



# Bureau of Indian Affairs

## Mission

The mission of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is to enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian Tribes, and Alaska Natives.

## Budget Overview

The 2026 Budget for BIA is \$1.7 billion in current appropriations. The Bureau plays a primary role in carrying out Federal trust, treaty, and other responsibilities for 574 currently federally recognized Tribes, with a service population of nearly 2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives in Tribal and native communities nationwide. The 2026 Budget supports continuing core efforts to advance self-governance and self-determination, foster stronger economies and self-sufficiency, and support safe Indian communities through a wide range of activities. The 2026 Budget eliminates programs outside of BIA's core mission. Specifically, it eliminates the Indian Guaranteed Loan program for Tribal business development because it is duplicative of several other programs across the Federal Government that offer loans to small businesses and which Tribal businesses are eligible for and receive. The Budget also terminates the Indian Land Consolidation Program, which has received bipartisan criticism for being ineffective.



A woman hangs salmon to dry before storage.

BIA Photo.

## Operation of Indian Programs

The 2026 Budget includes \$1.2 billion for the Operation of Indian Programs account. Priorities in this account are to—

### *Protect Indian Country*

BIA's Office of Justice Services (OJS) funds law enforcement, corrections, and court services to maintain safe Tribal communities. These programs support 198 law enforcement programs and 101 corrections programs run both by Tribes and by BIA as direct services. OJS funding also supports the Missing and Murdered Unit, including Operation Spirit Return, an initiative implemented in the spring of 2025 by the Trump Administration to help solve missing and unidentified persons cases involving American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States. The operation will identify unknown human remains located within or close to Indian Country that are believed to belong to either American Indian or Alaska Native persons and focus on reuniting the remains with family members and returning them to their Tribal communities.

## BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS Facts



- BIA was established in 1824 under the War Department and transferred to the Department of the Interior in 1849.
- BIA provides services to American Indians and Alaska Natives from the 574 federally recognized Tribes in the 48 contiguous States and Alaska.
- The Bureau administers and manages 56 million surface acres and 59 million acres of subsurface mineral estates held in trust by the United States for individual Indians and Tribes.
- More than 80 percent of Indian Affairs employees are American Indian or Alaska Native.

### *Promote Tribal Self-Determination*

The Department supports Tribal sovereignty. The BIA Tribal Government activity supports resources to Tribes and Alaska Native entities to strengthen and sustain Tribal government systems and support Tribal self-governance through the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act's (ISDEAA) (Public Law 93–638) contracting and self-governance compacting process. BIA will work to determine a New Tribes program funding estimate for the Lumbee Tribe when the Tribe is federally recognized.

### *Manage Trust Resources, Lands, and Energy Development*

BIA's Trust-Natural Resources Management activity supports the stewardship and development of energy resources on trust lands in Indian Country. Natural resource programs assist Tribes in the management, development, and protection of Indian trust land and natural resources on 56 million surface acres and 59 million acres of subsurface mineral estates. These programs enable Tribal trust landowners to optimize use and conservation of resources, providing benefits such as revenue, jobs, and the protection of cultural and traditional resources.

The Energy and Minerals activity within Trust-Natural Resources Management supports Executive Order (EO) 14154, *Unleashing American Energy*, and the Administration's priority for domestic energy abundance and economic development, including management and development of energy resources on Tribal lands. Income from energy and mineral production is the largest source of revenue generated from natural resources on trust lands. The 2026 Budget commits to the Indian Energy

Service Center, which coordinates Indian energy development activities across Interior's bureaus. The Center facilitates communication and coordination to enhance BIA's ability to process leases, the Bureau of Land Management's responsibility for Applications for Permit to Drill approval and monitoring, and the Office of Natural Resources Revenue's responsibilities for revenue accounting.

The Budget eliminates wasteful programs related to climate change ideologies, including the Tribal Climate Resilience program.

The 2026 Budget also supports EO 14225, *Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production*, and the Administration's active forest management reforms on Indian forest lands, which are managed by 300 Tribes across 19.2 million acres. The funding supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of forest resources in accordance with sustained yield principles included in forest management plans.

### **Tribal Priority Allocations**

Tribal Priority Allocations give Tribes the opportunity to further Indian self-determination by establishing their own priorities and reallocating Federal funds among programs in this budget category. The 2026 Budget proposes Tribal Priority Allocation funding of \$461.2 million.

### **Contract Support Costs**

The President's Budget maintains the Administration's support for the principles of Tribal self-determination and strengthening Tribal communities across Indian Country by fully funding Contract Support Costs at \$205.4 million. Contract Support Costs enable Tribes to assume



Dineh Tah' Navajo Dancers performing a Ribbon Dance at Great Sand Dunes National Park in Colorado.

NPS Photo.

responsibility for operating Federal programs by covering the costs to administer the programs.

### **Payments for Tribal Leases**

The Budget fully funds \$138.3 million for Payments for Tribal Leases, which funds Tribal facility lease agreements under section 105(l) of the ISDEAA in support of Tribal self-determination.

### **Construction**

The 2026 Budget proposes \$93.4 million for BIA's Construction activities, including funding for deferred maintenance projects for public safety and

justice facilities, irrigation projects and dams, and regional and agency offices serving Tribal programs and operations in Indian Country.

### **Land and Water Claims Settlements**

The 2026 Budget proposes \$58.9 million to meet Indian Settlement commitments. The funding request covers the continuing implementation of the Truckee River Operating Agreement (Public Law 101-618), the White Earth Land Settlement Act (Public Law 99-264), and initial funding for Federal payments authorized in the Hualapai Tribe Water Rights Settlement Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-419).

## SUMMARY OF BUREAU APPROPRIATIONS

(dollar amounts in thousands)

### Comparison of 2026 Request with 2025 CR

	2025 CR <sup>1/</sup>	2026 Request
Current, without Supplementals		
Operation of Indian Programs .....	1,897,709	1,217,383
Contract Support Costs .....	342,080	205,418
Payments for Tribal Leases .....	104,000	138,324
Construction .....	133,780	93,423
Indian Land and Water Claim Settlements and Miscellaneous Payments to Indians .....	976	58,897
Indian Guaranteed Loan Program Account .....	13,329	1,000
Indian Land Consolidation .....	4,000	0
Total, Current, without Supplementals .....	2,495,874	1,714,445
Current, 2026 Supplementals		
Operation of Indian Programs .....		42,984
Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58) .....		43,200
Transfer to OIG (P.L. 117-58) .....		-216
Construction .....		49,750
Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58) .....		50,000
Transfer to OIG (P.L. 117-58) .....		-250
Total, Current, 2026 Supplementals .....		92,734

<sup>1/</sup> Resource levels included are estimates. The President reserves his authority under the "Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025" (P.L. 119-4) to revise spending within the amounts provided by Congress.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF BUDGET CHANGES

By Appropriation Activity

### APPROPRIATION: Operation of Indian Programs

	2024 Actual	2025 Notional <sup>1/</sup>	2026 Request
Tribal Government .....	[398,987]	401,296	252,988
Human Services .....	[163,747]	163,453	65,640
Trust—Natural Resources Management .....	[322,349]	320,369	101,196
Trust—Real Estate Services .....	[165,887]	170,008	86,284
Public Safety and Justice .....	[555,559]	560,263	476,078
Community and Economic Development .....	[30,546]	30,524	9,764
Executive Direction and Administrative Services .....	[260,634]	251,796	225,433
TOTAL APPROPRIATION .....	1,898,550	1,897,709	1,217,383

<sup>1/</sup> Resource levels included are estimates. The President reserves his authority under the "Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025" (P.L. 119-4) to revise spending within the amounts provided by Congress.

**APPROPRIATION: Contract Support Costs**

	2024 Actual	2025 Notional <sup>1/</sup>	2026 Request
Contract Support (TPA) .....	305,946	337,080	200,418
Indian Self-Determination Fund (TPA) .....	5,000	5,000	5,000
TOTAL APPROPRIATION .....	310,946	342,080	205,418

<sup>1/</sup> Resource levels included are estimates. The President reserves his authority under the "Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025" (P.L. 119-4) to revise spending within the amounts provided by Congress.

**APPROPRIATION: Payments for Tribal Leases**

	2024 Actual	2025 Notional <sup>1/</sup>	2026 Request
TOTAL APPROPRIATION .....	51,167	104,000	138,324

<sup>1/</sup> Resource levels included are estimates. The President reserves his authority under the "Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025" (P.L. 119-4) to revise spending within the amounts provided by Congress.

**APPROPRIATION: Construction**

	2024 Actual	2025 Notional <sup>1/</sup>	2026 Request
Public Safety and Justice Construction .....	45,791	45,791	45,791
Resource Management Construction .....	65,694	65,694	38,186
Other Program Construction .....	22,295	22,295	9,446
TOTAL APPROPRIATION .....	133,780	133,780	93,423

<sup>1/</sup> Resource levels included are estimates. The President reserves his authority under the "Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025" (P.L. 119-4) to revise spending within the amounts provided by Congress.

**APPROPRIATION: Indian Land and Water Claim Settlements and Miscellaneous Payments to Indians**

	2024 Actual	2025 Notional <sup>1/</sup>	2026 Request
TOTAL APPROPRIATION .....	976	976	58,897

<sup>1/</sup> Resource levels included are estimates. The President reserves his authority under the "Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025" (P.L. 119-4) to revise spending within the amounts provided by Congress.

**APPROPRIATION: Indian Guaranteed Loan Program Account**

	2024 Actual	2025 Notional <sup>1/</sup>	2026 Request
TOTAL APPROPRIATION .....	13,329	13,329	1,000

<sup>1/</sup> Resource levels included are estimates. The President reserves his authority under the "Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025" (P.L. 119-4) to revise spending within the amounts provided by Congress.

**APPROPRIATION: Indian Land Consolidation**

	2024 Actual	2025 Notional <sup>1/</sup>	2026 Request
TOTAL APPROPRIATION .....	4,000	4,000	0

<sup>1/</sup> Resource levels included are estimates. The President reserves his authority under the "Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025" (P.L. 119-4) to revise spending within the amounts provided by Congress.