



The Navajo Nation **DR. BUU NYGREN** *PRESIDENT*
Yideeskáądi Nitsáhákees **RICHELLE MONTOYA** *VICE PRESIDENT*

Via Email

February 17, 2026

Navajo Regional Office
Attention: Deborah Shirley, Interim Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs
301 West Hill Street
Gallup, NM 87301

Subject: Request for Interim Range Technician Support for Nahata Dziil Grazing Permit Holders During ONHIR–BIA Transition

Dear Mrs. Shirley, Interim Regional Director,

On behalf of the Nahata Dziil Community Grazing Permit Holders, the Nahata Dziil Commission Governance, and in coordination with the Navajo Hopi Land Commission Office, we respectfully submit this request regarding the transition of grazing-related responsibilities following the cessation of Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation (ONHIR) operations. ATTACHED: NDCG-2026-02-058

Grazing permit holders in the Nahata Dziil area historically relied on ONHIR assistance for livestock tally counts and verification documentation required for compliance. With ONHIR no longer operational and while the Bureau of Indian Affairs continues to work through the details of assuming these responsibilities, permit holders are currently left without the administrative support necessary to meet ongoing compliance obligations.

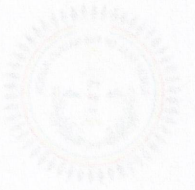
To prevent enforcement actions, administrative backlogs, and unintended noncompliance through no fault of permit holders, we formally request the temporary assignment of an interim qualified Range Technician to conduct livestock tally counts and provide verification documentation for the Nahata Dziil grazing area.

This request is intended as a short-term, interim measure to ensure the continuity of grazing administration and the protection of due process while the BIA finalizes staffing, procedures, and guidance related to the ONHIR transition.

We further request written interim guidance outlining how grazing compliance will be addressed during this transition period.

- Nahata Dziil Commission Governance (NDCG) held a Public Hearing on January 30, 2026, during which permittees expressed their concerns.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and welcome the opportunity to engage directly with your office.



Respectfully,

Sarah Slim

Sarah Slim

Director

Navajo Hopi Land Commission Office

On behalf of Nahata Dziil Community Grazing Permit Holders

- Cc: Sharen Sandoval, Chief of Staff, Office of the President/Vice President
- Bidtah Becker, Chief Legal Counsel, OPVP
- Katherine Belzowski, Deputy Attorney General
- Honorable Arbin Mitchell, 25th NNC
- Navajo Hopi Land Commissioners (NHLC)
- Resources Development Committee, 25th NNC
- Mike Halona, Director, Department of Natural Resources
- Dean C. Gamble, Supervisory, Natural Resources Specialist, Navajo Region
- Ashley G. Curley, Rangeland Management Specialist, Navajo Region
- Jesse Jim, Department Manager, Department of Agriculture
- Lorenzo Curley, President, Nahata Dziil Commission Governance
- Patricia Bitsue, Commission Manager, Nahata Dziil Commission Governance

NAHATA DZIIL COMMISSION GOVERNANCE

Lorenzo Curley, Commission President Jane Benally, Commission Vice President Nora Pahi, Commission Secretary
Melinda Joe, Commission Treasurer Loretta Bahe, Commission Member Arbin Mitchell, Council Delegate

RESOLUTION NO. NDCG-2026-02-058**NAHATA DZIIL COMMISSION GOVERNANCE REQUESTING BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS (BIA) TO ASSIGN AN INTERIM RANGE TECHNICIAN TO CONDUCT LIVESTOCK TALLY COUNTS AND PROVIDE VERIFICATION DOCUMENTATION FOR NAHATA DZIIL COMMUNITY GRAZING PERMITTEES DURING THE TRANSITION OF ONHIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

WHEREAS, On April 18, 1991, the Nahata Dziil Chapter was certified as the 100th chapter, pursuant to the Navajo Nation Council Resolution CAP-36-91, thus giving it the responsibility and authority to protect, to promote and preserve the interest and the general welfare, ensure the safety of the community people and sustain the Chapter government; and

WHEREAS, The Transportation and Community Development Committee of the Navajo Nation Council by Resolution TCDCUA-66-02 approved governance certification of the Nahata Dziil Chapter, pursuant to its Five Management System, in accordance with 26 N.N.C. §102(B), and further authorized the Chapter to exercise local governmental authorities contained with 26 N.N.C. § 103 (D)(1); and

WHEREAS, On January 20, 2008, the Nahata Dziil Chapter converted its governmental entity into a form of government and changed its name to the Nahata Dziil Commission Governance (“hereinafter NDCG”); and

WHEREAS, the Nahata Dziil Grazing permittees relies on timely and accurate livestock tally counts and verification documentation to remain in compliance with federal grazing regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation (ONHIR) historically assisted grazing permittees with livestock tallies and related documentation in the New Lands and surrounding areas; and on Nahata Dziil Chapter; and

WHEREAS, ONHIR has ceased relocation on new lands and operations, resulting in a gap in grazing-related administrative support; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has indicated it will assume certain responsibilities previously carried out by ONHIR, but the transition process, staffing, and interim procedures have not yet been finalized; and

WHEREAS, grazing permittees continue to be subject to compliance requirements under federal regulations, including livestock limits and documentation requirements, despite the absence of administrative support; and

WHEREAS, failure to conduct timely livestock tallies or obtain verification documentation may expose grazing permittees to enforcement actions through no fault of their own; and

WHEREAS, Title 26 of the Navajo Nation Code and the authority of the Nahata Dziil Commission Governance recognize the responsibility to protect local land use, grazing rights, and due process for grazing permittees; and

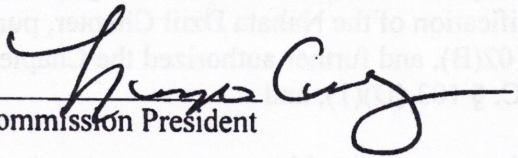
WHEREAS, 25 CFR Part 700 and related federal grazing regulations contemplate administrative oversight and verification processes necessary to ensure fair and orderly grazing management.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

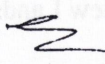
1. The Nahata Dziil Community Grazing Permittees formally request the **temporary assignment of an interim qualified Range Technician** to conduct livestock tally counts and issue verification documentation for the Nahata Dziil grazing area.
2. This interim assignment shall remain in effect **until the BIA fully assumes and operationalizes grazing-related responsibilities formerly carried out by ONHIR.**
3. The Nahata Dziil Commission Governance, in coordination with the Navajo Hopi Land Commission Office, is authorized to:
 - o Communicate this request to the BIA Navajo Regional Director;
 - o Coordinate interim grazing support options; and
 - o Advocate for written interim guidance to protect permit holders from enforcement actions arising from administrative gaps.
4. This resolution affirms that the request is **temporary, necessary, and protective in nature**, and does not waive the Navajo Nation's authority or grazing rights.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considerate thoroughly, discussed and adopted by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstained at a duly called meeting at Nahata Dziil Commission Governance of NAVAJO NATION, Sanders, Arizona, on this 13th day of February 2026.


Lorenzo Curley, Commission President

Motion: Jane Banelly Second by: Norjake

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table ✓ motion
Loeltha Bole  Failed
Second: Jane Banelly 