

Queets Community Center gets Solar Panels; First on the QIN

By Kelsey Moldenke – QIN Senior Planner

QIN has its first solar panels! Thanks to Twende Solar, the Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF), volunteer installers and electricians and Quinault volunteers looking to learn solar installation skills, there is a 22.5 kW solar array on the Queets Community Center. The installation took place from February 25th to the 28th. The solar panels, conduit, wiring, and Tesla Powerwall batteries were all donated, as was all the labor. Over the past year the Community Development Department worked with Twende and BEF to organize the install, job training, and obtain necessary permits.

The system will send energy back to the grid, which should save QIN approximately \$2,000 a year on its electric bill. In the case of a power outage, the system will automatically switch off from supplying the grid and the batteries will power the refrigerator, some lights, electrical outlets, and the internet router in the building, so that Queets residents will have access to electricity in the building in case of prolonged outages.

Each QIN volunteer received a Washington electrical trainee license before the install and COVID-19 protocols were followed. There will be workforce development training led by Solar Energy International and Remote Energy. The training will happen online in the coming months be-



Keenan Kalama prepares a panel for installation. Photo from Twende Solar



Electricians readying the inverters. Photo by Kelsey Moldenke

cause of COVID-19 and will hopefully set up QIN volunteers with skills and knowledge that will put them on the path towards earning their NABCEP certifications.

Thank you to Sue Kalama and Evelyne Kalama for helping coordinate the volunteers and making the install go smoothly! Thank you to the volunteers from Elemental Energy, True South Solar, A&R



Full installed system on the Queets Community Center roof. Photo by Kelsey Moldenke



Volunteer installers show Quinault volunteers how to install the panels and conduit. Photo from Twende Solar



Sue Kalama works with volunteer installers to prepare panels for installation. Photo by Kelsey Moldenke

Solar, and South Sound Solar who led the solar panel installation and electrical modifications and worked with the Quinault volunteers. Travel bag manufacturer

Tom Bihn helped sponsor the project and donated backpacks to the volunteers. The volunteers included: Keenan Kalama, Sue Kalama, Pete Wahwassuck. Anthony

Ramirez, Leonard Obi, Kenneth Sellers, Jon Pink, Amelia DeLaCruz, and Ole Obi.

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574 tribal nations and more than 5.2 million American Indian and Alaska Native people.

“The impact of Native American representation at the top of a federal agency that so directly affects our daily lives cannot be overstated, and we congratulate Secretary Haaland on this historic achievement,” said NCAI President Fawn Sharp. “The relationship between Tribal Nations and the federal government has been fractured for far too long. Having an ally like Secretary Haaland who is not only deeply qualified but is from our communities has the potential to transform the government-to-government relationship and will be vital in advancing Native American issues for generations. We are grateful to President Biden for her nomination to the post, to the Senate for their support, and to everyone in Indian Country who supported Secretary Haaland in this historic journey. Most importantly, we are grateful for Secretary Haaland’s history-making commitment to serve and look forward to working with her in her new role.”

Four months ago, NCAI membership adopted resolution PDX-20-059, calling for the appointment of a Native American Secretary of the Interior. It read in part, “American Indians and Alaska Natives have served the United States with honor in the military, in Congress and federal agencies for more than a century, and have made great contributions to the advancement of American Democracy...” Even though American Indian and Alaska Native people are equally qualified as their non-Native counterparts to hold Cabinet positions, this is the first time Native Americans are seeing themselves represented in an office that touches so many facets of their day-to-day lives.

It is with great pride, hope, and optimism that NCAI welcomes Secretary Haaland to her new post.

Takes oath of office

From Native News Online staff

Madam Secretary Deb Haaland took the oath of office to become the 54th Secretary of the Department of the Interior Tuesday night, March 16th, in a small ceremony with family, according to department spokesperson Tyler Cherry. The oath was administered by Chief of Staff Jennifer Van der Heide.

March 17th marked her initial day serving as the first Native American to head a federal department.

“Growing up, Native women rarely held federal lead positions and now, little girls everywhere will know that they can run for Congress and win, and that this country holds promise for everyone,” she said in her address. “In fact, it’s the unique experience and struggles that make good leaders, and why I became an organizer in the first place.”

Haaland said the fact that she survived on food stamps, has overcome addiction, and has lived experience as an Indigenous woman makes her qualified to advocate for struggling families, and hold the United States government responsible to its trust responsibilities.

“At my confirmation hearing, I said that we all have a stake in the future of our country,” she said. “No matter your political party or Zip code, your ancestral heritage or income level, we all must take the formidable challenges that lie ahead seriously, and we will take them head-on, together.”

A ceremonial swear-in was administered by Vice President Kamala Harris on March 18th (photo on the front page).



LAKE QUINAULT MANAGEMENT PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Quinault Indian Nation is developing a comprehensive Lake Quinault Management Plan to set long-term strategies to protect and restore the health of Lake Quinault for the benefit of the entire lake community.

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(You may just click on the above link in the online version of the Nugquam)

Olympic Mountains’ 2021 snowpack well-fed

Snowpack in the Olympic Mountains and the rest of the state flourished amid a La Nina pattern in February, a water supply expert said.

As mid-March, snowpack in the Olympics stood at 164% of normal. Much of the central Cascades were at 145% of normal, and the eastern slopes of the Cascades were at 123% of normal, according to the Natural Resources Conservation

Service, which tracks snowpack under the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The Pacific Northwest is in a La Nina year. La Ninas are associated with colder-than-normal water temperatures in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean and typically bring cool and wet weather to the region.

Snowpack on April 1 is a benchmark used to make predictions about water supplies

because it is the historical peak of the snow season in the Olympics and Cascades.

Cliff Mass, University of Washington atmospheric sciences professor and Pacific Northwest weather said an above-normal April 1 snowpack was “pretty much guaranteed” given the current snowpack and extended forecast.