



Navajo Nation to expand internet access

By Independent staff

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – The Navajo Nation is receiving a much-needed broadband expansion that includes almost 3,000 homes, schools and businesses in the Thoreau, Baca, and Prewitt areas.

On Tuesday, NTUA Wireless announced that those areas will receive “high-speed internet access,” with speeds of at least 25 megabits per second (Mbps) in download speed and three Mbps in upload speed courtesy of NTUA Wireless and the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission.

NTUA Wireless is a joint venture between the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority and Commnet Broadband to expand broadband access on the Navajo Nation.

The project is scheduled to be completed no later than the end of 2025. It will offer voice, highspeed internet and wireless data service at rates offered to other customers throughout the Navajo Nation.



Courtesy photo

Navajo Tribal Utility Authority technician Larry Begay Jr. installs a new device at a customer's home in Rock Point, Arizona, Nov. 29.

In addition to homes and businesses, there are several community organizations that will benefit from the expansion. The locations on the list include Thoreau's Chapter House, elementary school, middle school, high school, community center, and Volunteer Fire Department as well as the Navajo Outreach, St. Bonaventure Indian Mission School, the Baca-Prewitt Chapter House, and the Baca/Dlo' Ay Azhi Community School.

“Many aspects of our lives today rely on a broadband connection,” NTUA Wireless general manager Velena Tsosie said, “Our work to expand service to unserved and underserved areas means more Navajo Nation residents have access to telemedicine, economic and educational opportunities, improved quality of life, and more.”

Tsosie thanked New Mexico State Commissioner Theresa Becenti-Aguilar for her vision and support of the broadband expansion through the New Mexico Broadband Program. The program was established in 2021 and aims to expand broadband to unserved and underserved areas in New Mexico and close the digital divide. Becenti-Aguilar said the expansion was the result of a team effort.

“We are taking broadband availability very seriously,” Becenti-Aguilar said. “Network expansions, new technologies and the New Mexico Broadband Program will positively impact thousands of Navajo Nation residents. Consumer demand for broadband continues to grow and evolve. Our leadership is a joint effort to make these projects a reality.”

NTUA General Manager Walter Haase said NTUA and NTUA Wireless have been working for years to expand broadband as much as possible. Haase said, “We are very grateful for this funding opportunity that will allow broadband access for so many families, schools and businesses in the eastern agency of the Navajo Nation. They have been waiting for a very long time.”

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