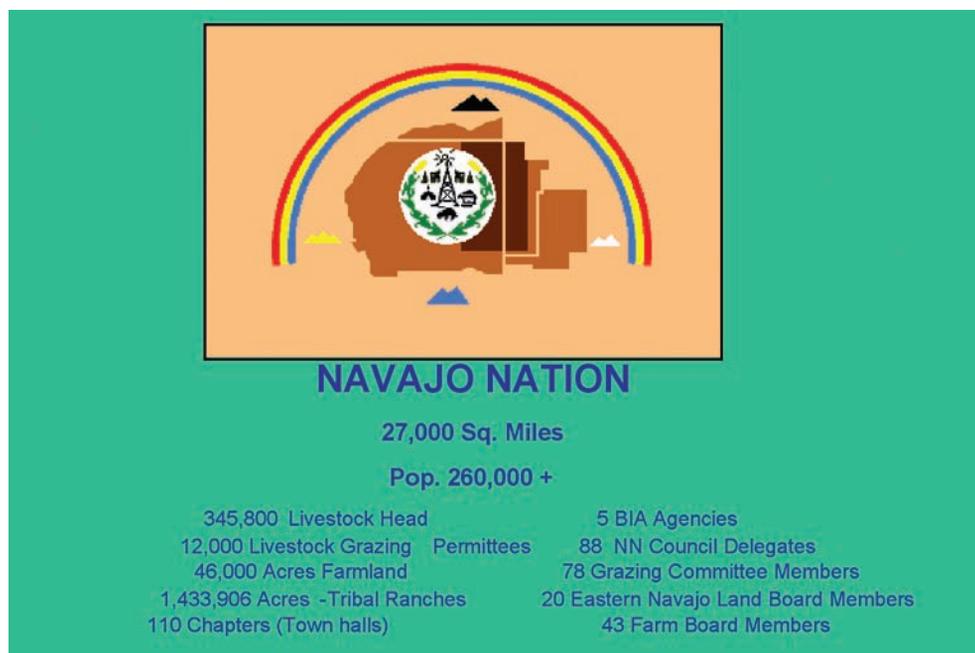


THE NAVAJO NATION AND EXTENSION PROGRAMS

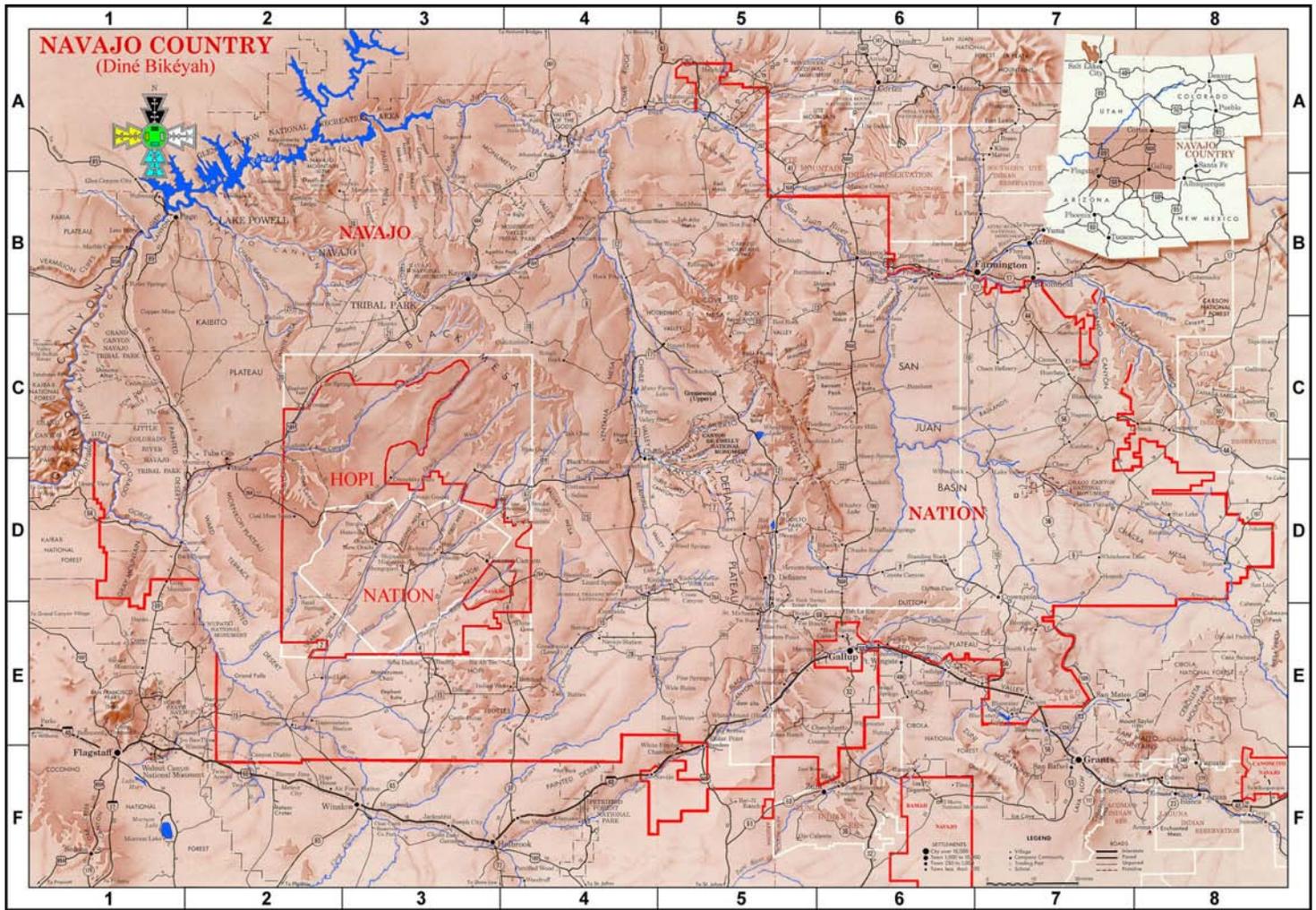


Consisting of 27,000 square miles in the states of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah, the Navajo Nation, geographically, is the largest Native American reservation in the U.S. The total area of the reservation is greater than that of the states of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont combined. The Navajo Nation claims approximately 298,000 enrolled members; it is the second largest tribe in population; over 173,000 Navajos live on the reservation. The population has increased 3.5 times from the 50,000 people who resided on the reservation in 1940. Most homes do not have electricity, running water, or telephones. The Navajo Nation has no urban centers, and most roads remained unpaved (U.S. Census, 2007). According to the 2000 census 298,215 persons declared Navajo ancestry or tribal affiliation. An individual must be at least one-quarter Navajo in order to be an enrolled tribal member, according to Navajo law. Kayenta is the only incorporated township. Most population centers are clusters of housing around schools, hospitals, trading posts, and chapter houses. Navajos generate an estimated \$40.5 million in the informal economy. Much of this undocumented income is derived from family-based agriculture and crafts enterprises. While data

portrays a picture of poverty and desolation, Navajo people still have their strong family bonds, their land and most enjoy a rich cultural, spiritual, and quotidian life based on small-scale farming and ranching. These human strengths, traditional lifeways, knowledge, values, and resources are the foundation of the Navajo people (DINÉ).

Part A: Setting (Geographic, Social, Economic)

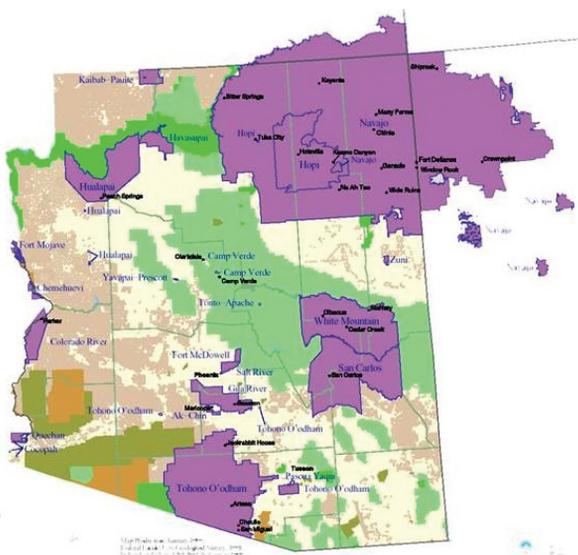
The Navajo Nation (Diné in Navajo language) includes everything important to the Navajo: the land, kinship, language, religion, and the right to govern themselves, known as tribal sovereignty. The Navajo homeland traverses approximately 26,000 square miles (17 million acres) of land, encompassing northeastern Arizona, and expanding into Utah and New Mexico. It is the most extensive land area assigned chiefly to a Native American jurisdiction in the United States. The Navajo reservation is similar in size to the state of West Virginia. Tribal members are often known as Navajo (or Navaho), but customarily label themselves as Diné, which signifies "the People".



In the 2000 census, there were 298,215 Navajo people residing in the United States, and 173, 987 lived on the Navajo Reservation. The boundaries of the reservation border the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation at the Four Corners Monument and include the Colorado Plateau into Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico. The tribal government is situated in the town of Window Rock in Apache County, Arizona. The Diné's traditional territories are bounded by the four sacred mountains, which are: Mount Blanca in the east, Mount Taylor in the south, the San Francisco Peaks in the west, and Mount Hesperus in the north, creating the boundaries of Navajoland. The original territory is actually an area much larger than the present-day reservation.

In most of the Navajo Nation, there is no private land ownership. The land is communally owned and administered by the tribal government. Customary land users may lease land for homesites, grazing, and other uses. Organizations, including the BIA and other federal agencies, churches and other religious organizations, and businesses, may also lease land.

On the other hand, the Eastern portion of the reservation located in New Mexico is popularly called "Checkerboard" because Navajo lands are mingled with fee lands (owned by



both Navajo and non-Navajo people) and federal and state lands under various jurisdictions. Congress established a Hopi reservation within the Navajo Nation's reservation as a historic homeland where Hopi history predates that of Diné in the area.

Communities

Chapter Houses

Diné government has a distinctive system. The Navajo Nation, which consists of five agencies, similar to counties, is derived from the 5 Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) agencies comprising the Nation. Political units are divided into Chapters, which are analogous to towns or town halls. The Navajo Nation Council, with 88 delegates representing the 110 Chapters, holds elections every four years for registered Navajo voters. When restructured in 1991, the Nation's government at the capital in Window Rock developed a system consisting of executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

Language

The Athabaskan language (of Na-Dené stock) of **Navajo** or **Navaho** (native name: Diné bizaad) is spoken in the southwest United States by the Navajo people (Diné). Geographically and linguistically, it is a Southern Athabaskan language (most Athabaskan languages are spoken in northwest Canada and Alaska). The Navajo language is spoken by more people than any other Native American or First Nation language north of the U.S.-Mexico border. There are more than 100,000 native speakers, and this number has expanded over time. At present, many Navajos of all ages speak the language, and over half of the population speak Navajo at home. Many parents still teach their children Navajo as their first language, and the Navajo still use their native language for everyday communication. Census data show that between 1980 and 1990 the percentage of Navajos ages 5-17, who spoke only English, rose from 12% to 28%, and by 2000, the figure reached 43%. On the other hand, use of the language is decreasing in some geographical areas, including urban areas off the reservation, as younger Navajos have adopted the English language as their primary language.

Education

For the Navajo, education is an essential priority; retention of students is emphasized, as there is a very high drop-out rate among high school students. Over one-hundred fifty Public, private, and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools serve students from kindergarten through high school. The local Head Start preschools are the only education program operated by the Navajo Nation government. Students may enroll in post-secondary and vocational training on and off reservation.

Six types of secondary establishments exist on the reservation; they include Arizona, New Mexico, as well as Utah Public Schools and Bureau of Indian Affairs Public Schools, Association of Navajo Controlled Schools and Navajo Preparatory School, Inc.

The Navajo Nation operates Diné College, a two-year community college which consists of the main campus in Tsaile in Apache County. There are also seven other satellite campuses on the reservation. At present, enrollment is 1,830 students; 210 of these are seeking to transfer to four-year institutions.

Economy

The Navajo Nation's unemployment rate is 44 percent, the median family income is \$11,885, and the per capita income is \$6,217, as stated in the Navajo Nation's 2000-2001 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Navajo Nation has the highest poverty rate in the U.S.; over 56 percent of Navajos live below the poverty level. Income is very low, even among American Indians. Navajos spend 68 percent of their incomes in off-reservation communities. Only 35 percent of the 676 privately owned companies are Navajo-owned. The Navajo Nation government offices include an additional 146 employers.

Hundreds of people work in civil service and administrative jobs for the Navajo Nation government. The operation of arts and crafts shops that sell handmade crafts is a major small business opportunity for Navajos. Retail stores and other businesses within the Navajo's reservation or nearby towns also employ residents of the reservation.

Predominant Ecological Types and Significance

The Navajo Nation reservation extends across large swaths of northern Arizona: most areas have an elevation of 5000 feet or more, and consist of high desert scrub and grasslands, pine and juniper woodlands, and river canyons.

Natural Resource-based Economic Activities

Traditional economic activities of the Navajo Nation economy consist of sheep and cattle herding, fiber production, weaving, jewelry making, and art trading. Modern industries that employ tribal residents include coal and uranium mining. Coal is the main source of mining at present.

Agriculture/Ranching

On the Navajo Nation, there are 511,784 sheep units of permitted livestock which includes cattle, sheep, horses, goats, and llamas on the 17,061,885 acres of land. On the Tribal ranches there are approximately 80 individual tribal ranches within the 25 core tribal ranches, in both New Mexico and Arizona. The majority are located in the eastern portion of the Navajo Nation in New Mexico. The Tribe leases ranches out to individuals with intent of developing strategic management plans to promote range improvements in an effort to produce quality beef. There are 843 land use permits on the irrigated Fruitland, Cudei and Hogback projects in the Shiprock Agency. This does not include the numerous traditional dryland farming operations on the reservation, but it brings in \$26,535,295 in gross receipts.

The Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture, located in Window Rock, oversees the management of the Tribal ranches and other agricultural issues; only tribal members manage and are employed by this Department.

Gathering

There are still people on the Navajo Nation that gather piñon nuts and berries. The piñons are cleaned, cooked and sold at the flea markets or roadside stands. The berries are sold in a similar manner, but they are processed to make red berry mush for marketing.

Hunting

The Fish & Wildlife department provides big and small game hunts annually on the Navajo Nation. They also enforce Tribal and Federal laws and regulations pertaining to hunting and fishing. Non-Tribal members are eligible to hunt and fish. This BIA manages this department, employing both tribal and non-tribal employees.

Tourism

Since the beginning, Navajo ancestors treasured the land and prayed it would give them a good life. The quiet stillness of the sweeping landscape – mesas, buttes, canyons, plateaus, trees, shrubs, and sand – reverberates with long-ago ancient echoes of songs, prayers and dances of a proud heritage in a diverse land as culturally rich as it is scenically endowed. Today the earth is still very important to the Navajo and they continue to value it for the life it provides. The Diné Tourism Promotion for Economic Development consists of the following TEAM Partners: Navajo Nation Shopping Centers, Inc.; Diné be' iina, Inc.; Grand Canyon Trust; Kayenta Township; and Navajo Parks & Recreation Department. Tourism provided \$622, 000 in tax monies for the Navajo Nation in 2004 (Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development, 2008).

Timber and Fuel Wood Harvest

The Navajo Forestry department, run by the BIA, monitors the timber industry and the Navajo people continue to use the forestry areas for fuel wood. Timber sales include the sale of tepee poles, logs for Hogan traditional house structures, fence posts and some commercial species, mainly ponderosa pine that are 11.5 inches and above.

Mining

Mining has a legacy that goes back to the late 1800's for minerals such as coal and the early 1900's for minerals such as uranium, copper and sand & gravel. With 1500 employees, mining brings in \$455 million gross receipts. BHP Billiton Mineral International, Pittsburgh and Midway Coal Company, and Peabody Coal Company mine coal on the reservation at present. The Navajo Nation government receives royalties from the mine leases that it uses to fund its programs. The Navajo Nation put a moratorium on uranium mining in 2005 (Kamat, 2008); currently they still discourage uranium near the reservation also (Mineweb, 2008).

Part B: History Of Extension

Under the Bureau of Indian Affairs funding, extension agents implemented educational programs from 1968 up to the mid 1980's. These extension programs were offered in both the Arizona and the New Mexico portion of the Navajo Nation.

Extension Indian Reservation Program (EIRP) was first introduced in 1991, with funding from the U.S. Federal government; EIRP program is administered through the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension system, through the 1862 Land Grant College. In 1991 the first extension agent, Gerald Moore, was stationed in Window Rock, Arizona. Currently serves as the Coordinating Extension Agent for the Navajo Nation Tri-state Extension Program.

In 1994 a second extension agent was placed in Shiprock, NM. Now currently held by Jeannie Benally, four other agents held that position before Jeannie. The University of Arizona will employ a third extension agent in Tuba City, Arizona in 2008

In the fall of 2006, a name change occurred, the EIRP program name is now called Federal Recognized Tribal Extension Program (FRTEP). The major extension programs for the FRTEP on the Navajo Nation are listed in Table 1.

Research Links

Any research studies of the Navajo Nation require documents and interviews with the Internal Review Board for Human Subject studies, and a second interview with Department of Historic Preservation for any cultural aspects of the study. For other data information on Navajo Nation try the web site address at www.factfinder.census.gov.

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Table 1. Major programs and primary collaborators

PROGRAMS	ISSUES	ACTIVITIES	COLLABORATORS
<i>4-H Youth Programs</i>	Need for youth to be engaged in citizenship & agricultural/ natural resource management	Club & project activities at tribal and county fairs.	Local 4-H volunteer leaders. Agriculture program agents.
<i>Youth Educational Programs</i>	Encourage knowledge of the agriculture/ natural resources of reservation	Youth livestock workshops. School enrichment programs.	Local resource gov't agency. School teachers, county extension agents.
<i>Range Programs</i>	Conserving range resources used by livestock & wildlife	Workshops and field days. Range monitoring & range developments.	Local governmental agencies, university specialists, county agents.
<i>Livestock Management</i>	Improving the quality of livestock via management & production. Animal ID system.	Workshops and field days.	Local governmental agencies, university specialist, county agents.
<i>Tribal Ranch Livestock Program</i>	Improve quality of beef and collaboration among ranchers. Animal ID system.	Workshops and field days. Scheduled ranchers meetings to deliver programs.	Local governmental agencies, university specialist, county agents.
<i>Community Gardening</i>	Encourage local food production in efforts to promote healthy lifestyle.	Master Gardener Program. Nurture a Farmers Market Program.	Local governmental agencies, university specialist, county agents

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