Resources and Development Committee confirms Bidtah N. Becker to the Navajo Nation Water Rights Commission

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Speaker Seth Damon’s ( Bááhááli, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Tsé Łichíí’, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh) appointment of Bidtah N. Becker to the Navajo Nation Water Rights Commission (NNWRC) was approved by the Resources and Development Committee (RDC) of the Navajo Nation Council during its Mar. 17 regular meeting. Becker will now serve as the commissioner representing the Fort Defiance Agency following RDC’s unanimous confirmation.

With over 19 years of experience in developing water infrastructure, Becker will continue to advance the water rights interests of the Navajo Nation as a commissioner. Becker’s extensive professional experience includes service as the former executive director of the Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources (DNR), attorney for the Navajo Nation Department of Justice (DOJ) and more.

“I am beyond honored with the appointment and I am ready to roll up my sleeves to work with the Commission, the Resources and Development Committee, the Chapters of the Fort Defiance
Agency and the entire Navajo Nation,” said Becker. “I will always put the People first, especially
now that Covid-19 has shown us drinking water is a human right that Navajo people are entitled to.”

Becker is now one of five appointed commissioners on the NNWRC, as established by

Legislation No. 0033-21, sponsored by Speaker Damon and cosponsored by Council Delegate
Wilson Stewart, Jr. (Crystal, Fort Defiance, Red Lake, Sawmill), confirmed Becker following a
process that began last year with the public advertisement for the vacant NNWRC position by
the Office of the Speaker.

Following the application period, Bidtah’s selection was issued Feb. 18. Speaker Damon
praised Becker’s skill and experience in the area of Navajo policy and resource management
during the selection process.

Stewart also shared his confidence in Becker and indicted she will be the first commissioner
for the Fort Defiance Agency in recent years.

RDC member Council Delegate Mark Freeland (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley,
Nageezi, Nahohdishgish, Tse’ii’ahi, Whiterock) said: “Thank you for stepping up on this important
role. We all know water is life and water is essential to our way of life and I encourage you to keep
our people first.”

Becker indicated she has worked actively with the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) to
maintain the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project, an experience she looks forward to utilizing in
serving the Fort Defiance Agency and the Navajo Nation.

As the representative for Navajo communities situated directly along the Little Colorado River,
Council Delegate Thomas Walker, Jr., (Cameron, Coalmine, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi Tó’ii) pointed
to the work of local groups that are successful in promoting self-reliance in their communities.
Walker praised the recent work of Tolani Lake Enterprise (TLE) that demonstrates the initiative
local community members are taking up to develop their water resources.

Walker acknowledged the overall challenge of water rights work and expressed his confidence
in Becker’s knowledge and skill in the field.

In response, Becker praised the example of TLE and acknowledged the committee’s focus on
the Navajo Nation’s water rights interests in Arizona and their desire to serve those communities.

Under Navajo Nation law, the committee has final authority for all appointments to the
commission. The NNWRC is comprised of two appointments for the Eastern and Fort Defiance
Agencies made by the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, two appointments for the Shiprock
and Chinle Agencies made by the Navajo Nation President, and one appointment for the Western
Agency made by the Chief Justice of the Navajo Nation.

More information about the Navajo Nation Water Rights Commission may be found on the

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