Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Aurene M. Martin today announced that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) will hold a series of tribal consultation meetings on the realignment of the regional and agency offices in 8 of its 12 regions. The meetings will take place October 27-30 at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas, Nev. The realignment is a result of the reorganization currently taking place within the Interior Department's Office of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, the BIA and the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians.

The BIA held the first series of consultation meetings on September 24-25 in Tulsa, Okla., with representatives from federally recognized tribes in the Southern Plains, Eastern Oklahoma, Midwest and Eastern Regions. The schedule for the remaining consultation meetings is as follows (all times are local time):

October 27, 2003

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Great Plains Region

1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.: Rocky Mountain Region

October 28, 2003

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Southwest Region

1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.: Navajo Region

October 29, 2003

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Pacific Region

1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.: Northwest Region

October 30, 2003

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Western Region

1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.: Alaska Region

In June 2003, the Department held informational sessions throughout the country to brief employees, Indian tribes and interested parties on the status and structure of the reorganization. The consultation meetings held last month and taking place this month are opportunities for tribes and interested parties to provide oral and written comments regarding the organizational structure of the regional offices for consideration by the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs.

On September 17, the Department published a notice in the Federal Register with dates and locations

of the meetings. Comments are due two weeks following the consultation for each region.

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