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Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians FY2012 Budget Request is \$152 Million

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The President’s fiscal year 2012 budget request for the Department of the Interior’s Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) is \$152.3 million, reflecting a \$24.7 million net decrease from the actual 2010 fiscal year budget and the fiscal year 2011 continuing resolution..

“In support of the President’s commitment to fiscal discipline and spending restraint, OST is participating in an aggressive Department-wide effort to curb non-essential administrative spending,” said Principal Deputy Special Trustee Ray Joseph. “The staff of OST should be commended for the efficient management of operations which accounts for \$3.3 million in administrative savings in this budget request.”

OST’s 2012 budget request reflects program reductions of \$22.6 million from the previous budget. Included in the reductions is \$16.0 million for the Office of Historical Accounting to reflect the enactment of a settlement for the *Cobell v. Salazar* lawsuit assuming court approval of the settlement in 2011. The only proposed increase is in funding for fixed costs — space, utilities, and other overhead expenses — that rose by \$1.2 million.

“The staff has implemented a dynamic accounting process that ensures today’s Indian trust financial operations are transparent and efficient,” said Joseph. “Our beneficiaries can be assured OST will continue to manage their funds with proficiency and care.”

OST was initially tasked with Department-wide oversight for the reform of Indian trust management and implementation of new fiduciary accounting systems. OST’s oversight role expanded in 1996 to include operational responsibility for financial trust fund management, including receipt, investment and disbursement of beneficiary funds. The Office of Appraisal Services, which appraises Indian trust lands, was moved to OST in 2002. The Office of Historical Trust Accounting was realigned in 2007 to report directly to the Special Trustee.

Visit the OST website at www.doi.gov/ost to view the fiscal year 2012 budget request.

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The mission of OST is to perform our fiduciary trust responsibilities to American Indian tribes, individual Indians and Alaska Natives by incorporating a beneficiary focus and

beneficiary participation while providing effective, competent stewardship and management of trust assets.