



# **2020 CARES Act - NTUA Projects**

## **Progress Report Update #22**

### **for Navajo Nation Leadership**

The Navajo Nation and the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) are committed to extending utilities to the homes of Navajo Nation families to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. On August 16, 2020, the Navajo Nation (NN) awarded CARES Act funding to NTUA to construct utility projects eligible under the United States CARES Act by December 28, 2020 with special projects having a completion date of December 30<sup>th</sup>.

For more than 20 weeks, NTUA focused on CARES Act projects, collaborating with the Navajo Nation President's Office, the Navajo Nation Council, and tribal programs to build and extend utility services to as many homes as possible to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Following the December 2020 deadline, projects that started construction, have been encumbered, and/or have been delayed because COVID-19 circumstances are currently being completed. This update highlights what has been completed by December 30, 2020 and focuses on the projects that are still being completed. Starting with this Update, NTUA will be issuing this report bi-monthly because of a limited number of CARES Act projects currently underway.

## **NTUA Progress Report Update #22**

### **CARES Act Projects completed as of January 26, 2021**

#### **Electric Connections and Land Acquisition**

Up until December 30<sup>th</sup>, NTUA District and Electric Construction Department electric line crews and electricians worked 10-hour days, including weekends, except for Thanksgiving Day, Navajo Nation Family Day and Christmas Day.

NTUA's initial goal was to connect 510 families. We have exceeded this goal by extending electricity to the homes of 209 families.

#### **As a result of efforts by NTUA and Neighboring Utilities:**

- 719 families are now connected to the electric grid
- 665 families by NTUA crews
- 54 families by neighboring utility crews
- 6 of these homes were connected after Dec. 30<sup>th</sup>.
- 5 by Jemez Mountain Electric Co-op and 1 by NTUA
  
- NTUA has one more CARES Act powerline project to complete - Salt Springs South consisting of 12 homes. This project is expected to be completed by February 19, 2021.



## **Electric Connections after CARES Act Deadline**

Following the December 30<sup>th</sup> deadline, NTUA had 159 families that applied for electric connection remaining on the CARES Act list. NTUA will not be able to connect them under CARES Act program; however, NTUA is seeking to find creative solutions to get these families connected. NTUA has identified potential funding sources to connect 67 of these families.

NTUA, Kayenta Solar, NTUAW and several outside organizations have agreed to fund the connection of 26 homes. In addition to the 26 home's NTUA's Kayenta Solar project will fund the connection of 5 homes in the Kayenta Chapter. The Navajo Nation Council Resources and Development Committee (RDC) has approved the use of funds that NTUA saved on the construction of two (2) Sihasin powerline projects - which will allow electric line crews to connect 10 additional homes.

NTUA has used other funding sources to connect dozens of families that were to be connected under Sihasin powerline projects planned for construction in 2021. NTUA will be requesting permission from RDC to use those savings to connect an additional 26 families.

Single families that are seeking funds to get connected are being encouraged to submit a Light Up Navajo III application. We hope to host another Light Up Navajo initiative in April of 2022.

### **Update on NN land acquisition process for the remaining 159 homes**

- 113 homes still require land acquisition
- 96 homes are under assessment
- 47 projects have been released by NN Land Department (NLD) clearing the way for electric line crews to proceed with construction
- 17 Service Line Agreements (SLAs) are pending NLD approval

### **NTUA's Off-Grid Residential Solar Program**

Work crews are preparing homes for a 3,000 kW solar unit placement. NTUA will be distributing 300 units, 40 units are designated for the homes of U.S. Military Veterans and 23 units are assigned for the Water Cistern Projects as described below. These solar units were only offered to homes that are not connected to the electric grid. All of these projects were encumbered, under construction and/or delayed as a result of COVID-19 issues. We expect to have all of the units commissioned by the end of February.

#### **Of the 300 homes:**

- 202 homes needed house-wiring
  - 54 homes - house-wiring under construction
  - 148 homes – house-wiring completed
- 98 homes - do not need house-wiring
  - 83 homes - have the house-wiring affidavit
  - 15 homes - are awaiting the house-wiring affidavit
- 40 homes belong to U.S. Veterans
- 300 homes have been released to the Solar vendors
  - 45 homes solar units are under construction
  - 215 homes solar units have been commissioned and are operating
  - 40 homes solar units were commissioned and placed in operation prior to Dec. 30th



## **Neighboring Electric Utility Partnerships**

NTUA created partnerships with the neighboring electric utilities that serve homes on the Navajo Nation to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These families are living beyond the reach of NTUA's electric distribution system but are in close proximity to a powerline of another electric utility provider.

NTUA reached out to our neighboring electric utility providers, which include Arizona Public Service (APS), Continental Divide Electric Cooperative (CDEC), Jemez Mountain Electric Cooperative (JMEC), and Socorro Electric Cooperative (SEC), to develop a meaningful solution for these families.

As a result, these companies identified homes they were able to connect. This is the first time NTUA has established this type of partnership with these neighboring electric utilities.

- **Jemez Mountain Electric Cooperative (JMEC)**  
**24 planned projects in (NM) - all projects completed**
  - 24 homes connected - 6 in Counselor; 3 Huerfano; 9 in Nageezi, 6 in Torreon
  
- **Continental Divide Electric Cooperative (CDEC)**  
**24 planned projects in (NM) - all projects completed**
  - 24 homes connected - 1 Baahaali, 3 Baca Prewitt;
  - 1 Chichiltah, 4 Churchrock, 1 Littlewater, 1 Red Rock
  - 1 Rock Springs, 2 Smith Lake, 2 Thoreau, 3 Tohajilee', and 5 Tsayatoh
  
- **Arizona Public Service (APS) - 5 homes connected in (AZ)**
  - 2 homes connected in Tuba City; 3 homes connected in Cameron
  
- **Socorro Electric Cooperative (SEC) - 1 home in Alamo Bend (NM)**

## **Electric Capacity Projects:**

As of January 27<sup>th</sup>, NTUA's electric division has completed 122 out of the 151 projects. Four projects were completed since December 30<sup>th</sup>. The remaining 31 projects are all expected to be completed by end of May of 2021.

Eighteen (18) projects are expected to be completed by the end of January in communities such as: Kayenta (AZ), Beclabito (NM), Sheepsprings (NM), Crystal (NM), Lukachukai (AZ), Wide Ruins (AZ), Chinle (AZ), Aneth (UT), and Mexican Water (UT).

Nine (9) projects are expected to be completed in February, March or April which include Nazlini (AZ), Kayenta (AZ), Sheepsprings (NM), Navajo Mountain (UT), Mexican Springs (NM), Aneth (UT), and Mexican Water (UT) communities. Two (2) projects are expected to be completed by the end of May.

The capacity projects are strengthening system reliability and adding capacity to the electric system which is needed to provide additional services to newly connected homes and to help prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19.



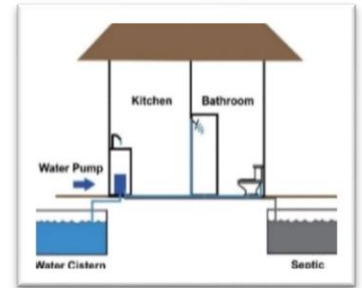
## **Water Cistern and Septic Projects:**

The CARES Act is providing funding for cistern water systems where there is no water available for household for drinking water, kitchens and bathrooms. A cistern water system will store the water needed for a household in a large 1,000 gallon container that can be refilled water.

NTUA is working with the Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority (NECA) to install the water cisterns, septic tanks, a power system, including building a bathroom addition and plumbing, if necessary. All 108 Water Cistern and Septic projects have been started, encumbered, and delayed by COVID-19 impacts. It would be unfair to these families if we started construction on their homes and did not finish the work.

### **108 Families have qualified:**

- 87 Projects out of 108 have been completed
- 63 out of 83 bathroom additions have been completed
- 104 out of 104 cistern systems have been installed
- 100 out of 100 septic systems have been installed
- 72 out of 108 homes receive electricity from NTUA
  - 52 were already connected to NTUA system
    - 20 were recently connected
- 23 out of 108 homes need a solar unit
  - 23 Solar units with back-up generator are in operation
- 13 out of 108 homes will be powered by generator
  - 13 generators have been installed



## **Water Line Connections and Septic installations to Homes**

NTUA has completed thirty (30) water line connections and twenty eight (28) septic systems. Two (2) homes already had existing septic systems. Twenty seven were completed before December 30<sup>th</sup> and three (3) additional homes, which were under construction but been delayed by the impact of COVID-19 were recently completed; two on January 8<sup>th</sup> and one on January 5<sup>th</sup>. We have identified another thirty (30) homes in need of systems, but will not be able to connect them under CARES Act program; however, NTUA is seeking to find creative solutions to get these families connected.

## **Water Wells & Water System Upgrades**

Pump/motor replacements for 64 of 64 targeted water wells have been completed. Well renovations have been completed on 10 of 20 targeted water well renovations projects. Three (3) well pump replacements have been completed in Tsaile (AZ). Renovations for two (2) of the three (3) major water tanks are close to completion.

The Newcomb (NM) tank renovation was completed on Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>. The completion of the two (2) remaining water tanks - the Fort Defiance (AZ) Slick Rock tank and the Window Rock (AZ) "H" tank - have been delayed due to COVID-19 issues

## **Cont'd Water Wells & Water System Upgrades**

Construction of all three (3) new water wells is complete. The Ganado (AZ) and the Thoreau Sonsela (NM) wells have been completed. The new Ganado Well project will include a Pump House before it is tied into the water system. The Thoreau Sonsela Well will require a Pump House before being tied into the system as well. The Thoreau project also included installation of a Well Pump at the nearby Thoreau Baca San Andres Well, which was installed on Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Houck (AZ) well site was completed on December 30<sup>th</sup>.

Construction to replace 27,000 feet of waterline for the Park Estates project near Sanders (AZ) phase I & II have been completed. Phase III is approximately 8,100 feet of line is under construction, encumber and delayed to COVID-19 issues. All 6" piping is installed on the project - 25% of the service lines are installed but are delayed due to material availability, due to COVID-19. This phase III is expected to be completed on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **Water Loading Stations/Major Water System Improvement projects**

Repairs and upgrades to 6 regional watering loading stations have been completed. Four are in Arizona (Bodaway Gap, Leupp, Lupton, Wide Ruins) and two are in New Mexico communities (Torreon & Lake Valley). These watering loading stations are now open for public use.

Construction has completed except for minor punch-list items on all 9 of new water loading stations which include 7 in AZ: Cameron, Fort Defiance, Greasewood Springs, Kinlichee, Whitecone, Chilchinbeto and Inscription House. Construction is complete at the 2 (two) NM stations: Crownpoint and Pueblo Pintado. The punch-list items are currently being addressed.

NTUA has constructed 5 livestock water loading stations. Construction is complete at all of them except for some minor punch-list items, which are currently being addressed. Three are in AZ, located in Hunters Point, Leupp, and Chinle. Two are in NM, located at Newcomb and Sheepsprings. These livestock water loading stations were constructed so that residents will not haul water for livestock from potable water sources.

NTUA has completed 10 of the 13 major water system improvement projects. Three projects were completed in AZ: Chinle, Kinlichee and Navajo; six projects were completed in NM, two in Church Rock, one Iyanbito, two in Ojo Encino and one in Torreon; one in Utah in Mexican Hat.

We have three projects that are under construction, encumbered and delayed due to COVID-19 issues. One is in AZ in Lower Greasewood, which is currently in the final testing phase and is expected to be completed on Feb 5<sup>th</sup>. The remaining two located in Ojo Encino (NM) and in TecNosPos (AZ) are anticipated to be completed in March 2021.

The Montezuma Creek (UT) arsenic removal water treatment plant has been completed and commissioned.

## **Wastewater Facilities Improvement**

4,800 feet of the Window Rock (AZ) wastewater trunk line will be renovated. Phase I of this project has been completed. Phase II did experience delays due to COVID-19 issues but the project was completed on Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>. The Pinon (AZ) wastewater lagoon was commissioned on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>. The two Shiprock wastewater lift station motor were replaced.

## **Free Student WI-FI Hotspots**

Forty two (42) hotspots have been connected in various communities throughout the Navajo Nation. The goal was to place the hotspots so that no one would have more than a 45-minute drive to access the Internet. The initial CARES Act target was 31 locations; however, due to increased demand, NTUA and NTUA Wireless installed additional hotspots. LeChee (AZ) and Oaksprings (AZ) were the last two sites installed.

## **Telecommunications/Broadband**

The upgrade of NTUA fiber optic backbone from 10 Gbps to 100 Gbps was placed in service. This boost in capacity is necessary to handle the increased internet traffic due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Without the upgrade to fiber optic backbone, NTUA would not be able to support the new 102 CARES Act broadcast stations. These broadcast stations provide improved internet speeds that the Navajo people deserve, especially the students/teachers attending school on-line, employees working remotely from home, and patients/doctors engaging in telehealth.

Of the 102 broadcast stations, 98 are uplifts and four (4) are brand new sites:

- 85 of 102 sites are in-service
- 4 of the 102 sites cannot be installed because the tower is not structural strong enough to support the additional equipment

## **Pinedale, Beclabito, Summit East, and Woodsprings Towers**

Construction on three of the four towers is now complete.

- Pinedale was completed on September 18, 2020
- Summit East was completed on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- Woodsprings was completed on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Construction at the Beclabito (NM) tower site is in progress. NTUA anticipates the Beclabito site to complete on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2021 and fully operational before the end of January 2021.

## **Multi-segmented Fiber Project - Tuba City (TC)**

The following sites in Tuba City are complete and fully operational:

- TC Tower was completed on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- TC High School was completed on December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- TC Grey Hills Academy was completed on December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- TC Plaza was completed on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- TC Jr. High School was completed on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- TC Primary Elementary School was completed on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- TC Regional Hospital was completed on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Construction at the Primary Boarding School is in progress. NTUA anticipates the Primary Boarding School to be fully operational on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

## **Kaibeto to Page Fiber line**

The fiber line from Tonalea to Navajo Generating Station (outside Page, AZ) has been completed. Electronics and shelters are operational. The remaining task is for NTUA to make the final cross-connect at the splice point which includes 300 feet of fiber pull and splicing. Once finished, area residents will notice enhanced services for mobile phones or broadband towers to provide the data needed for distance learning. NTUA anticipated completion of the project by January 29<sup>th</sup> 2021.

---

**For more information contact:**

**Walter W. Haase, P.E., General Manager, Navajo Tribal Utility Authority**  
**(928) 729-6202; [generalmanager@ntua.com](mailto:generalmanager@ntua.com)**

