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# News Release

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## USDA Invests in Pawnee Nation

**STILLWATER, OKLA., April 11, 2023** – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Under Secretary Xochitl Torres Small and Oklahoma State Director Kenneth Corn announced today that the Biden-Harris Administration is providing a \$2 million grant for the Pawnee Nation to incorporate renewable energy systems and promote energy efficiency on their reservation.

This investment is made under the Rural Energy Pilot Program (REPP), which provides grant funds to assist rural communities develop renewable energy. Funds can be utilized for energy planning, capacity building, technical assistance, community efficiency, weatherization and the installation and equipping of community-scale renewable energy technologies and systems. The Pawnee Nation will use this grant to install a 150-kilowatt community-scale solar garden, a 135-kilowatt geothermal system, battery storage and electric vehicle charging stations. The funding will also provide weatherization planning and implementation through environmental sensor deployment and renewable energy training and certification for tribal members.

“Developing renewable energy sources in rural America is an absolute necessity if we want to be able to grow our economy and provide the resources to the growing needs to combat climate change,” Corn said. “I am thankful that President Biden recognizes the growing threat climate change can have on agriculture producers, whom are the very bedrock of our American economy.”

Successful applicants to the REPP grant have shown they are established partners to provide community-scale renewable energy benefits and assistance to underserved rural communities. Partnerships can be comprised of:

- Nonprofit organizations
- State organizations
- Federally recognized Tribes
- Municipalities and other public bodies

“Pawnee Nation is a valued partner and important stakeholder for Oklahoma Rural Development,” Corn said. “I am thankful for Under Secretary Torres Small to highlight to our country the important contributions Pawnee Nation makes to help uplift our fellow Oklahomans and be a force for economic growth and positivity in our State.”

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the leadership of the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate-smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/ok>.

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