

# *Native Americans sign contract*

by **Jon Horst**

On June 3, representatives of Western, several utilities and the Santee Sioux Tribe signed an agreement identifying a bill-crediting program as the means to provide Federal power allocation benefits directly to the tribe beginning Jan. 1, 2001.

**Craig Knoell**, Western's public utilities specialist in Lincoln, Neb., and I met with Keith Harvey and Larry Macke of North Central Public Power District, Bruce Pontow of Nebraska Electric Generation & Transmission Cooperative, Inc., Bob Fisher of Nebraska Public Power District and representatives of the Santee Sioux Tribe to finalize bill-crediting program arrangements. Tribal members attending the ceremony were Arthur Denny, tribal chairman; Bob Ledenstiff, tribal utilities manager; and Roger Tindell, tribal business manager.

We started the meeting with a presentation and overview of bill-crediting program arrangements, which all parties had successfully negotiated over the past two months. We also dis-

cussed transactions that will result from those sessions.

After the presentation, we signed the contracts.

Western representatives expressed sincere appreciation to everyone involved. We said we looked forward to a continued successful government-to-government relationship with the Santee Sioux Tribe.

As tribal chairman, Denny had some very kind words for all parties and especially for Western's leadership, which brought the cooperatives together to develop a means to deliver hydropower benefits to the Santee Sioux Tribe.

With this milestone, the Santee Sioux Tribe becomes the first of 25 Native American tribal governments in our region to complete agreements necessary to become a firm power customer under the Upper Great Plains Post 2000 Marketing Plan for the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program-Eastern Division.

**(Note: Horst is a public utilities specialist in Billings.)**