



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Northern New Mexico College Partners with Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, Guzman Energy to Build Solar Array in El Rito

Española, NM — Northern New Mexico College (Northern) has partnered with Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC) and Guzman Energy to construct a solar array on Northern's El Rito Campus. This array helps to move not only the college, but also the entire KCEC membership and communities west of the Rio Grande served by KCEC toward achieving 100% daytime solar power.

A groundbreaking ceremony will take place on Friday, September 13 beginning at 10 a.m. on Northern's El Rito Campus, located at 1190 NM-554.

"El Rito is a key part of Northern's history," Northern New Mexico College President Rick Bailey said. "Now we can ensure that El Rito will be part of our future, and the future of green energy in New Mexico." Bailey said he intends for both the El Rito and Española campuses to run fully on renewable energy within the next 10 years.

Local interest in, demand for and support of renewable energy has led to the development of these arrays, as the communities served by KCEC have already seen a significant impact through the development of additional renewable sources.

The 1.5 MW solar array will consist of 6,000 panels and power not only the campus, but approximately 850 homes and businesses. Each MW of power keeps about \$1.1 million in the community through local construction labor, taxes and commerce.

The El Rito array is one of three arrays KCEC is constructing in partnership with Guzman Energy, including one in Sunshine, NM and one at the Taos Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant. The arrays are part of the co-op's ongoing efforts to achieve 100 percent daytime solar energy by 2020 and an eventual complete transition to carbon-free electric sources.

"We greatly value our community partners and the commitment they are making to renewable energy in New Mexico," said Luis Reyes, CEO of Kit Carson Electric Cooperative. "This solar array at El Rito is an important step in our energy transition efforts."

Northern's El Rito Campus began as the Spanish American Normal School, founded in 1909 to train teachers to educate the region's rural and Spanish-speaking population. The Normal School graduated its final class in 1969 and the El Rito site evolved as a campus of Northern New Mexico College. Over the last 50 years, various community and education programs have been offered at the campus. A mill levy initiative this November, if passed, would allow trades programs,

including plumbing and pipefitting to return to Northern's El Rito campus.

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About Northern New Mexico College

Northern New Mexico College has served the communities of northern New Mexico for over a century. Since we opened our doors in 1909 as The Spanish American Normal School in El Rito, the institution has strived to provide education programs that meet the changing economic and cultural needs of the region. In 2005, in response to community demands for higher education that meets the requirements of the modern age, the College began offering four-year degrees.

In just 14 short years, Northern has developed an academic infrastructure offering over 40 bachelor's, associate and certificate programs, in addition to community and continuing education programs. Northern New Mexico College is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and has earned prestigious national accreditations for its Engineering, Nursing, Education and Business programs. To learn more about Northern, visit www.nnmc.edu

About Kit Carson Electric Cooperative

Formed in 1944, Kit Carson is a member-owned electric distribution cooperative in northern New Mexico and is the second-largest cooperative in the state. Kit Carson is one of 16 distributes electric cooperatives that serve rural New Mexico communities, serving nearly 30,000 members in Taos, parts of Colfax, and Rio Arriba counties. To learn more about Kit Carson, visit www.kitcarson.com.

About Guzman Energy

Guzman Energy is a full-service wholesale power provider focused on providing market-based solutions to address our customers' energy challenges by delivering reliable, clean and affordable power. We work closely with communities to identify their initial and ongoing energy goals and customize solutions based on increased economic competitiveness and sustainability. Our platform is leading a transformation from the legacy energy economy to the renewable and distributed age. To learn more, visit www.guzmanenergy.com