



*Eastern Shoshone Business Council
P.O. Box 538
Fort Washakie, WY 82514
(307) 332-3532/4932
Fax: (307) 332-3055*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Federal COVID-19 Relief Assistance

May 19, 2020

Ft. Washakie, WY--The Eastern Shoshone Tribe recently received greatly needed federal funding under the CARES Act in order to aid our tribal community during this critical time. The Eastern Shoshone Tribe was awarded approximately \$10,239,280.00. Our Wyoming Congressional delegation and Governor Mark Gordon were instrumental in securing these desperately needed funds. We thank them for their continued support and assistance.

Our remotely located Wind River Reservation has left our community particularly vulnerable to this pandemic – both from a health and economic standpoint. We intend to utilize the federal funding that has been allocated to the Tribe in accordance with the specific restrictions and guidance that has been set forth by the United States Department of the Treasury in order to cover costs that:

1. Are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19;
2. Were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020; and
3. Were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020 and ends on December 30, 2020.

“The Shoshone Business Council is currently developing internal procedures that will allow the Tribe to appropriately and effectively utilize these federal relief dollars consistent with the statutory directives set forth by Congress in the CARES Act,” said Karen Snyder, Vice-Chairwoman of the SBC. “In conjunction with our Finance Department, we’re looking at ways to build our infrastructure, provide assistance for allowable expenses and maintain the current level of our per capita income so individual tribal members will not feel an immediate loss of income.”

The SBC declared a State of Emergency on March 12-- consequently closing the doors of most tribal departments and halting services to the community. All government and business establishments on the Reservation will remain temporarily closed until June 1, 2020.

Some programs such as Eastern Shoshone Tribal Health, Food Distribution and 477 Program are making every effort to continue to offer services on a limited basis. However, we are unable to serve our children through our Boys & Girls Club of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, Early Intervention Program; our seniors for congregate meals through the Warm Valley Senior Center and others through our Rocky Mountain Hall and fitness center-- The Zone. In addition, we are taking a tremendous hit with the temporary closure of the Shoshone Rose Casino & Hotel which has left many people unemployed.

“We remain hopeful that through these funds, our tribal government will be sustained and no further reduction of hours or layoffs will be necessary,” Snyder added. “Our primary goal is to protect our community and Tribal members.”

The SBC has taken the time and effort to carefully decide how to best allocate funding from the CARES Act towards our tribal operations in order to have the biggest impact on our tribal members. The Business Council is working diligently with local, state, and federal authorities for the benefit of our citizens. Our advocacy with our state and federal representatives has not stopped following receipt of these federal relief funds. We continue to remain actively engaged to ensure that the needs of our community are met and that the United States fulfills its trust obligations to the Eastern Shoshone Tribe.

###