

USDA: Seeking input from tribal leaders on advancing clean energy for tribal communities through the Inflation Reduction Act

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U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Under Secretary Xochitl Torres Small recently announced that USDA will host a Tribal consultation on Thursday, December 15, 2022, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. ET.

Tribal leaders and their proxies are invited to give input on new funding authorities under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) that will help advance clean energy for people living in Tribal communities. Tribes, Tribal enterprises, Tribal utilities and other non-Tribal applicants may be eligible for funding under the IRA programs offered by USDA.

- To register to attend the consultation, visit: https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_dYblofYFQqaB0iLGoW5tNQ.
- USDA is also hosting a Tribal Caucus from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. ET. Tribal leaders are invited to register to attend the caucus at https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_dYblofYFQqaB0iLGoW5tNQ.
- Proxies who plan to attend the consultation or the caucus may submit a proxy form to aian@usda.gov by Friday, Dec. 9, 2022. Proxies may email aian@usda.gov to request a proxy form.

In August, Congress passed the Biden-Harris Administration's historic legislative package known as the Inflation Reduction Act to reduce energy costs for families and create thousands of good-paying jobs for people in rural and Tribal

communities. The White House also released a series of fact sheets on the IRA, including [How the Inflation Reduction Act Helps Tribal Communities](#).

This commitment to cleaner energy will help USDA Rural Development provide resources to reduce climate pollution and ensure that rural people and their communities have access to a clean, secure energy supply to keep people and economies prepared for the future.

The Act supports funding authorities for renewable electric infrastructure, including electric vehicle transportation. It also supports new funding authorities for related energy and electric programs, including programs under USDA's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) and Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBCS).

The Inflation Reduction Act provides \$12.2 billion in funding to USDA to develop or expand renewable energy, biofuels and energy efficiency infrastructure, including:

- \$1 billion for RUS loans for renewable energy infrastructure loans with up to 50% loan forgiveness.
- \$2.025 billion for renewable energy and energy-efficiency projects through the Rural Energy for America Program, with \$303 million set aside for underutilized technologies and technical assistance.
- \$500 million in RBCS grants for infrastructure improvements through the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program to support the sale and use of blends of ethanol greater than 10 percent or biodiesel greater than 5 percent.
- \$9.7 billion for RUS to offer loans, grants, loan modifications and other financial assistance to help deploy or purchase renewable energy systems, zero-emission systems and carbon capture systems; or to make energy-efficiency improvements to generation and transmission systems of eligible entities.