

## Rosebud Tribe Expands Tribal Leadership in Renewable Energy

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The Lakota Sioux of the Rosebud Tribe in South Dakota showed themselves to be one of the leaders in renewable energy in 2003 when they built the first ever 750-kilowatt utility-scale commercial wind turbine in the lower 48 states wholly owned and operated by a Native American tribe.

The tribe also negotiated the first tribal sale of the carbon offset "green tags" generated by this turbine to NativeEnergy of Vermont, which has marketed the tags to thousands of individual green power supporters, including Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, the Dave Mathews Band, the Natural Resources Defense Council for their Rolling Stones' "Climate Change Awareness" concert and other parties interested in the development of renewable energy on Indian lands.

Today they are expanding their leadership role by working to integrate more wind power and other renewable energy approaches into their communities and tribal housing plans.

Their current project is called the Clean Energy Education Partnership (CEEP) and it may well change the future of how tribes use renewable energy across the Great Plains.

CEEP originated in March of 2005 in the Rosebud Housing Authority - Sicangu Wicoti Awanyakape Corporation (SWA) where innovative tribal personnel were looking for ways to demonstrate small scale renewable energy approaches and integrate them into tribal housing decisions and planning.

They soon began working with the Tribal Utility Commission (TUC) to develop a partnership that would make renewable energy an integral part of tribal housing.

Before long they had brought in Rosebud's Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) as well as the Council of Energy Resource Tribes (CERT), the National Renewable Energy Labs in Golden, CO (NREL), and the Intertribal Council on Utility Policy (ICOU) to help them develop a practical and realistic implementation plan.

By September of 2005, five wind anemometers had been installed to measure a year's worth of wind data at several locations on the Rosebud reservation including one at the home of Cecil and Rosie Little Thunder. The Little Thunders are well respected among the Lakota and the family has brought many spiritual leaders to the tribe over many generations.

It was jointly decided that the first CEEP demonstration project should be at the home of this distinguished traditional family to show that renewable energy is consistent with Lakota cultural values and the long Lakota tradition of working in harmony with nature.

In September, 2006, the partnership was expanded to bring in the practical renewable energy expertise of Trees, Water & People (TWP), a non-profit organization from Fort Collins, Colorado.

TWP had been working on the adjacent Pine Ridge reservation to lower utility bills and improve living conditions. They had helped create Lakota Solar Enterprises (LSE), one of the first 100% Native American owned renewable energy companies. Together, LSE and TWP have installed more than 130 solar heat systems for Pine Ridge families and planted family windbreaks and shade trees for an additional 162 families.

In Colorado, TWP runs their SolarBound Program, which promotes the use of solar energy in the residential and business markets in Northern Colorado. Internationally, TWP works in six Latin American countries and in 2005 won the prestigious Ashden Award that was presented by Prince Charles for TWP's work developing and installing over 15,000 fuel efficient stoves in Central America. The Ashden Award came with a \$50,000 prize provided by Climate Care from selling carbon offset credits internationally.

With TWP's addition to the CEEP team and a year's worth of wind data collected, the project implementation phase began. It was decided that the Little Thunder home would have four renewable energy demonstration applications installed:

- \* Solar heat system that produces heat any time the sun is out for just pennies a day
- \* Windbreak and shade trees planted as part of an Energyscape approach to lowering utility bills
- \* A 1.8 kilowatt Skystream 3.7 wind turbine which will also generate electricity and sell excess electricity back to the utility company, LaCreek Electric
- \* A 1.3 kilowatt solar electric system which will also sell excess electricity to LaCreek Electric.

As part of the educational aspect of the partnership it was decided that these installations should also have a significant teaching component.

- \* May 9 - A major tribal Renewable Energy Conference will take place at the Rosebud Casino. Representatives from the following organizations have been invited to make presentations:
  - o SWA and TUC regarding Rosebud's renewable energy plans and efforts
  - o ICoup, CERT and NREL on tribal renewable energy efforts across America
  - o TWP on the four renewable energy installations on the Little Thunder home

Following the conference, there will be a tour of the 750 kilowatt wind tower, a traditional dinner and a series of cultural activities that evening

- \* May 10 & 11 - On-site solar, energyscape and wind turbine installation workshops will take place at the Little Thunder home. Staff of SWA, LIHEAP, TUC and invited guests from other tribes and various federal agencies will participate in two days of practical renewable energy workshops.

Henry Red Cloud, a Lakota elder from the Pine Ridge reservation will provide the conference presentations and workshops on the solar heat systems and wind turbine. Henry is the direct descendent of Chief Red Cloud, one of the last of the great Lakota war chiefs. He is one of the national tribal leaders working to disseminate renewable energy information and practical knowledge to more tribes. He also does renewable energy trainings and presentations across the United States and Europe.

**Alison Mason will provide the conference presentation and workshop on the solar electric system. Alison runs SunJuice, a 100% woman-owned renewable energy consulting and contracting company based in Fort Collins, Colorado. She has been part of TWP's work with the Lakota since its inception. Alison was named the first ever national "Solar Woman of the Year" in 2004 by the American Solar Energy Association, in part for her work on the Pine Ridge reservation.**

After the initial conference and demonstration installations at the Little Thunder home, TWP will work with SWA, TUC and LIHEAP to do four additional sets of renewable energy installations on the Rosebud Veteran's Homeless Shelter and several homes.

SWA is making a significant time and financial commitment to educate the people of Rosebud about renewable energy and integrate these applications into reservation housing. It is currently looking for funding to expand its use of renewable energy and to educate more tribes about its benefits and how they fit into Native American culture and values.

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This is a major event and development for all those interested in tribal and renewable energy news and we hope you can come to the conference and help us disseminate this important information to the national tribal and renewable energy community.

For more information contact:

Tony Rogers - TUC - Director - (605) 747-4097 - tuc99@gwtc.net

Monica Larvie - SWA Contracting Officer - (605) 747-2203 - swadevelop@gwtc.net

Richard Fox - TWP - National Director - (970) 484-3678 - richard@treeswaterpeople.org