



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

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Navajo Nation Leaders applaud \$76 Million Water Delivery Agreement for the future Navajo Code Talkers Museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 28, 2022



PHOTO: Navajo Code Talkers Museum Board of Directors sign Right-of-Way contract to grant an easement for the Bureau of Reclamation for the completion of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project.

GALLUP, N.M. — Speaker Seth Damon and members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council applaud the signing of a right-of-way contract by the Navajo Code Talkers Museum Board of Directors, led by former Navajo Chairman Peter MacDonald, to grant an easement for the Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) to make significant progress towards the completion of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project (NGWSP).

Over \$76 million was awarded by the USBR for the construction of the next portion of the Navajo Code Talkers Sublateral. This allows the delivery of clean drinking water through 17+ miles of new pipeline and a water storage tank to communities along Highway 264 in western New Mexico and to the Window Rock and Ft. Defiance area in Arizona. This includes the infrastructure for the water security of the forthcoming Navajo Code Talker Museum.

“The Navajo Nation commends the leadership of our veteran’s organizations and the leaders behind the construction of the Navajo Code Talkers Museum. This contract will bring fresh drinking water to the communities that need it most and ensure our Code Talker Museum has water to operate into the future. We appreciate the USBR, NTUA, and our partners with the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project for working to make this a top priority,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh).

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According to the USBR, the San Juan River Basin portion of the Navajo Nation currently relies on a rapidly depleting groundwater supply of poor quality that cannot meet the current and future demands of more than 43 Navajo chapters.

“This USBR easement has been a key component of the NGWSP project we have been working on for years. This waterline will provide clean water to our elderly and the most vulnerable families in my area. Our Navajo Code Talkers are remembered by this project and we will work every day to ensure this museum is constructed. Water is life and it is the life source we need during this pandemic,” said Council Delegate Wilson Stewart Jr. (Fort Defiance, Crystal, Red Lake, Sawmill).

When the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project is completed, it will include approximately 300 miles of pipeline, two water treatment plants, 19 pumping plants, and multiple water storage tanks.

“The Navajo Nation Council continues to lobby for funding to make sure our communities get water into their homes, especially for our veterans. Our Navajo Code Talker Museum is a priority and we are thankful that this waterline project from Yatahay to Window Rock is becoming a reality, but our job is not done yet,” said Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Tachee/Blue Gap, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tselani/Cottonwood, Low Mountain).

The Cutter Lateral project is a major infrastructure initiative that began in 2009. It will provide a reliable water supply from the San Juan River to the eastern section of the Navajo Nation.

Currently, eight Navajo communities are receiving service, and soon the southwestern portion of the Jicarilla Apache Nation to serve 6,000 people or 1,500 households. This water supply will support a future population of approximately 250,000 people by the year 2040.

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