Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON — On Wednesday, Feb. 6, 2013, the Department of the Interior will hold the second of three tribal consultation sessions on its Initial Implementation Plan outlining how Interior will carry out the land consolidation component of the historic Cobell Settlement. The meeting will take place in Rapid City, S.D., with the remaining session to be held Feb. 14 in Seattle, Wash. The first consultation meeting was held in Prior Lake, Minn., on Jan. 31.

"The Land Buy-Back Program is a historic opportunity to address the fractionation problem and restore lands to Indian tribes, but it will not succeed without the active support of tribal leaders," said Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Kevin K. Washburn. "The Department is keenly interested in receiving guidance from tribal leaders on the draft Plan."

The Settlement provided a $1.9 billion fund to purchase fractional interests in American Indian trust lands from willing sellers, thereby enabling federally recognized tribal governments to use the consolidated parcels for the benefit of their communities. The Plan reflects comments received from tribal consultation sessions the Department held in the summer and fall of 2011 and on a draft Plan released in January 2012. On Dec. 18, the Department announced the launch of the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations, which will purchase the fractional interests, as well as a Secretarial Order outlining the program's organizational structure.

For more information about the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations, the Cobell land consolidation component, the Initial Implementation Plan, and the Department's 2011 and 2013 tribal consultation sessions, visit www.doi.gov/buybackprogram.

WHO	Jim James, Deputy Special Trustee-Field Operations, Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians, DOI John McClanahan, Program Manager, Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations, DOI Anthony N. Walters, Counselor to the Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, DOI Michael S. Black, Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, DOI
WHAT	Second tribal consultation session on the Department's Initial Implementation Plan for the Cobell Settlement land consolidation component.
WHEN	Wednesday, February 6, 2013, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (local time)
WHERE	Best Western Ramkota Hotel, 2111 North LaCrosse St., Rapid City, S.D. 57701; Phone: 605-343-8550.

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