



# 23<sup>RD</sup> NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

HONORABLE LORENZO C. BATES  
SPEAKER, 23<sup>RD</sup> NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

January 13, 2017

## **STATEMENT FROM SPEAKER LORENZO BATES REGARDING U.S. EPA'S DECISION TO DENY CLAIMS RELATED TO THE GOLD KING MINE SPILL**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council is very disappointed with today's announcement that the U.S. EPA has decided that the agency is not legally able to pay compensation for claims submitted by Navajo farmers, livestock owners, and many others who were impacted and devastated by the Gold King Mine spill that occurred nearly a year and half ago.

With today's announcement, we as leaders of the Navajo Nation call upon our Congressional leaders from the states of Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona to do what is right for our people by demanding that the U.S. EPA reconsider its decision and that the U.S. EPA provide full compensation to the many Navajo people who sustained extensive losses due to the spill that was caused by the agency.

Since the spill occurred in August 2015, the Navajo Nation Council and local leaders have met with officials from the U.S. EPA, Congressional members, and many others to advocate for full compensation for our people. We have provided written and oral testimony before Congress detailing the hardships and financial losses that our people have suffered due to the contamination caused by the spill, and yet we have been told that the federal government is not responsible for compensation – this is not right.

On behalf of the Navajo Nation Council and the many Navajo people affected by the USEPA's announcement, I respectfully call upon our Congressional leaders to do what is right for the Navajo people.

LoRenzo Bates, Speaker  
23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council