



THE STATE OF THE NATION



JANUARY 26, 2026





THE NAVAJO NATION QUARTERLY ADDRESS

PRESIDENT BUU NYGREN

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Madam Vice President, Madam Speaker, Madam Interim Chief Justice, visiting dignitaries, my Navajo people and members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council – Yá'át'ééh! I wish you and your families a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

I am Dr. Buu Nygren, President of the Navajo Nation, of the Red Running into the Water Clan, born for Vietnamese. My maternal grandfather's clan is Bitter Water, and my paternal grandfather's clan is Southern Vietnamese.


This quarter also advanced our work to revitalize Navajo Nation government to be more accessible, responsive, and centered on the basic needs of our people. As our tribal enrollment continues to grow, so does our responsibility to expand and strengthen services through thoughtful planning, strategic investment, and efficient administration. We continued direct engagement with Chapters, efforts that have allowed us to make meaningful improvements by improving areas such as housing, water access, and infrastructure development.

This report highlights key Executive Branch accomplishments. I thank our directors and staff for their dedication in moving the Navajo Nation forward.

1. ECONOMY

New Hotels will be opening all over the Navajo Nation.

- a) The Shonto Hotel will open this month, January 2026! It has 83 rooms and is a \$16 million facility.

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- b) The Shiprock Pinnacle Hotel will be completed in July 2026. It will have 83 rooms and we have invested \$22 million in it.
 - c) Cameron Horseman's Lodge Phase 1 construction is scheduled to begin this year.
 - d) Cameron Hozho Resort & Hotel Phase 1 construction is scheduled to begin this year.
 - e) The Crownpoint Hotel Market Study will be done this year.

Forest Carbon Offset Program

The Navajo Nation marked a major milestone in the Navajo Forest Carbon Project, one of the largest forest carbon projects enrolled in California's compliance program, spanning more than 500,000 acres in Arizona and New Mexico. On December 30, 2025, the project issued its first carbon credits, reflecting years of planning and collaboration. This success demonstrates our commitment to protecting our lands, leading on climate action, and creating new financial opportunities for the Navajo Nation.

Renewing Rights of Ways

The Executive Branch has worked diligently to renew rights-of-way with Arizona Public Service (APS), Tucson Electric Power, and Kinder Morgan—efforts that will bring tens of millions of dollars into Navajo Nation revenues. In the past quarter, I signed an MOU with Kinder Morgan, resulting in an immediate \$27 million payment while final negotiations continue. We are also on track to finalize a right-of-way extension with APS next quarter. A top priority of my administration has been keeping the Four Corners Power Plant open beyond 2031, and we are now close to a path forward that could extend operations as long as 2038. This plant has long been a major source of jobs, revenue, and economic stability for the Navajo Nation.

Tax Revenue Collections


The Office of the Navajo Tax Commission projected \$131 million in tax revenue for Fiscal Year 2025 and collected \$162,448,059—\$31.4 million (or 24 percent) more than anticipated. Sales Tax, Business Activity Tax, Hotel Occupancy Tax, Junk Food Tax, and Alcohol Tax all exceeded expectations. Increased collections are attributed to Navajo Nation programs spending CARES Act and ARPA funds before federal deadlines, along with higher construction activity across the Nation.

Minimum Wage Increase

Our Department of Personnel Management is working with a consultant to complete the review of the employee census and market data. We are getting very close to implementing a minimum wage of \$14.70 – an increase from \$10.61. I look forward to them completing their work in 2026 and to the Council's support in implementing these pay increases.

Navajo Nation Gaming Regulatory Office

The revised Title V (five) – Class III Gaming Minimum Internal Control Standards were officially adopted in November 2025, as part of the Navajo Nation Tribal Gaming Regulations. This two-year project incorporated all new requirements under the Tribal–Arizona Gaming Compact. The Navajo Department of Justice Economic



Development Unit assisted with key legal reviews, and notice of the revisions was provided to the Arizona Department of Gaming and the New Mexico Gaming Control Board.

2. ACCESS TO WATER, ELECTRICITY, HOUSING, AND THE INTERNET

Water

There are multiple water pipeline projects in the works that have reached significant milestones in the last quarter. These projects will bring water to hundreds of Navajo families, improving their lives for generations to come. I thank the Department of Water Resources for their too often unrecognized work on these projects.

In the past quarter, we continued to advocate for water rights, including increasing funding for the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project, which remains underfunded and will not be able to continue without additional funding operations from Congress. We successfully secured an additional \$59 million from Congress for the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project and a cost ceiling increase of \$175 million. This was signed into law this past Friday. We are closer to seeing the Project to completion. I thank Senators Heinrich and Luján and Representative Leger Fernández for their work on this significant milestone.

In the upcoming quarter, we continue our tireless work on the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement. We will be meeting with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and continue our dialogue with the States of Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, and New Mexico to gain their support for the Arizona Settlement.

Electricity

The Division of Natural Resources led a \$950,000, six-mile powerline extension from Teec Nos Pos to the Four Corners Monument, allowing families along the route to connect to electricity. Through the CHID Block Grant Program, DCD completed a 13-mile line in Dilkon (costing \$1.1 million and serving 23 households) and an 11-mile line in Greasewood Springs (costing \$1 million and serving 16 households). Together, these projects created nearly 40 temporary Navajo jobs.


Additionally, the Navajo Land Department and DNR streamlined the Service Line Agreement process, allowing customers and utility companies to sign agreements directly and file with NLD. This new process significantly speeds up electrical hookups.

Chapter house reopenings

In the past quarter, DCD assisted St. Michaels and Ramah Chapters with opening and reopening chapter houses and provided Community Land Use Planning Committee (CLUPC) orientation to 16 additional chapters. Common training requests included zoning, ordinance development, CLUPC plans, and clarification on the land use process. To date, 98 percent of CLUPC orientations are complete.

Broadband

Reliable internet access is essential across the Navajo Nation for government services, healthcare, public safety, economic development, education, and daily life. In 2025, NTUA and SBI constructed seven towers in San Juan,



Nazlini, Many Farms, Pine Springs, Moncisco Mesa, Low Mountain, and White Horse. Thirty additional Chapters were awarded new fiber construction, expanding beyond the 52 already connected. ARPA funds supported upgrades to 40 LTE towers and advanced fiber projects in Ramah, New Mexico, connecting 560 homes.

Housing

Every time a Navajo family receives a home, it is a special moment. Through the 1,000 Homes Initiative, DCD, the Office of Veterans Affairs, and NHLCO continue delivering homes across the Navajo Nation, showing that progress is real and the future is being built one home at a time.

CHID Homes

CHID is advancing Work Orders 1 and 3 and is on schedule. Work Order 1 will produce 50 modular homes is 82 percent complete, with 41 homes delivered; remaining homes have pads prepared, with final skirting, gutters, and painting ongoing. Work Order 3 will produce 150 manufactured homes and is 92 percent complete, with 138 homes delivered and 12 remaining. Work Order 5 was fully executed in November 2025, adding 138 additional homes. A new factory with Homes Direct will deliver 8–12 homes weekly. DCD aims to complete all ARPA housing placements by December 2026.

Navajo Hopi Land Commission Office

NHLCO advanced key initiatives supporting ONHIR transition, community housing, and land stability. Work Order #1 – the ARPA Modular Homes Project – reached 90 percent completion. NHLCO continues PMDR operations, supports property-related consultations, and coordinates grazing permit compliance for upcoming cattle sales. A public hearing is scheduled for January 30 to present the interim plan and finalize recommendations.


Bathroom Additions

In addition to new homes, DCD efforts will allow many Navajo families to soon have access to safe, sanitary, and reliable bathrooms through the Section 11 ARPA program, which supports bathroom additions and renovations. Early in my administration, I executed a \$150 million contract with Navajo Engineering Construction Authority (NECA) to build over 1,500 bathroom additions, managed through more than 70 work orders. NECA currently has 597 additions under construction and has completed 1,702 renovation assessments, with 1,297 renovations in progress.

In 2025, bathroom addition assessments reached 95 percent completion for 551 homes, and construction is 95 percent complete for 597 additions. Bathroom renovation assessments are 90 percent complete, with 40 percent of renovations in progress. Goals for 2026 include completing 185 additional bathroom additions and 300 more renovations.

Homeowners Assistance

The Navajo Nation received \$55 million from the U.S. Treasury Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF). To date, 722 grants have been issued to 306 homeowners, deploying \$9.9 million and obligating \$11.5 million, with \$25.6



million remaining. For urban families, a \$55.4 million Navajo Homeowner Assistance Fund has helped 17 households avoid foreclosure. Led by the DCFS, this initiative includes outreach events connecting urban Diné to resources and support to maintain and grow homeownership.

3. ROADS

On December 10, the Navajo Division of Transportation (NDOT) held a public meeting on the Navajo Route 15 project, addressing a roadway that has deteriorated over the past 30 years. The meeting marked a key milestone in advancing much needed improvements to this critical transportation corridor.

The N5001(1) Toadlena/Two Grey Hills Road project, awarded to Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority for \$14.6 million, is underway. NECA is completing right-of-way staking, cultural site fencing, and earthwork and bridge foundations. Wilson & Company is managing the construction for this project, and CA2 conducts materials testing to ensure compliance.

4. PUBLIC SAFETY

We continue to work on modernizing the Navajo 911 system to be used across the country that automatically provides a caller's location to dispatchers during an emergency call. I recently signed a \$6.2 million contract with MTM Solutions of Farmington, N.M., in partnership with the Department of Public Safety to begin to fulfill a 20-year dream to bring E911 digital communication to the Nation. The system uses technology that will use geospatial data to locate the call, in real time, to get the information to border towns so that help can be dispatched quickly.

Incident Command Center

The Shiprock Incident Command Center – set to be completed in 2026 – in Shiprock is 90 percent complete. This facility will house the Navajo Police Department, Fire and Rescue Services, the Emergency Medical Services and the Department of Emergency Management.

ICE activity and issues

Due to increased interactions between ICE and Navajo citizens, we have strengthened partnerships through our Navajo Nation Washington Office and federal agencies—including the U.S. Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, and Congressional offices—to protect our members.

Operation Rainbow Bridge was also repurposed to support Navajo individuals with negative ICE encounters. DCFS has rebooted the Operation Rainbow hotline and established online reporting for ICE-related concerns.

The Office of Vital Records & Identification, essential for federal law enforcement preparedness, has experienced delays due to supply shortages. Solutions are underway to restore full operations and ensure timely issuance of identification to Navajo citizens, helping them navigate encounters with federal authorities safely and efficiently.

5. HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



The Phoenix Urban Residential Treatment Center – the first Navajo-operated facility providing culturally appropriate substance use treatment – is 80 percent complete, with construction expected to finish by April 2026. The facility opened to residents in September 2025, and in December, the first graduates completed their 90-day program, marking a significant milestone in healing.

The Gallup Indian Medical Center project is 30 percent complete. A comprehensive Master Plan was finalized in October 2025, covering economic, environmental, workforce, and medical needs. The project's estimated cost is \$2.5 to 6 billion, with a goal in 2026 to secure \$65 to 100 million for construction drawings and break ground on the hospital and behavioral health facility.

DCFS was busy last quarter supporting Navajo families in need. DCFS distributed \$2,294,805 in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Department of Self-Reliance awards. Additionally, the Financial Assistance Unit provided \$3,728,100 to assist over 12,000 Navajo children and families, and allowing them to purchase school clothing, cover winter needs, and afford energy for their homes.

7. VETERAN SERVICES

Providing housing for Navajo veterans remains a top priority of my Administration. The Navajo Veterans Administration (NNVA) is addressing 151 housing requests. With \$50 million in ARPA funds, many veterans and their families have an unprecedented opportunity to become homeowners. A subrecipient agreement with the Southwest Indian Foundation will construct 20 affordable, one-to---three bedrooms homes.

Currently, 114 homes are funded with Veterans Trust Funds (\$26.5 million), 80 with ARPA funds (\$50 million), 30 with NAHSADA funds (\$4 million), and 10 modular homes were donated by FEMA. Progress on ARPA homes includes 95 in-progress, 27 completed but pending utility connections, and 22 turnkey homes delivered to veterans and their families.

The Veterans Trust Fund has grown to over \$12 million, supporting roughly 8,000 veterans. NNVA is working to increase the long-standing 4% allocation, which would better address rising costs for housing, utilities, food, medications, and cultural and healing needs, allowing more timely assistance for veterans and their families facing financial hardship.

8. EDUCATION AND OTHER RESOURCES

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During the first quarter of FY 2026, the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarships and Financial Assistance awarded \$7.36 million to 2,457 Navajo students for the Spring/Winter 2026 academic term.

I recently renewed a Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Arizona College of Veterinary Medicine to increase the number of Navajo veterinarians. In 2026, I will renew the agreement with the James E. Roger College of Law to ensure we have plenty of Navajo attorneys. Together with the Navajo Nation Oil and Gas Company, I created a new scholarship for Navajo students attending the ASU for an MBA. It is called the “Yideeskaadi Nitsáhákees Scholarship” and will provide two students a \$5,000 scholarship.



9. ELDERS

The Tohatchi Senior Center opened in October 2025, and the Nazlini Senior Center grand opening was in November 2025. The Coyote Canyon and Mexican Springs Senior Centers are next in line. There are still 23 closed Senior Centers that NDOH has targeted for reopening through emergency procurement. A goal for 2026 is to achieve 100 percent operational status for all senior centers, to expand home-based services to 20 percent more elders, and to continue repairs and construction.

10. ENVIRONMENT

Uranium Cleanup

NNEPA is partnering with a company called DISA Technologies to test new technology called High-Pressure Slurry Ablation on our uranium waste. This technology is supported by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC) who approved the use of High-Pressure Slurry Ablation treatment technology for Abandoned Uranium Mine cleanup on federal land. This is an exciting, creative, and groundbreaking way to address the cleanup of our abandoned uranium mines.

Animal Control

The Department of Fish and Wildlife completed the 164-review process for funding from New Mexico Rural Development for the Crownpoint animal shelter. One million dollars is approved from N.M. Rural Development. The land withdrawal process is complete. The utility infrastructure and blueprints for the shelter will be completed once the Navajo Nation cost-shared amount of \$800,000 has been awarded.

Government Efficiency

The Navajo Nation continues to improve government efficiency. This past year, the Homesite Lease Office streamlined its processes and approved over 2,000 homesite leases, helping more families access land more quickly.

We are also modernizing human resources and payroll systems. Employment applications are now being automated, and the Dayforce HR and payroll system was implemented to improve accuracy, transparency, and accountability. While challenges remain, teams from DPM, HR, payroll, IT, and Dayforce are working together to resolve payroll issues, train supervisors, and strengthen support. Ongoing training and resources are available on the DPM website.

In closing, I address you, Speaker and Honorable Delegates of the 25th Navajo Nation Council. It is time for us to set aside personal differences and return our full focus to why we were elected—to serve the Navajo people. I know that some of you do not support me. I know I have offended some of you in the past, and I came before you the day before Thanksgiving to take responsibility and to apologize. Some of you accepted that apology; some did not. Regardless, our duty to the Navajo Nation must come before personal grievances.

We have only eleven months left to fully expend our Fiscal Recovery Funds. I issued an Executive Order on hardship to ensure those dollars are not lost and that they reach our people. I am asking you to work with me so



we can complete critical water and electricity projects and launch a hardship program that is fair, lawful, and successful. These funds are too important to be sacrificed because of division or delay.

At the same time, several pieces of legislation being advanced by this Council would seriously undermine the authority of the Office of the President and Vice President and weaken the Executive Branch for generations to come. These efforts are not just about me; they are about shifting power away from the Presidency itself and concentrating it here in this chamber. A clear example is the proposal to strip the President of the authority to appoint members to the Board of Education, which would permanently damage the balance of powers within our government.

You are also moving legislation to reduce salaries for employees within my office. I restored all Legislative Branch salaries and much of the Council's operating funding in good faith. Yet there is still no operating budget for my office that I can support. I told many of you in early December that I would use a lighter pen with line-item vetoes, believing you would respond in kind. That good faith has not been reciprocated.

We all carry the same responsibility and the same oath—to serve the Navajo people to the best of our ability. It is time to put aside personal feelings, political grudges, and power struggles and do the job the Navajo people elected us to do. History will judge us by whether we delivered for our people when it mattered most.