Department of Energy
Tribal Energy Review
October 25th – 29th
Solar Feasibility and Pre-Development Study
Tribal ancestors resided in the area surrounding the San Jacinto Mountains in the Southern California region for centuries.

The Agua Caliente Reservation (approximately 32,000 acres) was deeded in trust by Federal Order in 1876 to the Agua Caliente Tribe.

The Tribe was deeded the even numbered sections as the odd numbered sections were deeded to Southern Pacific Railroad in 1860; Creating a checkerboard reservation configuration.

Portions of the cities of Palm Springs, Cathedral City and Rancho Mirage lie within the Agua Caliente Indian Reservation.
Project Overview

• With prior DOE support the Tribe developed a Strategic Energy Plan in 2006. This plan encompasses the vision for the energy future of the Tribe.

• Several of the near-term objectives from the Strategic Energy Plan have now been implemented and the Tribe now seeks to assess the feasibility of larger scale renewable projects on the reservation.

• The feasibility analysis will allow the Tribe to evaluate and select best energy development options on Tribal lands.
Project Location

• Three primary sites are being assessed through the DOE feasibility study:
  • Whitewater Ranch – A 217 acre property near the western edge of the Coachella Valley
  • Tribal Administration Plaza
  • A 20 Acre parcel south of the Agua Caliente Resort
Tribal staff has continued to work with Red Mountain Energy Partners throughout the feasibility stage of this project. Their assistance and expertise have been invaluable throughout this process.
Project Objectives

• Thoroughly assess the solar renewable energy potential of each of the Tribal sites identified.

• Based upon the initial assessment of the various sites identified; determine the pertinent technology options.

• Select the optimal technology for the sites identified and create viable project options.

• Develop detailed economic models for the projects identified with a goal of creating project-ready plans for solar renewable financing and implementation.
• A site requirement package was distributed to 5 vendors.
  • Analysis from vendors has resulted in two vendors who met criteria and appear to be capable of installing the desired project.
  • Staff approached Tribal Council with initial project estimates and will return to Tribal Council with refined project information after obtaining direction.

Agua Caliente Resort – 20 acre parcel

• Initial focus has been on the 20 acre site just south of the Agua Caliente Resort.
• The site has already been graded and transmission connection would not be difficult.
• A 1MW solar field would require 5-7 acres of land, provide approximately 8% of annual load for the Resort and qualify the site for the California Solar Initiative.
Whitewater Ranch – 217 acre property

- Portions of the property are in the BIA fee to trust application process.
- The focus will be solely on Federal Trust status parcels.
- The 83 acre northwest parcel appears to be the most feasible option/location.
- A phase 1 survey of the site was completed by our Tribal Historic Preservation Division.
- Initial site analysis completed and constraints are now known.
Tribal Administration Plaza

- Energy efficiency audit is planned later this year for this relatively new building.
- Upon initial analysis, rooftop PV or carport PV structures would appear to be best options.
- Additional analysis forthcoming once audit is completed.
Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) – The Tribe currently receives a 1MW annual allocation of power from the Parker/Davis Hydroelectric Dams. As part of the agreement with WAPA, the Tribe will receive this power allocation for the next 19 years.

Water and Energy Resource Authority (WERA) - The goal of this entity is to manage ongoing water and energy resources in a more efficient manner. WERA continues to meet on a quarterly basis and has proven to be a useful coordinating entity for all Tribal energy and water related issues.

Desert Cities Energy Partnership (DCEP) – The Agua Caliente Tribe continues to play a vital role in energy efficiency, conservation and renewable energy development within the Coachella Valley. A member of the WERA committee represents the Tribe on DCEP, a partnership representing the Tribe and other local municipalities, which guides policy on energy efficiency throughout the Coachella Valley.
Future Plans

• The Agua Caliente Tribe continues to assess energy options that can be incorporated into the Tribe’s Overall Strategic Energy Plan.

• Stewardship of the land and efficient use of resources in the desert region are critical to continued prosperity of the Tribe and the region for future generations.

• QUESTIONS?