Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Bureau of Indian Affairs Director W. Patrick Ragsdale today announced that he has confirmed Edward F. Parisian as regional director of the BIA Rocky Mountain Regional Office in Billings, Mont. Parisian, an enrolled member of the Chippewa-Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation in Montana, had been serving as the acting regional director since May 8, 2006. His new appointment was effective April 1. The Rocky Mountain Regional Office serves federally recognized tribes in Montana and Wyoming.

"Ed Parisian is an experienced administrator who will bring a fresh perspective to the Rocky Mountain Region," Ragsdale said. "I am pleased to have him as a member of the BIA's team of regional senior executives."

Parisian has over 25 years' experience in the fields of Indian health and education. He came to the regional office following a period as director of the Interior Department's Office of Indian Education Programs (now the Bureau of Indian Education). He was appointed to that position on August 3, 2003, after having served as deputy director since April 15, 2002. As director, he oversaw a system of 184 elementary and secondary schools serving almost 50,000 students and employing 5,000 teaching, administrative and support personnel. He was responsible for implementing federal education programs and laws, such as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, directing resources and technical assistance to 122 tribally administered, BIA-funded schools and 25 tribal colleges, and providing direction and oversight for two BIA-operated postsecondary institutions.

His experience also includes serving as an education line officer for the BIA's Northern Pueblos Agency in Espanola, N.M. (2000 to 2002); as chief executive officer of the Rocky Boy's Health Board (1995 to 2000); as superintendent of Heart Butte Schools on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in Montana (1992 to 1995); as OIEP director (1990 to 1992); and as superintendent of schools on the Rocky Boy's Reservation (1983 to 1990). He was the tribal health director and planner for the Rocky Boy's Health Board in the early 1980s.

His teaching experience includes courses in human growth and development at Stone Child College and social studies at Browning (Mont.) Junior High School. In addition, he has evaluated over 30 Indian education programs under Title IV and Title VII for school systems in North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Mississippi, Utah, and Washington, D.C.

Parisian holds an M.A. in Educational Administration from the University of South Dakota (1977), and a B.A. in Physical Education (1974) and an A.A. in Liberal Arts (1973) from Eastern Montana College. In 1973, he became a member of the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), an association of American Indian and Alaska Native educators, and served several years on its board of directors. He also held one term as NIEA president (1988 to 1989). In 1985, Parisian was named to Who's Who in the West. In 1982, he was named one of the Outstanding Young Men of America and Outstanding Indian Administrator by the Montana Indian Education Association.