
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

Indigenous clean-energy projects funded on South Coast

VANCOUVER – Three Indigenous communities on the Lower Mainland will join B.C.'s clean-energy sector with local projects following support from the Province.

The Province is partnering with Indigenous communities throughout B.C. to work toward a low-carbon future by providing funding from the First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund (FNCEBF).

The fund helps develop clean-energy projects driven and owned by Indigenous communities in areas such as solar, ocean thermal, wind energy, biomass, run-of-river hydroelectric power, energy-efficiency planning and other clean energy-related areas. A key goal of the fund is to increase the participation of Indigenous communities in B.C.'s clean-energy sector.

The FNCEBF provides Indigenous communities with clean-energy support in the areas of studies and planning, equity funding and revenue sharing.

The Musqueam Nation received \$98,775 in equity funding to improve energy efficiency in three buildings owned by the Nation. The project includes two retrofit measures to upgrade the current mechanical systems in the administration building with new high-efficiency equipment, and new LED lighting will replace inefficient lighting fixtures in the administrative building, the cultural centre and the community centre.

Two additional Indigenous communities located on the South Coast received funding in 2021:

- Xa'xtsa (Douglas) First Nation — \$35,485 in capacity funding to support a feasibility study for integrated heating and energy systems; and
- Sqéwqel Development Corporation (Seabird Island Band) — \$50,000 in capacity funding for a feasibility study to assess the viability of both becoming a renewable natural gas supplier and constructing a renewable natural gas plant in partnership with FortisBC.

The FNCEBF is also resetting its capacity funding limit to \$50,000 for all Indigenous communities to access for clean-energy projects.

In 2021, the fund provided more than \$3.8 million to support new capacity and equity projects in 27 Indigenous communities throughout the province. The FNCEBF is accepting applications for the next intake until Jan. 31, 2022.

The FNCEBF aligns with the Province's CleanBC Roadmap to 2030, which aims to create a balanced, sustainable future for climate action and the economy.

Quick Facts:

- Since the FNCEBF began, more than 134 Indigenous communities have benefited from \$18 million in capacity and equity funding.
- In 2021, the FNCEBF distributed more than \$8 million to Indigenous communities.
- The FNCEBF provides equity funding to Indigenous communities:
 - as much as \$500,000 for clean-energy projects;
 - as much as \$150,000 in equity funding toward community energy projects such as energy-efficiency, demand-side management and small fuel-switching projects; and
 - as much as \$50,000 in capacity funding for projects like community energy planning, feasibility studies or engagement with private-sector clean-energy project proponents.
- Currently, 46 First Nations benefit from 71 clean-energy revenue-sharing agreements with B.C. that are based on new net, incremental revenue to government, derived from water rentals and land rents. Eventually, First Nations will also benefit from wind-participation rents.

Learn More:

First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund: <http://ow.ly/JPz530apMVd>

Clean Energy BC: www.cleanenergybc.org/

Quotes:

Murray Rankin, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation –

“We’re working to support First Nations in developing clean-energy alternatives, especially in remote communities. The First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund continues to be a great resource to strengthen Indigenous participation in the clean-energy sector and support energy-efficient, resilient communities in their transition to a low-carbon future.”

Bruce Ralston, Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation –

“Partnerships between industry and First Nations play an important part in building a low-carbon economy with new clean-energy jobs, while also improving quality of life in remote areas of B.C. Supporting First Nation communities in becoming more energy efficient provides a direct and sustainable path to achieving CleanBC’s climate targets.”

Kelli Paddon, MLA for Chilliwack-Kent –

“People are concerned about climate change and know that we need to reduce emissions and shift to clean energy alternatives. I appreciate the work that the Xa’xtsa First Nation and Sqéwqel Development Corporation are doing to further the use of renewable energy and build a cleaner province for everyone.”

Tyrone McNeil, president of Sqéwqel Development Corporation L.L.P –

“The opportunity to access the First Nation Clean Energy Business Fund to further our interests in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in support of Seabird’s green initiatives responding to climate change, while also creating an economic opportunity is win, win, win for Seabird, the province and for the climate.”

Doug Slater, vice president of external and Indigenous relations at FortisBC –

“The participation of Indigenous communities in the clean-energy sector is extremely important to accelerating B.C.’s progress toward a low-carbon future. We look forward to working with Seabird Island Band as we collectively examine projects that will enable them to become a supplier of carbon-neutral renewable natural gas.”

Ehsan Haghi, community energy specialist at Musqueam Indian Band –

“The FNCEBF funding enables the Musqueam Indian Band to implement two energy-efficiency measures in band-owned buildings. The replacement of the old HVAC system in the administration building with a new efficient system helps the band save an estimated \$670 in annual utility bills and more than three tonnes of annual CO2 emissions. The FNCEBF funding also enables the band to upgrade the lighting system in the administration building, the community centre and the cultural centre. The lighting upgrade project will enable Musqueam to save about \$150,000 in utility bills over 10 years and reduce 1.3 tonnes of annual CO2 emissions.”

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