



Chinle Chapter Receives Award for Floodplain Management Plan

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CHINLE, Ariz. — Navajo Nation Council Delegate Eugene Tso (Chinle) of the 24th Navajo Nation Council to be awarded funding from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop a Floodplain Management Plan (Hazard Assessment) for Chinle Chapter.

“The reason why I submitted an Interagency Proposal to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was to request funding for flood control in Chinle because there are three areas where we get water from the valley,” said Delegate Tso. “The water then floods into a place called ‘Jurassic Park’ and all the way down to the Valley Store, affecting community members.”

Last year, Delegate Tso submitted an Interagency Proposal to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to address the “long history of flooding and failed flood risk management infrastructure” for Chinle Chapter.

Especially after numerous reports of damages and one death caused by annual flash floods that initiated a Navajo Nation Disaster Declaration back in 2019. However, among other proposals, Delegate Tso’s was not chosen.

Flooding in the Chinle Wash forces the Chinle Chapter to declare an emergency in order to divert all efforts and resources to flood mitigation and emergency services. The Navajo Nation Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is able to support Navajo Nation Chapters with emergency needs, but these services are expensive and must be allocated across the entire Nation.

By having a Flood Management plan in place, the Navajo Nation can make beneficial use of excess flood waters such as irrigation, storage, or groundwater recharge.

This year, Melissa Weymiller, Strategic Planner for the Sacramento District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, informed Delegate Tso that his proposal was selected for Fiscal Year 2022.

Within the proposal, Delegate Tso’s project aims to prioritize flood-risk awareness, planning, and prepared activities by developing a floodplain hazard assessment that looks at existing information on the flood risks in the area to provide nonstructural recommendations to reduce their flood risks.

It includes working with interagency partners to identify resources that could help the community reduce their flood risk such as collecting and analyzing existing data to understand the flood history of the area.

The project will work with community members by conducting a site visit to view the areas of concern to write a field report to review possible flood risk mitigation measures. A written floodplain hazard assessment that will identify and prioritize high risk areas in order to prioritize resources will occur.

By doing so, it will conduct a hydrologic and hydraulic assessment of internal drainage flooding at a newly constructed hospital below an alluvial fan.

“The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers selected my proposal and we are very honored that they bestowed this award for Chinle Chapter,” said Delegate Tso. “By receiving it, we will be able to assist community members who are disproportionately affected by annual floods and heavy rainfall.”

Delegate Tso is set to receive the award on July 28, 2021 at the Chinle Chapter House at 9:00 A.M. (MDT).

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