Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

This year's event will celebrate the 30th anniversary of Tribal Self-Governance

Media Contact: Nedra Darling, OPA-IA Phone: 202-219-4152
For Immediate Release: April 26, 2018
Print PDF

Albuquerque, N.M. – Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs John Tahsuda delivered remarks at Interior Days during the 2018 Annual Tribal Self-Governance Consultation Conference, celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Tribal Self-Governance, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center. This year's conference registration peaked around 900 attendees.

Secretary Zinke welcomed conference attendees via videoconference:

"For Tribal Nations across America, the road to prosperity is paved with the stones of sovereignty," said Secretary Zinke. "When we promise economic empowerment to every American, that promise must extend to every tribal nation. As we look to the next 30 years of Self-Governance, the relationship between Indian Country and the Department of the Interior must be strong if we are going to accomplish our mission. President Trump and I are committed to the future of Indian Country and we look forward to working with Self-Governance Tribes on initiatives that promote the prosperity of Indian Country like putting an end the opioid epidemic."

"Self-Governance has made great strides over the last 30 years. One of our main goals in the Administration is streamlining the federal bureaucracy and cutting red tape, so we can better support tribes in their pursuit to promote economic prosperity in their communities," said PDAS Tahsuda. "Ultimately, the self-governance program serves not just as a funding vehicle, but also as a diplomatic exchange between sovereigns. I believe positive results are in store as tribes continue to be innovative and seek more ways they can take the core tenets and purposes of self-governance and expand it into more opportunities to administer services and programs to your citizens."

The Tribal Self-Governance Conference is an annual event attended by officials of federally recognized tribes that operate federally funded programs under self-governance compacts and representatives of the federal agencies they do business with. The Indian Affairs Office of Self-Governance (OSG) conducts training sessions at the conference for tribal officials and program managers on all aspects of finance, reporting requirements, and administering Bureau of Indian Affairs programs under self-governance compacts.

OSG held a session on Thursday, April 26, on the Department's proposed Federal Register notice of the "List of Programs Eligible for Inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2019 Funding Agreements to be Negotiated with the Self-Governance Tribe by Interior Bureaus Other than the Bureau of Indian Affairs." For the first year, self-governance tribes with such agreements are invited to share their experiences in negotiating with non-BIA bureaus within DOI.

This year's conference celebrates 30 years of Self-Governance in Action, with the special

acknowledgement of the seven tribal nations who entered into the first self-governance agreements with the Interior Department – Absentee-Shawnee Tribe, Cherokee Nation, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Lummi Tribe, Mille Lacs Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, and the Quinault Indian Nation – as the Tribes that pioneered the movement away from 638 contacting as the sole means by which tribes could operate BIA-funded programs when they participated in the Bureau's Self-Governance Demonstration Project. The project was created following Congressional enactment that same year of the Tribal Self-Governance Act.
