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## **Hopi Tribal Chairman thanks Navajo Nation Tribal Council for saving land sacred to both Tribes**

Kykotsmovi, Ariz. - Hopi Tribal Chairman Herman G. Honanie today thanked the Navajo Tribal Council for its decision yesterday to oppose development at one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World, the Grand Canyon. The Tribal Council voted against the proposed multimillion-dollar project, the "Grand Canyon Escalade," that included a gondola tramway into the revered Canyon.

That land is sacred to both Tribes. In a letter a year ago, Chairman Honanie urged the Navajo Council not to support the 420-acre tourism proposal planned by a Scottsdale developer, noting the proposal would "irreversibly compromise the tranquility and sacredness" of areas the Hopi tribe has held sacred for at least a thousand years.

"The Hopi Tribe and many other Southwestern Tribes including the Navajo Nation hold the Grand Canyon as a sacred place of reverence, respect and conservation stewardship. It is important to preserve and protect these sites from harm and wrongful exploitation," the Chairman said in the October, 2016 letter to the Navajo leaders.

Though the media sometimes have emphasized differences between the two tribes, Chairman Honanie said, today is a day for rejoicing the Tribes' common respect for each other's sacred commitments: "The Navajo and Hopi people are and shall remain neighbors, and desire to live in harmony with mutual respect for each other for all future generations."

The Escalade tourist attraction and resort would have been located near the confluence of the Colorado and Little Colorado rivers and would have required more than \$65 million from the Navajo Tribe for roads, water and power lines, and communications.

Director Leigh Kuwanwisiwma, who heads the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office, added that the site would have disturbed land where Hopi pilgrimages have been taken for more than a thousand years as part of a ritual initiation for Hopi young men. He added the proposed gondolas on either side of the confluence would go over the top of sites used for sacred ceremonies and construction of the Escalade would destroy Hopi sites.

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