



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Resources and Development Committee receives reports regarding Antelope Point operations**

**LECHEE, Ariz.** – On Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee received reports from staff from the Antelope Point Marina and Antelope Point Canyon Park, regarding operations and proposed economic development projects within the Navajo Nation park areas.

The first report provided by general manager of the Antelope Point Marina, Michael Anderson, informed RDC members of proposed economic development plans for the marina area that include a RV and tent campsite, outdoor amphitheater with food service, employee housing, hotel, shower facilities, restaurant, local vendor area, and cultural center.

According to Anderson, the Navajo Nation leases approximately 680-acres of land to Antelope Point Marina, who has a concessionary contract with the U.S. National Park Service to operate on the shore area of Lake Powell.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Pete (Chinle) voiced his concerns regarding the proposed plans, and questioned whether there were conceptual plans currently in place, and if the program is prepared for the implementation, such as wastewater, land use planning, market studies, etc.

“We are dealing with thousands of tourists every year. I want to see how you implement this. If they come across this area, we want to be able to capture them. It needs to be captivating and magnetizing, so when they think back on their trip to Antelope Point, they’ll say to themselves, ‘two or three days wasn’t enough and I want to come back,’” said Delegate Pete.

Anderson raised a concern over a letter from the U.S. NPS stating that the NPS may not agree entirely with the proposed plan and may consider allowing outside vendors to develop businesses within the park area.

In response, RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) said the land proposed for economic development belongs to the Navajo people, and the business developed there needs to benefit the entire Navajo Nation.

RDC members voted 3-0 to accept the report from Antelope Point Marina.

Antelope Canyon park manager Effie Yazzie, presented an update report regarding operation of the park, and concerns about the National Environmental Policy Act that could affect development of more efficient public restrooms.

RDC chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) suggested to RDC members that the committee would look into the NEPA and find a solution to any potential issues that may conflict with the federal policy.

“We need to address any problems that may affect NEPA policies and look at the biological maps to see if the proposed construction may affect the land area or nearby animal populations,” said Delegate Shepherd.

According to Yazzie, the Antelope Canyon Park generates approximately \$8.2 million a year and receives over 400,000 visitors annually, most of which are from foreign countries.

RDC members voted 4-0 to accept the report.

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