

# TRUST MATTERS

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## Sally Jewell Confirmed as Interior's Secretary

Sally Jewell is the new Secretary of the Department of the Interior. She was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on April 10, 2013.



A statement from President Obama noted that Secretary Jewell brings, “strong management skills, appreciation for our nation’s tradition of protecting our public lands and heritage, and a keen understanding of what it means to be good stewards of our natural resources.”

The swearing-in ceremony of the 51st Secretary of the Interior was on April 12 in Washington, D.C. She was sworn in by retired Justice Sandra Day O’Connor. Secretary Jewell’s first work day at Interior was Monday, April 15.

Secretary Jewell was formerly the President and Chief Executive Officer of REI Inc., makers of outdoor merchandise. She held that position from 2005-2013. She graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in mechanical engineering. Her first position after graduating was with Mobile Oil. After three years, she left Mobile Oil to take a job with Rainier Bank. She was with the banking industry for 20 years before moving to REI.

Ms. Jewell has served on the board of several organizations, among them the University of Washington Board of Regents, Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, and the National Parks Conservation Association. An official biography of the Secretary is available on Interior’s website at <http://www.doi.gov/whowere/secretaryjewell.cfm>.

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## \$ Finding WAU Account Owners \$

Individual Indian Money (IIM) accounts without current contact information on file with the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) are referred to as Whereabouts Unknown (WAU) accounts. Owners of WAU accounts are not receiving their periodic statements of performance or disbursements from their accounts. It is critical for account owners to keep their contact information up-to-date in order to receive their funds and other information. As of March 31, 2013, a total of more than \$100 million was in WAU accounts. This is money that could be making a difference to account owners, and to Indian Country.

IIM account owners who are not getting their statements, and people who are unsure if they have IIM accounts should check out the list of names on the OST website at [www.doi.gov/wau](http://www.doi.gov/wau). People with names on the list should call OST’s Trust Beneficiary Call Center, toll free, at 1-888-678-6836. The center is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon, Mountain time.

## Buy-Back Program Information Being Developed for Individuals and Tribes

John McClanahan, Program Manager for the U.S. Department of the Interior Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations (Buy-Back Program), and his team know information is important to owners with fractional land interests. In order to decide whether to sell their interests, owners need to understand fractionation and to know as much as possible about the program's process.

The Buy-Back Program team, which includes staff from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST), is working on informational products that include a handout with frequently asked questions, presentations that describe the program in full detail, and a sample offer package. The program's website, [www.doi.gov/buybackprogram](http://www.doi.gov/buybackprogram), is undergoing a redesign so it will more effectively serve visitors to the site.

The team is also working with tribes to plan for the program. Buy-Back staff from BIA and OST recently attended the third Annual Tribal Land Staff Conference to discuss how the Buy-Back Program and tribes can share information to help implement the program. Staff are working to circulate information about how tribes and the Buy-Back Program can enter into cooperative, government-to-government agreements to facilitate implementation of the program.

### Partners for Native American Financial Empowerment

The Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) partners with many organizations to offer financial training to beneficiaries and other tribal members. Financial skills empower individuals to build and protect their financial resources.

OST is partnering with organizations, such as the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the National Financial Education Coalition (NFEC), to support financial training. NFEC members include tribes, Native organizations, tribal colleges, financial institutions, federal agencies, and others. NFEC is currently housed at NCAI.

During *April Financial Literacy Month in Indian Country*, NCAI and NFEC gathered information about the many financial training efforts taking place in Indian Country. Visit NCAI's Native Financial Education Initiative on their website ([www.ncai.org/initiatives/nativefinancial-ed](http://www.ncai.org/initiatives/nativefinancial-ed)) and check out the **toolkit for**

Funding for the Buy-Back Program comes from the \$1.9 billion Trust Land Consolidation Fund established in the *Cobell* Settlement, finalized November 12, 2013. The Fund will be used to purchase, at fair market

value, interests from willing sellers. All fractional interests purchased by the Buy-Back Program will be held in trust for the tribe with jurisdiction over the tract of land, which can then be used by the tribe for social, economic, and cultural activities.

Purchased interests will remain in trust status. As an additional incentive, when individuals sell fractional interests, a payment from the Fund will go to an Indian Education Scholarship Fund for American Indian and Alaska Native students. Up to \$60 million can be paid into the scholarship fund.

Obtain information about the Buy-Back Program by calling the Trust Beneficiary Call Center, toll free, at 1-888-678-6836. Owners with fractional land interests can register their desire to sell their interests when they call. This information may help with planning for the Buy-Back Program.

**tribal leaders.** This includes a list of financial education events being offered throughout Indian Country.

For many years, OST's Fiduciary Trust Officers (FTOs) have been using the First Nations Development Institute's *Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families and Investing for the Future* curricula to teach skills related to savings, checking, credit, and more. In Indian Country, financial skills are critical for tribal members to wisely use their per capita funds and other income. Economic development in Native communities, as well as personal financial well-being, hinges on individuals having such knowledge.

Find out when training is being offered near you by visiting the OST website. Navigate to the Regions page ([www.doi.gov/ost/fto/ftoRegions.cfm](http://www.doi.gov/ost/fto/ftoRegions.cfm)) and click on links to agencies close to you. For more information about OST training, contact your agency's FTO.



Land owners attend a session about the Buy-Back Program

## OST Field Offices on Facebook

The Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) has added Facebook as a means to access information about OST’s regional field offices. As the result of a pilot effort with five OST Fiduciary Trust Officers (FTOs), beneficiaries can now obtain detailed information about the following OST field offices on Facebook.

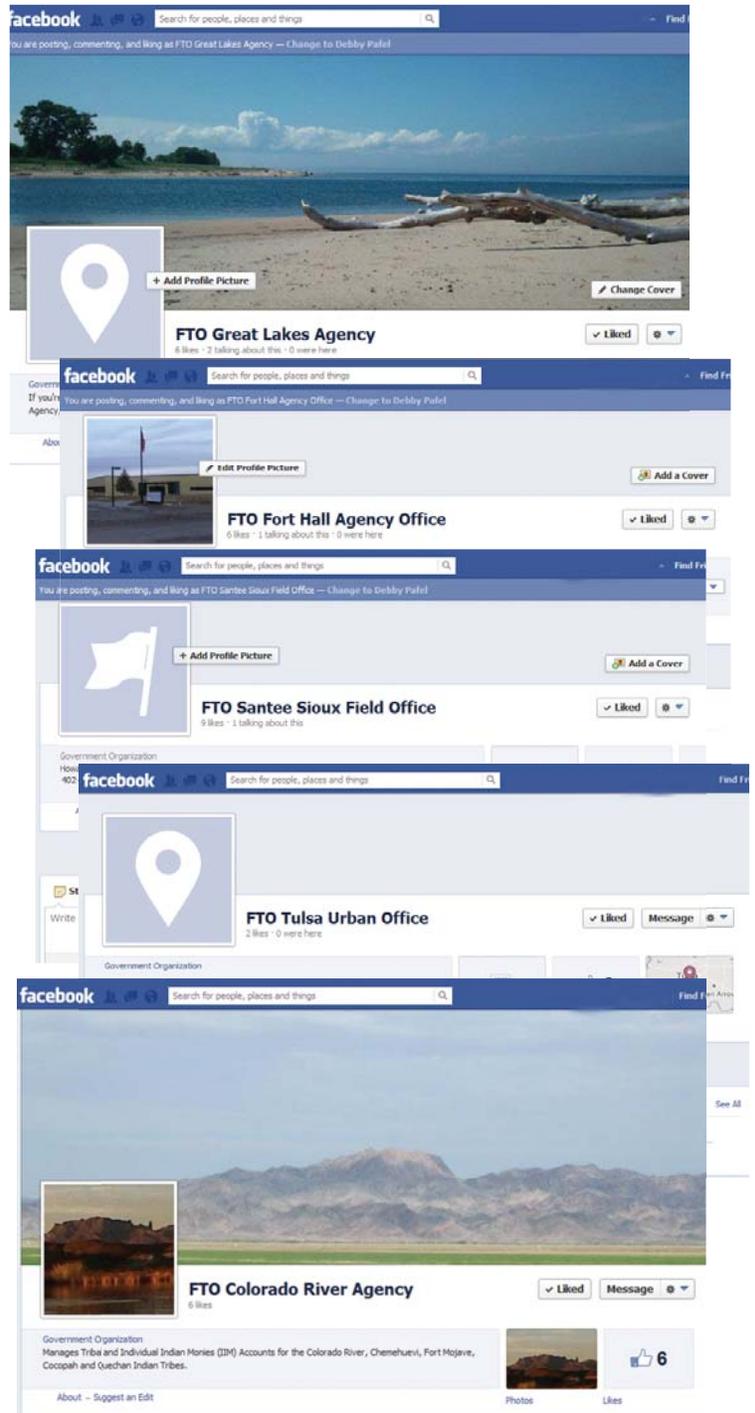
- » Colorado River Agency
- » Fort Hall Agency
- » Minnesota Agency
- » Santee Sioux Field Office
- » Tulsa Urban Office

These five field offices also have detailed information on the OST website ([www.doi.gov/ost](http://www.doi.gov/ost)).

By the time you read this article, more field offices will have active pages on the OST website. Each field office page provides staff contact information, the office’s address and directions to get there, and local events. At the bottom of each page, you can click on a choice of links to access a list of names of those account holders who do not have current contact information on file with OST. One link will take you to the whole list of names. The other will take you to a list tailored for that field office.

But there is more. At the *top* of each field office’s page, there is a link to that office’s Facebook page. So, if you are an avid Facebook fan or are just curious, check out OST’s local Facebook pages.

For information about the project, contact your FTO. Visit the whole list of links to field office pages by visiting the OST website at [www.doi.gov/ost](http://www.doi.gov/ost). Click on the Regions tab at the top of the page. On the *Fiduciary Trust Officers by Region* page, scroll down the list until you locate the office of interest to you. You might even decide to “Like” it on Facebook.



## OST Reaches Tribal Members at the Gathering of Nations

The Gathering of Nations Powwow was held April 25-27, 2013, in Albuquerque, N.M. Several employees with the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) staffed the OST booth to provide information and answer questions. They came prepared with answers about Cobell payments and the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations.

Attendees were encouraged to visit OST’s Field Operations booth by an advertisement in the official program booklet, and also by a large banner outside the vendor tent. Both the ad and banner contained a QR (Quick Response) code — those funny looking black and white blocks that represent a two-dimensional bar code. When attendees used their smartphones to scan the QR code, they were linked to the OST website page titled *Is OST Holding Money for You?*

The screenshot shows the top of a website page. The title is "Is OST Holding Money for You?" in a green font. To the right are links for "Print" and "Text Size" with three "A" icons. Below the title is a paragraph: "OST is seeking current addresses for Individual Indian Money (IIM) account holders. All Whereabouts Unknown (WAU) accounts have either interests in lands and/or funds to be disbursed to rightful owners." Below this is a section header "Locating IIM Account Holders" and a sub-header "Names in the list followed by an asterisk (\*) indicate accounts to which Cobell payment funds have been disbursed." At the bottom of the screenshot is a search interface with a text input field, a "SEARCH" button, and the text "Or select a letter to look up a name:". The background of the search area features a stack of US dollar bills.

Section of Whereabouts Unknown Page on OST’s Website

On that page, visitors to the website can search for their names. Anyone whose name is on the list does not have current contact information for their Individual Indian Money (IIM) account on file with OST. Without current contact information, OST is unable to send statements or make disbursements to the account holder. Such accounts are referred to as Whereabouts Unknown (WAU).

OST is making a concerted effort to locate account holders who are on the WAU list. The money in those accounts belongs to the account holders and could be making a difference both to the account holders and to the economy of Indian Country. So, if you spot the names of people you know on the list, encourage them to get in touch with OST. They can do so by calling OST’s Trust Beneficiary Call Center, toll free, at 1-888-678-6836. The center is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon, Mountain time.

Weren’t able to attend the Gathering or stop by OST’s booth? You can still get answers to questions about your IIM account. Scan the QR code on this page or visit [www.doi.gov/ost](http://www.doi.gov/ost), the OST website. Click on the **REGIONS** tab at the top of the page. The page lists local agencies. Click on the link for your agency to access information about the agency’s staff and more.

The advertisement features a background of several stacks of US dollar bills. At the top, it reads "Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST)". In the center, the text "Cobell MONEY for American Indians" is displayed, with "MONEY" in green and "for" in a smaller font. Below this, it says "Visit OST in the big tent!". At the bottom left, there is a call to action: "Check online for your name then visit the OST booth in the big tent." To the right of this text is a QR code.

Advertisement with Quick Response (QR) Code