STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARATION

THE NAVAJO NATION COMMISSION ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RE-AFFIRMS THE DROUGHT DECLARATION STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS:

1. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C, §§ 881 and 883 (A) and (C), the Navajo Nation Council established the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management (CEM) to coordinate emergency and disaster relief service by Navajo Nation and non-tribal entities in conjunction with the Department of Emergency Management; and to recommend to the Navajo Nation Council legislation or other appropriate activity regarding natural and man-made emergencies; and

2. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C, § 884 (B) (1), the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management (CEM) is responsible for declaring a Navajo Nation state of emergency with the concurrence of the President of the Navajo Nation; and

3. Pursuant to 2 N.N.C, § 884 (B) (2), the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management will assist in seeking assistance from federal, state, and other tribal governments, local and private agencies to address emergency and disaster related situations; and

4. The Navajo Nation Emergency Drought Re-Affirmation of July 23, 2012, is still in effect until such time as it is rescinded. Cumulative precipitation deficits accumulated during recent years contribute to long-term drought conditions which warrant a re-affirmation of the Drought Declaration; and

5. On June 11, 2013, the Arizona Governor’s Drought Inter-Agency Coordinating Group (ICG) recommended that the state’s Drought Emergency Declaration (PCA99006) and Drought Declaration for the State of Arizona (Executive Order 2007-10) remain in place; and

6. On January 9, 2013, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) declared 597 counties in 14 states primary disaster areas due to the ongoing drought. It was the first disaster declaration of 2013. The 597 primary counties designated as disaster areas correspond to the following states: Alabama (14); Arkansas (47); Arizona (4); Colorado (30); Georgia (92); Hawaii (2); Kansas (88); Oklahoma (76); Missouri (31); New Mexico (19); Nevada (9); South Carolina (11); Texas (157); and Utah (17); and
Significant reductions in precipitation exist, where the Chinle Agency is 71% of average; Eastern Agency is 47% of average; Fort Defiance Agency is 38% of average; Shiprock Agency is 45% of average; and Western Agency is 35% of average for May 2013; and

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) - National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center latest release of the U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook predicts that from mid-May to the end of August drought will persist or intensify in most of the state with drought conditions developing in Arizona and along the Colorado River through August of 2013; and

El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO): ENSO-neutral conditions are expected to continue through the summer with above average temperatures and below average precipitation, resulting in reduced surface water flows which will impact regional Navajo livestock and municipal wells used for drinking water, particularly alluvial wells, which are more prone to the affects of drought, resulting in less recharge, lower static water levels, lower yields; and

Approximately 5,000 stock ponds exist on the Navajo Nation, and as the water supply diminishes and evaporates, more pressure will be put on the 900 Navajo Nation windmills and numerous municipal wells used for drinking water; and

Drought conditions have created a critical shortage of water and range feed for livestock, which will result in the generally poor physical condition of livestock and increase in disease; the land condition will continue to deteriorate, and the socio-economic framework of the Navajo Nation will be negatively impacted. The livestock owners and farmers will need to plan to protect and preserve their land and their livestock; and

Excessive livestock and overgrazing is directly related to drought vulnerability and lack of adequate vegetation for rangeland; this destructive practice adversely affects vegetation and natural ecosystems for many years, if not permanently; and

The Navajo Nation has issued an Executive Order of Fire Restriction effective June 11, 2013, signed by President Shelly. The probability of catastrophic wildfire is extremely high which may result in loss of homes, animals, forest, vegetation, land erosion and negatively affect the air quality; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management re-affirms the drought declaration State of Emergency; and

2. The Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management finds it is necessary for appropriate Navajo Nation entities to immediately begin and maintain coordination and collaboration with relevant agencies for use of resources to meet the needs of the Navajo Nation public; and

3. The Navajo Nation shall activate available emergency resources such as funding, community education, assistance, and other means as determined fit and feasible to restore and sustain vital community infrastructure.
CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that the foregoing declaration was duly considered by the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management at a duly called meeting in Window Rock, Arizona, Navajo Nation, at which a quorum was present and the same was passed by a vote of 3 in favor and 0 opposed and 0 abstained, this 27th day of June 2013.

Herman Shorty, Chairperson
Commission on Emergency Management

Motion: Lt. Emerson Lee
Second: Eugenia Quintana

CONCURRENCE:

BEN SHELLY, President
THE NAVAJO NATION