



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 10, 2025

Contact: Michael Santistevan

msantistevan@kitcarson.com

Kit Carson Electric Cooperative Expands Wildfire Mitigation Methods with Addition of Electric Microgrids in Northern New Mexico

KCEC Board of Trustees awards \$23 million contract to PowerSecure and the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative for microgrid and battery energy storage systems facilities to keep electricity available during extreme weather events

Taos, New Mexico – Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC) announced today plans to expand its readiness plan to mitigate community impact of catastrophic events with the addition of three new microgrid local electrical power resources. The new microgrid and battery energy storage systems (BESS) facilities will be built as part of a \$23 million contract the Cooperative’s Board of Trustees recently approved and awarded to PowerSecure and the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC) as part of the U.S. Department of Energy’s Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnership (GRIP) program. The \$23 million contract funding is based on \$15.4 million in [previously announced](#) DOE Federal funding and \$7.7 million in KCEC cost sharing as part of a broad effort to enhance U.S. power grid resiliency.

The newly contracted KCEC project will add additional resiliency for KCEC to meet the electricity needs of its service area during severe events. Should extreme events impact parts of the power distribution system, local microgrids can effectively be “turned on” to serve critical loads for up to 5.5 hours.

Given the rural and geographically diverse nature of KCEC’s Northern New Mexico service territory, its communities are particularly vulnerable to power outages caused by threats such as wildfires, extreme drought conditions, and weather events. As part of the Cooperative’s readiness plan to mitigate community impact of catastrophic events, KCEC will deploy additional battery storage and microgrid infrastructure that can cover 100% of those communities’ electricity needs for up to 5.5 hours and longer with new infrastructure. The three locations receiving new microgrid facilities are:

- Taos Ski Valley BESS Facility: 3.75 MW / 18 MWh
- El Rito West BESS Facility: 1.25 MW / 6.75 MWh
- Penasco BESS Facility: 2.5 MW / 13.5MWh

"The lack of precipitation and unforeseen extreme weather events in our service area leave our members vulnerable to serious wildfire threats. We want to assure our members that we have been working on these microgrid projects and conducting year-round maintenance to provide the essential electric and broadband services," states Luis A. Reyes, CEO of KCEC. "Should we face broad power grid outages caused by extreme events, we will be able to tap into these new microgrid locally stored power resources to serve our community in times of need."

Construction of the project is expected to begin in the first quarter of 2025 and be completed in 2026. The initial phase, which includes installing BESS at Taos Ski Valley, is anticipated to be finished in 2025. This latest KCEC GRIP project will expand its renewable energy portfolio by adding 7.5 MW of BESS (38.25 MWh).

The KCEC microgrid and BESS project will also enable KCEC to perform public safety power shutoffs while maintaining critical local power loads and services. KCEC partners with Guzman Energy, which provides wholesale power and energy management services focusing on resilient, locally distributed power and storage.

KCEC currently has approximately 42 MW of distributed solar energy and 16.25 MW of BESS. The cooperative is planning additional solar and battery infrastructure projects to expand its capacity to over 50 MW of distributed solar and 32.5 MW (equivalent to 105.75 MWh) of BESS. These projects are expected to be completed by 2025 and 2026.

##

About Kit Carson Electric Cooperative

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

About NRTC

NRTC is member-driven and technology-focused. NRTC provides solutions that help our 1,500 electric and telephone members bring all the advantages of today's evolving technology to rural America. NRTC's Broadband, Smart Grid, Managed Services and Mobile solutions are developed specifically to meet the needs of rural utilities, their communities and their customers. We help our members evaluate, build, operate and maximize their critical network infrastructure. www.nrtc.coop

About Power Secure

PowerSecure, a Southern Company subsidiary, is the nation's leading distributed energy infrastructure company. Our team of experts has developed, installed, managed and serviced 2+ GW of microgrid capacity over the past 20 years, as well as implemented over \$900 million of energy efficiency upgrades. We take a full-facility, lifecycle approach through production and management, delivering clean and resilient energy to our customers at the best possible value. By combining our product innovation capabilities with our 360 integrated processes, we offer you the best custom solution for your needs, backed by an unmatched level of expertise, quality and service. See more at www.powersecure.com

About Guzman Energy

Guzman Energy is a wholesale power provider dedicated to communities in search of affordable and reliable energy. We partner with cooperatives, municipalities, companies, and tribes across North America to customize energy portfolios that make economic and environmental sense for today and tomorrow. Visit www.guzmanenergy.com.