

Memorandum

To: File
From: D. Kidder
Date: 5/28/2026
Re: Summary of ARMP Public Input Meeting in Tselani

Wilson Facilitators: Tiffany Martin, Dalton Kidder, Marlene Hoskie

Location: Tselani Chapter House

Number of Attendees: 20

Key Themes from Attendees:

- Concern that water levels are getting lower. Water rights are murky. There is a lot of uncertainty about the future, and it causes a lot of people to move into our area.
- There is no control of our population. We need a solution to our state population. The water is getting used up by the states, not leaving much.
- We have indigenous orders recognizing our sacred mountains. But they are taking advantage of us in these areas because we are in federal land. They're asking people to give up their farm/ranchland.
 - These big companies "like Elon Musk and Microsoft" are buying out cities and government and districts.
 - They are buying the land so they can promote AI, putting power plants in new areas. They say either sell your land, or they will take it. Elders are being pushed out of their land.
 - All our water is going elsewhere. They're not looking after us, our land, or our resource, they're just looking for profit from people moving in. That's the cause of inflation.
 - They don't care about our future, and they are ignoring our treaty rights. The government can take whatever they want because we're on federal land.
 - Is this land going to be pursuant to our 161 CFR? (NPL area). All our council delegates are ignorant about this. All they care about is money.
 - Even outside businesses, profit and non-profit don't help us. Our problem here exists day by day and year to year.
 - We try to stay with the policies, but BIA will only give us one homesite lease, but that is a big concern because it makes grazing difficult. If somebody grazes, they should have at least 4 homesite leases. That would help avoid overgrazing because it would allow families to migrate their livestock.
 - There is no land description on the permits, they are only limited by district.
 - Most of these people that own livestock can't afford to ranch full time. So, they have to go out and work so that they can provide for their animals.
 - About 75% of ranchers use water from their homes to water their livestock.
- The livestock are getting into the school area. They tore down the fence, but nobody is fixing it. My livestock has been escaping, so I have to go chase them around.

- The livestock's current lifestyle is not good for them. Every morning and evening I go down to my windmill to make sure that the livestock has water. I turn it on not just for my livestock but for everyone's livestock.
- As for farming, there is none. Peabody took it all, there is none.
- For grazing, we are overgrazed, nobody takes care of their livestock here. Horses and cows are roaming all over the place and they destroy everything.
- There is also a lot of livestock abuse. They have overgrown hooves and broken legs, but nobody cares.
- Every single one of us is concerned about water. I have running water, and I have cows that are in the pen all day every day. That's because they have state brands, which NN does not want roaming.
 - However, a lot of people haul water from the chapter. They are only allowed 300 gallons a week. That is not good. We don't want to pay any more than we pay now. They are jacking up the prices on us.
 - We have a water well across the road where we can take whatever we want and it is free. A lot of people drink from that well, even though the chapter says it isn't safe, but they have to do it because of financial constraints.
 - The chapter is putting a toll on wells, saying that you have to pay to get water from it. I have seen a man come to the chapter with 2 water jugs. He said they would last him two weeks, but he can't even afford to fill the two jugs.
 - Window Rock is too busy fighting amongst themselves, so they don't care about us. Right now, they will take the comments that you guys are writing down, put them on a desk, and let dust collect.
- I want to help the community. Water sources and conservation are very important to us. We have experienced Peabody waste a lot of water from us. We don't even have any springs anymore because Peabody drained it all, and that water was never replaced.
 - Peabody still tells us they didn't use that much water.
 - We are short on water for our livestock and even for us to drink.
 - The price of water is increasing, but our incomes and our Social Security will not.
 - We say no when things come up that use water (in a government voting context).
- We have an issue with feral animals. There are a lot of unbranded animals. You can see all the horses, sometimes even on the inside of the fence. We try to work with some kind of mitigation, either NN or BIA to help us reduce those animals.
 - BIA points to NN and NN points to BIA, both saying 'no money'.
 - Navajo people are being blamed for the overgrazing. We try to tell them it is the feral animals, but they don't listen. That's why we're reduced to 10 sheep units. We hear that they are going to try to enforce 10 sheep on you.
- We get presentations from RDC and BIA, but the presentations are always sand dunes. We sued BIA for \$554 million. That money is working against us now, because BIA is saying "trust responsibility", so they know we won't sue them again.
- We have "sovereignty", but it doesn't work like that. BIA has a stranglehold on our land.
- I wonder if your ARMP will address range units. There can only be so many permits within a range unit.

- It establishes stocking rate by carrying capacity. 25% of that carrying capacity is dedicated to wildlife, leaving us with even less. In our range unit, there is room for 20 or 30 permits, but only 5 or 6 will get it.
 - 25 CFR 167, I'm wondering when they implement this plan, if changes will happen to 167?
- Must be aware of homesite leases vs grazing land. The constraint is the BIA oversight.
 - Even though our Council Delegate says we're sovereign, the BIA still rules over us. It is supposedly reserved land for us, but they can take it back in the future.
- Our goals: we need to get feral animals reduced somehow. The excuse is that there's no money.
- We need more water conservation. I know there are old dams that are not being used, maybe we can restore some of those.
 - This would help bring the water table back up and reduce erosion.
- I'm trying to get my late mother's permit back, but they told me I wouldn't get it back for several years. So, I am grazing illegally, but I'm not worried because there's no enforcement!
 - Recently I travelled to New York, and I can't believe how much water they have.
- On the reservation, we have to go through a lot of learning processes to utilize water and land resources.
 - Land? We don't have land. We have Reservation.
- Our grandfathers and grandmothers were being taught how to farm. Then, came along official formal school "BIA school, off-reservation schools". Now, our children are being educated in the white-man's way.
- The land we live on has no water. We can only farm right along the river, anywhere else is too inefficient.
- If we want to get good farmland, we have to go through a lot of processes, including a homesite lease. We can't buy land here.
 - On the Reservation in AZ, we have nothing. Our own tribal government is now the white-man's government.
- I like presentations that teach us things we can implement. Feral horses and cows are roaming around, which makes ranching difficult. It would be ideal to make some money off all the roaming livestock.
 - If BIA wants to come take our land, I'm willing to sell it (better to make money out of the land some way).
- Another goal is: in these communities, why can't the NN put up water wells for us? At least 10 water wells in each chapter. Instead of just one well that belongs to the government. Put up water wells that people can use without tolls. If the water is coming out of the ground, it belongs to the people living on top of it. I see water wells down near Leupp.
 - It is very true that when Peabody came, they took all our water.
 - When I was a little girl, there used to be little streams coming down from the hills. When Peabody came in, it all got depleted. Window Rock needs to know that. They're just looking the other way. Stress to them: we need water wells.
- When grazing permits were originally introduced, they were part of our treaty rights. Those permits were adequate. We used to get a \$1,000 allowance with the permits, but that was discontinued 10 yrs later.

- We only have shallow wells for our livestock. Our only deep well is in Pinon, it serves the whole area. We need more deep wells, maybe one at each chapter would be enough.
 - We pay AZ public services and SRP to use water. We are paying for our own water when we turn on our faucet.
 - Each chapter should be allowed to do their own water management and development.
 - Also, we probably need to sue the BIA for all the money that is missing for permit holders to develop their corals, farmland, and equipment. People can't farm because they don't have the equipment or irrigation.
 - We tried to develop a reservoir dam in Tachee, but there was an issue with uranium, so we had to back off from that. I'm not an official, I'm just a desperate person. We want our youth to be educated in our culture and customs. We have to change our government. Everyone lies to us. If the community came back together and we were able to select our own leader, then we would have a real government. Our elders would migrate their livestock by season. Our youth are not learning these things in schools.
- The soil is dry. Just here and there will be wet. We're trying to do something about it, but we still have to haul our water to make a plant grow. It's not raining. We need to pray hard so we can get some rain. They say that something is going on on our land. Things aren't going the right way anymore. In Many Farms, people used to farm a lot, but they're not there anymore because it's dry. Down in the Hopi area, they can't grow anything. We need water, that is our main issue. A lot of people ask what are we going to do? They're worried about keeping their livestock, which is their food. The price of groceries is getting high. Some people don't have enough. Gas runs out quick, and it is hard to afford.
- We need more dirt tanks (cheap solutions) to water. Windmills cost a lot of money. We need to be ready for the rain if/when it comes. NN doesn't want to come hear our complaints because they're scared. Everyone's main complaint is water. (Hard to capture exact words, but he gave the sentiment that NN is using this project as PR, they are not interested in fixing anything). This is just what they're doing to us next. Maybe back then all the elders knew how to pray about the rain, but nowadays, who knows? They didn't pass their knowledge down, they died with it. They used to plant and raise corn, but now, who knows how to do that? If more people come out (to these meetings), it will be a lot better. NN knows they have the power, but they don't want to show up. The more people we have on board, the more power we have. But even my people (general community members) don't want to show up. It is hard to utilize the rain we do get because it runs off so quickly.
- Concern with timetable for how often the Plan can change. How adaptable is? Will this plan provide some native seeds to help regrow natural grass (or something along those lines)?

There's a lot of prairie dogs that eat up the vegetation. Once this plan is implemented, will they have lessons on erosion prevention, grazing, etc.?

- “Our branding (being from the reservation) makes a big difference.” When we take our livestock to auction, we get ~60-70 cents a pound. Outside of the NN, ranchers get ~1 dollar a pound. They say it's cheaper because it is from federal land. Even though our meat has more lean meat than the feed lot meat. So, there's something fishy going on. The hay that they bring us, they say is from CO, but it's not. They bring in hay with weeds. We have more weeds than grass. (He knows the hay is not from CO, because it has to be up to a certain standard to be sold out of state, which the hay they receive is not up to). Quality hay is very hard to find. Things are hard because of injustice. It's interesting that no chapter officials are here. The NPL grazing permits are being reissued with 10 sheep heads. If we could get those bumped up to 50 or 60 heads, that would really help us out. Rain depends on our livestock and wildlife.

Key Messaging by Wilson staff:

- The ARMP is to be the Nation's Plan.
- BIA will approve the ARMP, but it will be the Nation's Plan.
- Proposed Project Area is based on Nation's mapping and being part of the Nation.
- A draft ARMP will be made available for “your” review “to see if we got it right”.
- Presentation will be sent to Chapter.

Observations:

1. General sentiment at this meeting was extremely helpful. Attendees were very grateful.
2. Switched to a meat and cheese + vegetable tray for snacks at this meeting instead of donuts. These healthier snacks seemed to be far more popular than the donuts ever were.

Of-Interest:

- Renee Benally from BIA showed up about 2 hours into the meeting and left after about 30 mins. No team members got the chance to speak with her.
- The Nazlini Grazing Official spoke for ~20 minutes in Navajo. Marlene wrote notes and said that because she wrote notes, she would not bother translating the whole thing verbally. His comments are therefore not reflected in this document.