



The Navajo Nation
Commission on Emergency Management



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Commission on Emergency Management advances drought emergency declaration



The Commission on Emergency Management advanced a 2026 Declaration of Drought Emergency.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Tuesday, the Commission on Emergency Management (CEM) voted unanimously to approve and advance a Declaration of Drought Emergency in response to severe and ongoing drought conditions across the Navajo Nation.

The declaration cites concerns over reduced precipitation, diminishing water supplies, deteriorating rangelands, declining reservoir levels, and potential socioeconomic impacts on Navajo communities.

“The conditions we are seeing across the Navajo Nation require immediate and coordinated action,” said CEM Chairman Marcarlo Roanhorse. “This declaration is intended to help mobilize resources, support our chapters and livestock producers, and strengthen our drought preparedness efforts before conditions worsen further.”

Under Navajo Nation law, the Commission on Emergency Management, in coordination with the Department of Emergency Management, is authorized to coordinate emergency and disaster response efforts with Navajo Nation programs and external partners. The commission may also seek assistance from federal, state, tribal, local, and private entities to support response and recovery efforts during emergencies.

The commission advanced the declaration in response to worsening drought conditions

across the region and in consideration of recent emergency actions by the states of Arizona and New Mexico. State officials have cited persistent drought, below-average precipitation, heightened wildfire risks, and increasing impacts on water resources and agriculture.

The commission also considered U.S. Drought Monitor data showing that Arizona experienced its hottest and driest January-through-March period on record in 2026, with extreme drought conditions continuing across portions of Navajo, Apache, and Coconino counties.

The declaration recommends that the Division of Natural Resources support the procurement and implementation of drought mitigation infrastructure projects, including windmill repairs and livestock water storage systems.

The commission also recommends the allocation of \$6,553,730 from the Agricultural Infrastructure Fund for drought mitigation projects, including windmill repairs and related water infrastructure improvements.

Navajo Nation chapters are encouraged to activate local emergency mitigation plans and coordinate with their respective Administrative Service Centers, the Division of Community Development, the Department of Emergency Management, and other appropriate entities to strengthen drought preparedness and response efforts.

During the meeting, CEM Commissioner Johnny Johnson requested an update from Department of Emergency Management (DEM) Acting Director Laura Mike on the status of the Navajo Nation Hazard Mitigation Plan and the department's efforts to update the 2006 Drought Contingency Plan. Mike noted that the Division of Natural Resources previously developed the Navajo Nation Drought Contingency Plan and that DEM and the Department of Justice are reviewing the plans. She added that a report will be provided at the commission's next regularly scheduled meeting.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed the declaration on Wednesday, June 10, and it has taken effect immediately. The emergency declaration rescinds Resolution No. CEM25-005, the 2025 Declaration of Drought Emergency.

The declaration will remain in effect until rescinded or superseded by future action of the Commission on Emergency Management and the Office of the President and Vice President.

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