



FEBRUARY 2024

BIIYA' BAA NIWINE

DUCKWATER NEWSLETTER

DOE GRID RESILIENCE GRANT

As of 12/21/23, the grant award is being processed by the DOE. Funding award amount \$131,821 with cost share of \$19,773 for a total budget of \$151,994. This project will be in collaboration with Mt. Wheeler Power. The GRID resilience program is designed to strength and modernize the power grid against wildfires, extreme weather and other natural disasters.

DISTRIBUTION & COMMUNITY BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE

The tribe has applied for and received a grants from San Manuel Band of Mission Indians in the amount of \$250,000 and Nevada Gold Mine in the amount of \$200,000. Puyenpa Construction has completed the engineering design for the project. PERC (septic system) Testing to be completed as well as Soil Baring testing before the project can break ground.

STARLINK PROJECT

We're thrilled to report that an additional 28 installations have been completed at individual residences, bringing the total to 30 installations since the project began. Our efforts have extended to enhancing connectivity at our Tribal Building, with 6 successful installations completed to date. This initiative ensures that our communal spaces are equipped with reliable internet access for various community activities and services.



From Left: Wesley Allison, Annette George, Debbie O'Neil, Marian Perez, Ricky Mike

DUCKWATER 2024 COUNCIL MEMBERS

The tribal council has welcomed fresh faces to its ranks following a successful election process. The council has elected Debra O'Neil as the new tribal chairwoman. Joining O'Neil in leading the council are Annette George, assuming the role of Vice Chair, and Marian Perez, who will serve as Secretary/Treasurer. This trio brings a wealth of experience and dedication to their positions, promising to steer the council toward prosperity and unity.

Additionally, Wesley Allison and Ricky Mike continue as council members, further enriching the diverse perspectives represented within the council chambers. Their commitment to service and advocacy for the community will undoubtedly contribute to the council's effectiveness in addressing key issues and fostering growth.

As the newly elected members assume their roles, they express gratitude for the trust placed in them by their fellow community members. They vow to work tirelessly to uphold the values and interests of the tribe, striving for progress and inclusivity in all endeavors.

The community eagerly anticipates the positive impact these new leaders will bring, ushering in a new era of cooperation and advancement for the tribe.

TRIBAL HISTORICAL PRESERVATION OFFICER CONTUING EFFORTS IN NAGPRA

As a Tribal Historical Preservation Officer (THPO), Warren Graham plays a crucial role in the preservation and protection of our Shoshone cultural, heritage and ancestral remains. One significant aspect of this responsibility involves compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The U.S. Interior Department Announced in December 2023 the Final Rule for implementation of NAGPRA.

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TRIBE ENHANCES ESSENTIAL HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURES

Duckwater receives the Community Development Block Grant from the American Rescue Plan Act aimed at addressing the pressing housing needs of essential tribal employees amidst the challenges posed by the COVID 19 pandemic.

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Tribal Community Advances Broadband and E-Rate Projects

In a significant step towards bridging the digital divide, the tribal community of Puyenpa is making strides with its Broadband and E-Rate Projects aimed at enhancing connectivity and access to educational resources.

The Broadband Project, which entails the installation of fiber lines to the community, has reached several key milestones. Recently, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) provided crucial feedback on the project route for environmental studies, ensuring alignment with regulatory standards and environmental preservation efforts. Additionally, Puyenpa IT, the driving force behind the initiative, has onboarded Phillip Stevens, a seasoned FT design engineer, to spearhead the project's technical aspects. A pivotal site visit by Puyenpa IT is slated, marking a crucial phase in assessing logistical requirements and optimizing project execution.

Simultaneously, progress on the E-Rate Project, dedicated to enhancing internet access for schools and libraries, is underway. A significant advancement in this endeavor is the successful processing of the Nevada Identification Number (VIN), signaling administrative readiness and paving the way for streamlined implementation.

These milestones underscore the community's commitment to fostering digital inclusion and equipping its members with the tools necessary for educational and economic empowerment. As Puyenpa navigates the intricate terrain of broadband infrastructure development and internet accessibility, these endeavors stand as testament to collective determination in harnessing technology for the betterment of all.

Ensuring Community Safety: A message from our Police Chief

In a recent interview, Chief J. Lucas shed light on the distinctive procedures and approaches undertaken by the Duckwater Shoshone Tribal Police Department when dealing with crimes involving non-native and native individuals in the community.

Chief Lucas emphasized the foundational role of Nevada State P.O.S.T (Peace Officers Standard Training) certification for their officers. This certification not only grants them jurisdiction over natives within the reservation but also enables the enforcement of laws on non-natives both within and outside the reservation through a Mutual Aid Agreement with the Nye County Sheriff's Office.

The distinction in handling investigations and enforcement actions becomes evident when addressing non-natives and natives. For non-natives, violations are typically addressed under the Nevada Revised Statutes, prosecuted by the Nye County District Attorney's Office. Chief Lucas noted that non-natives may also be subject to Federal Law Violations, which are initially investigated by the tribal police and then referred to federal authorities for prosecution.

Conversely, natives are generally charged under the Duckwater Shoshone Tribal Law & Order Code, with prosecution carried out by either the Duckwater Tribal Police Department or the Tribal Prosecutor. Similar to non-natives, natives may also face Federal Law Violations, which undergo a process involving various federal agencies.



Chief Lucas highlighted the department's successful prosecutions since he assumed his role, citing instances of non-native individuals being prosecuted for offenses ranging from harassment to possession of firearms by prohibited persons. Cases involving natives, on the other hand, are addressed within the tribal court system.

Expressing gratitude, Chief Lucas credited the support of the Duckwater Tribal Council, Tribal Management, tribal members, and the community at large for their unwavering backing of the police department. He reiterated the department's commitment to maintaining Nevada State POST Certification and staying updated with advanced training, ensuring the highest level of service to the community and the safety of all residents. The Police Department remains dedicated to holding individuals accountable for their actions, irrespective of their background, and serving the community to the best of its abilities.



NAGPRA Empowers Duckwater Tribes Efforts to Repatriate Ancestors and Artifacts

In a groundbreaking initiative, the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe in Nevada is actively engaging with the revised Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), ensuring the return of their ancestors and sacred artifacts. The revised regulations, implemented nationwide, streamline processes for museums and federal agencies to inventory and identify Native American human remains and cultural items, facilitating their return to lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs).

Warren Graham, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) for the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, emphasizes the significance of returning ancestors to their final resting places. "We did not remove them; they were taken from their resting place, and they need to be placed back to their final resting place," he stated. Graham also highlighted the spiritual importance, stating, "It is our beliefs that when our ancestors were taken away, there is an unrest of their spirit until they are returned."

The Duckwater Shoshone Tribe's THPO department has been collaborating with local, county, state, and federal organizations, as well as universities, to ensure the successful repatriation of their ancestors. They have actively participated in the efforts led by the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), successfully repatriating and reburied an ancestor and their funerary objects from UNR.

Graham noted that the tribe is dedicated to assisting with repatriation efforts, providing guidance, advice, and identifying artifacts that need to be returned for reburial. The meticulous efforts of both UNR and UNLV in tracking down records, funerary items, and artifacts are contributing to the success of the initiative.



Duckwater THPO W. Graham stands in a room full of Native American artifacts at University of Nevada Reno

The THPO is also collaborating with the Great Basin National Park to repatriate at least 16 ancestors' remains that were taken out of their area in the past. The sensitive location remains undisclosed for protection reasons. The Duckwater Shoshone Tribe has previously participated in several repatriations alongside sister tribes in the area.

Rochanne L. Downs, the NAGPRA Liaison and Project Manager for the Office of Indigenous Relations at the University of Nevada, Reno, emphasized the importance of tribal involvement. "Remains need to be returned to all the tribes, so it is important that tribes get involved so that the ancestors and sacred items are returned to their resting places," she said. Downs highlighted the need for a cultural dialogue in an academic setting, fostering cultural awareness, and providing educational opportunities for Native students.

Tammi Tiger, Commissioner, and Stacey Montooth, Executive Director, with the Nevada Indian Commission, have played pivotal roles in facilitating the ongoing efforts and establishing connections with various tribes involved in the repatriation initiatives. The collaborative efforts reflect a commitment to cultural sensitivity and the preservation of Native American heritage.





Tribe Enhances Essential Housing Infrastructure with American Rescue Plan Act Grant

In a significant stride toward community development, Janey Brayn, the Community Services Division Manager of the Duckwater Tribe, successfully secured an Indian Community Development Block Grant from the American Rescue Plan Act in August 2021. The grant, totaling \$1,035,000.00, aimed at addressing the pressing housing needs of essential tribal employees amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following months of planning and coordination, the grant was awarded in December 2021, marking a crucial milestone for the Duckwater Tribe. The proposed initiative involved the construction of three new modular housing units, designed to accommodate essential tribal employees during the ongoing pandemic.

To date, two of these housing units have been successfully constructed at 200 Newe Street in Duckwater. Each unit boasts a comfortable 2-bedroom, 2-bath layout with dimensions of 23' x 48'. The units were strategically set on a stem wall foundation, showcasing a commitment to robust and resilient construction practices. While the physical structures have been erected, the final steps of water, sewer, and electricity installations are currently pending.

The community eagerly anticipates the completion of the third unit, the size of which is yet to be determined. This expansion aligns with the tribe's commitment to supporting its essential workers and fostering a sense of community resilience during these challenging times.

In addition to these immediate housing initiatives, the Duckwater Tribe is also laying the groundwork for future housing developments. The west side of the reservation, earmarked for land expansion, has been identified as a potential area for growth. However, the tribe recognizes the importance of thorough research to ensure that any new development remains resilient to the threats of flooding and erosion in the region.

The northeast area of the reservation is also under consideration for future projects, despite the presence of existing homes. Addressing water quality concerns, existing homes west and northeast of the reservation rely on individual ground wells, and exploring new, reliable water sources is a priority for upcoming developments.

Furthermore, the tribe acknowledges the paramount importance of infrastructure development, including utilities and roads, to support these ambitious housing projects. A comprehensive approach to planning will ensure that the tribe's vision for a sustainable and thriving community is realized without compromising on essential services.

Janey Brayn's successful grant application and subsequent housing projects underscore the Duckwater Tribe's commitment to the well-being and future prosperity of its community members. As these initiatives take shape, they serve as a beacon of hope and progress in the challenging landscape shaped by the ongoing pandemic. The Duckwater Tribe continues to exemplify resilience, foresight, and a steadfast dedication to community development.





Duckwater Tribal Historic Preservation Program Revives Shoshone Language Through Weekly Classes



In a bid to preserve and revitalize the rich linguistic heritage of the Duckwater Shoshone community, the Duckwater Tribal Historic Preservation Program (THPO) is proudly sponsoring weekly Shoshone language classes. The classes, led by experienced instructors Adeline Mike and Kathy Adams-Blackeye, aim to expand the number of Shoshone language speakers and introduce first-time learners to the basics of our Shoshone language.

The classes are offered both in-person and virtually every Sunday at 2 pm, providing flexibility for participants. The program's overarching goal is to immerse students in the linguistic, cultural, and historical aspects of the Shoshone people, incorporating traditions, stories, songs, and site visits into the curriculum.

Adeline Mike and Kathy Adams-Blackeye report that the classes have been well-received, with 10-17 students participating in both virtual and in-person sessions. Notably, the inclusion of two elders with a keen interest in speaking the language has proven invaluable. Their presence allows students to experience the nuances of different dialects within the community, contributing to a more authentic learning experience.

The lessons cover a range of topics, including sentence building with practical examples such as body parts, greetings, and self-introduction. Students are also guided through Shoshone traditions, encompassing aspects of food, plants, medicine, gathering, preparation, and use. The holistic approach ensures that learners not only acquire language skills but also gain insights into the cultural practices and heritage of the Shoshone people.

The inclusive and welcoming atmosphere of the classes is further enhanced by prayers and blessings, fostering a sense of community and connection among participants. As the program progresses, the Duckwater THPO Warren Graham is optimistic about the continued success of the Shoshone language classes, contributing to the preservation and celebration of the Duckwater Shoshone cultural identity.

 Find us on 
www.facebook.com/DuckwaterTribe

Important Upcoming Dates

Mon. Feb. 19th
Presidents Day-Tribal Offices Closed

Mon. Feb 26th
Council Meeting at 1pm

Wed. April 17th
Quarterly Community Meeting at 4pm

Presented By: Duckwater THPO Program

**BIIYA' BAA NIWINE
SHOSHONE LANGUAGE
CLASS**

 <https://www.facebook.com/DuckwaterTribe>

 Duckwater Shoshone Tribe

Virtual link will be posted on the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe's Facebook Page the day of class.

**When: Sunday's
Time: 2pm
Location: Health Dept.**

NEWS

Have news or a story you want shared?

CONTACT US

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