



Opportunities in Renewable Energy via Partnerships with Canadian First Nations

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Overview

Canadian Aboriginal communities, across the country, have become powerful partners in renewable energy developments. As of January 1st, 2014, there are some 27 hydro, wind, biomass, and major solar projects co-owned by First Nations communities producing energy.

Renewable Energy Projects

In order to take advantage of these renewable energy projects it is imperative to gain the support and consensus of the Aboriginal groups. First Nations participation has also been critical in the deployment of successful projects during the design and planning phases, which include incorporating traditional knowledge with scientific expertise during the environmental assessment studies. With almost 80 additional projects in various stages of development from concept definition to feasibility, these ongoing projects are stimulating Aboriginal partnered energy developments for years, at least into the mid-2020s.

Highlights of current ongoing projects:

- **The Mother Earth wind Energy project on Manitoulin Island in Northern Ontario**
 - A wind farm 100 per cent owned by the M'Chigeeng First Nation
 - The facility captures the strong winds that blow on the northern shores of Lake Huron, generating power which is being fed into the Ontario power grid
- **Wuskwatim Hydro on the Burntwood River in Manitoba**
 - A 200-megawatt (MW) initiative
 - Manitoba Hydro led the \$1.4-billion project
 - The Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation holds a 33 per cent stake
 - This is first time Manitoba Hydro has entered into a partnership with a First Nations community on a generating station project
- **The Dokie Wind Farm in Northern British Columbia**
 - The \$230-million investment is 25.5 per cent owned by Alterra, with the balance held by Fiera Axium Western Energy
 - Located within the traditional territories of the West Moberly, Saulneau, and Halfway River First Nations and the McLeod Lake Indian Band
 - The Dokie General Partnership entered into Memoranda of Understanding with all of these First Nations, which allow access through First Nation's traditional territories and provides revenue sharing, employment, and contracting opportunities for First Nations members

Market Demand

In Canada, provinces and territories are acquiring more clean energy due to:

- Rising demand in some regions
- Replacement of antiquated generating capacity
- Natural resource development
- Green or environmental provisions

Populations and economies from coast to coast are growing, which necessitates higher electricity base load capacity. Nearly all jurisdictions are seeking to reduce their environmental footprint and greenhouse gas emissions by promoting green energy resources. Authorities in Canadian governments, utilities, and electricity markets have also been encouraging Aboriginal involvement and co-ownership by introducing a variety of policies and practices. These rule changes have been introduced to recognize Aboriginal land and water rights, while the innovations also reflect a rational public policy position that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit participation makes sound economic and social sense. Collectively, these advances identify an emerging standard and a new norm that should be underscored.

Opportunities & Related Events

For U.S. firms looking to connect with Canadian Aboriginal organizations, Commercial Service Canada, in conjunction with the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) has developed a "First Nations to First Nations" initiative, which includes a

guide to doing business with Canadian aboriginals as well as upcoming matchmaking opportunities. Please contact our CS Calgary to receive our guide on “Canadian Aboriginal Procurement Processes and Opportunities”; cindy.biggs@trade.gov.

Interested in finding out more on First Nations partnerships? Join our Virtual Trade Mission to Canada’s North.

The United States Department of Commerce, in partnership with the Minority Business Development Agency, is organizing a two-prong virtual and traditional trade mission to Canada that will include the Aboriginal Entrepreneurs Conference and Trade Show 2014. Take part in briefings and one-on-one business appointments with pre-screened potential buyers, agents, distributors and joint-venture partners from throughout Canada, including those not at the Conference.

This mission is open to U.S. companies and trade associations from a cross section of industries with potential to provide needed and appropriate services in the more remote regions of Canada. These sectors include: energy (both new and renewable), environmental technologies and services, remote healthcare related technology and services, distance education, and infrastructure (including architecture/engineering, master planning, and construction management).

Web Resources

- [ReNew Canada](#)

For More Information: Contact Cindy Biggs, Commercial Attaché, U.S. Commercial Service for Western Canada at Cindy.Biggs@trade.gov or (403) 265-2116. You can also visit our website at <http://www.export.gov/canada>.

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Comments and Suggestions: We welcome your comments and suggestions regarding this market research. You can e-mail us your comments/suggestions to: Customer.Care@mail.doc.gov. Please include the name of the applicable market research in your e-mail. We greatly appreciate your feedback.

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