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Northern Navajo Agency
Shiprock, New Mexico
May 3, 1933

Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Commissioner:

The question of range control has been receiving very serious consideration for some time in the Navajo country. It is well known that most of the Navajo country is overgrazed. There has been much discussion about reducing the amount of stock on the range. No definite agreement was reached in this connection here until February 20, 1933 when at a general meeting of Chapter officers the proposition of castrating their billies goats was presented and agreed to by a large majority of the officers.

This method of reducing stock on the reservation does not deprive the Navajo people of the use of any of the stock that they now have but as there will be no further breeding of goats their numbers will be quickly and permanently reduced. Those who have a large number of goats will trade their meat for sheep with those Indians who have no goats. By the time the goats have disappeared there will be a much better distribution of the sheep and the Navajos will have derived a double benefit of having relieved the overgrazed condition on their reservation as well as equalizing the range revenues to the individual Indians.

In some districts the Indians are going ahead voluntarily with the work of castration and I am of the opinion that all districts will follow their example. I feel that this move is most important as a range control measure and I hope, Mr. Commissioner, that the method will have your approval.

Please let me have your views in this connection.

Very sincerely,

E. R. McCray
Superintendent

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