Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Kevin K. Washburn today announced that the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED) awarded more than $1.5 million to 10 federally recognized tribes for projects expanding their capacity to develop and regulate energy projects on tribal lands.

"Tribal self-governance goes hand-in-hand with economic development," Washburn said. "These capacity grants help tribes develop rules and regulatory regimes for energy development and for protection of their own energy assets."

The IEED's Tribal Energy Development Capacity (TEDC) grant program assists eligible applicants, which include federally recognized tribes, Alaska Native corporations and tribal energy resource development organizations, obtain the technical and regulatory capacity needed to develop energy resources and to properly account for energy resource production and revenues, as provided for under Title V, Section 503, of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. It also helps fund the development of codes, regulations and other legal infrastructure necessary for economic progress. The program is funded through annual appropriations.

IEED solicits proposals, and through a competitive review system, selects qualified projects for funding. IEED's Division of Energy and Mineral Development (DEMD) provides grantees with technical assistance and monitors grants to ensure that the best possible product is obtained for the funds allocated. The 10 announced grantees were selected from among 22 TEDC applications submitted during the FY 2015 funding cycle.

Energy and mineral development on federal Indian lands plays a critical role in creating jobs and generating income in Indian Country while also contributing to the national economy. According to the Department of the Interior's Economic Contributions Report released on July 11, 2014, the economic impact of energy and mineral development in Indian Country is second only to that of gaming.

In 2013, the total economic contribution in Indian Country from energy and mineral development was more than $17 billion, more than 91 percent of the total economic impact from development of natural resources in Indian Country. In the same year, energy and mineral development supported over 67,000 jobs, more than 83 percent of the natural resource jobs in Indian Country.

The 2015 TEDC grant awardees by tribe name, award amount and purpose are:

- **Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians of the Bad River Reservation** ($79,000) – To establish a regulatory infrastructure that will support the development and management of a major biomass facility.
- **Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians of the Big Valley Rancheria**, ($217,375) – For a feasibility study on establishing a tribal utility authority.
- **Chemehuevi Indian Tribe of the Chemehuevi Reservation** ($164,062) – To form a tribal power exchange as a joint powers authority.

- **Mesa Grande Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of the Mesa Grande Reservation**, ($160,500) – For an assessment on how to build a successful tribal solar business.
- **Passamaquoddy-Indian Township** ($150,000) – For a feasibility study on establishing a tribal utility authority.
- **Pueblo of Jemez** ($250,000) – For a feasibility study on establishing a tribal utility authority.
- **Pueblo of Zia** ($188,000) – For a feasibility study on establishing a tribal utility authority.
- **Spirit Lake Tribe** ($139,000) – For a feasibility study on establishing a tribal utility authority to accelerate the development of a 20 MW wind farm currently under development.
- **Ute Mountain Ute Tribe of the Ute Mountain Reservation** ($131,072) – For the promulgation of tribal hydraulic fracturing regulations.
- **Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska** ($78,600) – For a feasibility study of the Tribe's ownership and management of electric distribution assets.

The Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs oversees the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development, which implements the Indian Energy Resource Development Program under Title V of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. IEED's mission is to foster stronger American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities by helping federally recognized tribes develop their renewable and nonrenewable energy and mineral resources; increasing access to capital for tribal and individual American Indian- and Alaska Native-owned businesses; assisting tribes in building the legal infrastructure necessary for their economic progress; and enabling tribally and individual AI/AN-owned businesses to take advantage of government and private sector procurement opportunities.

For more information about IEED programs and services, visit the Indian Affairs website at http://www.indianaffairs.gov/WhoWeAre/AS-IA/IEED/index.htm.