

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 Champions, and ways you can become engaged and access funding and technical assistance. Your feedback is welcomed and encouraged!

Five Villages Win Bids for START Technical Assistance

The DOE Office of Indian Energy has selected five Alaska Native villages to receive technical assistance through the Alaska Strategic Technical Assistance Response Team (START) Program, including:

- Hoonah Indian Association
- Huslia Village
- Kokhanok Village
- Organized Village of Kwethluk
- Native Village of Shungnak.

Through START, DOE and the Denali Commission, along with DOE's national laboratories and other local and national experts, will assist these communities in developing strategic energy plans to help mitigate climate change, conduct energy awareness and training programs, and pursue new renewable energy and energy efficiency opportunities.

Read the full press release at www.energy.gov/indianenergy.



Kokhanok is one of five villages selected to receive START Program technical assistance from May 2015 through May 2018. Photo from Alaska Center for Energy and Power, NREL 33699.

ALASKA WELCOMES NEW DOE OFFICE OF INDIAN ENERGY DIRECTOR CHRIS DESCHENE

On May 18, 2015, Christopher Clark Deschene joined DOE as Director of the Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs.

A member of the Navajo Nation, Deschene has more than 20 years of management and policy experience, extensive tribal relationships, and deep expertise in business and energy development and federal Indian law. Prior to joining DOE, Deschene spent 10 years as a partner with the Law Office of Schaff & Clark-Deschene, LLC. His experience extends to business and energy development on tribal, state, and federal lands.

Deschene is highly regarded among tribal, state, and federal policy leaders and professionals, as well as industry and business leaders. He has extensive knowledge of power generation, transmission, and distribution; renewable energy, oil, and gas development; utility formation; energy, natural resource, and environmental policy development; regulatory permitting; and energy contracting.

Read the full press release at www.energy.gov/indianenergy/articles/christopher-clark-deschene-announced-doe-office-indian-energy-director.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 1-4

Kawerak Annual Regional Conference
Nome, AK

Alaska Rural Providers Conference
Nome, AK

JULY 25

Renewable Energy Alaska Project (REAP)
Alaska Renewable Energy Fair
Anchorage, AK

AUGUST 16

Chena Hot Springs Renewable Energy Fair
Fairbanks, AK

SEPTEMBER 28-30

2015 Arctic Energy Summit
Fairbanks, AK

DECEMBER (DATE TBD)

BIA Providers Conference
Anchorage, Alaska



Shortly after taking the helm as the DOE Office of Indian Energy's new Director, Deschene traveled to Alaska with Deputy Energy Secretary Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, who announced the latest round of Alaska START selections on May 28. Photo from DOE.

RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

2015 RURAL UTILITIES STUDY UNDER WAY

Among the most pressing needs in rural Alaska is tackling the high cost of energy. The 2015 DOE Rural Utilities Study (RUS) is looking at ways to meet that challenge sustainably.

“We’re taking a comprehensive, objective, outside look at the status of the situation,” said DOE Office of Indian Energy Alaska Program Manager Givey Kochanowski, who is part of a team that’s canvassing rural utilities across the state.

In addition to tribal utilities, the team will visit investor-owned utilities, municipally owned utilities, and co-ops for a representative sampling of roughly a third of Alaska’s 88 rural utilities.

The RUS team will explore why investment in renewable energy is not more robust in rural Alaska given the high cost of power. Based on their findings, the study will identify potential solutions, make recommendations, and help DOE determine how it can best support state and local efforts.



The Shungnak power plant is one of nearly 30 rural utilities the RUS team is visiting in 2015. Photo from Alaska Center for Energy and Power, NREL 33697.

AK ENERGY IN ACTION

ALASKA RESIDENTS TAPPING INTO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR ENERGY PROJECTS

Sometimes the impact that happens at key points of contact creates a ripple effect. The DOE Office of Indian Energy saw that in Alaska after a series of regional energy workshops in March sparked a flurry of technical assistance requests. In the month following the workshops, DOE received 10 requests for technical assistance in Alaska—just under half as many as were received from Alaska in the previous six months and a third as many as were fulfilled in all of Fiscal Year (FY) 2014.

“DOE’s active engagement with Alaska Native villages has raised awareness of the technical assistance options available to them,” said Alaska Program Manager Givey Kochanowski. “I think the workshops also inspired some communities to consider renewable energy in new ways, leading them to technical assistance.”

Kochanowski said his goal is to double the number of technical assistance requests met in Alaska in FY 2015. Learn more about applying for on-demand technical assistance in Alaska at www.energy.gov/indianenergy/resources/alaska-native-villages.



Alaska Native villages and regional and village corporations are eligible for up to 40 hours of strategic energy planning and project development technical assistance designed to advance renewable energy projects. Photo from Intelligent Energy Systems, NREL 29205.

BUILDING BRIDGES

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS FOCUS ON SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS

Nearly 150 Alaska residents attended regional energy workshops held in Bethel, Dillingham, and Juneau between March 23 and April 1.

Led by DOE Office of Indian Energy Alaska Program Manager Givey Kochanowski and technical experts from DOE’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the workshops focused on practical, sustainable ways to address rising energy costs, mitigate climate change impacts, and reduce reliance on imported fuel.

“I was pleased with the outcome and think this was a good beginning—with a lot of valuable information presented,” said Robert Venables, Energy Coordinator for Southeast Conference.

In addition to introducing a new educational curriculum tailored to Alaska, presenters also provided one-on-one technical assistance on technology-specific challenges, project financing, and energy efficiency.

Read a blog about the workshops at www.energy.gov/indianenergy/articles/alaska-energy-workshop-tour-creates-rich-opportunities-knowledge-sharing.

AK ENERGY CHAMPIONS



CRAIG MOORE

As Vice President of Planning and Development for the Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority, Craig Moore knows from experience that controlling energy costs through energy efficiency is a critical first step in addressing the energy challenges Alaska Native villages face. Moore manages a department that oversees new construction, rehabs, maintenance, weatherization programs, and energy efficiency programs throughout a 400-mile archipelago in the Tongass National Forest of southeastern Alaska.

For Moore, the opportunity to help Tribes find solutions for creating more comfortable, cost-efficient, healthy homes is the best part of his job.

“I love the small communities, and I want them to be sustainable,” said Moore. “I realize they’re struggling with the high cost of energy, so any small measure we can do to make their homes more affordable, more comfortable, and save them some energy dollars so they can invest in making a better life for the community is very rewarding.” Read our interview with Moore at www.energy.gov/indianenergy/articles/alaska-energy-champion-Craig-Moore.