



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

JUL 25 2012

Dear Tribal Leader:

In its report on the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill for Fiscal Year 2012, the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations stated, in part, “The Committee is aware of the duplication that exists in the Department of the Interior’s wildland fire programs, with multiple parallel organizations in four bureaus, each having nearly identical administrative organizations at the national, state, and regional levels, and at the local level.” The Committee went on in the report to direct the Department to “complete an assessment of the Department’s wildland fire management programs in order to determine the most cost effective, efficient means of providing comprehensive fire management services in support of the Departmental and bureau missions and to better direct scarce resources from duplicative administrative management organizations to focus resources on the protection of lives, property and natural and cultural resources.” The Committee asked for a set of options for restructuring and conducting the wildland fire management programs.

In response to the Committee’s report, the Department contracted the services of PricewaterhouseCoopers (the Assessment Team) to conduct an assessment considering the specific areas of wildland fire management referenced in the report to include, “the Department and bureau roles and responsibilities for administration and management of preparedness, suppression operation, hazardous fuels reduction, burned area rehabilitation, fire facilities, fire science, community assistance, and budget and finance functions.” The Assessment Team was also asked to “evaluate existing alternative models for service delivery, including the Alaska Fire Service, state, and other countries and identify resources that can be redirected to on-the-ground services through reorganization of its wildland fire management programs.”

During the assessment process, the Assessment Team conducted telephone interviews, in-person interviews, and site visits at several strategically selected areas across the United States including Idaho, Georgia, Florida, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, California, and Oregon. Additionally, affected personnel and tribal members were afforded the opportunity to provide feedback to the Assessment Team through completion of an on-line survey or through the Discussion Center on the Interior Fire Program Assessment 2012 neighborhood of Myfirecommunity.net.

On June 19, 2012, Task 1, the identification of potential opportunities, was completed; and Task 2, development of recommendations, began. As part of Task 2, and in support of the Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments requirements outlined in Executive Order 13175 and the Secretary of the Interior’s Order No. 3317, the Department is conducting three Tribal Consultation sessions. At these sessions the Department will present background information on the Interior Fire Program Assessment 2012 project, the options that have been prepared by the Assessment Team, and the criteria for evaluating those options. The Assessment Team’s summary document will be available at: [http://www.doi.gov/pmb/owf/Tribal\\_Consultation\\_Advance\\_Materials.cfm](http://www.doi.gov/pmb/owf/Tribal_Consultation_Advance_Materials.cfm) no later than July 27, 2012.

Consultations are scheduled for:

When: **Monday, August 27, 2012**  
Where: **National Indian Programs Training Center**  
1011 Indian School Road, N.W., Suite 254  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

When: **Tuesday, August 28, 2012**  
Where: **Northern Quest Resort and Casino**  
2012 Northern Quest Casino  
100 North Hayford Road  
Airway Heights, Washington  
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

When: **Friday, August 31, 2012**  
Where: **Mid-West Regional Office**  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Department of the Interior  
Norman Pointell Building  
5600 West America Boulevard, Suite 500  
Bloomington, Minnesota 55347  
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

After the consultations are completed, there will be an opportunity to provide additional feedback to the Assessment Team by emailing your comments to [IFPA12@ios.doi.gov](mailto:IFPA12@ios.doi.gov), by 5 p.m., September 12, 2012.

Please accept the opportunity to provide your feedback. The input of the Indian tribal governments is invaluable to the Department's wildland fire management program and to the success of the Assessment process.

Sincerely,



Laura Davis  
Tribal Governance Officer  
Department of the Interior