



Indian Country Update

FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

SUMMER 2006

Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales Visits Indian Country Announces New Initiatives to Fight Methamphetamine and Investigate Cold Cases

On March 29, 2006 Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales met with tribal leaders to discuss issues of importance to Native Americans. He participated in a roundtable discussion with federal, state and tribal law enforcement regarding methamphetamine enforcement and other tribal justice issues in Indian Country while visiting the Yakama Reservation in Washington State.

“I think it is important to get a first-hand view of the tribal justice system on the Yakama Reservation,” said Attorney General Gonzales. “The Tribe is doing good work to preserve the heritage of this special place and protect those who call it home from the threats of violence and drug abuse, but there remain serious problems that require additional attention.”

Attorney General Gonzales announced two new Justice Department initiatives for Indian Country during his trip to the Yakama Reservation.

First, he announced funding for the Methamphetamine Investigation Training for Tribal Law Enforcement. This course will provide tribal law enforcement officers with training on how to conduct successful and safe methamphetamine investigations.

The use, production and distribution of methamphetamine on Indian reservations has increased significantly during the past 10 years. At the winter session of the National Congress of American Indians in Washington, D.C., methamphetamine’s dramatic impact within Indian Country was perhaps the biggest issue of concern amongst tribal leaders.

Second, Attorney General Gonzales announced a cold case review initiative for Indian Country. The Yakama Nation will be the first tribe to benefit from this initiative. The Federal Bureau of



Investigation and United States Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Washington will review those unsolved homicides from the Yakama Nation that might benefit from new investigative resources and recent technological advancements in forensic science.

As part of the cold case review initiative, the Federal Bureau of Investigation will make available the services of both its Violent Crime Apprehension program and its National Center for Analysis of Violent Crime.

For more information about the Department of Justice’s role in Indian Country, visit www.usdoj.gov/otj.

Department of the Interior Awards \$4.1 Million in Grants to Tribes for Energy and Mineral Projects

The Department of the Interior’s Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development Grant Program helps Tribes determine what energy and mineral resources they may have on their lands and how they may be economically developed for the Tribes’ benefit. For 2006, the program received 81 proposals from Tribes for renewable energy, oil and gas, geothermal, coal, and mineral projects. Of these the Office of Indian Energy provided funding to 48 mineral assessment projects on 40 reservations totaling over \$4.1 million.

The Mineral Assessment Program’s primary functions are to: (1) provide funds to Tribes to perform technical evaluations of the energy and mineral resource potential of Indian reservations;

(2) provide Tribes with geological, geophysical, and engineering reports, maps, and other data concerning their energy and mineral resources; (3) provide Tribes technical assistance on using and interpreting assessment information so that Tribes can understand and plan for the potential development of these resources and (4) provide Tribes with an outreach vehicle to promote their lands and resources to potential partners if they so desire.

The next call for proposals for the Program will be in November, 2007. For more information, contact Dr. Robert Middleton, Director, Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development at 202-219-0740.

President Applauds Senate on Confirmation of Dirk Kempthorne as Secretary of the Interior



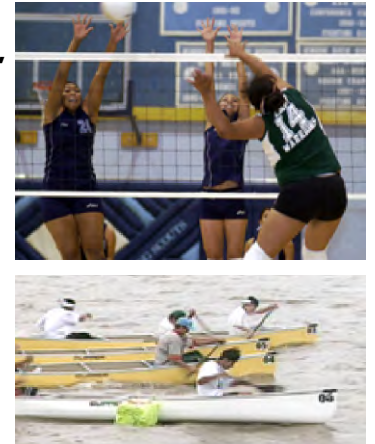
President George W. Bush is joined by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice as Idaho Gov. Dirk Kempthorne is sworn into office as Secretary of the Interior by Chief of Staff Josh Bolten Friday, May 26, 2006. Mrs. Patricia Kempthorne holds the Kempthorne family Bible for the ceremony that was held in the Oval Office of the White House.

President Bush said, "I applaud the Senate for confirming Dirk Kempthorne as Secretary of the Interior. Dirk has an abiding love of nature and the outdoors and is dedicated to conserving our natural resources. He will continue my Administration's efforts to effectively manage our national parks, support historic and cultural sites through our Preserve America Initiative, and pursue environmentally responsible energy development on Federal lands and waters. He will also work to maintain good relations with Native American tribes and will play a leadership role in my Cooperative Conservation approach to environmental stewardship. I congratulate Dirk and his family on today's confirmation and thank him for his continued service to our Nation."

Upcoming Events in Indian Country North American Indigenous Games

Denver, Colorado July 2-9, 2006
"In the Spirit of the Sports Warrior"

The North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) is a large-scale multi-sport and culture celebration offering competition in 16 sports for Indigenous athletes between the ages 13-19 and adults ages 20 and over. The North American Indigenous Games will be held in Denver, Colorado July 2-9, 2006. Photo courtesy of the Colorado Indigenous Games Society.



The White House hosted members of the Navajo Nation's Council on Human Services Committee on May 26, 2006. The members of the Committee came to the White House to express their appreciation and support of the strong leadership of the President on the war on terror. Pictured from Left to Right: Rudy Fernandez, Special Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs; Ray Berchman, Council Delegate and member of the Judiciary Committee; Tom M. White, Jr., Council Delegate and member of the Human Services Committee; Ray Barney; Ruben Barrales, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of Intergovernmental Affairs; Omer Begay, Chairman of the Human Services Committee; and Curran Hannon, Council Delegate. Photo courtesy of Navajo Nation.

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