



# Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project Newsletter

2nd Quarter, Jan. 2022

## Evaluation of San Juan Generating Station Water Conveyance Facilities In Progress

By James (Sterling) Acree, Project Management Specialist, Bureau of Reclamation

Reclamation has been analyzing the possible inclusion of the San Juan Generating Station water conveyance facilities into the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, and a draft Environmental Assessment is expected to be released for public comment in the spring of 2022.

In 2018, the Public Service Company of New Mexico with plans for closing down the power plant in 2022, approached Reclamation and suggested consideration of incorporating the existing river intake and water conveyance system, including the San Juan Generating Station reservoir, into our water supply project. Since then, Reclamation has learned of the City of Farmington and Enchant Energy’s interest in keeping the power plant operating and have confirmed there is sufficient system capacity for both the NGWSP and continued power generation.

Use of these existing facilities could provide major benefits to NGWSP, including increased reliability of the water supply, improved and consistent water quality entering the water treatment plant, greater operational flexibility during monsoon events, and both capital and operational cost savings. These benefits come with the system’s 50+ years of reliable performance and inclusion of an off-river storage reservoir capable of supplying approximately two weeks of water supply at full-NGWSP demands.

Water sampling and testing has begun and will continue to take place at both the San Juan River and the SJGS reservoir. The testing showed that the water in the reservoir is of similar water quality to the river, as it was only used for storage without any return flow from the power plant, and is fit for drinking water treatment. Once treated, this water will meet or exceed Federal Safe Drinking Water Act standards and can be ready for delivery through the NGWSP to Navajo communities and to the City of Gallup by summer 2028.



### Faces of NGWSP

Yateeh, my name is Pat Page and I am the Project Construction Engineer for Reclamation’s Four Corners Construction Office. I’ve been involved with the NGWSP since the early 2000’s. Since then, I’ve had the honor and privilege to be part of a team that has taken the Project from a conceptual dream to monumental reality, where clean drinking water is being delivered to communities and individuals.

After 33 years of federal service, I am retiring. When looking back, there are many construction milestones I can point to as highlights, but it’s the human element and those interactions involved with this project that has moved me the most – being invited into people’s homes to negotiate a right-of-way; hearing and seeing Navajo leaders passionately, (to the point of tears,) describe the importance of the Project; and one of my proudest moments – introducing myself in Navajo in a meeting inside the Tribal Council Chambers.

At the end of the day, this Project is about people: those who had the vision and passion to get NGWSP to this point; those who will see that it’s completed; and those who it will benefit so profoundly – for generations to come. I will be watching and cheering!



Water for the NGWSP’s San Juan Lateral will be drawn from the San Juan River and stored in an existing reservoir prior to treatment and delivery



If you would like to learn more, visit our website at <https://www.usbr.gov/uc/progact/navajo-gallup/>.





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## Navajo Gallup's Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant Receives National Recognition

By Chris Watt, Public Affairs Specialist & Bart Deming, Deputy Construction Engineer

Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project representatives were recently presented with three prestigious national design-build awards for the highly successful Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant, which has treated and delivered drinking water to Navajo communities on the Cutter Lateral for over a year.

Representatives from the Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources, Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office, and design-build contractor, Jacobs accepted the awards from the Design Build Institute of America at the Design-Build Conference & Expo in Denver, Colorado, Nov. 1-3, 2021.

### The Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant team was honored with the:

- 2021 Design-Build National Award of Merit in Water/Wastewater (for being one of the best three design-build projects in that category);
- the 2021 Design-Build National Award of Excellence in Water/Wastewater (the nation's best water/wastewater project);
- and the 2021 DBIA Chairman's Award for the project that demonstrated the greatest Community Impact & Social Responsibility, highlighting the benefits this project provides to the Cutter Lateral communities.

The awards are given annually by DBIA to honor the nation's best design-build projects and leaders.

"Those people [who have access to water now], I know, are really happy. I go to meetings, and I see their faces and the way they ask questions, it's a real big thing for them," said Navajo Nation Water Rights Commission member and hands-

on advocate of the NGWSP, Bert Sandoval.

Roughly 6,000 people or 1,500 households in eight Navajo chapters are now receiving this life-giving water, and by January 2022 the Jicarilla Apache Nation will also receive drinking water from the Cutter Lateral. In addition to replacing poor quality and diminishing groundwater, the dependable water supply will enable areas of growth and development, including commercial community and medical facilities, wellness centers, and housing developments. Reclamation and Jacobs will operate the new water treatment facilities until April 2022, when the operations and maintenance responsibilities will transfer to the Navajo Nation Utility Authority.

For more information about the award-winning Cutter Lateral Water Treatment project, please visit <https://dbia.org/project/cutter-lateral-reach-21-water-treatment-plant-and-associated-items-navajo-gallup/> or <https://www.usbr.gov/uc/progact/navajo-gallup/index.html>.



From left: Ted Michaelidis – Jacobs Project Manager, Robert Kirk – Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources Principle Hydrologist, Bart Deming – Reclamation Deputy Construction Engineer, Jill Petersen – Jacobs Project Engineer

## Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant Blessing Ceremony

By: Becky Begay, Navajo Outreach Coordinator, & Bart Deming, Deputy Construction Engineer, Bureau of Reclamation

A Navajo Hozhoonji (Blessing Way) Ceremony was held at the Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant at Dzilthnaodithhle, New Mexico on Oct. 29, 2021. The Hozhoonji Ceremony came almost one-year to the day after the initial water deliveries from the Cutter Lateral to Navajo homes, and it was important to all parties to traditionally bless the life-giving water coming from the Project.

Representatives from the Navajo Nation, local Navajo chapter officials, the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, and the Bureau of Reclamation attended the ceremony. The water treatment plant is a key feature of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project's Cutter Lateral, which supplies clean and reliable drinking water to the communities of Huerfano, Dzilthnaodithhle, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad (Burnham), Nageezi, Ojo Encino, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake, and Pueblo Pintado.

The Hozhoonji Ceremony was conducted by Richard Anderson Sr., from Crownpoint, New Mexico. The small ceremony took place inside the water treatment plant's process building, where the invited participants sat around a circle 6-feet apart and wore masks to comply with COVID-19 guidelines and requirements. The ceremony was conducted to bless the drinking water, the community, the area, the environment, and the treatment plant.



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

If you would like to learn more, visit our website at <https://www.usbr.gov/uc/progact/navajo-gallup/>.

