



Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project Newsletter

3rd Quarter, April 2022

Construction is starting on the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project along Highway 264

By Ryan Royer, Civil Engineer, Bureau of Reclamation

The Project water that will serve the people along New Mexico State Highway 264 and the capitol of the Navajo Nation, Window Rock, Arizona, begins its path far away in the mountains of southwest Colorado. The water that falls in this region runs off into streams. The streams gather into rivers and eventually the rivers combine into the San Juan River. From this river, Project water will be drawn, treated to drinking water standards, and transmitted through pipelines and pumping plants south along U.S. Highway 491 on its way to the Navajo Nation.



An excavator lowers part of the underground piping into its final resting place under Tohlakai Pumping Plant north of Yah-tah-hey Junction

The noticeable water transmission pipeline construction on the east side of Highway 491 between Twin Lakes and Little Water the past couple of years is similar to the construction that is getting ready to start along Highway 264. If you see lots of construction in the area of Yah-ta-hey junction, and on the north side of Highway 264 going towards Window Rock in the coming months, it is because construction on the water transmission line is taking place!

The Navajo Code Talkers Sublateral portion of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project was recently awarded to the contractor SJ Louis Construction Inc. of Rockwell, Minnesota. Beginning this past March and for the next two years, this next key reach of the project will be constructed, including: preparing the ground for pipe installation, trenching with large excavators, pipe laying (30" and 24" steel pipe) and backfilling.

One method that will be used during installation of this reach, is Horizontal Direction Drilling, or HDD. When large washes or shallow channels, are crossed, the pipe must be installed deep enough to prevent exposure of the pipe after erosion. To do this, large boring machines are needed to drill under the wash. The pipe joints are first welded, and then the pipeline is pulled through the bored hole. If you see pipe on the ground, but no ditch, this is likely what is going on. The holes are bored deep enough that erosion shouldn't be a problem for at least the next 100 years.

People in the area of this construction may observe materials being delivered like pipe, or concrete manholes and vaults. Additionally, a large concrete tank (1.5 million gallons) will be constructed northwest of the Black Hat store. Reminder to please be aware of trucks and construction vehicles turning off the highway in these areas.

If you or someone you know is looking for employment and has the skills to construct pipelines, please contact Lisa Zolin at 320-253-9291 ext. 356 or cell-320-428-8869 or email at HR@SJLouis.com



Faces of NGWSP

Ya't'eeh, my name is Bart Deming. I am the new Construction Engineer and Manager for Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office, following in the footsteps of Rick Ehat, Barry Longwell, and Pat Page leading this office and the NGWSP. My family and I live in Hesperus, Colorado, near where I grew up and attended school at Fort Lewis College, before finishing my degree at Colorado State University. After working as a consulting engineer on water resource projects in Oregon, I returned to the Four Corners region in 2012 to take a dream job with Reclamation to work on the NGWSP. I have been fully involved helping design, construct, and manage the NGWSP as a civil engineer and manager ever since.

Tó éí iiná! (Water is life!) It's truly an honor and privilege to be part of the team, along with our partners, bringing water to the people. As we've begun to experience in the past year on the Cutter Lateral, this project will continue to help provide economic development and job opportunities that were not possible without adequate access and availability of water. I plan to be here until the Project is completed, overseeing the federal government's trust responsibilities to the Navajos by delivering clean, reliable, and sustainable drinking water to the Dine'.



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





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Environmental Assessment for the Realignment of the San Juan Lateral

By Eric Creeden, General Biologist & NEPA Coordinator, Bureau of Reclamation

The Bureau of Reclamation is preparing an Environmental Assessment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act to analyze the potential impacts to the human environment of a planned realignment of the northern portion of the San Juan Lateral of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project (NGWSP). The proposed realignment differs from what was analyzed and approved as part of the NGWSP's 2009 Record of Decision and Final Environmental Impact Statement.

The Proposed Action would include the acquisition of select lands and facilities associated with the San Juan Generating Station water intake, conveyance, and storage systems; and



realign the northern reaches of the NGWSP's San Juan Lateral water pipeline, including its associated pumping plants, water storage facilities, and water treatment plant. Use of the San Juan Generating Station's water conveyance system was briefly detailed in the previous NGWSP Project Newsletter (2nd Quarter, Jan. 2022).

Reclamation asks the public to stay tuned to the NGWSP website (<https://www.usbr.gov/uc/progact/navajo-gallup/index.html>) for updates on the availability to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment for this proposed realignment, which is expected to be released later this spring. The public will be encouraged to provide comments during that review period.

Cutter Lateral Water Delivery – Community Feedback Over 1 Year Later

By: Hubert (Chico) Quintana, Civil Engineer, Bureau of Reclamation

Over one year ago the NGWSP Cutter Lateral began delivering water to eight Navajo chapters, starting with Dziłthnaadithle and Huerfano in October 2020, and finishing with Pueblo Pintado and Whitehorse Lake in May 2021, servicing an estimated 6,000 people or 1,500 households. The Bureau of Reclamation Office at the Four Corners Construction Office in Farmington, New Mexico spoke with Navajo Chapter officials about changes they've noticed.

Ojo Encino Chapter Manager Gloria Chiquito recalled “that residents would haul water from a local spring for cooking and drinking, but not anymore.”

Ben Woody Jr., the Huerfano Chapter President shared recent developments his chapter is involved with. Since the Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant (CLWTP) began delivery, they have upgraded the pipelines in the community water system, as well as the recent completion of the Carson North Water Project by the Navajo Engineering & Construction Authority. Woody also shared that the Carson Trading Post land purchase was completed in the first week of February, which acquired 600 acres of property to build Navajo Housing Authority homes and has been working with the University of New Mexico to design a trail system on the new property for community use. He gave credit to the Cutter Lateral for the availability of water to be able to move forward with these development projects. Woody closed with saying that 90-95% of the Huerfano Community is now being served with the drinking water from the project.

We plan to continue to update newsletter readers as we learn of more success stories.



View of Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant looking west. Photo taken on May 17, 2021.



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