

## **Echo Hawk Issues Reaffirmation of the Tejon Indian Tribe's Government-to-Government Status**

In a letter to the Tejon Indian Tribe of California, Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Larry Echo Hawk reaffirmed the federal relationship between the United States and the Tejon Indian Tribe. The Assistant Secretary's letter confirms that the tribe has a relationship with the federal government.

The Tejon Indian Tribe first requested confirmation of its status in 2006. Due to an administrative error, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) failed for several years to place the Tejon Indian Tribe on the list of federally recognized tribes that the BIA is required to publish annually. That list, entitled "Indian Entities Recognized and Eligible to Receive Services from the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs," was last published in the Federal Register on October 1, 2010 at 75 FR 60810, and the list was supplemented on October 27, 2010 at 75 FR 66124.

In his letter to the Tejon Indian Tribe, the Assistant Secretary stated that "upon review of the facts and history of

this matter, including prior Assistant Secretaries' decisions, I hereby reaffirm the federal relationship between the United States and the Tejon Indian Tribe, thus concluding the long and unfortunate omission of the Tejon Indian Tribe from the list of federally recognized tribes."

The Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs discharges the duties of the Secretary of the Interior with the authority and direct responsibility to strengthen the government-to-government relationship with the nation's 566 federally recognized tribes, advocate policies that support Indian self-determination, protect and preserve Indian trust assets, and administer a wide array of laws, regulations and functions relating to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes, tribal members and individual trust beneficiaries. The Assistant Secretary oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education. For more information, visit [www.indianaffairs.gov](http://www.indianaffairs.gov).

## **Secretary Salazar Names Members to National Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform**

As part of President Obama's commitment to fulfilling this nation's trust responsibilities to Native Americans, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar recently named five prominent American Indians to a national commission that will undertake a forward-looking, comprehensive evaluation of Interior's trust management of nearly \$4 billion in Native American trust funds.

"This commission will play a key role in our ongoing efforts to empower Indian nations and strengthen nation-to-nation relationships," Secretary Salazar said in naming the appointees to the Secretarial Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform. "The five members each bring extensive experience and knowledge to the commission, and I look forward to their findings and recommendations for how we can fully meet our trust responsibilities to the First Americans."

"Our trust administration must be more transparent, responsive, customer-friendly and accountable in managing these substantial funds and assets," Deputy Secretary of the Interior David J. Hayes said. "Building upon the progress made with the historic Cobell Settlement, this commission will help usher in a new era of trust administration."

The members of the Commission are:

- Chair - Fawn R. Sharp is the current President of the Quinault Indian Nation, the current President of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, and a former administrative law judge for the State of Washington and Governor of the Washington State Bar Association.
- Dr. Peterson Zah, an established leader in Native American government and education circles, was the last Chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council and the first elected President of the Navajo Nation.

- Stacy Leeds, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, is Dean and Professor of Law at the University of Arkansas School of Law and former Director of the Tribal Law and Government Center at the University of Kansas School of Law.

- Tex G. Hall, former Chairman of Three Affiliated Tribes and past President of the National Congress of American Indians, is currently serving as Chairman of the Inter Tribal Economic Alliance and is the Chairman of the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association.

- Bob Anderson, an enrolled member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (Bois Forte Band), has six years of experience working at the Department of the Interior from 1995-2001 as Associate Solicitor for Indian Affairs and as counselor to the Secretary of the Interior on Indian law and natural resource issues. He is currently a Professor of Law and Director of the Native American Law Center at the University of Washington, and holds a long-term appointment as the Oneida Nations Visiting Professor of Law at Harvard Law School.

Interior selected the members after a public solicitation for nominations and, in consultation with trust beneficiaries, evaluated the candidates on the basis of their expertise and experience, including in government and trust, financial, asset and natural resource management. Members were selected in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act and they will serve without compensation.

Within 24 months, the Commission is expected to complete a comprehensive evaluation of Interior's management and administration of the trust assets and offer



*“America”*

Sculptor, Doug Hyde

Made from thirteen feet of Indiana limestone.

Commissioned and installed for the  
YOCHA-DE-HE Club House, Brooks, CA.

For information about the artist or  
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recommendations of how to improve in the future.

Salazar's announcement came in advance of the third White House Tribal Nations Conference held December 2nd at the Department of the Interior. The conference brought together leaders from the 565 federally recognized tribes to hear from President Obama and to build upon the Administration's commitment to strengthen the government-to-government relationship with tribal nations.

Salazar established the framework for the Commission in a 2009 Secretarial Order, which addressed the Department's future responsibilities for trust management after the Cobell Settlement agreement set forth resolution of a class action lawsuit regarding the U.S. government's trust management and accounting of individual Native American trust accounts and resources. The Cobell Settlement will be effective when all

appeals are resolved favorably.

Under federal law, Interior is responsible for managing 56 million surface acres and 57 million acres of subsurface mineral estates for 384,000 Individual Indian Money (IIM) accounts and about 2,900 tribal accounts (over 250 tribes). Tribal trust assets include land, timber, grazing, oil, gas and mineral resources.

On trust lands, the Department manages about \$3.7 billion in trust funds and more than 109,000 leases. For fiscal year 2011, funds from leases, use permits, land sales and income from financial assets, totaling about \$400 million, were collected for about 384,000 open IIM accounts. About \$609 million was collected in fiscal year 2011 for about 2,900 tribal accounts. There are currently 156,596 individual Indian land allotments and more than 4.7 million fractionated interests.

## Secretary Salazar and Director Pizarchik Announce \$485 Million in Grants to States and Tribes to Clean Up Abandoned Coal Mines

Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar and Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) Director Joe Pizarchik recently announced nearly half a billion dollars in grants for states and tribes to eliminate health and safety hazards caused by past coal mining. This year's funding – a \$90 million increase over last year – will generate more than \$1 billion in economic activity and support thousands of jobs across the country.

Funding for Abandoned Mine Land (AML) grants comes from coal receipts and is distributed through a congressionally mandated formula under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA). Fiscal year 2012 grants will total more than \$485 million, the highest amount ever awarded.

"When our nation enacted mining reform in 1977, we made a simple and bold promise that the revenues from coal extraction today should help clean up the legacy of coal mining many years ago," said Secretary Salazar. "These grants help fulfill that promise while putting men and women to work across the country on restoration projects that will bring lands back to life, clean up rivers, and leave a better legacy for our children and grandchildren."

A recently issued Interior report estimated that the \$369 million in AML grants made available for fiscal year 2010 delivered an economic impact of \$1.1 billion dollars and was directly responsible for more than 8,600 jobs. With an increase of \$90 million over fiscal year 2011 funding levels, the economic impact of the \$485 million in grants is expected to exceed that of last year's funding.

"OSM's AML grants announced today will have a significant impact on the health, safety and economic growth of communities across the country," said OSM Director Joe Pizarchik. "With this and previous funding, our state and tribal AML partners will continue to produce a cleaner environment, well-paying jobs, and stronger local economies."

Among the leading state recipients of 2012 AML grants are Wyoming (\$150 million); Pennsylvania (\$67.2 million); West Virginia (\$66.5 million); Kentucky (\$47 million); and Illinois (\$24 million). Indian tribal governments receiving the grants include the Navajo Nation (\$7.2 million); Crow Tribe (\$2.2 million); and Hopi Tribe (\$1.4 million).

The fiscal year 2012 AML funding available to eligible coal-producing states and tribes is as follows:

Alabama	\$9,439,875	New Mexico	\$5,538,041
Alaska	\$3,000,000	North Dakota	\$3,921,596
Arkansas	\$3,000,000	Ohio	\$16,485,743
Colorado	\$8,655,603	Oklahoma	\$3,000,000
Illinois	\$24,080,075	Pennsylvania	\$67,152,367
Indiana	\$16,141,131	Tennessee	\$3,000,000
Iowa	\$3,000,000	Texas	\$5,413,781
Kansas	\$3,000,000	Utah	\$4,939,010
Kentucky	\$46,998,225	Virginia	\$11,330,795
Louisiana	\$426,215	West Virginia	\$66,495,521
Maryland	\$3,000,000	Wyoming	\$150,018,677
Mississippi	\$257,477	Crow Tribe	\$2,164,911
Missouri	\$3,000,000	Hopi Tribe	\$1,435,253
Montana	\$13,402,468	Navajo Nation	\$7,216,702

OSM provides grants to 28 coal-producing states and tribes based on their past and present coal production. The bureau will make these awards throughout the current fiscal year, which ends September 30, 2012. The \$485 million available in fiscal year 2012 caps a four-year phase-in of increased funding mandated by Congress when it amended SMCRA in 2006.

Since 1977, OSM has provided more than \$7.2 billion to reclaim more than 295,000 acres of hazardous high-priority abandoned mine sites and for other purposes. ♣