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Chemeheuvi Solar Microgrid Project Delivers Community Resiliency

90 kW carport system installed by GRID Alternatives in partnership with The Chemehuevi Tribe and the University of California Riverside will provide emergency power for community center

Havasu Lake, CA, December 4, 2017 — A pioneering solar microgrid installed on The Chemeheuvi Reservation in Lake Havasu, California is at the leading edge of the state's community resiliency efforts. The 90 kW carport system, the result of a partnership between The University of California, Riverside, The Chemeheuvi Tribe and GRID Alternatives with funding from the California Energy Commission, will provide a battery backed power source for the tribe's community center, saving lives during grid outages and lowering the tribe's energy costs.

High winds, bird strikes and the monsoon season all contribute to frequent power failures in this exposed region of the Mohave Desert. "On occasion, power will be out for up to three days, which is concerning especially for community members with medical conditions or tribal elders," explained Chemehuevi Vice-Chairman Glenn Lodge. Low-income and elderly residents come to the center, previously powered by a diesel generator, for a place to sleep and shower, power their medical devices, or just stay cool during summer blackouts.

"We expect a financial impact as well," said Vice Chairman Lodge. "Cost savings from reduced electricity usage will be applied to other housing and community projects that help members who need it most."

This project is part of a larger effort by the tribe to increase energy independence, lower costs, and improve quality of life for its residents. GRID has also installed over 80 residential systems on Chemehuevi homes to-date, and trained 20 members in solar installation.

The solar microgrid was installed by GRID Alternatives' Inland Empire staff and two tribal job trainees in September and October. It includes a carport PV structure with SunPower modules and smart inverters from EnSync Power Systems, operating with a Matrix system - an energy management platform that is a critical feature of the microgrid. A Primus Power flow battery energy storage system will be used that has advanced data analytics and smart energy management controls. Masters Electric of Riverside, CA contributed to the project as the electrical engineering firm. Engineers at UC Riverside's Center for Environmental Research and Technology will use their energy management control algorithms to implement optimal power management strategies.

The project, catalyzed by a state funding opportunity through the CEC, will serve as a model for other tribes and communities looking to improve their resiliency in the face of both ordinary outages and emergency situations like fires and natural disasters. The CEC, through its EPIC program is [committed to investing \\$44 million](#) in additional microgrid projects in 2018, with a focus on tribal and disadvantaged communities.

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About GRID Alternatives

GRID Alternatives is the nation's largest nonprofit solar installer, bringing clean energy technology and job training to underserved communities through a network of community partners and philanthropic supporters. GRID has installed over 9400 solar electric systems for low-income families and affordable housing providers with a combined installed capacity of 40MW, saving \$320 million in lifetime electricity costs, preventing 840,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions, and providing nearly 35,000 people with solar training. GRID has nine regional offices and affiliates serving California, Colorado, the Mid-Atlantic and Tribal communities nationwide, as well as an international program. For more information, visit www.gridalternatives.org.