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42867 A Conversation with Alaskans on the Grid Resilience State
and Tribal Formula Grants

Whitney Bell: Hello, everyone, and welcome to A

Conversation with Alaskans on the Grid Resilience State and Tribal Formula Grants webinar. I'm Whitney Bell with ICF, and I'll be your host today. First, I have a few housekeeping items for today's webinar. This Webex meeting is being recorded and may be used by the U.S. Department of Energy. If you do not wish to have your voice recorded, please do not speak during the call. If you do not wish to have your image recorded, please turn off your camera or participate by phone. If you speak during the call or use a video connection, you are presumed to consent to a recording and use of your voice or image. All participants are in listen-only mode. If you have any technical issues or questions, you may type them in the chat box and select send to host. There's an example here on the screen for you. There will be a Q&A after today's presentation so please submit all questions in the chat box. If you need to view the live captioning, please refer to the link that will appear in the chat now. Finally, and this is the number-one question we get, we will be posting a copy of today's slides on this webinar's landing page by

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this coming Friday. The recording of today's webinar, as well as a transcript, will be available on the same webpage in about two weeks, and we will notify you all when that is live.

All right. Now that the housekeeping is out of the way, I'd like to take a moment to introduce you to Matt Heavner. He's the senior advisor at the Arctic Energy Office at the Department of Energy, and he is going to kick off today's meeting. So Matt, welcome.

Matt Heavner: Great. Thank you, Whitney, and thank you everyone online who was able to join us today. This is an opportunity to hear from us at DOE more about the Grid Resilience State and Tribal Formula Grants, and it's a great opportunity to hear and answer questions. And we're really excited to have this opportunity for everybody.

I wanted to start by just giving a few quick slides about the Arctic Energy Office and describe how we can help Alaskans connect with the Department of Energy more broadly. So the Arctic Energy Office that I'm a part of is a key piece of executing the

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Department of Energy's mission. And so just to make sure everybody's familiar with that, it's to ensure America's security and prosperity by addressing energy, environmental, and nuclear challenges by providing transformative science and technology solutions. And so our office reports to the Undersecretary of Science and Innovation under the Secretary of Energy, and so we provide broad reach across the Department of Energy for Alaskans and Arctic residents to engage with the department. The goals for the Department of Energy are to combat the climate crisis, promote energy justice, facilitate the energy transition, and create clean energy union jobs. And today in this grid deployment office, grid resilience opportunity is a key part of that. For the Arctic Energy Office specifically, we see ourselves and we strive to bring the Arctic to the Department of Energy and the Department of Energy to the Arctic. So today's webinar is a great opportunity to do that.

Our team is fairly small, but we have broad expertise in energy, engineering, international affairs, science and research that the department supports, as

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well as military and government relations and tribal consultations and communications. Our main objectives are to support the broader Department of Energy, the policies, programs, and events that are going on, as well as advance Arctic energy transition in remote and rural communities. Again, today's a great opportunity for us to do that. We want to ensure that tribal voices are heard, and this is a great opportunity for that as well.

And finally, what we want to do through the Arctic Energy Office is invite you to stay connected with us. You can find us and updates on what the department is doing in the Arctic at our webpage, which is energy.gov/arctic. We have the Arctic Energy Newsletter that we invite you to subscribe to, and you can follow us on Facebook or Twitter as well as connect with us on LinkedIn. And we look forward to working with GDO and all of you online to make sure everyone is able to take advantage of this Grid Resilience Formula. I'd like to now turn it over to Ariel Horowitz, who's a deputy director at GDO.

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Ariel Horowitz: Thank you and good afternoon, everyone.

Thanks for joining us. I'm Ariel Horowitz, the deputy director of grid modernization for the DOE Grid Deployment Office. And we've very excited to have the opportunity to talk with this group today about a recent update that we made to the Grid Resilience Formula Grants for tribes over the course of the rest of the summer. Next slide please.

So just to introduce the Grid Deployment Office, we're a relatively new office within the Department of Energy. We were created about a year ago, and we work to provide electricity to all citizens, all residents of the United States by maintaining and investing in critical generation facilities, transmission facilities, distribution facilities to ensure resource adequacy, expand our transmission and distribution networks to ensure our communities have access to reliable and affordable electricity and that those networks are able to better withstand some of the challenges that we're seeing, you know, today with some of the extreme heat and flooding that we've seen over the past couple of weeks, for example.

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We work across three different divisions. We have a generation credits division that mostly works with existing hydropower and nuclear facilities, for example, and works within the wholesale market constructs to ensure resilience and reliability. We have a transmission division that's very focused on ensuring transmission reliability and expanding out the transmission infrastructure to support our policy goals. And then the Grid Modernization Division oversees activities that work to prevent and minimize the impacts of electric outages and enhance the resilience and the flexibility of the electric grid. Next slide please.

So we have a wide range of different programs across those three divisions, many but not all of which are tied to either the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs bill or the Inflation Reduction Act. Today we are here to discuss the Grid Resilience Formula Grants for our states, territories, and tribes, which as some of you may know, closed earlier this year for our first round of funding for states but is still open through August 31st for tribes. And we have a

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variety of program structures and modifications that we've put in place to work to make this program as accessible and useful as possible for tribes in particular, and we're really excited to get the opportunity to talk those through today. Next slide please. So with that, I will pass it off to Emily to talk through some of those changes.

Emily Barrett: Thanks, Ariel. All right. So yeah, as Ariel mentioned, I'll be talking through - I'll provide a little bit of a sort of high-level overview of some of the major highlights of the grant program just as a reminder and then we'll kind of dig into some of the specific updates that recently happened.

So this is a five-year non-competitive formula grant program that allows states, territories, and tribes to get access to funding that is set aside for grid resilience projects. And we'll talk a little bit about kind of what eligible investments can be made through this program. But, you know, in general, it's for projects that reduce the likelihood and consequences of electrical outages due to extreme weather, wildfire, or other natural disasters. So as

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Ariel mentioned, the deadline for submitting an application to get access to these funds was extended for tribes until August 31st, so a little more than a month from now. That's for the first two years of funding, and then there will be three subsequent years of funding available after that, and there will be a process for applying to get access to those funds and amending the agreement that you have with DOE.

So really, you know, you don't need to have specific projects identified in order to apply by August 31st. Really, you need to do some thinking about what your programmatic approach will be, but you can keep the application pretty high level, which gives you flexibility to identify some of those project specifics moving forward. And really, applying by August 31st gives you the opportunity to develop that program in the future and secure those first two years of funding. We have provide sample application templates and resources to help with that application process. And I will say this since I know this can sometimes be confusing, because this is not a

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competitive grant program, we have a lot of flexibility in how much we can work with you and how much we can talk with you and help you, and we really are very happy to do that. Like I've had lots of one-on-one conversations with tribes sort of thinking through what this opportunity might mean for them and how they might use the funding and answering questions, and we are really, really available and open to doing that. So when you see the contact information in the chat and at the end of the session, take note, reach out. We'd be happy to talk to you if you have questions even following onto this discussion.

There are subgrant and cost match requirements associated with this program. I'll speak to those a little bit kind of as I go through some of these highlights, but if you have following questions, I'm happy to dig in further.

So as promised, here are some examples of things that you could use this grant funding for. This is not an exhaustive list, but this is what's written into the

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Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which is the law that made this funding available. So it's things like grid pole management, hardening of electrical infrastructure, undergrounding of electrical equipment or weatherization technologies that will allow electrical equipment to withstand the impacts of weather or natural disasters, adaptive protection strategies and battery energy storage, as long as that energy storage system is being used for this resilience need, right, for the ability to respond to and mitigate the impact of these kinds of disruptive events and power outages.

I will call out a couple of things that are explicitly ineligible and have been called out in the law as things that this funding cannot be used for. Probably the most significant of which is the construction of new generating facilities. So new solar, new (unint.), new diesel generators, new generating capacity of any kind of not an eligible use of this funding. At the end there'll be some discussion of other grant opportunities that might be better suited for that, as well as some clarification

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on well, what if it's not new and kind of what -
there's flexibility there, but that is an explicit
prohibition in the law.

Again, I mentioned that there is a subgrant component
to this program. So the way that the law is written,
the expectation is that the recipients of these
funds, so in this case states, territories, or
tribes, would direct funding to eligible entities and
subaward these projects to in general utility
providers, electric utility providers that serve
them. So, you know, there's a list here of eligible
entities that are explicitly called out. There is a
provision within the law that allows for the
inclusion of eligible entities that are not
explicitly listed here. For instance, if a tribe
wanted to self-direct some of this funding and do the
grid resilience projects themselves, that might be
allowable but would need explicit permission from the
Secretary of Energy, and there's a process that we
have in place to do that.

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There are cost match requirements associated with this funding opportunity. So the funds that are available to the tribe, a 15 percent cost match is immediately applied. And then for the projects that are sub-awarded, there's an additional cost match. So in the normal case, it would be 100 percent cost match on the grid resilience project funding, but for small utilities or small eligible entities, and those are entities that sell less than four million megawatt hours of power per year, that cost match is reduced to one-third of the cost of the project. So cost match can be provided in the form of in-kind contributions, such as staff time. It can be provided by other entities. However, with very limited exceptions, federal funding cannot be used as cost match for these grants. However, funds from the Denali Commission are one of those limited exceptions. And so if you want more information on that, you can reach out to us or ultimately to your project officer to kind of talk through how that might work.

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So where are we in this program? So I mentioned applications for tribes for the first year of funding are due on August 31st. However, we are already beginning to make awards. GDO started awarding projects on a rolling basis back in May. To date, we have awarded - and I think this number is still current, but it's changing quickly -- \$4.4 million to tribes. And those will continue on a rolling basis, and we'll be making those awards based on the order in which we receive applications.

So if you look on the right-hand side of this slide, you can see a QR code that will allow you to go to the website with all of the specific tribal allocations. Those are publicly available.

Allocations to Indian tribes for the first two years are in the range of \$50,000 on the low end, up to \$5 million on the high end. So to get access to your tribal federal allocation, you can go to this website, or I believe I see somebody just put it in the chat. Thank you for that.

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But let me get to sort of some of the recent program updates. So as Ariel mentioned, there have been some changes that have come out in the last couple of months, including we now have a mail-in option available so that in addition to applying through the Fed Connect system, you can also mail applications in. And we have some additional materials that are available to kind of help with the process, including grant application assistance recordings, updated slides that walk through the application process, and updated templates. I will also say that probably the biggest update that's happened is that we are not accepting tribal consortium applications. And I'll walk through a little bit on what that looks like and how that works. I will say there are some nuances. For every program, I think this may look a little bit different so I want to make sure that we're clear about kind of what GDO means when we talk about a tribal consortium and how that would work in terms of actually applying to get access to the funding but then administering the grant.

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Okay. So a group of tribes, including Alaska Native Corporations, may submit a single application on behalf of multiple tribes. There will be a lead Indian tribe in that scenario, which would then handle submitting the single application and then be responsible for administration of the award. That tribe is then responsible for fulfilling all of the grant requirements associated with this grant over the course of the full program and the full funding. Cost match can be allocated across the tribes participating in any way that you choose to do so. That could come from a combination of the tribes participating, it could come from a third party, and it would be, you know, 15 percent of the sum total of all of the funds that were being applied to as a part of that consortium. There is some updated information that's available online that kind of walks through how you would describe the cost match and how that's being met 'cause as a part of applying for the program, you would have to detail where all that cost match funding was coming from. And every entity and every tribe participating who was providing cost

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match would provide a letter basically committing to providing their portion of the cost match.

One of the things that we have provided in the past are templates for what we call head-of-government letters. So this is documentation basically authorizing somebody within the government to apply to get access to the funds and sort of be the lead on the application. So there's a similar approach that we're taking here where every participating tribe would submit sort of the equivalent of that head-of-government letter but appointing the lead as the sort of lead for submitting the application and administering the award on behalf of the collection of tribes. If anyone here or anywhere, any tribe has applied to the program in the past and has an interest in perhaps participating in a consortium, you know, we've certainly heard that and are being flexible and working with tribes to do that. So you should contact the email address here, GDOTribalAssistance@hq.doe.gov to kind of talk through what that would look like.

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So five percent of this grant funding can be used to administer the program, and that might be used directly by the lead tribe or distributed across the tribes participating, but that could also be contracted out to a third party. So it is certainly possible that the lead Indian tribe could authorize a third-party organization to handle the application, submit the application on behalf of the consortium and then administer the award for the tribal consortium. They could do that using that five percent, and that would be something that the tribal consortium would determine, and that's how that sort of technical assistance and program administration funding could be used. However, you know, whoever is designated as the lead tribe for the consortium would still ultimately be responsible for making sure that all of the requirements of the grant are fulfilled and are met over the course of the program.

So what needs to happen now? So assuming you're approaching this and are looking at kind of applying to the program, there are two key application components. There's the program narrative, which

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describes the resilience objectives that would benefit all of the participating consortium tribes and how the consortium tribes will plan to use and make decisions around how the funds are used moving forward. We have a sample program narrative that's available online and, you know, hopefully you'll be able to borrow heavily from that as makes sense for you. Again, project specifics are not required at this time in that program narrative. And in fact, there is some advantage to keeping things high-level and strategic 'cause that allows you to sort of sort out and figure out those details moving forward.

Each participating Indian Tribe, as I mentioned, will provide a letter basically designating the lead Indian Tribe to act on their behalf and authorize them to apply for and administer the grant. And then the lead Indian Tribe would submit a letter accepting that responsibility and that designation and that they commit to administering the grant funding moving forward. Again, we have templates for this. They're at that website that will come up here at the end of

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the presentation, and there's some additional guidance available in the frequently asked questions.

So the last thing that I'll sort of call out here, and you notice that this kind of walks through the elements of what's required in the program narrative, and so it's related to some of the things that I sort of mentioned already around objectives and how decisions will be made, the criteria by which projects will be selected, how funding will be distributed, and how this approach will benefit all tribes participating in the consortium.

The last thing I do want to call out here is that a public notice and hearing is required before the application is submitted, and that can be a dingle, you know, public notice and hearing for all of the participating tribes within the consortium.

With that, I'm going to talk through one frequently asked question that I sort of promised to talk about at the beginning, and then I'll get to whatever questions you all have. So we do sometimes hear that

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there's an interest in modifying existing generating facilities and could that be an eligible project, and the answer is yes, we do have some flexibility in this space. The project would still need to meet the primary objectives of the grant in that it would need to either mitigate the impact of or reduce the likelihood of disruptive events in the electric grid. But given that that is met, that criteria is met, replacing old generation components with new components with new components, overhauling diesel generators, including replacements of component parts, you know, building stock inventories for replacement parts to have an inventory of materials to make repairs where supply chain issues perhaps might be an issue, and then refurbishment of existing transformers, new fuel tanks - these could be new fuel tanks - all are examples of allowable projects. And, of course, if you have questions about whether a project is eligible, feel free to reach out to us and we can certainly talk through that with you. In some cases, you know, things may need to be reviewed if they are sort of borderline, but we're happy to do

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that and kind of walk through all of those questions as they arise.

I will say that we do know that expanding generating facility to increase the capacity, you know, to go from a 100 kilowatt to a 200 kilowatt generator would not be allowable. And then replacement of one kind of generation with another, so to replace a 100 kilowatt diesel generator with a 100 kilowatt, you know, solar PD system would also not be allowable because those have been deemed to be new generating facilities.

And with that, I think I am at the end of my prepared comments. Here are some additional resources. Like I mentioned, we are really happy to have one-on-one meetings with all of you. Please take note of this contact information. I think you'll also be getting these slides. There's recordings available, there are templates available, and we can work with you to kind of provide whatever support is in our power to make sure that you have the opportunity to take advantage of this funding.

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This is one last resource I wanted to share. This isn't specific to the Grid Resilience Formula Grant funding, but the Office of Indian Energy does a great job of collecting current funding opportunities, and we know that there's a lot out there right now, and the Formula Grant Funding may fit within a larger, you know, set of energy goals that you all have. You know, for instance, there are programs right now that could help you pursue renewable energy projects, if that was an interest, that you might then be able to pair with something like a battery energy storage or grid upgrades that you could fund through this project to do something larger like, for instance, a microgrid.

Okay. And with that, I think I'm happy to take whatever questions you have. I have a couple other colleagues on the line who will be coming on video and off mute, both more on the contracting side and others at GDO. So if you all wanted to join me, I think we'd be happy to start taking some questions.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Emily, thank you so much. This is
AnneMarie Horowitz, no relation to Ariel, who spoke

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in the beginning. I am the communications lead for the Arctic Energy Office. So it's wonderful to see so many folks on the line, and if you're watching this after the fact, we're glad you're able to catch the recording as well. Our office is always available for support. So we're thrilled to have GDO expertise on this line as well. So please keep those questions coming, and we're happy to get as many of them as we can answered online, and then we can get to any that we can't have time for after this as well. So drop them in that chat feature.

So the first one is from Denae. They were asking is there a list of current organizations or recipients of funding to date? So if you could address that, Emily, I'd appreciate it.

Emily Barrett: Yes, there is. We've been announcing these things in a couple of different ways. If you follow us on LinkedIn, GDO announces every time there's a new batch of funding but then also on our website, on the GDO website, which is energy.gov/gdo, and I think it's also in the presentation. You can go and look up who has been funded so far, where funds have been

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awarded so far. And again, that number keeps going up pretty rapidly at this point.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Great. Thank you so much for addressing that. I'll kick this next one to Tom on our team. Thank you for joining - well, actually on the GDO team. But Cindy was asking for self-directed projects for the tribes, do they need to go through the process to get permission before applying to the grant program or can that be done after an award is made?

Tom King: Thanks for the question. So there are a couple items here. One is the differentiation between an eligible applicant and an eligible entity. If a particular tribe would like to do specific work and not necessarily make a subaward to an existing eligible entity that's listed in the BIL, they can submit a request to be considered for an eligible entity to be able to do that work. So there is a process. Once the award is made, you'll work with your project officer, and you can go through that process. And keep in mind, and Emily kind of hit on this, as far as the application process, you're not defining specific projects. So we've been

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recommending to keep things at a very high level of defining what the criteria and objectives are going to be in selecting projects and so then once the award is made, you will then be able to go through, finalize the paperwork and the documentation and then you'll be able to go through and then submit requests for projects, working closely with the project officer. So you will not be on your own. There's a strong team that's there to help you through that process.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Great. Thank you so much, Tom, for addressing that. Okay. Another question that we have, this one I'm going to put over to Jay also from Cindy. On the environmental questionnaire they're saying it appears that groups are focused more towards energy labs, providers, et cetera. Since the tribes are applying for funding to be grant program managers for sub-awardees and no specific projects need to be laid out, is the best category group for planning and administrative tasks?

Jay Hanna: Yes. So this is Jay Hanna. I work at the National Energy Technology Laboratory, and we support the Grid Deployment Office for (unint.), and if you

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receive a grant, your federal project office will be from NETL. So it's a good question. For your initial application, as has been mentioned previously, when you receive your award, you'll be authorized to do essentially the management of the technical assistance and administrative activities under the grant. And then because of that, on your environmental questionnaire, you're correct, you just check group A on the first sheet. You fill out the top part of the first page of the environmental questionnaire. You check group A, and then the instructions say if you check group A, you go to the last page and you sign it. Then, as Tom King just mentioned, after you receive an award, there's a process that you go through for getting what is essentially approval from DOE for the individual projects. And if you go to the Administrative and Legal Requirements document, which is essentially the funding opportunity announcement, in section 5G or I think it's Roman Numeral VG, it lists the notification process you have to go through for the individual projects after you receive your grant. One of the items you provide in the notification would be

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the environmental questionnaire for that specific project, which you'll likely have more to fill out once you know the specific project. And if you have an eligible entity that's managing the project for you and has more information, perhaps they can fill that out and provide it to you and you provide it to DOE along with the other information that's required in section VG of the ALRD. And that same term will be in your Assistance Agreement if you receive a grant. Thank you.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Jay, thank you so much for addressing that. I really appreciate it and for the introduction to you and your work. This question I'll put over to Emily and another one, and then, Lucas, you're on the line next. So Bertha was asking for the purpose of this grant only, there's no legal paperwork required to be designated as a tribal consortium, is that correct?

Emily Barrett: I will let Jay jump in, and correct me if I'm wrong, but no. I mean I believe that if you apply as stated and go through the application process and really the legal designation happens when you all designate a lead tribe through those letters of

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commitment. Then that's what you need to do in order to be qualified as a consortium under this application process.

Jay Hanna: Yes. We're allowing what is essentially unincorporate consortia. So you'll just have to have the letters from the head of government submitted with the application from all the consortium members saying that, you know, that I'm the authorized person for my tribe, and we designate this other tribe to be the lead for our consortium that we are joining. And then the that lead tribe must also submit a letter accepting that role on behalf of all of the participating tribes. And that information, and we have example letters that are posted to the website and also in the frequently asked questions that are posted with the ALRD on the website where you have all the application information. It goes into more detail on that, but it does not have to be like a legal contract signed necessarily between the various tribes. Although, you know, each tribe is, excuse me, the lead tribe will be responsible for meeting the cost match for the entire grant. So it would likely behoove the participating tribes and that lead tribe

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to have some kind of an arrangement for making sure that the cost match that is provided may be a prorated share of each tribe's allocation, you know, for the cost match, but that's up to the tribes to work that out.

We also ask that in your program narrative you explain how each tribe will have a say in how the grant funding will be used and how the projects benefit all of the participating tribes.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Great. I think between the two of you that was really excellent. So I really appreciate that. Kind of a related note here, so Emily, we'll start with you on this. Can a tribe and their ANC, their Alaska Native Corporation, apply under one application with the applicant being the ANC?

Emily Barrett: Yeah, absolutely. And the model for that would be at that point the ANC would be the lead tribe and all the same sort of structures would be in place where the tribe would submit a letter designating the ANC, and the ANC would then submit a letter accepting that designation as sort of the lead for that application.

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AnneMarie Horowitz: Great. And thank you so much. And

Lucas, I know we briefly touched on this, but it came up in the questions. Does the Denali Commission money count as a match under this program?

Lucas Greza: Yeah. You can use Denali Commission dollars to satisfy the cost match.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Great. Thank you so much for addressing that. I really appreciate it. All right. We'll put this one over to Tom. Erin's asking could a tribe subgrant funds to a local government - or I'm sorry. Could a tribe subgrant funds to a local government when they serve as the utility in the area?

Tom King: If that utility is one of those listed as part of an eligible entity where they're a generation provider, electric provider, energy storage provider, distribution provider, then the answer is yes. It may be specific to that local government, but in general, it sounds like that would be - it would be an allowable approach to take that. Once again, work closely with your project officers, and if you have questions, sometimes these are specific and have

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nuances. So just be careful about that and just ask questions.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Perfect. Thank you so much, Tom.

Emily, a question for you. Richard's asking can a battery system be purchased to improve grid resilience that will later be connected to renewable energy sources in the future?

Emily Barrett: Absolutely. SO the renewable energy sources would not be - you could not procure the renewable energy sources through this grant funding, but you could certainly procure the battery energy storage that would be used for grid resilience and, in fact, could connect that to an existing renewable energy source that you have. So if you, for instance, already had a photovoltaic system and wanted to use this funding to install a battery to help utilize that photovoltaic system in say the context of a microgrid, that would absolutely be an allowable expense. It's really that you can't pay for the new generation itself under this funding.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Great. Thank you, Emily. So Lucas, I understand that the deadline for this is July 31st for

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these applications. How long does it typically take for someone to apply for this program?

Lucas Greza: So the deadline's actually August 31st.

AnneMarie Horowitz: August.

Lucas Greza: So we've got a little bit more time.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Yes. Yes. Don't hustle. Don't hustle.

August 31st. You're good.

Lucas Greza: Yes. So the application itself, there are six to seven documents that you need to submit.

Really, I think the part that would take the longest is the public notice and hearing. That can take a little while to get set up and execute. You know, depending on how quickly you can do that, there's definitely still time to apply if you haven't. It all kind of just depends on how quickly you can get that public notice and hearing scheduled and held.

A couple other things to keep in mind if you're talking to potential sub-awardees, that process can take a little while, but if you're planning to self-direct funds, that's not as much of an issue, although once you get to the sub-award stage, you'll

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have to go through the eligible entity process there.
So definitely still time to apply.

Emily Barrett: And I should have said this during my presentation, but I just want to clarify, you know, Lucas mentioned the public notice and hearing. I called that out during my discussion. We are not prescriptive about what that needs to look like. So, you know, you have your processes for making decisions and working with your community. Those are the right processes. If it's online, if it's in person, if it's during a council meeting, you know, you have a lot of flexibility as long as you're providing notice that it's happening and you're discussing kind of the grant opportunity in a forum that makes sense. So it doesn't have to be very complicated. Just put that out there.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Thank you so much for adding that background, Emily. A question I'll direct to Jay from Kaylin, can a third-party agent who's handling the application and administration of the grant also be the subgrantee executing the projects? And then go on to say as in a city municipality that owns a utility.

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Jay Hanna: That's a good question. Obviously, the concern here would be conflict of interest on the part of the third-party agent that's acting on behalf of the tribal government. So I think that we would have to understand the specific situation. You know, you would need to talk to your federal project officer once you receive an award, and we'd have to understand what the relationships are and whether or not it constitutes an inappropriate conflict of interest. You know, if it's all government entities involved and this process was envisioned in the program narrative and subjected to public comment and, you know, you'd probably be in better standing than if that was not the case. But again, it's difficult to give a very specific answer to that because there's a lot of nuances involved. You need to consult with your federal project officer. And again, you know, you reference city municipality, but if it's a tribal-owned utility and they are the designated applicant on behalf of the tribe, then they may execute the project themselves as the eligible entity, and that wouldn't necessarily be a conflict of interest because they're an agent of the

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tribe or a subunit of government of the tribe if it's a tribal utility. If it's some entity that's not necessarily a subdivision of the tribe, then there could be an issue with respect to conflict of interest.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Great. Thank you so much, Jay, for addressing that. And then if you have any final questions, please get them in now before we wrap this up. We definitely want to make sure we're hearing from everyone who has any questions. So this question I'll address to Tom. Roha's asking if projects reducing air pollution or risk of fire near grids fall under the types of investment that is able to happen today?

Tom King: Thanks, AnneMarie. And, you know, this question, it looks like there's two different pieces to it, air pollutants or risk of fire. So first and foremost, you know, the objective of these grants is to prevent outages and enhance resiliency of the electric grid. So ensuring that the projects meet the mission objectives of the specific application are very important. The air pollution and air pollutants, I'm not quite sure about that. We'd probably need

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more information. But there could be some projects per se that would reduce risk of fire, and that could be like vegetation management. So if you're looking at being able to clear out some of the brush and vegetation near and underneath some of the transmission distribution assets, those would be allowable projects, and that would help reduce potential fires. So that would be an example where it could be. But once again, these may be project specific, and so that's where once you submit your application, you go through and keep that application at a very high level and determine what the, you know, from a grid resilience perspective what the emphasis and focus would be, and then once the application is made, those projects can then be brought to the Department of Energy, and then we can review that and make sure that they are allowable.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Great. Thank you so much. We got a couple more questions that came in. So Lucas, can a private company be a sub to a consortium leader to offer shared services to multiple tribes?

Lucas Greza: The short answer is yes, although it depends on what the services are. If they're technical and

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administrative, that would be great. They could serve all of the tribes under the consortium. If it's to execute a specific project, there could be a sensitivity there where we'd want to make sure that there's not duplicate activities being done under the same funding. So that's sort of a case where you'd work with your federal project officer to make sure that we're in compliance there.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Great. Thank you so much, Lucas, for addressing. Emily, I'll put this one over to you. Bertha's asking to clarify so consortium lead much provide the total matching funds for all tribes and corps on behalf of all the tribes or could each tribe submit their own total matching funds?

Emily Barrett: So yeah, and it is sort of confusing, but I will say that the lead by taking on that designation and that role becomes responsible for making sure that the consortium meets its cost match requirements. So each individual tribe could provide their cost match, and that would be a perfect model. Each tribe could, you know, submit their proportional 15 percent or the 15 percent that would be associated with their allocation, but it would be ultimately the

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responsibility of the lead to make sure that that is done. So the cost match could come from anywhere. It could come from - and then it would ultimately be, you know, at the discretion of the consortium to make those decisions. It could be each of the tribes participating, it could be a third party, and each of the tribes could directly submit their cost match, but it would ultimately be the responsibility of the lead tribe to make sure that that was done appropriately. And I will say that one of the things that is called out in the application is that we do ask that along with the application, an explanation of how the cost match will be met is a part of the application process. If it is coming from a third party or from each of the participating tribes, then they would submit letters to that effect basically committing to their portion of the match.

AnneMarie Horowitz: Great. So we're not seeing any incoming questions right now. I just want to close out the Q&A and I'll kick it over to Whitney. So Emily, Jay, Tom, Lucas, thank you so much for your expertise in going through these answers. Whitney, back over to you.

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Whitney Bell: Great. Thank you. I do believe we are going to bring Matt back on for a couple of closing remarks here. So Matt, the stage is yours.

Matt Heavner: Great. And thank you, everyone. Just to close out, thanks to GDO and other folks from (unint.) headquarters and thanks for all the Alaskans and other interested folks who were able to join us. Thanks for your time.

Whitney Bell: Great. Thank you, Matt. Just so everyone knows, there will be a copy of today's slides that will be available on the webinar's landing page as well as the recording in about two weeks. We will email you when everything is available, and you can find a link to the landing page in the chat now. Again, thank you to everyone so much for joining us today and for those of you with all your questions and for participating. Take care, everyone, and we'll see you next time.

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