

MMS Fast Facts

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Indian Trust Mineral Revenue Services

The Minerals Management Service (MMS) is an agency within the U.S. Department of the Interior. Through its Minerals Revenue Management program, MMS manages the collection, verification, and disbursement of revenues associated with leasing and production of oil, natural gas, alternative and renewable energy and minerals on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and onshore Federal and Indian lands. Each year, the MMS collects and disburses billions of dollars to the U.S. Treasury, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Historic Preservation Fund, Reclamation Fund, and 34 Indian tribes. In FY 2008, MMS collected and disbursed approximately \$23.4 billion. Of those revenues, MMS disbursed \$534 million in Indian revenues to 34 Indian tribes and 30,000 individual Indian mineral owners.

The Department of the Interior has made Indian trust responsibility one of its highest priorities. We would like to take this opportunity to highlight the Indian Trust Revenue Services MMS provides to the Indian community.

The Federal Government has a long-standing historical and legal relationship with Indian tribes through its Indian trust responsibility. Since its inception in 1982, MMS, in close coordination with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, and Office of the Special Trustee for Native Americans, provides services to help the Department fulfill its fiduciary trust responsibility to the Native American Indian community.

In 1983 Congress enacted the Federal Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act (FOGRMA). Section 202 of FOGRMA authorized the Department to enter into cooperative agreements with Indian tribes. In response to this authority, MMS established the Tribal Cooperative Agreement Program. Under cooperative agreements, Indian tribes are authorized to conduct inspections, audits, and investigations of activities on their lands. However, the tribes mostly conduct audits of leases for oil and gas production. Currently, MMS has established partnerships with the following seven Indian tribes operating under cooperative agreements:

- Blackfeet (Montana)
- Jicarilla Apache (New Mexico)
- Navajo Nation (Arizona)
- Shoshone/Arapaho (Wyoming)
- Southern Ute (Colorado)
- Ute (Utah)
- Ute Mountain Ute (Colorado)

Through these partnerships, MMS provides assistance to the tribes in order for them to assume a greater role in managing their mineral assets. Under the authority of the Department's Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) programs, MMS assists tribes with some of the hiring and training expenses of staff and provides them with operational knowledge and hands-on experience to advance and support Indian self-determination that ultimately prepares the tribe to assume a greater role in managing its mineral assets. The IPA has led to the establishment of several tribal cooperative audit programs.

The MMS actively participates in consultation meetings with Tribes that enter into leases and business agreements related to specific energy development under new Tribal Energy Resource Agreements (TERA). TERAs grant authority to a tribe to review and approve agreements, and rights-of-way for energy development on tribal lands.

The Department established the Federal Indian Minerals Office (FIMO) in Farmington, New Mexico to provide "one-stop" service for Navajo individual Indian mineral owners in the Four Corners Region. The MMS, along with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Land Management, provides assistance with outreach, inspections, enforcement, and mineral revenue compliance services. Earlier this year, the Department established the Fort Berthold "one-stop" virtual office in New Town, North Dakota. MMS also provides support and assistance to that office.

As part of MMS's commitment to improve services to the Indian community, MMS recently reorganized its Minerals Revenue Management Program and established the State and Indian Coordination office located in Denver, Colorado. This office serves as an advocate for the Native American community and a communication channel to the Department and other Federal agencies. It is staffed with 28 employees; of that number, 10 employees are dedicated solely to outreach efforts. For over two decades, MMS has provided various forms of outreach to Indian tribes and individual Indian mineral owners by staffing booths at Indian fairs and pow-wows. The outreach meetings enable MMS to listen to the concerns and suggestions from tribes and individual mineral owners, answer questions, and identify and resolve mineral-related problems. In Fiscal Year 2008, MMS conducted nearly 70 Indian outreach sessions with Native American constituents and resolved over 4,000 royalty-related inquires.

The MMS will continue its relationship with the Native American community to ensure they receive accurate payments for the minerals produced on their lands.

To find out more about MMS, visit our website at <http://www.mms.gov> or call the MMS Office of Congressional Affairs at (202) 208-3502. For past editions of MMS Fast Facts, visit <http://www.mms.gov/ooc/newweb/congressionalaffairs/congress.htm>