

Nygren highlights Navajo Nation issues with actress Jane Fonda

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AUSTIN, Texas — Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren and actress and activist Jane Fonda participated in the SXSW 2024 South by Southwest conference during the weekend of March 8, addressing toxic environmental perils with specific concerns for the Diné of the Navajo Nation.

At the conference, Nygren took part in the Breaking the Cycle: Building Climate Resilient Communities panel, and Fonda spoke as a panelist in the Hollywood and Activism session.

The actress has used her glamorous platform as a celebrity to beacon attention to Indigenous rights, economic justice, and gender equality. She continues to advocate for climate change and stands tall for vulnerable populations.

In a one-on-one discussion, Nygren shared his concerns with Fonda about the scarcity of basic human needs and water availability in the Navajo Nation.

“One of the large challenges the Navajo Nation endures is finalizing our water settlements,” Nygren said. “Until then, families continue as they have since the 1800s, hauling water from wells in containers to take their baths, prepare their food, keep their homes clean, stay hydrated, and provide for their livestock and farms.”

In a statement on social media, Fonda spoke of her meeting with President Nygren.

“President Nygren spoke to me about the scarcity of water on Navajo lands which is putting people’s health in danger and making progress and development for the Diné Peoples a big challenge. Water flows through their lands but they’re forbidden from accessing it,” Fonda stated. “These are American citizens. They fight in our wars, pay taxes, etc. We must fight for them to have what all people should have as a basic right, clean water, clean air. The uranium mines on Diné lands leak radioactive poisons into the air and waterways. Shameful that our country allows these things to harm our fellow Americans. Let’s stand in kinship with our Indigenous families.”

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