



Dilkon Chapter awarded over \$33 million to address broadband

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DILKON, Ariz. — Today, Hon. Council Delegate Elmer Begay (Dilkon, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone, Greasewood Springs) of the 24th Navajo Nation Council announced Dilkon Chapter was awarded \$33,246,806.32 in grants from the National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA) for the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program.

“The families I represent continually struggle with broadband infrastructure and it has been my priority to see District 7 connect to the world,” said Delegate Begay. “Thank you to the local grazing committee and their families for consenting land withdrawal for the mobile towers. Special thanks to Tico Charlee and his staff at the Navajo Nation Telecommunications & Regulatory Commission for their support of our project.”

On behalf of District Seven Chapters (Teesto, Indian Wells, White Cone, Dilkon, Greasewood Springs), Dilkon Chapter Manager Margie Barton submitted an application requesting approximately \$33.2 million for broadband connections. District 7 Chapters partnered with Aquila Cubed Consulting, LLC, a Native American and women-owned business who conducted the studies and consultations in the region to identify necessary infrastructure needs.

Awarded funds will directly go towards the Broadband Infrastructure Deployment project proposed installation of fiber, directly connecting 3,643 unserved Native American households while anchoring institutions and businesses. Additionally, the installation will grant a minimum of 25/3 Mbps wireless service.

As part of the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, 23 grants totaling more than \$601.6 million were awarded to 94 Tribal entities through funds from U.S. President Joe Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Reaffirming the Administration’s commitment to nation-to-nation engagement and closing the digital divide in communities, including Native American and Alaskan Native households.

In June, the Naabik’iyáti’ Committee of the 24th Navajo Nation Council approved Resolution(s) NABIMY-16-22 and NABIMY-17-22, which supported Dilkon Chapter’s application to the Program.

Under the Biden-Harris Administration’s “Internet for All” Initiative, NTIA is tasked with awarding \$980 million in grants through the Program to tribal governments in order to address the lack of broadband infrastructure in tribal communities.

Over 42,000 unserved Native American households and establishments who previously did not have high-speed internet will now have direct connection. The historic legislation will create an additional 1,073 new jobs to drive the economy sustainable and equitably.

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NTIA is the Executive Branch agency that focuses on expanding broadband internet access for users to continue innovating and creating economic prosperity. By doing so, NTIA is able to address the issues of education, healthcare, and public safety that intersect with broadband connectivity.

“I am hopeful this initiative will be the first step towards restoring and recovering the health and wellness to the homes that lost loved ones during the pandemic,” said Delegate Begay. “In order for our Navajo Nation to prosper and empower our people, having high-speed internet is an essential utility and necessity for everyday life.”

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