



NEWS RELEASE

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Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, State of Montana recognized for audit work by Interior Secretary Norton

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe and the State of Montana have been recognized by the Department of the Interior’s Minerals Management Service (MMS) for their outstanding efforts in royalty collection and compliance activities related to energy production on their lands.

In recognition of their auditing efforts in recent years, Department of the Interior Secretary Gale Norton presented the prestigious MMS Joan Killgore Award to Mr. Todd Druse of the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe in southwestern Colorado, and the James B. Griffith Award to the State of Montana’s Department of Revenue during a Dec. 1 presentation in Washington, D.C.

“The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and the Montana Department of Revenue have compiled outstanding records for completing audits on schedule, submitting high-quality products, and consistently achieving positive program results,” Secretary Norton said of the award recipients. She particularly praised the leadership and active participation of the Tribe and State of Montana in fulfilling their responsibilities as part of cooperative audit agreements with the Minerals Management Service. Those cooperative agreements allow individual Indian Tribes and states to assume more responsibility in the areas of compliance and auditing related to energy production on Tribal lands and on Federal lands within state borders.

The Joan Killgore Award presented by Secretary Norton formally honors an individual from a Tribe who has made a significant contribution toward Tribal control and self-governance in managing Indian mineral lease revenues. The award is named in honor of former MMS employee Joan Killgore, who spent nearly 20 years as the MMS primary point of contact on Indian royalty issues.

The James B. Griffith Award honors a state for outstanding efforts in managing its cooperative audit agreement with MMS. The award was created in honor of Wyoming State Auditor James B. Griffith, who more than 22 years ago played a key role in getting states and Indian tribes to participate with the Federal government in mineral audit activities. Griffith’s visionary

leadership, which is reflected in the award, provides a reminder of the importance of cooperation between the Federal government and the states in managing mineral resources.

Secretary Norton praised the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, which has maintained a “solid, long-standing program that has been unwavering in its management of Tribal assets and resources.” The State of Montana, she added, was one of the original states to enter into a cooperative audit agreement with the Minerals Management Service 20 years ago and has “earned its reputation for completing audits on schedule, recovering royalties for the state and Federal government, and consistently submitting high-quality products.”

MMS, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages offshore oil and gas exploration as well as renewable and alternative energy sources such as wind, wave, and solar on 1.76 billion acres of the Outer Continental Shelf while protecting the human, marine, and coastal environments. The OCS provides 30 percent of oil and 21 percent of natural gas produced domestically, and sand used for coastal restoration. MMS collects, accounts for, and disburses mineral revenues from Federal and American Indian lands, and contributes to the Land and Water Conservation Fund and other special use funds, with Fiscal Year 2005 disbursements of approximately \$9.9 billion and more than \$153 billion since 1982.

MMS Website: www.mms.gov
MMS: Securing Ocean Energy & Economic Value for America