



## The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Navajo Nation finalizes lease for 200 MW emissions-free solar energy development project in the community of Cameron



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer sign a lease for a 200-megawatt solar project in Cameron, Ariz. on April 6, 2021.

**CAMERON, Ariz.** – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, Council Delegate Thomas Walker, Jr., Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish, and Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources Executive Director Dr. Rudy Shebala joined Navajo Tribal Utility Authority officials and Cameron Chapter President Charlie Smith in Cameron, Ariz. on Tuesday, to finalize a lease agreement to construct the Cameron Solar Generation Plant, which will produce 200 megawatts of emissions-free solar energy.

“This is another step forward for the Navajo Nation’s renewable energy future. When the Nez-Lizer Administration took office, we signed the Hayoofkaal proclamation to pursue and prioritize clean renewable energy development for the long-term benefit of the Navajo people. Working in partnership with Cameron Chapter, NTUA, and the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council, we are now able to

proceed with this new solar energy project that will provide approximately 400 jobs during construction, over \$8 million in payroll, \$3 million in transmission payments to the Nation, and tax and land lease revenue. We are moving in a new direction with energy development on the Navajo Nation,” said President Nez.

Cameron Chapter supported the project through a resolution passed in 2018. President Nez and others also recognized and thanked Cameron grazing permit holder Lucie Begay, who agreed to the construction of the solar project in the area of the permitted grazing land.

“I commend the former and current Cameron Chapter leaders and community members for developing and implementing the vision that they have for their community. If you’ve visited the Cameron community lately, you’ll notice all of the new business development and improved highway that will serve as a strong foundation for more development and sustainability for the long-term. We thank everyone who laid their hands to this great work and we look forward to seeing more and more renewable energy development projects in the near future, in accordance with our administration’s Hayoołkaaf proclamation,” said Vice President Lizer.

Cameron Chapter President Charlie Smith, who was sworn-in as the president of Cameron Chapter in January, thanked all of the leaders in attendance and the chapter officials for the dedication and service to the community. He also spoke about other infrastructure needs within the community including more access to water resources.

The lease for the project was approved by the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council’s Resources and Development Committee on March 31, by a vote of 4-0. Council Delegate Thomas Walker, Jr., who serves as the Vice Chair of the Resources and Development Committee was also in attendance for the signing and thanked the Cameron Chapter officials and grazing permit holders for their support of the project to create jobs and revenue.

“The residents of Cameron are very respectful and generous and they have a lot of faith in our community. NTUA is now an official part of our community through this project. This is a long-term commitment with this 30-year lease. Someday, we’ll look back on this day and say we were part of this signing and a part of the growth and development that followed. As leaders and as a community, we are looking forward to the future for our people,” said Delegate Walker.

NTUA Legal Counsel Arash Moalemi spoke on behalf of NTUA during the signing ceremony, and noted that the project will require infrastructure development and serve as an anchor tenant to promote economic development in Cameron.

“The Cameron Solar Project brings new employment and economic opportunities for the area and for the Navajo Nation,” said NTUA Legal Counsel Arash Moalemi. “The project will also help make way for new multi-utility infrastructure for the area.”

The Cameron Solar Generation Plant is expected to generate \$90 million in transmission payments and over \$13 million in land lease payments to the Navajo Nation over the life of the project. Construction will also create \$6 million in tax revenue.

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