



Mashantucket Pequot Tribe and Seminole Tribe among first to join Federal effort to build tribal economies by matching tribal buyers with sellers

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WASHINGTON – Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Carl J. Artman will host the Interior Department's kick-off event for its intertribal economic consortium initiative, which will take place on Monday, February 11, 2008 with a signing ceremony between the Department, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe of Connecticut and the Seminole Tribe of Florida to honor the memorandum of understanding that formalizes the two tribes' cooperative economic relationship. The ceremony will take place at the Interior Department building at 1849 C Street, N.W., Room 7000 A&B, in Washington, D.C., starting at 11:00 a.m. (EST).

"This intertribal economic consortium initiative will create a platform for tribal economic growth," Artman said. "It is a platform that helps resource-rich, cash-poor tribes by linking them to those with purchasing power. Forging those links between supply and demand is necessary for building strong tribal economies, and that is good both for Indian Country and all Americans."

The concept of tribes with purchasing power buying from tribes with goods or services to sell has been further developed by the DOI's Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development as a way to build and strengthen tribal reservation economies. The IEED will assist in this unique collaboration by linking producer tribes and Indian-owned businesses with purchaser tribes, helping tribes explore opportunities to collaborate economically and connect participating tribes with Federal procurement opportunities and commercial markets world-wide.

The intertribal economic consortium initiative had its beginnings in mid-2007 when the Mashantucket and Seminole tribes, who rely on a broad network of vendors and producers of raw materials for their businesses, decided to buy from American Indian-owned vendors and producers for their needs wherever and whenever possible. The IEED has worked with these and other tribes to help them maximize their purchasing power and develop new commercial markets for their products.

The IEED works with federally recognized tribes seeking to create demand for their livestock, seafood, agricultural products, raw materials and mineral assets. It also works with tribes seeking to invest in exploration for and production of natural resources such as sand and gravel, energy resources such as coal, coal-bed methane, gas and oil, and alternative energy resources and technologies such as wind, biomass, geothermal, solar, hydroelectric and tidal resources on or near Federal Indian lands.

WHO: Carl J. Artman, assistant secretary - Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior Robert Middleton, director, Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development, DOI Jack Stevens, chief, IEED Division of Economic Development, DOI Michael J. Thomas, chairman, Mashantucket Pequot Tribe of Connecticut Kenneth Reels, vice-chairman, Mashantucket Pequot Tribe of Connecticut Mitchell Cypress, chairman, Seminole Tribe of Florida, and vice president, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. Richard Bowers, vice-chairman, Seminole Tribe of Florida, and president, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians of Oregon officials Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin officials

WHAT: Assistant Secretary Artman will host a signing ceremony to honor the memorandum of understanding between the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe of Connecticut and the Seminole Tribe of Florida of that formalizes the two tribes' cooperative economic relationship. The event is to kick off the Department's intertribal economic consortium initiative.

WHEN: Monday, February 11, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. (EST).

WHERE: Department of the Interior headquarters building, 1849 C Street, N.W., Room 7000 A&B, Washington, D.C.

CREDENTIALS: This invitation is extended to working media representatives, who are required to display sanctioned media credentials for admittance to the event.

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