordinator for the Navajo and Hopi Families COVID-19 Relief Fund that has raised \$10 million over two years for Indigenous families across the four corners area. We are forever grateful for

the leadership of former Senator Jamescita Peshlakai who is now working with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in Washington, D.C.

## The Shiprock Hotel

The construction of a hotel and restaurant in the Shiprock area has been an aspiration for many leaders in the region. As a gateway to the Northern part of the Navajo Nation, support for hotel construction and the infrastructure development of the area could happen soon. The economic potential of the region has grown over the years, with the iconic volcanic rock formation of Shiprock, New Mexico, driving the local tourism industry.

Earlier this month, Madam Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton introduced Legislation No. 258-21 that allocates \$11.4 million from the Sihasin Fund to the Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprise for the Shiprock Hotel-Restaurant Project. This will now go before the Navajo Nation Council for full consideration.



Council Delegates Edison Wauneka, Paul Begay, and Mark Freeland stand with Tribal Liaison Luther Lee and Lobbyist Carlyle Begay.

Council Delegates Kee Allen Begay, Jr. and Carl Slater outside the Arizona State Capitol.



## 27th Annual Arizona Indian Nations & Tribes Legislative Day

Two weeks ago, our colleagues of the Naabik'iyati' State Task Force were joined by President Jonathan Nez for the 27th Annual Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day hosted by the Arizona State Legislature in Phoenix. The committee led multiple meetings through the week with Arizona leaders to discuss education priorities, public safety facilities, tribal water rights issues, and infrastructure projects for the Navajo people.

In November, President Joe Biden signed a \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill that will provide around \$8 billion to Arizona to upgrade outdated roads, bridges, transit systems, invest in broadband initiatives, and more. With a projected state surplus for additional funding, we advocated for various infrastructure opportunities available for the largest tribe in Arizona.



Council Delegate Charlain Tso speaking with Arizona's Speaker of the House, Rusty Bowers.

*"The Navajo Nation continues to meet with Arizona state leaders to share the priorities of the Navajo people, especially during this pandemic. It is important we maintain the government-to-government relationship when making decisions that will impact the future of Arizona's 22 Tribal Nations. State and tribal capital projects must be streamlined so we can plan, develop, and construct new roads, bridges, school buildings, and water infrastructure projects across northern Arizona. We commend the leadership of former State Representative Arlando Teller, former Senator Albert Hale, former Senator Jack Jackson, Sr., and many others before them who were powerful voices in the Arizona Legislature."*  
- HEHSC Vice Chair, Carl Slater



SUMMARIES

# PROGRAM SUMMARIES

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Program/Chapter Audits/Investigations

- NONE

### Follow-up on Corrective Action Plan (CAP) Implementation – 5 Reports

1. 3rd Review – Navajo Department of Workforce Development
2. Comparison of Chapter Fund Balances on March 31, 2020 and March 31, 2021

### Other – 1 Report

1. Available Chapter Fund Balances as of September 30, 2021

Helen Brown, CFE, Delegated Auditor General  
(928) 871-6303

[helenbrown@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:helenbrown@navajo-nsn.gov)

### Issues/Recommendations

- Continue to recruit applicants to fill five (5) vacant positions.
- Outsource audits due to vacancies to meet performance goals – depends on consulting budget.
- Submission of MIP backups by some Navajo Nation Chapters are taking too long and some chapters are utilizing different software vendors that is impacting our ability to restore their financial data for reporting purposes.
- Resume efforts to amend plan of operation and incorporate plan to address FY2021 Legislative Concerns.
- Continue to assist the Administrative Service Centers on Chapter matters.
- Continue to work with the Wells Fargo Bank to address the Chapter bank account fees and to reestablish access for the OAG.

### Goals for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter in FY 2022

1. Navajo Rehabilitation Trust Fund Special Review
2. Klagetoh Chapter Internal Audit
3. Tse Daa Kaan (Hogback) Chapter Internal Audit
4. Chapter Debit/Credit Card Special Review
5. CARES Act Special Duty/Hazard Pay Special Review
6. Performance Audits of Navajo Nation Veterans Administration and Office of the Controller
7. CAP follow-up reviews: Mariano Lake Chapter
8. Available Fund Balances for 110 Chapters as of Dec. 31, 2021
9. Outsource more chapter audits and performance audits of Navajo Nation departments/programs; will need to issue various request for proposals to utilize consulting budget.



The Navajo Nation Council Chambers shortly after the Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony and Luminaria Display.

# NAVAJO ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Rosita A. Kelly, *Executive Director*  
 (928) 871-7263  
 rositakelly@navajo-nsn.gov

## Accomplishments

All Navajo Election Administration (NEA) offices abiding by the current reintegration plan. (75% working in the workplace)

The Navajo Board of Election Supervisors (NBOES) conducted six (6) meetings via telecommunication due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and Navajo Nation Health Orders.

Seven (7) resolutions were approved by the NBOES during their regular meetings.

The Navajo Election Administration (NEA) planned and oversaw three (3) special elections for local governments that had vacancies.

There were seven (7) vacant positions within NEA.

- Legislative Reporter hired Dec. 2021
- Several interviews were conducted for Assist. Dept. Manager, Programs and Projects Specialist, and Office Assistants. Selected individuals will be coming on board Jan. 2022
- JVs for 2 positions will forward to DPM for advertisement in Jan. 2022

In-house promotion for the Voter Registration Specialist position in Chinle Agency has been completed.

Recall initiatives and inquiries at the agency offices are being sought.

<b>Chinle Agency</b>	<b>15,989</b>
<b>Eastern Agency</b>	<b>28,930</b>
<b>Ft. Defiance Agency</b>	<b>28,730</b>
<b>Northern Agency</b>	<b>23,623</b>
<b>Western Agency</b>	<b>21,128</b>
<b>TOTAL VOTERS</b>	<b>118,400</b>

As of January 1, 2022

## Goals for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter in FY 2022

Continue to plan for a possible special election for school board and the '22 Navajo Nation Council and Presidential Primary Elections.

Continue working with DPM to fill vacant positions at the central and agency offices.

Continue working with DPM to reclassify positions: Office Assistants to Office Specialists and possibly changing the Voter Machine Technician to an Information Systems Technician.

The NEA needs to establish a Fund Management Plan for the revenue generated from open filing to have funds revert back to operations for the NEA within the annual budget.

Continue to maintain voter registration database. Also conduct voter registration drives.

Continue to provide information to the public via chapters, radio, social media, and agency meetings through agency reps.

Continue to update NEA Rules and Regulations, Code Amendments and codification in the Election Code.

## Issues/Recommendations

Continue with office equipment upgrades (computers and new database) via supplemental funding from the Navajo Nation.

Winter is fast approaching and staff at agency offices are expressing concerns over dilapidated building that they work out of. We have started inquiries about getting assistance from Capital Project Management Department in this endeavor.

# HUMAN RIGHTS

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Commission and staff committed an enormous amount of time to the Redistricting activities for the States of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah for this reporting period. This worked involved collaboration, coordination and communication with various stakeholders of each state, that include Indigenous nations, county governments, state and local elected officials, partisan organizations, Navajo citizens and Navajo governmental and chapter officials who provided invaluable information toward the design and development of redistricting maps that meet the principles in the Voters Rights Act. In the state of New Mexico final Congressional, House, Senate and Public Education Commission plans were signed by the Governor of New Mexico.

House Bill 8 preserve majority-minority Native American Districts in House districts 4, 5, 9, 6, 69 & 65. This bill was signed into law by Governor Lujan-Grisham on December 29, 2021.

Senate Bill 1 for Congressional three (3) districts was signed by New Mexico Governor Lujan-Grisham on Dec. 7, 2021.

Senate Bill 2 also preserved majority-minority Native Americans in Senate District 3, 4, & 22. Senate District 30 is a Native American Influence District. Senate Bill 2 was signed by Governor Lujan-Grisham.

House Bill 9, identified as the Public Education Commission Redistricting Plan was signed on December 17, 2021. This plan creates a north-west district largely composed of the Navajo Nation and border communities where substantial Native American student populations are present.

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### 1

The protection of the San Francisco Peaks and other sacred sites continues to be at the forefront of this office's mission. Several meetings were conducted Navajo Nation leadership within the Executive branch to further the development of an indigenous coalition to monitor, advise and spearhead decisions that concern sacred sites in Arizona. The Navajo Nation Office of Historical Preservation is taking the lead to develop a white paper. The white paper will outline the issues concerning sacred sites, discuss mechanisms to engage tribal governments, the formation of the indigenous coalition, recommend protocols for engaging the U.S. Forestry Services and other government agencies that are significant to issues concerning sacred sites among other topics. The commission will continue to advance this matter in the next quarter.

# COMMISSION

(928) 871-7436

leonardgorman@navajo-nsn.gov  
Leonard Gorman, *Executive Director*

## 2

The Commission conducted its monthly meetings as specified in its Plan of Operation. A total of six resolutions were passed by the Commission which are as follows:

### **NNHRCNOV-14-21**

Supporting and Recommending an Arizona legislative redistricting plan that includes a Native American Majority Minority Voting Age Population of no less than Fifty-Seven Percent and an Arizona Congressional Redistricting Plan that includes a Strong Tribal Presence.

### **NNHRCNOV-15-21**

Supporting and Recommending New Mexico Redistricting Plans for the House, Senate and Public Education Commission

### **NNHRCNOV-16-21**

Recommending the Review of Utah Redistricting Plans for the San Juan County and Advocating for Changes Where Deemed Necessary to Protect Navajo Voters.

### **NNHRCDEC-17-21**

Recommending the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission to Amend the Draft Legislative Districts Plan to Provide for a Robust Native American Majority Minority District and Continues to Support a Congressional Plan that Provides a Significant Native American Population.

### **NNHRCDEC-18-21**

Recommending the San Juan County New Mexico Redistricting Plan for the County Commission that Preserves Two Majority-Minority Districts for Navajos Residing in San Juan County, New Mexico.

### **NNHRCDEC-19-21**

Appointing Commissioner Henrietta Sandoval-Soland to serve as a Member of the City of Winslow Police Department's Community Liaison Committee.

## 3

The Commission is honored to have two vacant Commission seats filled in this reporting quarter. The Naabikiiyati Committee confirmed Henrietta Sandoval-Soland to serve as the Law Enforcement designee.

Mr. Steven Begay was confirmed to serve as the Member at Large position. With the appointment of the two Commissioners, the Navajo Human Rights Commission has a five-member Commission seated.

## 4

The Office continues to receive complaints and opens investigations on complaints that satisfy the standard of racial discrimination, unfair treatment or deliberate indifference toward Navajo citizens. Three new complaints were received this reporting period. Six complaints were closed. The Office has fifty-two open cases under investigation for this quarter.

## 5

Media and Public relations interactions continue this reporting period primarily through zoom and the Commission's Facebook page. Press releases were generated concerning redistricting work and the Commission's monthly meeting announcements. The Public Information Officer was able to conduct a presentation to the Diné Bi Olta School Board on this office's activities this reporting period.

## 6

On November 18, 2021 the Commission participated in the annual U.S. Department of Justice Indian Working Group meeting. Issues discussed included Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons with an examination on the "Missing White Woman Syndrome," Nursing Home Facilities and the healthcare services provided at long term cared offered at off Navajo Nation facilities, Protection of Voting Rights and the Civil Rights investigation referral to southeast Utah.

# NAVAJO UTAH COMMISSION

Clarence Rockwell,  
*Executive Director*  
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crockwell@navajo-nsn.gov

## Goals for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter in FY 2022

Advocate accordingly with the Navajo Nation Utah Lobbyist.

Support and assist the Utah Navajo Health System in seeking legislative appropriations during the 2022 Utah Legislature for the Gentle Iron Hawk Domestic Violence Shelter.

Seek grant extensions for several Utah Navajo Revitalization Fund (NRF) grants appropriated for capital projects at several Utah chapters currently encountering delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Seek Navajo Nation Council approval for allocation of Fiscal Recovery Funds requested for two projects submitted by the Navajo Utah Commission.

## Accomplishments

The Navajo Utah Commission secured \$260,000 in FY2022 Non-chapter appropriations from the Utah Navajo Revitalization Fund Board for the Aneth Chapter New Building Project.

The Navajo Utah Commission requested funding for two projects serving Utah chapters, including housing projects and capital project management administration.

The Navajo Utah Commission and Utah Navajo Trust Fund initiated preliminary planning (A&E) for the Montezuma Creek Post Office Project in collaboration with the Utah Division of Facilities Construction Management during the first quarter.

The Navajo Utah Commission, Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, and others worked with the San Juan County Commission in maintaining redistricting election boundaries advantageous and in the best interest for the Utah chapters and the Navajo Nation.

## Issues/Recommendations

The Navajo Utah Commission and several Utah Navajo chapters work collaboratively over the past few years to accumulate significant construction funds for capital projects including, chapter renovations, new chapter building projects, administration building, community center, and warehouse facility. The Navajo Utah Commission was also able to secure matching funds for these efforts from the State of Utah, including Utah Navajo Revitalization Funds and Utah Navajo Trust Fund. The Utah NRF grants have timelines attached to the allocations with certain expiration dates. The health pandemic has impacted capital projects planning and implementation significantly due to work interruption, delays, and supply chain challenges for one project that started. Despite continuing presence of the pandemic, NUC is still required to provide justification for grant extensions.



Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown participates in Utah Redistricting Commission Meeting to advocate for voting rights with Malysa Egge and Davina Smith at the Utah State Capitol Building in Salt Lake City, UT.

# ETHICS AND RULES OFFICE

Lewnell B. Harrison,  
Executive Director  
(928) 871-7254  
lewnellharrison@navajo-nsn.gov



Council Delegate Thomas Walker, Jr. joins Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer for the signing of the Air is Life Act.

## Accomplishments

Lewnell B. Harrison, Ethics Investigator was appointed Interim Executive Director on October 15, 2021.

The ERO requested and was approved by the Motor Vehicle Review Board to replace our current high mileage vehicles with two newer vehicles.

Efforts are still being made to locate and contact individuals that have outstanding restitution with the Nation. There has been some success in obtaining restitution from some Respondents that have never made payments before. This last quarter was the highest amount of restitution ERO has collected for FY2021.

Intakes continue to be received and reviewed for possible investigation. Each Investigator has a number of investigations they are working on.

The office continues to answer questions regarding the ERO process either by phone or email.

There were eight hearings before the Office of Hearings and Appeals this quarter. Three were new ethics complaints and five were for orders to show cause. The Ethics and Rules also had two informal agreements with two elected officials who agreed to step down from elected office and pay full restitution and forgo a hearing with OHA.

## Goals for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter in FY 2022

1. Recruit and hire for vacant Executive Director and Presenting Officer position.
2. Continue to enforce restitution judgments by sending letters demanding payment, filing motions for order to show cause and/or garnishment proceedings.
3. Recommence working and collaborating with the Division of Community Development, Administrative Services Centers, Navajo Nation Department of Justice, Navajo Elections Administration, and Office of Government Development in providing consultations for local governments (110 chapters).
4. Continue providing the Ethics in Government Law/Standards of Conduct training for Chapters, School Boards, and other Navajo Nation Departments, including monthly training for newly hired employees with the Navajo Nation Staff Development and Training Center.
5. Work cooperatively with other Navajo Nation departments, the Public Integrity Task Force, FBI, Office of Inspector General and Internal Revenue Service on various task forces and workgroups that concern the public trust to more effectively hold individuals accountable for violations of the Ethics in Government Law.
6. Continue to take Ethics intakes on elected and appointed officials and employees of the Navajo Nation and complete Ethics Clearances for candidacies, business loans, veteran's loans and the Navajo Nation Office of Background Investigations.
7. File ethics complaints, Orders to Show Cause and eligible cases for garnishment pursuant to 2 N.N.C. § 3800 et seq. in the Window Rock District Court.

## Issues/Recommendations

Biggest issue that continues is the inability to fill the vacant Presenting Officer position. Even after reclassifying the position in 2020 to raise the salary, DPM has only referred one applicant but that individual was not qualified. ERO may have to consider another reclassification to increase the salary again to entice more individuals to apply. Other than increasing the salary not sure what else can be done to fill the position.

Issue that has come up the last two quarters concerns the main ERO building. Although a claim loss was submitted to Risk Management in March 2021 a response was not received until September 2021. Facilities Maintenance is actually the one that identified what the issue is and it appears the building is shifting and will need to be re-leveled to keep it from getting worse. ERO will work with Risk Management to have insurance cover any repairs but if not, ERO will have to identify funds to address the issue.

## Accomplishments

Efficient use of allocated funds, Navajo Nation Labor Commission (NNLC) held (15) hearings by teleconference or Zoom with counsels or record and parties.

NNLC and program timely processed (2) appealed NNLC cases to Navajo Nation Supreme Court.

NNLC program timely processed (15) formally filed complaint by mail, fax, and email.

NNLC timely adjudicated/settlement conferences (15) NPEA cases.

NNLC and program timely closed and issued (5) continuance orders by teleconference due to closure.

NNLC and program timely issued and mailed (300) subpoenas and notice of hearings and NNLC Rules by certified mail, first class, facsimile and email to counsels of record or parties.

NNLC will continue to adjudicate (110) pending NPEA cases.

NNLC program made (8) audio copies at parties' request.

Amended NNLC Rules of Procedure effective April 19, 2021.



Council Delegates Kee Allen Begay, Jr., Wilson C. Stewart, Jr. and Rick Nez tour the San Juan Lateral of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project from Newcomb to Yatahey, NM.

# LABOR COMMISSION

## Goals for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter in FY 2022

NN Presidential and HEHS appointment of NNLC membership per CJY-42-16. Continue to refer candidate(s) to appointing authority.

Efficient use of allocated funds and timely processed appealed NNLC cases(s).

NNLC and program will timely adjudicate NPEA cases by teleconf and authorized in person hearing(s) from July 8, 2021.

NNLC and program will timely process formally filed NPEA complaint(s) and/or petition(s).

NNLC and program will timely issue and close out NPEA cases.

NNLC and program will continue review and amend NNLC Rules of Procedure.

NNLC and program will continue to preserve substantial rights of all employees and employers in accordance to Navajo Law.

Closure of NNLC cases heard by current sitting NNLC members.

Anslem Bitsoi, *Executive Director*  
(928) 871-6805  
anslembitsoi@navajo-nsn.gov or  
art\_bitsoi@yahoo.com

## Issues/Recommendations

NNLC lacks one (1) NNC Health, Education and Human Services Committee duly appointment and (1) Navajo Nation Presidential appointment. Vacancy been advertised.

NNLC will continue to expedite office renovation and funding per COVID-19 guidance.

Additional sanitation supplies re: COVID 19 issues will be necessary.

Continuing closure of NN due to COVID-19

NNLC and office updating NNLC Plan of Operation.

Confirmation on compliance with Federal American Disability Act during second quarter.

# EASTERN NAVAJO LAND COMMISSION

Larry Rodgers, *Executive Director*

(505) 786-2430

lasar98@yahoo.com

## Accomplishments

The Commission at its regular meetings received updates on the proposed NELI federal legislation. The legislation is in draft form prepared by the legislative counsel for Senator Lujan's office. Minor adjustments are needed with the set of eight (8) maps and related language in the draft. The Chaco Canyon Protection legislation has somewhat taking from stage before Lujan can move forward with NELI.

The Navajo Land Buy-Back Program Rounds I & II Results Report – The statistical data showing allotment interests sales data, with interpretive thematic maps illustrating degree of allotment ownership by the Navajo Nation are in draft form. The combined sales results from 2016 and 2019 will be reported in a booklet for distribution to 45 chapters soon after publication.

The Commission through meetings with the Thoreau Chapter and the Eastern Navajo RBDO should result in substantive paperwork supportive of a Commission resolution recommending private land purchases in Thoreau.

Ranch Land Purchases are held in abeyance with no support from NLD or the Office of the President. The "front-runner" Chaves Ranch near Tohajiilee-Rio Puerco has been deemphasized due to the grand difference of the appraisal value that is one-fourth of the asking price.



Council Delegate Vince James with a young spectator during the 54th Annual San Carlos Apache Veterans Parade.

## TOP PRIORITIES

1. NELI Project
2. Navajo Land Buy-Back Program Results
3. Thoreau Private Land Tracts
4. New ranch land purchase

## Goals for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter in FY 2022

Complete draft of the NELI federal legislation working with Congressional staffers.

Complete draft of the Navajo LBBP-II Report for publication to share with 45 chapters and interested parties.

Continue to work with Navajo DNR and NLD regarding the Commission-approved proposed land purchases.

Complete Thoreau private land purchase documentation in collaboration with EN RBDO and the Chapter.

# NAVAJO GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT

DeWayne Crank, *Policy Analyst (Delegated)*  
(928) 871-6378

dewaynecrank@navajo-nsn.gov

## Accomplishments

### CNGD-1001-21

An action to approve the request of the Comprehensive Government Reform Sub-committee of the Commission on Navajo Government Development for an extension to continue working on the working draft document, "*Diyin Nohokaa' Dine'e bi Beehaz'Aanii' Bitsi Silei*" to January 21, 2021

### CNGD-1002-21

An action to amend and approve the Executive Director Job Vacancy Announcement with the sensitive position designation and further authorizing the Office of Navajo Government Development, in conjunction with Office of the Speaker, to begin advertising for the Executive Director of Office of Navajo Government Development.

### CNGD-1201-21

An action to create a Commission on Navajo Government Development Sub-committee to review applications and interview qualified candidates for the Office of Navajo Government Development Executive Director position.

## Goals for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter in FY 2022

ONGD is currently working with the Commission's sub-committee to produce a document that will be presented to the public and the public will have the opportunity to comment and make additional recommendations on for possible referendum vote by the Navajo People.

ONGD will work very closely with the Office of Legislative Counsel in the careful submission of the Commission's proposed recommended "government reform" referendum measures to the 24th Navajo Nation Council and the Navajo Board of Election Supervisors for legislation considerations.

ONGD is open back up to 75% and 1-2 staff are working remotely due to COVID-19 emergency orders by legislative branch guidelines and memos.

ONGD will continue to work on the white paper - *A Case for Understanding Navajo Nation Sustainability Practices & Guidelines in 2021: COVID-19 Pandemic Presents Unique Opportunities*. This white paper will be presented to the Resources and Development Committee and the Naabik'iyáti Committee.

## Issues/Recommendations

The Office and Commission are working diligently to produce a document to present to Navajo Nation Council and the Navajo people in regards to government reform.

The ONGD intends to train both policy analysts in Robert's Rules of Order as a foremost Navajo Nation entity to assist boards, commissions, committees and other governmental bodies in parliamentary procedure.



Council Delegates walk between various meetings with AZ Senators and Representatives during the 27th Annual Arizona Indian Nations & Tribes Legislative Day in Phoenix, Arizona.

# OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

Manuel Rico, *Executive Director*

(928) 871-7254

mrico@navajo-nsn.gov

## Accomplishments

OLS processed 63 Legislations this quarter as well as closing out 60 resolutions.

OLS personnel participated in 80 council/standing meetings and work sessions during this quarter.

OLS Legislative Staff continue to utilize the hybrid meeting method that includes telecommunication and in-person meetings with minor technical assistance from the Office of the Speaker.

OLS Expended approximately 20% of the FY2021 Budget for department.

Within the first quarter, staff continued to work in the office with a majority of the meetings held via teleconference. Office occupancy is at 100% with support staff in the office at 5 days a week.

OLS assisted one (1) work force development employee with temporary employment during the 1st quarter.

Council Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton  
advocates for Navajos with disabilities outside the Navajo Nation Council  
Chambers in Window Rock, AZ.



## Goals for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter in FY 2022

- Increase training opportunities for staff.
  - Professional Development
  - Budget Process Training
  - Annual and Semi-annual training
- Continue to effectively coordinate all meetings, including subcommittee meetings (i.e. Title II, NIIP, Dine Bizaad NABI Subcommittee).
- Utilize Legislative Tracking - DiBB Meeting Request Module.
- Implement Legislative Tracking - DIBB backup storage for personnel.
- Implement DIBB Timekeeping Module- Establish, Trial phase and full implementation.
- Begin planning stages of Legislative Tracking - Archive Project.
- Fill Vacant Positions:
  - Administrative Assistant (Candidate Selected)
  - Director of Ethics and Rules Office. Position currently advertised.
- Legislatively assist the Navajo Nation Council and the Office of the speaker with the allocation of the fiscal recovery funds (FRF-ARPA)
- Establish internal policies and procedures to address mandatory vaccinations as required by Navajo Nation Council resolution CAU-48-21 and other public health orders.
- Begin discussions and planning for the 25th Navajo Nation Council transition.

## Issues/Recommendations

- Issue: OLS is currently short staffed within the administrative section (HR/Finance).
- Recommendation: Fill Administration Assistant position immediately to ensure work and service provided is effective and efficient.

# OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

Dana Bobroff, *Chief Legislative Counsel*  
(928) 871-7166

[olc@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:olc@navajo-nsn.gov)

## Issues/Recommendations

OLC had 3 staff members take early retirement and 1 staff member transferred to another department. To be fully staffed, OLC should have 10 attorneys, a paralegal, and 3 administrative staff. OLC legal staff is currently limited to 6 (CLC, a Principal Attorney, an Attorney, a Senior Tribal Advocate, and two administrative staff). OLC is actively pursuing additional legal staff, however, OLC is challenged with competing with DOJ for new staff. Until new staff is procured, OLC will not be attending the report section of committee meetings. OLC will, instead, devote that time to legislation drafting. Legislation drafting would also be expedited if legislation requests included all supporting documents.

## Goals for 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter in FY 2022

- Continued to advise and assist the NNC, Standing Committees and sub-committees. Attend all meetings, advising on all procedural and substantive questions.
- Continued efforts to identify and resolve inefficiencies within OLC that constrain productivity due to the pandemic working environment. Despite the challenges to us, our staff continue to provide essential services remotely through calls, telephonic/Zoom, fax or email.
- Continued efforts to assist clients in identifying and resolving inefficiencies that adversely affect OLC efforts to provide services. OLC prioritized the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and attended daily work sessions that were conducted to determine the priorities of the Navajo Nation and to streamline the expenditure process.
- Continued to attend all Office of Speaker's meeting to keep abreast of all pertinent information received to ensure that OLC is kept updated and proactive concerning legislative needs, projects, and priorities.
- Continued advocating for more attorney staff as the increase in meetings and legislation requests has drastically increased while OLC staffing declined due to the early retirement offering. The office must keep up the demands for services.

## Accomplishments

During this first quarter, OLC continued to develop and carry-out legislative initiatives aimed at strengthening the Navajo Nation's response to COVID-19 pandemic, including the development of laws, regulations and policies to better meet the needs of the Navajo people and three branches of the Navajo Nation Government.

- The drafting and finalization of 111 legislations, amendments, and program review requests.
- The provision of legal representation at 101 committee regular and special meetings, Council Sessions, work sessions and leadership meetings.
- The drafting and finalization of the ARPA Fiscal Recovery Fund expenditure plan legislations, including amendments at all committees meetings and Council Sessions.
- Legal representation at HEHSC meetings with the NM Secretary of Education and Secretary of Department of Indian Affairs concerning the implementation of Yazzie/Martinez v. State of New Mexico.
- The development of four plus legislations to revamp the Navajo Nation Veterans Act, including leading a work session with the Veterans Advisory Council to vet proposed amendments.
- The drafting and finalization of the legislations necessary to ensure that all CARES Funds were expended.
- The drafting of 20+ legislations specifically crafted to allow the government to respond to and mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The drafting and finalization of over 170 legislation requests and contract reviews.
- The Chief Legislative Counsel recognizes the work and dedication of OLC staff who have continued to serve the public throughout the pandemic, specifically coming into the office during branch closures. Legal staff virtually attended teleconference committee and leadership meetings on a daily basis, including numerous meetings that ran long into the evening.
- OLC upholds its responsibilities to the public by maintaining mandatory training requirements for attorneys and advocates under their professional responsibility rules.



### **Naabik'iyáti'**

Seth Damon - Chair  
- All Council Delegates -

### **Law & Order**

Eugenia Charles-Newton - Chair  
Otto Tso - Vice Chair  
Vince R. James  
Eugene Tso  
Edmund Yazzie

### **Resources & Development**

Rickie Nez - Chair  
Thomas Walker, Jr. - Vice Chair  
Kee Allen Begay, Jr.  
Herman M. Daniels  
Mark Freeland  
Wilson C. Stewart, Jr.

### **Budget & Finance**

Jamie Henio - Chair  
Raymond Smith, Jr. - Vice Chair  
Elmer P. Begay  
Nathaniel Brown  
Amber Kanazbah Crotty  
Jimmy Yellowhair

### **Health, Education, & Human Services**

Daniel E. Tso - Chair  
Carl Slater - Vice Chair  
Paul Begay  
Pernell Halona  
Charlaine Tso  
Edison J. Wauneka



**NAVAJO NATION  
OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER**

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