Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Jessica Kershaw (Interior), Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov; Nedra Darling, OPA-IA Phone: 202-219-4152; Wyn Hornbuckle (Justice), Wyn.Hornbuckle@usdoj.gov
For Immediate Release: October 5, 2015
Print PDF

DURANT, Okla. – As part of the Obama Administration's commitment to strengthen the government-to-government relationship with tribal nations and fulfill federal trust obligations, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell will join Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby and Choctaw Nation Chief Gary Batton on Tuesday, October 6, to announce a historic settlement regarding the U.S. government's management of funds and resources it holds in trust for these tribal nations.

Interior Solicitor Hilary C. Tompkins, a member of the Navajo Nation, and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Lawrence S. Roberts, a member of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, will also join the signing ceremony and announcement at the Choctaw Event Center. Tuesday's announcement marks a significant milestone in the Obama Administration's commitment to resolving tribal trust management lawsuits with Native American tribes.

The Choctaw Nation is the third largest Native American tribe in the United States, with approximately 176,000 enrolled members and 10,864 square miles of tribal lands in southeastern Oklahoma. The tribe’s growing business enterprises have allowed it to work to improve the lives of tribal members who have a rich tradition of serving in the military, maintaining a strong tribal government based on their cultural heritage, and serving as leaders in the State of Oklahoma.

The Chickasaw Nation has more than 60,000 enrolled members and includes 7,648 square miles of south-central Oklahoma, encompassing all or parts of 13 Oklahoma counties. The Chickasaw Nation has a strong history of self-sufficiency and self-governance guided by their cultural values and traditions.

WHO: Sally Jewell, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Hilary C. Tompkins, Interior Solicitor Lawrence S. Roberts, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Jack Austin, Assistant Chief, The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Joe Coley, Tribal Chaplain, The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Gary Batton, Chief, The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Bill Anoatubby, Governor, The Chickasaw Nation

WHAT: Historic settlement announcement with Chickasaw, Choctaw Nations

WHEN: Tuesday, October 6, 2015 10:15 a.m. CDT – Media check-in 10:30 a.m. CDT – Announcement 11:00 a.m. CDT – Media availability

WHERE: Choctaw Event Center 4451 Choctaw Road Durant, OK 74701

MEDIA: Credentialed members of the media are encouraged to RSVP here