

*Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development*  
*Respecting Tradition... While on the Path to Prosperity*

# *Indian Energy Policy Development*



## *Who We Are...*

The Division of Indian Energy Policy Development oversees the development and implementation of energy and mineral development regulations in Indian country and initiates programs to enhance the capacity of tribes to take charge of developing their energy and mineral resources.

The Division has specific responsibility for implementing Title V, Section 503 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58) which requires the Secretary of the Interior to oversee the review, evaluation, and implementation of Tribal Energy Resource Agreements (TERA). A TERA provides a tribe with the option of entering into energy-related business agreements and leases and for granting rights-of-way for pipelines, electric transmission, and distribution lines without the review and approval of the Secretary of the Interior for each proposed project.

*Enhancing energy and resource development opportunities for tribes through effective implementation of federal regulatory policies*

## *What We Do...*

- Promote tribal oversight of energy and mineral resource development on tribal lands, thus furthering the goal of Indian self-determination
- Coordinate with other DOI bureaus and offices, other federal agencies and tribes to develop effective processes for implementation of Indian energy processes, policies and regulations
- Conduct outreach activities that explain regulatory requirements and the respective roles of the Department and tribes regarding the development of energy resources under 25 CFR Part 224
- Develop and implement tribal capacity building programs designed to provide Indian country access to information and develop tribal expertise in the energy resource development field
- Develop and update model TERAs and guidelines to implement TERA regulations, including procedures for creating and maintaining records for use in monitoring tribal compliance with its associated TERA

## *Tribal Energy and Environmental Information Clearinghouse*

The Division and the U.S. Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory launched a Web site to create a Web-based clearinghouse of environmental information that will support American Indian and Alaska Native traditional and renewable energy resource development.

The Tribal Energy and Environmental Information Clearinghouse (TEEIC), <http://teecic.anl.gov>, offers a knowledge base for tribes and tribal organizations that can assist them in developing environmental analysis and evaluation programs that further their energy and economic development goals. In addition to environmental best practices, methods for conducting environmental assessments to aid in decision making, and links to applicable federal and state laws related to energy development, the clearinghouse's database includes information on the various impacts of different types of traditional and renewable energy development and infrastructure projects. The database has been developed using existing information, which will be augmented over time with environmental impact assessments as they are completed.

## American Indian Mentoring Program

Chief among the Division's priorities is an active mentoring program for American Indian students, and tribal faculty at all levels of the educational pipeline. Working closely with Argonne National Laboratory, students are assigned a mentor who guides them through a range of educational programs, such as science and engineering, that provide students with hands-on research experience and communications skills. Under an innovative partnership with Argonne National Laboratory, the Division hosted an internship program where students focused on energy resource development, both renewable and non-renewable, and learned about the potential environmental impacts from energy resource development. This program offers an opportunity for Indian students interested in science and engineering, where they are traditionally underrepresented, to work with energy and natural resource development.



Students and faculty at an Argonne National Laboratory training program.  
Photo: courtesy Argonne National Laboratory



Left: IEED sponsored student in the mentoring program.  
File Photo

## Tribal Energy Policy Advisory Committee

The Department of Interior established the Tribal Energy Policy Advisory Committee (TEPAC), a forum for tribes and federal officials to provide advice to the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs about how to implement the Department of the Interior's energy development policy in Indian Country, especially in the implementation of Tribal Energy Resource Agreements. The Committee also provides the Assistant Secretary input for how best to manage and administer tribal energy resource development, comply with federal environmental laws, and provides advice on implementing regulations under the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act of 2005. Additionally, the TEPAC provides input on best practices as tribes develop TERA expertise.

## Indian Education Renewable Energy Challenge

The Indian Education Renewable Energy Challenge is a contest sponsored by IEED in partnership with the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and Argonne National Laboratory for students attending high schools and tribal colleges funded by the BIE. In the contest, students create small wind turbine systems that will harness wind energy, store it mechanically or electrically, and then use the stored energy to power an array of LEDs. The Challenge is an opportunity for students and teachers to learn about green and renewable energy technology that tribes can use to promote economic self-sufficiency and energy independence while providing a future for their youth.



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