



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
**U.S. Department
of the Interior**

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Media Advisory

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Interior Deputy Secretary Mike Connor to Discuss Accomplishments, Additional Steps in Implementation of Tribal Land Buy-Back Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On Thursday, November 20, U.S. Deputy Secretary of the Interior Mike Connor will host a news media teleconference to discuss the year-to-date accomplishments and next schedule for the continued implementation of the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations (Buy-Back Program).

The Buy-Back Program implements the land consolidation component of the Cobell Settlement, which provided \$1.9 billion to purchase fractional interests in trust or restricted land from willing sellers at fair market value within a 10-year period.

Land fractionation is a serious problem across Indian Country. As lands are passed down through generations, they gain more owners. Many tracts now have hundreds and even thousands of individual owners. Because it is difficult to gain landowner consensus, the lands often lie idle and cannot be used for any beneficial purpose.

In its first year of sending offers, the Program has already successfully concluded transactions worth nearly \$225 million to American Indian landowners and has restored the equivalent of more than 375,000 acres of land to tribal governments.

WHO: Mike Connor, Deputy Secretary of the Interior

WHAT: News media teleconference on progress for the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations

WHEN: Thursday, November 20, 2014, 1 p.m. Eastern Time

MEDIA: Credentialed members of the media can participate in the teleconference by calling 1-888-324-9613 and entering the passcode 9464430.