



Two wireless towers installed in rural Arizona

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ST. MICHAELS, Ariz. – The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority completed installation of two wireless towers that will provide increased cellphone and internet access to Navajo families, businesses and emergency personnel in rural Arizona, according to a news release.

The Navajo Nation recently announced the towers were installed in the St. Michaels, Arizona, area and near Sawmill, Arizona.

They were funded with a \$32 million CARES Act allocation approved by the Navajo Nation Council and signed into law by Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez Aug. 16.

"This is a significant milestone for our community here in summit east," NTUA Choice Wireless Deputy Director Velena Tsosie said. "We have a major highway that goes through the summit. This tower will alleviate years of connectivity issues and struggles for local residents, who can now rely on it for work and communications."

The lack of internet and cellphone communication in rural areas of the Navajo Nation has been cited as one of the major problems for families to reach law enforcement or get emergency medical assistance to rural locations.

In March 2017, Navajo Nation officer Houston Largo was shot twice while on duty when he stopped a vehicle on County Road 19 in rural Casamero Lake.

A local resident who assisted Largo after the shooting had to use Largo's police unit radio to call for help because her cellphone had no signal. Largo died at the hospital the next day.

The \$32 million allocation of CARES Act funds used for these two towers has also served to fund similar projects at Pinedale, Beclabito, Tsaile/Wheatfields and Chinle, according to the announcement.