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### **Pyramid Lake Tribe Taps Sun Power**

Nixon, Nev. -- Solar energy is generating much of the electricity for the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe's high school, medical clinic and museum thanks to a rebate program, a generous nonprofit organization and the Tribe's commitment to renewable energy.

On July 22, the Tribe will celebrate the recent completion of seven photovoltaic solar arrays in Nixon, the small community northeast of Reno located near Pyramid Lake. The arrays are capable of generating up to 487,800 kilowatt hours of electricity per year and will reduce the Tribe's annual electric bill by approximately \$72,800. At the dedication event, the Tribe will receive a \$1,355,000 rebate from NV Energy's SolarGenerations program to offset costs for 271 kilowatts of solar energy installed by Black Rock Solar, a nonprofit working to help spread the adoption of renewable energy.

"The cost savings from these projects will definitely increase our ability to provide more services in other areas – language programs, our museum, parks and recreation and elder services. Those are areas we can focus on," said Pyramid Lake Tribal Council Chairman Mervin Wright.

On a sunny day, much of the electricity for the Pyramid Lake High School, Tribal Health Clinic, Police Station, Museum and Visitor Center, and Tribal Headquarters will be generated by the solar arrays, Wright added.

"We continue to be impressed by the efforts of Black Rock Solar to bring renewable energy to organizations, such as the Pyramid Lake Tribe, that otherwise couldn't afford it," said Mary Simmons, vice president of external affairs for NV Energy. "The SolarGenerations program is the result of the long standing commitment by the Nevada Legislature and state utility regulators to make Nevada a leader in renewable energy."

"As part of these projects, we've also been training tribal members to work in this growing industry. We believe that a renewable energy economy can benefit all aspects of society, even small rural communities like Nixon," added Tom Price, Executive Director of Black Rock Solar. "And the money they save can help support community programs in these trying economic times."

A total of 1737 solar panels were installed at Nixon by Black Rock Solar during the past few months. The panels were attached to steel racks that are anchored to the ground. At the suggestion of Wacan Waci Blindman, a tribal member who has become a licensed solar installer through working with Black Rock Solar, the 18.8-kilowatt solar array at the museum was configured in the shape of an arrowhead.

Simmons said the environmentally friendly projects will produce enough electricity to power to 48 households, and that they will reduce the Pyramid Tribe's carbon emissions by 324 tons annually.

"Our Tribe is concerned about the environment," said Ben Aleck, collections manager for the museum. "Traditional people's concept is to live in balance with our environment, Mother Earth. Solar energy fits into our way of looking at the world."



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Three arrays capable of generating 195 kilowatts of electricity were installed at the high school and a 30-kilowatt array was installed at the clinic adjacent to a 30-kilowatt array installed by Black Rock Solar in 2009. In addition, Black Rock Solar installed a 60-kilowatt solar array at Natchez Elementary School in Wadsworth, also in the Pyramid Lake reservation, in 2008.

During the dedication event on the 22nd, community members and guests will enjoy a BBQ dinner hosted by Black Rock Solar and have the opportunity to learn about solar power and energy efficiency improvements for their homes.

NV Energy, Inc. is a holding company with principal subsidiaries, Nevada Power Company and Sierra Pacific Power Company, doing business as NV Energy. Serving a combined 54,500-square-mile service territory, NV Energy provides a wide range of energy services and products to approximately 2.4 million citizens of Nevada and nearly 40 million tourists annually. For more information, visit [www.nvenergy.com](http://www.nvenergy.com).

#### **About Black Rock Solar**

Black Rock Solar is a non-profit project focused on addressing climate change and speeding the adoption curve of renewable energy. By installing renewable energy at low or no cost, Black Rock Solar puts much needed funds in the hands of communities typically not served by the renewable energy industry, who then get to decide how to best meet their own needs. Along the way, Black Rock Solar creates educational opportunities for volunteers and beneficiaries, and sponsor training to broaden the solar power industry. For more information visit [www.blackrocksolar.org](http://www.blackrocksolar.org).

#### **About Pyramid Lake and its People**

Pyramid Lake is located about 35 miles Northeast of Reno, Nevada and is the property of and managed by the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe. Pyramid Lake is known as being North America's most beautiful desert lake and home to many year round recreational opportunities. The lake occupies 112,000 surface acres inside the reservation boundary and has a shoreline of approximately 125 miles. The lake is fed primarily by the Truckee River and is famous as a fishery for the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout and Cui-ui, which are on the endangered species list. The Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation is comprised of 476,728 acres and is home to the Pyramid Lake National Scenic Byway. The roughly 2,400 Tribal members are direct descendants of the Northern Paiute people who have occupied the vast areas of the Great Basin for thousands of years. For more information about Pyramid Lake or its people please visit the Pyramid Lake Museum and Visitors Center in Nixon or log on to [www.pyramidlake.us](http://www.pyramidlake.us).

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