

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Division of Community Development Newsletter

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Did You Know...

The San Francisco Peaks or Doko'oosliid - Abalone Shell Mountain, are the Sacred Mountain of the West. They are located north of Flagstaff, Arizona.

6.9 million

The nation's American Indian and Alaska Native population in 2018, including those of more than one race.

10.1 million

The projected American Indian and Alaska Native population, including those of more than one race, on July 1, 2060. They would constitute 2.5 percent of the total population.

Events

- November 11: Veteran's Day
- November 28: Thanksgiving
- November 29: Navajo Nation Family Day
- December 25: Christmas

TONALEA CHAPTER RECEIVES SIHASIN FUNDING FOR NEW CHAPTER FACILITY



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez signs Resolution CO-34-19.

TONALEA, Ariz. — On November 9, 2019, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez signed Resolution CO-34-19 into law in Tonalea, Arizona. The Tonalea Chapter has received \$3,000,000 from Sihasin Funds to complete the new chapter house facility. The legislation was introduced by Council Delegate Paul Begay and was approved by the 24th Navajo Nation Council on Oct. 22, 2019.

Tonalea Chapter has been without a chapter facility for several years due to the closure of the former chapter house which was built in 1959. The chapter house was demolished due to health and safety concerns following building assessments that identified shifting in the facility's foundation and walls, traces of asbestos, and other major issues. The community held meetings and conducted daily business in a storage warehouse and the Tonalea Senior Center for a few years, and is currently situated in a rented office space in Tuba City, twenty-five miles away.

President Nez thanked all of the local chapter officials for their years of hard work and effort to develop legislation to receive the needed funding.

The new chapter house is planned to be completed by late 2020.

READ MORE AT: <http://bit.ly/2QldNxx>

Division of Community Development • P.O. Box 1904, Window Rock, AZ

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BACKHOE / MOTOR GRADER TRAINING HELD AT WHITE CONE CHAPTER

BY TIAUNA BEGAY & KENT GRANTSEN

On October 24, 2019, the Capital Projects Management Department (CPMD), White Cone Chapter, and RDO Equipment sponsored a free Backhoe / Motor Grader Training in White Cone, AZ.

A grader training specialist demonstrated features of a 6-wheel drive grader and gave the students an outline of what is going to be covered on the grader operation.

He explained the significance of the blade design and how it further protects the operator from harm by having the blade go around an obstacle it detects, instead of hitting it and jerking.

In the photos, the specialist is showing the location of two alternators. This feature allows the operator to bring the grader back to the yard for repair, if one fails.

The attendees were also shown the caps for filling or changing liquids quickly when there is continuous operation happening on a work site.

The training will allow chapter grader operators to better manage and operate the machinery.



Waiting for 911:

Ambulance drivers struggle to find rural homes without addresses



DALENE REDHORSE PHOTOGRAPHS A HOUSE AS PART OF HER FIELD WORK IN THE FOUR CORNERS REGION OF THE UNITED STATES. JAYSSEN NIEDERMEYER. RURAL UTAH PROJECT

By Sofia Jeremias Sep 22, 2019, 10:00pm MDT

BLUFF, San Juan County — All his children ran back into the house as Shaun Stephenson was getting ready to leave for the day. All but one, his 4-year-old daughter, who managed to sneak behind the rear tire of his truck.

Stephenson started backing out and heard a bump. Jumping out, he saw his toddler lying on the ground, and a wave of panic washed over him. Marthleen Stephenson, his wife, called 911, explaining where they lived in Mexican Water, a community in Navajo Nation along the border of Utah and Arizona.

But half an hour passed and the ambulance had yet to show up. Shaun got back in his truck with their little girl and started driving. They called 911 again. Meet us somewhere on the way — the car's emergency lights will be on, they told the dispatcher. A police officer caught up to the flashing, speeding truck, and they moved the girl into the police car.

She was rushed to the Four Corners Regional Health Center, where they learned that her legs were badly bruised — Marthleen and Shaun had to carry her everywhere for two days — but ultimately she would be OK.

The Stephensons share the details of this terrifying day because they've heard variations of it across their community. When they called 911, they couldn't give the dispatcher the address to their house because they don't have one. They believe this contributed to the confusion and difficulty of getting an ambulance to come to their home that day.

Like the Stephensons, many families in San Juan County, Utah and the Utah side of Navajo Nation — which borders four states — don't have addresses. This makes getting help in an emergency challenging at best.

When asked how many buildings lack an address in Navajo Nation, MC Baldwin, the coordinator for the Navajo addressing initiative, said he can't give an exact number. He estimates that there are about 10,000 "addressable structures," which includes everything from homes, businesses, schools and government buildings.

People in Navajo Nation recall seeing homes go up in smoke long before a fire truck arrived; driving out to the highway to flag down ambulances; or getting in the car to race ailing friends or family to a doctor.

And the problem isn't unique to Utah. Long wait times for ambulances are a problem across rural America: One study found average wait times are almost double in rural areas. According to the last census, about 60 million people live in rural areas in the United States.

The health care coalition that encompasses San Juan County similarly has an average response time almost double the state average, and the delays can have serious consequences, according to Les Chatelain, director of emergency services programs at the University of Utah. In cases where an illness is "immediately life threatening, they're never going to make it to the hospital in time," said Chatelain.

Change may be imminent. The Navajo Addressing Authority and the Rural Utah Project, a nonprofit based in Salt Lake City, have been working to locate and give the people throughout the Utah portion of Navajo Nation a way to be found.

The Navajo Nation is providing families with the traditional addresses that are required for a slew of bureaucratic processes — from voting to registering for a driver's license — and the Rural Utah Project's work is making it easier to get directions to those homes.

It's a monumental task, and progress is piecemeal. Soon, Rural Utah Project will deliver signs with geocodes that function as makeshift addresses to about 2,500 homes on the Utah side of Navajo Nation. It's not a perfect fix, but more of a Band-Aid until a more permanent solution can be found, organizers said. And there is still a lot of work to do.

In the town of Aneth, Navajo Nation has finished naming the streets and assigning each home a proper address. Residents now have something to write when they go to the DMV, a location to give 911 if they have to call, and as Tara Benally, the field director of the nonprofit explained, something to "show that we still exist."

A deadly oversight

The naming of streets and the numbering of homes was long overlooked in Navajo Nation due to jurisdictional issues that left land management and road maintenance in the hands of a dizzying number of government entities. The Navajo Nation is in charge of leasing land, but the Bureau of Indian Affairs creates the regulations that the nation enforces, according to a report by Michael Parish of the Diné Policy Institute.

Road development didn't start in earnest until around 50 years ago. Some homes in the nation were built after dirt roads were put in; others have been there since before roads of any kind existed. Add the fact that the nation flows into three states, and assigning responsibility for addressing becomes even more confusing. The homes in Navajo Nation are also scattered across huge swaths of open land, making traditional municipal planning difficult.

The Rural Utah Project started working in San Juan County at the end of 2017 with the goal of increasing voter registration. According to TJ Ellerbeck, the group's executive director, they've registered 1,600 voters, mostly Native Americans, in the county.

While registering voters, field workers for Rural Utah Project discovered that many indigenous people living in the Utah side of Navajo Nation were placed in the wrong voting districts because of their unconventional way of writing down addresses, which were more akin to directions than place names. In order to get people properly registered, they needed to provide more definitive addresses, and the project spun this process into a bigger program.

On the part of the Navajo Nation government, Baldwin has been working on getting signs on homes and streets since 2008, although the program predates his tenure.

Baldwin is the only employee currently doing field work, while the only other two Navajo Addressing Authority employees remain in the office at Window Rock, the capital of the Navajo Nation, which straddles the border of Arizona and New Mexico. The office was created as part of an Enhanced 911 Initiative, which included addressing every home in Navajo Nation.

Baldwin trains chapters — there are 110 making up the local governments in the nation — on how to address and provides technical support. That support includes using mapping software, putting up signs, and deciding on road names.

Baldwin describes the process of mapping using the analogy of a tree with a trunk and branches. First, they have to establish where the roads in a town are and name those roads. After they figure out the main highways and streets, they determine where side roads branch off and which side roads lead to homes.

The difficulties of navigating San Juan County are made especially clear after speaking with Pauline Trujeque, a UPS driver, on a sweltering afternoon.

Trujeque pulls out a small black spiral-bound notebook that serves as her GPS system. The edges are brown and the ink on some of the pages is fading. It's a culmination of about 11 years of experience delivering mail in San Juan.

She started her route in 2008, and began taking notes immediately. The notebook is filled with maps, phone numbers and detailed notes on how to get to people's homes — a name, the color of a house, and the miles it takes to drive there.

Trujeque guesses there are a few hundred entries, "but there could be so many more." Many companies won't ship to the makeshift addresses. "You ask a lot of questions, otherwise you'll never find somebody," she said.

Latitude and longitude

The process of mapping this rural landscape can be confusing unless you've visited the greater Four Corners region — the area that is Navajo Nation, the largest reservation in the United States, spanning 27,000 square miles.

Driving through Red Mesa, a chapter that dips into Utah and Arizona, the desert highway stretches out to the horizon. Miles of sagebrush and protracted dirt roads pass before the occasional house or pack of dogs materializes. The late-summer air is so dry and hot you begin to feel brittle. The heat, the stillness and the shades of burnt red, orange and pale yellow rock rising out of ankle-high grass all gesture toward the sacred.

The most southern parts of San Juan County feel untouched by time. Bluff, a small town that feels big compared to surrounding communities, begins and ends within four minutes of driving down U.S. Highway 191. The library is housed in a small square building that used to be the jail, the original signage intact: "San Juan County Jail. Dedicated to Justice. Obedience to Law Means Freedom."

It's in this remote landscape that Baldwin and the Rural Utah Project started teaming up about a year ago to locate homes using latitude and longitude rather than traditional addresses.

Specifically, they're trying to get people to use "plus codes," a kind of shorthand for coordinates on a map. When you receive a plus code for somewhere in San Juan County, it looks like this: "7CPX+PM Bluff, Utah." That's a shortened version of a full 10-digit code for a local hotel in Bluff, where many of the homes do have addresses, but the addresses don't always work on popular GPS services.



ONE OF THE HOMES IN NAVAJO NATION THE RURAL UTAH PROJECT WORKED ON ADDRESSING. JAYSEN NIEDERMEYER, RURAL UTAH PROJECT

If you enter the plus code in Google Maps, you see the full longitude and latitude displayed on the bottom of the screen. Just as every point in the world already has a latitude and longitude, every place also has a plus code. It's just a matter of figuring out which points on a map have buildings on them, which of those buildings are homes, and what the plus codes are for those homes.

Each plus code is unique, and because it refers to a specific place on a map, there's less room for confusion. There's no question of which "Main Street" someone lives on. Once someone knows their plus code, they can text it to friends or family or read it out to a 911 dispatcher who can plug it into a GPS system.

The technology was developed by a Google team in Zurich led by Doug Rinckes, a technical program manager. Rinckes said he didn't initially expect it to be used in the United States — previous projects were in Kolkata and Mogadishu, where many people's access to basic services is limited because they don't have addresses.

Rinckes was surprised when, after he gave a presentation on plus codes, he was approached by individuals in Navajo Nation, who explained they had huge swaths of unaddressed land.

"The example I was given right at the beginning was everybody knows somebody who's died because an ambulance took too long to find their house," said Rinckes.

While everything from voting rights to economic development can be improved by having an address, Rinckes stressed health care outcomes as a particularly important aspect. "Basically ambulances being able to drive directly to you and not get lost on the way."

Rural Utah Project's work during the past year has entailed figuring out which buildings in San Juan County were abandoned and which had people living in them, speaking to residents about getting an address, and now, providing those homes with signs that display their plus codes.

There were hurdles the Rural Utah Project didn't expect, like the difficulty of explaining the GPS satellites that orbit the Earth to some of the elders on the reservation and translating that concept. In the Navajo language, things are described by what they do, explains Daylene Redhorse, 44, a field organizer for the project. The word satellite, roughly translated, would be "the metal box floating through the stars that takes pictures."

"That sounds horrifying," said Drew Cooper, the deputy director. It's an ominous description. How does he explain this in a way that's not creepy?

Cooper also explained that some residents feared the plus codes would be used against them. According to several sources, some Native Americans are targeted for predatory lending, and some worried that the plus codes would be given out to repossession agents. Field workers explained that plus codes were something people chose to give out — a way for others to find them only if they wanted to be found.

Collective memory

When Redhorse's mom had a stroke, the family called 911, but no one on the line knew the roads or exactly where her family was located. They live in Tselaki Dezza, an area with 106 people, according to the last Census report, up a long dirt road that winds away from a paved highway. The family had to drive her mother to Blanding, where she was then flown to Farmington, New Mexico, because the closest hospital did not have equipment to treat a stroke victim.

An hour passed from the time she had a stroke to the time she was finally flown for treatment. With strokes, every moment that passes without treatment is critical, and the longer it takes to receive care the more brain damage occurs. Redhorse's mother was unresponsive the whole time, ultimately losing mobility of her entire body and the ability to speak. She was 51, and after her stroke the family was told she only had six months to live. She passed away at age 57.



TARA BENALLY, THE FIELD DIRECTOR FOR THE RURAL UTAH PROJECT, APPROACHED PEOPLE IN HER COMMUNITY TO EXPLAIN PLUS CODES, A NEW KIND OF ADDRESS BASED ON LONGITUDE AND LATITUDE COORDINATES. JAYSEN NIEDERMEYER, RURAL UTAH PROJECT

Kathy Carson, an EMT based in Bluff, said she often tells people to flash their porch lights on and off so she can locate their homes. Some people drive themselves to the fire station, have the ambulance meet them somewhere else, or sometimes even drive to Carson's home, although she says the latter happens less often these days. "We don't want to be that ambulance that keeps passing the burning house," says Carson.

Carson has lived in Bluff for more than 40 years, and Dawn Dilego, a fellow EMT, has lived there for more than 20. They know homes by the families that live in them and Carson has an especially well-regarded map of the county inside her head, according to community members. The two know San Juan, but worry about what would happen if someone new to the area tried to take over their job. They wouldn't know that five or so families might say their address is 10 miles past mile marker 5 on state Route 162. "New people coming in don't have that collective memory," explained Dilego.

Lynette Benally, an EMT for the Utah Navajo Health System, said she also frequently tells people to flash their house lights on and off and that family members usually run out to a place on the highway where an ambulance can see them.

Tara Benally, Redhorse, and Marthleen Stephenson now work in the field for Rural Utah Project, taking photos of homes and structures, speaking to the people in San Juan County and explaining how plus codes work. Benally grew up in Navajo Nation and worked in construction. Redhorse was a teaching aid and Stephenson was a cook before she taught herself mapping software and started addressing for her local chapter before doing similar work for the Rural Utah Project.

They all had stories of loved ones and neighbors waiting for ambulances to reach their homes, a wait that sometimes had serious consequences.

Redhorse's father is getting older, and she explained that he needed medical care at home after he started mixing up his medications, along with transport services to take him to dialysis appointments. It seemed like every week there would be a new driver, and every time they had difficulty finding him. "Giving out my dad's address was pretty hard." She would explain which county road they lived off, and that their home was at the end of it.

Tara Benally drives me to her mother, Mary's, home on a Saturday afternoon. I want to ask her about her daughter's work and what she thinks about the addressing program — the Benallys' home is one of the many that were assigned plus codes over the past year.

Mary Benally's home pops up out of the unbounded landscape. She, too, lives on a dirt road off a highway just past the Redhorses. She has about eight perfect, small watermelons growing in the yard. It's almost a hundred degrees, and she complains that heat has made it almost impossible to keep her plants alive.

Mary Benally is either 68 or 72 — her father always claimed she was four years younger than the date the Bureau of Indian Affairs recorded. This doesn't seem to bother her. Mary Benally is passionate, educated, both optimistic and shrewd — she recalls reading the encyclopedia as a child, anything that her parents brought home to her. She loved fairy tales, and when she got older she devoured Greek mythologies.

Will an address make a difference in Mary's life? She doesn't understand why people can't find her house. Mary tells them how many miles her home is from the mile marker and which county road it's on, but that still doesn't suffice. She laughs that even her family can't find it sometimes.

Things are changing though, and she sees the value that the plus codes had for registering voters. If an ambulance ever needs to be called, she'll have a sign and a simple number, rather than a mile marker or highway number, to give 911.

She'll have a way to be found and proof that she exists.

READ MORE AT: <https://www.deseret.com/indepth/2019/9/22/20858894/waiting-for-911-ambulance-drivers-struggle-to-find-rural-homes-without-addresses>

New in **GOOGLE** Earth

Create your own maps and stories in Google Earth

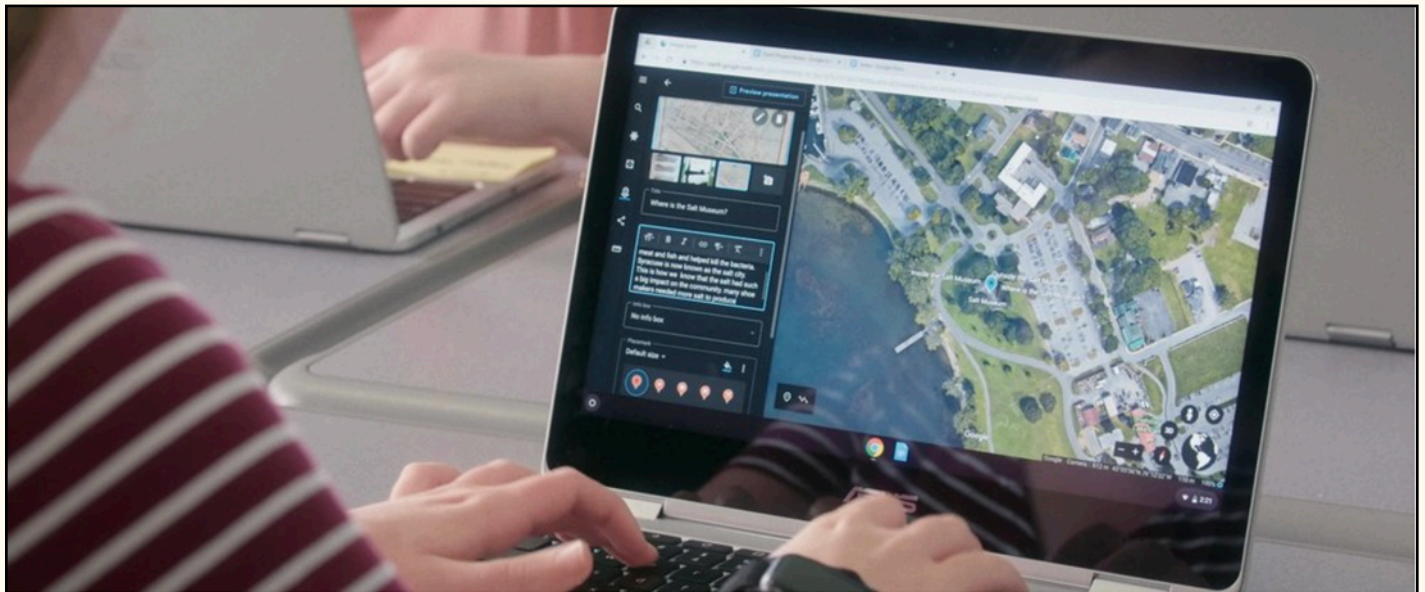
Gopal Shah

Product Manager, Google Earth

Published Nov 20, 2019

As humans, we've always bonded by sharing stories about the places that matter to us. It likely started around a campfire—elders recounting tales of sites sacred to their people. Today, we use technology to celebrate our ancestry, raise awareness about places we care about, and rekindle memories of home.

For nearly 15 years, people have turned to Google Earth for a comprehensive view of our planet. But our mission has never been to just show you a static picture of the planet; we want to bring the world to life. With new creation tools now in Google Earth, you can turn our digital globe into your own storytelling canvas, and create a map or story about the places that matter to you.



With creation tools in Google Earth, you can draw your own placemarks, lines and shapes, then attach your own custom text, images, and videos to these locations. You can organize your story into a narrative and collaborate with others. And when you've finished your story, you can share it with others. By clicking the new "Present" button, your audience will be able to fly from place to place in your custom-made Google Earth narrative.

Two years ago when we rewrote Google Earth for modern browsers and devices, we launched the Voyager program to start to infuse the globe with stories from the world's best storytellers. Today, we're taking the next and most significant step forward: turning the power of mapmaking and storytelling over to you.

Creation tools are now available in Google Earth on web. You can view your projects on mobile and tablet devices using the latest version of our iOS or Android app. Thanks to an integration with Google Drive, you can share your stories with your audience and they can view it anywhere—their phone, tablet or laptop. Best of all, you can invite others to collaborate and co-author projects with you.

We're excited to see the stories you tell in Google Earth, and we'll continue to build out this new capability with your help and feedback.

Discover more at: <https://www.blog.google/products/earth/new-google-earth-creation-tools/>

DCD-NNAA Staff Talks About Plus Codes To Help Utah Navajo Voters

BY: MC Baldwin, GIS/Rural Addressing Coordinator, NNAA, DCD

During the last week of September 2019, native folks from across the country converged at the University of Utah – School of Law. NNAA staff participated in the concurrent presentation about mapping and how it can be included in the voter registration forms. The First Nations Voting Rights Conference was made possible by Utah Rural Project (RUP) joining forces with the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission. The following is a snap shot of the event written by Rural Utah Project staff.



We did it! Last week, we concluded three days of historic dialogue for the "First Nations Voting Rights Conference: Planting for the Future." Thank you to the over 200 individuals from Indigenous Nations, non-profits, and activists who made this conference an incredible conversation on the future of voting in Indian Country.

To ensure that we're able to process feedback, celebrate victories, and create the best event that we can for future iterations of the First Nations Voting Rights Conference, we hope that you will take our post-conference survey and share with us what worked and how the event can be improved.

In addition to feedback from the conference, we will be circulating materials as they become available. You can see photos from the conference here, and we will send a second email with the video recordings [from] the sessions once they are uploaded online and available.

Thank you again for making this event a truly incredible space to come together and ignite a dialogue around voting, the [C]ensus, and the empowerment of [i]ndigenous voters. It has been an honor to converse and work with you to make this event a reality.

Thank You,

The Rural Utah Project

The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission

Bulletin Board

Navajo Nation pays tribute to Diné Warriors on Veterans Day

WINDOW ROCK – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, First Lady Phefelia Nez, and Chief Justice JoAnn B. Jayne were joined by Navajo veterans, youth, elders, dignitaries, and families on Monday, to commemorate Veterans Day during an honorary event at the Navajo Nation Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock – the capital of the Navajo Nation.

During his keynote address, President Nez delivered a heartfelt message of appreciation to all Navajo veterans, their families, and communities, several of which were recognized at the event. Today, the Navajo people continue to serve in Armed Forces at a higher rate than the national participation rate.

"On behalf of the Nez-Lizer Administration, it is my honor to deliver this message in recognition and remembrance of the thousands of Navajo veterans who have served our country in every branch of the Armed Services. We honor the sacrifices of our military men and women who fought for our freedom and sacrificed. We are also very proud to have many of our Diné people who continue to serve around the world," said President Nez.

On Oct. 30, President Nez was joined by the members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council, and Chief Justice JoAnn B. Jayne, during the U.S. Navy's Authentication of the Keel Ceremony of the U.S. Navy's first of class towing and salvage vessel, "USNS Navajo (T-ATS 6)" in Houma, La.

President Nez added, "Your service is being recognized and honored throughout the country, and we will continue to stand beside you in support."

During the event, Vice President said, "Many of us have family members and relatives who serve in the Armed Forces around the world. We have mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters that sacrificed time to defend our Nation. As leaders, we pray for hope, healing, and love for you and your families."

Also, in attendance at the ceremony was the Navajo Nation Band, Nation Veterans Administration Executive Director James D. Zwierein, Division of Human Resources Executive Director Dr. Perphelia Fowler, Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish, Miss Ft. Defiance Veterans Agency Princess Aysha Catron – Tsosie, and representatives of U.S. Sen. Tom Udall, U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich, Congressman Ben Ray Lujan.

On behalf of the Office of the President and Vice President, we ask our Navajo People to join us in prayer to give thanks for our Navajo veterans.

READ MORE AT: <http://bit.ly/2CP21c5>

President Nez and Vice President Lizer declares Navajo Nation Day of Prayer

WINDOW ROCK – On Thursday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer issued a proclamation, declaring Nov. 14, 2019, as the "Navajo Nation Day of Prayer," in observance of the change of seasons to unite the Navajo People together through prayer. The proclamation also recognizes every Oct. 1, as the beginning of the New Year and the changing of seasons.

"Today, on Navajo Nation Day of Prayer, we join together again to give thanks for the bountiful blessings that God has bestowed upon the Navajo Nation. Most importantly, we pray for our families, communities, and Nation. We turn to prayer for refuge, gratitude, and to discover peace," said President Nez.

The proclamation encourages "People to pray, in accordance with their own faiths and consciences, for God's guidance and continues protections as we meet the challenges and opportunities before us" and that "we prepare, plan, and pray for entering a new season of change, opportunity, and reflection. Seek guidance, harmony, spiritual health, resiliency, growth, and strength through prayer."

"For many of us, prayer is an important expression of faith. It is an act of worship and it offers reflection, guidance, and comfort. Through prayer we find the strength to do God's work to help and support others. Also, we must pray for our local and national leaders, and our law enforcement and first responders. Prayers reminds us that we are not alone and that we are all children of God," said Vice President Lizer.

"The Navajo Nation understands the adversities and sacrifices the People face. We face the threats of the 'modern-day monsters,' such as diabetes and violence. However, our faith and prayers can be cures for the fear we feel as we confront our battles. On this day, may our beliefs bring us together and plant the seeds of progress and healing in our ever-changing world," added President Nez.

The proclamation also states, "Our Nation's honored the tradition of prayer has sustained us and strengthened us through history. May we never forget the power of prayer."

The proclamation issued designates Nov. 14 as Navajo Nation Day of Prayer and every Oct. 1 as the beginning of the New Year across the Navajo Nation.

READ MORE AT: <http://bit.ly/2D5miKG>

Bulletin Board

Nez-Lizer commend the defeat of Proposition 10 by Utah voters

WINDOW ROCK - Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer are pleased with the outcome of the Nov. 5 special election in which San Juan County, Utah voters rejected Proposition 10, which was a ballot measure that proposed to create a study committee to consider and possibly recommend changes to the structure of the county government. Results released by San Juan County on Friday show 1,967 "yes" votes and 2,120 "no" votes.

"With Tuesday's vote, the people have spoken loud and clear - it's time to put this issue to rest. The defeat of this measure should encourage all county officials to move forward with more meaningful initiatives like the improvement of school bus routes, stimulating the economy, creating jobs, and many others issues that will benefit all county residents," said President Nez.

Last year, members of the Navajo Nation were elected to fill two of three San Juan County Commission seats for the first time in San Juan County's history. If Proposition 10 was passed, it would have severely jeopardized last year's vote of the people.

Following last year's election, certain officials challenged the eligibility of one Navajo candidate who was fairly elected to serve as a county commissioner. Efforts to reform the commission by increasing its membership from three to possibly five began after repeated attempts to disqualify the Navajo candidate - the first step in that process was the introduction of Proposition 10.

"We thank everyone who got the word out to vote 'no' on Prop 10. Native American people have been fighting for voting rights for a long period of time. Today, we embrace this victory and we hope that it sends a message across the country that we will stand up for our rights as the First Americans," stated Vice President Lizer.

In a press conference on Oct. 29, President Nez spoke about the need for the county to heal and unite following the Nov. 5 special election. "We have hope for all people of San Juan County, Utah. Now is the opportunity to put any differences behind and move forward on a path of unity and prosperity," added President Nez.

READ MORE AT: <http://bit.ly/352sdMD>

Navy Officially Names New Class of Ships in Honor of the Navajo People



HOUMA, La. October 30, 2019 - Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez was honored to be joined by the members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council, Speaker Seth Damon, Chief Justice JoAnn B. Jayne, former Speaker LoRenzo Bates, and Navajo Code Talker Peter McDonald on Wednesday, during the

U.S. Navy's Authentication of the Keel Ceremony of the U.S. Navy's first of class towing and salvage vessel, "USNS Navajo (T-ATS 6)" at the Civic Center in Houma, La.

The keel was said to be "truly and fairly laid" as it was authenticated by President Nez, Speaker Damon, and Jocelyn Billy, who signed their initials into the keel plate that is the symbolic backbone of a ship, the keel plate will be fastened within the hull of the vessel.

READ MORE AT: <http://bit.ly/2QlpVyK>

Navajo Nation secures several key Tribal Interior Budget Council positions

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council successfully secured several key seats on the Tribal Interior Budget Council, during a meeting with the 12 Bureau of Indian Affairs regions in Washington D.C. The Tribal-Interior Budget Council provides a forum and process for tribes and federal officials to work together in developing annual budget requests for programs under the U.S. Department of the Interior on budget priorities for fiscal years 2020 and 2021.

President Nez made several nominations during Wednesday's meeting including appointing Council Delegate Jamie Henio to serve as a member of the TIBC's Budget Subcommittee and recommending Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. to serve as the co-chair of the Road Maintenance Subcommittee.

In addition, Council Delegate Pernell Halona was confirmed as a member of the Data Management Subcommittee, Council Delegate Eugenia Charles Newton is now the chair of the Public Safety Subcommittee, and Council Delegate Paul Begay was appointed as a member of the Education Subcommittee.

"These appointments are key to securing more resources from the Department of the Interior for critical services and projects related to road maintenance, education opportunities for our young people, and public safety for our communities," said President Nez. "By securing these key positions, the Navajo Nation will have greater influence in the federal budget process in the coming years."

READ MORE AT: <http://bit.ly/2QUHHz>

PERSONNEL NEWS

DCD OPEN POSITIONS

POSITION TITLE	LOCATION	PAY RATE	CLOSING DATE
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Capital Projects Management Department

Planner (S)	Window Rock, AZ	38,958.40	11/26/2019
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Administrative Service Centers

Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Red Lake, AZ	25,854.40	12/02/2019
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Rock Springs, NM	25,854.40	12/04/2019
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Black Mesa, AZ	25,854.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Forest Lake, AZ	25,854.40	11/26/2019
Community Services Coordinator(S)	Iyanbito, NM	36,462.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Alamo, NM	25,854.40	OUF
Community Services Coordinator(S)	Becenti, NM	36,462.40	12/05/2019
Community Services Coordinator(S)	Lake Valley, NM	36,462.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Red Mesa, AZ	25,854.40	OUF
Community Services Coordinator(S)	Coalmine Mesa, AZ	36,462.40	OUF
Accounts Maintenance Specialist(S)	Tolani Lake, AZ	25,854.40	OUF

For the most up-to-date personnel info, please visit DPM's website at <http://www.dpm.navajo-nsn.gov/jobs.html>

COMIC OF THE MONTH



INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE OF THE MONTH



For Some Native Americans, No Home Address Might Mean No Voting



SAN JUAN COUNTY, Utah — At the end of a labyrinth of red dirt roads and surrounded by the rusty cliffs of nearby mesas, Marthleen and Shuan Stephenson live on an isolated desert homestead on the sprawling Navajo Nation.

Until last month, you couldn't find their home using a traditional address. Instead, the directions went like this: "Turn off U.S. Highway 191 between mile markers 1 and 2. It's a blue house with a tan roof."

The couple felt like they were living in the dark, separated from modern times.

"Out there, it's city streets, apartments and house numbers," he said.

"But we don't have anything out here," she added.

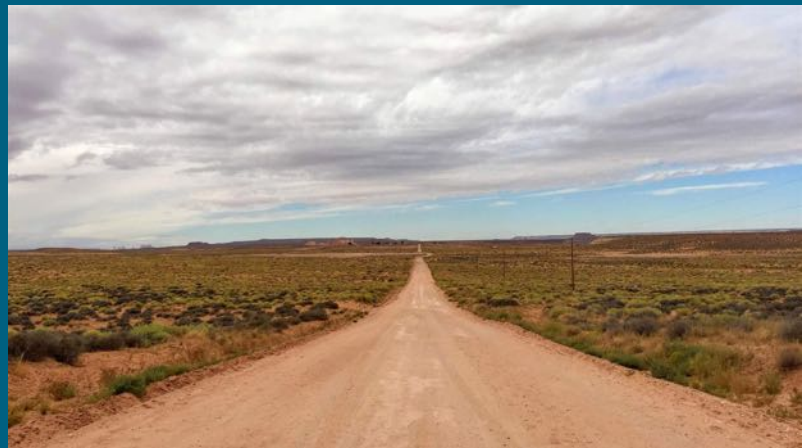
Like the Stephensons', most homes on the Navajo Nation in southeastern Utah lack street addresses. That means packages must be shipped to businesses or relatives who live in town, many miles away. Most on the reservation get their regular mail at post office boxes, which are sometimes located in Arizona. Emergency responders, given vague home locations, are often delayed.

But it is the impact on voting that has many indigenous rights advocates deeply concerned.

"In Indian Country, you don't have a 123 Elm Street address," said James Tucker, a pro bono voting rights counsel for the Native American Rights Fund.

"It limits your gateway to even be able to register to vote, to putting your foot through the door to participate from the get-go."

County by county, election administrators must know exactly where voters live to assign accurate precincts, which then determine which ballot a voter receives, which offices she votes for and at which polling location she casts a ballot. In Utah and many other largely rural states, residents can register to vote by describing their approximate location on registration forms, or even draw a rudimentary map, which is allowed by the National Voter Registration Act of 1993.



But in states with strict voter identification laws, officials typically require a traditional address. Last year, the U.S. Supreme Court just weeks before the midterm elections declined to block a North Dakota law requiring IDs with street addresses. P.O. boxes would not suffice, the court ruled, sending local tribes and activists into a frenzy trying to meet the new standard.

Now voting rights advocates are searching for ways to assign addresses to rural, indigenous communities ahead of the 2020 general election, knowing that it may be only a matter of time before county and state governments crack down on non-traditional addresses on reservations.

For Navajo residents of southeastern Utah, a new addressing system developed with the assistance of Google might help.

Addressing the Unaddressed

The Navajo Nation has 50,000 unaddressed homes and businesses, creating complications for hundreds of thousands of people.

The mostly desert-covered reservation, which spans parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah, encompasses more than 27,000 square miles. It will take an unknowable number of years to assign addresses throughout the reservation, said M. C. Baldwin, the rural addressing coordinator at the Navajo Nation Addressing Authority, the tribal office tasked with identifying and addressing homes and businesses there.

Limited by a three-person staff, massive swaths of land, a lack of broadband access and limited funding, his office has set addresses for fewer than 1,000 buildings on the reservation. The obstacles include not just identifying buildings but also jumping over bureaucratic hurdles, such as naming roads through official resolutions and dealing with the local politics of 110 different chapter houses — the governing boards that make up the Navajo Nation.

“There’s a lot of work that we have to do before we even get to the point where we can install the first sign,” said Baldwin, who often goes out alone putting up new street posts and hanging numbers on homes.

He’s eager for help.

When organizers for the Salt Lake City-based nonprofit Rural Utah Project set out to register 1,600 new voters from the Navajo Nation in the runup to the 2018 midterm elections, staff soon realized what they were up against: One-fifth of Navajo voters in the county were filed in the wrong precinct, which meant they sometimes voted in the wrong school board races. At least 70% of Navajo voters in the county, the project found, were filed under P.O. boxes, while the rest were filed using vague descriptions of their home locations.

For decades, Navajo residents in San Juan County, Utah, have faced barriers to the ballot. The issue came to a head last year when a federal judge ruled the county’s school district and county commission seats were unconstitutionally drawn to limit Native American representation. While Native Americans gained a 2-1 advantage on the county commission for the first time after November’s election, project staff knew their efforts to increase indigenous voting power were just beginning.

“We had to do something,” said Drew Cooper, the project’s deputy director. “I never really realized how socially valuable an address is. It’s something we totally take for granted. These people have literally never been afforded a place in San Juan County.”

After nonprofit officials approached Google, the company agreed to provide technical assistance and advice to the Rural Utah Project’s addressing program, aiming for it to be a trailblazer for the rest of the Navajo Nation and other Native American territories. With new satellite images from Google in hand, project staff identified 2,500 addressable buildings and visited locations in person. Eventually, they assigned each home and business what’s known as a plus code — shortened longitude and latitude coordinates that can be used as a home address.

Now, for example, the Recapture Lodge, a local hotel, is 7CMR+2M Bluff, UT.

Project staff, several of whom are Navajo, began this month delivering and installing address signs (paid for by Google) to people across the reservation, while also re-registering residents along the way. They hope to provide addresses by this fall for three-quarters of Navajo who live in San Juan County.

“I feel like our work is a step forward,” said TJ Ellerbeck, the project’s executive director, “but it’s not like plus codes just magically fix everything. There are centuries of disenfranchisement and racism, and you can’t just fix that immediately.”

Baldwin, at the Navajo Nation, hopes other nonprofits “can carry that torch and help us” on tribal territory in Arizona and New Mexico, potentially using plus codes as a tool.

Google’s plans for helping other Native communities develop similar addresses are unclear. Google officials would not comment for this article.

The Fight Elsewhere

Last year’s change to North Dakota’s voting law was not the first time that Native voting rights have been affected by non-traditional addresses.

In 2012, election officials in Apache County, Arizona, purged 500 Navajo voters from the registration system, claiming their addresses were “too obscure,” according to a field study by the Native American Rights Fund. Voters in that case used P.O. boxes and drew the location of their homes on applications. Apache County officials did not return Stateline’s requests for comment.

It is crucial that tribes act fast to make sure they’re ready for a potential crackdown on non-traditional addresses ahead of 2020, said OJ Semans, a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and co-director of Four Directions, a South Dakota-based Native voting rights group.

“We know it’s going to happen,” Semans said. “I can guarantee you there’s going to be talks in other states to make this one of the voting requirements. They’re not going to give you a two-week notice. It’s going to happen just prior to the election.”

Four Directions worked with the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota to create an emergency addressing system just a few days before the 2018 elections. After about 20 tribal members pointed to their residences on a map, Four Directions assigned new addresses that fit the state’s new standard and were officially notarized by the tribe. In other tribes in the state, leaders helped print new tribal IDs that met the state’s requirements.

Now, Four Directions has developed a new mobile application for tribes in North and South Dakota that will assign members a physical address.

Using GPS, the app records the longitude and latitude of a tribal member's home. Users upload a photo of the property, along with some personal information and the name of the main road the voter takes to get home. The app can run without an internet connection, which is essential for the 41% of Native Americans living on reservations who lack broadband access. Once a voter gets to a place with an internet connection, the data is transferred to the cloud and Four Directions assigns the voter a new physical address using state standards.

These new addressing systems also could prove crucial during the 2020 census. Native Americans are the most undercounted population group in the country, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. During the last census in 2010, 4.9% of American Indians and Alaska Natives living on reservations were not counted.

When it comes to drawing new congressional, legislative, county commission and school district lines, it's important to know exactly where people live, said Michael Sharp, vice president of Albuquerque-based Research and Polling Inc., a firm that will assist New Mexico in drawing new district maps in the coming years.

"Accurate rural addressing equals accurate census counts," he said, "not only just for population, but for federal funding. Those areas that are undercounted could potentially lose out on millions of dollars per year."

Tribal members, however, are finding that the benefits of addresses go well beyond voting and the census.

Benefits Beyond Voting

Three sandstone-colored horses took their time getting off the long, barren, sandy road that approaches Dalene Redhorse's single-story, cream-colored home on a cloudy late-September morning. As a field organizer for the Rural Utah Project, Redhorse was one of the first on the Navajo Nation to have her new address sign posted above her front door.

She's relieved to be in the right voting precinct, to be sure. But the new address is so much more for her.

She's thrilled to shop online and finally get packages delivered to her home. Technicians for electric, water and cable companies can more easily find her house. Similarly, instead of having to find her home using vague directions, emergency responders will have its exact location if she ever needs help.

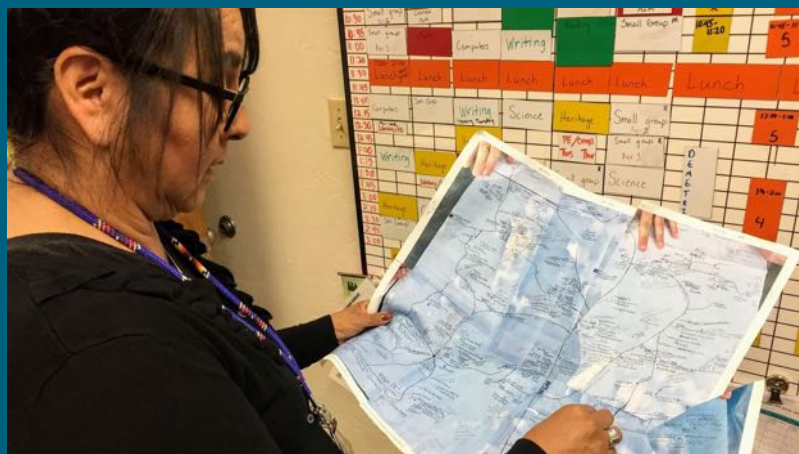
It's personal for Redhorse. Several years ago, her mother had a stroke. An ambulance couldn't find exactly where she lived. The family, instead, had to drive her almost an hour north to a hospital in Blanding, before she was flown to New Mexico for treatment. In that time, her mother lost the ability to speak and most of her ability to move.

"That would make a change for a lot of people," Redhorse said.

Local officials already are touting the new addressing system. Barbara Silversmith, principal of Bluff Elementary School, has had a difficult time trying to pinpoint the homes of her 82 students, almost all of whom are Native American. The school, which serves preschool through fifth grade, lies just across the San Juan River — the border of the Navajo Nation.

For the past three years, the school has participated in a state-sponsored home-visit program, in which teachers visit students and parents in the runup to the school year, so they feel more comfortable and connected with the local school system. But when the program started, it was a challenge to locate some students living in a maze of spread-out homesteads.

On a hand-drawn map, Silversmith follows her finger along the weaving unnamed dirt roads of the reservation just south of the school, where she has penned in the homes of her students. When new students join the school, she asks them to point to their homes on the DIY map.



"Sometimes it was a long process to locate some of them," said Silversmith, who is Navajo. "I can imagine now with the new number system, that would help tremendously. That would, of course, be an easier process and cut down on time."

The home-visit program has been a success in improving the relationships between families and teachers, Silversmith said, and she expects it to get better with the new addresses.

Some on the reservation don't see the benefits of the new addresses yet, Redhorse said. Worried about creditors or debt collectors, Redhorse said a handful of people have said to her, "You're exposing us. You're putting us out there. You're letting people know where we live."

It's a misguided concern, she said. The new addresses are only for those who want it. "If you want to give it to creditors," she said, "that's up to you." Educating her neighbors will certainly be important, she recognizes.

That skepticism isn't stopping her, though. With new address signs in her truck, she's excited to hit the dusty roads of southeastern Utah this fall, delivering a needed bit of infrastructure and a little sense of hope to her neighbors, exclaiming at each house or hogan, "See, here's your sign!"

READ MORE AT: <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2019/10/04/for-some-native-americans-no-home-address-might-mean-no-voting>

U.S. Census Bureau History: Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving Dinner

The U.S. Department of Agriculture conducts a census of agriculture every 5 years to collect data on the nation's crop and livestock producers. The most recent enumeration in 2017 found that 23,173 turkey farms supplied the main course of many Thanksgiving feasts. These farms produced more than 104 million turkeys in 2017.

On November 28, 2019, the United States celebrates Thanksgiving. The way Americans celebrate the holiday has changed since colonists celebrated the first days of thanksgiving in Virginia and Massachusetts in the early 1600s. No longer strictly a holiday celebrating survival and the autumn harvest, Thanksgiving is now a time for families and friends to gather, enjoy a meal together, watch football, participate in charitable events, and begin the holiday shopping season.

Early colonists celebrated several days of thanksgiving in the early 1600s, with our modern holiday tracing its roots to a celebration between Pilgrims and Wampanoag Indians. Link to a non-federal Web site in 1621. The early settlers of the Plymouth Colony Link to a non-federal Web site gave thanks after surviving their first winter in North America, succeeding at their attempts at farming, and celebrating the colony's improved chances of surviving as a new winter season approached.

Colonists continued to celebrate religious days of thanksgiving throughout the colonial period, including a day of thanksgiving to celebrate the Continental Army's victory at the Battle of Saratoga in October 1777. After the American Revolution, President George Washington proclaimed that the new nation would celebrate its first thanksgiving on November 26, 1789. President James Madison proclaimed a day of thanksgiving on March 4, 1815, following the United States' victory in the War of 1812. Throughout the 1800s, states celebrated their own days of thanksgiving—often in November—-independent of any proclamation by the federal government.

Following the Union victory at the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863, and perhaps in response to Sarah Josepha Hale's lobbying (see "Sarah Josepha Hale" to the left), President Abraham Lincoln issued a thanksgiving proclamation on October 3, 1863. With the nation split in two by war, Lincoln urged Americans to give thanks and praise and "...commend to [our beneficent Father's] care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union."

Throughout the late 1800s and early 1900s, presidents proclaimed days of Thanksgiving each year on the last Thursday of November. In 1939, with the nation in the grip of the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt moved the holiday earlier in the month (proclamation 2373) to benefit retailers who hoped Americans would spend more money if given additional time to shop for the holidays. While 32 states recognized Roosevelt's earlier Thanksgiving date, 16 refused to acknowledge the president's proclamation. For 2 years, Americans had a choice of two Thanksgiving days until Congress passed a joint resolution declaring the last Thursday of November to be the nation's legal Thanksgiving Day on October 6, 1941.

Today, our Thanksgiving holiday celebrations reflect our nation's increasingly diverse population. Feasts may include turkey, ham, or roast beef; Italian aranchini, Mexican chile relleno, Indian chicken vindaloo, or Vietnamese bun cha; and a cornucopia of side dishes, vegetables, breads, and desserts. You can learn more about the history of Thanksgiving and how we celebrate the holiday using census data and records.

READ MORE AT: https://www.census.gov/history/www/homepage_archive/2010/november_2010.html?#

It's American Indian & Alaska Native Heritage Month

The first American Indian Day was celebrated in May 1916 in New York. Red Fox James, a member of the Blackfeet Nation, rode horseback from state to state to get endorsements from 24 state governments to have a day to honor American Indians.

In 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed a joint congressional resolution designating November 1990 as "National American Indian Heritage Month." Similar proclamations have been issued every year since 1994, and we now refer to this celebration as "American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month."

READ MORE AT: <http://bit.ly/2DhRTJ4>



141,438

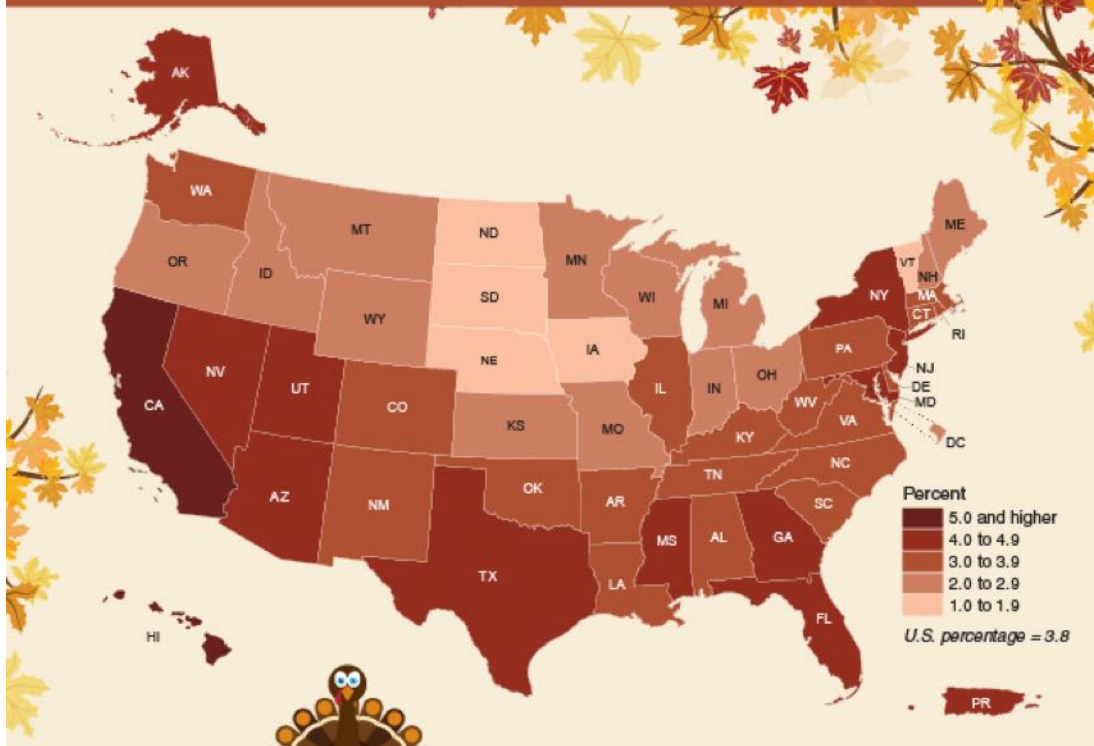
The estimated number of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native civilian veterans of the U.S. armed forces in 2017.

573

The number of federally recognized Indian tribes in 2018.

Family Gatherings

Percent of Households that are Multigenerational



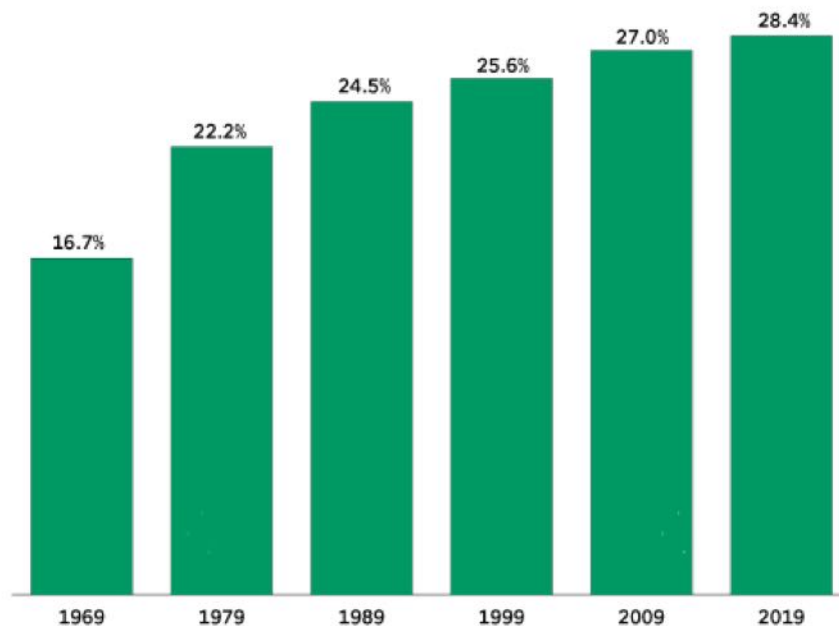
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Source: 2018 American Community Survey
1-Year Estimates.

One-Person Households on the Rise

Percent of Households That Are One Person



The FCC and Ajit Pai are Leaving Native American Reservations Behind

Despite Pai's promise to get broadband to rural areas, Native American reservations still struggle to get basic Internet connections

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs recently held a hearing addressing the technological disparities affecting Native American communities. Many indigenous people living on tribal lands in the United States are often located in rural areas without access to high-speed internet or even cell service. A year ago, Traci Morris, a member of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma and head of the American Indian Policy Institute at Arizona State University, told NPR that people living on tribal lands were the "least connected," "underconnected," and "underserved."

I didn't have to hear this on NPR to understand its truth. I grew up on the Northern Cheyenne reservation, a community where making a cellphone call or checking messages required driving to locations where I might pick up a spotty signal. I still remember all of the spots along the highway where I could check my voicemail messages or place phone calls.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai says bringing broadband to rural areas is his highest priority, but since there aren't lucrative deals to be made, service providers have generally ignored rural communities like the one I called home. This puts opportunities afforded to the connected population out of reach and disproportionately affects Native American communities. Service providers haven't had the incentive to establish connectivity in areas with rugged terrain. The FCC recently approved almost \$5 billion in subsidies to be distributed among locations lacking broadband access. This will allow states with rural locations to work toward providing internet access to residents affected. The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs heard testimony from Belinda Nelson, chairperson of Gila River Telecommunications, who listed access to licensed spectrum, secondary market licensing, reforms to tribal bidding credit, and build or divest mechanisms as solutions to bridging the gap in Native access.

On the reservation where I grew up, wireless connectivity lags far behind technological availability. Cellphones couldn't access a signal almost anywhere on the reservation, so residents often drove miles to reach spots that picked up a faint signal. It wasn't an uncommon sight as we drove away from the reservation to come across a group of vehicles on the side of the road checking text messages.

Of course, this also meant access to social media was limited to home computers so communicating on the go was a hassle in every way. It wasn't until fairly recently that cell towers were installed, allowing cellphone access to the area. This brought modern communication to the reservation. But that only solved part of the problem. Because many residents of tribal lands live below the poverty line, broadband isn't economically accessible. Many low-income households buy a smartphone that can be used for homework, job applications, medical access, banking, and everything else that requires an internet connection. Since most providers of broadband have been from the private sector, it's not profitable to provide service to low-income communities. The logistics also presents issues due to rugged terrain in rural areas. The Northern Cheyenne Reservation is only one of many rural areas lacking access to a cellphone tower.

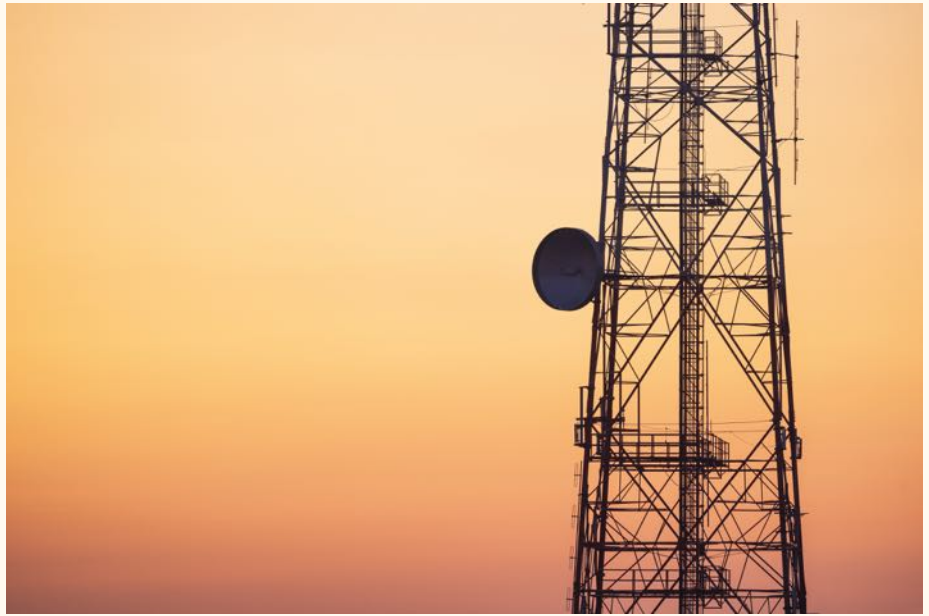
To counter these issues, two federal agencies have been tasked with providing the funding needed for Native communities to gain access to broadband. The FCC and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service are charged with overseeing high-speed internet access to tribal lands. However, according to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), there are discrepancies in the data the FCC has presented. While collecting data, the FCC often makes the mistake of inaccurately counting high-speed internet users because they're in the vicinity of access. This doesn't take into account the special challenges terrain presents in rural areas. As a result, statistics don't accurately reflect residential access to broadband. This gets reported to oversight committees and makes it difficult to properly assess issues facing Native Americans living on tribal lands in rural locations.

Opportunities available to populations connected to broadband remain out of reach for some residents on tribal lands. Schools throughout the United States are largely integrated with technology such as tablets, computers, and digital learning boards. While some communities complain that their kids are spending too much time with technology, people living on Native lands are still struggling to get a signal. Technology prepares students for an advancing technological society. High-speed internet is required for Native children to compete on the national level. Younger school-age children aren't the only students affected. Students across the U.S. enjoy the financial advantages of online education that would benefit low-income communities, but online college courses aren't accessible to people living in places without broadband. Education is difficult to obtain for many residents of Native communities due to factors such as income and access. The distance to institutions of higher education in relation to rural areas doesn't present opportunities for those unable to relocate. Unless broadband access is available, residents encounter even greater difficulty obtaining an education.

As remote employment continues to grow, residents in rural areas are optimal candidates. However, without access to high-speed internet, working remotely isn't easy for residents on tribal lands. During the latest hearing of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, the FCC proposed closing the technological gap on tribal lands and offering bidding credits to service providers. The FCC created a special task force to tackle spectrum-related issues in Indian country called the Native Nations Communications Task Force. It's made up of tribal members across several nations who act as liaisons between their communities and the FCC, providing the agency with specialized guidance. According to the representative at the hearing on September 18, the FCC is taking several steps to coordinate with tribal leaders, such as workshops and instructional tools on applying for alternative access until high-speed internet is available.

Education and training are key for rural governments to ensure resident access to technology. Native nations can also prioritize designating representatives to tackle key issues on the national level as they pertain to broadband access and other digital concerns. Since obtaining spectrum also involves licensing requirements, it's important to employ entities with knowledge in this field. Absent implementation of federal agency solutions, residents of tribal lands will continue struggling to meet the needs of communities

READ MORE AT: <https://onezero.medium.com/native-american-reservations-still-struggle-to-get-basic-internet-connections-ce6ba5445ccb>





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