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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **NAVAJO NATION AND HOPI TRIBE DISCUSS PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE LITTLE COLORADO RIVER WATER SETTLEMENT**



**Both Navajo and Hopi LCR water rights settlement teams came together to establish shared principles.**

FLAGSTAFF, AZ - Navajo and Hopi designated representatives have come together to establish shared principles for settlement discussions regarding tribal water rights for the Little Colorado River basin.

The two Nations came together on March 16, 2016 and on March 30, 2016 to coordinate their response to proposals to resume settlement talks. Both agreed to move forward with negotiations, as "Two Nations, One Voice". Hopi and Navajo designated representatives met again for three days in late April to further discuss guiding principles and other issues related to the potential settlement.

"Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe have committed to work together to fight for water that rightfully belongs to us as aboriginal people," said Navajo President Russell Begaye.

"This is a historic time when the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe will work side-by-side for water that is critical to both Nations, for our people to have healthy water and to grow our economy," he continued.

Hopi Chairman Herman Honanie agreed with President Begaye's comments. "Water is life for both our peoples," observed Chairman Honanie. "It is critical that, although we are two Nations, we must speak with one voice, stated Chairman Honanie.

The Navajo Nation team working in coordination with the Hopi Tribe consists of: Navajo Nation Attorney General, Ethel Branch; Grass-roots Representative, Nicole Horseherder; Professor at NAU in Applied Indigenous Studies, Dr. Manley Begay; Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd; and Legal Counsel for the Office of the President and Vice President, Karis Begaye.

The Hopi Tribe's team includes Tribal Council Chairman Herman Honanie, Vice Chairman Alfred Lomahquahu, Jr. and members of the Hopi Tribal Council's Water and Energy Task Team. These include Task Team Chairman Norman Honanie, Council members Malinda Andrews, Bruce Fredericks, Rosa Honani, Lamar Keevama and Wallace Youvella, and Water Resource Program Director Lionel Puhuyesva.

Both tribes have priority water rights to the Little Colorado River and its sources that are the subject of the long-running Little Colorado Water Rights Adjudication. The case was filed in Apache County Superior Court in 1978 and involves nearly 2,000 claimants, including the United States, the Hopi Tribe, the Navajo Nation, the cities of Flagstaff, Winslow and Holbrook, and farmers and ranchers throughout the Little Colorado River Basin.

The Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe are committed to coordinating their positions for upcoming water settlement negotiations. Meetings between the two tribes are ongoing.