Original comment deadline of June 30, 2014, extended to July 31, 2014

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Washington, D.C. — Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Kevin K. Washburn today announced an extension of the comment deadline on the proposed rule to accept applications to place land into trust in Alaska, in response to several requests for extension. The public may provide written comment through July 31, 2014. The proposed rule was announced earlier this year as part of President Obama's commitment to upholding the nation's trust responsibilities to American Indian and Alaska Natives.

The proposal would allow the Secretary of the Interior to consider applications to take land into trust in Alaska. The pertinent regulations are at 25 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 151, entitled Land Acquisitions, which provides the regulatory framework within which the Secretary of the Interior must consider requests and exercise her discretion to take land into trust. The exclusion of Alaska in Part 151 was put in place by the Department in 1980.

The proposed rule to explicitly include Alaska has been available for public comment since May 1, 2014. The proposed rule can be viewed online at: http://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/ASIA/Consultation/index.htm. The Department also welcomes written comments from the public and tribal members, via email at consultation@bia.gov, or via mail to Mr. Kevin K. Washburn, Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs, 1849 C Street NW, MS-7328-MIB, Washington, D.C. 20240.

The Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs oversees the BIA, which is headed by a director who is responsible for managing day-to-day operations through four offices – Indian Services, Justice Services, Trust Services and Field Operations. These offices directly administer or fund tribally based infrastructure, law enforcement, social services, tribal governance, natural and energy resources, and trust management programs for the nation's federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages through 12 regional offices and 85 agencies.

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