



24th Navajo Nation Council

Office of the Speaker

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MEDIA CONTACT

Carl Slater, Director of Communications and Government Affairs
Bronson Peshlakai, Sr. Public Information Officer
(928) 871-6815
nlnb.communications@gmail.com

Navajo Utah Delegates Meet with Utah Tribal Leaders

OGDEN, Utah — The Utah Tribal Leaders group met at Weber State University, selected its new leaders, and approved a resolution concerning Bears Ears National Monument in Ogden, Utah May 6-7.

Navajo Nation Council Delegates Nathaniel Brown (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta), Herman Daniels (Shonto, Naa'tsis'áán, Oljato, Ts'áh Bii Kin), and Charlene Tso (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa), all delegates that represent Navajo Utah, participated in the leadership meeting of Utah's eight tribal nations.

The Utah Tribal Leaders held a meeting Monday in executive session to elect a chair and vice chair and to identify the group's 2020 legislative priorities. The group chose to focus on strengthening Utah's implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act and to include a fiscal note.

Removing the word "squaw" from 48 sites throughout the state was also discussed.

The non-profit Utah Diné Bikéyah presented a resolution opposing the Roadless Rule Exemption Petition by the State of Utah. In opposing the petition, the tribes cited a lack of consultation by the state in contravention of Governor's Executive Order 2014-5 "Executive Agency Consultation with Federally-Recognized Indian Tribes."

Highlighting the diminishment of the Bears Ears National Monument, the tribes noted that "US Forest Service lands remain under threat of cultural vandalism, looting" and "indiscriminate off road vehicle usage" that harms wildlife, plants, and cultural resources.

Delegate Daniels presented to the UTL on a variety of matters. He underscored the Navajo Utah Commission and Oljato Chapter's work with the Utah Dept. of Transportation to develop a roundabout interchange at Gouldings Junction in Monument Valley. Construction is expected to begin this summer.

Among the other issues he presented, Delegate Daniels also noted the State of Utah and the Navajo Nation's work to pass the Navajo Utah Water Rights Settlement Act in the 116th Congress.

“This is one of the top issues the Nation is currently working on,” Delegate Daniels said. “The speaker and president have been to DC multiple times to advocate for the settlement act’s passage and we look forward to building up Navajo Utah’s water infrastructure in the near future.”

At the May 7 meeting, the tribal leaders heard reports from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FirstNet, the Utah Commodity Supplemental Food Program, Utah Rivers Council, and the state’s department of health.

“With the new elections we are focused on finding balance in the transition and our new roles at Utah Tribal Leaders,” Delegate Tso said. “We find common ground on issues pertaining to roads, cultural awareness, protecting the livelihoods of all tribes, providing support for one another, and recognizing legislative priorities.”

The Navajo Utah delegates invited UTL to hold their fall or winter meeting on the Navajo Nation.

The next UTL meeting is scheduled for June 6 and 7 in Cedar City, Utah.

The Utah Tribal Leaders are comprised of the Navajo Nation, Skull Valley Band of Goshute, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe / White Mesa, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Confederated Tribes of Goshute Reservation, and Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation.

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