



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **From the Heart of FL to Navajo: WREC Powering Communities**

**February 7, 2025** - Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative (WREC) is proud to announce its participation in the Light Up Navajo project, partnering with the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority. As the first Florida cooperative to join this initiative, we are committed to bringing electricity to homes in the Navajo Nation that have never had power or running water. This effort is part of our ongoing mission to empower communities and improve the quality of life for all.

The Navajo Nation spans Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico, covering over 27,000 square miles, an area roughly the size of West Virginia. Currently, nearly 10,400 families in the Navajo Nation lack electricity or running water. Since the Light Up Navajo project began in 2019, 882 families have gained access to power.

"While WREC has engaged in international projects before, we felt a deep connection to the mission in the Navajo Nation. It was surprising to learn that many of our fellow Americans still lack access to essential services like electricity," said Gary Steele, WREC's Manager of Member Relations. The Light Up Navajo mutual aid initiative embodies the true American spirit of people helping people. It's a collaborative effort like no other, connecting homes of families that have been waiting years, even decades, for electric power.

This May, WREC will send 16 dedicated employees to the Navajo Nation to begin installing electrical infrastructure. This project aims to provide reliable and sustainable power to homes that have long been without this essential service. By bringing electricity to these areas, we are not only lighting up homes but also opening doors to new opportunities for education, healthcare, and economic development.

WREC's General Manager, David Lambert, stated, "We are honored to play a role in transforming the lives of the Navajo Nation residents. Access to electricity is a fundamental need, and we are dedicated to ensuring that these communities receive the power they deserve. This project underscores our mission to empower and uplift communities."

The installation process will involve close collaboration with NTUA electric crews, local leaders, and residents to ensure the project meets the community's needs. WREC is dedicated to supporting and uplifting not only the communities we serve but also those beyond our service areas, like the Navajo Nation. We aim to be a trusted partner and leader

in energy excellence, driving forward with innovative solutions that improve the quality of life for our Members and strengthen the vitality of all communities we touch.

For more information about the Light Up Navajo project, please visit their website at [ntua.com/light-up-navajo.html](http://ntua.com/light-up-navajo.html) or search "Light Up Navajo" on YouTube to find numerous informative videos.

### **About “Light Up Navajo” project.**

The Navajo Nation is the largest Native American reservation in the United States, covering approximately 27,000 square miles across northeastern Arizona, northwestern New Mexico, and southeastern Utah. It is home to over 170,000 residents and is governed by the Navajo Nation Council.

In Spring 2019, the NTUA partnered with the APPA to connect Navajo homes to the electric grid by creating an innovative, pioneering pilot project called Light Up Navajo (LUN). The goal was to energize Navajo homes at an expedited pace, helping to improve the standard of life for Navajo families living without electricity. Each year, outside utilities send their electric crews to the Navajo Nation to help connect homes and extend powerlines.

### **About Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WREC):**

Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative, Inc. is a not-for-profit electric cooperative serving over 270,000 homes and businesses in Pasco, Hernando, Citrus, Polk, and Sumter counties since 1947. WREC is dedicated to providing safe and resilient energy and services at the best possible value to its members while actively contributing to the communities it serves.

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# MEET THE TEAM!



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