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Third Secretarial Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform Meeting in Albuquerque

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The third public meeting of the Secretarial Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform was held in Albuquerque, N.M., on June 11-12, 2012.

The five members of the Commission along with the Designated Federal Officer convened to move forward on their comprehensive evaluation of Interior's management and administration of the nearly \$4 billion in trust assets. The Commission is charged with providing recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior at the end of their two-year tenure on how best to improve the Department's trust management and administration. Building upon the progress made with the historic Cobell Settlement, the Commission will help establish a new era of trust administration, stressing responsive, customer-friendly, accountable and transparent management of these substantial funds and assets.

The two day meetings were highly valuable sessions on the nature of the trust relationship and viewing other public and private sector trust models exploring the thoughts and ideas that may be applicable in Indian Country. There were panelists participating at the meeting such as Sam Deloria, Director, American Indian Graduate Center; Bank of NY Mellon, The Northern Trust Company, and Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation representatives; Intertribal Monitoring Association, Ross Swimmer, Swimmer Group, LLC, and Melody McCoy, Native American Rights Fund.

The Commission also engaged with various American Indian Youth Organizations in an evening session centered on creating a dialogue to discuss the future of Department of the Interior trust management. The session was held at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, an entity of the All Indian Pueblo Council. Keeping the youth informed and soliciting their input is a major goal of the commission.

On June 13, 2012, Chair of the Commission Fawn Sharp (Quinault), commission members Dr. Peterson Zah (Navajo Nation), Tex G. Hall (Three Affiliated Tribes), and the Designated Federal Officer for the Commission and Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary at the Department of the Interior Lizzie Marsters participated live on the Native America Calling Radio show. They provided a summary of the two-day meeting, and outlined the objectives of the Commission.

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Future meetings of the Secretarial Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform will be held on September 13-14, 2012, Bismarck, N.D.; and December 6-7, 2012, Seattle, Wash.

Tribal leaders, tribal organizations and individual Indians are invited to provide recommendations and possible solutions for trust management and administration to improve the delivery of services to Indian Country. For further information, please visit: <http://www.doi.gov/cobell/commission/index.cfm>.

The Commission values your feedback, to send your comments and recommendations for how to improve trust administration and management, send an email to trustcommission@ios.doi.gov.

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