Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Carl J. Artman today announced that the Interior Department will hold a series of dialogue meetings with tribes on its Indian Affairs Modernization Initiative during the month of September. The meetings will be an opportunity for Indian Affairs officials and tribal leaders to discuss how the Office of the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education should prepare for the effects of projected personnel retirements and rising operations costs, as well as how they can better utilize future technology to improve efficiency.

"Times have changed and will continue to change," Artman said. "We need to ensure that the government-to-government relationship between the tribes and the Federal Government continues to function well into the future. These meetings are an opportunity to explore such changes and how best to modernize Indian Affairs operations to better serve Indian Country."

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Majel Russell and Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development Director Robert Middleton have been designated by the Assistant Secretary to organize and conduct the monthlong series of meetings.

The Indian Affairs Modernization Initiative Dialogue meetings will take place according to the following schedule:

September 4, 2007: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Southwest Regional Office, 1001 Indian School Road N.W., Albuquerque, N.M., 87104. Phone: 505-563-3100.

September 5, 2007: Inn of Gallup, 2915 West Highway 66, Gallup, N.M., 87301. Phone: 505-722-2201.

September 7, 2007: Double Tree Hotel, 2001 Point West Way, Sacramento, CA, 95815. Phone: 916--924-4909.

September 10, 2007: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Oklahoma Regional Office, 3100 W. Peak Blvd., 2nd Floor Conference Room, Muskogee, OK, 74402. Phone: 918781-4600.

September 11, 2007: Best Western Hotel and Convention Center, 1125 E. Gore Blvd., Lawton, OK, 73501. Phone: 580-353-0200.

September 13, 2007: Hilton Garden Inn, Nashville Airport, 412 Royal Parkway, Nashville, TN, 37214. Phone: 6158840088. September 17, 2007: Mystic Lake Casino and Hotel, 2400 Mystic Lake Blvd., Prior Lake, MN, 55372. Phone: 952-445-9000.

September 19, 2007: Hilton Hotel, 500 W. 3 rd Ave., Anchorage, AK, 99501. Phone: 907-265-7111.

September 21, 2007: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northwest Regional Office, BPA Auditorium, Federal Building, 911 N.E. 11 th Ave., Portland, OR, 97232. Phone: 503-2316702.

September 24, 2007: Billings Hotel and Convention Center, 1223 Mullowney Lane, Billings, MT, 59101. Phone: 406-248-7151.

September 26, 2007: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Regional Office, Two Arizona Center, 12 th Floor Conference Room, 400 N. 5 th Street, Phoenix, AZ, 85004. Phone: 602-379-6600.

September 28, 2007: Dakota Sioux Casino, 16415 Sioux Confier Road, Watertown, S.D., 57201. Phone: 605-884-1700.

The meetings will begin at 8:00 a.m. and adjourn at 5:00 p.m. with a noontime break for lunch (all times are local time).

Topics to be addressed include projected Indian Affairs staff retirements and the potential loss of institutional knowledge, rising operational costs and identifying cost-effective solutions such as consolidating or altering business practices and improved use of technological advances, trust management issues such as fractionation, promoting tribal economic self-sufficiency and leadership, and evaluating the successes and challenges of the tribal self-governance initiative.