



About United Indian Health Services

The United Indian Health Services, Inc. (UIHS) Potawot Health Village is located 280 miles north of San Francisco in Arcata, Humboldt County, California. The Health Village is near the intersection of Hwy 101 and Hwy 299 and is at the center of UIHS' service area, which is Humboldt and Del Norte counties and which constitutes approximately 5000 square miles.

Incorporated in 1970, UIHS is a private, non-profit tribal health consortium that provides culturally sensitive and comprehensive health care services to approximately 16,000 registered clients which includes American Indians and their families located in Humboldt and Del Norte counties. The consortium is comprised of nine federally recognized tribes of Yurok, Wiyot, Mattole, and Tolowa ancestry.

Operating out of a series of remote clinics and offices for thirty years, in 2001 UIHS consolidated many of its services into a 44,000 square foot central clinical facility known as the Potawot Health Village located on 40-acres in Arcata, California. The five satellite clinics continue to serve UIHS's remote clientele.

United Indian Health Services, Inc. Service Area *Humboldt & Del Norte Counties*



UIHS Solar Electric System

UIHS installed a 42-kW solar electric system at our Potawot Health Village in 2007. The system provides about 25% of our total electricity needs. It is in keeping with our vision of bringing wellness to ourselves, our community and our world and the vision of our local Indian communities to have balance of “all things” in our lives. Traditional Health involves “all things” which contribute to the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of the individual, the family and the community. It includes those traditional values, knowledge and beliefs which exist in all of us.



Connecting Clean Energy to Healthy Rivers

The Klamath River was once the most productive salmon spawning rivers on the West Coast, and these salmon fisheries were critical to the way of life of our Native Peoples. But the health of the Klamath River and the salmon it supports has been largely impacted. This is largely due to four large dams blocking salmon migration, restricting water flow, raising water temperatures, causing toxic algal blooms, and generally degrading the water quality. In order to restore the health of the Klamath River these dams need to be removed to allow the salmon to make their way up to their spawning grounds. The electrical energy produced by these dams must be replaced with clean, renewable energy sources. The dams produce enough power to supply about 70,000 homes. This power can be replaced by power generated from environmentally responsible sources such as wind turbines and rooftop solar panels, and the UIHS solar electric system demonstrates our responsibility and care for the environment. UIHS supports these clean technologies as an extension of our traditional ways of caring for the land and our people. It's An Old Way In a New Day.



Toxic Algae in the Klamath



Aireal View of Iron Gate Dam



Iron Gate Damn



About UIHS Solar Project

The UIHS solar electric system is rated at 42-kW DC and produces enough power to supply about 8 to 10 typical homes. The system is composed of six arrays, each of which is tied to a SunnyBoy 6000-watt AC inverter. Each array includes thirty-six 180-watt Evergreen Solar photovoltaic modules. The majority of the modules are located on the south facing Facilities Building roof, while the remaining modules are located on the southwest facing Administration Building roof.



Aireal View of Potawot's Solar Project

The system was installed in 2007 by local solar electric contractor Roger and the Merry Band of Solar Installers with the help of UIHS staff. Many individuals and organizations were involved in making the project a success. Following the projects preliminary planning with Humboldt State University's Schatz Energy Research Center, UIHS received initial support from Cher-ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria, Resighini Rancheria, Smith River Rancheria, and Humboldt Water Resources. Shortly thereafter, the Will Reid Foundation provided UIHS with \$20,000 in seed funds to initiate the project. UIHS utilized the seed money granted to secure a grant from the California Health Facility Financing Authority to complete the first phase of the UIHS Solar Project. UIHS received \$90,000 in rebates for the project. UIHS is now begun fundraising and planning for phase two of the UIHS Solar Project, which will be to double the current size of the system.



How Does the UIHS Solar System Work?

The solar electric modules, or photovoltaic (PV) modules, convert sunlight directly into electricity. Typical solar modules are about 15% efficient in this energy conversion process. The power produced by the solar modules is direct current (DC) electricity. Before it can be used to power normal electrical devices it must first be converted to alternating current (AC) by using an inverter. Alternating Current (AC) is what standard electrical outlets require. After the electricity has been converted to AC it can be used to power on-site electrical loads at the Potawot health facility. On the weekends, when there is excess solar electricity, the power is fed back to the electric grid. When this happens the electric meter literally “spins backwards” and we get a credit on our electric bill. On average the UIHS solar electric system meets about 25% of our on-site electricity needs. We can increase this number by increasing our buildings efficiency and reducing energy used at Potawot.

