



Indian Country Energy and Infrastructure Working Group (ICEIWG)

May 13, 2026, Hybrid Meeting (Oklahoma City, OK & Virtual) | External Report

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Executive Summary

The [Indian Country Energy and Infrastructure Working Group \(ICEIWG\)](#) works collaboratively with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Indian Energy (IE) focusing on energy access, Tribal energy resource development and resource assessments, and power generation that support the DOE statutory authorizations and requirements of Title V of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

ICEIWG Tribal representatives and DOE convened on May 13, 2026, from 9:30 AM – 4:00 PM EST. The ICEIWG meeting convened Tribal leaders and DOE IE leadership and staff to align on priority actions to advance energy infrastructure in Indian Country, focusing on land, regulatory, and jurisdictional barriers. Members identified infrastructure, governance, and pricing challenges, and established actionable next steps and areas for further DOE/Tribal coordination.

Participants emphasized priorities to strengthen transmission and distribution systems, improve access to and effectiveness of federal funding, and expand Tribal governance capacity through utility development, regulatory frameworks, and taxation strategies. Key opportunities include enhancing interagency



coordination, streamlining processes, improving program design to ensure direct Tribal benefits, creating opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, and supporting scalable solutions such as integrated infrastructure development and distributed energy systems. The session reinforced the importance of sustained federal–Tribal collaboration to reduce barriers, enhance energy resilience and affordability, and advance long-term energy sovereignty.

Discussion Themes

Consolidating fractionated interest, streamlining leasing and rights of way, title status report processes

Key Themes & Insights

- Navigating fractionalization and probate processing
- Misaligned processes discourage development
- Regional federal capacity and coordination
- Sovereignty, trust, and transparency concerns
- Need for scalable, cross-Tribal solutions
- Opportunity: Tribal utilities & federal facility integration

Actionable Opportunities & Requests

- Policy and federal action
- Process improvements
- Programmatic opportunities

Transmission and distribution needs

Key Themes & Insights

- Funding access and administrative barriers
- Ensuring Tribal consultation in transmission development
- Structural gaps in federal and regional governance (FERC & RTOs)
- Interconnection and planning exclude Tribal needs
- Capacity constraints and knowledge gaps
- Financial and structural constraints on Tribal energy systems

Actionable Opportunities & Requests

- Policy and governance
- Process improvements
- Capacity and training
- Funding and implementation



40101 (d) Funds

Key Themes & Insights

- Cost-share requirements as a structural access barrier
- Aligning intended and realized Tribal benefits
- Statutory constraints limit DOE flexibility and intervention
- Interest in integrated infrastructure strategies
- Opportunity to align funding across programs

Actionable Opportunities & Requests

- Policy and federal action
- Process improvements
- Programmatic opportunities

Developing utility codes

Key Themes & Insights

- Tribal utility models are inherently context-specific
- Existing technical assistance lacks clarity and usability for decision-making
- Importance of shared resources and peer learning for infrastructure
- Need for earlier and more consistent engagement with federal regulators

Actionable Opportunities & Requests

- Policy and federal action
- Process improvements
- Programmatic opportunities

Strategies for navigating complex jurisdictional issues, especially concerning utility rights-of-way across reservations

Key Themes & Insights

- Jurisdictional complexity creates barriers to rights-of-way development
- Strategic use of rights-of-way negotiations as leverage points
- Partnerships with investor-owned utilities and co-ops as both opportunity and challenge
- Delegation of authority as a mechanism to accelerate approvals
- Limited engagement with federal planning and transmission processes

Actionable Opportunities & Requests

- Policy and federal action
- Process improvements
- Programmatic opportunities



Taxation of energy resources that flow through reservations

Key Themes & Insights

- Double taxation and jurisdictional ambiguity remain persistent barriers
- Tribal taxation authority as a mechanism for revenue generation and sovereignty
- Complexity of revenue allocation across jurisdictions and geographies
- Negotiated tax agreements as a model to reduce conflict and clarify roles
- Emerging interest in non-traditional revenue models tied to infrastructure

Actionable Opportunities & Requests

- Policy and federal action
- Process improvements
- Programmatic opportunities

How can Tribes address energy pricing fluctuations?

Key Themes & Insights

- High-cost, variable energy systems create acute affordability challenges
- Federal assistance programs play a critical but limited role
- Distributed energy and resilience strategies emerging as key solutions
- Interconnection requirements and utility business models create barriers
- Tribal utilities offer cost advantages and require full cost transparency

Actionable Opportunities & Requests

- Policy and federal action
- Process improvements
- Programmatic opportunities

ICEIWG Charter Review



Appendix

Resources Shared

- DOE \$11.3 million [Partnership for Academic Industry Career Training \(PACT\) Initiative](#), which includes \$2.3 million dedicated to Tribal Colleges and Universities.
- DOE Office of Indian Energy \$50 million [Unleashing Tribal Energy Development Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#); applications due July 24.

Meeting Agenda

TIME	DESCRIPTION
09:00–09:40 a.m.	Welcome Call to Order Invocation (Co-Chair Chairman Gonzalez) Office of Indian Energy Staff Introductions Remarks from Chair Director Mahroum ICEIWG Member Introductions
09:45–10:30 a.m.	Session: Consolidating fractionated interest, streamlining leasing and rights of way, title status report processes.
10:30–10:45 a.m.	Break
10:45–11:30 a.m.	Session: Transmission and distribution needs.
11:30–12:00 p.m.	Session: Developing utility codes.
12:00–01:00 p.m.	Group Photo & Lunch Break
01:00–01:45 p.m.	Session: Strategies for navigating complex jurisdictional issues, especially utility rights-of-way across reservations.
01:45–02:30 p.m.	Session: Taxation of energy resources that flow through reservations.
02:30–03:00 p.m.	Session: How can Tribes address energy pricing fluctuations?
03:00–03:15 p.m.	Break
03:15–03:45 p.m.	ICEIWG Charter review
03:45–04:00 p.m.	Wrap up and summary of next steps
04:00 p.m.	Adjourn