



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

MAR 22 2010

Dear Tribal Leader:

The Department of the Interior is pleased to announce the next stage of its collaboration with tribes to develop a Department-wide Tribal Consultation Policy in accordance with Interior's Action Plan (enclosed.) The Tribal Consultation Team (Team) is being formed to draft Interior's Tribal Consultation Policy. This letter invites you to participate in that collaboration by nominating a tribal official to represent your tribe on the Team. The Team will include a tribal official from each Bureau of Indian Affairs region and a Federal representative from each Interior bureau/office.

The tribes in each BIA region are asked to nominate three tribal officials or delegates from their BIA region to serve on the Team. Each tribe may submit nominees to the BIA Regional Director. The Regional Director will work with the tribes to select the three nominees to put forward to the Secretary, providing technical assistance as necessary. Tribal Team members will represent the interests of their tribe in the Team meetings on Interior's consultation policy. Nominees must have certification from an authorized tribal official of their tribe that they are authorized to speak for the tribe if selected for the Team. Nominees who have an understanding of how Interior programs affect tribes and who have experience with government-to-government communications could be helpful; however, no such understanding or experience is required. From each Interior bureau/office, the Secretary will also appoint a Federal member and one alternate to the Tribal Consultation Team. The members of the Team will remain in service for 1 year following their appointment. The tribal and Federal alternates should be available to serve if the original appointee is unable to continue working on the Team during the 1-year term.

During this 1-year period, the Tribal Consultation Team will draft a policy; submit the policy to tribes and the Federal Register for notice and comment; and revise the draft as appropriate, based on comments received. The Team will submit the revised draft to the Secretary for review and approval. Additionally, the Team may have further interaction with Interior's bureaus once the final Department-wide policy is completed.

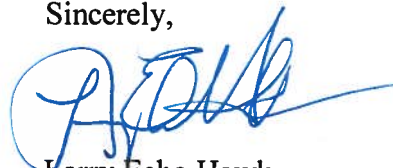
Tribal Consultation Team members may need to travel extensively for meetings during the 1-year period of service. Expenses of the 12 tribal members of the Team for these meetings (transportation, lodging, and per diem expenses) will be paid by Interior. Members of the Team will be expected to be involved in teleconferences and other means of communication on a regular basis as needed to complete the work of the Team.

Tribes are asked to make their selections and forward the names and other information (see enclosed nomination form) to the BIA Regional Directors by April 30, 2010. BIA Regional Directors will forward the names of the nominees to the Secretary by May 5, 2010. From the three nominees for each region, the Secretary will appoint one Tribal Consultation Team member and one alternate for each BIA region by May 14, 2010.

As you know, this request for nominations stems from a Federal Government-wide consultation initiative, and Interior recognizes that the Federal Government is making multiple requests of the tribes for collaboration. Interior is mindful of the demands that this initiative is making on tribal resources. If you have any suggestions for how this process could be improved as we move forward, we welcome your input. We greatly appreciate your continued responsiveness to the President's tribal consultation initiative, and we look forward to continuing to work with you.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call Ms. Tracie Stevens, Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, at (202) 208-7163.

Sincerely,



Larry Echo Hawk,
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs

Enclosures