Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Nedra Darling, OPA-IA Phone: 202-219-4152
For Immediate Release: March 13, 2007
Print PDF

WASHINGTON – Bureau of Indian Affairs Director W. Patrick Ragsdale today announced that he has named Omar C. Bradley as the Regional Director for the BIA's Navajo Regional Office in Gallup, N.M., which serves the 16 million acre Navajo Reservation located in western New Mexico, northeastern Arizona and southern Utah. Mr. Bradley, a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, had been serving as the acting regional director since May 2006. His appointment was effective February 4, 2007.

"Omar Bradley brings with him almost 30 years of experience working with BIA programs and tribal governments," Ragsdale said. "I am pleased that the Bureau and the Navajo Nation will continue to benefit from his extensive knowledge and expertise."

The Regional Director is the senior manager for the Navajo Region and provides executive direction for BIA program operations that deliver services to the Navajo Nation tribal government and the 220,000 tribal members living in the area either directly or under P.L. 93 639 contract with the tribe. His areas of responsibility include management oversight of the 16 million acres of the Navajo Indian Reservation and adjacent off-reservation tribal trust lands and 950,000 acres of individually held allotted trust land located in the states of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. He is responsible for the administration, execution and funding of trust services, water and natural resources management, forestry, fire management, irrigation, dam safety, housing, education, and social services programs as well as the construction and maintenance of over 6,000 miles of reservation roads.

Mr. Bradley began his BIA career in 1978 as a realty officer with the Bureau's Southern Pueblos Agency in Albuquerque, a position he held for the next 12 years. In 1990, he was promoted to Natural Resources Program Administrator where he was responsible for the oversight and delivery of natural resources programs and activities to 10 Pueblo tribes and over one million trust acres within the agency's jurisdiction. During these years, Mr. Bradley also periodically served as the acting agency superintendent for his and other BIA agencies including the Mescalero Agency in Mescalero, N.M., and the Ute Mountain Ute Agency in Towaoc, Colo. As the acting superintendent he was responsible for the daily administration and management of all agency program services to the federally recognized tribes within their areas.

In 1998, he became the Regional Water Rights Protection Manager in the Bureau's Albuquerque Area Office (now known as the Southwest Regional Office) where he was responsible for water management, irrigation construction, operations and maintenance, and dam safety on trust lands belonging to 24 federally recognized tribes. He held the position until 2000 when he was named Deputy Regional Director for the Navajo Regional Office.

As Deputy Regional Director, Mr. Bradley was the principal advisor to the Regional Director for all program activities under the jurisdiction of the Navajo Regional Office and was responsible for all day--to-day managerial and technical functions of the regional office and its agencies and field offices on the Navajo Reservation.

Following a reorganization of the BIA, his title changed in 2004 to Deputy Regional Director for Trust Services. His responsibilities included the day-today administration and management of the BIA's trust programs servicing the Navajo Nation, implementation of the Interior Department's Comprehensive Trust Management Plan, and overseeing the work of BIA trust program employees. He held the title of Deputy Regional Director for Trust Services until May 2006.

Mr. Bradley received a bachelor's degree in University Studies in 1974 and a master's degree in Business Administration in 1975 from the University of New Mexico. That same year, he began his career in serving tribal communities as a business economic development specialist with the All Indian Development Association, a nonprofit organization in Albuquerque, N.M. As such, he was responsible for promoting and facilitating business development among the 24 tribes located in New Mexico and southern Colorado, including the Navajo Nation. He remained with the AIDA until 1978, when he was hired by the BIA.

Mr. Bradley currently resides within the Manuelito Chapter jurisdiction of the Eastern Navajo portion of the Navajo Nation in New Mexico.