



**For Immediate Release
June 1, 2016**

NAVAJO NATION AND HOPI TRIBE CONTINUE WATER RIGHTS SETTLEMENT DISCUSSIONS

Flagstaff, AZ – Representatives of the Hopi Tribe and Navajo Nation are continuing to develop shared principles for water rights settlement discussions for the Little Colorado River basin.

Representatives of both tribes met for two days in Flagstaff, Arizona, on May 31 and June 1, 2016. It was their fifth meeting.

"The teams are making good progress in developing an agreement that originates with the tribes, rather than with other parties as occurred with past agreements. This is a refreshing new approach, and not simply a rehash of S. 2109 or any previous settlement draft," said Hopi Tribe's Vice Chairman, Alfred Lomahquahu, Jr., who is a member of the Hopi Water Team. "It is important that we find common ground on issues related to the two Tribes' water rights," he continued.

Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye stated: "Time is of the essence. The Navajo Nation would like to see a water settlement passed soon, so that we are not sitting here 30 years from now discussing the same issues with even less water to negotiate over." President Begaye added that "federal and state candidates looking for Navajo Nation support in the fall must understand that this water settlement is a priority for the Navajo Nation."

The tribal water teams have agreed to discuss a variety of issues relating to the Tribes' water rights claims, focusing first on developing guiding principles for their negotiations.

The water teams previously discussed shared, on-reservation water resources such as washes, aquifer resources, and springs. This session they discussed Little Colorado River mainstem and Colorado River mainstem issues.

The teams continue to work together diligently, consistent with the notion of "Two Nations, One Voice."

For more information, press only:

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