

RESOLUTION OF THE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE  
NAVAJO TRIBAL COUNCIL

Approval of proposal of Governor of New Mexico in  
his letter dated December 12, 1956, to the  
Secretary of the Interior concerning the  
Navajo Irrigation Project

WHEREAS:

1. The Navajo Irrigation Project as proposed in the Feasibility Report dated January, 1955 was to include two divisions;

- (1) The Shiprock Division of 109,000 acres, located entirely inside the Navajo Indian Reservation.
- (2) The South San Juan Division of 28,250 acres, 26,620 acres of which are non-Indian owned and 1,630 acres by individual Indians.

2. Studies conducted by the Irrigation Engineer of the Navajo Agency since the submission of the Feasibility Report have revealed that a better cost-benefit ratio could be obtained by combining the two divisions of the Navajo Project and reducing the total project acreage to 115,000 acres. Such reduction would also save water for industrial use in connection with the proposed Utah Construction Company coal and power project.

3. In accordance with this study, in a letter dated December 12, 1956, the Governor of New Mexico proposed to the Secretary of the Interior that the two divisions of the Navajo Project be combined, and the total acreage limited to 115,000, and, in accordance with a previous understanding



between the Chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council and the State Engineer of New Mexico and the New Mexico member of the Upper Colorado River Commission, that all the irrigated land within the project be developed solely for Indian use. This would be accomplished by making the irrigable Federal and State lands within the old South San Juan Division a part of the Navajo Indian Reservation, by the Navajo Tribe's relinquishing non-irrigable lands of the present reservation to the State and Federal governments in exchange for the new lands to be added to the reservation. The proposal of the Governor of New Mexico, therefore, is that although the total area of the Navajo Project should be reduced from the acreage contemplated by the Feasibility Report, the actual area for Indian use should be increased from 110,630 acres to 115,000 acres, and that the Navajo Tribe should trade non-irrigable land in New Mexico for an equal area of irrigable land.

4. Before the Secretary of the Interior can request the Congress to authorize and appropriate funds to start construction of the Navajo Project, he must submit the plan to the States of Utah, Colorado and Wyoming giving them 90 days in which to return their comments. The Secretary will not submit a plan based on the above-described proposal of the Governor of New Mexico without an expression of approval from the Navajo Tribe. It is essential that the plan be submitted to the States without delay, so that their comments can be received at an early date and the plan sent to Congress in time for authorization at its current session.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Advisory Committee of the Navajo Tribal Council hereby approves and urges the early authorization by Congress of the Navajo Irrigation Project, in accordance with the Feasibility Report dated January, 1955, with the changes recommended in the letter of the Governor of New Mexico to the Secretary of the Interior dated December 12, 1956, to wit:



"The lands developed should be solely for Indian use, should include the most suitable lands in the Shiprock and South San Juan Divisions and should not exceed 115,000 acres with a diversion requirement of not to exceed 508,000 acre feet per annum."

2. The Advisory Committee further recommends inclusion in the act of Congress which will authorize construction of the Navajo Irrigation Project a provision to permit the addition of irrigable State or Federally owned lands in the South San Juan Division to the Navajo Indian Reservation in exchange for equal areas of non-irrigable lands contiguous to the boundaries of the present Reservation in New Mexico to be conveyed, with the approval of the Navajo Tribal Council, to the State of New Mexico and the Federal Government respectively. In the alternative, the Advisory Committee recommends that such legislation authorize the Navajo Tribe to purchase such lands and that such lands after such purchase be held in trust by the Federal Government for the Navajo Tribe.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the Advisory Committee of the Navajo Tribal Council at a duly called meeting at Window Rock, Arizona, at which a quorum was present, and that same was approved by a vote of 9 in favor and 0 opposed, this 9th day of January, 1957.

*Scott D. Preston*  
Vice Chairman  
Navajo Tribal Council