

DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR) EXPO 2026  
MARCH 24-25, 2026  
TWIN ARROWS NAVAJO CASINO RESORT AGENDA



Monday April 27, 2016

3:00 – 5:00 pm (MST) Early Registration

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Tuesday, April 28, 2026

8:00 am (MST) **OPENING OF THE “DNR EXPO 2026”**  
*W. Mike Halona, Executive Division Director*  
**DIVISION OF NATURAL**

8:15 am **INVOCATION**

8:20 – 8:30 am **WELCOME ADDRESS**  
*Dr. Buu Nygren, Navajo Nation President*  
**THE NAVAJO NATION**

**TOPICS:**

8:30 – 9:55 am **Navajo Land Department**



**Homesite Lease Process**

**Presenters:** Byron Bitsoie, Sr., Department Manager III & Tonia Sam, Program Manager I

**Abstract:** Navajo Land Department has Five Agency Offices on the Navajo Nation who assist clients in obtaining a one-acre residential lease for 75 years that provides an opportunity for families to build or mortgage a home. Lessee has an option to renew, assign, or terminate the lease. Before obtaining HSL, the Lessee must comply with all Federal and Navajo Environmental Laws to obtain clearances to build a home on the Navajo Nation.

**General Land Development Department**



**Tribal Authorization Access, Rights-of-Ways, and Service Line Agreement on the Navajo Nation.**

**Presenters:** Daryl Lorenzo Jr., Environmental Specialist & Byron Bitsoie Sr., Department Manager III

**Abstract:** The Navajo Nation General Land Development Department (GLDD) oversees and regulates land-based development activities across approximately 17 million acres of Navajo Trust and Fee Lands in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. The department manages the review and authorization of Tribal Authorization Access (TAA), Rights-of-Way (ROW), and Service Line Agreements (SLA) for tribal and non-tribal entities, including NTUA, NAIHS, and NDOT. GLDD's workflow encompasses document intake, internal and external technical review, compliance

verification, and issuance of Notices to Proceed. The department also addresses procedural and coordination challenges that arise during project evaluation, working closely with applicants to maintain efficiency and reduce delays. Ongoing improvements to GLDD's review framework support faster, more consistent movement of TAAs, ROWs, and SLAs through the approval pipeline.

### **Family Burial Plots & Land Withdrawal Process**

**Presenters:** Norvina J. Charleston, Sr. Environmental Specialist & Byron Bitsoie, Sr., Department Manager III

**Abstract:** *The Navajo Nation has adopted new Burial and Cemetery Regulations to guide safe, respectful, and culturally appropriate burials. Chapters are encouraged to set aside land for community cemeteries to avoid land-use conflicts. To begin a land withdrawal, communities must submit a brief project summary, GPS coordinates or survey, a chapter resolution, and grazing-permittee consent. These items reserve the land for up to five years, but no construction can start until the required environmental clearances (BRCF and CRCF) are approved.*

**10:00 – 11:25 am**



### **Department of Agriculture**

#### **Navajo Nation Grazing Regulations**

**Presenters:** Raymond Castillo, Principal Extension Agent, and Charmaine Hosteen, Principal Extension Agent

**Abstract:** *This presentation provides an overview of grazing regulations within the Navajo Nation, focusing on the federal and tribal systems that govern grazing permits. Grazing permits are officially recognized authorizations that allow Navajo individuals to use specific range units and land management districts for grazing. It examines the legal foundation of these permits, including relevant federal laws, regulations, and elements of common law, along with the unique eligibility requirements specific to the Navajo Nation. Clarifies the role of permit holders, emphasizing that all permittees must be enrolled Navajo individuals. By explaining these regulatory frameworks, the presentation aims to improve understanding of how grazing activities are managed and overseen.*

#### **Navajo Nation Land Use Permits**

**Presenter:** Lacey Salabye, Principal Extension Agent

**Abstract:** *This presentation offers an overview of Land Use Permits on the Navajo Nation. Land Use Permits are crucial tools for authorizing and managing agricultural activities on tribal lands, ensuring farming is both productive and sustainable. It explains the purpose of land use permits, the permitting process, and the roles of the Farm Board, Grazing Officials, and applicants or farmers. The presentation will also highlight key requirements such as compliance with relevant policies and regulations. Common challenges, including conflicts and disputes, will be discussed to better understand farming on the Navajo. Emphasis will be on responsible land stewardship, protecting natural resources, and aligning farming practices with long-term health. The goal is to raise awareness, promote transparency, and support informed decision-making for agricultural land use across the Navajo Nation.*

**11:30 to 12:30**

### **LUNCH ON YOUR OWN ( 1 hour)**

- Four Elements Cafe
- Arrows Sports Bar
- Grand Falls Buffet
- Navajo Blue Travel Plaza
- Box Lunches at Coffee Shop
- Hot Dog & Chips Stand

12:45 – 2:10 pm



## **Department of Fish and Wildlife – Streamlining Biological Compliance: Fish & Wildlife’s Review Process**

**Presenters:** Rachel A. Livingston, Navajo Natural Heritage Program & Tony Ciocco, Navajo Natural Heritage Program Department of Fish & Wildlife

**Abstract:** *This presentation outlines the steps taken to evaluate proposed developments to protect designated species and their habitats, whether for homesites or other projects. The process culminates in issuing a Homesite Biological Compliance Form (HBCF) or a Biological Resource Compliance Form (BRCF). The session explains how compliance is ensured with federal and tribal laws, such as the Endangered Species Act and Navajo Nation protections, and introduces the online submission system launched in October 2025, streamlining the process.*

## **Agricultural Resources Management Plan (ARMP) update and timelines**

**Presenters:** Kariann Sokulsky, Environmental Practice Lead, Southwest Region | Wilson & Company, Inc

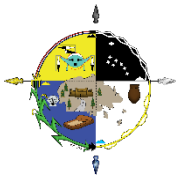
**Abstract:** *Environmental Practice lead will provide an update on the Public Information meetings, schedules and highlight some common themes occurring in the Public Information meetings.*

## **Animal Control Program: Laws and Regulations Feral Horse Survey Update**

**Presenters:** Jeffery Cole, Wildlife Manager, Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife

**Abstract:** *A comparison of feral horse numbers collected from the aerial flight surveys. Is there a change?*

2:15 – 3:40 pm



## **Historic Heritage Preservation Department**

### **Cultural Resource Compliance Process on the Navajo Nation**

**Presenters:** Rolf Nabahe, Sr. Archaeologist, and Olsen John, Archaeologist

**Abstract:** *HHPD oversees the management of cultural resources on Navajo Nation lands, including the Section 106 process for “archaeological clearance” for homesites, business and other development activities. The presentation will provide an overview of the compliance process by navigating the requirements of the Navajo Cultural Resources Protection Act (CRPA, 1988), and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA, 1966), as well as providing an overview of the Jishchaa’ Policy as well as the Curation Policy.*

### **What is NAGPRA, and How does it help to Protect Navajo Cultural Lifeways.**

**Presenters:** Timothy Begay, Anthropologist, and Erik Stanfield, Sr. Anthropologist

**Abstract:** *The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA, 1992) provide a mechanism for Indian Tribes to reclaim human remains and ceremonial items from collections across the country. We will provide an overview of the HHPD’s repatriation activities since the inception of the act. We will also touch upon Navajo items in international collections.*

### **Protecting Navajo History and Resources in the General Southwest.**

**Presenters:** Cassidy Morgan, Program and Project Specialist, and Erik Stanfield, Sr. Anthropologist

**Abstract:** *HHPD works with various federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) outside the Navajo reservation to protect important places in*

the cultural lifeways of the Navajo People. The Navajo Nation has worked to Bears Ears National Monument (BENM), the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM), and the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kuveni-Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument (BNIK).

### **Kin Sani, What Can Historic Buildings Tell Us?**

**Presenter:** Lukai Nez, Sr. Archaeologist

**Abstract:** Historic buildings can be found throughout the Navajo Nation and some of them are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. We will review the Nation's stock of historic properties and provide how they are evaluated i(and protect?) in the cultural resources' compliance process. Kin sani can also tell us about our collective history since the establishment of the Navajo Indian Reservation.

**3:45– 5:10 pm**



### **Water Resources – Pending abstract Northeastern Arizona Water Rights Settlement**

**Presenters:** TBD

**Abstract:** Arizona Congressional Senators and Representatives reintroduced the proposed Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement (S. 953) to ratify and fund the settlement agreement between the Arizona, Navajo Nation, the Hopi Tribe and the San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe and other Arizona parties. The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs held a Congressional hearing for the Northeastern Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement on March 11, 2026, in Washington D.C.

### **Western Navajo Phase 1 Projects**

**Presenters:** TBD

**Abstract:** Department of Water Resources has contracted with B4 Enterprises to construct a water treatment plant, water lines and associated facilities to provide additional water to community of Lechee and businesses in the Antelope Canyon area as a surface water component that is part of Western Navajo Project's Phase 1. Department of Water Resources also completed the additional water well, pipeline and associated facilities near Bodaway Gap as a groundwater component. Finally, NECA has been contracted to construct additional water booster stations to provide more water towards Cameron.

**5:10 pm**

**RECESS – Please join us for the Round Table Discussion to ask questions.**

**7:00 pm to 9:00 pm Round Table Discussion:**

### **“Ice Cream Social”**

Interacted with Division of Natural Resources Managers and staff to receive information about your respective chapter's initiatives.

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**Wednesday, April 29, 2026**

**8:00 am**

**RECAP**

8:10 – 9:35 am



## Department of Resource Enforcement Natural Resource Investigations

**Presenter:** Sergeant Darryl Billy and Ervin Scott, Criminal Investigator

**Abstract:** *DRE investigates numerous Natural Resource incidents and challenges to complete a thorough investigation by proving the elements of crime. What can we do to better assist law enforcement officers to compile information and preserve crime scheme? What latest technology can the public consider and how to use it for their benefit?*

### Livestock Issues

**Abstract:** *Livestock has been and will continue to be the livelihood of the Navajo People. What recommendations and methods to maintain their valuable livelihood.*

### Current Activities

**Abstract:** *Look at what the Department of Resource has accomplished in the past years.*

9:40– 10:30 am



## Minerals Department Stewardship, Revenue, and Responsible Development.

The Minerals Department's presentation at the 2026 DNR Expo will focus on three major aspects: Stewardship, Revenue, and Responsible Development. Those pillars reflect how the Department's work contributes to the Nation's future, manages mineral resources, and supports the development of energy-related projects.

**Presenters:** Bryan Benally – Delegated Minerals Director, Richard Carlton - Senior Geologist, Rebecca Gilchrist - Senior Mining Engineer, Krishna Baskota - Principal Mining Engineer and Brian Tsingine - Senior Mining Engineer

**Abstract:** *The Minerals Department presentation will highlight its role in managing Navajo mineral resources through stewardship, revenue generation, and responsible development, and its participation in energy-related projects and activities. Topics will include:*

- **Stewardship.** *Application of technical review, compliance, and reclamation practices to ensure responsible management and long-term sustainability of Navajo lands. This includes the role of federally supported programs in pre-development, active operations, and post-mining activities, with a focus on environmental safeguards and compliance oversight.*
- **Revenue Generation.** *Revenue derived from coal, oil, gas, and other resources and activities, and the Department's role in royalty verification, valuation, and audit coordination to ensure fair and accurate returns. The presentation will also highlight how these revenues support essential public services, including education, healthcare, public safety, and other government programs.*
- **Responsible Development.** *Participation in project review processes, including the Navajo 164 Review, mineral impact assessment, and coordination with Navajo Nation leadership. The Department also supports other Navajo Nation entities in the review and negotiation of mining contracts, mineral development proposals, and related activities.*
- **Energy-Related Participation.** *Brief overview of the Department's role in supporting energy-related projects through technical input, land valuation, coordination, and project evaluation, helping ensure that potential energy projects are conducted responsibly and benefit the Nation.*

**10:35 to 11:20 am Navajo Energy Opportunity for Navajo Nation**

**Presenters:** Sam Woods,

**Abstract:** *The Navajo Nation Energy Office serves as the foundational engine of innovation by integrating major trends in energy and technology with infrastructure, capital, and natural resources to generate self-sustaining revenue that improves and secures the standard of living for its people and communities.*

*Join us for a discussion on the factors driving opportunity: macroeconomic conditions, geopolitical forces, new technologies, and the benefits and opportunities for small businesses and their stakeholders.*

*How can the nation best leverage its abundant natural resources to seize this unprecedented opportunity?*

**11:20– 12:20 pm**

**LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**

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**12:35 – 2:00 pm**



**Navajo Forestry Department**

**Forest Product Permitting**

**Presenter:** Michael Yazzie, Principal Forest Technician

**Abstract:** *This presentation will provide information regarding the Navajo Nation Forest and Woodland Regulations, RCMA-48-01, that includes forest products use or transportation through permit authorization. Permit requirements, types of permits, permit availability and cost for forest products will be presented.*

**Capital Improvement Project Planning:**

**Presenter:** TBA

**Abstract:** *With ARPA, the construction of various capital improvement projects has increased on the Navajo Nation, such as powerlines, water and wastewater lines and road improvement projects. This presentation will provide information on requirements on how to obtain a tree harvesting permit for capital improvement projects, where tree removal may be necessary for a clear zone of varying widths and lengths as part of construction plans.*

**Navajo Forestlands Integrated Resource Management Plan**

**Presenter:** Frankie Thompson, Program Manager II

**Abstract:** *This presentation will provide information regarding the Navajo Forestlands Integrated Resource Management Plan (IRMP), RDCD-110-18, which comprises of five areas on the Navajo Nation. Information presented will include the process in which the plan was developed, the important issues the public determined, and present a management approach for guidance to the Navajo resource departments to address needs for more active management of natural resources within these areas.*

2:05 – 3:30 pm



### Navajo AML / UMTRA

**NAMLRD processes, innovation, application, and collaboration in hazardous waste management, environmental health, and economic impact.**

**Presenter:** Cory Dayish, Environmental Specialist NAMLRD

**Abstract:** *The Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Department presents its work at the DNR Expo under the theme, “Preservation of natural resources through innovation.” This presentation outlines the department’s integrated strategies for hazardous waste management and abandoned mine land reclamation across Navajo Nation. The primary objective is to mitigate environmental and public health risks associated with legacy uranium and hard rock mining while advancing sustainable land use. Methods include the application of technical and regulatory expertise in site assessment, remediation design, and implementation, coupled with robust community engagement practices. The department actively collaborates with local stakeholders to incorporate cultural values and community priorities into project planning and execution. Results from ongoing projects demonstrate measurable reductions in environmental hazards and increased opportunities for local workforce development and land revitalization. Community-based initiatives further support economic development and long-term stewardship of reclaimed sites or impacted communities. This work highlights the importance of interdisciplinary and community-centered approaches in addressing complex environmental challenges. The Navajo AML Reclamation Department’s model illustrates how innovation, technical expertise, and stakeholder collaboration can effectively contribute to the preservation and sustainable management of natural resources.*

3:35– 5:00 pm



### Navajo Parks and Recreation Department

**Enforcement at all Navajo Nation Tribal Parks**

**Presenter:** Alvina Arviso, Department Manager III & Sergeant Travel Fuller

**Abstract:** *Navajo Parks and Recreation Department has several park locations across the Navajo Nation including Bowl Canyon/Asaayi Lake, Four Corners Monument, Lake Powell Navajo Tribal Park, Little Colorado River, Monument Valley, Tseyi’ Dine Campground-Cottonwood Campground, Tse Bonito Tribal Park, Navajo Nation Museum and Window Rock Veterans Park. Each location has a number of Tour Operators and Vendors who contribute to the cultural experience at each park location. Due to the number of visitation during our peak season May – October there has been an increased need to address enforcement in all facets of our day to day operation. The department will provide an overview of Navajo Nation Codes and Navajo Nation Regulations with which our department operates.*

5:00 pm

**Closing Remarks**

**Grand Prize**

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## DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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