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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 28, 2007**

Fire Restriction on Bowl Canyon Recreation Area (Asaayi Lake)

Window Rock, AZ – On June 22, 2007, the Navajo Forestry Department issued an Executive Order, Order of Fire Restriction, to all Navajo Nation departments. The fire restriction impacts all Navajo Parks and Recreation Department (NPRD) facilities, particularly Bowl Canyon Recreation Area.

According to Benjimen Yazzie, Forest Technician III of the Navajo Nation Forestry Department, the fire restriction will be in effect until the Navajo Nation's forest and woodland areas receive about a 20% precipitation level or more, throughout a consistent period of time. The majority of woodland and forest areas are located in the general region of the Defiance Plateau, which includes the Chuska Mountains, Narbona Pass and Bowl Canyon.

With the Executive Order in effect the restriction on all open fires has an impact on NPRD's Bowl Canyon Recreation Area (Asaayi Lake) and its visitors. Only propane and gas grills are allowed in the Navajo Nation recreation areas. Also in correlation to the Fourth of July week, the Order of Fire Restriction is especially imposed as a precaution. The use of fireworks or other pyrotechnic devices during this time is prohibited and unlawful (17 N.N.C. § 2733).

“There might be less visitors [for Bowl Canyon Recreation Area]” states Martin Begaye, NPRD's Senior Programs and Projects Specialist. However that is not the case every summer according to Begaye, “[Visitors] can bring in their prepared food, like cold cuts, but no charcoal” he affirms. Overnight campers and fishers are still allowed at Bowl Canyon Recreation Area throughout the summer, however roasting marshmallows over the camp fire for the duration of the restriction, will no longer be part of the summer-camping fun.