

The Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED) has made possible the installation of a 65 kW wind turbine to power the KILI Radio Station (“Voice of the Lakota People”) at the Pine Ridge Reservation in Porcupine, South Dakota. IEED representatives took part in a ceremony on June 25, 2008 marking the attachment of the machine’s three blades to its tower. The Oglala Sioux Tribe will formally commission the machine on July 31, 2008.

Funding from IEED, by way of a Public Law 93-638 contract with the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, and donations from Honor the Earth and the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community enabled the Intertribal Council on Utility Policy (ICOU) to purchase the turbine, which has been placed atop Porcupine Butte.

IEED also funded training for tribal members to install and maintain the turbine. Training for the installation began on June 22nd, conducted by engineers and ICOU.

Pine Ridge is one of the windiest reservations in the country. The reservation's wind resources are so great that Pine Ridge could produce 4,000 times more power than tribal members could use, according to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. Surplus power generated by the Porcupine Butte turbine will be sold back into the grid, providing electricity for local utility users.

The idea for the turbine took root in 2002 when National Renewable Energy Lab's “Wind Powering America” program provided an anemometer to KILI to collect wind data. The anemometer was replaced by and a refurbished Nordtank turbine, sitting on a 72 foot tower. With blades reaching 99 feet, the turbine will produce approximately 92,171 kWh of power per year. That represents a potential savings to KILI radio of as much as \$12,000.00/year in electricity bills.

IEED and the Oglala Sioux Tribe view KILI as an essential organ for Pine Ridge economic development.