



**Office of the Special Trustee  
for American Indians**  
**Fiscal Year 2012 Annual Report to Congress**

Beginning in 2013, the annual report is published as the last section of OST's annual budget justification document.

The annual report is available online at the following internet address:  
[http://www.doi.gov/ost/press\\_room/upload/2012AnnualRpt\\_historical-v9.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/ost/press_room/upload/2012AnnualRpt_historical-v9.pdf)



United States Department of the Interior  
Office of Special Trustee for American Indians  
Washington, D.C. 20240

March 18, 2013

Dear Member of Congress:

I am pleased to provide the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) fiscal year (FY) 2012 annual report to Congress pursuant to the requirements stated in 25 U.S.C. § 4043 (f). The report presents OST's ongoing actions to improve services to tribal and individual Indian trust beneficiaries.

Returning to OST in 2011 after having served as the OST Chief of Staff until 2005, I had the opportunity to oversee significant changes in operations.

OST's support of the **Secretarial Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform** and preparation for trust land consolidation through the **Land Buy-Back Program** drove much activity in FY2012. The report explains how OST developed **OASIS**, an electronic appraisal request preparation, tracking, and reporting system, and **MAPS**, a system to estimate fair market value and fair annual rents, to facilitate the Buy-Back Program. OST also prioritized resolution of account data discrepancies to support **Cobell Settlement payments**. Both the Commission and the Buy-Back Program were referenced in the terms of the *Cobell Settlement*, Title I of the *Claims Resolution Act of 2010*.

Partnerships with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and other bureaus and offices within Interior, federal and state agencies, and tribal leaders and organizations improved the quality of our services. Of particular note was the creation of interagency agreements between the **Department of the Treasury** and OST. Read in the report about why Treasury selected OST to expertly invest millions of dollars of tribal funds.

Beneficiaries responded enthusiastically to implementation of **electronic notifications**. Individual Indian Money beneficiaries who use direct deposit or a debit card were offered deposit notifications via text message or email, instead of by regular mail. Besides providing safety and convenience for beneficiaries, e-notifications save the government printing and postage costs. The report looks at the implementation of this very successful effort, despite the digital divide that exists in Indian Country.

I welcome your feedback on these efforts and other content in this report. Please contact my office at 202-208-4866 for additional information about OST and the Indian trust.

Sincerely,

Michele F. Singer  
Principal Deputy Special Trustee

# Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians Annual Report to Congress - Fiscal Year 2012

The Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) was established by the *American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994*, Public Law 103-412 (Reform Act). The office was created to improve the accountability and management of Indian funds held in trust by the federal government. As trustee, the Department of the Interior (Interior) has the primary fiduciary responsibility to manage tribal trust funds and Individual Indian Money (IIM) accounts, as well as resources that generate income for those accounts.

The Indian trust consists of 55 million surface acres and 57 million acres of subsurface minerals estates held in trust by the United States for American Indians, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives. Over 11 million acres belong to individual Indians and nearly 44 million acres are held in trust for Indian tribes. On these lands, the department manages over 119,000 leases. It also manages more than \$4 billion in trust funds. For fiscal year (FY) 2012, income from financial assets and from leases, settlements and judgments, use permits, and land sales, totaling approximately \$487 million, was collected for about 387,000 open IIM accounts. Approximately \$1.4 billion was collected in FY2012 for about 3,000 tribal accounts (for over 250 tribes).

## A Unique Trust

The status of the Indian trust is unlike other trusts. Beyond size, other factors make the Indian trust unique.

The Indian trust gradually evolved from a series of Congressional

actions — beginning with the *General Allotment Act of 1887* (Dawes Act) — and subsequent policy changes. No single trust document created the Indian trust to articulate the fiduciary duties incumbent on the federal government in managing that trust. In a commercial trust, such a document would provide specific guidance for the management of trust assets. Unlike the commercial trust environment, where accounts and underlying trust assets must remain economically viable and productive or face liquidation under the common law of trusts, a large number of small accounts exist within the Indian trust. Most Indian trust accounts would fall below the minimal threshold for commercial trust accounts.

The Indian fiduciary trust administered by Interior does not charge for services to manage the natural resources of the trust or the investment of trust funds. Virtually 100 percent of income is returned to tribes and individuals. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is responsible for natural resource management. OST handles fiduciary assets. In many cases, the cultural heritage associated with a natural resource held in trust is more important to the beneficiary than its monetary worth.

Tribes are supported by OST if they choose to withdraw their trust funds. Subchapter II of the Reform Act addresses the voluntary withdrawal of trust funds by tribes. As stated in the law, the purpose of the subchapter is to provide tribes “an opportunity to manage tribal funds currently held in trust by the

United States and managed by the Secretary through the Bureau, that, consistent with the trust responsibility of the United States and the principles of self-determination, will 1) give Indian tribal governments greater control over the management of such trust funds; or 2) otherwise demonstrate how the principles of self-determination can work with respect to the management of such trust funds, in a manner consistent with the trust responsibility of the United States.” Under the Reform Act, from 1994 through FY2012, nine tribes have chosen to withdraw some or all of their trust funds out of trust status for self-management or investment.

## Fractionation and Trust Land Consolidation

From the days of the first treaties to the present, there has been an effort to balance tribal and federal visions of the trust. One of the most controversial issues was passage of the Dawes Act. This act divided reservations by allotting a number of acres on the reservation to each Indian head of a family, single person, or orphan child. Land not allotted was deemed excess and was made available to settlers as fee land.

Many reservations have a checkerboard pattern of fee and trust lands, often as a result of the Dawes Act. The checkerboard effect has an impact on the economic viability of trust lands because laws that apply to fee lands and trust lands differ. Those seeking to lease the land for any purpose find their efforts further complicated if their dealings span both types of land ownership.

Deleterious effects of the Dawes Act have manifested in fractionated ownership of tracts of trust land. Often, when an original owner of an allotment passed away, ownership of the tracts was split among many family members. Each person inherited an *undivided interest* in the original tract. The process of increasing the number of owners

of a tract, or *fractionation*, has continued for several generations. Today, many tracts have hundreds of owners. There is an economic impact of fractionation because 51 percent of a tract's owners need to agree before the land can be developed or used for such things as grazing, mineral extraction, or oil drilling. A tract with dozens of

owners is at a disadvantage to reach consensus for use of the land, even if all the owners are able to be contacted.

There have been efforts in the past to reduce fractionation. Among them, the Indian Land Consolidation Act (ILCA) of 1983 (Public Law 97-459), as amended in 2000, authorized any tribe, with the Secretary's approval, to exchange or sell any tribal lands, or interest in lands, to eliminate undivided fractional interests in Indian trust or restricted lands or to consolidate tribal landholdings. The American Indian Probate Reform Act (AIPRA) of 2004 amended ILCA and changed the way trust estates were distributed to heirs. There have been subsequent amendments to AIPRA.

The *Claims Resolution Act of 2010* (Public Law 111-291) Title I, Individual Indian Money Account Litigation Settlement, is the most recent attempt to address fractionation. The act included the *Cobell Settlement*, which established the Trust Land Consolidation Fund. The settlement was finalized November 24, 2012. The fund provides \$1.9 billion, over a ten-year period, to acquire fractionated interests in trust or restricted lands, up to 15 percent of the fund is available to implement a Land Buy-Back Program, and to pay costs related to the work of the Secretarial Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform.

Interior's Office of Valuation Services (OVS) and OAS collaborated in FY2012 to eliminate redundant valuations between the offices. The "One Appraisal Policy" avoids duplication of resources, shortens appraisal time, and controls costs.

**C**ritical to land consolidation is the fair market valuation of property. OST's Office of Appraisal Services (OAS) has been working with other bureaus and offices in Interior to provide timely, reliable, and credible appraisal services in accordance with professional and federal standards.

Developed in-house and recognized as a significant asset to the land consolidation process, the **Office of Appraisal Services Information System (OASIS)** is an electronic appraisal request preparation, tracking, and reporting system. It streamlines creation of appraisal requests originated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Office of Hearings and Appeals, or tribes for delivery to OAS. The system, implemented throughout OAS and BIA five months earlier than scheduled, provides status updates and produces various reports for coordination and reconciliation. Hard copies of appraisal requests have been eliminated, which saves personnel time and paper. Online training to over 300 OASIS users saved travel expenses and reduced labor costs. An OASIS webpage provides users with useful information and allows them to suggest improvements to OASIS. An updated version of OASIS is scheduled for release in FY2013.



OAS also created the **Mass Appraisal Program System (MAPS)**. MAPS is a system comprised of several mass appraisal methods, including an automated valuation model (AVM) used to estimate fair market value and fair annual rents. MAPS allows for a streamlined and quicker turnaround of appraisal requests, once upfront research and data systems are

in place. It conforms to nationally recognized appraisal standards, *Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice and Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions*, as applicable. MAPS is currently being used in several regions and broader application is planned. OAS regions using MAPS by the end of FY2012 included Eastern Oklahoma, Midwest, Northwest, and Great Plains.

The policy was successfully implemented among the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and OAS on the Navajo/Gallup water project.

OAS also consulted with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Army Corp of Engineers, Interior's Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA), the Federal Highway Administration, OVS, BIA, and the departments of transportation of several states to establish uniform appraisal requirements and streamline appraisal processes. OAS worked with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), OVS, and BIA to formulate processes to eliminate the development of duplicative data for real property appraisals. Establishment of a land consolidation website resulted in improved information sharing and overall project understanding.

OST signed a Memorandum of Understanding with OVS, BIA, and BLM on July 18, 2012, to correct mapping errors of fractionated land. OAS also implemented AgWare, market transaction data and report writing appraisal software, in the twelve OAS regional offices. OAS has linked market transaction data in AgWare with locational information on trust tracts/parcels stored in a geospatial information system database. This assists appraisers in developing appraisals, performing appraisal reviews, and providing real estate consulting services.

Such collaborations enhance the management and operation of the Buy-Back Program.

**O**ST anticipated approval of the *Cobell* Settlement would instigate new workloads, not only for land consolidation but also for **Cobell payments**. During FY2012, OST worked with BIA, other federal entities, and contractors to provide current account holder information to Garden City Group, Inc., the claims administrator.

OST prioritized the clean-up of account holder discrepancies, resolving more than 99.98 percent of the original baseline discrepancies; over 13,000 items were resolved through the discrepancy review. The OST Trust Beneficiary Call Center responded to 9,721 IIM Account Litigation Settlement inquiries during FY2012.



**T**he **Secretarial Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform** (Commission) was created to undertake a forward-looking, comprehensive evaluation of Interior's trust management of more than \$4 billion in Native American trust assets. It held its first meeting March 2012. The Commission seeks input from affected individuals and tribes to identify opportunities to enhance Departmental accountability, responsiveness, and efficiency in the management of both natural resources and fiduciary assets.

OST has been supporting, and continues to support, Interior and the Commission. OST staff worked on all of the Commission's FY2012 public meetings and webinars, and hosted the June 2012 meeting held in Albuquerque. At each meeting, OST management made presentations. Dozens of background documents were provided on compact discs, and access to additional documents and other information was made available online to the Commission through OST's intranet. Secretary Salazar and Deputy Secretary Hayes requested that the Commission specifically consider OST's current and future trust responsibilities and functions as it evaluates Interior's trust management.

## Operational Efficiencies

The following efforts were undertaken to advance beneficiary focus and participation while providing effective, competent stewardship and management of trust assets. As directed by Executive Order 13576, Delivering an Efficient, Effective, and Accountable Government, administrative cost savings and management efficiencies received critical attention in FY2012. All OST offices focused on their core operations to implement financial efficiencies, without impacting service to beneficiaries. Many of these efforts, if not most, rely upon robust partnerships and collaboration with BIA and other Interior offices and bureaus; federal, state and local agencies; and tribal organizations. Increasingly, OST is reaching out to communicate outside the organization in order to effect, enhance, or optimize outcomes of its internal efforts.

### **Saving Money**

- » Negotiated new agreements for annual acquisition and human resource services that saved \$205,000 and \$390,000, respectively
- » Revised the contract for security services at OST's Albuquerque office, saving \$138,000 annually
- » Consolidated OST facilities at Lenexa, Kansas, reducing rent/utilities by approximately \$200,000 annually; installed motion-activated light switches
- » Discontinued an accounting services contract, saving \$700,000 annually, and reorganized to provide the same function with current personnel, increasing employee morale and advancement opportunities, and establishing

**O**ver a ten-week period during the summer of 2012, Individual Indian Money beneficiaries who use direct deposit or a debit card were offered options to receive deposit notifications electronically (e-notifications), instead of by regular mail. The two new options were text message or email e-notifications.

**E-notifications** provide safety and convenience for beneficiaries. An e-notification is typically received by the beneficiary either the same day or the day after funds are credited to the individual's IIM account. A paper notification would have arrived several days after the deposit was made.

The offer was well-received. OST expects significant savings in printing and postage costs over the coming years as the use of e-notifications rises.



similar employee/supervisor ratios across branches and teams

- » Relocated the OAS Eastern Oklahoma Regional Office with the BIA office to reduce space and to save approximately \$65,000 annually on office rent
- » Processed payment of a record \$345 million Osage settlement one week earlier than required under the settlement agreement; over 3,900 direct deposits resulted in faster access to funds by beneficiaries and reduced transaction costs to the government
- » Increased the number of beneficiaries who use electronic funds transfers, more than 6500 nationwide (958 debit card and 5,584 direct deposit), resulting in substantial direct savings to the government in transaction costs
- » Initiated a pilot project, in collaboration with U.S Treasury and Chase Bank, for direct deposit

and debit card per capita payments in excess of \$18 million to the Western Shoshone (check costs will be further reduced when this process is implemented for other tribal per capita and tribal credit payments)

- » Increased online training, which reduced travel, printing, and shipping costs
- » Processed and reconciled over 8.8 million financial transactions and approximately one million account maintenance transactions encompassing more than \$1.9 billion in receipts and almost \$1.3 billion in disbursements to individual Indian and tribal beneficiaries

### **Partnering for Results**

- » Prepared and issued FY 2012 audited financial statements on the IIM and tribal trust funds; the independent auditors, KPMG LLP, issued no material weaknesses
- » Coordinated over 1,100 benefi-

ciary outreach meetings throughout Indian Country and at off-reservation locations, such as the Phoenix and Chicago Indian centers; many involved cross-agency cooperation and coordination with other governmental organizations

» Participated in 2,400 meetings with tribal governments

» Provided over 260 separate trainings sessions to Indian youth and adults on fundamental financial skills training

» Provided enhanced monitoring to identify and track beneficiaries in need of social service

assistance, working with BIA and Office of the Solicitor (SOL) staff to implement; 501 IIM accounts were tracked

» Completed a “proof-of-concept” with the successful transmission and printing of beneficiary checks at the U.S. Department of the Treasury in a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) scenario

» Implemented Pay.gov, the Treasury’s automatic direct deposit and credit card collection of payments for Bureau of Indian Affairs leases and permits, in September 2011 and received payments in FY2012 totaling \$6,623,192.44

» Worked with BIA and DOI information technology staff to write a solicitation to see if a commercial, off-the-shelf system exists that would combine the functionality of the Trust Fund Accounting System (TFAS) and the Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS)

» Partnered with BIA to review and close multiple forestry accounts, which reduced accounting and administrative costs

### **Operating Efficiently**

» Automated and streamlined the liabilities payment process, saving over 1,000 staff hours annually

» Increased use of the TFAS Update Utility Program, which automates data entry, saving over 1,000 staff hours annually

» Implemented a process to upload bulk cash transactions via spreadsheet instead of manually keying individual transactions, saving over 2,000 staff hours annually

» Implemented the Per Capita Distribution System, automating the cash distribution process for verifying accounts and receipting per capita distributions from tribal accounts to numerous IIM supervised, whereabouts unknown, and estate accounts

» Processed 66,956 automated one-time disbursements, totaling in excess of \$208 million

» Responded to 191,167 calls to the Trust Beneficiary Call Center

» Reduced the number of Whereabouts Unknown accounts (those

**W**hen the Department of the Treasury required investment services for various tribal funds created by legislation, they determined OST could expertly and cost effectively provide those services. Treasury determined that OST’s costs were lower than hiring a contractor. Treasury also recognized OST’s expertise in dealing with tribal governments and its well-established relationship with tribes.

After consultation with the tribes, **Treasury and OST entered into three Interagency Agreements (IAAs)** in FY2012 that allow OST to provide investment and program management services for the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, and the Crow Creek Tribe. Two more IAAs will be finalized in FY2013, while an additional two will continue to be negotiated.

OST’s Trust Funds Investment division plans, develops, operates, and controls the buying, selling, and trading of investment instruments. The division provides technical advice and assistance to regional offices, agencies, and Indian tribes in developing financial plans and investment strategies for tribal

trust funds. This is the expertise Treasury tapped, allowing OST to invest in eligible securities in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreements.



lacking current address information on file with OST) by more than 18,800 (21.5%); aggregate value of the accounts made

with tribal statements to 5 minutes (previously 5 days), which allowed them to be produced on the same day as paper statements,

employees who did not chose the VERA-VSIP offer

» Promoted an ethical culture at OST by developing an ethics manual and training, providing one-on-one ethics orientation for new employees, creating a “one stop” location on OST’s intranet for ethics information, emailing timely reminders and notices to all OST employees, and employing exit interview surveys

### **Information Technology (IT) Transformation Initiative**

The IT Transformation initiative is a multi-year effort by Interior to reduce IT costs across the department and improve the effectiveness of IT services delivered to its employees. OST, led by its Assistant Director for Information Resources (ADIR), has been fully engaged in Interior’s IT Transformation initiative.

In FY2012, OST made significant strides by developing and maintaining an OST server site migration plan that was included within the department’s plan for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) review. During the year, OST virtualized over 80 percent of the OST server infrastructure in preparation for consolidation of OST data centers with BIA data centers. Virtualization allowed several physical servers to be changed to virtual machines on one of OST’s physical servers, thereby reducing the footprint of OST’s physical IT infrastructure. Virtualizing server infrastructure reduced electrical and cooling requirements, lowering those expenses. Forty percent of OST’s production servers migrated to the BIA Albuquerque Data Center. OST also supported Interior’s preparations for an agency-wide

**T**he Trust Beneficiary Call Center (TBCC) answered its **one millionth call** on May 17, 2012. TBCC opened its phone lines December 3, 2004. The well trained and patient personnel who answer the phones are available Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon, Mountain time.



More than 97 percent of callers have their questions answered during the call, which is referred to as first line resolution. (The industry standard is approximately 49 percent.) The remaining issues are escalated to OST staff. Those items are tracked by TBCC for follow up to ensure callers receive the information they request.

available to IIM holders exceeded \$21.4 million

» Disbursed \$736,607 Special Deposit Account (SDA) funds using an in-house team of six, one third the number of personnel used in previous years (maximum historical amount disbursed annually by a staff of 18 was \$1 million)

» Reconciled 425 return per capita accounts of which 212 accounts, cumulatively valued in excess of \$2.8 million, were eligible for tribes to use under the newly developed Returned Per Capita Account Reconciliation System

» Provided OST staff and tribal representatives access to tribal account statements online  
» Implemented a new process that reduced production of CDs

resulting in renewed tribal interest in electronic statement delivery

» Deployed 250 laptops that also function as in-office workstations to enable teleworking, which has increased employee productivity and satisfaction

» Developed an electronic Records Move Request (RMR) form, eliminated one level of RMR review, and implemented online approval and notification, streamlining the RMR process to save time and money; eliminated the backlog of RMRs pending legal reviews

» Offered Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payment (VSIP) to 20 employees whose positions were eliminated; established a team that placed

migration of the email system to a Google based system, referred to as BisonConnect.

### **Tribal Litigation**

OST's Office of Historical Trust Accounting (OHTA) employees were part of an interagency workgroup that was tasked with determining a method to calculate amounts to use in settlement negotiations with tribes concerning claims about trust fund accounting and natural resource management. Other Interior and U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) employees were also members of the workgroup.

A specialized group in OHTA, the tribal team, created Trust Account Databases (TADs) on an expedited basis as part of the settlement efforts. The team compiled and analyzed account data to create over 170 TADs for tribes. Information from six accounting systems and data sources were combined into each database that covered up to 64 years (July 1, 1946 to September 30, 2010) of trust fund activity. Trust Fund Expedited Settlement Evaluation Method calculations were run for over 100 tribes or tribal entities. In addition, technical papers, and work sessions and briefings with tribes, tribal officials, tribal consultants, tribal attorneys, and/or settlement judges were provided for approximately 90 tribes. Team members attended negotiations to provide tribes with expert explanations of the trust data.

Attorneys from DOJ and Interior's Office of the Solicitor formulated settlement offers after they considered the trust fund data and settlement analyses. Through FY2012, more than 50 tribal settlements were concluded. The combined value of those settlements exceeded \$1

**F**inancial skills are critical to building and managing personal wealth. OST, alone or in partnership with other private and public organizations, provides financial skills training that reaches Indian trust beneficiaries, and other community members, in Indian Country and in urban settings.

In FY2012, OST's **Field Operations** conducted or supported 136 **financial skills classes** for adults and 132 classes for youth. Participants included 1630 adults and 720 youth. Training materials, developed by the First Nations Development Institute, were designed specifically for Indian Country and include materials suitable for individuals at all levels of experience.

The classes combine instruction and experiential activities that engage participants about topics such as budgeting, investing, and planning for the future. The popular and effective Spending Frenzy exercise gives each participant a set amount of play money and a profile. Then participants make financial decisions based upon a given set of life challenges — both good and bad. The Fickle Finger of Fate may deem a participant gets a divorce and has to pay child support, inherits a large sum of money from a late relative, or has their car totaled in an accident. Volunteers from many walks of life — including lawyers, bankers, car salesmen, and others — are on hand to provide advice. Discussions, plus personal knowledge and experiences shared among participants, have led to many "ah-ha" revelations about handling finances in the real world. This training is critical to preparing beneficiaries to wisely manage income from leases on their lands, tribal settlements, per capita payments, and other sources.



billion. Additional tribes continue to negotiate with the government.

The settlements are important because of the potential for the funds to drive economic development in Indian Country. They also are bringing closure to historical grievances without costly litigation.

### **Tribal Consultation Initiative**

On November 5, 2009, President Barack Obama issued a Presidential Memorandum directing each agency to submit a detailed plan of

action describing how the agency will implement the policies and directives of Executive Order 13175. Interior established a joint federal-tribal team that developed a policy on tribal consultation. The policy includes elements that strive to honor the government-to-government relationship by

involving the appropriate level of decision maker in a consultation process, promoting innovations in communication by including a department-wide tribal governance

officer (TGO), detailing early tribal involvement in the design of a process implicating tribal interests, and capturing a wide range of policy and decision making processes under the consultation umbrella.

Bureaus and offices, in collaboration with the TGO, were tasked to revise existing policies or develop new policies to conform to the department's policy. OST's tribal consultation policy team was established after Interior's policy was implemented December 1, 2011. Team members met with OST senior management to develop supplemental policy in areas unique to OST and to determine how implementation of the new policy might affect OST operations. The team continues to address this effort, working closely with Interior's TGO.

### **Efficiency Study Will Inform FY2013 Efforts**

OST authorized an efficiency study, conducted by the vendor, Booz Allen Hamilton Inc. The results of the study, released April 30, 2012, offered quick wins and high impact recommendations. In response, OST's senior managers held several meetings to address better internal communications, an area the study highlighted. OST also responded to the study's recommendation to create a strategic plan by initiating a strategic planning process. The strategic plan will be completed in FY2013.

Among projects that will be pursued in FY2013 to specifically benefit beneficiaries while improving efficiency is a pilot project to provide IIM beneficiaries with real time online access to account information. Tribes already have this capability.

An effort to settle the Pembina litigation began in FY2012 and is expected to conclude in FY2013. OST has been working with BIA, SOL, and DOJ to identify per capita beneficiary listings in order to distribute the settlement funds.

Although Treasury is able to print beneficiary checks under a Continuity of Operations (COOP) situation, it lacks the ability to print beneficiary statements and explanations of payment. Therefore in FY2013, OST will continue its COOP effort by locating a third-party provider for this service.

Addressing issues of concern to employees is critical if OST is going to continue to be a high-functioning organization. This is especially true when an issue is safety related. To increase protection for OST field personnel, additional security measures were put in place for the OST office in Billings, Montana. Furthermore, arrangements were finalized to obtain space for the Billings' staff in a new federal building, which is under construction. The move to the new space will occur in FY2013. The new space will be outfitted with safety features, which cannot be added to the current space due to its historical designation. Additionally, the office space will be situated on the first floor to better accommodate beneficiaries who visit.

### **Conclusion**

Offering more transparency for Indian trust beneficiaries to understand the sources and management of their funds, while protecting and increasing the value of those funds, are OST's top priorities. Each project undertaken has been, and will continue to be, benchmarked against those objectives. In addition, OST will continue to support Interior's work with the Secretarial Commission on Indian Trust Administration and Reform, the Land Buy-Back Program, and Cobell Settlement payments.

Every day, OST employees contribute their efforts to ensure fulfillment of the federal government's fiduciary obligation to tribal and individual Indian beneficiaries. They are proud to serve the government, the beneficiaries, and other stakeholders in this effort.

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