

# Indian Energy teaming up for military contracts



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May the Christmas season fill your home with joy, your heart with love and your life with laughter.

This month I received a record number of phone calls and emails from tribal citizens with a diverse range of concerns and requests for assistance. I have to say, it's very rewarding to assist in finding solutions to your particular situation, and I want to thank you for allowing me to serve you in this way. And, I also want to thank our staff who always manage to come through with the information, recommendations and solutions.

I also received quite a few

inquiries about the status of Indian Energy, including a rumor that they had filed for bankruptcy. Not sure where these rumors start, but to play off Mark Twain's famous quote, "News of their death is greatly exaggerated."

As mentioned in my last unit report, Indian Energy provides a comprehensive monthly report and financial statement per contractual agreement. As well, a bi-annual review is conducted in person. I will be advocating that this presentation occur as part of our normal quarterly reviews so that there is a venue for public participation and input.

The most recent news to share:

## **Military renewable energy/tribal 8(a) opportunity**

The Turtle Mountain Chippewa Tribal Council (Belcourt, N.C.) voted to enter into a formal partnership with Indian Energy. With an official vote of 8 for and 0 against, Turtle Mountain Energy Solutions LLC becomes a vehicle for the tribe to participate in providing renewable energy solutions to the United States Department of Defense. Turtle Mountain Energy Solutions is in preliminary negotiations with Boeing's

Renewable Energy sector to partner in this effort (our stake is 15 percent of Indian Energy's 45 percent partnership in this entity).

This news comes on the heels of the Department of Defense ambitious commitment to purchase renewable energy solutions for domestic military bases.

On Sept. 15, the Army stood up its new Energy Initiatives Task Force with the mission of fast-tracking utility scale solar power and other renewable energy installations at its bases. As Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus stated on Oct. 13, "We buy too much fuel from potentially or actually volatile places on earth, those places we would never let build our ships, our aircraft, our ground vehicles, but we give them a say. We gave them a say on whether our ships sail, whether our aircraft fly, whether those ground vehicles operate because we get our fuel from them. And even if we could get all the fossil fuels from the United States, from inside our borders, it's still a global commodity and subject to price shocks and supply shocks and the price shocks we deal with virtually every day."

Another major development that impacts Native nation's ability to participate in the energy sector was the recent announcement that the United States Department of the Interior revised the regulations addressing leasing of Indian land, according to a Federal Register memo released Nov. 28.

This change was driven by tribal nations, who have recently been "doing larger and more complex transactions, including large solar and wind projects," said John Dossett, general counsel for National Congress of American Indians.

The most obvious change is a new 30-day deadline to process residential applications and a 60-day limit on business-related applications. Previously, there was no ceiling on how long the process could take.

Regarding the proposed changes, the Department of the Interior has stated that having a separate category to streamline renewable energy proposals should boost the sector, including solar plants in the Southwest.

"Tribes often lost out on deals due to the lengthy appraisal requirement and lack of deadlines.

This is going to help move things along quite a bit faster," Dossett said.

All this is good news for Indian Energy as they position themselves to be a major developer for Native nation's energy development projects.

I used up most of my words with Indian Energy, but I do want to mention that I attended the first language immersion camp for this season and humbly want to express my gratitude to our cultural and language staff and all of the first language speakers who came together to share their knowledge in such a good way. Miigwech, kdi nin nim gii wiimigyek (Thank you for inviting me to be there).

I sincerely urge everyone to consider attending any of the language classes that are held in our various communities. And if you can commit to a four-day immersion camp, you will never regret it. I promise it will be a transformative experience.

Once again, wishing everyone a blessed Christmas.

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