



# **2020 CARES Act**

## **Progress Report Update #24**

### **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) President signed into law CJY-62-20 allocating 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 Office of the President and Vice-President (OPVP), the Navajo Nation Council, and Navajo Nation Division and Departments to build and extend utility services to as many homes as possible to 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 of 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. This is the second twice monthly update. We are issuing an updated every two weeks because there are a limited number of CARES Act projects currently underway. We appreciate the support and encouragement as our utility crews continue building, extending and connecting multi-utilities to regional families during this pandemic.

## **NTUA Progress Report Update #24**

### **CARES Act Projects completed as of February 23, 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 211 families.

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

- 721 families are now connected to the electric grid
  - 667 families by NTUA crews
  - 54 families by neighboring utility crews
  
- NTUA has one more CARES Act powerline project to complete - Salt Springs South (AZ) consisting of 12 homes. Winter weather conditions forced a delay. Crews are expected to start installing meters March 3<sup>rd</sup>.



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

Following the December 30<sup>th</sup> deadline, there are 155 families who had applied for electric connection remaining on the CARES Act list. An additional 29 families have applied for support through the NTUA Light Up Navajo III application process.

NTUA will not be able to connect these families under the 2020 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.

In addition, Jemez Mountains Electric Co-op has identified 19 families since December 30<sup>th</sup>: 4 in Nageezi, 6 in Counselor, 1 in Ojo Encino, 5 in Pueblo Pintado, 3 in Torreon.

Arizona Public Service has identified 14 families: 9 in Tuba City and 5 in Cameron.

Continental Divide Electric Co-op is identifying families as well and has reported they have 8 families whose projects are shovel ready: 2 in Ramah, 3 in Tsayatoh, 1 in Baca/Prewitt, 1 in Red Rock, 1 in Manuelito, and 1 in Churchrock.

All neighboring utilities are reporting that they will continue to identify families and get them shovel ready in anticipation of additional funding.

NTUA, Kayenta Solar, NTUA Wireless and several outside organizations have agreed to fund the connection of 26 homes. In addition to these 26 homes, NTUA's Kayenta Solar Project will fund the connection of 5 homes in the Kayenta Chapter.

The Navajo Nation Council's 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 an additional 10 homes.

NTUA has used other funding sources to connect dozens of families that were to be connected under the Navajo Nation's 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.

Families that are seeking funds to get connected are being encouraged to submit a Light Up Navajo III application as soon as possible. We hope to host another Light Up Navajo initiative in April 2022.

### **Update on NN land acquisition process for the remaining 184 homes**

- 122 homes still require land acquisition
  - 110 homes are under assessment
  - 12 Service Line Agreements (SLAs) are pending NLD approval
- 62 projects have been released by NN Land Department (NLD) moving these projects closer to construction



## **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
  - 23 homes - house-wiring under construction
  - 179 homes – house-wiring completed
- 98 homes do not need house-wiring
  - 89 homes - have a house-wiring affidavit
  - 10 homes - are awaiting a house-wiring affidavit
- 40 homes belong to U.S. Veterans
- 300 homes have been released to the Solar vendors
  - 14 homes solar units are under construction
  - 286 homes solar units are operating
  - 40 homes solar units were commissioned and placed in operation prior to Dec. 30<sup>th</sup>



## **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 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:**

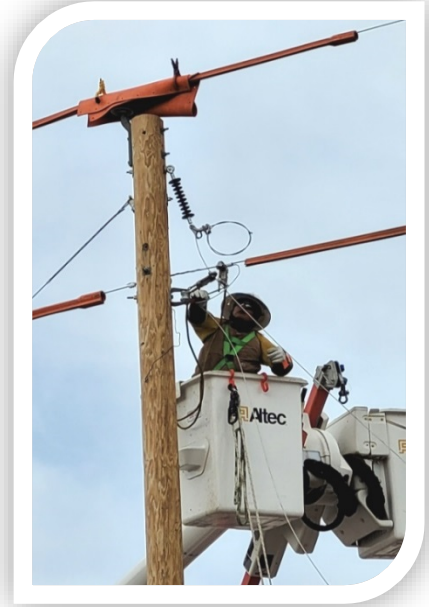
As of February 9th, NTUA's electric division has completed 117 out of the 151 projects.

Fourteen (14) were completed since December 30<sup>th</sup>.

Due to weather and time constraints it is not anticipated for additional projects to be completed by the end of February.

The remaining twenty (20) projects we will require alternative funding sources. We expect to complete them by end of May of 2021.

These 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.

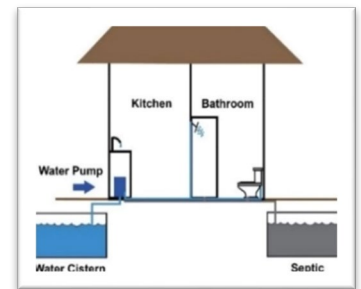


## **Water Cistern and Septic Projects:**

The CARES Act is providing funding for cistern water systems where there is no water available for household 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.

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 105 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.



### **105 Families have qualified:**

- 90 Projects out of 105 have been completed
- 67 out of 82 bathroom additions have been completed
- 105 out of 105 cistern systems have been installed
- 100 out of 100 septic systems have been installed
- 71 out of 105 homes receive electricity from NTUA
  - 51 were already connected to NTUA system
    - 20 were recently connected by NTUA crews
- 23 out of 105 homes need a solar unit
  - 23 Solar units with back-up generator are in operation
- 11 out of 105 homes will be powered by generator
  - 11 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 impacts of COVID-19 were recently completed; two on January 8<sup>th</sup> and one on January 5<sup>th</sup>.

We are completing feasibility visits on another forty-five (45) homes in need of systems. We 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 renovation 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 "A" and the Window Rock (AZ) "H" tanks will be not completed until April of 2021 due to weather conditions. These two projects will not be eligible for CARES Act funding.

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, and service lines are currently being installed. Phase III will be completed on February 28<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 is complete 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 on all 5. 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.

## **Cont'd Water Loading Stations/Major Water System Improvement projects**

NTUA has completed 11 of the 13 major water system improvement projects. The remaining two projects have been put in the 2021 project list.

Three projects were completed in AZ: Chinle, Kinlichee and Navajo; six projects were completed in NM, two in Church Rock, one in 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 and is currently complete.

The remaining two located in Ojo Encino (NM) and in TeecNosPos (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 January 9<sup>th</sup>.

The Pinon (AZ) wastewater lagoon was commissioned on December 15<sup>th</sup>. The two Shiprock wastewater lift station motors 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 NTUAW 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 & Woodsprings Towers**

Construction is complete on all four towers:

- Pinedale was completed on September 18, 2020
- Summit East was completed on December 15, 2020
- Woodsprings was completed on December 15, 2020
- Beclabito was completed on February 15, 2021

A Ribbon cutting event was held on February 18<sup>th</sup>. NN President Nez and NN Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty joined Beclabito community leaders for celebration.

Story was featured on KOB-TV4 from Albuquerque, NM



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

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

- TC Tower was completed on 12/12/20
- TC High School was completed on 12/24/20
- TC Grey Hills Academy was completed on 12/28/20
- TC Plaza was completed on 12/29/20
- TC Jr. High School was completed on 1/7/21
- TC Primary Elementary School was completed on 1/7/21
- TC Regional Hospital was completed on 1/7/21
- TC Primary Boarding School was completed 1/28/21

## **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 and the final cross-connect at the splice point was completed on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Area residents are experiencing enhanced services for mobile phones or broadband towers to provide the data needed for distance learning.

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