



The Navajo Nation
Yideeskáądi Nitsáhákees

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Navajo President Buu Nygren signs historic Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement with Hopi Tribe, San Juan Paiute leaders

PHOENIX – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren joined leaders from the Hopi Tribe and Southern San Juan Paiute Tribe to sign the historic Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement at the Heard Museum here today.

The agreement proposes to bring reliable, safe and clean drinking water to the tribes. It ensures a permanent homeland for Diné, Hopi and Southern Paiute peoples.

The signing ceremony included President Nygren, Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalne Curley, Hopi Tribal Vice Chairman Craig Andrews and San Juan Southern Paiute President Robbin Preston, Jr.

Flagstaff Mayor Becky Daggett, Central Arizona Water Conservation District Board President Terry Goddard and Associate General Manager and Chief Water Resources Executive for the Salt River Project Leslie Meyers joined the tribal leaders for the ceremony. In total, at least 39 parties are involved in the settlement.

“We’ve come together and put our differences aside,” President Nygren said. “In Navajo, one of these things I like to say, ‘Yideesk’áądi Nitsáhákees’ – think for the future. And that’s what we are doing today. We have come together today to reflect and put our differences aside and plan for the next 100 years.”



Leaders of the Navajo Nation, Hopi Tribe and San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe and others gather in Phoenix July 17 to sign the historic Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement at the Heard Museum here today.

Congress needs to pass legislation to approve the settlement that includes \$5 billion for water infrastructure projects for the three tribes.

On July 8, the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Act of 2024 was introduced in

Congress. The settlement addresses the tribes' water settlement claims in Arizona.

Hopi Vice Chairman Andrews said the settlement ends decades of litigation and the uncertainty of water for tribes, towns and cities in northern Arizona.

"This is not just an Indian water settlement," Andrews said. "It is an Arizona water settlement."



Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren addresses an auspicious group at the Heard Museum for a historic signing of the long-sought Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement. "We've come together and put our differences aside," President Nygren said. "In Navajo, I like to say, 'Yideesk'áqdi Nitsáhákees' – think for the future."

He explained that unity and collaboration has been a key strategy for all 39 parties to make this "Herculean" agreement possible.

President Nygren said this water settlement ensures that the Southern Paiute Tribe gets water and land set aside for its own territory.

In total, the Navajo Nation will secure its water claims and build water infrastructure that will connect Navajo communities in Arizona. Those projects include *the liná Bá - Paa Tuwaqat'si* Pipeline, Southwest Navajo Regional Project, Ganado Area Project, Code Talker Lateral, Black Mesa Project, Four Corners Project, Kayenta Area Project, Lupton Area Project and local ground water projects.

"Most importantly, what this settlement secures is a permanent homeland for our children," Speaker Curley said. "We got to protect what is theirs for the next 100 year, 200 years, 300 years."

Next week, tribal leaders will lobby congressional leaders for the passage of the Arizona water settlement, President Nygren said.

"Let's keep the momentum going and let's get this across the finish line," President Nygren said. "Water is life and there is nothing we can't do without water."

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