



Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$78 Million to Further Drive Down Energy Costs and Enhance Energy Security in Rural and Remote Communities Across America

President Biden's Investing in America Agenda Supports 19 Community-Led Clean Energy Projects Across 12 States and 13 Tribal Nations to Deploy Cheaper Power, Support Local Economic Development, and Build Up Climate Resilient Communities

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — As part of President Biden's Investing in America [agenda](#), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced more than \$78 million for 19 projects across 12 states and 13 Tribal nations to develop and deploy sustainable clean energy solutions and expand access to reliable and affordable energy in rural and remote communities across the nation. The grant funding—made possible by the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law—empowers communities to lead in developing locally-tailored clean energy projects best suited for their unique needs, helping to cut energy costs, enhance climate resiliency, and support local economic development. Today's announcement underscores the Biden-Harris Administration's deep commitment to building an inclusive and equitable clean energy future that creates safer, more resilient communities, enhances Tribal energy sovereignty, and supports new good-paying jobs.

"President Biden's Investing in America agenda is delivering progress and prosperity to families in every pocket of the nation," said **U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer M. Granholm**. "Through these transformative investments, rural and remote communities from coast to coast are able to map a clean energy future that revitalizes local economies and cuts the pollution that is fueling the climate crisis and driving environmental injustice."

The selected grant-funded projects announced today support projects with federal funding of \$500,000 to \$5 million and are part of the larger \$1 billion [Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas](#) (ERA) program, managed by the DOE [Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations](#) (OCED). The ERA program aims to address the distinct energy challenges faced by rural communities by increasing energy affordability and promoting climate resilience in areas with fewer than 10,000 people. Rural and remote communities face a unique set of energy challenges due to their smaller populations and isolation from larger electrical systems, including higher electric bills, unreliable energy supplies, and/or no access to electricity at all. At the same time, rural America has great unused potential for clean energy generation.

To remove barriers that prevent many rural and remote communities from accessing federal funding, DOE simplified the application process for this grant

funding opportunity, did not require cost share, offered technical assistance, and reduced the financial reporting requirements to deliver for rural America.

Nearly 97% of the country's land mass is considered rural, providing open space with access to some of the best wind and solar resources in the country. To help unlock this potential, the selected projects cover a range of clean energy technologies, from solar, battery energy storage systems, energy efficiency upgrades, and microgrids to wind, heat pumps, grid improvements, and electric thermal storage.

- Five of the projects use microgrids to displace the use of diesel fuel—reducing costs, greenhouse gas emissions, and the risk of fuel spills from transporting fuel across sensitive ecosystems of Alaska.
- Four projects use distributed energy resources to help reduce net energy purchases.
- Four transmission and distribution projects help to improve energy reliability and resiliency—increasing capacity for future renewables and reducing environmental and health impacts.
- Three electrification projects increase energy access using both a solar-as-service model and homeowner model.
- Two battery energy storage systems reduce net energy purchases and displace backup diesel, and one heat pump project displaces the need for heating oil.

In line with President Biden's [Justice40 Initiative](#)[®] to advance energy and environmental justice, all 19 selected projects are in or adjacent to disadvantaged communities that are disproportionately overburdened by pollution, and historically underserved. Key impacts from a sample of these selected projects include:

- Providing rooftop solar power and replacing aging HVAC and lighting systems for up to nine K-12 public schools located in historic Selma, Alabama to increase energy efficiency and lower energy costs.
- Creating a microgrid to provide vital backup power during outages for a health clinic, child development center, and food distribution center for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Poteau campus, located near "Tornado Alley."
- Installing a battery energy storage system to increase energy reliability and provide critical clean backup power during outages caused by

extreme winter weather for two local volunteer fire departments and a local primary school in Victor, Montana.

- Extending 30 miles of underground, electric distribution lines to increase service capacity and resilience, and electrify nearly 190 rural, underserved homes for the first time in Ferry and Okanogan Counties, Washington.

Learn more about the 19 projects selected for award negotiation [here](#).

As part of the Department's commitment to transparency, OCED will hold a series of national and regional virtual briefings to provide information on the selected projects, OCED's approach to clean energy demonstrations, and opportunities for community engagement. Learn about ERA engagement opportunities and register to attend [here](#).

Selection for award negotiations is not a commitment by DOE to issue an award or provide funding. Before funding is issued, DOE and the selectees will undergo a negotiation process, and DOE may cancel negotiations and rescind the selection for any reason during that time. Lead applicants also may change during the award negotiations process.

OCED manages the ERA program, which includes the [ERA Funding Opportunity Announcement for cooperative agreements](#) and the [Energizing Rural Communities Prize](#)[®]. OCED is collecting feedback and data from previous applicants, rural communities, and stakeholders to inform the development of future funding opportunities under the ERA program.

Learn more about how [OCED](#) is supporting the Biden-Harris Administration's whole-of-government approach in addressing the climate crisis and delivering a clean and equitable energy future for every American.

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