

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL TRUSTEE
FOR AMERICAN INDIANS

Status Update

Tribal/Interior Budget Council
Washington, D.C.

May 22-23, 2014

OST



OST Status Update

- OST Leadership
- Budget Update
- *Cobell Payments Update*
- Land Buy Back Update
- OST Process Improvements



OST Leadership

- Status of Special Trustee
- Status of Principal Deputy Special Trustee
- Jim James, Deputy Special Trustee Field Operations



Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians

Budget Update

- FY 2014 Budget Enacted \$139.7M
- FY 2015 President's Budget \$139M – Decrease in request due to efficiencies
- Currently preparing FY 2016 Departmental submission



Budget Update (cont'd)

- 2015 Request includes two policy changes:
 - Proposes to eliminate the language that extends the time when the statute of limitations can begin regarding tribal and individual Indian mismanagement claims
 - Proposes that the Secretary shall not be required to reconcile Special Deposit Accounts with a balance of less than \$500.00 unless OST receives proof of ownership from a Special Deposit Account claimant



2014 – Cobell Update

- OST continues to provide up-to-date beneficiary data to the court appointed claims administrator, Garden City Group

- **Stage 1 – Historical Accounting Class**
 - ❑ Motion to Court to be filed to add 131 members to Class
 - ❑ Stage 1 work must be completed before Stage 2 distributions can be made.

- **Stage 2 – Trust Administration Class (TAC)**
 - ❑ Two main requirements:
 - Determination of amount available for distribution
 - Determination of who is a TAC member Stage 2 recipient.
 - ❑ Historical Accounting Class members are automatically Stage 2 recipients.



2014 Land Buy Back Program Update

OST Support of Land Buy-Back Program:

- Field Operations and Trust Beneficiary Call Center
- Trust Services
- Office of Appraisal Services



Land Buy Back Update (cont.)

Field Operations

- Staff in the Trust Beneficiary Call Center and Field offices play a significant supporting role by responding to landowner requests.
- During the second offer wave to landowners from Pine Ridge, offers reached all fifty states and OST staff assisted tribal members at all field offices.
- Staff conducted outreach in Denver, Albuquerque, Los Angeles and Minneapolis to respond to member queries on offer packages sent to these locations.
- Since December 21, 2012, the TBCC and OST field offices have been responding to an extraordinarily large volume of calls and "walk-ins" regarding the recent *Cobell* settlement payments.



Land Buy Back Update (cont.)

Field Operations

- From December 17, 2012, to January 3, 2013, Field Operations (the 50 field offices and TBCC) documented 19,069 beneficiary contacts.
- OST received a total of \$39,306,000 in Cobell Historical Accounting Class payments for 39,306 individuals whose whereabouts were unknown. As of April 30, 2014, more than 21,000 of these individuals have been located and funds disbursed.
- OST is managing an additional \$16,059,000 for 16,059 individuals whose accounts are supervised.



Land Buy Back Update (cont.)

Trust Services

- Distributes individual land sales income to individual beneficiaries, reconciles the amount of funding needed, and transfers monies from the LBBP Treasury account to fund these distributions.
- Through May 8, 2014 over \$57 million allocated to Individual Indian Money (IIM) account holder accounts as a result of LBBP.
- All allocations have been within 2 business days of receipt from the BIA-Acquisition Center -- well within the established goal of 5 days from receipt.



Land Buy Back Update (cont.)

Trust Services

- Disburses the balance of an account receiving land sales income to the beneficiary, checks to verify that there is no more land asset holdings attached to that account, and then closes that account. Each account closed saves the Federal government about \$45 dollars per year.
- Through May 8, 2014 over 600 IIM accounts closed as a result of acquisitions made by the LBBP.
- Provides accounting reports each month to the LBBP detailing the total daily activity and number of accounts closed.



Land Buy Back Update (cont.)

Appraisals

- Mass appraisal model for Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations was developed and implemented for the first time in OAS.
- Mass Appraisal Valuation System (MAVS) connects systems hosting land ownership and physical data, integrates Geographical Information System data, and incorporates Multiple Regression Analysis.
- MAVS will be used to estimate market value estimates for thousands of Indian allotted lands in a timely and cost effective manner to support the acquisitions by the Land Buy Back Program.



Land Buy Back Update (cont.)

Appraisals

- Completed appraisals of Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations – total of 5,431 tracts covering 1,079,081 acres.
- Completed site specific individual appraisals at Makah Reservation, Fort Belknap and Quapaw.
- Work in progress:
 - Development of mass appraisal models for the reservations, Crow, N. Cheyenne, Coeur d' Alene, and Sisseton to appraise approximately 5,050 tracts totaling 483,125 acres.
 - Preliminary work for Fort Peck and Fort Belknap – 3,500 tracts totaling 308,400 acres.
 - Contracting for mass appraisal work for Standing Rock and Cheyenne River.
 - Reviewing appraisals completed by Confederated Tribes of the Salish and Kootenai
 - Preliminary work for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation who will be developing and writing appraisals on approximately 400 tracts/18,000 acres.
 - Contracted for appraisal of 13 tracts totaling 666.47 acres for Squaxin Island.



OST Process Improvements

- Lock Box
- Printing and mailing of checks
- TBCC – Service Manager
- Masthead Office



Questions?

For More Information Please
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Thank you!

