



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Resources and Development Committee approves right-of-way for Nazlini Navajo Route 27

TSE BONITO, N.M. – On Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee recommended approval of Legislation No. 0271-16, which seeks to approve the right-of-way for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Navajo Region Division of Transportation for future road improvements for Navajo Route 27, located between Chinle and Nazlini, Arizona.

According to a Chinle Chapter resolution passed on Feb. 2014, the right-of-way will allow BIA to construct a three lane highway from Nazlini to Chinle and create a round-about traffic signal at the N27 and N7 junction in Chinle.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard H. Pete (Chinle), who sponsored the legislation, stated that the construction of the route has been a prolonged process for many years and emphasized that the community members of Nazlini have been patient for this initiative.

“This initiative has been a progress of hard work for many years. The route extends from Ganado and it passes through the community of Nazlini. The highway from Ganado to Nazlini was completed in 1975 and the initial plan was to have the highway completed from Ganado to Chinle in phases, but those phases were never completed. All the archeological and environmental were completed. The community members of Nazlini have been waiting for this opportunity and they are becoming impatient,” stated Delegate Pete.

According to Nazlini Chapter President Johnson Claw, N27 has been awaiting a complete highway for 60 years. The route was created because a school was built in Nazlini in 1953 but the dirt road has created many problems for residents and school bus drivers. Nazlini community members can't purchase new vehicles because the dirt road will ruin the vehicle rapidly and elders have to travel to clinics but road conditions at times cause them to miss their appointments, added Claw.

“Today, 12 community members of Nazlini joined us to advocate for the purpose of the legislation. They are passionate about the issue because N27 effects their daily lives. The proposed construction of the highway to Chinle will benefit Nazlini and Chinle chapter as well,” stated Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) who co-sponsored the legislation.

RDC member Council Delegate Davis Filfred (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tólikan, Red Mesa) stressed the need for basic infrastructure such as decent roads in the communities.

“I support this legislation because I experienced driving on N27. Our elders need good roads to get to hospital appointments, our families need access to emergency services, and our children need good roads to get to school,” stated Delegate Filfred.

The Resources and Development Committee approved Legislation No. 0271-16 with a 3-0 vote. RDC serves as the final authority for the legislation.

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