

# Memorandum

**To:** File

**From:** D. Kidder and L. Domenici

**Date:** 6/18/2026

**Re:** Summary of Agricultural Resource Management Plan (ARMP) Public Input Meeting – Bodaway Chapter House

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## **Wilson Facilitators**

Tiffany Martin, Dalton Kidder, Marlene Hoskie

## **Location**

Bodaway Chapter House

## **Number of Attendees**

12

## **Key Themes from Attendees**

### **Permitting**

- The amount of time spent between requesting a permit transfer and completing the transfer is lengthy.
  - During this time, people do not want to stop farming or using their farmland. Participants suggested that a temporary permit could allow producers to continue operating while awaiting a permit transfer. This would also allow them to qualify for assistance programs and funding opportunities.
- The Navajo Nation is revising Title 3, and attendees were surprised that representatives were not present at the meeting.
- Participants expressed concern that there is significantly more administrative process than in the past, when permits could be signed during a single office visit.
  - Producers are now required to complete training and develop a conservation plan.
- Some people convert from tribal permits to state permits, and attendees stated that livestock management differs between the two systems.
  - Participants expressed concern that some state-permitted operations exceed appropriate stocking levels because they are not subject to tribal livestock allocations.
  - Tribal permit holders stated they have raised these concerns with the Grazing Committee but feel they have received little response.
- Participants expressed concern that some approvals occur without their knowledge.
- Participants stated that while many producers follow permit requirements, others do not reduce livestock numbers or keep livestock within their designated grazing areas.

- They also noted that livestock ownership is sometimes difficult to determine, making herd management and selective breeding more challenging.

### **Land Status**

- Participants stated that withdrawing land from use is uncommon and that information about the process is difficult to obtain. They also noted that local leadership often lacks information about the process.
- Homesite leases take a long time to obtain, and participants stated that additional requirements often arise as applications progress.
- Participants stated they have lived in the area for generations but feel they are restricted from building homes in desired locations because of guidance from the Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife (NNDFW).
  - They expressed concern that even after contacting their Council Delegate, they received little assistance.
- Participants questioned why other facilities, such as transfer stations, can be constructed nearby while homesites are restricted.
  - They also questioned how frequently NNDFW visits the area and how decisions affecting homesite leases are made.

### **Agriculture/Farming**

- Participants suggested that USDA support development of storage facilities and meat-processing or produce-packing facilities.
  - They stated this would make selling agricultural products off the reservation more practical and economically feasible, as many producers currently travel long distances and package products themselves.
- Participants stated that BIA previously met with the community to discuss livestock tagging and fencing, but those efforts were not successful because promised livestock tags were never distributed.
- Participants stated that while the land can still support agriculture, changing conditions require producers to adapt their farming and grazing practices.

### **Water**

- Participants stated that agricultural water rights exist, but infrastructure needed to deliver water to farmland and pasture is lacking.
  - They emphasized that the cost of developing water infrastructure discourages many people from farming or maintaining pasture.
- Participants stated that BIA has discussed reducing the amount of farmland because of drought conditions.

- Participants expressed concern that many discussions have occurred regarding water rights, but that little visible progress has been made. They suggested stronger leadership is needed to move these efforts forward.
- Participants stated that many earthen dams are damaged.
  - They noted that some individuals oppose rebuilding them because neighboring livestock also benefit from the water.
  - Participants also stated that ranchers from outside the area often have equipment to repair dams, while local producers lack similar resources.
- Participants stated that some livestock do not have adequate access to water.
- Participants suggested improving awareness of wildlife and other animals using livestock water sources so livestock water supplies can be better managed.
- Participants noted that an HPL water line near Coalmine directs water into one area.
- Participants stated that hauling water and purchasing hay are significant expenses.
- Participants noted that, traditionally, people dug along washes to access groundwater and suggested similar locations could potentially be used for water pumps.
- Participants encouraged planning for future droughts and other emergencies by improving water capture and storage.
- Participants stated that drilling wells is difficult because of extensive bedrock.
- Participants noted that they often wait in long lines to obtain water before hauling it back to their homes or livestock.

#### **Outreach/Communication**

- Participants recommended improving advertising and outreach for public meetings to increase attendance.
- Participants stated that broader community participation would help bring additional resources to the area.
- Participants noted that although many residents have telephones, not everyone uses Facebook, and they believe Chapters could provide more direct communication about meetings.
- Participants stated that similar meetings have occurred in the past, but they often feel discouraged because they have not seen meaningful action resulting from previous discussions.
  - Participants acknowledged that project staff appear committed to helping but questioned how effectively information is communicated back to the community.
- Participants suggested providing a presentation showing conditions across the land after project data collection is complete.

## Infrastructure

- Participants stated there is a need for greater access to heavy equipment.
- They noted that organizations may be able to provide assistance but expressed concern that government agencies have not taken sufficient action to secure those resources.
- Participants recalled discussions about developing irrigation infrastructure more than 50 years ago, including installation of water pumps.
  - They noted that drought conditions have become more severe and expressed concern that some remote livestock operations lack adequate management.
- Participants stated that agricultural knowledge exists but that some community members are reluctant to adopt new practices.
- Participants stated that some earthen dams are poorly constructed, allowing water to bypass them.
- Participants noted that NDOT has previously provided equipment, but if it is not regularly used, it is removed and generally not returned.
- Participants stated that road conditions throughout the area are poor.

## Education

- Participants expressed a desire to create more opportunities that encourage younger generations to return to the community.
- Participants stated there is a need for additional education on modern agricultural practices.
- Participants expressed concern that younger generations living off the reservation are losing connections to their cultural identity.
- Participants suggested establishing a liaison or point of contact for agricultural and farming issues on the Navajo Nation.
- Participants discussed the importance of learning to coexist with agricultural pests.
- Participants emphasized the need for better education on how information and available resources are communicated.
  - Mae Franklin, with the Western Farm Board, noted that Diné College recently hosted a workshop demonstrating how native seeds can be incorporated into mudballs and distributed across the landscape to support revegetation.
- Participants emphasized becoming more self-sufficient rather than relying on others.
- Participants questioned how they can teach future generations to farm when reliable water is unavailable.
- Participants emphasized that becoming more self-sufficient strengthens communities and noted that educational resources are widely available for those willing to learn.

- Participants stated that the Navajo Nation and BIA do not always respond to local needs.

### **Feral Horses**

- Participants stated that improved feral horse management and additional assistance programs are needed.
- Participants expressed concern that feral horses consume livestock water and damage fencing.
- Participants suggested developing better estimates of feral horse populations and their distribution.
- Participants felt that reduced reliance on horses for transportation and ranch work has contributed to the current feral horse population.

### **Key Messaging by Wilson Staff**

- The ARMP will be the Navajo Nation's plan.
- BIA will approve the ARMP, but it will remain the Navajo Nation's plan.
- The proposed project area is based on the Navajo Nation's mapping and jurisdiction.
- A draft ARMP will be made available for public review so community members can verify that their input was accurately captured.
- The presentation will be provided to the Chapter.

### **Observations**

1. Only two attendees were present at the beginning of the meeting, with additional participants arriving throughout the session.

### **Of Interest**

- Continue communication with the Chapter and meeting participants as the project progresses.