



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **MEDIA CONTACTS**

Jared Touchin (928) 221-9253  
Jolene Holgate (928) 380-4174  
Crystalyne Curley (928) 286-7918  
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

### **Resources and Development Committee approves eligibility requirements for issuance of grazing permits on the Navajo Partitioned Lands**

**TSE BONITO, N.M.** – On Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0034-16, which amends IGRJN-110-10, and approves the Navajo eligibility requirements to qualify for issuance of a grazing permit on Navajo Partitioned Lands.

In 1940, administrative control of livestock grazing on the NPL began with the issuance of the first formal grazing permits on the 1882 Executive Order Reservation. Pursuant to 25 C.F.R 71 and 72, grazing permits were cancelled by court order on Oct. 24, 1973 and never reissued. The Navajo-Hopi Settlement Act required the development of new grazing regulations for the NPL, therefore, new regulations were published in Oct. 2005 in 25 C.F.R 161 section 161.400, which allowed the Nation to establish eligibility requirements for grazing allocations and grant permits, according to the Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture.

In June 2010, the former Intergovernmental Relations Committee of the Navajo Nation Council approved the eligibility criteria for issuance of a grazing permit on the NPL.

RDC chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat), who sponsored the legislation, said the legislation was eligible for consideration since Feb. 2016, however, he waited until additional information was available and recommendations from the Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture were addressed.

“I asked the committee to address this legislation later because there were come consideration and recommendations that we needed from the Department of Agriculture, grazing officials, and chapter officials regarding the amendments. We had a meeting on Feb. 14 with the agriculture department and it was agreed to move forward with the legislation,” stated Delegate Shepherd.

According to the legislation, an individual seeking to receive a permit to graze livestock on the NPL must meet the following criteria:

1. Appear as a permittee on the list of permits cancelled on Oct. 14, 1973.
2. Be listed on the 1974 or 1975 Bureau of Indian Affairs enumeration within NPL.
3. Have lived continuously within the enumeration area where the cancelled permit was used.
4. Be an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation.

5. Not have received any of the following accommodations:
  - a. Signed an accommodation agreement to remain on Hopi Partitioned Lands; or
  - b. Received a permit to graze livestock on lands outside the NPL.
6. Should new permits be issued for the NPL under 25 C.F.R. section 161.401 legally recognized heirs of the permittees who appear on the list of permits cancelled on Oct. 14, 1973, will have first priority.

“Its time to issue the grazing permits out to the NPL. People have waited too long for this to happen,” stated RDC member Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle).

According to Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture program project specialist Renelda Begay, the grazing permits will be issued in April.

The Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0034-16 with a 5-0 vote and serves as the final authority for the bill.

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