Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Quileute Tribe of LaPush, Washington, today became the first federally recognized tribal nation to contract with the Federal Telecommunications Service to receive low rates and reliable service for voice, data, and video transmission service.

"As we approach the 21st Century, it is imperative that tribes and tribal members--especially our young people--have economical access to the Information Age," said Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Ada E. Deer during a signing ceremony today in the office of the U.S. General Services Administration Acting Administrator David J. Barram. Through a new service agreement that is available, the nation's 554 federally recognized tribes can now realize considerable savings and expand the use of new technology such as the Internet for schools, economic development, and other tribal needs.

Quileute tribal representative Sherman Black signed the FTS 2000 service agreement that he said will allow the tribe to economically use long-distance services for videoconferencing, data transmission, and phone calls. "I am honored to be the first to sign this agreement. This agreement will provide new long-distance service to our community and school in LaPush - and with substantial savings over our current commercial long-distance service rates," Black said. The Quileute Tribe can now use the FTS 2000 for such tribal programs as law enforcement, a fishery, and a school.

"This agreement supports the' Clinton Administration's objectives of strengthening intergovernmental partnerships, providing access to the information superhighway, and increasing the use of technology to streamline financial services," said GSA Acting Administrator Barram.

Tribes interested in learning more about the FTS 2000 services can contact Alvin Woods at (703) 7ffJ7568 or Julie Belindo at (703) 904-2803.