



Welcome to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Indian Energy's quarterly newsletter for Alaska Native villages and others who are partnering with us to explore and pursue sustainable solutions to rural Alaska's energy crisis. Read on and learn about projects in action, local Energy Ambassadors, and ways you can become engaged and access funding and technical assistance. Your feedback is welcomed and encouraged!

## Alaska Native Village Energy Challenges a Priority for DOE

Since joining the DOE Office of Indian Energy in May, new Director Chris Deschene has made it a priority to see firsthand the energy challenges that Alaska Native communities are facing. He has traveled to Alaska three times so far, joining local Alaska Program Manager Givey Kochanowski for visits to several villages and in support of key events including the Global Leadership in the Arctic Conference Aug. 30–31, President Obama's historic visit to Alaska Aug. 31–Sept. 2, and the 2015 Arctic Energy Summit Sept. 28–30.



A ground-mounted solar installation in Buckland, one of 11 communities in the Northwest Arctic Borough. Photo from Givey Kochanowski

In addition, the Arctic was a significant focus of the National Tribal Energy Summit: A Path to Economic Sovereignty, which took place Sept. 23–25 in Washington, D.C. Nearly 40 representatives from Alaska registered for the event and participated in working group meetings, panels, and sessions. During the summit, Kochanowski highlighted one of the Office's key initiatives, which is leading the development of a 10-year renewable energy strategy for the Arctic region as part of the National Strategy for the Arctic Region. Working closely with Alaska Native communities to capture existing energy planning and development activities and identify gaps or areas appropriate for federal agency engagement, the Office has developed a draft report, which can be accessed online at [www.energy.gov/indianenergy/national-strategy-arctic-region](http://www.energy.gov/indianenergy/national-strategy-arctic-region).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### OCTOBER 15–17

Alaska Federation of Natives Convention  
Anchorage, AK

### OCTOBER 27

DOE STEM Mentoring Café  
Anchorage, AK

### DECEMBER 1–5

Bureau of Indian Affairs Providers Conference  
Anchorage, AK

### FEBRUARY 9–11, 2016

Alaska Village Initiatives Rural Business Conference  
Anchorage, AK



A gathering of some of the attendees from Alaska at the National Tribal Energy Summit in Washington, D.C. Photo from David Hathcox

### DOUG MACCOURT JOINS DOE OFFICE OF INDIAN ENERGY TEAM AS POLICY ADVISOR

Doug MacCourt was appointed as Senior Policy Advisor to the DOE Office of Indian Energy in July and just one month later he joined Deschene and Kochanowski for a tour of various Alaska Native villages. A long-time champion of Indian energy, MacCourt has more than 25 years of experience working with tribes, Alaska Native corporations, and tribal business enterprises on all aspects of energy development. In 2010 he published *Renewable Energy Development in Indian Country: A Handbook for Tribes* in collaboration with DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). Along with advising Deschene and the rest of the Office of Indian Energy staff, MacCourt will work across DOE and with other federal and state agencies on mission-critical policy, legislative, and funding issues.



Members of the DOE Office of Indian Energy team in Hoonah, Alaska. Doug MacCourt is shown on the far right, followed by Givey Kochanowski and Chris Deschene. Photo from Givey Kochanowski.

# RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: INPUT NEEDED ON TWO NEW PROPOSED TRIBAL INITIATIVES

The DOE Office of Indian Energy is looking for input from inter-tribal organizations, tribes, Alaska Native villages and regional corporations, and other interested stakeholders on two new proposed initiatives.

### Oct. 29: Inter-Tribal Network Responses Due

The Inter-Tribal Technical Assistance Energy Provider Network seeks to establish internal energy experts within participating inter-tribal organizations who would coordinate energy solutions among participating Indian Tribes and advise DOE on the energy goals and needs within their region. For details on how to respond to the request for information (RFI), visit [www.eere-exchange.energy.gov](http://www.eere-exchange.energy.gov) (DE-FOA-0001408).

### Oct. 30: Alaskan Communities Energy Efficiency Competition Responses Due

DOE is looking for feedback on a new \$4 million initiative to significantly accelerate efforts by remote Alaskan communities to adopt sustainable energy strategies. A joint effort between the DOE Office of Indian Energy and the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, the proposed initiative seeks to competitively elicit the best approaches to developing and implementing applicable clean energy solutions throughout rural Alaska and potentially in other Arctic regions. For details on how to respond to the RFI, visit [www.eere-exchange.energy.gov](http://www.eere-exchange.energy.gov) (DE-FOA-0001421).

## APPLICATIONS FOR DOE FUNDING FOR ENERGY PROJECTS DUE DEC. 10

On Sept. 2 during his trip to Alaska, the President announced up to \$6 million in funding from the DOE Office of Indian Energy to install facility- and community-scale clean energy and energy efficiency projects on Indian lands that reduce reliance on fossil fuel and promote economic development. Apply online by Dec. 10 at [www.eere-exchange.energy.gov](http://www.eere-exchange.energy.gov) (DE-FOA-0001390).

## NEW REPORT SUMMARIZES TRIBAL VULNERABILITIES TO CLIMATE CHANGE

A new Office of Indian Energy report, *Tribal Energy System Vulnerabilities to Climate Change*, was released in September and affirms what many Alaska Native villages have experienced firsthand—that extreme weather events and other climate change impacts pose an ongoing and increasing threat to tribal energy infrastructure and access. Access the report at [www.energy.gov/indianenergy](http://www.energy.gov/indianenergy).

## BUILDING BRIDGES

### INDUSTRY LEADERS LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR SOLARIZING ALASKA

In early October a select group of solar industry leaders convened at NANA Corporate Headquarters in Anchorage for a roundtable discussion about opportunities to advance scalable solar electricity solutions for remote Alaska Native villages. The meeting kicked off “Solarize Alaska,” a collaborative effort among the NANA Regional Corporation, DOE, and NREL to advance innovative financing and technical solutions for integrating solar energy generation onto this region’s islanded microgrids. Stay tuned for more details on this effort.

## AK ENERGY IN ACTION

### VILLAGE COUNCIL BUILDING RETROFITS HAVE BIG IMPACT IN FORT YUKON

The Gwitchyaa Zhee Gwich’in Tribal Government (GZGTG), which serves the Gwich’in people of Fort Yukon, Alaska, is working to reduce reliance on imported diesel fuel, lower operating costs, enhance quality of life, and serve as a model of self-sufficiency. To help meet its goals, the community invested in a quarter-million-dollar energy efficiency and renewable energy project and applied for a \$125,000 DOE grant to supplement project costs.

With an eye toward maximizing the return on investment, GZGTG employed simple, cost-effective retrofits—performed by local labor with existing skill sets—to the GZGTG office building, which is the community’s largest energy consumer.

As a result of some simple energy upgrades, GZGTG expects to realize a total annual cost savings of more than \$17,000 and a 48% overall reduction in diesel fuel consumption compared to 2012.

In addition to helping create local jobs, the project has served to reinforce the tribal ideals of self-sufficiency and sustainability. “DOE has funded great projects that have allowed people to see that they’re possible off the road system, north of the Arctic Circle and with all local labor,” said Dave Pelunis-Messier, Rural Energy Coordinator for the regional tribal nonprofit Tanana Chiefs Conference. “Others will be able to follow where they’ve led and [have] more control over their energy future.” Learn more at [www.energy.gov/indianenergy/articles/gwitchyaa-zhee-gwich-tribal-government-counteracts-high-energy-costs-climate](http://www.energy.gov/indianenergy/articles/gwitchyaa-zhee-gwich-tribal-government-counteracts-high-energy-costs-climate).



In addition to energy efficiency upgrades on the Tribal Hall building, GZGTG worked with Tanana Chiefs Conference to install solar panels that, during the sunny months of the year, are expected to produce more power than the building uses each month, offsetting an estimated 1,300 gallons of diesel-generated power annually. Photo from Dave Pelunis-Messier, Tanana Chiefs Conference

### MORE THAN 30 ALASKA NATIVE VILLAGES TAP INTO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN 2015

Last spring, DOE Office of Indian Energy Alaska Program Manager Givey Kochanowski set a goal to double the amount of technical assistance it would provide to Alaska Native communities in Fiscal Year 2015. As the year came to a close, that goal was exceeded as DOE accepted 31 technical assistance requests in Alaska—three times the number of requests from the previous year. In the last three weeks of September, technical experts from NREL traversed the state in a final push to meet requests for strategic energy planning workshops in Hydaburg, Little Diomed, and Tanana.

DOE offers up to 40 hours of technical assistance per year to help Alaska Native villages with strategic energy planning and energy project development. Learn more and apply at [www.energy.gov/indianenergy/technical-assistance](http://www.energy.gov/indianenergy/technical-assistance).



The Native Village of Diomed on the west coast of Little Diomed Island in the Bering Straits, 135 miles northwest of Nome, Alaska, and one-half mile from Russia. Photo by Sherry Stout, NREL