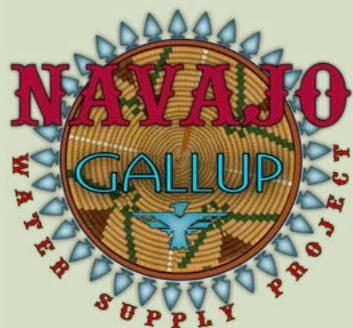




NAVAJO-GALLUP WATER SUPPLY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

Summer 2026

MEETINGS

Project Construction Committee (PCC)

Jul. 30, 2026

9 a.m. - noon

Location: Navajo Tribal
Utility Authority - Corporate
Headquarters
Indian Route 12
Fort Defiance, AZ 86504

To participate virtually, please
contact jacree@usbr.gov

GET IN TOUCH

Questions/Comments:

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Contact us:

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Four Corners Construction
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1235 La Plata Highway
Farmington, NM 87401

Looking for more ways to interact with our team?

Come find our booth at the
Navajo Fair this September!
We'll have staff on-site and
would love to tell you more
about the project.

Reclamation Awards Major Contract to Advance Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project



Horizontal Directional Drill pullback method being utilized on Reach 4B near Shiprock, New Mexico on the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project in June 2025. This type of pullback will be used for construction of the Block 2-3 Pipeline which begins at the Frank Chee Willetto Reservoir approximately 17 miles east of Shiprock, New Mexico, and ends at the San Juan Lateral Water Treatment Plant.

By Jenny Erickson, Upper Colorado Basin Public Affairs

The Bureau of Reclamation has taken a significant step forward in the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, awarding a \$75.5 million contract to Flatland Energy Services LLC for the construction of critical underground pipeline crossings in northwest New Mexico.

This contract focuses on the Block 2-3 Pipeline, which stretches from the Frank Chee Willetto Reservoir, east of Shiprock, to the San Juan Lateral Water Treatment Plant currently under construction in San Juan County.

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BUREAU OF
RECLAMATION

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



Reclamation Awards Major Contract cont.

Innovative Construction Techniques

The project will utilize Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD), a trenchless method that allows for the installation of nearly 10,000 feet of water supply pipeline with minimal surface disruption. This approach is essential for crossing sensitive terrain and important Navajo cultural sites—including Shumway Arroyo, the San Juan River, Nenahnezad Hill, and the Chaco River—without disturbing surface features. The pipeline segments constructed under this contract will range from 2,000 to 3,300 feet in length and navigate challenging elevation changes.

The remaining portions of the Block 2-3 pipeline will be installed through traditional open-trench construction under a separate contract.

Project Impact and Timeline

Once completed, the Block 2-3 Pipeline will deliver water from the Frank Chee Willetto Reservoir to the San Juan Lateral Water Treatment Plant, providing a sustainable water supply for communities across the Navajo Nation in New Mexico and eastern Arizona, as well as Gallup, New Mexico. Construction is set to begin this summer and conclude in fall 2028. The San Juan Lateral is already more than 70% complete, with initial water deliveries expected in late 2028 and final project completion by the end of 2029.

"This work includes some of the most complex horizontal directional drilling installations performed to date on the NGWSP, including the San Juan River crossing and Nenahnezad Hill bore, which includes a 250-foot elevation change," said Reclamation's Western Colorado Area Office Manager Bart Deming, who oversees the Four Corners Construction Office completing this work. "The installation on Reaches 2 and 3 will allow the pipeline to cross beneath the San Juan and Chaco Rivers and avoid other challenging terrain and existing infrastructure where traditional trenching would be difficult or impractical."

FACES of NGWSP



Meet John Leeper

Wow, it is a privilege to be included among the Faces of NGWSP. Since working with the Project, the wrinkles around the eyes have gotten deeper and the hair has gotten thinner. In the 1960's as a youngster in California and the son of a civil engineer, the family visited the massive state and federal water projects that crisscrossed that state. That was the same era when the NGWSP was first described to Congress. Back then water development was seen as more storage and more straws in the river systems. It was inconceivable that our appetite for water would ever exceed the supply. Things have changed. In the early 1970's, fifty years and 12 presidential elections ago, Congress gave Reclamation the authority to conduct feasibility studies. That was before Microsoft, Apple Computer and the Internet.

After studying civil engineering in California and Colorado, and after a stint in the Peace Corps, my first direct contract with the Project was in the late 1990's when I started working for the Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources.

Continued on page 3

FACES of NGWSP cont.

It became apparent that the Project would be a center piece of a Navajo Nation San Juan River water settlement. That settlement required the political courage of the Navajo, city of Gallup and state leaders. It also required a consensus among the Upper Basin States. And in 2009, relatively recently in this project's history, Congress authorized its construction. It was amazing watching the project take shape in real life, and to see the dedication and creativity of this team make major Project improvements over the 2009 version.

What comes next will be incredibly exciting. We all anticipate the project's completion in a few short years. If consensus can again be reached with the Upper Basin States, through the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Act, the project's service area could be extended to additional Navajo communities in Arizona. Then the most exciting chapter begins.

This project is about livelihoods, not miles of pipeline or pump stations. Some portion of the hundreds of thousands of Navajo people living off the reservation will find their way home. And that is a day we will all celebrate!

John is currently serving as a Senior Project Manager for WSP and consulting for the Navajo Nation.

Connecting Navajo Communities to a Sustainable Water Future

By Project Management Specialist Michael Davis

As the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project (NGWSP) advances, communities across the Navajo Nation are preparing for a new era of reliable, clean water. Recent infrastructure upgrades and collaborative efforts are laying the groundwork for future water deliveries, promising improved health, reduced risks, and lasting benefits for families throughout the region.

To prepare for future water deliveries, the Bureau of Reclamation has constructed two turnout facilities, key community connection control points in the water distribution network, associated with Pumping Plants 4 and 7, supporting the communities of Tohatchi, Mexican Springs, and Sheep Springs. The Navajo Nation and the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, with support from Souder Miller and Associates, are now working to upgrade local water systems so they are ready to receive water from the San Juan Lateral of the NGWSP. Potable water deliveries from this system are anticipated to begin around the end of 2028.

Several additional communities along the San Juan Lateral—from north to south—are also preparing to connect. These include Sanostee, Newcomb, Two Grey Hills, Sheep Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, Mexican Springs, Standing Rock, Crownpoint, Coyote Canyon, Twin Lakes, Rock Springs, Tsayatoh, Window Rock, St. Michaels and Fort Defiance. To support these connections, the Bureau of Reclamation is developing six new turnout facilities, standardized to help reduce long-term operation and maintenance costs for NTUA and the Navajo Nation. Designs for turnouts for Sanostee, Newcomb, Naschitti, Crownpoint, Coyote Canyon, Rock Springs, and Window Rock are complete and solicitation for construction will begin in August. The Shiprock turnout, designed through a separate effort, is expected to be ready for water deliveries in 2029.

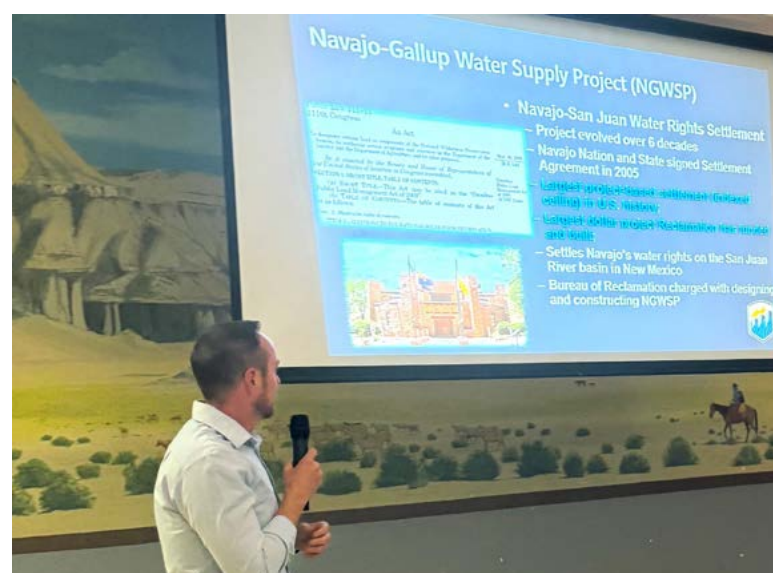
The NGWSP represents a major step toward improving quality of life across the Navajo Nation through access to a clean and reliable long-term water supply. Its success relies on continued collaboration among tribal, federal, and local partners. As these communities move closer to achieving secure, sustainable water access, they also move toward a healthier, more prosperous, and culturally vibrant future.



From the Source: Highlights from the Newcomb Chapter House Info Session

Last month, the Newcomb Chapter House hosted an Information Session for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. If you couldn't attend, here's what you missed!

The session featured presentations from a diverse team dedicated to delivering reliable water to our region, including representatives from Reclamation, the Navajo Nation, Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, Indian Health Services, and project contractors. Attendees learned about the project's rich history, current construction progress, water delivery plans, operational updates, and the timeline for completion. Each speaker welcomed questions, fostering an engaging and informative discussion.



Deputy Construction Engineer Ryan Gladden of Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office presents information about the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project on June 14 at the Newcomb Chapter House.

Lunch was provided, and the event offered a valuable opportunity for community members to connect with the project team and each other.

"We are grateful for the chance to connect with community members and thank all who attended and shared their perspectives," said Deputy Construction Engineer Ryan Gladden. "Your engagement is valued as we move this project forward together."

Water Talk- Turn it up for turnout facilities

On the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project (NGWSP), turnout facilities are key control points in the water distribution network. Think of them as valves, meters, and gateways that manage how water is sent from the main supply line into communities along the NGWSP.



Rendering depicting what the new turnout buildings along the San Juan Lateral will look like.

These structures use gates and valves to start, stop, or adjust water flow, ensuring the right amount reaches each community.

Turnouts are fitted with flow meters and telemetry systems to accurately measure water deliveries—essential for tracking usage to better understand how much water needs to be treated and ensure that communities get the water they need.

By making it possible to direct high-pressure, treated water efficiently to every community along the NGWSP, these turnout structures are vital to the project's goal: providing a sustainable, long-term water supply to households and businesses in communities in northwest New Mexico.



This rendering shows the types of valves and gateways housed within the turnout buildings that manage how water is sent from the main supply line into communities along the NGWSP.