



ALBUQUERQUE, NM- On January 12, 2021 - two days before his 62nd birthday, Eddie Benally died peacefully with his loving wife, Kelly Willis-Benally at his bedside and his daughters Andrea Marsh, Raelle Hamilton, and Cheyanne Benally via Zoom at Lovelace Hospital. Given the current public health orders regarding gatherings in New Mexico, no physical memorial service will be held. Please go to www.MortensenFuneralHomes.com for more information, to see a photo album, and share your memories with the family in an online guest book. An outdoor memorial service is being planned in Michigan in the Spring.

Eddie was born January 14, 1958 in Rehoboth, New Mexico into the Todichinii (Bitter Water Clan), born for the Kinlichiinii (Red House Clan), the Tachii'nii (Red Running into the Water Clan) and Haltsooi (Meadow People).

Eddie devoted his life to the preservation, protection and conservation of wildlife. He was in law enforcement for 38 years as a Police Officer and a Wildlife Conservation Officer. He was instrumental in bringing attention to wildlife crimes and getting successful prosecutions. He convinced the U.S. District Attorney to take a case for prosecuting eagle poaching which led to the first prosecution in the U.S. of eagle poaching, thanks to Eddie's investigatory work and persistence. He worked closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service throughout the country and was known as "Boss" because he got things done - no matter how hard. Much of his work was done undercover. He also worked with the undercover narcotic task force in Gallup for 15 years.

Eddie was key in starting the Navajo Nation Annual Youth Hunt after a Navajo boy in Sheep Springs approached him with questions about the Fish and Wildlife Seal on his vehicle. The boy then told Eddie he wanted to learn to hunt but no one in his family knew how. As a result, in 2005 the first mentored youth hunt was held which has been held every year since, except in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Eddie loved fly fishing and enjoyed traveling. He had his own style of loving and loved his family deeply. When he loved you, you knew it.

Eddie is survived by his wife, Kelly Willis-Benally; sons Tracey Benally and Myron Benally; daughters Andrea Marsh, Raelle Hamilton, and Cheyanne Benally; brothers Howard Benally, Albert Benally, and James Benally; sisters Annie Tom, Julie Carlton, and Judy Buffalohead, and 6 grandchildren.

Eddie is preceded in death by his parents, Mike Benally, Sr., and Sadie Benally; and his brothers Mike Benally, Jr. and Herbert Benally.

Per Eddie's wishes he will be laid to rest in Charlevoix Michigan, near his wife and children. Donations for transportation and the memorial service are appreciated - <https://tinyurl.com/EddieBenally>