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## Airing Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> on PBS, *Power Paths* reveals how American Indian tribes are leading the way to establish sustainable energy sources

*Power Paths*, which chronicles the grassroots efforts of the Navajo, Hopi and Lakota Sioux tribes to disconnect themselves from big energy companies and create renewable, locally-controlled energy, airs nationally on PBS on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2009, at 10 p.m. The 60-minute documentary, presented by Native American Public Telecommunications (NAPT) and the Emmy and Peabody Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens* for Native American Heritage Month, includes interviews with Winona LaDuke, Senator Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley. (Check your local public TV station listings.)

"*Power Paths* shows that renewable energy must be supported by the citizenry, because Congress does not have the political will or the votes to enact legislation that supports it more than fossil fuel energy," producer/director Bo Boudart says.

Producers visit the Navajo and Hopi reservations, where tribal leaders leased land to Peabody Coal beginning in the 1960s. The company's mines and power plants employed locals and helped finance tribal governments but also caused major environmental problems. Peabody drained so much water from the underground aquifer that the springs Native farmers and ranchers had relied on dried up. And the power plants did not bring energy to the tribes—18,000 homes on the Navajo Nation still have no electricity.

*Power Paths* follows the efforts of the Just Transition Coalition, a group of Native activists and environmental organizations who convinced the Navajo and Hopi governments not to renew leases with Peabody Coal. In 2005, the coalition won a court-approved settlement directing the Mohave Generating Station in Laughlin, Nev., to either control pollution or shut down. The plant closed, and so did the Arizona coal mines that supplied the plant's fuel.

Now the Just Transition Coalition is working to bring green energy jobs to the reservation and provide electrical power to tribal members. *Power Paths* profiles their efforts to install solar panels and wind turbines and build a greener, independent economy. The coalition has petitioned Southern California Edison energy company to reinvest the pollution credits it receives for not operating the Mohave Plant in renewable energy projects on Navajo and Hopi land. In an unprecedented decision, the California Public Utilities Commission took the coalition's plan seriously, and the petition will go to trial this fall.

To help viewers take action for renewable energy, the *Power Paths* website and a special edition, Web-enabled DVD (available at [www.visionmaker.org](http://www.visionmaker.org)) will provide basic facts on U.S. energy sources, energy laws, the energy lobby and the economics of energy production. A citizen toolkit will provide information viewers need to write letters to their leaders, get organized, educate their communities and develop a set of talking points on local energy issues. Additionally, the website will include updates on the Just Transition Coalition and other tribes' efforts, as well as additional interviews with legislators and sustainable energy advocates.

*Power Paths* is produced by Bo Boudart, Norman Brown (Navajo) and Christopher Philipp. Major funding was provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Official program website: [www.powerpaths.tv](http://www.powerpaths.tv)

Electronic press kit and [www.nativetelecom.org/power\\_paths](http://www.nativetelecom.org/power_paths)

Broadcast information: [www.pbs.org/independentlens/power-paths](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/power-paths)

**Native American Public Telecommunications (NAPT)** shares Native stories with the world by supporting the creation, promotion and distribution of Native media. NAPT's other Fall 2009 offerings include *To Brooklyn and Back: A Mohawk Journey*, *For the Rights of All: Ending Jim Crow in Alaska* and *River of Renewal*. Other NAPT services include **AIROS.org**, which features streaming and downloadable audio stories, and **VisionMaker Video**, a distributor of *Jim Thorpe, The World's Greatest Athlete* and other documentaries by and about Native Americans. For more information, visit: [www.nativetelecom.org](http://www.nativetelecom.org).

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