



NAVAJO-GALLUP WATER SUPPLY PROJECT NEWSLETTER

Spring 2026

MEETINGS

Project Construction Committee (PCC)
Apr. 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

Clean Water Starts Here Information Meeting
June 14, 2026 1-4 p.m.

Location: Newcomb Chapter House
See page 4 for full info.

GET IN TOUCH

Questions/Comments:
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Farmington, NM 87401

Bureau of Reclamation advances Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project with \$67.7 million contract for construction of the project's San Juan Lateral River Intake Pumping Plant

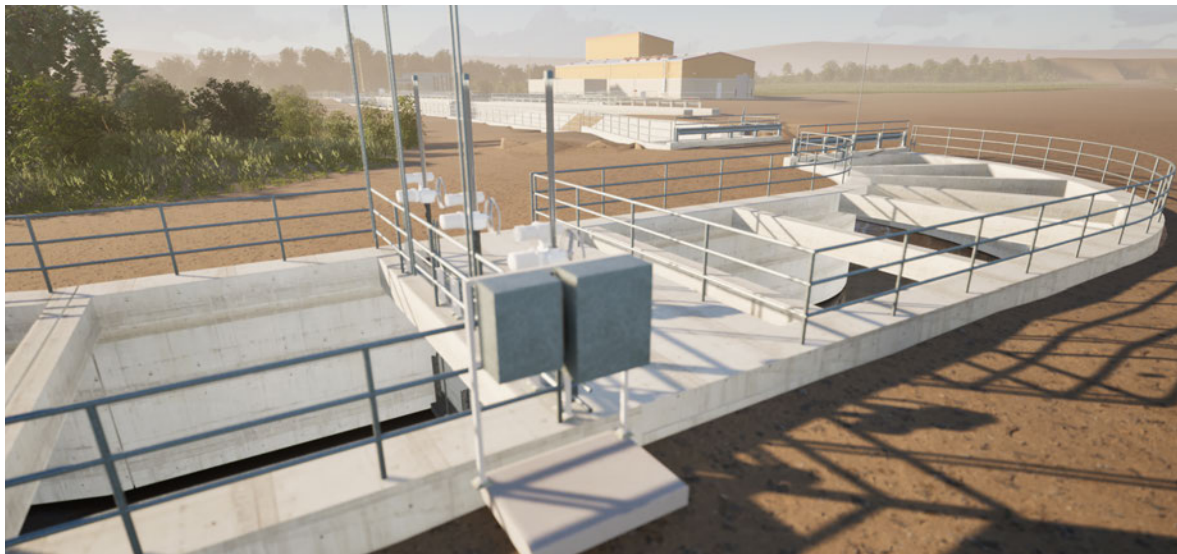


Illustration of the concrete intake gate.

New facility will serve as starting point for water flowing to Navajo Nation and city of Gallup communities and marks the final 'major' pumping plant to be constructed for the project

By Jenny Erickson, Upper Colorado Basin Region Public Affairs

The Bureau of Reclamation is advancing the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project with a \$67.7 million contract to construct the San Juan Lateral River Intake Pumping Plant in northwest New Mexico. The Bureau of Reclamation awarded the contract to Ames Federal Contracting Group, LLC.

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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/>



Project Construction Update

By Paul Bergstrom and Hilda Castillo Smith, resident engineers

The Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project continues to make exciting progress this spring, with major construction milestones taking shape across multiple sites.

Reach 4A/B Nears Completion

Work on Reach 4A/B, stretching from the new water treatment plant to Pumping Plant 2 and onward to Pumping Plant 3, is almost wrapped up. All pipeline installation is complete, and only a few closeout and touch-up items remain. Crews expect to close these out in the next few weeks.

Pumping Plants 2 and 3 Prepare for Commissioning

At Tse Da'azkani (Pumping Plant 2) and To Alts'iisi (Pumping Plant 3), construction is approaching the finish line. Power has been connected at both sites and teams are now conducting final system testing. Commissioning is anticipated within the next month or two, when each plant's systems will run together to verify seamless, reliable operation.

Water Treatment Plant Taking Shape

Construction of the new water treatment plant, situated just off Highway N 36, is well underway. This facility will play a central role in delivering safe, clean drinking water once the entire system comes online. Early site work began in spring 2025, including clearing the area, bringing in job trailers, and preparing the foundation. Since then, several concrete placements for key structures have been completed, with more scheduled as the project continues to advance.

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Aerial photo of Pumping Plant 2.



Aerial photo of Pumping Plant 3.



Aerial photo of active construction at the water treatment plant located off HWY N-36.

FACES OF NGWSP



Meet Paul Bergstrom

Yáát'ééh! My name is Paul Bergstrom, and I'm proud to serve as a resident engineer with the Bureau of Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office. I grew up among the lakes and cold winters of Minnesota, but these days I call Farmington, New Mexico home. I have to say, the weather here is a big upgrade.

I earned my Civil Engineering degree from the University of Minnesota, and my career has taken me from Yosemite National Park to the fast-paced world of international disaster response. Now, I'm honored to play a role in the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, where I help coordinate construction needs between designers, field staff, partners, and contractors. Working in such a stunning part of the country on a project that brings clean, reliable water to communities with an incredibly dedicated team is deeply rewarding.

Photo: Paul Bergstrom, shown here while working on another Reclamation project in Utah.

Flowing Strong- The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority and the Cutter Lateral at Work

By Nathan Nakamoto, project manager

Since June of 2022 the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) has successfully managed, operated, and maintained the Cutter Lateral raw water delivery and treatment system of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project.



Cutter Lateral – Interior of a raw water system pumping plant.

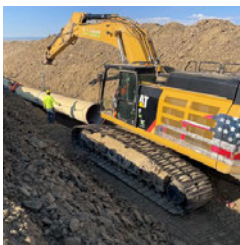
The Cutter Lateral raw water delivery and treatment system is a critical component for ensuring reliable water access for communities in the region. This system consists of approximately 21 miles of pipeline, two pumping plants, and multiple regulating tanks that work together to transport raw water from the Cutter Reservoir. The raw water is delivered to the Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant, where it undergoes a comprehensive treatment process to meet drinking water standards before distribution into the consecutive water system. Cutter Lateral water serves approximately 6,000 people, which includes eight Navajo Chapters and the Jicarilla Apache Nation.

Continued on page 6



LONG TERM RELIABLE WATER STARTS HERE

Want to learn more about your future drinking water? The Bureau of Reclamation's Four Corners Construction Office invites all Navajo Chapters to participate in an informational meeting for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project:



**June 14, 2026 from 1 to 4 p.m.
at the Newcomb Chapter House
Open to the Public
All Chapters Invited**

Food+ drink will be provided

The Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project is the cornerstone of the Navajo Nation's San Juan River Water Rights Settlement in New Mexico and is now more than 70% complete. The project will have the capacity to provide a safe and dependable drinking water supply to 43 Navajo Nation Chapters in New Mexico and east-central Arizona.

Representatives from the Navajo Nation, Reclamation, Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, city of Gallup and contractors working on the project will present info on:

- Project history and background
- Construction progress and updates
- Water delivery, operations, and project completion schedule
- Partner roles and community involvement

This is a great opportunity to share your concerns and feedback!

Questions? Contact Becky Begay at bbegay@usbr.gov, or Malcolm Begay at mbegay@usbr.gov, or call 505-324-5000. For more information about the NGWSP, visit the QR code at the bottom of this page.

We hope to see you there!



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION



Bringing Clean, Reliable Drinking Water to the Navajo Nation

Construction update cont.



WCA crews preparing pipe for inspection.



Inside of pipe section removed where new access way will be installed in preparation for cleaning and inspection.

Reach 1 Pipeline Improvement Progress

The Reach 1 pipeline rehabilitation effort has been in motion for several months. This crucial pipeline moves water from the San Juan River to the Frank Chee Willetto Reservoir. Work includes cleaning, inspection, installation of new access ways, and repairs in areas identified during inspection. Crews have already removed sections of pipe to allow installation of new access points, a plunger valve, and a bypass for a storage tank. Internal cleaning is underway using a specialized machine equipped with pressure washers and a video system to inspect the pipe's condition and identify areas requiring repair.



WCA crew preparing to remove section of pipe at location of plunger valve to prepare for cleaning and inspection.

Pumping Plant 1 Work Begins

Construction on Pumping Plant 1 began in March with surveying, site clearing and foundation excavation. The contractor will soon begin initial activities such as fencing and establishing material storage areas. Once complete, this plant will move water to the treatment plant for processing.

Flowing strong cont.



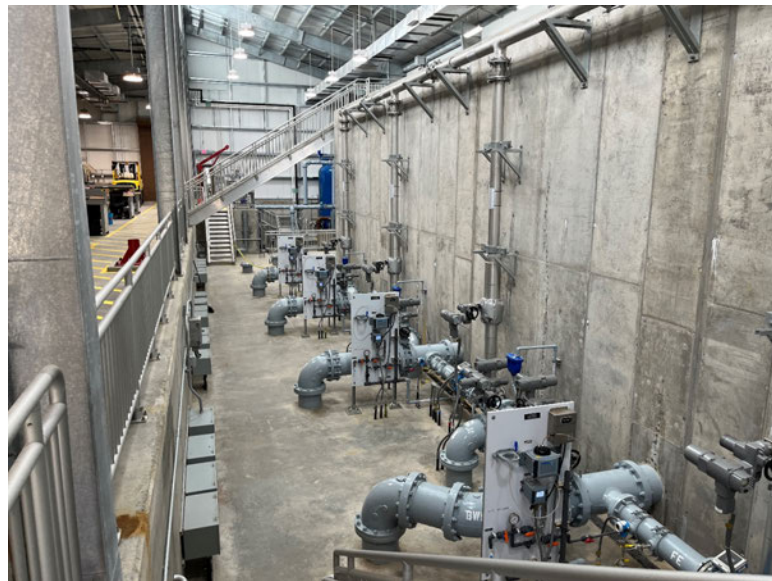
Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant – Coagulant storage tanks within the chemical building.

The Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant operates seven days a week to provide a continuous supply of safe drinking water. On average, the facility treats approximately 300,000 gallons of water per day. In 2025 alone, the plant delivered an impressive 134 million gallons of treated water, underscoring its vital role in supporting public health and regional water security. This consistent production reflects the plant's commitment to reliability and sustainability in one of the most water-stressed regions of the Southwest.

In 2025, a treatment chemical known as coagulant, used in the water treatment process, was changed to improve operations and reduce maintenance needs. Since 2021, the system had used a ferric-based coagulant, which is an iron-based chemical used in water treatment to remove impurities by neutralizing negatively charged particles, causing them to bind together and settle from the water during the process. Supply chain challenges and increased strain on the treatment process led NTUA and its operating contractor to explore more efficient and cost-effective options. They determined that an aluminum-based coagulant would better address these issues. In late 2025, the system was

successfully switched to aluminum chlorohydrate without any interruption to water service. Early results are promising, showing effective treatment, and staff will continue monitoring and adjusting the process to optimize performance.

Additionally, since taking over operations and maintenance of the system, NTUA has worked to integrate the raw water delivery and treatment system with its broader water delivery infrastructure in the region to improve efficiency and reliability. These efforts have included developing stronger communication channels between operating personnel and entities and establishing protocols for timely information sharing. By integrating operations, NTUA aims to improve water delivery across multiple systems, reduce redundancies, and enhance service reliability for the customers it serves in the region.



Cutter Lateral Water Treatment Plant – Treatment building and filtration basins.

NTUA's management of the Cutter Lateral shows their commitment to ensuring water security for the region. Through effective communication, system management, and integration of systems, the Cutter Lateral has successfully been utilized to provide safe drinking water to thousands of people.

San Juan River intake facility cont.

*"This award marks construction of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project's final major pumping plant and represents a critical step forward," said **Assistant Secretary – Water and Science Andrea Travnicek**. "This project represents the Trump administration's commitment to improving critical infrastructure and will deliver essential water to the Navajo Nation, where more than one in three people still live without indoor plumbing and must haul water to their homes."*

The San Juan Lateral River Intake Pumping Plant will serve as the diversion facility for the San Juan Lateral, directing water from the San Juan River into the pipeline system that supplies the Navajo Nation and the city of Gallup.

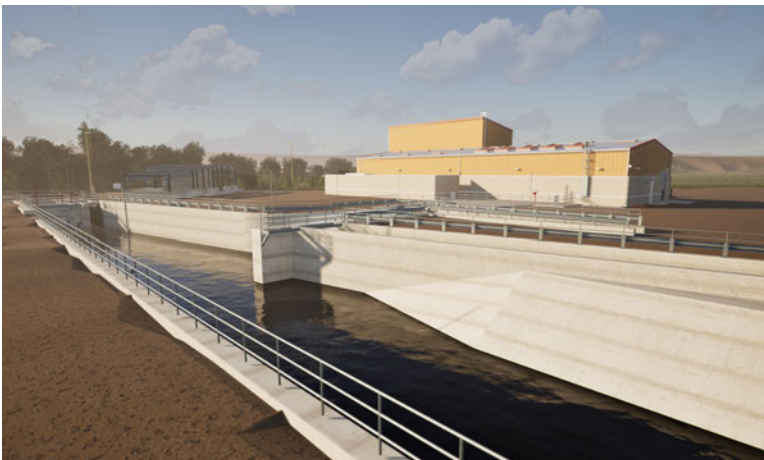


Illustration of the intake canal towards the pumping plant.

Planned improvements include hydraulic refinements and installation of modern automation and control systems capable of regulating diversion rates in response to downstream demand within the San Juan Lateral system. These upgrades will enable remote monitoring and control and improved operational efficiency consistent with Reclamation standards.



Illustration of the site overhead view.

*"This facility will serve as the diversion point for water that will be delivered throughout the entire San Juan Lateral and into the communities that depend on it," said **Reclamation Acting Commissioner Scott Cameron**. "This is great progress on an important project to the Navajo Nation, northwestern New Mexico and to Reclamation."*

This contract is funded through \$55 million of Community Funding appropriated in Public Law 119-74 and \$12.7 million from previously appropriated funds.

The San Juan Lateral is more than 70% complete, with initial water deliveries expected in late 2028 and full project completion by the end of 2029.



Illustration of the intake view.

Water Talk

Our construction update on the Cutter Lateral on page 3 talked a lot about the use of coagulants in the water treatment process.

What is a coagulant?

Coagulants play an important role in making water safe and clear. They help remove cloudiness, color, metals, and even some harmful microorganisms.

Coagulation in water treatment is a process used to remove suspended dirt, particles, and other impurities from water. This process involves adding specific chemicals, known as coagulants, to raw water. Many of these tiny particles are too small to separate from the water on their own, so the coagulant helps them stick together into larger clumps. Once they are made into larger clumps, called flocs, they can settle faster to the bottom of the water pool and be more easily removed. Cleaner water from the top is sent on to filtration basins.

How are coagulants used?

Coagulants are used in many types of water treatment, including:

- **Drinking water:** To make water clean and safe to meet health standards
- **Wastewater treatment:** To remove oils, grease, and other pollutants
- **Nutrient removal:** To help take out substances like phosphorus that can harm waterways
- **Sludge treatment:** To reduce the amount of waste left after treatment
- **Pools:** To help keep water clean and clear

