

# Tribal Partnership Update

## Laborers Union



CHANGING LIVES - BUILDING FUTURES

October 2007

## Contractor Expands Market Share at Fort Peck Management Employees Make Reservation Home. Look to Future Projects

By Pat Smutz, Communications Director, Northwest LECET

It's no wonder a number of Apollo, Inc's management employees have purchased homes on the Fort Peck Reservation recently. The LI-UNA signatory contractor won the bid to build the much-needed water purification system under a Tribal Labor agreement with Fort Peck Reservation, and since then things have expanded for them beyond the scope of that project making it look like Apollo, an American Native owned company based in Kennewick, Washington, will be one of major players in reservation construction for a long time to come.

"We are already doing three more projects; an airport, a design build job, and a pump station redesign. We're also now bidding on two more" said Apollo's Project Leader, Ron Harris, during a tour of the Municipal Rural Industrial (MRI) project on the reservation. "The Laborers Union and the Tribe's TERO

"If they think they're busy now, just wait till things really get going"

*Kevin Buckles  
TERO Director*



Apollo, Inc. sign located on the highway at the Fort Peck Reservation



**Fort Peck's Water Purification Plant under construction by Apollo on the Reservation.** From left: Brian Boland, Field Rep, Montana Laborers Union; Kevin Buckles, TERO Director, Fort Peck Tribes; Ed Hensley, Construction Market Representative, LECET; Ron Harris, Project Leader, Apollo, Inc.

office have been great to work with. We're putting tribal members to work and we're getting some really good hands in the process. I'm not worried about manning our jobs, not with the kind of help they've been giving us. We're here for the long haul."

Fort Peck's Tribal Enforcement Rights Office (TERO) Director is now planning to build a bigger tribal workforce than he first imagined. "I think we're looking at a major employer in the future, who not only is obligated by contract to hire our tribal members, but Apollo wants to hire them. They're a real partner, and I want them to stick around the reservation for a long time" said Kevin Buckles the man who enforces Indian Preference hiring for Fort Peck.

"If they think they're busy now, just wait till things really get going" commented Buckles further. "We have plans for developing our irrigation abilities on the vast plots of land the Tribes own, and we have wind farms, oil-related work, manufacturing facilities, and a huge

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# LABORERS TRIBAL PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

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## Building a Better Community at Fort Peck

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number of other things that are about to jump off the drawing board into reality. We need contractors like this and partners like the Laborers Union to make things work. We're looking at the future possibility of a joint venture with Apollo too."

Ed Hensley, the Laborers Employers Cooperation and Education Trust (LECET) Construction Market Representative, feels the same way. "We have what we call the perfect partnership, an agreement

to work cooperatively together with the union, the tribes and the contractors to insure tribal members get the work they deserve. It's a winning outcome for all involved. It's one of the things LECET does well - bring people together."



Fort Peck tribal member Jared Moran works on the Fort Peck Water Purification Project. He is a member of the Montana Laborers Union working under the Fort Peck Tribal Labor Agreement

The TERO office setup a Job Skills Bank with an automated telephone signup system to handle the large volume of calls that were coming in from tribal members wanting work.

"When we first started advertising the training the Montana Laborers Union was sponsoring, our phone rang off the hook" said Buckles. "Our staff was swamped, so we put in the automated

system to handle the load. We've got a lot of people who want those union jobs with the good wages and benefits."

Fort Peck Reservation Chairman John Morales is a strong supporter of getting his tribal constituents good paying jobs on the reservation. "I wish all of the reservation was covered under a union. Those jobs

"These are things I want for all my people."

**John Morales**  
Tribal Chairman  
Fort Peck Tribes

are what we need to help offset the abject poverty our people experience" said Morales recently. "The Indian Health Service is not enough for our people to maintain their health, and many have nothing to look forward to except Social Security in their old age, the union has a great pension. These are things I want for all my people."

In the meantime, Apollo, Inc. is forging ahead with plans to keep doing what it does best - build things. With the partnership of the Montana Laborers Union and a forward-thinking group like the Fort Peck Reservation, good things are assured to happen.

**Apollo**  
Inc.

**General Contractor**

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*Apollo* .....BUILDING PEOPLE WHO BUILD GREAT THINGS.

Kennewick, Washington based, the Native American owned general contractor Apollo, Inc. posts their sign the on the side of the Construction Office on Fort Peck Tribe's Water Purification Job Site.