

Tribal Energy Program

Funding & Training Opportunities and Tribal Energy News

July 6, 2012

The Tribal Energy Program is pleased to forward the following information on funding opportunities, renewable energy requests for proposals (RFPs), training opportunities, and tribal energy news.

Funding Opportunities

USDA Seeks Applications for Grants to Assist Rural Communities with Extremely High Energy Costs

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development is making available up to \$7 million in High Energy Cost Grants during fiscal year 2012 to assist communities where expenditures for home energy exceed 275 percent of the national average. The maximum amount of grant assistance that will be awarded under this notice is \$3 million.

Applicants must demonstrate that proposed communities meet one or more high energy cost benchmarks, such as average total household energy costs that exceed \$4,860 annually. Funds may be used to acquire, construct, extend, upgrade, or otherwise improve energy generation, transmission, or distribution facilities.

Extremely high energy costs in rural and remote communities typically result from a combination of factors, including high energy consumption, high per-unit energy costs, limited availability of energy sources, extreme climate conditions, and housing that is not energy efficient.

Eligible applicants include, states, local governments, businesses, federally recognized Indian Tribes and tribal entities, and other entities organized under state law.

Applications are due July 30.

For additional information, please see page 38570 of the June 28, 2012 [Federal Register](#), or visit the USDA Rural Utilities Service [website](#).

USDA Announces the Availability of Grants through the Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2012

Public bodies, nonprofit corporations, institutions of higher education, rural cooperatives, and Native American Tribes may apply for grants to support projects that will improve economic conditions in rural areas. RBOG is a highly competitive program that emphasizes sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs. It is estimated that USDA will only be able to accommodate approximately 24 grant requests nationwide, given the funding available.

Application Deadline: Applications must be received by **August 6, 2012** at the USDA Rural Development state office in order to be considered for funding.

Available Funding: Just over \$1.2 million is available nationwide for grant requests of \$50,000 or less. Applications will be evaluated through a competitive process based on specified program priorities. Another \$1.14 million is available for projects benefitting federally recognized Native American Tribes and communities in rural areas. Grant requests will be evaluated on a competitive basis. There is no grant size restriction on these funds.

Program Priorities and Eligibility: All applications will be evaluated for funding consideration based on program purposes and priorities. Only the highest-scoring applications will be funded. Please view the [Notice of Funding Availability \(NOFA\) in the Federal Register](#) for a complete listing of requirements, priorities, and restrictions. Please pay particular attention to the specific scoring criteria laid out in the NOFA. The specific nature of the scoring regime requires applicants to be complete in all responses.

The primary objective of the RBOG program is to improve the economic conditions of rural areas. Assistance provided to rural areas under this program includes:

- Rural business incubators
- Technology-based economic development
- Feasibility studies and business plans
- Long-term business strategic planning
- Leadership and entrepreneur training.

In addition, interested applicants are advised that:

- USDA encourages applications that will support [regional economic development](#)
- Public bodies, nonprofit corporations, institutions of higher education, Indian Tribes on federal or state reservations and other federally recognized Native American Tribes or tribal groups, and rural cooperatives may be eligible to apply
- Projects must benefit a rural area; thus, all ultimate recipients of services provided through the project must either reside in a rural area (if an individual) or be located in a rural area (if a business)
- Project funds cannot be used for construction, planning a facility, engineering work, or revolving loan funds.

More information and how to apply:

Read the the [Notice of Funding Availability](#) published in the *Federal Register* on June 7, 2012.

View grant and application information on the Grants.gov [website](#).

Find assistance and contact info on the USDA Rural Development [website](#).

Technical Assistance

DOE Tribal Energy Program Technical Assistance

Deadline: Ongoing

Free technical assistance is available to assist federally recognized Indian Tribes, bands, nations, and other organized groups and communities—including Alaska Native villages or regional and village corporations—with renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. Typically limited to 40 hours, technical assistance through the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Tribal Energy Program may include renewable energy technology information, renewable resource information, energy efficiency techniques, project support, system performance modeling, policy information, design review, special studies, strategic energy planning, and training. To request assistance, visit the Tribal Energy Program website and complete the [online request form](#).

Renewable Energy RFPs

The Tribal Energy Program provides the following information on solicitations for renewable energy generation, renewable energy certificates, and green power as a courtesy to our subscribers. Unless otherwise noted, these requests for proposals and solicitations are neither supported nor endorsed by the DOE [Green Power Network](#).

A complete list of active RFPs can found on the DOE Green Power Network's [Renewable Energy RFPs page](#).

Upcoming Webinars

Community Renewable Energy Success Stories: Landfill Gas-to-Energy Projects July 17, 2012, 3 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. Eastern Time

Presented by the Energy Department, this webcast will highlight both the challenges and benefits of developing successful community landfill gas-to-energy projects at the Prairie View Recycling and Disposal Facility in Will County, Illinois, and the Perdido Landfill Gas-to-Electricity Project in Escambia County, Florida. [Register here](#) to attend the webinar.

[Full story.](#)

Grid Reliability: Impacts to Tribal Renewable Projects July 25, 2012, 1 p.m. Eastern Time

This webinar is part of a series presented by the Energy Department's Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs, the Energy Department's Tribal Energy Program, the Environmental Protection Agency's Green Power Partnership Program, and Western Area Power Administration. The webinars promote tribal energy sufficiency and foster economic development and employment on tribal lands through the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. Tribes interested in responding to utility-offered renewable RFPs and/or learning more about the competitive power market, utility staff, and other stakeholders should attend. The webinar is free, but [registration](#) is required.

Office of Indian EnergySTART Program Status September 26, 2012, 1 p.m. Eastern Time

This webinar is part of a series provided by the Energy Department's Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs, the Energy Department's Tribal Energy Program, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Green Power Partnership Program, and Western Area Power Administration. The webinars promote tribal energy sufficiency and foster economic development and employment on tribal lands through the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. Tribes interested in responding to utility-offered renewable RFPs and/or interested in learning more about the competitive power market, utility staff, and other stakeholders should attend. The webinar is free, but [registration](#) is required.

Native Learning Center Offers FREE Courses and Training to Native Americans and Indigenous People

The Native Learning Center (NLC) offers FREE courses and training to Native Americans and indigenous people with an emphasis on the educational needs of tribal members and their communities. The NLC is a program of the Seminole Tribe of Florida and was established in partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 2008.

The NLC's learning opportunities and resources focus on areas that are critical to the growth and improved quality of life for Native communities. Focus areas include celebrating culture and language, financial

wellness, grant education, housing strategies, and tribal government.

Motivation and Team Building, July 11, 2012, 2 p.m. - 3 p.m. Eastern Time

Grants Education – Before You Seek a Grant, July 18, 2012, 2 p.m. - 3 p.m. Eastern Time

Tribal Government – Writing Persuasively, July 25, 2012, 2 p.m. - 3 p.m. Eastern Time

To register, see the NLC [website](#).

Recent News

DOE Office of Indian Energy Announces Tribes to Receive Technical Assistance Through the Strategic Technical Assistance Response Team (START)

The Strategic Technical Assistance Response Team (START) initiative is a project of the DOE Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs (DOE-IE) aimed at advancing next-generation energy development in Indian Country. The START initiative is focused on the 48 contiguous states and Alaska. It is led by a technical assistance team comprised of experts from DOE and its National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL).

The following Tribes have been selected to receive technical assistance through the START Program in the 48 contiguous states:

- **Campo Band of the Kumeyaay Nation** in Campo, California, will receive technical assistance and financial analysis of renewable energy project opportunities, including commercial-scale wind on tribal lands.
- **Forest County Potawatomi Tribe** in Crandon, Wisconsin, will receive technical and financial analysis to support the development of a community-scale biomass project that will utilize local nonfood feedstocks.
- **Hualapai Tribe** of Peach Springs, Arizona, will receive technical and financial feasibility analyses of projects on tribal lands, with primary focus on community-scale renewable energy projects to help power the Tribe's facilities at Grand Canyon West.
- **Pascua Yaqui Tribe** in Tucson, Arizona, will receive financial and market analysis assistance to support prioritization and feasibility analyses for community-scale solar power generation development.
- **Passamaquoddy Tribe** of Indian Township in Pleasant Point, Maine, will receive technical and financial analysis supporting the potential for commercial-scale wind project development.
- **Pueblo of Zuni** in Zuni, New Mexico, will receive technical assistance to support a community-scale solar project that supports the Pueblo's water supply infrastructure with a sustainable, distributed power supply.

The following Alaska Native Tribes have been selected to receive technical assistance through START Alaska:

- **Arctic Village Council** will receive assistance to help improve diesel powerhouse operations; reinstate Power Cost Equalization (PCE) – a longstanding State of Alaska electrical subsidy program for low income households; install prepay meters for residential buildings; repair existing photovoltaic (PV) systems; and explore feasibility of community-scale solar energy generation.
- **Native Village of Kwinhagak/Quinhagak** will receive assistance to help develop a community energy plan; increase residential energy efficiency; implement a heat recovery project for the community sewer and water facility; improve energy efficiency in new residential housing; produce a wind-to-heat analysis; and prepare for additional funding opportunities.
- **Native Village of Teller** will receive assistance to help address the community's long-term bulk fuel storage capacity needs; identify opportunities to increase residential energy efficiency, including education and training; implement retrofits and repairs for public facilities; and prepare for additional funding opportunities.

- **Organized Village of Kake** will receive assistance to help develop a community energy plan; relocate a wind met-tower closer to the village; conduct biomass and hydro generation feasibility studies; install a PV system; identify bulk diesel improvements; and initiate residential energy efficiency activities.
- **Venetie Village Council** will receive assistance to help develop a community energy plan; repair public utility generation infrastructure; reinstate PCE; develop utility rate structure; and conduct a community-scale PV program as well as a biomass feasibility study and project design review.

For more, see the DOE-IE START [Web page](#). Any questions can be directed to IndianEnergy@hq.doe.gov.

Salazar Approves First-Ever Commercial Solar Energy Project on American Indian Trust Lands

On June 21, 2012, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar approved a 350-MW solar energy project on tribal trust land of the Moapa Band of Paiute Indians in Clark County, Nevada. The project marks a milestone as the first-ever, utility-scale solar project approved for development on tribal lands, and is one of the many steps the administration has taken to help strengthen tribal communities.

The Record of Decision signed on June 21 approves the construction, operation and maintenance of a low-impact PV facility and associated infrastructure on about 2,000 acres of the Tribe's reservation, located 30 miles north of Las Vegas. The site represents about 3 percent of the Tribe's 71,954 acres, which are held in trust by the U.S. government. The project is expected to generate about 400 jobs at peak construction and 15 to 20 permanent jobs.

"This is a great day for the Moapa Band of Paiute Indians, and for Indian Country as a whole," said Donald "Del" Laverdure, Acting Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs. "As our nation's energy portfolio continues to grow, it is important that tribal communities have the opportunity to harness the energy of the wind and sun in a way that can power our homes, businesses and economies. Today is an important step in that direction."

Under the Obama administration's initiatives to foster tribal energy self-sufficiency and advance economic competitiveness, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) is also engaged in a [sweeping reform of federal surface leasing regulations](#) for American Indian lands that will streamline the approval process for home ownership and spur renewable energy development in Indian Country. As trustee for the land and resources of federally recognized tribes, Interior is responsible for managing about 55 million surface acres in Indian Country.

A fact sheet on the Moapa Project is available on the DOI [website](#). A map of the project area is available [here](#).

For more, see the [full press release](#).

2012 Tribal Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) Awards from USDA Rural Development Announced - Funding Also Will Improve Public Transit in Tribal Communities

On June 18, 2012, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the selection of 27 projects in 14 states to support small business and job creation opportunities and train workers in Native American communities. Janie Hipp, Senior Advisor for Tribal Relations, made the announcement on behalf of Secretary Vilsack while attending the National Congress of American Indians mid-year conference in Lincoln, Nebraska.

The announcement followed the previous week's announcement by the secretary that the USDA will implement measures to make it easier for individuals living in Substantially Underserved Trust Areas (SUTA) to obtain USDA funding to improve basic services, including water and sewer systems, broadband and electric infrastructure. These measures are a crucial step for American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders to build modern utility infrastructure, create jobs and improve their quality of

life. The enhancements are being implemented through a final regulation published in the [Federal Register](#).

The more than \$3.2 million in grants is being administered through USDA Rural Development's [Rural Business Enterprise Grant \(RBE\) program](#). This program provides grants for rural projects that finance the development of small and emerging rural businesses, help fund distance learning networks, and help fund employment-related adult education programs.

For more, see the [full press release and list of projects](#).

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For more information on the [Tribal Energy Program](#) and our [Guide to Tribal Energy Development](#), visit our website.

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