



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240

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## OWF POLICY MEMORANDUM 2014-001

To: Director, Bureau of Land Management  
Director, National Park Service  
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation  
Director, U.S. Geological Survey

From: Jim Douglas, Director – Office of Wildland Fire

Subject: Tribal Consultation and Coordination for the Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Management

### **Purpose:**

This memorandum provides policy for tribal consultation and coordination in the Department of the Interior's Wildland Fire Management program.

### **Background:**

Consultation is a process to create effective collaboration with Indian Tribes and informed Federal decision-making. Consultation is built upon government-to-government exchange of information and promotes enhanced communication that emphasizes trust, respect, and shared responsibility. This policy memorandum implements various Presidential and Secretarial policy documents related to consultation and coordination with Indian tribal governments, including: acknowledges the provisions for conducting consultation in compliance with Executive Order 13175 *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*; Presidential Memorandum issued November 5, 2009; Secretarial Order No. 3317; and Secretarial Order No. 3335.

### **Scope:**

This policy memorandum applies to national level programmatic and policy wildland fire management matters. Individual bureaus with responsibility for implementing and executing the Department's wildland fire management program and activities will follow and adhere to those bureau policies and programs for consultation and coordination.

The Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) manages the Department's wildland fire budget, oversees and coordinates the Department's Wildland Fire Management Program in its entirety, ensures consistency of policy and programs, provides advice to Departmental leadership, manages enterprise systems and applications, conducts and oversees internal control activities, and coordinates with other Federal agencies and non-federal partners. As part of its responsibilities,

the OWF is responsible for providing Departmental guidance, policy, and oversight. Activities and actions of the Office of Wildland Fire are subject to this Policy Memorandum.

**Time Frame:** This Policy Memorandum is effective immediately and remains in effect until rescinded or modified.

**Policy:**

The Office of Wildland Fire will engage in consultation on national level programmatic and policy wildland fire management matters that may have a substantial and direct effect on Indian tribes on matters including, but not limited to:

1. Tribal cultural practices, lands, resources, or access to traditional areas of cultural or religious importance on Federally managed lands;
2. The ability of an Indian Tribe to govern or provide services to its members;
3. An Indian Tribe's formal relationship with the Department; or
4. The consideration of the Department's trust responsibilities to Indian Tribes.

Consultation excludes matters that are in litigation, settlement negotiations, or matters for which a Court Order limits the Department's discretion to engage in consultation.

The specific approaches and methods of consultation will be guided by the intent and policies defined in this memorandum and subsequently determined during implementation. Formal and informal means of communication will be used to further ongoing collaboration, coordination, and communication. Various venues and mechanisms will be utilized in implementation of this memorandum. Approaches and methods will be tailored to the specific topics for consultation and tribal interests involved, including existing processes, groups, and forums or through the creation of new forums and/or tribal staff-level advisory group(s).

When formal consultation is needed, tribes will receive formal notice via email, U.S. mail, or facsimile. The OWF will continue to use inter-tribal associations to assist with information dissemination.

**Contacts:**

Any questions can be directed to Paul Steblein, Deputy Director, Policy and Budget, Designated Federal Official, Office of Wildland Fire at [paul\\_steblein@ios.doi.gov](mailto:paul_steblein@ios.doi.gov) or (202) 606-5053.

cc: Interior Fire Executives  
Interior Fire Directors