



OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3000

ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

DEC 16 2009

Dear Tribal Leader:

On behalf of the Department of Defense (DoD), please accept our greetings for a happy holiday season! As the year ends, we remain grateful for the ongoing sacrifice of the many American Indian and Alaska Native men and women who proudly serve our country.

The DoD proudly takes on the challenge of the Presidential Memorandum issued on November 5, 2009, for each Federal agency to develop a plan of action to implement the challenge issued in Executive Order 13175 within 90 days.

DoD requests your help and guidance. I invite your written comments on the draft DoD plan of action in response to President Obama's Memorandum, by January 13, 2010. The draft DoD plan of action is posted to the Native American Issues pages of the DoD environmental website, www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/NA.

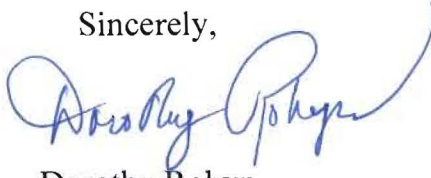
In particular, please consider offering comments that highlight:

- What DoD actions or actions of the Military Departments should initiate consultation?
- What procedures best ensure meaningful and timely consultation?
- How could the Department enhance its consultation efforts?
- How could the Department encourage more military installations to engage in meaningful and timely consultation with tribes?
- What additional steps should the Department consider taking to enhance the capacity of Military Departments and personnel to engage in consultation?
- What additional steps should the Department consider taking to enhance the awareness of tribal governments about DoD policy on consultation as well as the Federal statutes that trigger consultation?
- What additional steps could the Department take to promote collaboration and stronger government-to-government relationships with tribes?
- How should the Department enhance efforts to build the capacity of military and civilian personnel to protect natural and cultural resources of interest to tribes?
- How should the Department measure the progress of its ongoing efforts to consult and coordinate with tribes?

President Clinton issued Executive Order 13175 in 2000 to spur Federal agencies' actions and guide them in developing the capacity to consult effectively with tribal nations. DoD's focus on consultation with tribal nations dates back to 1994. Consultation has become the framework for Department actions and the foundation for government-to-government relationships that respect tribal sovereignty and DoD's responsibilities to tribes under the Federal trust doctrine and other statutes. DoD's commitment to consultation was clarified first in October 1998 with the adoption of the American Indian and Alaska Native Policy. It was enhanced further by additional guidance, programs, partnerships, and outreach to tribal governments and organizations. Each of these documents is posted to www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/NA, the Native American Issues pages of the DoD environmental website.

Confident as we are that DoD has taken significant steps to engage in regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribes, the Department strives to do more. I welcome your comments on DoD's proposed plan of action and additional opportunities to join with you in strengthening our government-to-government relationships to protect vital natural and cultural resources. Thank you in advance for your recommendations. I know your input will help guide the success of our efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dorothy Robyn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Dorothy Robyn
Deputy Under Secretary of Defense
(Installations and Environment)