NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Office of the Secretary
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Contact: Nedra Darling, Indian Affairs
202-219-4152
Carrie Moore, OST
202-208-3460

MEDIA ADVISORY

Swimmer, Martin to Address Reorganization at May 21 Senate Indian Affairs Committee Hearing

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Special Trustee for American Indians Ross O. Swimmer and Acting Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Aurene M. Martin will testify before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs at its May 21 hearing on the reorganization of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). By reorganizing the agencies that manage Indian trust funds and assets, the Interior Department seeks to bring increased accountability and efficiency into the trust management area.

In 2002, the Department and the Federally-recognized tribes undertook an ambitious effort to change the way the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs and the Special Trustee for American Indians deliver BIA trust and non-trust services to tribes, tribal service populations and trust beneficiaries.

The reorganization plan is based on agreements reached with the Joint Tribal Leaders/DOI Task Force established by Secretary Gale Norton last year to examine and recommend proposals for improving the way such services are delivered. Task Force members provided insights into where organizational changes were needed so that services could be delivered more efficiently to recipients and beneficiaries.

WHO: Ross O. Swimmer, Special Trustee for American Indians, and Aurene M. Martin, Acting Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior.

WHAT: Senate Committee on Indian Affairs hearing on the reorganization of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

WHEN: 10:00 a.m. EDT, Wednesday, May 21, 2003.

WHERE: 485 Senate Russell Office Building, Washington, D.C.

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