



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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**Navajo Nation's renewable energy future takes big step
forward with completion of Kayenta Solar II generation facility**



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, Navajo Tribal Utility Authority representatives, Salt River Project officials, and Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish during the opening ceremony for the second phase of the Kayenta Solar generation facility on Sept. 20, 2019 in Kayenta, Ariz.

KAYENTA, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer commended Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) and Salt River Project (SRP) for working together to move the Navajo Nation forward in its renewable energy initiatives, during the opening ceremony on Friday for the second phase of the Kayenta Solar generation facility, a renewable energy plant that now produces enough emission-free energy to power approximately 36,000 homes.

Construction of the first phase began in 2016, which generates 27.3 megawatts of electricity for families on the Navajo Nation. NTUA began construction of the second phase of the solar plant

last year, which now produces an additional 28 megawatts — all of which will be used to power homes on the Navajo Nation.

“Today is another great milestone for the Navajo Nation’s renewable energy future. Will the completion of the second phase of Kayenta Solar, we are moving ahead with long-term sustainable energy development that will provide more electricity for Navajo homes and make our communities and economy stronger,” said President Nez.

He stated that the Kayenta Solar generation facility aligns with the Nez-Lizer Administration’s “Navajo Háyoókáát (Sunrise) Proclamation,” which states that the Navajo Nation will pursue and prioritize renewable energy development for the long-term benefit of the Navajo people.

“The Navajo Háyoókáát Proclamation has set the tone for energy development across the Navajo Nation and throughout Indian Country, and thanks to the partnership between NTUA and SRP and with the support of our Nation’s leaders, we are moving in a new direction while providing additional jobs and revenue for our Navajo people,” President Nez added.

In addition to job creation, the revenue generated from Kayenta I and II will help fund NTUA’s “Light Up Navajo” initiative, a joint effort between NTUA and the American Public Power Association dedicated to bringing electricity to Navajo homes. In the first phase of the “Light Up Navajo” initiative, 228 Navajo homes received electricity for the very first time.

Vice President Lizer focused on the economic opportunities that the solar facility will provide for the community of Kayenta and beyond, and how it helps to promote the “Buy Navajo, Buy Local” initiative.

“Through the great work of NTUA, we are creating a stronger economic foundation and greater momentum for business owners and Navajo entrepreneurs to grow and prosper so that we can show the world that we can do it on our own,” said Vice President Lizer.

NTUA is now in the planning stages of the second phase of the “Light Up Navajo” initiative. The Nez-Lizer Administration has requested that NTUA prioritize the electrification of homes of Navajo veterans in the next phase.

“We have come a long way to bring power and light to the residents of the Navajo Nation,” said NTUA General Manager Walter Haase. “This solar plant not only brings energy to the Nation, but has been a catalyst to help us to improve the standard of living for many Navajo families.”

During the construction of the first phase of Kayenta Solar, the Navajo workforce was paid \$5.2 million and received over 4,700 hours of specialized training in solar utility construction for the Kayenta Solar Project, which empowers the workforce with new skills to secure other jobs in the future.

Haase stated that the second phase of the solar project provided over 150 jobs, over 90-percent of which were filled by local Navajo people. Phase one and two combined generated approximately \$9.5 million in salary paid to the workers as well, which also benefited the local

economy. Overall, it is estimated that \$15.6 million in economic activity occurred within the surrounding communities during the construction period, according to NTUA.

President Nez and Vice President Lizer also shared their gratitude for the grazing permit holders, several of whom were in attendance for the event, that allowed for the Kayenta Solar generation facility to be constructed on their grazing lands totaling over 300 acres.

During Friday's event, 24th Navajo Nation Council member Vince R. James and Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish were also in attendance to show their support and appreciation. Kayenta Chapter President Stanley Clitso and Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources Executive Director Dr. Rudy Shebala also offered supporting words during the opening ceremony.

The Nez-Lizer Administration greatly appreciates the hard work of NTUA's management and workforce in making Kayenta Solar II a great success for the Navajo people.

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