

My name is Duane Yazzie from the Shiprock community and I make the following statement as a farmer who depends on the San Juan River for irrigation water and as a community leader on behalf of all who depend on reasonably clean water and air.

- Principally due to the coal extraction and burning for the past 45 years, our area citizens experience disproportionate impacts on our health. Our children have high rates of asthma, our elderly have respiratory problems and we have lost too many of our people to black lung and heart disease.
- We are experiencing the impacts of high temperatures and severe drought from climate change, the inevitable increase of climate change can only be curtailed by reducing our carbon footprint.
- PNM said in its Integrated Resource Plan, it would invest in 3 new gas plants and more nuclear, both of which are more costly than renewables. This is dangerous and ill-advised; it is not necessary.
- We expect that it is a given that PNM will clean up the 250 acre site it has contaminated.
- We demand certifiable and independent soil and water sampling to make sure that NO more poisons from this plant leach into the San Juan River and into the groundwater.
- This closure of this dinosaur plant represents a massive opportunity for clean energy and we must leverage that opportunity with 100% renewable replacement power.
- I understand Los Alamos County is investing in 100% solar for San Juan replacement power.
- Arizona has issued a moratorium on all new gas plants to protect ratepayers from high capital costs and stranded asset costs; California has recently rejected gas plants for the same reasons.
- We can conserve and lower our energy consumption. We can use renewable solar and wind and storage and they use no water. So long as the Earth is alive, we will not run out of sun or wind.
- We accept there will be economic impacts, but the continuum of the life of Earth for the sake of our future generations is more important than money.

No doubt this is a contentious issue with tremendous import. There is no argument on the impacts it will have on families, schools and communities. The issue raises raw emotions, pro and con, it is perceived a threat to paychecks, the ability to care for families, to the lives and future of impacted families. This accentuates the extent of our dependency on extractive energy. Nevertheless I must say what I say.

We may have traveled different paths of history, but we share a common destiny. As five fingered human beings we are all children of the Earth Mother and Father Creator. Our creation stories say the Creator formed mounds of earth and breathed life into them. Thus, we have an intrinsic and undeniably relationship with the earth, we are of the earth and we return to the earth. The earth belongs to us all and we belong to the earth, just as a child and mother belong to each other.

The teachings of our peoples concur in that God is everywhere, God the Creator inhabits the vast expanse of his creation. His essence permeates through the earth, therefore the earth has spirit, she is alive, she feels happiness and pain. It is no misnomer that we regard her as our Earth Mother, she unfailingly provides for us, but we are failing her as the stewards we supposed to be.

The Creator made an immaculate balance in all of nature, today the equilibrium of the world is precariously out of balance. The changing earth conditions cannot be denied; the great hurricanes, earthquakes, pollution, drought, wild fires, melting glaciers and rising oceans. It is clear the exponentially increasing exploitation of the earth is ebbing her life thus, accelerating the closure of our collective life. The unmitigated exploitation of the earth must end, we do not want to bring the earth to its demise. Our responsibility is to reason together for the life of our coming generations. Should our priority be economics or the life of our home, the planet earth?

As Indigenous Peoples we retain and maintain the Original Intent. By choice we choose to live as our Creator made us, our physical and spiritual realms remain intact as one reality. Our Indigenous choice is that we want our earth to live, as the life of earth is our life. We stand in defense of our earth; we choose to defend her life and the life of all life.