



# The People's State *of the* Nation

**JANUARY 13, 2026**





## PEOPLE'S THIRD STATE OF THE NAVAJO NATION ADDRESS

### *The Honorable Dr. Buu Nygren*

especially the Navajo people, relatives, Navajo Nation employees, and members of the 25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council.

Yá'át'ééh! I wish each and every one of you and your families a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

I am Dr. Buu Nygren, President of the Navajo Nation. I am of the Red Running into the Water Clan, born for Vietnamese. My maternal grandfather's clan is Bitter Water, and my paternal grandfather's clan is Southern Vietnamese.

I am proud to introduce my wife, First Lady and Apache County Attorney Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren, who has been my anchor and rock throughout my presidency.

It has now been three years since I took the oath of office as your Navajo Nation President. I am honored to stand before you to share the progress we have made together. We have moved forward on housing—one of our greatest needs—through strategic investment, coordination, and federal relief funds. Hundreds of families are closer to safe, stable homes; projects once stalled are moving, and critical infrastructure like water, electricity, and roads is advancing. We are no longer standing still—we are building.

We set out to revitalize government, expand access to services, and meet basic needs. As tribal enrollment grows, so does our responsibility to plan wisely, invest strategically, and ensure a responsive government focused on the well-being of families, communities, and future generations.

## **WE PROMISED TO BUILD A STRONGER ECONOMY – AND WE ARE DELIVERING**

We are moving beyond limitations and delivering real results by supporting Navajo entrepreneurs, creating jobs, and protecting vital revenue for our Nation.

### **Continued Operation of the Four Corners Power Plant**

We worked to keep the Four Corners Power Plant operating beyond its planned 2031 closure, and APS is now considering extending operations to 2038. This means hundreds of Navajo jobs, continued revenue for essential services, and time for a thoughtful transition to the clean-energy future we deserve. Sustaining operations protects families today while we train our workforce, grow new industries, and invest in renewable energy projects that will power tomorrow.

### **New Hotels Will Be Opening Across the Navajo Nation**

We are excited to announce a wave of new hotels that will soon open across the Navajo Nation, bringing jobs, tourism, and pride to our communities.

Shonto Hotel is opening this month, January 2026. This \$16 million facility features 83 modern rooms and represents a major milestone for hospitality in the region.

Shiprock Pinnacle Hotel is on track for completion in July 2026. With 83 rooms and a \$22 million investment, it promises to be a vibrant destination for both visitors and locals.

Cameron Horseman's Lodge Phase 1 construction is scheduled to begin this year, adding new lodging options to the area.

Cameron Hozho Resort & Hotel Phase 1 is also set to start construction in 2026, creating exciting opportunities for tourism and local jobs. Hozho Resorts has developed a phased plan for its 20-acre business site along US 89 in Cameron, Arizona, which integrates Grand Canyon ground tours through its sister company, The Adventurous Group, under National Park Service authorization.

Initial operations will begin in a temporary building in 2026 while final design plans for a 15,000 sq. ft. Tour Operations facility are completed, with construction expected to start in 2027. Future phases include a 100-room hotel and a restaurant/banquet facility scheduled for 2028–2029. Hozho Resorts and The Adventurous Group will prioritize hiring a local workforce to support operations and expand employment opportunities within the community.

A Crownpoint Hotel Market Study will be completed this year to guide future development and ensure sustainable growth.

## **The Navajo Small Business Credit Initiative**

The Navajo Small Business Credit Initiative (NSBCI) is opening doors for Navajo entrepreneurs and turning ideas into thriving businesses. With \$26 million in initial funding — and \$7 million already disbursed in 2025 — we are putting real capital into the hands of our people. Over the next decade, NSBCI will invest more than \$88.7 million across three tranches, creating jobs, growing local businesses, and strengthening our economy. This initiative is about hope, opportunity, and the power of Navajo innovation.

Contracts with the U.S. Treasury were finalized in 2024, and the first \$26 million tranche was received. Our 2026 goal is to fully award Tranche 1 funding, delivering critical support to Navajo small businesses and driving economic growth across the Nation.

## **Business Site Leasing Reform**

We are also streamlining the business site leasing process so Navajo entrepreneurs can move faster and succeed. I thank the Resources and Development Committee for supporting reforms that reduce barriers and help our small business owners thrive.

## **Forest Carbon Offset Program**

The Navajo Nation is leading in climate action with the Navajo Forest Carbon Project. Our commercial forests meet strict California Air Resources Board standards, allowing participation in the cap-and-trade program. This means our forests fight climate change while generating revenue to keep them healthy. On December 30, 2025, the project issued its first carbon credit—a milestone started under President Ben Shelley. We anticipate earning millions of dollars of revenue over the course of the next several years. This achievement shows that climate leadership, economic resilience, and Navajo stewardship can advance together, showcasing the power of our people and vision.

## **Renewing Rights of Ways**

The Executive Branch has worked very hard to negotiate the renewal of rights-of-ways with Arizona Public Service Company, Tucson Electric Power Company, and Kinder Morgan. Once the Navajo Resources & Development Committee approves these renewals, tens of millions of dollars will be rolling into our tribal coffers. We will be receiving \$27 million immediately from Kinder Morgan while we finalize negotiations.

## **Tax Revenue and Renewable Energy Initiatives**

In Fiscal Year 2025, the Navajo Tax Commission projected \$131 million in tax revenue but collected \$162.4 million, exceeding expectations by \$31.4 million (24%). Sales Tax, Business Activity Tax, Hotel Occupancy Tax, Junk Food Tax, and Alcohol Tax all surpassed projections, driven by strong construction activity, strategic use of CARES Act and ARPA funds, and post-pandemic tourism.

The Commission is reestablishing the Possessory Interest Tax, which has historically generated \$20 million annually. The draft Renewable Energy Tax, a project that began in 2023, covers Solar, Biomass, Geothermal, Wind, Hydroelectric, and Hydrogen. In 2026, the Commission will finalize Renewable Energy Tax legislation, reestablish the Valuations Department, collect \$135 million, renew intergovernmental agreements with New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah, and update statutes—all of which will support and sustain essential programs.

## **Minimum Wage Increase**

Our Department of Personnel Management is working with a consultant to complete the review of the employee census and market data. We are getting very close to implementing a minimum wage of \$14.70. This is an increase from \$10.61. I look forward to them completing their work in 2026! I also look forward to the Council's support in implementing these pay increases. This increase will put more income into the hands of Navajo workers, helping families meet basic needs while strengthening the local economy through greater spending in our communities

## **Navajo Gaming Regulatory Office**

The Navajo Nation Gaming Regulatory Office (NNGRO) safeguards Class II and III gaming through licensing, inspections, and asset protection. In 2025, NNGRO revised 75 percent of the Gaming Ordinance and 25 percent of Tribal Gaming Regulations, on track for full completion in 2026. The Problem Gambling Program is in development, with funding and structure planned by June 30. Upcoming initiatives include a web-based licensing system, website overhaul, Criminal Code updates for gaming violations, and POST-certified Enforcement positions to strengthen accountability and transparency.

## **I PROMISED TO INCREASE ACCESS TO WATER, ELECTRICITY, HOUSING, AND THE INTERNET**

In 2025, we made historic strides: completing major waterline projects, extending electricity to dozens of homes, delivering hundreds of new and renovated homes, and expanding broadband and connectivity to previously unserved communities.

## Water Access

The Navajo Nation has made historic progress in expanding safe and reliable water access across our communities in 2025.

NTUA extended waterlines and septic systems to the homes of 551 Navajo families of which 237 were completed in 2025. In 2026, the goal is to complete 449, and as of this report, there are 128 in construction. NTUA has also completed 158 water cistern and septic systems for homes of Navajo families, 50 of which were completed in 2025. In 2026, the goal is to complete 49 water cistern and septic systems, and as of this report, there are 21 in construction. Lastly, NTUA completed the 30-plus year old Westwater project bringing first-time water and electricity along with fiber Internet to 17 Navajo homes.

Several major projects are underway or nearing completion:

Local/Chapter-Level Projects include:

- The To’Hajiilee Water Line Project is a 7.4-mile, 10-inch pipeline that will provide safe drinking water to 1,600 residents, replacing a failing well. The project is 90% complete and is expected to be celebrated in February 2026.
- The Chichiltah–Vanderwagen Water Supply Project will bring first-time water service to 137 families (520 residents) through seven new wells, a 225,000-gallon storage tank, and 27 miles of pipeline. The wells are drilled, and pipelines are being installed.
- The Carson–Burnham Waterline Project upgrades the 1970s–1980s water systems to serve 1,200 residents with improved water pressure and capacity. Construction has begun, with completion expected in 2026.
- The Smith Lake Water Wells Project provides safer water to 760 residents by treating existing wells to remove contaminants until larger supply projects come online.
- The Naschitti NGWSP Connection links 1,200 residents to the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project and is 60% complete.
- The Sanostee, Newcomb, Two Grey Hills, Sheep Springs, Tohatchi & Mexican Springs, and Rock Springs & Tsayatoh projects are underway or in design to replace contaminated or inadequate wells, collectively serving over 9,800 residents.
- The Beacon Bisti N-9 Lateral is a 45-mile pipeline connecting eight chapters and delivering 1.5 million gallons per day to 5,700 residents. Ten miles are installed, three miles are under contract, and 22 miles are bid for 2026 construction.
- The 371 Regional Water Supply Project will deliver San Juan River water to Smith Lake, Casamero Lake, Baca, and Thoreau, benefiting 3,000 residents. Pre-construction work is underway for the 60-mile pipeline, storage tanks, and booster pumps.

- The St. Michaels Water Supply Project expands service to 12,900 residents with 10 miles of pipeline, four storage tanks, and a pump station, delivering up to 5.7 million gallons of treated water per day.

Regional Projects include:

- The Farmington to Shiprock Pipeline is complete and will deliver half of the 40-year water supply, starting early 2026, coordinated with the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project.
- The Western Navajo Project Phase 1 will build a water treatment plant and lines for Lechée and Antelope Canyon, with wells and pipelines near Bodaway Gap to support a new hospital; completion is expected in 2028.
- The Ramah Water Tank will expand the Pine Hill system
- The Albuquerque-Tohajiilee Waterline will begin deliveries in early 2026.
- Construction is underway on the San Juan Lateral Water Treatment Plant, the most critical and costly part of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. This plant will ensure the water flowing through the Lateral is clean, safe, and reliable for our communities.

**Ongoing work continues for other projects:**

- Arizona Congressional Senators and Representatives reintroduced the proposed Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement (S. 953) to approve and fund the settlement agreement between the Arizona, Navajo Nation, the Hopi Tribe and the San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe.
- Technical support continues for the Rio San Jose Basin Settlement.
- Providing technical support for the ongoing planning, design and construction of the Navajo Gallup Water Supply project and proposed additional funding in Congress through Congressional bills S. 637 and H.R. 1482.
- Little Colorado River Basin Litigation: Paused pending settlement approval.

These projects are funded through a combination of ARPA, Navajo Nation, New Mexico capital outlay, New Mexico Tribal Infrastructure Fund, USBOR, and other federal funds.

## **Electricity Access**

We are bringing light—and opportunity—to many Navajo communities. In 2025, NTUA delivered electricity to 492 homes, extended service to 452 more, connected 40 off-grid solar homes, and partnered with utilities to reach 31 additional households. The Division of Natural Resources completed a \$950,000, six-mile powerline to Four Corners Monument, while the Division of Community Development extended service in Dilkon and Greasewood Springs, creating nearly 40 jobs.

In 2026, \$47 million in improvements—upgrading water, powerlines, wells, and facilities—will move forward. Every new connection strengthens families, expands opportunity, and fuels a brighter and more resilient Navajo Nation!

### **Housing and Bathroom Additions**

When I took office, we set an ambitious goal—to deliver 1,000 homes to Navajo families—a task some said was impossible. My commitment was ensuring that every Navajo family can live with dignity under a safe roof. Through the 1,000 Homes Initiative, families are receiving keys, homes are set on prepared pads, and teams coordinate logistics, utilities, and construction to ensure timely delivery.

### **ARPA-Funded Housing Projects**

The ARPA-funded housing program provides safe, sanitary homes for families affected by substandard housing and COVID-19 impacts. In 2025, CHID moved from planning to actual home deliveries:

- Work Order 1: 41 of 50 modular homes have been delivered. This is 82% complete. The remaining homes are being prepared. Full completion is expected in Quarter 2 of 2026.
- Work Order 3: 138 of 150 manufactured homes have been delivered. This is 92% complete. The remaining units are ready for installation.
- Work Order 5 was fully executed on November 19, 2026 and will add 138 homes. Homes Direct factory now produces 8–12 homes per week for the Nation.

DCD's 2026 goal is to complete remaining ARPA placements, close out outstanding obligations, and document lessons learned to guide future housing efforts. Major deliverables are targeted for December 2026.

### **Navajo Hopi Land Commission Office (NHLCO)**

In 2025, the Navajo Hopi Land Commission Office delivered 84 modular homes, providing hundreds of families with safe, fully serviced housing. Working with DCD and navigating complex legal and cultural challenges, we are turning plans into reality for those impacted by the Navajo-Hopi land dispute. We are restoring dignity, and building a brighter, more stable future for our Navajo Nation.

### **Bathroom Additions**

We are also transforming homes and lives across the Navajo Nation by providing safe, sanitary, and reliable bathroom facilities. Through the Section 11 ARPA program, we executed a \$150 million contract with the Navajo Engineering Construction Authority (NECA) to build over 1,500 new bathroom additions and renovate thousands more. In 2025, we completed 597 new additions and assessed 1,702 homes for renovations, with 1,297 renovations underway.



In 2026, we aim to finish 185 more additions and 300 renovations, overcoming challenges like resource limits and utility delays. These efforts are about restoring dignity, improving health, and giving Navajo families the safe, functional homes they deserve. Every bathroom completed is a step toward stronger, healthier, and more empowered communities across our Nation.

### **Homeowner Assistance**

The Navajo Nation received \$55 million from the U.S. Treasury Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) to support eligible homeowners, with Native Community Capital administering the program. To date, 722 grants have been issued to 306 homeowners, deploying nearly \$9.9 million and obligating \$11.5 million, with \$25.6 million remaining.

For urban Navajo families, a separate \$55.4 million Navajo Homeowner Assistance Fund has assisted 17 families, helping those families to prevent foreclosure and maintain homeownership. We are ensuring Navajo families—both rural and urban—receive financial support and resources to sustain safe, stable homes.

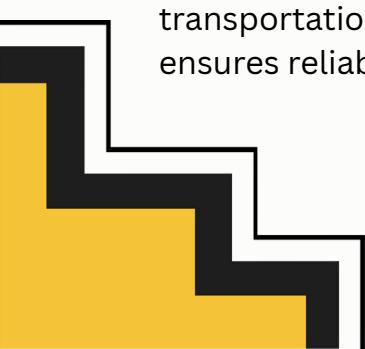
### **Broadband**

Connected communities mean children can access modern education, families can reach telehealth services, and public safety teams can respond faster in emergencies - the Navajo Nation Broadband Office (NNBO) is doing just that!

NNBO's efforts have resulted in 7 towers being built, in 2025, in San Juan, Nazlini, Many Farms, Pine Springs, Moncisco Mesa, Low Mountain, and White Horse. Fiber deployments reached Navajo Mountain, Nazlini, and Red Mesa, with upgrades to the fiber backbone improving system-wide capacity. Thirty Chapters received new fiber construction, adding to the 52 already connected. ARPA funds supported Smith Bagley, Inc. in updating 40 LTE towers while OSO Internet connected 560 of 600 homes in Ramah, NM to fiber.

NNBO's 2026 priority is full connectivity for all remaining unserved chapter houses, completing the Chapter House Interim Connectivity project.

### **I PROMISED TO IMPROVE ROADS ACROSS THE NAVAJO NATION**



The Navajo Division of Transportation (NDOT) is driving major infrastructure investments to deliver safer roads, stronger bridges, and faster connections across the Navajo Nation. Our goal is straightforward – build and maintain a transportation system that supports daily travel, strengthens the economy, and ensures reliable access to critical services.

In 2025, Navajo DOT completed bidding for five Federal Highway Program projects totaling about \$93 million. Major work includes:

- 7 miles of N35 near Sweetwater, Arizona, which is now 98 percent complete at a cost of \$21.2 million, with pavement rework and final inspection in Spring 2026,
- The 5.7-mile N6461/N6460 project near Dennehotso is 90 percent complete at \$19.8 million, including a bridge, riprap, signage, and safety upgrades. Flooding in October 2025 caused erosion and damage; temporary repairs are underway with added drainage and mitigation planned for Spring 2026.
- Additional projects are advancing in Toadlena/Two Greyhills, Alamo, Wheatfields, and Tsaile.

Bridge replacement efforts with McKinley County and partners are also underway, focusing on structures in the poorest condition. Current projects include Red Rock, Baahaali, and Pinedale, New Mexico, with more planned in 2026–2027 for Churchrock, Lupton, Mexican Springs, and Chinle. Design costs total \$4.2 million, with construction estimated at \$40 million. By Fall 2026, six federal highway projects will go to bid, ensuring construction is ready to begin in early 2027.

NDOT is implementing a decentralization initiative to strengthen road maintenance. We've established seven road districts and doubled the minimum mileage for chapter road grading from 15 to 30 miles. To support this, we are expanding our grader fleet and reclassifying laborers as Equipment Operators, recognizing their vital role in keeping communities connected. Full operational status is expected by April 2026.

These efforts connect our families, enabling commerce, improving public safety, and ensuring that every Navajo citizen can travel safely, thrive, and prosper.

### **I PROMISED TO BOLSTER PUBLIC SAFETY—AND WE ARE DELIVERING**

We are protecting our women, children, veterans, and elders with more officers, modern equipment, and upgraded emergency response systems. By investing in our heroes and infrastructure, we ensure every Navajo community is safer, stronger, and more resilient than ever before.

#### **Growing Our Police Force**

Nine brave officers from Class 61 recently graduated from the Navajo Police Training Academy and are now serving across our seven districts. Recruitment for Class 62 is underway, and I call on Navajo men and women to answer the call to serve.



We are continuing to grow our police force by lowering the hiring age from 21 to 18, enhancing pay and retirement benefits, and offering sign-on bonuses—ensuring our officers are empowered to protect and serve every family across the Nation.

### Strengthening Public Safety Across the Navajo Nation

Safe communities require strong facilities and emergency infrastructure. Our work is bringing services closer to families, speeding response times, and improving coordination across the Nation.

#### **Detention Facilities**

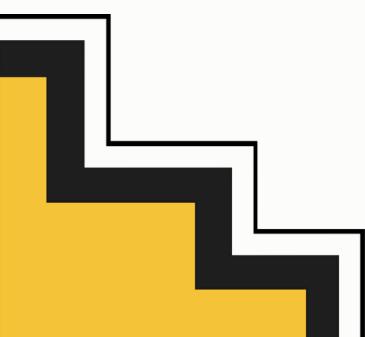
For too long, communities like Window Rock and Shiprock lacked local detention centers, forcing long and unsafe transports. With \$3.6 million in ARPA funds, we purchased two mobile detention centers—each holding 12 individuals for up to 48 hours. Window Rock is operational, and Shiprock will be fully functional by February 2026, ensuring justice is accessible and timely.

#### **Dispatch Installations and Incident Command Center:**

In December 2025, a modular building at the Western Dispatch Center strengthened emergency communications, marking a milestone in our 9-1-1 system. The Shiprock Incident Command Center is 90 percent complete and will soon house police, fire & rescue, EMS, and Emergency Management, uniting teams to respond faster, protect lives, and make every Navajo community safer and stronger.

#### **Renewal of 638 Contract**

I signed Resolution LOCN-05-25, securing five years of funding for the Navajo Nation Police Department through a Public Law 93-638 contract with the U.S. Department of the Interior. This updated agreement reflects terms we revised to meet the Nation's current needs, ensuring our officers have the resources to protect communities and enforce tribal laws. It allows for mutual aid agreements, reliable patrol vehicles, and security for public officials. For too long, officers relied on high-mileage vehicles prone to breakdowns. With this funding, we are providing modern, dependable vehicles, strengthening our police force, and giving our officers the tools they need to serve with pride, safeguard families, and make every Navajo community safer, stronger, and more resilient.



## **Modernizing 911 and Crisis Services**

We are creating safer, healthier communities, empowering first responders, and ensuring every Navajo family can receive timely, life-saving support by transforming emergency response across the Navajo Nation with our Next-Generation 911 (NG911) project. This project unites the Division of Public Safety, federal and state partners to save lives. The upgraded system automatically provides a caller's location, ensuring help reaches every community faster than ever before.

In 2025, DPS verified 30,000 addresses across 50+ chapters and traveled over 80,000 miles to prepare for deployment. I signed a \$6.2 million contract with MTM Solutions to implement E911 digital communications, making the Navajo Nation the first tribal nation with a consolidated NG911 answering point. This system will support calls, texts, images, and video, bringing cutting-edge technology to our people.

## **High-Tech Law Enforcement Vehicles**

We are also equipping our officers with advanced tools on the ground. To keep our communities safer and expand patrol coverage, Public Safety will purchase 120 new law enforcement vehicles equipped with advanced geospatial technology, enabling officers to complete reports on-site immediately after responding to calls.

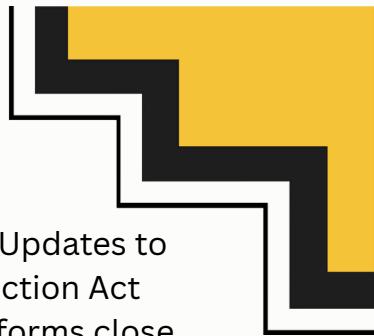
## **ICE Activity and Community Support**

Due to interactions between ICE and Navajo citizens, the Navajo Nation has strengthened partnerships through the Washington Office and with federal agencies—including the U.S. Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, and congressional representatives—to address ICE-related issues affecting our members. Operation Rainbow Bridge, launched in May 2023 to combat exploitation by fraudulent healthcare facilities, has been repurposed to support Navajo people facing negative ICE encounters. Working with DCFS, we relaunched the hotline and reporting system. My office will continue advocating for stronger protections.

## **Strengthening Our Laws to Protect the People**

Public safety begins with strong, clear, and modern laws that protect every Navajo family. In 2026, we will advance critical reforms to ensure our laws meet the needs of our communities and shields our children, elders, and most vulnerable relatives.

We are modernizing our criminal code with amendments to Title 17, developed in close collaboration with the Office of the Prosecutor, the Law & Order Committee, and community stakeholders. The policy work is complete, and these reforms are ready to move through the legislative process to strengthen justice across the Nation.



We are also enhancing protections for children and vulnerable adults. Updates to the Alchíní Bi Beehaaz’áanii Act (ABBA) and the Vulnerable Adult Protection Act (VAPA) are finalized and moving toward Council introduction. These reforms close gaps, making our laws practical, enforceable, and centered on safeguarding those who need it most.

In 2025, I also approved \$5 million to support Missing and Murdered Diné Relatives. This funds the first Missing Persons Unit within Navajo DPS, supports investigative training, and ensures a coordinated Tribal Community Response.

Together, these efforts strengthen justice, honor our relatives, and ensure that every Navajo family can live in safety, dignity, and hope.

### **I PROMISED TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

Over the past year, my administration has made significant progress in improving health and social services for our people. The Navajo Department of Health (NDOH) and the Navajo Division of Children and Family Services (NDCFS) have worked to expand access to culturally grounded care, strengthen public health systems, and provide critical social services that empower individuals, support families, and honor Diné traditions.

#### **Phoenix Urban Residential Treatment Center (Yideeskąđi Hózhóójí Center)**

In 2025, we opened the Phoenix Urban Residential Treatment Center, the first facility to provide substance use treatment fully grounded in Diné culture, values, and healing practices. For too long, Navajo members relied on Western programs that did not incorporate our teachings, ceremonies, or traditions.

Our treatment center delivers care that honors our identity while treating substance use disorders! Our mission is to foster Hózhó by expanding culturally appropriate care, strengthening behavioral health systems, supporting elders, and building sustainable Navajo-led health infrastructure. The Phoenix Center embodies this mission, offering culturally based treatment and whole-person wellness.

NDOH purchased and began renovating the building in March 2025, and Phoenix zoning changes finalized in September 2025 now allow all 92 beds to operate. The project is 80 percent complete, with Abearco Development, a Navajo-owned business, serving as architect and overseeing construction. Completion is expected by April 2026, and more than 100 Navajo members are already receiving care. The first graduates of the 90-day program celebrated in December 2025 marked a major step in healing.





In 2026, services will expand to inpatient detox, psychiatric care, and intensive outpatient programs, with a goal of serving more than 200 clients annually.

### **Gallup Indian Medical Center**

We completed the master plan for the Gallup Indian Medical Center, which includes a full campus with a hospital, behavioral health center, VA village, housing, and community facilities. The plan also includes conceptual designs for additional spaces such as a community center, retail and office areas, medical offices, entertainment facilities, rodeo stadium, trades buildings, and assisted living.

Renovations and modular expansion for the emergency department were completed on July 21, 2025, enhancing patient services. The campus project is currently about 30 percent complete, with a total investment projected of over \$500 million for equity financing, and overall campus costs estimated at over \$2.5 billion. In 2026, we aim to secure \$65–100 million for construction drawings and break ground on the hospital and behavioral health facility. Once financed, the campus is expected to be finished by December 2031.

### **Strengthening Navajo Families with Federal Programs and Services**

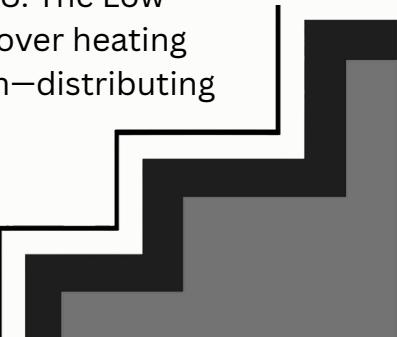
Ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of Navajo families has been a top priority for my administration. Through comprehensive federal programs administered by the Navajo DCFS we continue to provide culturally grounded support that empowers families, addresses urgent needs, and builds stronger communities across the Nation.

### **Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF)**

The Navajo Nation received \$55 million from the U.S. Treasury's Homeowner Assistance Fund to support eligible homeowners. Native Community Capital (NCC) administers the program, aiming to assist 901 homeowners by September 30, 2026. At the end of 2025, 722 grants have been issued to 306 homeowners, deploying \$9.88 million and obligating \$11.46 million, with \$25.56 million remaining. The application portal is temporarily closed and expected to reopen in 2026. Native Community Capital is on track to obligate the remaining funds by July 2026.

### **Family Assistance Unit**

The Navajo Nation provides essential support programs through FAU. The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps families cover heating and cooling costs—including wood, coal, pellets, and weatherization—distributing \$276,700 to 453 households from January 1 to December 2, 2025.





The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) supports basic needs, health care, and minor home repairs, providing \$744,800 to 1,438 applicants—83% of obligated funds—with assistance ranging from \$500 to \$700 based on household size and need.

Burial assistance helps families cover funeral costs, with the maximum payment increasing from \$2,500 to \$3,500 effective November 1, 2025. From January 1 to December 2, FAU distributed \$5,500,188.72 to 2,140 applicants. Together, these programs ensure Navajo families have access to vital services, emergency support, and financial assistance when they need it most.

### **Domestic Violence Shelters, Diné Action Plan, and Wellness Centers**

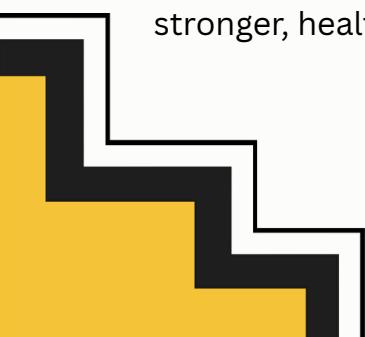
My administration has made significant strides in protecting and empowering vulnerable populations, especially our Navajo women and girls who face violence at alarming rates. Recognizing that four out of five Native women experience violence, we invested \$3.2 million in the Utah Navajo Health System to expand the Gentle Ironhawk Shelter in Blanding, Utah, increasing capacity to 18 beds and providing comprehensive services.

We also launched construction of two new domestic violence shelters, funded with \$7.1 million, to strengthen support in Tuba City and Shiprock. The Northern TREE House Shelter in Shiprock is now under Navajo Nation control and will be renovated with New Mexico's support.

These efforts are reinforced by the reinvigorated Diné Action Plan, which integrates traditional Diné values to address domestic violence, suicide, and substance abuse. New wellness centers have opened in Crownpoint and Tuba City, with more planned for Shiprock and Kayenta, reflecting our commitment to the safety, health, and holistic well-being of Navajo communities.

### **NAPI Food Distributions**

Our Washington office secured a \$5.55 million USDA grant to purchase and distribute food through NAPI, reaching every Chapter to strengthen food security and support the Navajo economy. This initiative ensures families have access to nutritious food – such as potatoes, corn, beans, and flour—while promoting agricultural self-sufficiency and empowering local farmers. My staff work alongside Chapter teams to deliver resources efficiently, connecting directly with our communities. Together, we are not only feeding families but also building a stronger, healthier, and more resilient Navajo Nation.



## **SNAP Benefits**

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act expanded work and time-limit requirements for SNAP, threatening benefits for up to 13 percent of families, disproportionately affecting Navajo households. The Navajo Nation Washington Office, working with partners and other tribes, raised awareness in Congress about SNAP's importance and its connection to treaty obligations. Thanks to these efforts, all Navajo tribal members were exempted, preserving access to essential nutrition.

We continue expanding services, scaling health and social programs, and embedding Diné values in governance—building a stronger, healthier, and more resilient Navajo Nation where families and communities thrive in Hózhó.

## **I PROMISED TO EMPOWER LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

### **Chapter Leadership Meetings**

Over the past year, my office has prioritized direct engagement with chapter leadership. By visiting communities, holding listening sessions, and meeting with Community Representatives, we have closed gaps between local and central government.

Chapters identify priorities—from infrastructure and water to housing, public safety, and education—and OPVP translates these into actionable plans. Issues are documented, assigned, and advanced for resolution, while Division Directors and department leaders meet chapters directly, improving accountability, coordination, and service delivery.

These efforts ensure chapter priorities shape policy, guide resources, and strengthen local leadership. To date, I have visited 35 chapters, fostering a government that listens, acts, and delivers results.

- Many Farms Chapter discussed ARPA projects, roads, housing, public safety, and operational needs. The meeting produced 16 actionable items, with follow-ups by division directors and Chapter leadership to advance community priorities.
- Teesto Chapter focused on turning allocated project funds into real infrastructure improvements.
- Diwozhii Bii' Tó (Greasewood Springs) Chapter addressed housing, infrastructure, and community development while strengthening coordination between executive divisions and local leadership.
- Thoreau Chapter discussed housing, utilities, infrastructure, environmental concerns, home site leases, and economic development—reinforcing the importance of collaborative solutions with delegates.
- Sweetwater Chapter highlighted turning over new homes to residents and the importance of safe, stable housing for Navajo families.

- K'ai'bii'to' Chapter addressed housing and infrastructure challenges, reflecting direct executive engagement with local needs.
- St. Michaels Chapter: We visited families to support home upgrades—electricity, water lines, septic tanks, and bathroom additions—bringing essential utilities and improvements.
- Wide Ruins Chapter discussed road access and connectivity to support community mobility.
- Rough Rock Chapter: Met with local leaders to hear concerns and discuss shared priorities, reinforcing our commitment to ongoing engagement.

## **I PROMISED TO IMPROVE VETERAN SERVICES**

Supporting Navajo veterans remains a top priority. My Administration is committed to honoring their sacrifices with meaningful action—addressing housing, benefits, and medical care—while ensuring their voices are heard and needs are met.

### **Veteran Housing**

Providing safe, affordable housing continues to be a top focus. The Navajo Nation Veterans Administration (NNVA) is actively addressing 151 housing requests. With \$50 million in ARPA funds, we are creating unprecedented opportunities for veterans and their families to become homeowners. In partnership with the Southwest Indian Foundation, 20 new 1- to 3-bedroom homes are underway. Currently, 114 homes are supported with \$26.5 million from Navajo Veterans Trust Funds, 80 homes with \$50 million in ARPA funds, and 30 homes with \$4 million from NAHASDA, plus 10 modular homes donated by FEMA.

Significant progress has been made: 95 homes are in progress, 27 completed homes await utilities, and 22 turnkey homes have been delivered. These efforts provide safe, stable housing, honor veterans' service, and strengthen families.

### **Federal VA Benefits**

This year, NNVA helped 194 veterans secure U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation, including many Vietnam-era veterans who had waited decades. NNVA's accredited team guides veterans through every step, including filing an Intent to File, establishing Power of Attorney, and completing claims documenting physical, psychological, and moral injuries, including combat trauma and Military Sexual Trauma.

Veterans received over \$730,000 in retroactive disability payments this year. A 100-percent-rated Vietnam-era veteran may receive about \$4,000 per month, tax-free, enabling access to medical care, counseling, and essential living needs.

### **Veterans Trust Fund (VTF)**

The VTF now exceeds \$12 million, supporting roughly 8,000 veterans. NNVA is advocating to increase the long-standing 4% allocation – unchanged since 1998 – to cover essentials like food, utilities, medications, and ceremonial needs.

Carryover authority has been restored, allowing unspent funds to roll into the next fiscal year, ensuring stability for Color Guard and Honor Guard stipends, burial assistance, home repairs, and other critical services.

### **Improved Staffing & Veterans Act Updates**

NNVA strengthened its workforce, filling 32 positions—about 90 percent of staff—allowing expanded services in financial assistance, housing, burial benefits, emergency services, and benefits navigation.

The Navajo Nation Veterans Act was amended to place Chapter and Area Veterans Organizations under the Executive Branch for technical assistance, giving them formal roles and spaces to voice concerns. Amendments also expanded NNVA responsibilities to include outreach, claims assistance, and essential services in health, education, housing, and employment.

Through direct engagement with veterans across the Nation, our Administration continues to improve healthcare, benefits, and support, ensuring service is honored with action and accountability.

### **ENSURE YOUTH HAVE THE BEST EDUCATION AND RESOURCES**

Our Navajo youth are the foundation of our Nation’s future. My Administration is committed to ensuring they have access to the best education, resources, and opportunities, equipping the next generation to thrive academically, professionally, and personally.

### **\$10,000 MBA Scholarship at ASU**

In partnership with the Navajo Nation Oil and Gas Company, I established the Yideeskaadi Nitsáhákees Scholarship for Navajo students pursuing an MBA at Arizona State University. Two students receive \$5,000 each to support their educational and professional growth. Business degrees equip Navajo students with leadership, management, finance, and entrepreneurship skills, empowering them to strengthen Navajo businesses, create jobs, and drive economic development within our communities.

## **ASU, UA Partnerships, and Federal Advocacy**

I renewed an MOU with the University of Arizona College of Veterinary Medicine to increase the number of Navajo veterinarians, preserving traditional livestock practices, ensuring herd health, and supporting food security and economic sustainability. In 2026, I will renew a similar agreement with the James E. Rogers College of Law to maintain a pipeline of Navajo attorneys, providing scholarships, mentorship, and professional development to prepare graduates to serve the Nation and advocate for tribal rights.

The Division of Social Services and ASU School of Social Work renewed a five-year agreement through 2028, adding two programs that give students more opportunities to serve communities, supporting mental health, family stability, and access to essential services.

Through the Navajo Nation Washington Office, we prevented the reversion of over \$9 million in workforce development funding from 2019–2021. These funds now support job training, scholarships, tuition, technical school programs, and initiatives that advance skills, employment, and economic growth for Navajo people.

## **Financial Literacy Initiatives**

We launched a Navajo financial literacy program to equip youth and families with skills to manage, save, and grow resources. Partnering with Wells Fargo and Oweesta Corporation, we trained leaders and nonprofits to deliver education rooted in Diné values. Videos are available in English and Diné, and a chapter-based resource page ensures wide access.

Hands-on experiences with the American Indian Science and Engineering Society and a virtual Financial Mobility Community of Practice help students and families gain practical financial skills. In 2026, we will expand to every chapter and high school, deliver more videos and coaching, and empower Navajo families with confidence, independence, and long-term prosperity.

## **Navajo School Clothing and Supplies Program**

The NSCS program provided \$2,158,200 to 4,871 applicants in 2025, assisting 10,791 children through the Navajo Education Incentive. The Supplemental Program added \$548,400 for 670 applicants, supporting 1,371 children. Demand remains high, and I continue advocating for full funding to ensure all Navajo children receive essential school resources.

## Protecting Tribal Education

NNWO safeguards tribal education amid federal transitions, ensuring continuity of funding, staff, and programs. Through advocacy, tribal consultation, and direct engagement with the White House and Department of Education, we protect services, uphold the federal trust responsibility, and support Navajo students' rights under the Treaty of 1868.

## I PROMISED TO INVEST IN THE PROPER CARE AND WELL-BEING OF ELDERS

Our elders are the foundation of the Navajo Nation—the keepers of knowledge, culture, and tradition. Ensuring their health, safety, and dignity is a top priority of my Administration. By investing in senior centers, programs, and accessible facilities, we honor our elders, support their independence, and provide spaces where they can thrive physically, socially, and emotionally.

### Senior Centers: Opening New Centers and Renovating Existing Centers

The Navajo Department of Health (NDOH) is advancing the Senior Centers Assessment and Improvement Plan, a key initiative to strengthen 86 senior centers across Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Of these, 60 are operable, 22 are closed, 3 are non-operable, and one is proposed for construction.

NDOH has standardized food menus, activity calendars, and home-delivery checklists, aligning with national standards and supporting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual well-being of over 10,000 Navajo elders each year. By June 2026, all centers will be evaluated, and a final report completed. Emergency efforts have already reopened 23 centers, including Tohatchi, Nazlini, St. Michaels (\$6 million renovation), and Jeddito, with Coyote Canyon and Mexican Springs next.

In 2026, NDOH aims for 100 percent operational status, expand home-based services to 20 percent more elders, and continue targeted repairs and construction.

Additionally, a \$13.3 million ADA initiative is bringing 164 tribal buildings into full compliance by March 2024, ensuring safety, accessibility, and inclusion. Work has begun at seven Chinle Agency locations, making essential services fully accessible to Navajo elders and people with disabilities.

Together, these efforts create modern, safe, and culturally grounded spaces that honor our elders, enhance wellness, and strengthen community connections across the Navajo Nation.

## **Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA)**

Protecting Navajo citizens affected by uranium exposure remains a top priority. On July 3, 2025, the Navajo Nation Washington Office helped secure a landmark victory with the Radiation Exposure Compensation Reauthorization Act (RECA). The law extends the program through 2028, doubles compensation from \$50,000 to \$100,000, and expands coverage for radiation-related illnesses. RECA provides critical support to uranium workers and downwinders. As of December 16, 2025, 51 uranium workers and 433 downwinders have received compensation—a 100 percent approval rate for reviewed claims.

NNWO continues collaborating with congressional representatives and the New Mexico Tumor Registry to ensure claimants access health records and protections against predatory practices. This expansion delivers justice, safeguards health, and honors generations impacted by uranium exposure.

## **Medicaid**

Medicaid remains a lifeline for Navajo families, supporting children, elders, and low-income citizens. When federal work requirements threatened coverage, NNWO successfully advocated for exemptions, ensuring clinics, hospitals, and health programs continue operating. These protections provide essential healthcare, strengthen our communities, and support healthier, brighter futures for Navajo families.

## **I PROMISED TO SUPPORT FARMERS AND RANCHERS**

Supporting our farmers and ranchers ensures food security, preserves traditional practices, strengthens rural livelihoods, and maintains the health of our land for generations to come. My Administration is committed to providing the resources, infrastructure, and guidance needed for Navajo agriculture to thrive.

## **Windmill Repairs**

Reliable water access is essential for Navajo families, livestock, and the health of our land. By repairing 600 windmills and livestock water facilities—exceeding the original goal by 20%—the Department of Water Resources ensured that communities and ranchers had consistent water for daily needs and for sustaining their herds. Installing new windmills, solar units, and replacing tanks and troughs further strengthens water infrastructure, reduces the risk of shortages, and supports traditional livestock practices that are central to Navajo culture, economy, and way of life.

## **Saving the Padres Mesa Demonstration Ranch**

The Padres Mesa Demonstration Ranch (PMDR) is a cornerstone of Navajo agricultural heritage and the birthplace of Native American Beef. It provides livestock management, range restoration, and sustainable ranching education that benefits Navajo communities. When ONHIR closed on September 30, 2025, PMDR faced closure, threatening jobs and a vital cultural and economic resource.

My office intervened, and the Navajo Nation assumed operational responsibility. ONHIR provided \$75,000 for early FY2026 labor, and NHLCO is budgeting another \$75,000 to sustain operations for the year. NHLCO formally assumed oversight on September 25, 2025, and is working to secure \$257,000 from the Navajo Rehabilitation Trust Fund for water, herd health, and operational support.

PMDR supports 14 grazing permit holders and generates revenue through herd sales, while serving as a hands-on classroom in sustainable ranching practices. Preserving PMDR protects Navajo land stewardship, livelihoods, and cultural traditions.

## **I PROMISED TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT ON THE NAVAJO NATION**

Protecting the land, water, and air of the Navajo Nation is essential to the health, safety, and future of our communities. My Administration is committed to addressing both immediate environmental challenges and long-term hazards, ensuring our people can thrive on lands that are safe, clean, and respected.

## **Solid Waste**

The Solid Waste Program is actively identifying and cleaning up illegal dump sites across the Navajo Nation. DCD staff collect data from all 110 chapters to build a comprehensive waste site database, guiding cleanup efforts and funding applications. Most chapters now have roll-off bins through the Navajo Nation Sanitation and Waste Management Program, helping communities safely manage everyday waste. The program coordinates closely with NNEPA to plan targeted cleanups and implement long-term solutions. Through outreach, monitoring, and cleanup initiatives, the program preserves Navajo homelands, protects public health, and ensures a cleaner, safer environment for future generations.

## **Uranium Cleanup**

Abandoned uranium mines have long threatened Navajo health and sacred lands. In 2025, NNEPA partnered with DISA Technologies to test High-Pressure Slurry Ablation (HPSA), an NRC-approved method that removes up to 98 percent of uranium and 93 percent of radium-226 from mine waste. NNEPA provided site access for validation and is working with the Eastern Navajo Land Commission to implement HPSA across the Navajo Nation. Combined with off-site disposal at Ambrosia Lake, this approach provides permanent closure, aligning with Navajo law and tradition. By reducing radioactive contamination and toxins, NNEPA protects water, soil, and communities, delivering long-term environmental and public health benefits for generations to come.

## **I PROMISED TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCIES OF TRIBAL PROGRAMS AND OFFICES**

My Administration is committed to addressing employment challenges across tribal operations, prioritizing Navajo hires to strengthen communities and support families. To attract and retain talent, we ensure wages are fair and competitive. A comprehensive wage study of 115 employees identified ways to boost morale through improved pay, benefits, and mentoring. This effort provides opportunity, stability, and growth, bringing qualified Navajos home to live, work, and build their futures while reflecting our commitment to caring for those who serve the Nation.

## **Dayforce – Modernizing Human Resource Tasks**

Implementing Dayforce modernizes HR and payroll systems, ensuring accuracy, transparency, and accountability. While the rollout has faced challenges, we continue addressing issues and appreciate our employees' patience and dedication.

## **Streamlined Employment Applications**

HR and General Services have automated Navajo Nation employment systems for the first time, streamlining the hiring process. This makes opportunities more accessible, reduces barriers for qualified Navajos, and ensures fair, equitable hiring. Modernized systems improve government operations, empower our workforce, and strengthen communities by bringing Navajo talent home.

## **Office of Vital Records – Tribal Platform Enrollment**

On August 4, 2025, the Office launched Tribal Platform Enrollment, a secure system for managing vital records. Kiosks and remote access via Starlink provide faster, safer, and more convenient service, reducing travel burdens for remote communities and ensuring secure access to critical documents.

## **Homesite Lease Office**

Improvements at the Homesite Lease Office resulted in over 2,000 approved homesite leases in 2025. Streamlined processes provide stability, protect family land rights, and allow Navajo families to build and invest in their homes. These efforts strengthen cultural ties, support community growth, and ensure planning for future generations.

Through these initiatives, my Administration is creating meaningful employment, modernizing government services, and empowering Navajo communities while protecting family lands and strengthening the Nation for the future.

## **Hardship**

I'm pleased to announce a third round of hardship checks in 2026, focused on our most vulnerable families. These checks will go to those who need them most. The Office of the Controller will administer the program using ARPA funds, which must be disbursed before year-end. Today, I will sign an Executive Order setting deadlines to ensure the program rolls out efficiently and on time. As inflation rises, this assistance will help families ease the cost of living, care for their loved ones, and meet daily needs, giving Navajo people a chance to breathe easier in 2026.

## **GOALS FOR 2026**

### **Economy**

We will fully award Tranche 1 of NSBCI funding, streamline the business site leasing process, and implement a \$14.70 minimum wage. We will launch and develop new hotels and lodging facilities—including Shonto Hotel, Shiprock Pinnacle Hotel, Cameron Horseman's Lodge, and Cameron Hozho Resort & Hotel—to increase household income, stimulate local spending, and strengthen economic stability across the Navajo Nation.

### **Infrastructure & Utilities**

We will complete all remaining water, electricity, and broadband projects, finish the San Juan Lateral Water Treatment Plant, and advance Phase 1 of the Western Navajo Project. We will expand and repair roads and bridges, adding 15–30 miles of dirt roads, to improve access to essential services, connectivity, and community safety.

### **Housing & Home Support**

We will complete ARPA housing projects and bathroom renovations, and close out Homeowner Assistance Fund obligations while supporting remaining homeowners to improve living conditions and housing stability.

## **Public Safety**

We will bring detention centers and the Incident Command Center fully online, deploy the NextGen 911 system by August 2026, advance criminal code reforms including ABBA and VAPA, and allocate \$5 million to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons initiatives to strengthen law enforcement and support affected families.

## **Health & Social Services**

We will expand the Phoenix Center to serve over 200 clients annually, break ground on the Gallup Indian Medical Center hospital and behavioral health campus, complete domestic violence shelters, and expand wellness centers to provide accessible, culturally grounded healthcare and behavioral support for Navajo individuals.

## **CLOSING**

We all share the responsibility to leave things better than we found them. On January 10, 2023, I took my solemn oath to faithfully execute the Office of the President, preserve and defend the laws and government of the Navajo Nation, and advance the interests of our people. These words guide me every day.

Over the past year, my Administration has worked tirelessly to strengthen the quality of life for the Navajo people. These accomplishments are possible because of the dedication of our employees, partners, and the trust of our people. Yet our work is far from complete. We must continue investing in our communities, preserving traditions, and embracing innovative solutions to meet today's and tomorrow's challenges.

As I close, I reaffirm my commitment to you. I am deeply grateful to serve as your President. Together, we will uphold our values, empower our people, and ensure the Navajo Nation remains strong, vibrant, and resilient. God bless the Navajo people and our great Navajo Nation.