Ponca Tribe of Nebraska

Michael Boggs – Energy Planner
Project Earth Lover
History

- The Ponca’s were a peaceful agricultural tribe located along the Niobrara river in northeastern Nebraska.
- In the early 1870’s the Ponca’s were forced to leave Nebraska and settle in Oklahoma.
- Almost 10 years later the Ponca’s were allowed to return to Nebraska. Those that returned are now considered the Northern Ponca’s and those that remained are considered the Southern Ponca’s.
- During this time period the population dwindled to as little as 200.
History continued

- In 1960 the Ponca Tribe was terminated and no longer federally recognized.
- The Northern Ponca Tribe was once again a federally recognized tribe in 1990.
- Our population has grown to 1,236 registered members.
- We have no reservation land, but instead we operate with a service delivery area made up of 15 counties.
- We have 5 office sites and own properties in 2 other counties with our headquarters located in Niobrara, Nebraska.
EECBG

- Establish an Energy Department
- Retrofit Projects
- Recycling Program
- Education
Energy Department

- Energy Planner
- Energy Planning Team
  - Energy Planner, Senior Planner, Executive Director, Deputy Director, Risk Benefits Manager, Maintenance Supervisor, Housing Employee, Tribal Council Members
- Earth Lover Branding
Retrofit Projects

- We looked mainly at the 5 office locations.
  - What needs did each office have?
  - What is the future of each office site?
  - Where could we get the most out of our money?

- Norfolk Office

- Niobrara Office
Retrofit Projects - Norfolk
Retrofit Projects - Norfolk

- Old Christian College purchased about 5 years ago.
- 3 main buildings, gym building, administration building, and dorm

- Focus on the administration building
  - Brick exterior and cinder block interior
  - The building is basically divided into 2 halves
  - Retrofits were done on the North half of the building.
Retrofit Projects - Norfolk

- Replaced the HVAC
  - Reconfigured ductwork
  - New insulation in the ceiling
  - Programmable thermostats
- Insulated the walls from the inside
- Replaced existing lighting with LED
- Replaced old single pane windows with new double pane windows
- Replaced exterior doors on gym building
Retrofit Projects - Niobrara
Retrofit Projects - Niobrara

- Old weigh station building
  - Brick exterior with steel siding

- Insulated the outside of the building underneath the siding.
- Sealed, insulated, and covered existing unused door
- Sealed all missing screw holes
- Insulated the heating and air duct
  - Insulation in the ceiling
Retrofit Projects - Niobrara

- Replaced 9 existing single pane windows.
  - Caulked and sealed all other windows
- Replaced exterior door at the rear of the building
Recycling Program

- Purchased our recycling bins and set them up throughout our 5 office sites

- Main challenge is breaking peoples habits of throwing recyclables away.
Education

- Most important roles of the Energy Planner
  - Attend all Tribal gatherings
    - Offer energy saving ideas and methods
    - Encourage better uses of resources
    - Encourage active roles in recycling
    - Encourage members to take an active role in changing their habits and the habits of those around them
- Monthly newsletter
- Earth Lover branding
Education

- Weatherization workshops
  - Held at our office sites
  - Demonstrated how to use the weatherization items in the kits
- Weatherization kits
  - Foam weather stripping, window treatments, caulk, spray foam, foam outlet covers, door sweeps
Benefits of EECBG

- Finances
  - Allowed for the establishment of Energy department, retrofits to be done, recycling, community education

- Way of thinking
  - Opened our eyes to a new way of doing things
    - Staff level
    - Hopefully on the membership level as well
DOE Grant

- Recently received DOE grant that we entitled our Project Earth Lover

- **Purpose:** to perform an Energy Options Analysis (EOA) to empower Tribal leadership with critical information to allow them to effectively screen energy options that will further develop the Tribe’s long-term strategic plan and energy vision.
Plan

- To collaborate with our Energy Team to brainstorm and compile energy producing ideas for the Ponca Tribe.
  - Solar, Wind, Geothermal, Biomass
  - To what scale are we wanting to do these.
  - What methods work best for our locations

- Finalize our Scope Of Work (SOW) for the contractor on the wants and needs of the Ponca Tribe.
Plan continued

- Meet with potential contractors (ongoing)
  - Explain what we are looking for
  - Select the contractor
- Begin our EOA (Jan-Feb)
- Present the findings to Tribal Council and get direction on which way the Tribe wants to go
- Continue to pursue grants that will allow for the continuation of our energy efforts.
- Continue to educate the Ponca members on what we are doing, and encourage energy saving practices
Other Projects

- EPA grant for wind energy feasibility
  - Very beginning stages
  - We will be doing wind monitoring at our Norfolk property to see the feasibility of wind energy at this site.
Contact information

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