The Indian On-Reservation Workforce & Labor Market Data

Data for Indian Economic Development Workshop
Flagstaff, AZ – July 24, 2017

Navajo worker at the Navajo Generating Station
Photo courtesy of the Central Arizona Project
Theory underlies data

Data shapes theory
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Mainstream&quot; Theory</th>
<th>Reservation Reality*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban Labor Market</td>
<td>Job Scarce Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sector Jobs</td>
<td>Public Sector Jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Ladders</td>
<td>Jobs Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Work Search</td>
<td>Moccasin Telegraph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to Move</td>
<td>Attachment to Res</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Mismatch
with current reservation data built on “mainstream” theory

• “Unemployed” = Active search for work in prior four weeks

• “Not in the Labor Force” with no data on barriers

• No U-6 equivalent for Indian data at the reservation level
A Mismatch

Is the unemployment rate of Indian workers on the Navajo reservation

22% as the ACS says

or 50% or more as as Tribal Leaders say?
Resolving the Mismatch

Increase the capacity of tribes to collect and manage data on tribal populations and tribal resources

The major theme of the NCAI Tribal Data Capacity project
A Way to Start

A joint tribal-federal effort to build the BIA Population and Labor Force Report around tribal data
many thanks
norm_deweaver@rocketmail.com