Coconino County Maintenance of Roads on the Navajo Nation

PROP. 403
Coconino County
ROAD
Maintenance Sales Tax

Your Roads. Your Decision.

No Federal Funds Means Road Maintenance Service at Risk

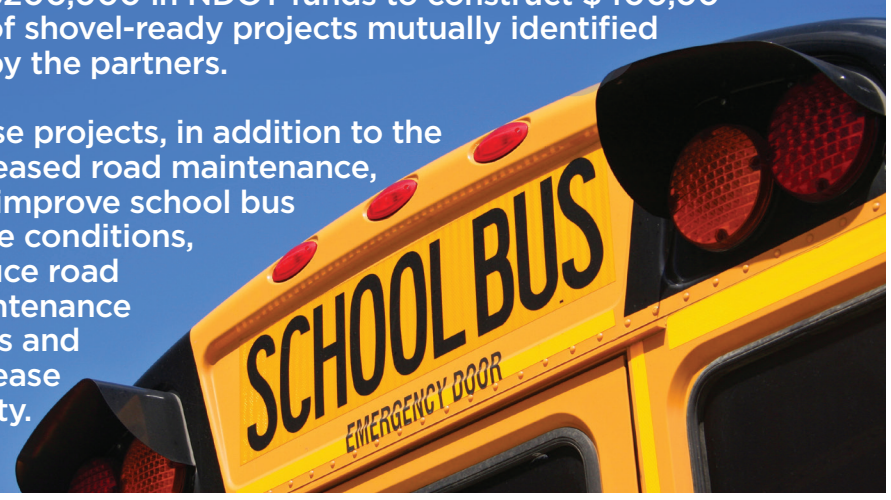
Recently, the federal government did not reauthorize funding for the federal program that provides Counties with funds to maintain school bus routes. Coconino County has historically chosen to use these funds, and funds from the County's gas tax revenues that have declined dramatically (see below), to conduct maintenance of school bus routes on the Navajo Nation. **The loss of this funding means that the County will have to severely reduce or eliminate road maintenance on the Navajo Nation without additional revenues. If voters approve the Road Maintenance Sales Tax initiative, Proposition 403 on the November ballot, then the County will be able to continue road maintenance.**

If Prop. 403 is approved, then the funding partners – Coconino County, the BIA, and Navajo Nation Division of Transportation (NDOT) – have identified about $1 million for a jointly funded plan for school bus route maintenance on the Navajo Nation.

The plan, if Prop. 403 is approved by voters in November, will include:

- Providing daily road maintenance services to 286 miles of some key school bus routes – a 30% increase.
- Establishing a County Capital Projects Matching Fund of $200,000 per year. These funds would match $200,000 in NDOT funds to construct $400,00 of shovel-ready projects mutually identified by the partners.

These projects, in addition to the increased road maintenance, will improve school bus route conditions, reduce road maintenance costs and increase safety.

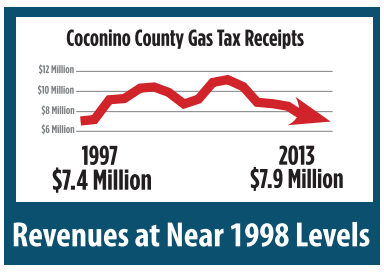


"Under a longstanding agreement with the BIA, the County provides daily road maintenance on many key school bus routes on the Navajo Nation. These roads get our kids to school safely. Services like this, and the proposed matching grant program with Navajo DOT, support shovel-ready projects to improve our roads. These roads are vital to our transportation needs."

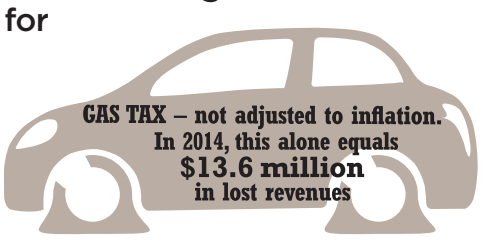
• Lena Fowler, County Supervisor, District 5

Why doesn't Coconino County have the funds to maintain roads on the Nation?

Gas tax revenues from the state represent 80 percent of the County's road maintenance budget. *Property taxes do not fund road maintenance.*



State and Federal officials have not raised the gas tax level since the early 1990s, while costs for maintenance has increased.



The gas tax is flat, not indexed to inflation and doesn't reflect the cost of gas.

Overall, the gallons of gas sold is declining due to increased fuel efficiency.

As a result, County gas tax revenues are at near 1998 levels.

Are there other things that have affected County road funding?

A federal program that funds counties to maintain school bus routes was **not** funded by the U.S. Congress. The County had used these funds to maintain school bus routes on the Navajo Nation.

State officials have kept County gas tax revenues to fund other State programs.

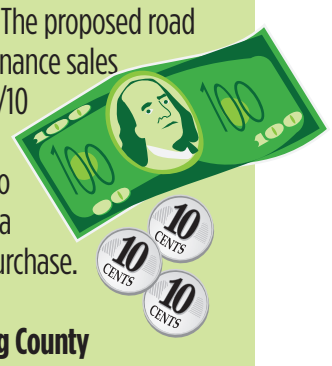
$1.5 million per year in rural road maintenance funds have **not** been re-authorized by the U.S. Congress.

Road maintenance costs have increased and so have the number of drivers and miles of County roads. For example, adjusted for inflation and fuel efficiency, $1 in gas taxes in 1991 (the last time there was an increase to the state gas tax) is only worth 30 cents in 2014.

Coconino County Road Maintenance Sales Tax

FACTS

Rate – The proposed road maintenance sales tax is 3/10 of 1%, equal to 30¢ on a $100 purchase.



Existing County Tax Expires – If approved, at the same time the new tax begins another County tax expires. So the net tax increase will be 17.5 ¢ on a $100 purchase, or $53 on a $30,000 purchase.

Limited Duration – The sales tax would be in effect until 2034 or for only 20 years.

Revenue Generation – The County estimates the revenues from the road maintenance sales tax to be approximately $6 to $7 million per year. The actual level of revenue will vary with the economy.

Restrictions – The specific language of the election ballot restricts the use of the monies from the road maintenance sales tax to road maintenance-related costs. The statutory authority used by the County to place a road maintenance sales tax on the ballot also restricts the funds to only road-related services. The funds will be locally controlled and cannot be taken by the State.

The Road Maintenance Sales Tax, as with all sales taxes, are not applied when you purchase food at a grocery store, medicines or gasoline.

Coconino County Road Maintenance Sales Tax Proposition 403: Your Roads. Your Decision.

School Bus Routes Maintained if Prop. 403 is Approved by Voters

PROP 403
Coconino County ROAD Maintenance Sales Tax

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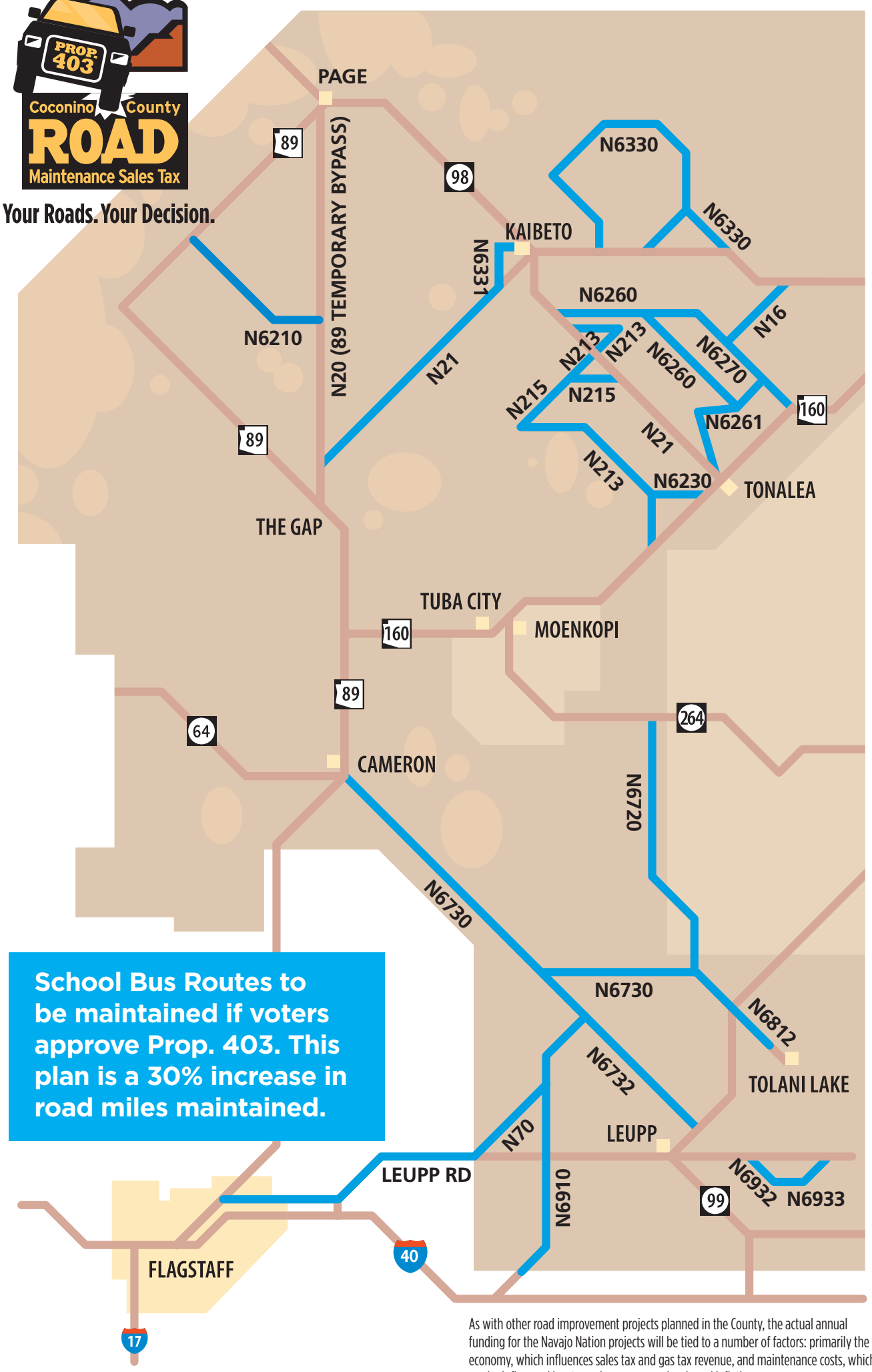


School Bus Routes to be maintained if voters approve Prop. 403. This plan is a 30% increase in road miles maintained.

As with other road improvement projects planned in the County, the actual annual funding for the Navajo Nation projects will be tied to a number of factors: primarily the economy, which influences sales tax and gas tax revenue, and maintenance costs, which can be influenced by storm damage, snow levels and inflation.

If Prop. 403 is approved by voters, then the following school bus routes will be maintained:

NORTH		SOUTH	
• N16	• N6260	• N70	• N6910
• N21	• N6261	• N6720	• N6932
• N213	• N6270	• N6730	• N6933
• N215	• N6330	• N6732	
• N6230	• N6331	• N6812	

Coconino County Capital Projects Matching Fund

Many of the Navajo Nation school bus routes need additional improvements to ensure that buses can transport children safely, reduce travel time and reduce the costly repairs to school buses. **Some types of road projects that are needed now that will be implemented with the Proposition 403 funds if approved by voters include:**

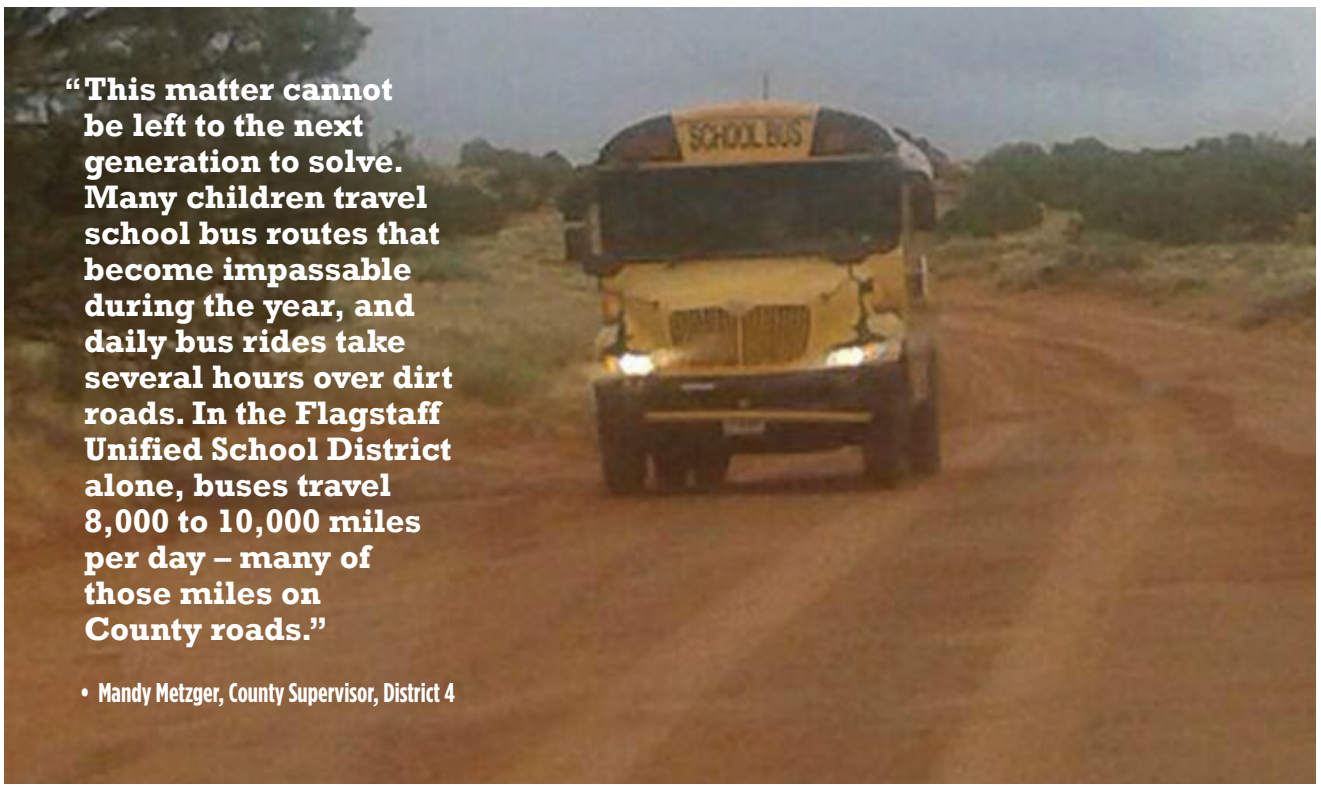
Improving drainage by installing culverts and low-water crossings

Adding road base material to the dirt roads

Cutting ditches alongside of the roads to move water away from the roads or to culverts

These road projects will improve road conditions particularly during the rainy seasons when some roads routinely become impassable.

To view the entire Roads CIP and detailed maps, go to www.coconino.az.gov/CountyRoads



"This matter cannot be left to the next generation to solve. Many children travel school bus routes that become impassable during the year, and daily bus rides take several hours over dirt roads. In the Flagstaff Unified School District alone, buses travel 8,000 to 10,000 miles per day – many of those miles on County roads."

• Mandy Metzger, County Supervisor, District 4

COCONINO COUNTY ARIZONA

WEB: www.coconino.az.gov/CountyRoads

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