

Native Americans Plan for Energy-Wise Future

The **Rosebud Sioux** tribe in Mission, SD, the first Native American tribe to join Rebuild America, is positioning itself to become a player in the energy sector. The tribe is setting up a Tribal Utility Authority (TUA). As its first action, the TUA is taking steps to receive an allocation of hydropower from dams in the western states along the Missouri River. This marks the first time the tribes will have direct control over the generation and transmission of power on the reservations.

The Rosebud Sioux and **Lower Brule Sioux Tribe**, another Rebuild America partnership, are among 28 tribes in the Great Plains that are eligible to receive a hydropower allocation from the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), a subgroup of the Department of Energy.

The Rosebud Sioux must submit an Integrated Resources Plan to WAPA as a precursor to receiving its hydropower allocation. The tribe is approaching this as an opportunity to develop a blueprint for wise energy use over the long-term by emphasizing renewable energy and sustainable development, according to **Bob Gough**, attorney for the tribe.

“Getting power delivered to the reservation at lower rates is only part of the picture,” he says.

The tribe also plans to develop solar and wind power, notes **Deanna Braunlin** of GAVIN Consulting, Inc., who is working with the tribe to develop the TUA, evaluate projects, and recommend energy policy.

“What they do today is important if they are to strategically position themselves as players in the market tomorrow,” says Braunlin, a former state legislator from Nevada. “The work they are doing will serve as a template for other tribes.”

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