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California Tribe Pivots to Private Financing for Microgrid Project

Feds cease project funding midstream, Tribal Council partners with BQuest Foundation for bridge loan

Portland, Ore. – Every family on the Guidiville Rancheria’s trust land in Mendocino County, California, can look forward to the installation of a new microgrid to electrify their homes with clean renewable energy this year. The project is back on track, despite a sudden pullback of a federal grant. 7Skyline provides assistance for companies and Tribes developing or investing in energy projects, and helped facilitate a private bridge loan through BQuest Foundation. This ensured that construction would proceed, safeguarding the Tribe’s energy independence and sustainability goals.

In 2023, the Tribe was awarded a \$3.55 million grant through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), funded by the Inflation Reduction Act. The grant was designated for stakeholder engagement, planning, workforce development, and installation of a solar-powered microgrid supporting 20 homes and 16 homeless units. Plans include a 550 kW solar array and a 1.5 MW storage and backup system.

Although a grant agreement was finalized and project work began in early 2025, including interconnection applications and equipment deposits, funds were abruptly frozen in March without explanation. This unexpected move violated the contract terms and federal trust responsibility, placing the project at risk.

To avoid delays, the Tribe partnered with the BQuest Foundation, securing interim financing that allows construction to continue. BQuest provides direct support for housing and climate-related projects in partnership with historically underserved communities.

“While we work with BIA to resolve this issue, BQuest’s support ensures we stay on schedule,” said Tribal Vice Chair Magdaline Warden. Although BIA has since made funds accessible again, they now come with new requirements and an uncertain timeline.

Sheiyenne Seegmiller, the finance and tax project manager for 7Skyline, said, “It is a relief that the Council was able to secure the capital for the project. The completion of energy projects, like Guidiville’s microgrid, positively impacts generations of Tribal members and provides an innovative example of self-determination for communities across Indian Country.”

The microgrid project is part of the Tribe’s broader vision of self-sufficiency across energy, housing, water, and communications. It includes cutting-edge features such as fire-resistant



graphene supercapacitors, hydrogen backup generated from atmospheric water, and rooftop solar on new energy-efficient homes.

Energy Manager Michael Derry emphasized the importance of uninterrupted momentum: “Indiscriminate funding cuts undermine Tribal energy progress. This project will reduce costs, improve reliability, and mitigate fire risk.” Council Chair Donald Duncan added, “We’re grateful to organizations like BQuest who step in when support is needed most.”

Bridge financing is increasingly used by Tribal governments facing delays in federal reimbursements. Groups like **Colorado Clean Energy Fund** have long supported projects through such tools, but their capacity has been affected by cuts to federal programs like the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. Philanthropies are stepping in to help fill the gap.

For more information about these philanthropies, please visit BQuest Foundation at bquestfoundation.org, Meyer Memorial Trust at mmt.org, Hammond Climate Solutions Foundation at hcs.foundation, and Direct Relief at directrelief.org. For more information about 7Skyline, please visit 7Skyline.com.

The Guidiville Rancheria is a federally recognized Tribe with lands near Ukiah, California. For more information about their energy program, please contact admin@guidiville.net.

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About 7Skyline, LLC

7Skyline, LLC is a Portland, Oregon-based clean energy company focused on delivering innovative grid solutions and advanced energy technologies that enable a more resilient, efficient, and sustainable energy future for Tribes. 7Skyline provides business strategy, management consulting, environmental planning, business development, Tribal liaison, grant writing, and regulatory support services for companies and Tribes developing or investing in energy projects throughout North America. With a focus on innovation, equity, and real-world impact, 7Skyline is shaping the future of energy—one solution at a time.