



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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Resources and Development Committee approves updated Service Line Agreement regulations and agreement form



Left to right: Division of Natural Resources Principal Attorney Robert Allan, RDC Chair Brenda Jesus, NLD Department Manager Byron Bitsoie.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Monday, the Resources and Development Committee (RDC) approved Legislation No. 0262-25, adopting new Service Line Agreement (SLA) Rules and Regulations and a new standard SLA form. The action updates and replaces provisions originally established under RCF-19-00 and RDCS-96-17 to streamline the approval of utility service connections across the Navajo Nation.

“To meet the goals of uniformity and streamlining the approval of Service Line Agreements for NTUA and other utility providers, we needed to amend the old process that created inconsistencies and delays. These updated SLA rules and regulations establish a clear framework that aligns with federal requirements and strengthens how the Nation manages land-use authorizations. This reform is necessary to move projects forward without unnecessary bottlenecks,” said RDC Chair Brenda Jesus (Oaksprings, St. Michaels).

The updated SLA rules align with 25 C.F.R. §§ 169.51–169.56 by requiring utility providers or right-of-way grantees to file completed SLAs with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and to provide copies to the Navajo Land Department (NLD). Under the new regulations, NLD approval is required in cases where land users do not have an existing land-use authorization—such as a lease, permit, withdrawal, right-of-way, or Tribal Access Authorization—while utility providers may directly file SLAs in cases where such authorizations already exist.

Legislation No. 0262-25, sponsored by Chair Jesus and co-sponsored by Vice Chair Casey Allen Johnson (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Birdsprings, Leupp, Tolani Lake), continues the delegation of authority to the NLD Department Manager to approve SLAs and affirms the RDC's authority to approve SLA rules, regulations, and forms.

Established through Resolution No. RDCO-80-16, the General Land Development Department (GLDD), under the Division of Natural Resources, processes applications for land withdrawals, non-mineral leases, permits, and rights-of-way on Navajo Nation trust and fee lands. GLDD is also responsible for obtaining and managing land-user consents related to surface and mineral leases. Plans are underway to reconsolidate GLDD back into the Navajo Land Department through updates to applicable plans of operation.

Service lines—such as telephone, water, electricity, gas, or internet—are generally utility lines that branch from an existing utility right-of-way or Tribal Access Authorization. They provide service to an individual home, business, or structure and must comply with federal requirements, including voltage limits for electrical service lines.

"The current system for processing SLAs has been burdensome for families and for the departments responsible for reviewing them. Over the years, the lack of uniform procedures has slowed projects, jeopardized funding, and prevented timely access to essential services. With the new SLA regulations and standardized form, we are finally putting in place an efficient and reliable process that supports our communities and pushes critical infrastructure forward. This is about delivering services without delay and ensuring our people are not left waiting," said RDC Vice Chair Johnson.

The Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0262-25 on the consent agenda with a vote of four in favor and none opposed. The Committee serves as the final authority for this action.

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