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# INVESTING IN AMERICA

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## President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is Delivering for Indian Country

As of March 2024

The Biden-Harris Administration has hit the ground running to implement the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and it is already delivering results for Indian Country. To date, more than \$13.7 billion in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding has been announced and is headed to Tribal communities. Tribes have received more than \$929.8 million for broadband to invest in high-speed internet, \$6.8 billion for transportation including roads, bridges, and public transit, and over \$4 billion for clean water and sanitation improvements. Many more projects will be added in the coming months, as more funding opportunities become grant awards, and as the formula funds allocated to Tribes turn into specific projects. The law provides more than \$13 billion in dedicated funding to directly support Tribal communities and makes Tribes eligible to apply for or request billions more in discretionary, formula, and other types of awards. By the time implementation is complete, the law will have made the largest single investment in Tribal infrastructure ever in United States history.

**Roads and Bridges:** For too long, the Federal government has underinvested in the estimated 145,000 miles of roads passing through Tribal lands. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law seeks to rectify these historical wrongs and rebuild our roads and bridges. It includes the single largest dedicated bridge investment since the construction of the interstate highway system. Based on formula funding alone, Tribes are expected to receive nearly \$4 billion over five years in federal funding for highways and bridges.

- **Announced funding to date:** Over \$1 billion in funding to date under the Tribal Transportation Program has been allocated to Tribes.

**Internet:** High-speed internet is necessary for everyone to do their jobs, participate in school, access health care, and stay connected. Yet over one-third of Indian Country lacks broadband infrastructure that delivers even minimally sufficient speeds. The

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests \$65 billion to provide affordable, high-speed internet to every American, including \$2 billion for the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program at the Department of Commerce to bring high-speed internet coverage to more Tribal communities. Additionally, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's Affordable Connectivity Program cuts internet bills by up to \$75 per month for households on Tribal lands (and \$30 per month for other households) and provides a one-time \$100 discount off a connected device like a laptop. The Biden-Harris Administration is providing further cost savings by working with internet providers to offer high-speed internet plans that are fully covered by the Affordable Connectivity Program — meaning most eligible households can now get high-speed internet without paying a dime.

- **Announced funding to date:** To date, Tribal communities have received \$929.8 million for high-speed internet. Over 329,000 households on Tribal lands are enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program, with more signing up every day. Households can check their eligibility, sign up, and find fully covered internet plans at [GetInternet.gov](https://www.getinternet.gov). In addition, nearly \$886.2 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds have been made available through the Tribal Broadband Connectivity program for 226 Tribal entities to expand high-speed Internet network deployment on Tribal lands.

**Water:** Currently, up to 10 million American households across the country connect to water through lead pipes and lack access to clean, safe drinking water. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law represents the largest investment in clean drinking water in American history, including the first-ever dedicated federal funding to replace lead service lines and address dangerous PFAS chemicals.

- **Announced funding to date:** To date, over \$4 billion in funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has been announced to Tribes for clean water and sanitation projects. This includes \$1.7 billion set aside to provide clean water and sanitation to Indian Country. Of this funding, \$120 million is dedicated to lead service line replacement, and \$168 million for safe drinking water investments that can also support lead pipe replacement. In addition, nearly \$2.4 billion has been announced for Indian Water Rights settlements already – over 90% of the funding set aside in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for this purpose.

**Public Transit:** The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law makes the largest investment in public transit in U.S. history. Based on funding from the Tribal Transit Program alone, Tribes are expected to receive more than \$183 million over five years under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to improve public transit across Indian Country.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Transit formula funding amounts are subject to changes resulting from the 2020 census or from annual transit service data reported to FTA's National Transit Database.

- **Announced funding to date:** To date, Indian Country has been allocated more than \$87.2 million to improve public transportation options, and several Tribes have been awarded Low or No Emission Bus Grants to help them purchase or lease zero or low-emission transit buses. Tribal-run schools and schools adjacent to Tribal lands also benefited from the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean School Bus program awards. In September, the Department of Transportation also announced \$9.9 million in discretionary grant funding through the Tribal Transit Program. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law increased competitive funding for the Tribal Transit Program by nearly 83% per year for five years.

**Resilience:** Millions of Americans feel the effects of climate change and extreme weather every day. More frequent hurricanes, wildfires, heat waves, floods, unprecedented power outages, and persistent droughts devastate our communities and threaten our infrastructure. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law makes a historic investment to bolster the resilience of Tribal communities against pressing challenges like impacts of climate change, extreme weather events, and other hazards like cyberattacks.

- **Announced funding to date:** Over \$134.5 million has been allocated to projects in Indian Country for infrastructure resilience through the Irrigation, Power, and Safety of Dams programs in 2022. The Department of the Interior also announced over \$111 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and annual appropriations funding for Tribal Climate Resilience projects. These 49 awards will support 76 Tribes and 8 Tribal organizations, including helping communities begin the process of community relocation, managed retreat, or protect-in-place actions.

**Legacy Pollution Cleanup:** Across the country, thousands of former industrial, chemical, and energy sites emit harmful pollutants into surrounding communities. These sites pose harms to health, welfare, and economic prosperity — and disproportionately impact communities of color. Tribal nations occupy and govern homelands adjacent to and affected by many of these sites. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will deliver the largest investment in tackling legacy pollution in American history by cleaning up Superfund and brownfield sites, reclaiming abandoned mines, and capping orphaned oil and gas wells. Tribes will receive set aside funding through the \$150 million Tribal Orphaned Wells Program. Tribal communities with dangerous environmental hazards and pollution caused by past coal mining are also eligible to receive funding under the Department of the Interior's Abandoned Mine Lands program.

For more information, click [here](#) to see a map of funding and announced projects in your community through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

## Indian Country Project Spotlights

### ***RAISE Grant Program Project Spotlight***

#### **Big Quilcene River Bridge Replacement Project**

The Department of Transportation awarded Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe with approximately \$25 million to replace the Big Quilcene River bridge on Linger Longer Road. The new bridge will have pedestrian infrastructure and will also replace flood-prone segments of Linger Longer Road. The project protects non-motorized travelers and communities from safety risks by building a new bridge replacing an obsolete bridge and a regularly severely flood prone road that connects several communities. The project builds a new bridge that will span the floodplains, eliminating the river’s failing levee system, and replacing it with a natural river channel.

See [here for a full list of RAISE projects.](#)

### ***Rural Water Project Spotlight***

#### **Eastern New Mexico Rural Water System**

The Department of Interior’s Bureau of Reclamation invested \$229 million for the Eastern New Mexico Rural Water System. This project will build more than 130 miles of water pipeline and treatment facilities to transport a critical water supply from Ute Reservoir to approximately 70,000 people in the region who are currently impacted by a rapidly declining aquifer. This funding will accelerate progress on the project, and construction is already underway.

See [here for more information on Rural Water projects funded by the Bureau of Reclamation.](#)

### ***Climate Change Relocation Project Spotlight***

#### **Quinault Indian Nation Community**

The Quinault Indian Nation will receive \$25 million from the Department of the Interior’s Voluntary Community-Driven Relocation program. The Quinault Indian Nation, which seeks to relocate its Taholah Village, is vulnerable to storm surges, river flooding and sea level rise. This grant will support the community’s voluntary move to a higher elevation area identified by the tribe.

See [here to learn more about the Voluntary Community-Driven Relocation.](#)

### ***Clean Water Project Spotlight***

#### **Rocky Boy’s Reservation / North Central Montana Rural Water System**

The Department of the Interior awarded \$146 million to build drinking water infrastructure that will ensure a reliable water supply for rural north-central Montana. This project will build

over 750 miles of pipeline and storage facilities to deliver reliable, clean water from the Tiber Reservoir to over 10,000 households and a total estimated population of 28,000 residents. When completed, the water system will serve the Chippewa-Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation as well as six adjacent counties in north-central Montana who lack access to reliable drinking water.

See [here to learn more about the Department of the Interior's BIL-funded Rural Water Projects.](#)

***Broadband Project Spotlight***  
**Doyon Region Connectivity Program**

The U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced that it awarded nearly \$51 million to the Doyon, Limited and Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission in Alaska. These grants will fund high-speed internet connections for 581 currently unserved Alaska Native households across villages in the Doyon region of Alaska – and enable high-speed internet for eight Tribal governments in the Ahtna region. Internet activities will help Tribes provide telehealth, distance learning, telework, and workforce development for community members in this area.

See [here for more information on Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program.](#)

***Transportation Infrastructure Project Spotlight***  
**Northern Cheyenne Rosebud Cut-Across US 212 to MT 39 – RAISE Program**

The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded \$15.8 million to the Northern Cheyenne Tribe in Montana through the Rebuilding America Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program. The funding supports the reconstruction of approximately 3.1 miles of existing gravel road on the Rosebud Cut-Across to include a two-lane paved route with two-foot shoulders, geometric improvements, safety enhancements, improved signage, and a separated multimodal pedestrian and bicycle pathway. The project will improve safe transportation infrastructure for travelers between the communities on the Reservation and provide better access for emergency response vehicles.

See [here to learn more about the RAISE Program.](#)

***Water Rights Settlement Spotlight***  
**Gila River Indian Community**

Governor Stephen Roe Lewis of the Gila River Indian Community signed an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation to ensure \$72 million in new federal funding would go to accelerate the construction of the Community's irrigation project. This award was a part of its existing water rights settlement. The Community also received \$83 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for a water pipeline project that will reuse 20,000 acre-feet of

water each year, helping shore up elevation levels at Lake Meade and helping alleviate the drought crisis along the Colorado River.

See [here for the FY22 and FY23 Allocation of Funding for Indian Water Rights settlements.](#)

### ***Resilience Project Spotlights***

#### **Port Gamble S'klallam Tribe Relocation of High-Risk Shoreline Residents**

This project will relocate families to newly constructed homes on other reservation lots away from the eroding shoreline. The shoreline area where their homes currently sit consist of predominantly bluff-backed beaches, where landslides have occurred due to coastal erosion and place these homes at risk.

See [here for more awards under the Tribal Climate Resilience program.](#)

### ***Brownfields Cleanup Project Spotlight***

#### **Navajo Nation**

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded \$2 million to the Navajo Nation for a Brownfields Community-wide Assessment Grant. Grant funds will be used to conduct 25 Phase I and 16 Phase II environmental site assessments. Funds will also be used to prepare six cleanup plans and to update and maintain a brownfield site inventory. The target area for this grant is the Navajo Nation including Tribal trust lands in New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah. Priority sites include a former sawmill, a former particle board factory, and a former munitions box manufacturing facility. The funding will help accelerate clean-up efforts of contaminated sites, spur economic redevelopment, and build safer, more resilient communities for the next generation. The funding will help stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfield sites.

EPA awarded an additional \$2 million to the Navajo Nation for a Brownfields Cleanup Grant. The funds will be used to clean up the Hexavalent Chromium Source Area at the Navajo Forest Products Industries site. The 103-acre site is a former lumber product manufacturing facility that is now contaminated with hazardous substances including hexavalent chromium, semi volatile organic compounds, and metals. Grant funding will also be used to develop one reuse plan, one market analysis, and will support community outreach activities.

See [here for a list Multipurpose, Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup \(MARC\) Grant projects.](#)