



United States Department of the Interior

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

June 3, 2009

Dear Tribal Leader:

The Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) is working on a project to revise how funding shares are calculated and allocated to tribes who contract or compact the appraisal program pursuant to P.L. 93-638, the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, as amended [25 U.S.C. §450j-1(a)] (hereafter "638").

The original tribal share formulas were developed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs' (BIA) regions in 1995. As a result, 12 different Tribal Share Allocation Formulas (TSAFs) were developed. Some of the TSAFs are very simple: in the Midwest region, for example, the available regional budget for appraisals simply is divided by the number of tribes in the region. Other regions developed TSAFs that incorporated different variables in the formula, such as land base, population, historical workload, etc. Some regional TSAFs are quite complex, involving five or more weighted components.

When the Indian Lands Valuation program was transferred from the BIA to OST in March 2002, BIA Awarding Officials and OST officials decided to initially continue the region-by-region TSAF policy for purposes of maintaining continuity.

Over the years, OST has listened to the concerns of many tribes. One concern is that tribal shares that were calculated in 1995 have not changed. Another is that tribal shares have not been recalculated in step with increased regional appraisal budgets. Also there appears to be inequities in funding when tribes have contracted or compacted the appraisal program after the 1995 date.

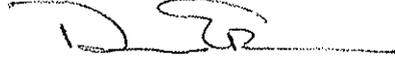
The purpose of the consultation sessions is to discuss ideas in developing new tribal share allocation formulas that will be used to apportion funds for tribes performing, or interested in performing, the appraisal program pursuant to P.L. 93-638 contracts and compacts. These formulas will ensure uniformity and transparency in determining tribal shares and funding residual for the inherent federal functions.

OST wants to begin a dialogue with tribes to discuss ideas in developing the new TSAF allocation formulas that will be used to apportion funds for tribes performing, or interested in performing, the appraisal program pursuant to 638 contracts or compacts.

A series of tribal consultations are scheduled as follows: 1) June 30, 2009 in Oklahoma City, OK; 2) July 14, 2009 in Rapid City, SD; 3) July 29, 2009 in Portland, OR; 4) August 4, 2009 in Billings, MT; and 5) August 18, 2009 in Albuquerque, NM.

Detailed Information on the project background, schedule and locations will be posted on the DOI/OST Web site, <http://www.ost.doi.gov>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Erwin', written over a horizontal line.

Donna Erwin
Acting Special Trustee for American Indians