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Hopi Tribe calls for the United States to explore Navajo Generating Station options

Kykotsmovi, Ariz. – In the wake of news that Middle River Power has decided not to pursue ownership of the Navajo Generating Station (NGS), Hopi Tribe officials today called for the federal government to explore other options to avoid an economic crisis at Hopi.

On Friday, Middle River Power announced it would not continue to pursue ownership of NGS, which is set to close the end of 2019. Hopi officials said the news is devastating to the Hopi people, who have been working alongside Peabody Coal, the current owners, mine workers, and other stakeholders to keep NGS operational past 2019. According to Hopi Tribal Chairman Timothy Nuvangyaoma, closure of NGS will have devastating economic impacts on the Hopi Tribe. Tribal Vice Chairman Clark Tenakhongva said that closure will sharply increase unemployment and substantially decrease tribal governmental services to the Hopi People.

“We are disheartened by the news that Middle River has pulled out of negotiations, but we are committed to find a path forward, whatever that path may be, to ensure services to the Hopi people are maintained,” said Chairman Nuvangyaoma.

“The United States Government must either continue to buy power from NGS, or provide the Hopi Tribe with support necessary to avoid an economic catastrophe,” said Vice Chairman Tenakhongva. “The federal government must act without delay.”

Chairman Nuvangyaoma noted that the Central Arizona Water Conservation District (CAWCD) still has an obligation to purchase power from NGS.

“One option is for the United States to step up and ensure that CAWCD lives up to its obligations,” said Nuvangyaoma.

Chairman Nuvangyaoma noted: “Times are uncertain, but the Hopi people have persevered for thousands of years, and we will survive this crisis. That’s certain. The only question is whether Hopi will, yet again, have to bear a burden that should not be ours to bear. For two centuries, the Spanish, Mexican and United States governments have acted and failed to act in a way that has unfairly burdened Hopi with Navajo aggression and expansion. For forty years, scarce and precious Hopi water was exploited to provide cheap power to Los Angeles, Las Vegas and Phoenix. For forty years, Hopi was paid a pittance for Hopi resources that made Central Arizona what it is today. It’s high time for the United States and the State of Arizona to do right by Hopi.”

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