

## ABQJournal Online » Southern Utes' Clean-Air Program OK'd

The Southern Ute Indian Tribe in southwest Colorado became the nation's first Indian tribe to run its own Clean Air Act program after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved its air permitting program, *The Durango Herald* reported.

"EPA's approval reflects the tribe's exceptional effort to build the expertise and capacity to manage air quality on the reservation," Jim Martin, Denver-based regional administrator for the EPA, said in a news release.

The nearly decade-long effort to receive EPA permission to implement the program on the tribe's more than 1,000-square-mile reservation near Ignacio, Colo., involved "extensive community and outreach" with the oil and gas industry, the state and communities in the region, officials told *The Herald*.

Prior to the approval, the EPA was responsible for permitting projects within the bounds of the checker-board reservation with large sources of air emissions, the paper reported.

The program now allows the tribe to issue permits and perform inspections at large stationary sources of air emissions on the reservation, such as oil and gas production sites, *The Daily Times* in Farmington reported.

The EPA will continue to oversee the tribe's permitting program, just as it does for state permitting programs, according to *The Daily Times*.

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