blueprints
Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant Program

Blueprints How-To Guide for Tribal Communities

Introduction

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program Blueprints are model projects and programs that EECBG participants can pursue, covering a range of areas in energy planning, energy efficiency, renewable energy, transportation electrification, clean energy finance, and workforce development. Each Blueprint outlines several high-level key activities, related to that project topic. The Blueprint How-To Guides go into further detail, providing more granular steps, recommendations, and resources within each key activity as award recipients move from planning to implementing their EECBG projects and programs.

Tribal recipients can use EECBG funding to complete one or more of the actions described within this How-To Guide. This document aims to assist Tribal communities to quickly identify where and who they need to start, next steps to make progress, and how existing resources can be leveraged by addressing key activities that are common across several Blueprints. As such, "Key Activities" and associated "Actions" listed in the sections below are not in order, but rather identify important distinct steps that may be done sequentially or in parallel.

Technical Assistance

Accessing technical assistance may be especially important for tribal communities, which may have personnel constraints. There are several resources available to supplement your organization's capacity to develop and complete a project under EECBG. Consider using the EECBG Technical Assistance Voucher option to help with project elements, like data collection, savings estimates, or modeling that

KEY ACTIVITY CHECKLIST

1. Project Team and Interested Parties

- ☑ Form your energy planning project team.
- ☑ Identify interested people and organizations and plan engagement activities and materials.

2. Energy Data Collection and Establishing a Baseline

- ☑ Pick a year to begin tracking and comparing energy use to.
- ☑ Gather, organize, and analyze your Tribe's energy data or for specific sites.

3. Market Assessment

- ☑ Identify renewable generation sources, energy needs, and job creation potential.

4. Funding and Financing

- ☑ Determine funding approaches aligned with your project and your Tribe's interests.

5. Action Plan Development

- ☑ Combine findings, outcomes, assessments, and engagement input into a formal plan.

Disclaimer: This document includes resources developed by U.S. federal agencies, academic institutions, and industry providers for informational purposes. DOE does not endorse or provide oversight for individual organizations or institutions.

SCEP
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might be needed. The Office of Indian Energy Policy & Programs also offers technical assistance that could supplement your EECBG funds; you must submit an application to determine eligibility for technical assistance.

The Department of Energy and partner Federal agencies offer several technical assistance programs that are specific to various clean energy technologies, policies or programs. For example, The Joint Office of Energy and Transportation also offers Technical Assistance to Tribal Nations on siting and implementation of EV infrastructure. For a complete list, visit Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program Technical Assistance Opportunities and email questions to TechnicalAssistance@hq.doe.gov.

Key Activities

KEY ACTIVITY 1: PROJECT TEAM AND INTERESTED PARTY ENGAGEMENT

- **Goal:** Develop a vision and goals for the Tribe around renewable energy, EV charging, energy planning, or workforce development to strengthen community buy-in and ensure all voices are heard.
- **Activity Benefits:** Conducting a holistic and comprehensive interested party engagement process can ensure that insights from the Tribe, tribal community, and other relevant parties are considered, and that the community can build a shared foundation of knowledge to inform and identify priorities and potential opportunities for your Tribe.

BLUEPRINT CONNECTIONS

Key Activity 1 relates to Blueprints #1, #2D, #3B, #3C, #3D, #4A, #4B, #5, and #6. Please review those Blueprints for additional tips, resources, and project ideas.

Action 1: Form your energy project team

How? Review the checklist:

- ☐ **Identify team members who can support the internal development and implementation of your Tribe's energy project.** Consider what areas of expertise, knowledge, and technical skills are desired for core team members of the planning project. Identify project management and support staff team members who can provide relevant data, materials, and input to inform the process and development of the project and engagement activities; ideally giving tribal preference to team members selected.
  - **Tip:** Use the DOE position description templates to help identify and recruit qualified team members: Building Your Energy Team.

The Karuk Tribe cuts its facilities' energy use by 92% through solar and battery storage. Source: U.S Department of Energy

- ☐ **Fill in gaps and increase team resources by bringing in external expertise and support.** This can include consultants, fellowships, or support programs. Examples include DOE's Clean Energy Innovator Fellowship and AmeriCorps' Native Nations initiative. Determine whether you need full-time or part-time and on-site or off-site support.

Action 2: Identify internal and external interested parties and plan engagement activities and materials

How? Review the checklist:

- ❑ **Identify interested parties.** Develop a list of people and organizations to engage, such as Tribal leaders and the Tribal community; other Tribal communities who may be interested in partnering; landowners or stewards, residences and businesses adjacent to potential sites, on construction delivery routes, or with buildings potentially in need of energy upgrades; environmental groups; utility companies; potential consumers of new renewable energy or EV charging stations; and applicable permitting/regulatory agencies.
- ❑ **Provide educational materials.** Identify relevant information related to the tribal community's interests and about renewable energy resources, EVs, energy efficiency, or other clean energy projects. Educational engagement materials often highlight economic, health, social benefits, and community or workforce development impacts. Educational materials can be developed in stages, with initial rounds of engagement informing what topics and questions are important to the Tribe. Sharing the findings of a renewable resource market study is one form of educational engagement.
- ❑ **Develop an engagement plan.** Incorporate the Tribe's respective governance policies and procedures to identify stages that require tribal government involvement and tribal community input and involvement. Additionally, consider hosting events such as workshops, meetings, and talking circle discussions to gather input, establish priorities, address concerns, and support discussion and consensus-building.
- ❑ **Develop a vision and goal document.** Formally document the Tribe's vision and goals. This document can represent the Tribe's interests and future aims. It can be used as a basis for future engagement and planning activities, and/or for applying for project funding.

KEY ACTIVITY 1 RESOURCES

Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund (GRID Alternatives) Funding opportunities, Tribal Solar Leadership Programs, Workforce Development and Training Programs, and educational scholarships.

Midwest Tribal Energy Resources Association (MTERA) A non-profit intertribal organization comprised of Midwest Tribes. MTERA is planning and pursuing innovative Tribal energy projects that respect the sovereignty and unique culture of individual Member Tribes, while leveraging the collective strength and resources of all Midwest Tribes.

Other resources:

Addressing Regulatory Challenges to Tribal Solar Deployment (NREL)

Solar Permitting, Inspection, and Interconnection Timelines (NREL)

SolarTRACE (NREL). Rooftop solar permitting, inspection, and interconnection median timelines.

Community Engagement and Equity in Renewable Energy Projects (NREL)

Building your Energy Team (DOE)

Formulating a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (DOE)

- ❑ **As applicable to your project, engage with relevant permitting authorities, local utilities/cooperatives, and other interested parties such as landowners or stewards and large energy users.** These types of organizations and interested parties may be able to provide information that could shape the scope of renewable energy resource development potential, uses of generated energy, EV charging locations, and may help build understanding of the required steps for completing a clean energy project. This input could be useful to inform the Tribe's vision and goal(s), determine what is feasible, and develop an implementation action plan.

What to consider:

- **What types of engagement activities are best suited for your Tribe's project needs?** Some engagement plans have multiple stages. For example, engagement could focus on information-sharing and a discovery phase to inform and define community priorities and vision. Other stages of engagement could be collecting and responding to suggestions for how to implement a project, including strategies, partnerships, and action steps.
- **If considering a renewable energy project, what are your Tribe's needs and priorities for for the energy generated?** Engagement activities can be used to determine and share the Tribe's values and goals for renewable energy projects and to create an understanding of how different needs and outcomes of a renewable energy project will be prioritized. For example, a community meeting can be used as a space to share and/or gather information on priorities and motivations such as Tribal energy sovereignty, economic benefits to the Tribe, developing Tribal job opportunities and workforce skills, or increasing Tribal energy supply and reliability.
- **Are there benefits to partnering with other Tribes?** Regional partnerships may produce benefits of additional resources and expertise, or greater cost-effectiveness through increased project scale.

KEY ACTIVITY 2: ENERGY DATA COLLECTION TO ESTABLISH A BASELINE FOR YOUR TRIBE OR SPECIFIC SITES

- ➢ **Goal:** Understand how your Tribal community, individual buildings, and vehicles use energy and their sources of energy.
- ➢ **Activity Benefits:** Collecting energy data is the first step to understanding your Tribe's energy use and identifying potential places where energy is being wasted, different energy sources could be used, or whether EV charging infrastructure could be installed.

BLUEPRINT CONNECTIONS

Key Activity 2 relates to **Blueprints #1** and **#2A**,. Please review those Blueprints for additional tips, resources, and project ideas.

Action 1: Pick a year to begin tracking and comparing energy use to

How? Review the checklist:

- ❑ **Select a baseline year.** Select a calendar year (e.g., 2005, 2015, 2018) that you will collect energy data for and will use as your comparison point for future years' data. This will be your baseline year.
- ❑ **Set baseline boundaries.** Define the boundaries for your baseline (e.g., geographic location, building types, sectors). For example, you could look at all building energy use within your Tribal area or you could focus on the buildings and facilities used for Tribal community events or by the Tribal government.

What to consider:

- **Align your baseline year with other plans.** It can be helpful to identify a year that aligns with other dates or plans important to your tribe (e.g., a comprehensive plan, renewable energy plan, transportation electrification plan). If your Tribe has or intends to adopt climate or greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions goals, select a baseline year that meets those standards. By aligning dates, it will be easier to communicate how your plan can integrate, complement, and inform these Tribal government and community goals.
- **Use a baseline year with a lot of available data.** Data availability will determine what years could be your baseline year. Data consistency is important as well. Try to select a year further in the past and collect data for subsequent years at the same time for the same source. You can use this to develop a baseline and show trends over the following years.

Action 2: Gather, organize, and analyze your tribe's energy data or for specific sites

How? Review the checklist:

- ❑ **Leverage internal expertise when requesting utility data.** When requesting and collecting data from utilities, ask within your Tribal government (e.g., who takes care of your facilities and accounts) if the utility has assigned an account manager or representative to work with your Tribe. If so, they may be able to help your team understand how the utility organizes its data (by month, sector, jurisdictional boundary, etc.) and be able to facilitate or inform your data request.
- ❑ **Gather energy use data.** Develop an understanding of your Tribe's energy use, including identifying its energy sources. Do you have utility-provided electric and gas services? Does your tribe also use delivered fuels, such as propane or fuel oil for heating, or gasoline and diesel for fleet vehicles? Utility companies may be able to provide community- or jurisdiction-wide data. Some utilities have established data sharing protocols while others may be able to respond to data requests.

What to consider:

- **Use complete data years.** Each data year will include at least 12 consecutive months of energy data (energy used and cost) by energy source for buildings, transportation, or other selected sectors. Technical assistance resources may be leveraged to help with estimating data if 12 months of complete data are not available.
- **Depending on the use for the data – building level benchmarking or community-wide energy planning – consider the scale of the data needed:** Utilities will be concerned about sharing data for individual accounts unless you have permission to request it. Requesting *aggregate data* – meaning data that combines many individual data points into one number, for example, the total energy use for all commercial accounts – is a common practice.
- **Build goals off your baseline year.** Developing a baseline is the first step for setting energy goals, as it allows you to understand where you're starting from. Once you know where you currently stand, your Tribe can set goals and identify trackable metrics.

KEY ACTIVITY 2 RESOURCES

SLOPE tool data viewer

City Energy: From Data to Decisions

Tribal Energy Atlas (NREL)

KEY ACTIVITY 3: MARKET ASSESSMENT

- **Goal:** Determine the market potential for your project type (e.g., renewable energy or EV charging) to inform your community's strategy and focus on areas of greatest potential value to your Tribe.
- **Activity Benefits:** Completing a market assessment can help Tribes understand what potential they have for an energy project or EV charging, how that project could benefit the Tribe, and what type of investment, expertise, and job training could be needed.

BLUEPRINT CONNECTIONS

Key Activity 3 relates to **Blueprints #3A**, **#4A**, and **#5**. Please review those Blueprints for additional tips, resources, and project ideas.

Action 1: If pursuing renewable energy, identify renewable generation sources, energy needs, and job creation potential

How? Review the checklist:

- ❑ **Identify and analyze available renewable energy generation sources.** Tribal members can (1) use renewable energy resource potential assessment tools, such as NREL's **Tribal Energy Atlas**, (2) reference studies, such **as Techno-Economic Renewable Energy Potential on Tribal Lands**, or (3) if greater technical expertise is needed, leverage available **technical assistance resources noted above.**
- ❑ **Assess your Tribe's energy needs.** Determine if and how much energy is needed for Tribal residences, businesses, and facilities or if there is excess for sale to others. See Key Activity 2, above, if your Tribe needs to collect this information.
- ❑ **Identify potential customers.** If the tribe intends to sell renewable energy to others, identify potential customers, such as local or regional electric utility or large commercial or industrial users.
- ❑ **Assess job creation potential.** Reach out to project developers, construction contractors, or other Tribes and communities with similar projects to assess job creation potential. See the **EECBG Blueprint 6: Workforce Development** to consider how your EECBG funding could be used to develop the tribal community's workforce, in collaboration with the Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance (TERO) if applicable, as part of a renewable energy project.

*Coeur d'Alene Tribe combines solar PV installation with workforce training. Source: Laura Laumatia and **U.S. Department of Energy***

What to consider:

- **Tribal support and involvement.** What is the level of Tribal government support needed for conducting this project? This may include Tribal government involvement at all stages or specified stages of the project depending on the organizational structure. This may also include community input and involvement.

- **Tribal resources and expertise.** What are the Tribe's available resources and expertise to carry out the above steps? Identify which actions can be completed or initiated internally by the Tribe and which actions require additional support (technical assistance, contracted services, and/or workforce training for the Tribal community). If assistance is needed, identify what type of support is needed and for which steps of the project.
- **Constraints.** Proximity to utility grid; seasonal access issues for road and other transportation systems for construction materials and equipment delivery; land ownership or stewardship structure.
- **Project Scale.** What project scale is feasible for the potential generation resource: distributed (residential, facility), community, or utility?
- **Grid Interconnection.** Is transmission/interconnection with the power grid feasible?
- **Technical suitability**. Assess which renewable technologies are suitable for local conditions (geography, topography, weather, etc.).

The San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Nation saves thousands on energy bills with a solar project. Source: Sandi Alvarez and U.S. Department of Energy

Action 2: If pursuing EV charging, determine the locations and number of chargers to install

How? Review the checklist:

- ❑ **Complete your community EV adoption projections.** Note current and projected trends in EV adoption, including factors such as vehicle registration data and market trends. The projections will facilitate discussions on how much electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) is needed to meet future EV adoption in your community. Advancing Iowa's EV Market Report includes information that could guide your projections.
- ❑ **Consolidate all collected data and analyses into a detailed site assessment report**. This report will include assessments of electrical capacity, zoning regulations, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, EV adoption projections, optimal charger placement, and recommendations for charger types, quantities, ownership models, costs, and timelines. Tribal engagement activities can be used to both inform this report and to collect reactions to the data and findings of this report.
- ❑ **Select promising locations.** Based on the above assessments and your Tribe's input, identify sites or areas that your project could concentrate on. Identify the charging level (e.g., Level 2, DC Fast Chargers), number, and location (e.g., workplace, Tribal meeting locations, public destinations) of EVSE needed to support your Tribal community based on existing and anticipated needs.
- ❑ **Reach out to your local utility to schedule site-level evaluations for potential charging station locations**. Use these evaluations to assess power availability and determine necessary electrical upgrades to support the estimated charging station capacity and usage. Some upgrades can add significant delays to the process (e.g., 18+ months for transformer upgrades). Initiate dialogues with utility representatives to discuss possible approaches for expanding electrical infrastructure and capacity in areas where necessary.

What to consider:

- **Compile all the necessary information to formulate your site assessment.** The Fleet Electrification Step 10: Complete Site Assessment and Design EVSE (DOE) is helpful in confirming you have all the resources you need to complete a proper site assessment. Technical Assistance resources and GIS analysis can also be used to support a site assessment.
- **Identify utilities' EV and EV charging purchasing incentives and time-of-use (TOU) rates if available**. Search for utility EV programs in your area on the Laws and Incentives (AFDC) website and review Examples of Utility-Related Laws and Incentives of utility EV programs.
- **Consider costs.** The cost estimate for this whole process can range from $5,000 - $15,000. This is a rough estimate, and the costs can vary depending on location, scale of your EVSE installation, and electrical capacity. The Plug-in EV Best Practices Compendium (County of Santa Clara) provides an overview of key considerations for governments seeking to support the deployment of EVSE, which includes cost estimates for preliminary assessments as well as equipment and installation.

KEY ACTIVITY 4: FUNDING AND FINANCING

- **Goal:** Evaluate different contracting and funding approaches for your project to determine which best matches your Tribe's interests and funding needs.
- **Activity Benefits:** Funding is often identified as a barrier to completing clean energy projects. Some contracting mechanisms use cost savings from their clean energy project to pay for the project itself. Other approaches allow funding to be recycled over time, enabling the initial amount of funding to support future projects. With consideration, your Tribe can determine if one of these models is suitable, and potentially increase the benefits of your EECBG award.

BLUEPRINT CONNECTIONS

Key Activity 4 relates to Blueprints #3A and #5. Please review those Blueprints for additional tips, resources, and project ideas.

Action 1: Consider if a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is a good fit for your project

How? Review the checklist:

- ❑ **Work with your Tribal government to learn about PPAs and determine interest and feasibility.** A PPA is a frequently-used type of contract that allows a customer – such as a Tribal government or operator of a site – to access solar electricity without paying the upfront costs of installing the solar project. A third-party contractor will install, finance, own, operate, and maintain the system while the customer often provides the rooftop, parking lot, or land parcel for the solar photovoltaic (PV) array and agrees to pay for electricity produced by the system each month. PPAs can result in net customer cost savings when the solar energy costs are less than what the customer was otherwise paying. More information on PPAs is in Blueprint #3A. Technical assistance with an EECBG Voucher or other resource could be used to evaluate a proposed PPA project, contract, and benefits.
- ❑ **Complete a Project Savings Assessment.** Over their lifetime, solar projects can often save money compared to conventional utility power. Understanding the potential cost savings can inform how much – if any – upfront funding may be needed from your Tribe. The presence and extent of savings depend on project size and installation costs, incentives, basic system design, sunlight resources, and assumptions on conventional power prices. PVWatts Calculator (NREL) and REopt Energy Integration & Optimization Home (NREL) incorporate those factors to help estimate savings.

What to consider:

- **Tribal support and involvement.** If your Tribe is new to PPAs, plan to engage with your Tribal government to first learn about PPAs and then determine initial interest in exploring PPA projects and potential sites within the Tribal community. If there is interest, establish your Tribe's preferred process to solicit and review proposals. If considering a PPA, the Tribal government should carefully review terms and conditions and work with the chosen PPA contractor to ensure benefits, beyond the purchase of renewable energy, accrue to the Tribe.

Coeur d'Alene Tribe Saves Energy with grocery store efficiency upgrades. Source: U.S Department of Energy

- **Explore IRA tax credits.** The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) modified and extended the Investment Tax Credit for Energy Property, now making it available to non-taxable entities like local governments. The IRA added tax credit bonuses for various project characteristics, included those located in defined energy communities, which if stacked together could *reduce overall project costs by up to 70%*.

Action 2: If pursuing a revolving loan fund, work to understand areas within the Tribal community that have a gap in funding for clean energy projects

How? Review the checklist:

- ❑ **Consider if Tribally-owned buildings, residences, businesses, or non-profits within your community need or want access to financing, and at what funding level.** This could be done through a formal survey, qualitative interviews, or in coordination with Tribal leadership to determine priorities, needs, and the pros and cons of extending credit to various interested parties.
- ❑ **Community Engagement.** Successful revolving loan funds need community knowledge and support of the fund. More detailed information is available in Blueprint #5.

What to consider:

- **Tribal support.** What is the level of Tribal government support for developing a revolving loan fund?
- **Tribal resources and expertise to run an internal fund and/or potential limitations to running an external fund.** Revolving loan funds can either be internal or externally administered. Determine if there are prevailing rules or perspectives on the best approach.
- **The amount of funding needed to establish a loan fund.** The initial amount of funding needed to start a revolving loan fund could be sizeable and payback periods for the loan could be lengthy, depending on the types of projects the fund aims to support. Consider using your EECBG award to research or develop preliminary designs for a loan fund to position your Tribe to seek additional sources of funding to initiate it.

Action 3: Review additional funding opportunities through grants, loans, and partnerships

How? Review the checklist:

- ❑ **Review funding opportunities and programs listed in this Key Activity's Resources box.** Identify which programs align with your Tribe's clean energy goals and projects, confirming deadlines, funding amounts, and available resources.

- ❑ **Consider forming a funding team within your Tribe.** It can be helpful to define how your Tribe wants to review potential funding opportunities and the process to decide which opportunities your Tribe will pursue.

What to consider:

- **Tribal support and involvement.** How does your Tribe determine and grant authority to pursue a funding application or apply for resource support?
- **Tribal resources and expertise.** Consider which activities your Tribe could most benefit from receiving outside assistance. Some technical assistance resources can provide grant writing and management support.

KEY ACTIVITY 4 RESOURCES

Solar for All: Solar for Tribal Communities Highlights (EPA) Highlights awarded applicants that will invest in Tribally driven and long-lasting programs to establish opportunities for Tribal communities to deploy and benefit from distributed residential solar. These opportunities will include funding and technical assistance to support solar development and storage, workforce development, lower utility bills, and programs designed and implemented within the community.

National Clean Investment Fund (EPA) Program descriptions and contact information for the three grant recipients that have collectively been awarded $14 billion to establish national clean financing institutions that deliver accessible, affordable financing for clean technology projects nationwide, including in Tribal communities and regions.

Tribal Energy Plan Grants (GRID Alternatives) Funding up to $50,000 for up to one year for Tribal energy plan projects. The grants can be used to compensate the Tribal planning team for their time, contract the services of consultants or other third-party experts, and cover the costs of public meetings and other methods soliciting public input.

Tribal Solar Gap Funding Grant (GRID Alternatives) Supports solar projects of any type that require a Tribal cost-share (ex. Federal or State programs) or are leveraging funding from other grant opportunities or initiatives. Applicants may apply for gap funding up to $250,000.

Tribal Nations and Native Communities Guide (DOE) Funding Opportunities, including tax credits, and Technical Assistance programs.

Tribal Energy: Federal Assistance to Support Microgrid Development (GAO) See Appendix 1 for table of Financial Assistance Opportunities.

Loan Programs Office - Tribal Energy Financing (DOE) Supports Tribal investment in energy-related projects by providing direct loans or partial loan guarantees.

Elective Pay:

2023 Tribal Energy Webinar Series: Understanding 48(e) and Elective Pay for Tribal Governments (DOE)

IRS Factsheet for Indian Tribal Governments on Elective Pay (BIA)

Elective Pay and Transferability Frequently Asked Questions (IRS)

KEY ACTIVITY 5: ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- **Goal:** Define the Tribe's goal(s) and vision, identify strategies and actions, maximize workforce and economic development opportunities, and incorporate Tribal priorities.
- **Activity Benefits:** The process of creating an Action Plan can build Tribal knowledge and understanding of potential opportunities as well as document the Tribe's priorities and preferred strategies and intended actions. Having steps and a timeline can support funding applications, create the basis for potential partnerships, and inform what job skill training, projects, and other efforts Tribal members consider pursuing. Action Plans can be very detailed, or a lighter touch, but intend to help move a project into its action phase by laying out concrete steps.

BLUEPRINT CONNECTIONS

Key Activity 5 relates to **Blueprints #1**, **#3B**, **#3D**, **#4A**, and **#4B**. Please review those Blueprints for additional tips, resources, and project ideas.

Action 1: Combine findings and outcomes of research, assessments, and interested party engagement into a formal plan document and adopt the completed plan

How? Review the checklist:

- ❑ **Provide a summary of current energy context within the Tribe's area(s) and the region**. This information will often be included in a market assessment report and identified by local Tribal community knowledge. This summary may include baseline data of Tribal energy usage, EV adoption and EV chargers, or current renewable energy generation.
- ❑ **State the Tribe's goal(s) and vision**. The Tribe's goals and vision will establish the desired outcomes resulting from a clean energy project, the benefits, and uses of the project. The Tribe's values and prioritization of energy use and project benefits can be identified here.
- ❑ **Identify strategies and specific action steps**. Informed by engagement with the Tribe and technical expertise input, identify and list the steps needed to complete a clean energy project as well as related and supporting strategies, if desired. Include timeframes, key participants, and potential partners to support and guide next steps after the plan is adopted. Examples of related strategies include identification of funding resources; determining who and how potential resources will be evaluated and pursued; understanding adjacent workforce and job skills development needs; and defining how economic benefits of a renewable energy project will be invested into the Tribe.
- ❑ **Follow the Tribe's governmental policies and procedures to adopt the action plan**. This process may include multiple levels of Tribal government involvement depending on the organizational structure of each respective Tribe.

What to consider:

- **The Tribe's desired role in the project.** For example, desired Tribal roles could include leasing land for renewable energy development or being the developer, owner, and/or operator of the clean energy project. Consider what activities can be managed by the Tribe versus by a technical assistance provider or contractor.
- **Request technical assistance, if needed.** Industry-specific and technical expertise can be extremely useful in identifying potential action steps, associated resources, and ongoing responsibilities.

CASE STUDIES: TRIBAL RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

Moapa Southern Paiute Solar: The First Utility Scale Solar Project on Tribal Land. This case study provides an overview and the project benefits of a 250 MW solar project on the Moapa River Indian Reservation near Clark County, NV.

Renewable Energy Development: Lessons Learned from the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority. This case study gives context and background on Navajo Nation's energy outlook and describes aspects of the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority's renewables program that is attempting to address the issues laid out in the energy outlook.

Renewable Energy: Planning for Sustainability & Self-Determination for the Navajo Nation. This case study investigates how renewable energy systems can provide sustainability and self-determination for the Navajo Nation.

KEY ACTIVITY 5 RESOURCES

EECBG Comprehensive Guide for Indian Tribes (DOE)

Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers (EPA and DOE collaborative initiative) Direct technical assistance, training, and resource development support to communities to advance environmental and energy justice priorities. Centers can assist Tribes with navigating federal, state, and private grant application systems; writing strong grant proposals; and effectively managing grant funding, among other services. Centers are scheduled to operate through October 2028.

Renewable Energy Development in Indian Country: A Handbook for Tribes (NREL) Overview of the renewable energy project development process including finance, permits, and contracts.

Solar Power in Your Community Guidebook (DOE) Contains case studies with approaches to reduce market barriers that have been field tested in cities and counties around the country.

Community Solar Resources (DOE) Community Solar projects may receive free technical assistance through the **National Community Solar Partnership Technical Assistance Program**.

Inflation-Reduction-Act-Tribal-Guidebook (White House) This guidebook provides an overview of the clean energy, climate mitigation and resilience, agriculture, and conservation-related funding programs in the Inflation Reduction Act for which Tribes are eligible.

Articles Related to Tribal Renewable Energy Projects:

- **America's Energy Transition Must Include Tribal Lands (Scale Microgrids)**
- **Finding a new stream of tribal clean energy financing (Yale Center for Business and the Environment)**