



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Resources and Development Committee receives updates from Cameron Chapter

CAMERON, Ariz. – On Wednesday, June 28, the Resources and Development Committee (RDC) held its regular meeting in Cameron, Ariz. and received a report from Cameron Chapter President Charley Smith regarding various initiatives related to drought mitigation, feral horses, livestock needs, and veterans.

RDC Chair Council Delegate Brenda Jesus (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) said, “The community is currently grappling with the impact of drought and heavily rely on surface water. As a result, the chapter continues to explore ways to utilize the emergency fund to address this issue effectively. A collaboration with the Resources and Development Committee is focused on ways to find sustainable solutions.”

According to the Cameron Chapter President, a pressing issue is the wild horse problem. Advocacy groups have temporarily halted their efforts to mitigate the issues due to concerns about the horses. Smith emphasized that it is not just a local issue but a more significant Navajo Nation-wide problem. A comprehensive plan is being developed with the involvement of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and other resources to address the problems.

Another significant concern is the drought’s effect on local ranch areas, leading to issues with the BLM Park services. Currently, rangers are capturing and impounding wild horses straying into these areas. The Chapter is exploring potential funding sources for managing this situation and addressing the challenge of overgrazing.

In regards to supporting Navajo veterans, Cameron Chapter has one of the highest veteran counts in the region. The Chapter continues to address financial findings that impact the available resources to support benefits and assistance for veterans.

Water scarcity is a significant issue affecting the community, with many residents hauling water for livestock from the Cameron trading post. Efforts are underway to source water from other sources to help maintain the community’s water tank.

In terms of development, there are exciting prospects on the horizon. A hotel, public safety complex, and an auto mechanic shop are being considered, aiming to keep money within the community and promote Navajo businesses. These ventures could significantly impact the community, providing jobs and boosting the local economy.

During his recent drought tour, Council Delegate Rickie Nez (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) highlighted the urgent need to address the drought and wild horse issues. He pointed out the hardships that residents in the Western Agency face. Many haul water over long distances on a daily basis to provide for their families and livestock.

Cameron Chapter President Smith said the community is committed to addressing the challenges and creating a thriving community despite the difficulties. On Thursday and Friday, the Resources and Development Committee will also visit several abandoned uranium mine sites that are in the process of remediation in the Cameron area.

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