



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### MEDIA CONTACTS

Jared Touchin (928) 221-9253  
Jolene Holgate (928) 380-4174  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

### Delegate Phelps collaborates with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to initiate flood plain management services

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Tuesday, Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii) met with officials from the Los Angeles District Corps of Engineers to discuss plans to provide Floodplain Management Services to areas on the Navajo Nation.

During the meeting, officials provided an overview of specific areas that are in need of flood management services based on a previously established priority listing, which includes the communities of Leupp, Tsidi To ii, Cameron, Fort Defiance, Window Rock, Tuba City, Chinle, Kayenta, Crownpoint, Shiprock, Ganado, and Tohatchi.

Los Angeles District Corps of Engineers Tribal Liason Quana Higgins, stated that \$1 million in federal funding was recently allocated to the Flood Plain Management Services Program under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Special Investigations, to provide the services specifically for the Navajo Nation.

While the program offers many types of services, the analyses will focus on flood-plain surveying/mapping, watershed delineations, and flood-plain delineations.

Delegate Phelps, who met with federal officials on several occasions to advocate for the funding, said the communities are in great need of the services and resources due to recent increases in flooding in certain areas on the Navajo Nation.

"I am extremely pleased that funds were made available during the current fiscal year by the USACE, it was quite dismal when we first started working on ways to identify funds for Navajo projects that had been neglected for a few years. Now it is exciting to see all the partners moving



**PHOTO: Flooding in the community of Many Farms in 2013.**

forward again," said Delegate Phelps. "My deepest appreciation to Lisa Morales and Quana Higgins at USACE."

Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) also participated in Tuesday's meeting, to advocate for the inclusion of the community of Many Farms on the priority listing. He pointed out that many of his constituents have been affected by flooding in recent years.

Officials with the Corps of Engineers also emphasized that efficient use of the funding is a top priority, and requested that other entities with flood or plain mapping data share information to avoid duplicating efforts.

Upon the completion of work, Delegate Phelps said the surveys and mapping can assist with development, planning, and safety efforts in the communities.

Officials advised that communities work with the Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources to be placed on the priority listing, adding that doing so would also assist in demonstrating the overall needs of the Navajo Nation to federal officials.

Also present at the meeting was Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins), who said there is a great need for such services in the communities of Tsé Si áni and Nahata Dziil due to past flooding in the areas.

Officials with the Los Angeles District Corps of Engineers will visit several communities this week to continue their efforts in surveying flood plain areas.

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