

# Trust Matters

## Secretary Approves Fiduciary Trust Model

On August 11, 2004, Secretary Norton approved the "To-Be" Trust Business Model, now called the Fiduciary Trust Model (FTM), with the exception to the processes relating to direct pay for individuals that continue to be studied. With the Secretary's support for reengineered Indian trust business processes, nationwide implementation will begin.

The FTM represents a comprehensive reengineering of trust business processes, consistent with the Department's strategic plan for trust reform. The business processes described in the FTM identify how the future trust administration will operate. When implemented, the FTM

will transform the current trust business processes into more efficient, consistent, integrated and fiscally responsible business processes that better meet the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries.

For example, when the FTM is implemented:

⇒ Beneficiaries will have access to information regarding their trust assets via a primary point of contact in field locations or a nationwide call center.

⇒ Accurate and timely land value and ownership information will be available.

⇒ A single Adjudication Office for Indian probate will consolidate and expedite the adjudication and hearing process.

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⇒ The handling of trust funds will be more secure and efficient through lockbox operations.

⇒ A funds receivable system will be fully automated, notifying employees when lease payments are due.

⇒ Automated applications and contract forms will standardize and streamline leasing and conveyance procedures.

⇒ Cadastral Surveyors will be located in or near BIA Regional offices, and a program to develop Certified Federal Surveyors will reduce the time and expense to acquire federally approved surveys.

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**A copy of the final Fiduciary Trust Model is available on the OST web site at [www.ost.doi.gov](http://www.ost.doi.gov)**

## Self-Determination / Self-Governance Update

The Office of External Affairs (OEA) coordinates OST's P.L. 93-638 self-determination and self-governance activities. Currently, tribes have the opportunity to enter into contracts or compacts for the OST real estate appraisal and financial trust services functions.

During FY 2004, OEA staff worked in cooperation with tribes to initiate

new contracts and compacts for these functions, to renegotiate current contracts and compacts, and to provide technical assistance and information to tribes in these areas.

Currently, OST is in the final stages of developing a Memorandum of Understanding to present to those tribes that have chosen to contract or compact the real estate

appraisal function for FY 2005.

When the MOU is completed, OEA will contact each tribe with a current contract or compact to present and discuss the MOU. The MOU outlines the proposed roles and responsibilities that the tribe and OST will agree to in the performance of the function. OEA looks forward to working with the tribes on this matter.

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## OST Attends Outreach Events

OST Field Operations staff were busy this summer attending meetings and pow-wows, and using these tribal gatherings as opportunities to provide information to Indian trust beneficiaries about OST. Among other outreach activities conducted, OST Trust Officers and staff provided an informative presence at the Anadarko Indian Exposition, Tulsa and Pawnee pow-wows and the Navajo Nation Fair.

Representatives from the Southern Plains and Eastern Oklahoma Regional Offices, Pawnee and Osage Agencies, Shawnee office, and the Trust Officers from the Osage Agency and Tulsa Office attended and provided staffing for an outreach booth at the Tulsa Inter-tribal Club Pow-wow held August 13-15. The long hours OST staff worked at this event paid off with a significant number of beneficiary updates made to OST information. OST staff collected between 50-75 updates to address information and even made contact with five accountholders that previously had been presumed to have been deceased. Beneficiaries updated their own information, and used their cell

phones to call additional individuals who needed to update their account information as well.

OST employees distributed office



OST Employees pose for a photo with the winner of the Pendleton "Circle of Life" blanket raffle. Left to right: Judi Hill, Stephanie Hinman, Steve Milligan, Fidelas Davis (Blanket Winner), Samantha Peters, and Dresdyn Hinman (OST helpers), and Nancy Peters.

business cards, pens, OST newsletters and surveys, so visitors could continue to learn from our materials after they left the booth. Through these efforts, people across the state of Oklahoma became aware of the services and responsibilities of OST. The assistance received from both the Southern Plains and Eastern Oklahoma offices was valuable in answering the variety

of questions presented.

OST also had a strong and valuable presence at the Navajo Nation Fair, held this year from September 8-12.

Many people visited the OST booth, and some 1,800 visitors requested that OST check their account status, update their address, or see if they had an account. Twenty-three beneficiaries whose whereabouts had been unknown were identified. And, through the efforts of OST staff, one person became aware of a significant inheritance that was previously unknown to her.

Employees and contractors assisted in staffing the booth, distributing OST cups, pens, newsletters and contact information.

The efforts of OST and contractor staff in attending these events represent our commitment to working with beneficiaries to provide important information and services to them.

Thanks to all who participated in these successful events.

## MOU Signed with NBC for OST Appraisal Management

Effective October 1, 2004, the OST Office of Appraisal Services (OAS) is now under the management of the National Business Center (NBC) Appraisal Services Directorate. A Memorandum of Understanding to this effect authorizes NBC to provide workload management services to OAS in support of Indian land appraisals. Mr. Brian Holly, Chief Appraiser for NBC, will oversee OAS.

The MOU will support and enhance the independence of OST appraisers. This agreement is geared toward

meeting the highest standards of professional appraisal practice while providing services to Indian trust beneficiaries in a cost-effective, timely manner. Under the MOU, OST appraisers remain OST staff and will stay in their current locations.

Indian preference for hiring appraiser positions will continue. OST also retains control of the budget. Tribes will continue to have the ability to contract and compact with OST for the appraisal function through Public Law 93-638.

NBC will provide assistance for appraisal workload management, and will ensure consistent standards of performance. NBC will serve as a resource to address regional appraisal backlogs, and will promote continued training and certification among OST appraisal staff.

Mr. Holly looks forward to meeting OAS staff and working closely with them and the tribes to support valuations of Indian trust assets.

## Quality Surveys Gauge OST Services

In conjunction with the placement of new Fiduciary Trust Officers (FTOs) in agency and regional office locations, OST is sending Quality Service Survey Questionnaires to Individual Indian Money (IIM) account holders serviced by the respective agency or region.

The purpose of the survey is to establish a baseline, or current, measurement of the level of beneficiary satisfaction with OST when an FTO is placed in a field location. Additional surveys will be sent in the future to gather results that will be compared against this baseline data, so that improvements in services by OST can be measured and evaluated.

The questionnaire focuses on the frequency of beneficiary visits and contacts with OST, and inquires about the primary purpose of the visit or contact. The beneficiary is asked to rank their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the service OST provided. In ad-

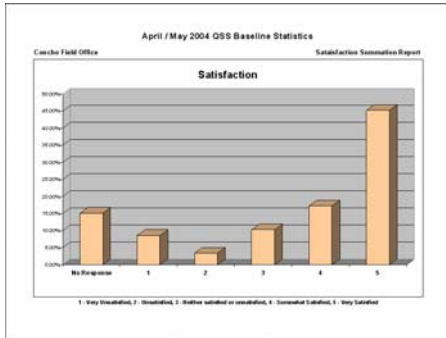
dition, the questionnaires include blank space for the beneficiaries to provide written comments.

Information reported by beneficiaries will be a valuable tool to help improve the delivery of trust services at the local

level. Responses received are scanned and tallied for OST use. Written comments are also reviewed so that the FTOs can personally address matters that need additional attention.

The response rate to the survey has been impressive. As of July, individual mailings had been sent to 26,694 account holders in five locations (Anadarko, Concho, Pima, Puget Sound, and Eastern Oklahoma). Some 2,331 responses have been received—almost a 9% response rate.

In August, OST mailed 6,165 additional questionnaires to the Taholah, Great Lakes, Makah, and Olympic Agencies.



This graph displays the levels of satisfaction with services for the 217 Concho Agency account holders who responded to the Quality Service Survey. The majority of respondents were "very satisfied" with OST services.

### OST-BIA Quarterly e-Communicator

OST and BIA employees now have another way to access current information on projects and events of mutual interest to our organizations. The MIT Communications Group, co-chaired by Doug Lords, OST Deputy Special Trustee—Field Operations and Ed Parisian, BIA Director of the Office of Indian Education Programs, has created an electronic newsletter accessible to employees from their computers.

The e-Communicator is published quarterly and includes short articles and bulletins on the progress and status of trust reform projects and other mutual items of interest. The e-Communicator also includes a three-month e-Calendar of events that employees can review for planning and participation purposes.

Check out the second issue of the e-Communicator, published October 4, 2004, and let us know what you think. Any ideas for items to include in the future, or events to list on the calendar are welcome. Please email or call them in to Carrie Moore (202) 208-4866 or Pat Gerard (505) 816-1313, with the OST Office of External Affairs.

## Orientation for Trust Officers

In July and August, a comprehensive, three week orientation program for newly-hired Fiduciary Trust Officers, Regional Trust Administrators and Deputy Superintendents for Trust was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. OST and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) sponsored this orientation session for individuals who have filled key positions within our organizations to guide the implementation and success of the Department's Trust Initiatives for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Participants included 6 Regional Fiduciary Trust Administrators, 18 Fiduciary Trust Officers and 6 Deputy Superintendents for Trust, which represents about one-fourth of the total new trust

positions within OST and BIA that will be filled over the next fiscal year. These employees share the responsibility for

protecting and administering the assets that are held in trust by the US government for Indian tribes and individuals.

They are responsible for working cooperatively to ensure that trust beneficiaries are receiving accurate and timely delivery of products and services.

The orientation included guest presentations, panel discussions and activities. Some of the subjects covered included federal Indian law and policy, federal legislation, Trust Initiatives for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, cultural diversity, beneficiary expectations and team building, as well as day-to-day activities in BIA and OST such as personnel, budget, trust accounting, trust systems, records and reporting.



Participants at the Trust Officers and Deputy Superintendent for Trust Orientation Training included (left to right): Front row: Roy Smith, Bob Upton, Leroy Chase, Jim James, Second row: Gloria Spybuck, Vicki McCoy, Florence WhiteEagle, Bonnie Paquin, Cathy Rugen, Stephen Milligan, Elizabeth Sparks, Virginia Moore, Robin Phillips, Melissa Currey. Third row: Lynn Engdahl, Cliff Hall, Tom Reynolds, Mel Burch, Grant Stafne, Robert Craff, Henry Ware, Herb Sakalauks, John Roach, Neil Eldridge, Lynnette Verlanic, Ed Lone Fight, Curtis Towery.

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## Trust Payment Lockbox to be Implemented

**T**he Department is taking action to implement a “lockbox” for receiving and processing trust asset payments using a state of the art approach that 1) speeds deposits, 2) provides timely receipt of funds information, and 3) reduces risk of theft or loss.

The Department will use a commercial lockbox service to receive, process, and deposit all surface lease remittances by the end of 2005. The expected roll out schedule will be:

- 01/15/05      First Pilots - Anadarko and Concho Agencies
- 09/15/05      50 agencies will be using the lockbox
- 12/21/05      All agencies will be using the lockbox

The benefits of the lockbox for Indian beneficiaries will be to streamline collections from receipt of funds through the disbursement of funds, thereby reducing the processing cycle time. This efficiency will meet the 24 hour deposit requirement, resulting in increased interest earnings. Disbursements will be more timely and accurate and will be based on certified ownership.

## OST Regional Trust Administrators

**O**ST has six Regional Trust Administrators (RTAs) on Board. The RTAs oversee and coordinate fiduciary trust activities nationwide. They are:

1. Melvin Burch: Southern Plains and Southwest Regions
2. Jim James: Great Plans and Eastern Regions
3. Tom Reynolds: Northwest and Alaska Regions
4. Cathy Rugen: Navajo and Western Regions
5. Vicki McCoy: Eastern Oklahoma and Pacific Regions
6. Robert Upton: Rocky Mountain and Midwest Regions