

Diné Bich'iya Bá (For Navajo Food)

2-Day Summit Documentation

Summit website: <https://fornavajofood.com/>

Held at San Juan College, Farmington, NM
May 24 & 25, 2022



Hosted by: [San Juan River Farm Board](#)

Main Contact: Tracy Raymond, SJRFB President

Email: neeshjizhi@yahoo.com

Phone: (505) 486-5690



Sponsored by: [Rocky Mountain Farmers Union](#)



Co-Facilitated by: Sandhya Tillotson

sandhya@sagebrush.ltd & Tom Chee

tomchee44@gmail.com

www.sagebrush.ltd

Photo Folder:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/AtbfMYYSdnzzxJr16>

Ya'at'eeh

Summit Objectives

- Strengthen multi-directional trust between stakeholders
 - Address the issues that are challenging the stakeholders
 - Build consensus and commitment on a shared plan to move forward
-

Agenda

Day 1 - Tuesday May 24th, 2022

- **8:30 - 9:00 - Coffee, Check-In & Registration Table**
 - **9:00 - 12:00 - Morning Session**
 - Welcome & Invocation (SJRFB)
 - Purpose of Summit (Tracy Raymond)
 - Introductory Talking Circles
 - Talking Circles on Vision
 - **12:00 - 1:00 - Lunch Break & Slideshow**
 - **1:00 - 4:00 - Afternoon Session**
 - Talking Circles on Challenges & Opportunities
 - Wrap Up Day 1
 - **4:00 - 5:00 - Social Hour**
-

Day 2 - Wednesday May 25th, 2022

- **8:30 - 9:00 - Check-In & Registration Table**
- **9:00 - 12:00 - Morning Session**
 - Welcome & Motivation (SJRFB)
 - Talking Circles on Solutions
- **12:00 - 1:00 - Lunch Break**
- **1:00 - 4:00 - Afternoon Session**
 - Full Group Discussion on Solutions & Next Steps
 - Wrap up Summit

Sequence of Focus Questions throughout the Summit

1. Introductions - Talking Circles

- Focus Question: Introduce yourself & your role. How have recent events (the pandemic, Gold King Mine Spill, and drought) affected you? What does this mean for our food, farm & irrigation systems?
- *Process: Small groups discussed in talking circles*

2. Our Vision - Talking Circles

- Focus Question: What is our vision for the NN San Juan River Irrigation System? What do we want to see in place as a result of the community's actions?
- *Process: Small groups developed ideas on sticky notes which were added to the virtual whiteboard*

3. Challenges & Opportunities - Talking Circles

- Focus Question: What is preventing us from reaching our shared vision? What can help us reach our shared vision?
- *Process: Small groups developed Challenges & Opportunities posters*

4. Solutions - Talking Circles

- Focus Question: How are we going to overcome our challenges and build upon our opportunities to reach our vision? How can we each contribute?
- *Process: Small groups developed ideas, which were harvested for the Consensus workshop below*

5. Solutions for the Irrigation System - Consensus Workshop

- Focus Question: What are the shared strategies to overcome the challenges, build upon our opportunities and help us reach our vision?
- *Process: Solution ideas were clustered by the full group, by similar intent to develop shared strategies*

6. Shared Solutions: Action Plan for the Irrigation System - Action Circles

- Focus Question: How are we going to overcome our challenges and build upon our opportunities to reach our vision? How can we each contribute? What specific actions can we take?
- *Process: Small groups developed Action Plan posters*

Our Vision for the SJRIS



3. Challenges & Opportunities

- What is preventing us from reaching our shared vision? What can help us reach our shared vision?
- *The following posters were developed through small groups during the talking circles*

Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of vision ● We're not listening to the farmers ● Lack of authority over water ● Laws & policy "ignored" ● Shared solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 100% Farmer support ● Written water management plan ● Improve regulations ● Provide access to youth farmers ● Comprehensive farm inventory
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Under staffed (O&M) irrigation department, funding, other resources ● Lack shared understanding & vision with government ● Prioritize farming in ARPA ● Traditional perspectives of understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access ARPA funding by including farming/ranching ● Federal appropriations ● Non-profit grants ● Re-visioning of government form, ie 3-Branch, exclusive of...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth involvement (interest in PC, cell phones, instant gratification) ● Transfer traditional knowledge (language barrier) ● Convert to renewable energy ● Enforcements ● Marketing - Farm-to-Table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engaging/challenging youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use modern tech ○ Hands on education ○ Community volunteer projects ○ Vocational ○ Winter school ○ Workforce development ○ Pathway - OJT type Government ○ 4-C Economic Development ● Involve elders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traditional crops, processing ○ Classroom teaching, more vocational ● Available resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Water, wind, solar, education ○ Energy transition law NM ● Great workable rules/regs ● Processing, Customers, Economy of size
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funding ● Organize farmers ● Too many stakeholders (political red tape) ● Enforcement of regulations ● Community youth buy-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify resources ● Establish partnerships ● Streamline approvals ● Accountability ● Youth forum in agriculture

Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Centralization in Window Rock ● Equipment not being used. Fees too high? ● Communication lacking - Farm Board > Water Users > Delegates ● Chapters don't post that they need to post, ie plans of operations ● Lack tech savvy people in Chapters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plans of operations needed: storage, rental fees, use of income, proof of experience. ● Fixed income applications. Hardship grants? ● Social media? Text blitz to notify people of important news ● All Chapters should post: Plans of Operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Title 26 ○ FMS ○ Budget ○ Wind system ● Social Media training for Chapter Officials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Probate issues ● Policy & procedures are flawed or unwritten ● Lack of funding ● Increasing farms from 10 to 100 Acres ● Increase water assessment ● Lack of manpower - Irrigation Dept ● Communication - 3 Party Agreement (SJRF, Water Users, Irrigation Dept) ● Irrigation usage - alternate farmers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reassignment of permits/ add survivorship ● Create policies ● Seek funds & grants ● STAC ● Increase water assessment ● Generate revenue ● Respect: better communication partnership with leadership ● Schedule usage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get dedicated group to carry-out PLAN ● Reaching shared vision, seeing it through ● Lack of commitment from all parties (individuals, groups) ● Usually talk, no action. Talk of promises, no delivery. ● Not being resourceful ● Lack of resources ● Land issues stuck in Probate ● Home site vs. farm permits ● Conservation planning responsibility ● Understanding "beneficial use" ● Enough money to implement short & long term changes/upgrades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make contacts ● Find resources ● Meet knowledgeable people that know history ● Outreach in communities ● Implementation of strategic planning ● Communicate with locals to bring resources together ● Land use is documented on the agricultural permit ● Build knowledge of planning long term ● Educate home site lease holders to understand ● Update rules, regulations, policies

Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Carryout Work Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why? ○ Unclear of whom: Government or Tribal/Local ○ No vision ○ Disconnect ○ No confidence ○ Communication: English & Navajo language ● Who is responsible? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Government, agencies, non-profits ● Pandemic ● Hard to approach ● Access to irrigation canal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete at the local level (Chapter Government) ● Streamline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shared vision = Take care of opportunities listed below: ● Cooperation/ Collaboration between farmers (eg - deaning?, laterals) ● “Shared responsibility” ● Change the way we think (modern lifestyles) ● Pressurized irrigation system ● Talking, visiting (neighbors) ● Right of way, boundary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Politics ● Money ● Abandoned farms ● Homesite leases ● Land ● Grave sites ● Teamwork ● Water conservation ● O&M ● Enforcement ● Land issues ● Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Politics ● Money ● Grants ● Traditional values ● Regenerative Ag ● Grass Bank ● O&M ● Abandoned lands ● Greenhouse farming ● Drip irrigation ● Teamwork ● Water conservation ● Land stewardship ● Enforce policies

Solutions

How are we going to overcome our challenges and build upon our opportunities to reach our shared vision?



Investing in Food Sovereignty

6. Shared Solutions: Action Plan for the Irrigation System - Action Circles

- Focus Question: How are we going to overcome our challenges and build upon our opportunities to reach our vision? How can we each contribute? What specific actions can we take?
- *Process: Small groups developed Action Plan posters*

Shared Solution: Assessment of SJRIS Farms: Mapping & Assessment

- Locate list of permittees
 - BIA, NN departments, Farm Board, etc.
- Separate irrigable from non-irrigable land > ie homesites from irrigable land
 - BIA, NN Depts, Farm Board
- Mapping > use Google Earth or ArcGIS to map the plts

Shared Solution: Food Assets & Value Added System

Poster Team: Bree, Jo, Kyle, Yolanda

1. Food Hub (2 years)
 - Management
 - Funding
 - Buildings
 - Grants
2. Seed bank
 - Program
 - Building needed
 - Clayton Deublo guy, Brascoup (sp?) (Traditional Native American Farmers Association)
3. Invest in Research Development - value of traditional crop
 - Tellin our (sp?)
 - Diné College
 - Data management - NTU, NMSU, UNM, U of A
4. Commercial Kitchen
 - Food demonstrations
 - Cooking traditional food
 - Cooking classes
5. Farmers Markets/ Flea Markets (current)
 - SR Farmer
 - Begay Flea Market
 - Kirtland Farmers Market
6. Farm to Grocery Store (2 years)
 - Bashas buying from farmers
 - Policy development
7. Mobile Pop-Up Shop/ Food grocery store

- Ex: mobile food truck
- 8. COOP/ Cellar
 - Modern & traditional storage
- 9. Native-led Non-profits leading Agriculture education
 - Invest in orgs doing the work
 - Navajo Ethno Agriculture
 - Diné Introspective
 - Shiprock Farmers Market
 - San Juan College food hub
 - RH
 - Forward Farms
- 10. Community Resources for:
 - Steaming corn (pits)
 - Corn shucking machine
 - Resources for farmers
- 11. Food/ Farmers Network
 - Which farmers are growing what
- 12. Knowledge holders
 - Classes, workshops
 - Passing the knowledge
 - Elders
- 13. Greenhouses, agriculture tools (take hemp equipment) available in Cudi, Shiprock, Hogback

Shared Solution: Future of Farmers: Youth & Education

- 4H organization
- Future Farmers of America
- *Traditional Chapters workshops
- *Traditional NonProfit organizations
 - Diné Introspective
 - ToohBAA
 - Navajo Ethno Agriculture
 - Soil health
 - Greenhouse
 - Seedlings
- School science & environmental programs
 - Preschool
 - Elementary
 - High school
 - Colleges
 - Present proposals to schools
 - Incorporated Navajo traditional knowledge and language
 - College interns

Shared Solution: Funding our Irrigation Systems

1. AIF - Agriculture Infrastructure Fund
 - a. \$20 million
 - b. Timeline
2. Sihasin Funds
3. UUFB - Undesignated Unreserved Fund balance
4. BIA Project Funding
 - a. Supplemental funds
5. US Farm Bill
6. Gold King Mine Spill Funds
 - a. \$10 million

164 Legislation

- SJRFB
- Agency Council
- RDC
- NNC
- OPVP

- Fund Management Plan
- SOW Scope of Work
- Project Contract

Shared Solution: Admin

- Collect existing rules and regulations by SJRFB by July 30, 2022
 - Navajo Dept of Ag (train manual)
 - Review Farm Board Plan of Operation
 - Review other Farm Board Policies & Procedures (Ganada) and other Water Users Associations
- Develop Draft Policies & Procedures with assistance of Rocky Mountain Farmers Union by August 30, 2022
 - Update progress at this SJRFB meeting
- Get local chapter support
- Presentation to RDC by September 30, 2022

Shared Solution: Partnership & Resources Between Agencies (update if needed)

- Use agency cooperative working agreement(s), job descriptions, revision(s)? to provide customer service
 - NN Gov
 - Fed Gov (BIA, NRCS, BoR, EPA)
 - State Gov
 - Local Gov
 - Our client:
 - SJRFB
 - SJR Water Users
 - Deneh Water Users Assoc.
 - NGO's
- Financial Accountability
- Plan of Operation will follow scope of work
- **Deborah (SR Chapter Vice President) will call a meeting with the Partners**
- Reports & Plans
 - O&M - seasonal
- Non-Government Partners
 - Keller-Bliesner Engineering
 - Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
 - Food Coalition
 - Bethel Church (Pastor John)
 - New Dawn
 - Sagebrush Ltd - facilitation

Shared Solution: Chapter Improvements (Farming Communities)

- Farm Board Representative get involved
 - Go out check ditch. Make sure all farmers are getting the water needed
- Teaching
- Youth involvement. Elders. Put in greenhouse for them
- Start plants and sell to public
- Each certified Chapter involve
- Chapter CLHP farmland
- 20 million
- 5 yr plan

Shared Solution: Better Communication with Farmers & Community

Poster team: Brian Curley-Chambers, Evelyn Yazzie, Ralph Etcitty

Communicate with community members/ farmers by:

- Identify what types of mediums through which they can get information
 - Email
 - Phone (text, pictures)
 - Radio (general announcements)
 - Newspaper
 - Chapter Community Coordinator
 - Social Media (each program & department)
 - Dedicated website with a way to submit specific questions
 - Request forms for logging/ recording public request for information or services (both online & in-person)
- Create a sorting system for public requests to best communicate and address questions
- Task assigned to government program/ department seeking to communicate

Overall Next Steps

This is a collective impact approach to achieving shared goals. It is up to all of us to take accountability for actions and solutions.

1. Participants and stakeholders are encouraged to build upon the relationships started or strengthened during the summit, to follow up and take action (small or large). Reach out and support one another.
2. The San Juan River Farm Board intends to organize a follow-up Summit with stakeholders in the next year, in order to facilitate the continuation of this important work together.

A'he'hee