

Nihi Tsíís Baa
Á'daa'á'dáhoolyá

Stay active
 Stay connected
 Stay positive
 Stay spiritual

Ya'íishjááshchilí
 June – “Month of Planting”

Apr-May-Jun 2022
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Standing Rock NM

Healthy Places-Healthy People Newsletter

Navajo Nation COVID-19 update >>>>

The Navajo Nation remains in “yellow status,” in accordance with Public Health Emergency Order No. 2022-004 available online at: <https://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>. Based on cases from June 10 – 23, 2022, the Navajo Department of Health issued a Health Advisory Notice for the following 63 communities due to uncontrolled spread of COVID-19.

“Health care facilities on the Navajo Nation are now offering the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines for children between the ages of six months old and 5-years-old. The vaccines are the best defense against COVID-19 if you get the virus. The vaccines are proven to be highly effective in pushing back on symptoms and lowering the chances of being hospitalized if you get the virus. Parents and caregivers can reach their local clinics to schedule an appointment for vaccinations,” said Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez.

For more information, including helpful prevention tips, and resources to help stop the spread of COVID-19, visit the Navajo Department of Health’s COVID-19 website: <http://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19>. For COVID-19 related questions and information, call (928) 871-7014.

The Trailhead Sign Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony on May 19, 2022, in Crownpoint, NM

The ceremony of the Hashtl’ishnii (Mud People Clan) Trail of the K’é Community Trails began precisely at 10 a.m. at the Office of Diné Youth (ODY) in Crownpoint, then the participants walked over to the Hashtl’ishnii Trail entrance for see the ribbon cutting. The celebration was to celebrate a new trailhead sign that included the name of the trail, map, distance, safety tips, and rules/regulations for using the trail. Presiding over the ceremony was Daniel Vandever. Mr. Vandever also honored and recognized the involvement from all the supporting agencies who put in their challenging work and dedication. The K’é Coalition serves as the backbone to the planning process. The event included speeches



from local health agencies and the Crownpoint Chapter officials, Rita Capitan and Leonard Perry. Attending in support were the Crownpoint Office of Diné Youth, National Park Service, Chaco Canyon Historic Park, Navajo Technical University, NM Clean and Beautiful, NN Trails Task Force, Navajo Nation Department of Community Development, Indian Health Service, the UNM PRC Healthy Places-Healthy People Team, and Chapter Land Use Planning Committee members from other Eastern Navajo Agency



chapters. The Hashtl’ishnii trail continues to be improved while being used by community members. The Crownpoint community is also working on several other trails in the area. Participants at the ceremony were also invited and encouraged to walk the entirety of the trail when the ribbon-cutting concluded. The trail covers 2.56 miles. The Hashtl’ishnii trail is part of the K’é Community Trails initiative, which is improving health, culture, and educational outcomes around trail development in the Crownpoint area.

HPHP Chapter Updates >>>>

Becenti Community Mapping & Walkability Assessment Workshop: May 11, 2022

On May 11, 2022, a community mapping and walkability assessment workshop was completed in Becenti, NM. The goal of a walkability assessment is to determine which outdoor places to walk in the community would benefit from enhancement to encourage walking and other forms of physical activity. The workshop began by looking at a map of the community. The Community Land Use & Planning Committee (CLUPC) had already identified and begun working on a trail. The 2-mile trail was labeled on a Google Earth map that was displayed for all to see. Located inside the Chapter House tract near a fence, the trail is about 8 feet wide and has already been graded using the Chapter's backhoe.

Workshop attendees noted positive aspects of the trail's location. For



instance, there are native plants growing along the trail, including wild onions and carrots. CLUPC members envisioned planting more bushes and shrubs along the trail to add to its beauty. Archeological clearance is complete. Attendees also noted improvements needed to make the trail safe, walkable, and sustainable, including adding parking, lighting, and signage to alert drivers to slow down. Additional ideas included placement of boulders or other barriers to keep vehicles off the trails. CLUPC would like to enhance the trail with signage in Diné and English that include

names of places, historical events, cardinal directions, trail distance markers, motivational messages related to the benefits of walking, and caution signs to alert to crossings. Concerns about unleashed dogs also need to be addressed for walkers' safety.

The CLUPC's long-range plan is to ensure connectivity so that the trail is accessible to the local Senior Center, NHA Housing, Veteran's building, and the Chapter House. The CLUPC would like to be responsible for maintaining the trail to ensure its long-term sustainability.



TRAIL SAFETY TIPS >>>>

- * **Check the weather before you walk or hike. Bring appropriate clothing layers, sunscreen and any other items to protect you from the elements**
- * **Wear sunscreen and a hat to protect yourself from the heat and sunburn**
- * **Wear appropriate footwear. Many trails, roads, and sites have uneven terrain that can lead to tripping hazards and other obstacles**

Have a safe and enjoyable walk!

Standing Rock Community Mapping Workshop: June 2, 2022

On June 2, 2022, the UNM PRC Healthy Places-Healthy People staff traveled to Standing Rock (Tse'ii'ahi') Chapter House to provide an update on the trail project and conduct a mapping workshop at their CLUPC meeting. We were welcomed by an awesome group led by the chapter president, Johnny Johnson; community services coordinator, Janice Padilla; and members of the CLUPC group. Later on, the Standing Rock Community School principal, Donald Pine, joined this meeting.

The HP-HP team provided Google Earth maps of the Standing Rock area and projected onto the big screen in the Chapter House. One area mentioned was within the Chapter House tract another area mentioned is walking from the Standing Rock community school/chapter house to the main road. According to the school principal, Mr. Pine, the trail is utilized by students and his staff right now. Their cross-country team also uses that trail. Several questions were proposed pertaining to clearances and funding opportunities. They also wanted to invite their Community Health Representative (CHR) and a representative from the Navajo Housing Authority (NHA) to join us on that day. The group from Standing Rock thanked us for coming out and they look forward to our walkability assessment workshop in the near future.



Ojo Encino Community Walkability Assessment Workshop: May 27, 2022

On Friday, May 27, 2022, the UNM PRC Healthy Places-Healthy People team conducted a mapping and walkability assessment workshop in Ojo Encino, New Mexico. Over 10 participants attended the workshop, including Chapter President George Werito; Community Health Representative Sherry Toledo; Ojo Encino Chapter Manager Gloria Chiquito; Ojo Encino Economic Advisor Brandon Velvis; Architect William Brandon; Ojo Encino Emergency Medical Services Supervisor Benji Sam; and Ojo Encino Land Board representative Daniel Augustine.

The group began by viewing the Ojo Encino Chapter compound on Google Earth and looking at the proposed trail. Next, the group walked the trail, noting that it was graded by the Chapter maintenance person. The trail is



7.5 feet across, enabling several people to walk side-by-side, which makes the trail more user friendly. The total trail length is about 3.5 miles and includes three rest areas. The trail will be used by the housing tenants and the school sports teams. The trail is safe to walk on, accessible to walkers at all levels, with beautiful scenery. There is little vehicle traffic nearby and the trail is clear of gopher and prairie dog holes. Some areas to work on include one sandy area and a few unleashed dogs. Recommendations for enhancement include trail signs that indicate trail mileage, warnings about the

dogs, and a crossing sign. Another recommendation is to rebuild and repaint and the final bench on the trail.

There is great interest from the community in future sustainability of the trail. The chapter boundaries encompass a Senior Center, 45 housing units, EMS services, a pre-school, and a elementary school, making trail connectivity across the community a future priority.



Huerfano Community Mapping & Walkability Assessment Workshop: May 13, 2022

On Friday, May 13, 2022, the UNM PRC Healthy Places-Healthy People team conducted a mapping and walkability assessment workshop in Huerfano, New Mexico. We met at the Hanaadli Youth Center and met with Jarvis Mullahon and Randy Larvingo at 10AM. Jarvis is the Projects and Programs Specialist and Randy is the Recreation Specialist at the youth center. We spent about 30 minutes drawing potential areas of a trail using a Google Earth map. Two areas were mentioned during this conversation. One area mentioned was west of the Chapter House. Another area that was drawn on the map was a continuation of the first area that led south of the Chapter House in a rectangular shape that could be about 3 miles in total distance.

We walked the area located west of the Chapter House, which has a distance of approximately .75 miles. As a group, we made several important observations. It is safe to cross the road to get to the trail from the Chapter House parking lot area. There are no clearances needed that they are aware of. The area is full of sage brush that needs to be cleared. There is a small trail area along the path which dogs, or other animals, are currently using. Recommendations are to use the backhoe from the Chapter House to clear out the trail areas. The average trail width is about 8 feet. The school is about 2 miles from the trail area and stu-

dents should be able to utilize the area. There are areas for signs, benches, and bicycles racks because it is in an open field. Suggestions for wording on signs could be related to safety signage and distances walked/ran. The area does have a lot of public traffic on cr7150. The traffic has oilfield workers and employees from the Navajo Nation traveling through, making it a high traffic area. There are no signs currently alerting drivers of pedestrian crossings on cr7150. A safety concern is that the trail is next to the road that has no fencing or divided barrier between the trail & dirt road. The participants also mentioned that a picnic area for families to gather for events that are planned for the Office of Youth Development would be beneficial. These could include health events, physical activities, and

educational events for the nearby boarding schools. There are currently no prairie dog and gopher holes in the potential trail area. There are some concerns about dogs not being on leashes and possible snakes in the trail area. People drive 50 mph, which may make people feel unsafe. Huerfano Chapter events and the trail development events can be merged to get more community folks involved. Some ideas are to get the youth involved to keep the area cleaned and maintained. The youth may also be involved in some projects with planting trees and vegetation along the trail.



VIVA CONNECTS Site Visit with To'Hajiilee >>>>

Laurel Fimbel

On Tuesday, May 10th, PRC members from the VIVA Connects and Healthy People-Healthy Places team visited the community Canonicito Band of Navajos Health Center newly created community walking path.

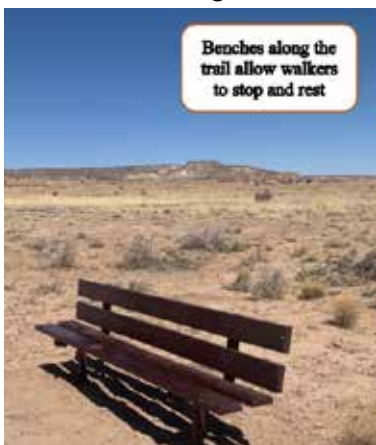
To'Hajiilee is one of the VIVA Connects Action Communities awarded with a mini-grant this year to build a walking path around the health center. The .8 mile graveled walking path, benches, outdoor exercise equipment, and a trailhead sign are all part of this amazing walking path project for all community members to walk and bike along.

So far, many community events each month have been held to increase interest in walking and physical activity. The PRC members are all very impressed with the work, dedication, and enthusiasm that the To'Hajiilee team have put into this walking path for their community!

Future plans include community events at the walking path as well as creating another trail at the East end housing for people to walk along.



To'Hajiilee Walking Trail trailhead with signage and a book library



Benches along the trail allow walkers to stop and rest

Special thanks to everyone who has spent time and energy to create this beautiful path, and to the To'Hajiilee members who welcomed the PRC team members to walk the trail and learn more: Sarah Bitsui, Lester Secatero, Santiago Montoya, and Jim Platero. Special thanks to the PRC team members who attended the site visit: Marla Pardilla, Elverna Bennett, and Cydney Padilla



Exercise station placed along the trail to allow people to play and exercise

Summer Youth Employment Presentations on the Benefits of Physical Activity on Mental and Brain Health

On June 13 and June 27, 2022, the Healthy Places-Healthy People staff conducted virtual presentations for the Crownpoint Chapter House summer youth employees on the benefits of physical activity on mental and brain health. The title of the presentation is "Stay Active: Do It For Your Health and Mind!" The presentation focuses on what physical activity means to our youth. The diverse responses from the youth were great topics of discussion. We also asked the youth about trail building with questions such as, "What is a nice trail to you?" Furthermore, the benefits of physical activity were presented such as improving heart and food health, building strong



bones, controlling weight, and reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression. Prevention of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and obesity were also areas that were presented with the benefits of physical activity. The benefits of brain function with physical activity were also added to include improved motor skills, problem solving, and better sleep with physical activity. Mental health awareness is a common concern among our youth, as well. We presented some facts about how physical activity can reduce anxiety and depression, while improving body image, self-esteem, and self-confidence.

HEALTH TIPS >>>>

Protect your skin from the sun as you stay active in the outdoors this summer! Whether you are walking, running, or bicycling, you should always remember to apply sunscreen.

“The Truth About Sunscreen: 7 Facts That Will Set You Straight for Skin Protection This Summer”

With summer around the corner, smart sun-lovers are planning how to keep their skin safe from sunburn and skin cancer while enjoying the warmer weather. Here are some important facts about sunscreen that will have you loving your skin and the summer at the same time!

- 1** Sunscreen is protective. Sunscreen does protect your skin from the sun’s rays, when used as directed. However, some research suggests that sunscreen users get burned frequently, which may be because they use too little, apply it/reapply it too late, or use it to engage in otherwise unsafe sun exposure, like staying out longer or not wearing protective clothing.
- 2** You have to use a lot. That means a shot glass full to cover the full body, a fourth to a half teaspoon for the face. Studies have shown that consumers use much less sunscreen than is needed to effectively protect, so use more than you think you need, or get a measuring spoon!
- 3** Don’t use it solo; it’s important to use a combination of sun safety approaches for effective sun protection. Sunscreen isn’t an all-protective force field. It is intended to be combined with other sun-safety approaches, like covering up with clothing, staying in the shade, wearing a hat, and scheduling activities to avoid times of day when the sun is most intense (10AM – 4PM).
- 4** It doesn’t have to be greasy. Recent advances in sunscreen technology have led to a variety of improved textures and consistencies of sunscreens, from sticks for those who like to roll it on, to light milks that spread easily and leave no white cast. The days of thick pastes are over, but you still need to apply a lot, so pick a product with a texture you really like!
- 5** It isn’t just a girl thing. Few men look forward to having wrinkles, age spots, or discolored skin. Sunscreen isn’t just a product for women; using sunscreen and other sun-safety strategies is critical for anyone looking to prevent the premature aging that comes with sun exposure—not to mention helping prevent skin cancer.
- 6** Coconut oil is not a good sunscreen. Although some sunscreens contain coconut oil, the oil itself is not adequate to prevent skin damage. Coconut oil may extend the time to burn for some individuals, but the level of UV protection is very low and may be highly variable by source, so don’t rely on coconut oil to protect your skin!
- 7** Sunscreen is NOT a “Do-It-Yourself” kind of product. Sunscreen is a non-prescription drug intended to protect the skin. You wouldn’t strap your child in using a seatbelt you made at home, so why protect their skin with untested homemade sunscreen? If you’re concerned about the safety of ingredients in sunscreen, there are other options. You can move your outdoor activities to morning or evening, when the sun is less intense, and cover up, wear a hat, stay in the shade, and use a store-bought, mineral-based sunscreen.

What does SPF mean? SPF stands for sun protection factor. The SPF value indicates the level of sunburn protection provided by the sunscreen product. Higher SPF values (up to 50) provide greater sunburn protection. To get the most out of your sunscreen, choose one with an SPF of at least 15. If your skin is fair, you may want a higher SPF of 30 or 50. Apply sunscreen at least 15 minutes before you go outside. Reapply it at least every two hours, and more often if you are sweating or getting in and out of the water.

<https://blogs.cdc.gov/cancer/2019/05/01/the-truth-about-sunscreen-7-facts-that-will-set-you-straight-for-skin-protection-this-summer/>

Deaths, hospitalizations remain low amid new COVID-19 wave New Mexico health officials are saying there's no reason to panic

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BY RYAN BOETEL

JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

COVID-19 cases are rising dramatically throughout New Mexico, but several factors indicate this wave won't be as deadly as previous ones, state health officials said.

New Mexico Department of Health officials on Wednesday held the first public COVID briefing in three months to address the trend, which is being driven by a subvariant of the omicron variant of the coronavirus.

The state reported 1,100 new cases on Wednesday and 13 new deaths, pushing the statewide toll to 7,862 since the onset of the pandemic. There were 140 people hospitalized with COVID throughout the state, including nine on ventilators.

Additionally, the Health Department's weekly epidemiology reports — dated Monday — show there were 6,104 new cases and 102 hospital admissions for COVID in the previous week. That amounted to a 54% increase in cases and a 25% increase in hospitalizations from the week before, according to the reports.

Dr. David Scrase, the acting health secretary, said those numbers don't tell the whole story. The advent of at-home testing means Deaths, hospitalizations remain low amid new COVID-19 wave

that only a fraction of cases — the polymerase chain reaction tests taken mainly at health facilities — are included in state data. It's likely the actual number of COVID cases in the community is about three to seven times higher than what is being reported, he said.

But health officials said there's no reason to panic. And Scrase said no state government officials are even discussing a mask mandate or other restrictions.

"I don't think anybody's even talking about that anymore, not even considering it, because we have the tools we need to fight the pandemic," Scrase said. "This isn't about

infections. It's about serious disease. It's about hospitalizations. It's about deaths. That's what we need to pay attention to."

During previous surges, hospitals throughout the state were treating about 700 COVID patients at any given time, and the average daily death count reached above 40 during the winter of 2020.

"What we're seeing with this wave is very different than what we've seen in the past," said Dr. Christine Ross, the state epidemiologist. "Despite this rise in cases and (high) community transmission levels, hospitalizations, ICU admissions and deaths remain comparatively low." Scrase said there are a variety of factors keeping hospitals from being overwhelmed despite high case counts. People have built up immunity through vaccines, booster shots and prior infections. Therapeutics, like the drug Paxlovid, are proving to be extremely effective at staving off serious disease. And the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 appears to be evolving to be less lethal, he said.

"I think we're evolving toward a milder illness," Scrase said. "If more people are getting COVID, and they're not sick, and they're not going to the hospital, that's actually a good thing."

Despite those positive trends, breakthrough cases leading to serious illness are still happening.

During a recent four-week period, there were 238 fully vaccinated people hospitalized with COVID and 11 vaccinated people died. During the same period, 161 unvaccinated people were hospitalized and eight of them died. Only about 20% of New Mexico adults are unvaccinated, so the data still shows COVID vaccines are highly effective, the health officials said.

"We are clearly in a very different pandemic," Ross said.

June 8, 2022



Learn how PRCs are helping their communities get vaccinated against COVID-19.



GRANT OPPORTUNITIES >>>>

NB3 Foundation “Native Youth on the Move Grant”

<https://www.nb3foundation.org/community-empowerment/>

Grant Overview

Based upon the lessons learned through the NB3 Foundation’s initial Native Youth on the Move cohort in the Albuquerque area, these Native Youth on the Move grants will expand access to this funding and collaboration opportunity throughout the state of New Mexico. Grants of up to \$25,000 each will be awarded to support existing projects that focus on improving and sustaining Native youth health in relation to one or more of the following four core areas:

- Increasing opportunities for physical activity,
- Increasing access to healthy and affordable foods,
- Building youth leadership and advocacy
- Deepening cultural connections.

Eligibility Criteria

- Organizations eligible to apply are U.S. based Native American-controlled nonprofits 501(c)(3), federally or state recognized tribal governments or programs, or Native American community-based groups with a 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor. Schools are not eligible to apply unless they have 501(c)(3) status.
- For this particular grant cycle, applications will ONLY be accepted from the state of New Mexico.

The grant period is August 1, 2022 - January 15, 2024.

UPCOMING EVENTS >>>>

Health Fair at To’Hajilee Health Center will be held on Thursday, July 28th, 8:00am to 7:00pm, starting with a traditional blessing and walk to bring balance, harmony and beauty for Hozho throughout this special day.

JOIN us for the HPHP monthly networking ZOOM meetings.



All photos credit to HP-HP staff. Thank you.

2022 Trail Apprentice Program

The Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) is pleased to announce that the 2022 Trail Apprentice Program is currently accepting applications through July 15, 2022. Young adults aged 18-28 who are interested in a career in a trails-related field (recreation, natural resource management, conservation, environmental studies, history, etc.) are invited to apply. Through the program, Trail Apprentices will gain leadership, networking, and training opportunities.

Selected Trail Apprentices will:

- Receive a scholarship to attend the 2022 National Trails Workshop in Albuquerque, NM (November 2-4, 2022)
- Participate in virtual trainings and activities
- Network with a cohort of peers and established trails professionals

For more information about the Trail Apprentice Program, selection criteria, participation in the 2022 National Trails Workshop, and more, please visit the Trail Apprentice Program webpage.



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