



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS  
Washington, D.C. 20240

January 14, 2009

Chief J. Allan, Chairman  
Coeur d'Alene Tribal Council  
Post Office Box 408  
Plummer, ID 83851

Dear Chairman Allan:

My term as the Special Trustee for American Indians at the Department of the Interior has come to an end. Over my years here, I have had the privilege of working with many dedicated people to bring about reforms to the Indian trust. It has been a wonderful experience and I am proud of what has been accomplished.

I offer my thanks to you and your tribal members for your efforts and invaluable input while I served as the Special Trustee. Together we have made remarkable progress. The following highlights are representative of what we have achieved.

- New, integrated title, leasing, accounting, and payment systems
- A trust funds accounting system that balances to the penny every day and provides comprehensive quarterly statements of account to beneficiaries
- Debit card option directed to beneficiaries without regular banking relationships
- Direct deposit for faster, safer trust disbursements
- Trust Beneficiary Call Center to provide timely and accurate responses to beneficiaries' questions
- Fiduciary Trust Officers to serve as primary points of contact for beneficiaries at the agency level
- American Indian Records Repository to provide state-of-the-art storage and protection of inactive Indian trust records

Even with all that has been done, work remains to make management of the Indian trust transparent and to instill confidence among beneficiaries that the United States Government's fiduciary trust obligation to them is being fulfilled every day. According to the succession plan, the Principal Deputy Special Trustee Donna Erwin will be the Acting Special Trustee until a new appointment is made. I have confidence you will continue to support her and the work of the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians.

For my part, my heart is in this important work and I will offer my assistance whenever asked. I look forward to the future and a time when reforms of the Indian trust will be completed. I know that goal will be accomplished sooner due to the work that has taken place during my tenure. If you need to contact me, my personal phone number is 202-320-6531. Thank you for your help in the past, and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ross".

Ross O. Swimmer  
Special Trustee for American Indians