Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Washington – The National Indian Country Telecommunications Infrastructure Consortium (NICTIC) will hold a meeting on February 27, 2003, at the Wyndham Washington Hotel, 1400 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20005, starting at 2:30 p.m. in the Ash Lawn North room.

The NICTIC was created to support the President's National Strategy for Homeland Security by coordinating an effort to build and improve the telecommunications infrastructure throughout Indian Country. "This national organization can serve as an engine to improve the telecommunications infrastructure throughout Indian Country," said Brian Burns, Chief Information Officer-Indian Affairs.

An initial meeting of the NICTIC was held on September 18, 2002 in Phoenix, AZ that was jointly hosted by the Department of the Interior's Indian Affairs and the General Services Administration (GSA). At that meeting the concept of establishing the Consortium was discussed with tribes, private organizations and government agencies. During a second meeting that was held on October 17, 2002 in Las Vegas, NV, a list of goals and objectives was developed outlining what the Consortium would achieve. A third meeting was held on December 11, 2002 in Albuquerque, NM, where a draft of the Consortium's Vision Statement and expansion of the goals and objectives was accomplished. At the meeting on February 27, 2003, Cal Ramos from NASA will present a presentation on NASA Wireless Satellite Technology. The finalization of the Vision Statement, discussions on funding strategies, grant writing seminars for tribal representatives, the development of an inventory and where to initiate a pilot project will be discussed.

The goals of the Consortium are to: 1) develop an Indian Country telecommunications resource inventory; 2) establish an Indian Country telecommunications network architecture; 3) establish an Indian Country telecommunications integration model; and 4) assist Tribes in their effort to pay for the cost of telecommunications infrastructure by providing technical assistance in securing millions of dollars of Federal grant funds available each year from Federal agencies.

Note to Editors: Agenda of NICTIC meeting can be downloaded at DOI web site.