Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Nedra Darling, OPA-IA Phone: 202-219-4152
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Billings, Mont. — The second of five in a series of listening sessions will begin Thursday, August 16, 2012. The Obama Administration recognizes that the protection of sacred sites on federal lands is integral to traditional religious practices, tribal identities and emblematic of sovereign tribal nations. These sacred site listening sessions are intended to assist in developing policies that result in effective, comprehensive and long-lasting federal protection of, and tribal access to, the places that are so important to the fabric and culture of tribal nations.

To address tribal concerns regarding sacred sites issues, Interior will conduct listening sessions on sacred sites in general, as well as knowledge relating to specific sites on Interior-managed tribal trust and other federal lands. The Department will be better equipped to make decisions that are sensitive to the ceremonial use and physical integrity of sacred sites through the benefit of tribal input and views on such matters.

Because many Indian tribes have belief systems that discourage or even prohibit the disclosure of the location or other information about sacred sites and places, Interior will respect tribal requests that information about such locations be kept confidential and only share this information with appropriate agency personnel.

For all those unable to attend any of these listening sessions, please send your input/suggestions by September 21, 2012, via email to consultation@bia.gov or the U.S. Department of the Interior, attn.: Mr. Dion Killsback, Counselor to the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, 1849 C Street, NW, MS 4141-MIB, Washington, DC 20240. Should you have additional questions, Mr. Killsback can be reached at (202) 208-6939.

WHO:	Donald E. “Del” Laverdure, Acting Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs, DOI Dion Killsback, Counselor to the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Tribal Leaders from the Rocky Mountain Region and other regions
WHAT:	Second Sacred Site Listening Session.
WHEN:	Thursday, August 16, 2012 9:00am – 12:00pm (local time)
WHERE:	Holiday Inn-Grand Montana Billings 5500 Midland Road Billings, MT 59101 (406) 248-7701

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