



NNHRC VOTING RIGHTS CONFERENCE AGENDA

Twin Arrows Casino

August 24 – 25, 2026

(Updated August 18, 2026)

Monday, August 24, 2026

Time	Session	Participants
9:00 – 10:00	Navajo Blessing and Opening Remarks Navajo Blessing: NNHRC Vice Chairman Dr. Henry Fowler Welcome Address: Dr. Wendy Greyeyes, NNHRC Executive Chairman	MC: Austin Yazzie
10:15 – 11:45	The State of Native Voting Rights: Challenges Today and Emerging Issues Ahead This panel examines current and emerging obstacles affecting Native voter participation across Indian Country. Discussion will focus on practical barriers encountered by voters, including polling-place access, transportation challenges, language access, mail service limitations, voter registration obstacles, election administration issues, and emerging trends identified through recent research. Panelists will discuss how these barriers affect Native communities and identify areas requiring future policy and advocacy attention.	Panelists: Jim Tucker, Dan McCool Moderator: Darlene Womochil
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch	
1:00 – 2:00	History of Navajo Voting As esteemed elders and founders of the Navajo Voter Coalition, the speakers will share historical perspectives on Navajo voting, including how events on the Navajo Nation have shaped voting decisions, participation, and Navajo citizens' involvement in tribal and state elections. Presentation will conclude with recommendations and guidance for Navajo Nation officials, organizations, and the younger generation on straightening civic engagement and increasing voter participation across local communities.	Speaker: Lenora Y. Fulton; Steven Begay (Navajo Voter Coalition)

2:15 – 3:15	State Election Laws A comparative discussion of election laws and election administration practices in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Panelists will examine key differences among the three states, recent legislative developments, tribal consultation requirements, voter identification rules, early voting procedures, ballot access provisions, and legal issues affecting Navajo voters.	Panelists: Malysa Egge (ACLU UT); Leon Howard (ACLU NM); Ahmed Soussi (ACLU AZ) Moderator: Aaron Shaddy
3:15 – 4:15	Census Data and Voting Representation This panel examines how census, demographic, and voting data affect political representation, governmental funding, redistricting, and voting-rights advocacy. Panelists will discuss how tribes, advocates, and local governments can use data to identify barriers to participation, support funding requests, evaluate representation, and strengthen voting-rights initiatives.	Panelists: Jim Tucker; M.C. Baldwin; Norbert Nez Moderator: Sandra Mitrovich
4:15 – 5:00	Voting Rights Workshop and Community Discussion This interactive session provides attendees with an opportunity to discuss issues raised throughout the day and identify practical challenges facing their communities. Panelists will engage participants in a moderated discussion regarding voting barriers, election administration, advocacy opportunities, and future priorities, followed by audience questions.	Moderator: Austin Yazzie

Tuesday, August 25, 2026

Time	Sessions	Participants
9:00 – 10:00	Voting Rights Act, Tribal Identification, and Election Access This session explores the legal protections available to Native voters under federal law. Topics will include Voting Rights Act enforcement, tribal identification requirements, redistricting challenges, vote dilution claims, election-access litigation, and recent developments affecting Native voting-rights enforcement. Discussion may include lessons learned from litigation and settlements in New Mexico and Utah.	Panelists: Ray Williams, Leon Howard, Katherine Belzowski (Navajo Nation DOJ); Lauren Bernally (NAVIA outreach coordinator)

		Moderator: Frances Sjoberg
10:00 – 11:00	Running for Office: Grassroots Campaigns and Representation Dr. Joe Shirley, Jr. will discuss his experience serving as a Navajo Nation Council Delegate, President of the Navajo Nation, and Apache County Supervisor, including lessons learned from grassroots campaigning and differences between tribal and county elections.	Speaker: Dr. Joe Shirley, Jr.
11:00 – 12:00	Navigating State and County Relationships with the Navajo Nation Discussion of coordination between county election officials and the Navajo Nation, including polling-place placement, ballot collection and processing, voter outreach, language assistance, election administration, intergovernmental cooperation, and funding challenges. Panelists will discuss successful partnership models and practical steps that counties and tribal governments can take to improve voter access and participation.	Panelists: Elsir Musta (Coconino County Election Director); Rayleen Richards (Navajo County Elections Director); Larry Noble (Apache County Recorder); Vint McGray (San Juan County Utah Deputy Clerk); and Helene Crosby (Native American Liaison with the New Mexico Secretary of State) Moderator: Jordon Corliss (Navajo Nation DOJ)
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch	
1:00 – 2:00	Using Voting Data in the Three States Presentation and discussion of voting data from Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah, including how to interpret data to support local government funding requests, voter outreach, election-access advocacy, and resource allocation.	Presenters: Ryan Snow (Lawyers' Committee); Jayne Parrish (AZ Native Vote); Malyssa Egge (ACLU UT)

		(NNHRC Policy Analyst)
2:15 – 3:30	ACLU National Presentation: Native Voting Rights, National Trends, and Litigation Strategies ACLU National will provide a national overview of voting-rights developments affecting Native communities, including emerging litigation trends, legislative developments, election-administration issues, and advocacy priorities. The presentation will focus on lessons from Native voting-rights efforts across the country and identify opportunities for tribes, advocates, organizers, and policymakers to strengthen political participation and protect voting rights in the years ahead.	Presenter: Casey Douma (ACLU NM); Jade Roberson (ACLU Nat'l); Malyssa Egge (ACLU UT) Moderator: Leon Howard
3:45 – 4:45	Building Native Power This closing panel focuses on practical strategies for strengthening Native political participation and representation beyond a single election cycle. Discussion will address voter engagement, leadership development, candidate recruitment, coalition-building, youth participation, community organizing, and sustained advocacy efforts. Panelists will identify opportunities for tribal governments, community organizations, and individual advocates to build durable civic infrastructure and translate participation into long-term political influence.	Speaker: TBD
5:00	End of conference	