



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Diné College Land Grant Office Stresses Importance of Conservation Plan

TSAILE, Ariz. — The director of the Diné College Land Grant Office believes the understanding and importance of a conservation plan was the rationale behind the Eastern Agency of the Navajo Nation registering a recent increase in grazing permits.

And thanks to a collaborative effort between Diné College Land Grant, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and New Mexico State University, grazing permits are on the up-and-up. The three entities worked in unison with producers to complete and develop conservation plans and to bring people into compliance.

“After meeting with all five (BIA) agencies we found the funding source to support two-part-time positions to assist both the (BIA) and the producers on getting as many permit-holders into compliance.”

Litson said such a thing was a bit of a challenge for elderly Navajo residents who weren't computer literate nor, in some cases, fluent in English.

“The Eastern Agency was going to reissue permits, requiring a conservation plan. As we reached out to the five BIA agencies around the Navajo Nation, the Eastern Agency was the sole agency that responded and began working with us. We held multiple meetings and hired two individuals who worked out of the Diné College Crownpoint campus,” Litson said.

From 2014 to 2018, Litson said 315 conservation plans have been put in place. The breakdown of that figure is 77 for 2017-2018; 43 for 2016-2017; 151 for 2015-2016; and, 44 for 2014-2015.

“One of the end results of this is that it has prompted the (BIA) to become more diligent in compliant protocols, including the need for permit-holders to establish conservation plans and to uphold their responsibility as a land-user,” Litson said.