

# Meskwaki Nation Looks to Wind Power for the Future

By Maria Scandale

This year the Meskwaki Nation is going to be watching the wind. The hope is to join forces with this power to produce renewable energy in a manner that is friendly to Grandmother Earth. A monitoring tower installed Aug. 25 will confirm whether a wind farm can be built on the nation's land in Iowa.

The tribe, also commonly known as the Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa, recently contracted with WPCS International, design-build engineering specialists for communications infrastructure.

"We put up a meteorological tower to measure the wind for the next year. We will analyze the data and after a year we will do a final report," said James J. Heinz, executive vice president, with WPCS International Inc.'s St. Louis operations. The company is headquartered in Exton, Pa.

Equipment on the 250-foot tower will provide data on "what the true capacity of energy" the wind could provide, Heinz said. The data will determine the viability of installing wind turbines.

"We are now collecting data that will ultimately determine whether to put up one or more wind turbines. We know it's in a good area; there are a lot of other meteorological towers in the area.

"We take that information to the wind turbine manufacturers, and the Meskwaki Nation decides what they want to do," Heinz said. WPCS International would furnish, install and maintain the towers under a grant from the Department of Energy.

The minimum average wind speed to produce electricity is 7.9 miles per hour, or 3.5 meters per second. "What the wind speeds are has a direct correlation to how much energy is going to be produced," Heinz explained.

The 1,300-member Meskwaki Nation purchased 80 acres of land in 1857 and has now grown to more than 7,000 acres. The Meskwaki Nation is the only resident tribe in the State of Iowa.

Christina Blackcloud-Garcia, executive director of the Meskwaki Nation, thanked the Department of Energy for the financial assistance that allows the tribe to conduct this wind energy site assessment.

"As yet another initiative by our sovereign government, this monumental opportunity fosters the ideal of self-determination for the Meskwaki Nation."

She said officials anticipate that wind energy generation in this area will prove feasible. After the one-year study, the Meskwaki Nation may move forward to develop and manage wind energy independently. Meskwaki GIS/Wind Energy Technician Tom Gearing, is overseeing this project.

"If the Meskwaki Nation energy movement continues, employment opportunities in this field may also arise. The Tribal Council supports conducting these alternative energy studies as an effort to expand resources for tribal members and to uphold tribal values by protecting the environment for future generations," Blackcloud-Garcia said.

"Not only is it the Meskwaki philosophy, but also the philosophy of tribal nations in general, that our sense of responsibility must correlate with our beliefs: Natives are environmental stewards of Grandmother Earth. As the Meskwaki people continue

modernizing with the 21st century through integrating renewable energy into our way of living in an efficient manner, and using our finite resources effectively, wind energy appears to be a practical effort."

Meskwaki Historical Preservation Officer Johnathan Buffalo sees this effort as far less damaging than a continued reliance on oil and coal. In addition, the renewable wind energy method conforms with the Meskwaki teaching of taking only what the people need.

Tribal Council Liaison Donald Wanatee notes that in Vine Deloria's understanding of the "meteorological phenomenon" in his 1995 book, "Red Earth, White Lies," his observations recount that the natural force from above can be a friend.

"The Meskwaki people have known about this force for many generations and have continued Thunder scripts in their ceremonies of the Bear, Fox, Wolf, Eagle, Swan, Water and Thunder Clans. Our religious rituals have taught us to honor and pray to the Spirits of the Sky, the Ones-Who-Walk-The-Earth," Wanatee said.

"The project we have undertaken is well underway, because the oral tradition is being taught and learned by the children. Many tribes are doing the same rites as before the settlement of the United States. We are accepting the technology that is available to everyone in the world to better serve our people. We have always accepted new ways of science and will make the best of scientific discoveries," Blackcloud-Garcia said.

WPCS provides wireless communications systems for the Foxwoods Resort Casino of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, among other work for Indian



Photo courtesy Meskwaki Nation. The anemometer, used to measure wind force and speed, was installed on the meteorological tower last summer. Wind speeds will be gathered for a year before a decision is made to erect a wind turbine.

nations, but Heinz, added that "this is our first Indian reservation where we are able to do a wind study, and we are very interested in doing this for other reservations. There is grant money available to Indian nations for renewable energy, and there are a lot of Indian tribes out there that got that."

## 2010 FREE Tax Preparation with Electronic Filing

If you make under \$50,000 a year and need assistance in preparing and filing your BASIC Income tax return. Call Sac and Fox Nation Learning Center (918-968-0509) to set up an appointment.

### What To Bring For Tax Preparation:

- Picture ID
- Social Security Card For Each Family Member
- All Forms W-2 and 1099's
- Any Other Tax Related Documents Received



**E-FILE BEGINS MONDAY, JANUARY 31<sup>ST</sup>**

**It's not to late to enter the Sac and Fox Nation Science & Engineering Fair. Please bring your science project board on February 19 to the SFN Activity Center (gym), register on-site.**



## Sac and Fox Nation Science & Engineering Fair

**Date:** February 19, 2011  
**Time:** Noon – 8pm  
**Place:** SFN Capital Grounds  
 5 mi south of Stroud

**Projects/Judging:** Learning Center  
**Awards/Dinner:** Community Building

Who is eligible to participate in the 2011 SFNSEF?  
 American Indian students in grades 5-12  
 a) who are enrolled members of a Federally Recognized Tribe who live and attend school within the Sac and Fox jurisdiction, **OR**  
 b) any enrolled Sac and Fox member, regardless of residency location.  
*Unfortunately, funds are not available to assist with travel expenses to attend the SFNSEF.*

### Tentative Agenda:

**Learning Center** (light snacks will be available)

- Noon – 2pm:** Students Registration/Set-up Projects
- 1pm – 2pm:** Judges Registration/Meeting
- 2pm – 3pm:** Students' Activity
- 2pm – 3pm:** Judges walk-thru all projects
- 3pm – 4pm:** Project Judging/ Interview students
- 4pm – 5pm:** Judges consensus on winners' selections (Students should stay at their project)
- 5pm – 6pm:** Project area open to Family and Public (Students take down their projects)

### Community Building

**5:30pm – 7:30pm:** Awards Banquet (Category, Special, Grand Awards)

**Students, Judges, Family, and Public are invited to Banquet**

*3 – 6 Grand Award Winners of the Sac and Fox Nation Science and Engineering Fair will be selected, and expenses paid, to attend the National American Indian Science & Engineering Fair (NAISEF) in Albuquerque, NM on March 24-26, 2011.*

### Student Info:

*What size t-shirt do you want?* Youth: Large Adult: M L XL 2XL

**Section A: Project Information** Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

**Section B: School Information** School Name \_\_\_\_\_

School Mailing Address (City State Zip) \_\_\_\_\_

### Section C: Participant Information

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Tribal Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_ Tribal Enrollment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Home Mailing Address (City State Zip) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: **F / M** (Circle One)

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian contact info: email or phone # \_\_\_\_\_

*Mail Student Info to: SFNSEF, 920883 So Hwy 99, Building A, Stroud, OK 74079  
 or Contact: Cheryl McClellan Cell 405-200-7061 Or Stevie Williamson 918-968-3526 x1002*

## State Of The Indian Nations

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reach those goals. I know we are moving forward, as my article last month pointed out by the list of accomplishments of the past decade, so I am asking for everyone to pray for guidance or direction from our Creator as to what He would have our Nation do to please Him and in return God will bless our People. Psalm 33:12-22 - Give to God the glory, v 12: Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. Amen.

Sincerely,  
 George Thurman, Principal Chief