

2004 BUSINESS/COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNER PIIKUNI WIND POWER, AB



A theme that ran through the presentations of both ED of the Year Award winners at the 2004 CANDO National Conference was the importance of using the resources found within communities to their full advantage. William Big Bull of Piikuni Wind Power spoke of how the community located in the Blackfoot Confederacy of Southern Alberta is rather poor in most natural resources; they do, however, have lots of wind. The Piikuni First Nation saw an opportunity to capitalize

on this resource and put the wheels in motion. In 1992, facing challenges from traditional power companies, Piikuni purchased a 9.9 megawatt wind turbine, which has led to an expansion of wind power production. The community is now working on a joint dam project with ATCO on the Old Man River to produce hydroelectric power.

Piikuni Wind Power has demonstrated a commitment to improving the economic potential of their respective communities. These leaders in Aboriginal community economic development have shown that it is possible to build a strong economic base by focusing efforts on the resources in existence and by maintaining a clear vision for the future of the community.