



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

MEDIA CONTACT:

nnlb.communications@gmail.com

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Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement provides more than water to Arizona Tribes



Tribal leaders were joined by representatives from the City of Flagstaff, Central Arizona Water Conservation District, and Salt River project at the signing ceremony.

PHOENIX, Ariz. – Today, during a signing ceremony for the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement in Phoenix, Ariz., 25th Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalyne Curley told state and tribal leaders that the settlement will provide resources and infrastructure for future generations.

The signing ceremony brought together several of the parties to the settlement from the state to show their support by signing the agreement that will now be sent to Congress as part of the congressional bills.

“This settlement agreement is not for us today, but for our grandchildren. It’s for the generations to come,” Speaker Curley said.

Speaker Curley comes from the rural Navajo community of Fish Point, Ariz., where she grew up without the convenience of piped water or plumbing. She elaborated that one-third of Navajo families still live without running water or plumbing on the Nation, which is unheard of outside of tribal nations.

Wednesday's signing ceremony brought together all Arizona Tribal Nations involved in the settlement as well as City of Flagstaff Mayor Becky Daggett, Central Arizona Water Conservation District Board Chair Terry Goddard, and Salt River Project Director of Water Resources Patrick Sigl.

Mayor Daggett said that the Flagstaff City Council unanimously approved the settlement and thanked Navajo, Hopi, and San Juan Southern Paiute leadership for coming to the table to push the settlement to the finish line.

Chair Goddard echoed the sentiment that the settlement is a generational accomplishment that has been advocated for by historical tribal leaders and will impact generations of future tribal communities.

"Water is life. We hear this frequently and water issues are also central to life which often include difficult challenges," Goddard said. "Congratulations to all the tribes and leaders involved in today's signing."

The bill will authorize \$5 billion in federal funding for water infrastructure on the sovereign territories of the Navajo Nation, the Hopi Tribe, and the San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe. If authorized by Congress, infrastructure constructed on the Navajo Nation funded by the legislation will bring substantial clean, safe and reliable drinking water to Navajo communities in Arizona.

"This settlement will secure a homeland for our children. As tribal leaders, we must protect our water for the next 100, 200, and 300 years," Speaker Curley said. "For many years, the Navajo Nation contributed to the development of many cities. This is our time to have access to what has been ours since our emergence as Navajo People."

Speaker Curley thanked Navajo Nation President Dr. Buu Nygren, Hopi Chairman Tim Nuvangyaoma, Hopi Vice Chairman Craig Andrews, San Juan Southern Paiute President Robbin Preston Jr., and her colleagues on the 25th Navajo Nation Council for their support and collaboration in finalizing the monumental Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement. Council Delegate Casey Allen Johnson was also in attendance at the signing.

President Nygren reiterated that water is life.

"There is nothing we cannot do without water," President Nygren said. "The future looks great for each and every one of us."

At the end of the ceremony, each leader signed the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement.

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