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<td>Anthony A. Addison, Sr.</td>
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<td>Special Assistant to President Oglala Sioux Tribe</td>
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<td>Derrick Beetso</td>
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<td>Blackfeet President ITBC</td>
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<td>Stephen M. Fast Horse</td>
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<td>Council member Northern Arapaho Tribe</td>
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<td>Conrad Fisher</td>
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<td>Northern Cheyenne Tribe</td>
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ATTENDEES (Continued):

2 Steve Fox  Secretary-Treasurer
   Ft. Belknap

3 Morris Harbanger (Phon.)

4 Robert N. Harris, Sr.  Eastern Shoshone

5 Benji Headswift  NLTC

6 Danielle Her Many Horses  Oglala

7 Curtis Horn  FBIC

8 Ben Janes  Lower Brule

9 L. Jace Killsbuck  President
   Northern Cheyenne Tribe

10 Sheldon King  Northern Cheyenne Tribe

11 A. Gay Kingman  Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
   Great Plains Tribal Chair
   Association

12 Michael LaValley  Senator Tester

13 Clark Madison  Ft. Peck - Elk River Law

14 Jodie McAdams  Eastern Shoshone Tribe

15 Connie Medicine Bull  Northern Cheyenne

16 Kenneth Medicine Bull  Elder
   Northern Cheyenne

17 A. J. Not Afraid  Chairman, Crow Tribe

18 Doug Oellermoun  Reclamation
   Great Plains Region

19 R. Nate Old Crow  Crow Tribe
ATTENDEES (Continued):

2 Len P (illegible) Confederated Salish and Kootnai
3 Rhonda Pitka Chief Beaver Village
4 Waylon Rogers Northern Cheyenne
5 William Rowland Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council
6 Majel Russell ITBC, Ft. Peck Legal Counsel
7 Richard Sanger Chippewa Cree Tribe
8 Merlin Sioux Northern Cheyenne
9 Gene Small Northern Cheyenne Tribe
10 Vernon Small Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council
11 William Snell Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council
12 Lee Spoonhunter Co-Chairman Northern Arapaho Tribe
13 Grant Stafne Ft. Peck Tribal Council Ft. Peck Tribes
14 Douglas Stuart (Illegible) to RMTLC Ft. Belknap
15 Karen Syder Council member Eastern Shoshone Tribe
16 Lance Tissidimit Shoshone Bannock Tribes ITBC
ATTENDEES (Continued):

Tafinia Tusa             Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders
Clint D. Wagon          Chairman
Eastern Shoshone
Carolee Wenderoth       Confederated Salish and Kootenai
Dan Wenner             Ft. Peck Tribal Legal Counsel
Andy Werk, Jr.          President,
                        Ft. Belknap Indian Community
Illegible               NCTC, Tribal Council
Illegible               FBIC
BEFORE THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
TRIBAL CONSULTATION
POTENTIAL DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR REORGANIZATION
TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
Public Hearing was held pursuant to
Notice and Invitation at Billings, Montana, USA,
commencing on the 21st day of June, 2018, at 9:10
a.m. MT.

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
AN ATTENDEE: Before we begin we would
like to ask Kenneth Medicine Bull, an Elder in the
Northern Cheyenne Tribe, to open us up with a
prayer.

A SPEAKER: Most of you, or some of you,
or maybe not any of you went to a boarding school.
My older brother paved the way.

And, now, when I was in Third Grade I
still couldn't speak English, so my brother, he was
my interpreter. And, he said I'm going to keep
(inaudible) and my grandma, she said about the Holy
Ghost.

And, she put her hands together and kind
of looked up in the sky. And we all kind of wondering, you know, what, what she, what is she looking for?

Well, I looked up there and I seen it had all kinds of designs and feeling, or a tense feeling. And, then she said, "Now, look for the Holy Ghost."

And, it was just about that time that a firearm went off, and she said, "Aahh, shit." I was afraid to think that, you know, whatever that was.

I don't know if it was right or wrong, but my Grandma, she -- So, I'm glad to be here, and thanks for the welcome. And, they always say welcome to coal country.

Actually, it's Cheyenne country. I don't know who started that, but, you know, so now we're here.

Hope that all of us have a good time and share your thoughts and ideas. And, all I can say is (inaudible).

Don't be like Custer. He told us he'd be right back.
We don't know where he went. You don't want to go.

(Whereupon, a prayer was shared, after which the following occurred:)

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Thank you.

So, thanks for coming this morning. I thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules and, and spend with us.

And, I will -- We have a slide show which will go over some of this. Like I say, again, I thank you for taking your time and coming to Billings, as well.

This is one of a series of consultations that we're doing, I'd say the initial round of consultations on the initial reorganization of the Department of Interior. And, this is the second.

We were in Michigan meeting with the (inaudible) Tribe, and, on Tuesday, and next week we have a couple more that we're trying to get around to Indian Country as quick as we can, provide as much information as we can about the concepts that we go over the Department reorganization, and then we will then have
additional consultations after that to, you know, interact with your leadership after you've had a chance to digest all the information that we've provided you, and, and hopefully to be better informed and, and to be able to key that all in.

So, we're going to -- I guess I'm in the way here. Step to the side here.

So, I think protocol-wise that if, if you'll bear with me when I go through this slide show, it's got the basic information, and kind of get that into your hands first, and then, and then we'll open it up for questions and, and other commentary, anything that, that you want to make.

I would ask -- We do have, we have a time window here. We have, we've set until 1:00 o'clock, right?

But, I want to make sure the tribal leadership, on behalf of, of, of the Tribe, gets a chance to, to get their comments and questions on the Record first. And, then, after that we'll open it up to other folks that are, that are here to, to offer their comments, et cetera.

So, we have -- This is a, being recorded
by a Court Reporter. Unfortunately she couldn't be here, but she's on phone, and so this will also be part of the Record of the consultations that we're doing.

Whenever we get around and the technology gets us there, the, the Transcripts of these will be on our web site and you will be able to go through those, as well. At least that's usually how long?

Couple weeks? Two or three weeks.

So, those will be up on our web site.

And, we have -- On the Indian Affairs web page you can access this information.

On the Department's web page, front web page, you can also access the map we'll show here in, in a little bit, which is proposed reunification after the reorganization. I also want to just take a chance since I've got you here in the room just to say thank-you to our staff.

They're working very hard. Liz Apple, Liz Apple is our Acting Chief of Staff, and she's also sort of the head of, of Regulatory Affairs for, for the Office of the Assistant Secretary, and
performs this great function of, of assisting us to
do things like consultation, making sure we're not
only abiding by the law, but abiding by our
consultation commitments, and make sure that we're,
we're having everything in an orderly fashion
prepared to go out to the Register or to go out to
the web site and, and be available for you.

Also, I don't know where Dave went.

Charlie and them,

But, other staff that are here, Regina
and some of the other young ladies. But, they're
helping out there.

I hope you got a chance to sign in.

And, to the extent, if possible, it makes it easier
for us to work our way through the Sign-In sheet;
also for the Record, to make sure we get names down
correctly.

Which reminds me, if they -- When you
speak, for purposes of the Record, if you could
introduce yourself, your name, your leadership
position, your, and the Tribe that you represent so
that our Court Reporter can try to get that down,
as well.
And, again, if you, if you didn't get a chance to sign up previously, at some point if you -- We'll take a break, one or two breaks, and will be sure -- But, if you have a chance, if you sign in it actually helps us be sure we've got the names down correctly, et cetera.

So, I think that's it. We'll launch this off to -- Okay.

If you'll -- So, where do we start this?

This started last year.

President Trump took office, 2017. I'm sorry.

MR. KILLSBUCK: (Inaudible), Northern Cheyenne Tribe. If there's no agenda for this consultation?

THE MODERATOR: You should have received a Tribal leader letter.

MR. KILLSBUCK: Does that have the Agenda --

THE MODERATOR: Yes.

MR. KILLSBUCK: -- in it?

THE MODERATOR: Yes.

MR. KILLSBUCK: Do you think it's
possible, if this is true Government-to-Government, could we go around the introductions first before you give your presentation?

THE MODERATOR: Sure.

MR. KILLSBUCK: I'd also like to thank Kenny Medicine Bull for that prayer this morning. I think it's only proper that we have a little protocol established for this Government-to-Government meeting if it's going to be a true consultation to give the Government introduction.

I think it's important that the tribal leaders have traveled a long ways to get the chance to at least introduce ourselves before we get into the formal discussion. I think there should be some protocol.

THE MODERATOR: Great.

MR. STAFIN: Good morning. I'm Grant Stafin with the Sioux Tribe, Board member.

MR. FISHER: Good morning, as well. Conrad Fisher, Vice President, Northern Cheyenne Tribe.

Again, Jace Killsback, President,
Northern Cheyenne Tribe.

MR. HARRIS: Nick Harris, Eastern Shoshoni Business Council.

MR. WAGON: Clint Wagon, Chairman of the Eastern Shoshone Tribe.


MS. (Inaudible): Good morning.

(Inaudible.) I work with the General Counsel for the National BIA Association.

MS. KINGMAN: Good morning. Gay Kingman, Director, Great Plains Tribal Commission and member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe and (inaudible).

MS. (Inaudible): Hi. (Inaudible.)

MR. (Inaudible): I'm on the Council for the Sisseton Nation, and I'm also Ceremonial Leader. And, I am -- It feels good to meet some colleagues, and it's good to, you know, include everybody.

You don't have to be an official or special indication or anything like that. I thought this was America where we have people and
An opportunity and that's what America stands for, whereas Indians don't need a Reservation.

But, I'm here anyway. And, I was here first, and I'll probably be the last one to leave.

MS. (Inaudible): Hi, I'm (inaudible) and I'm also our Chair of the tribal government.

MS. TUSE: Good morning. This is (inaudible) Tusi, for Tribal Council representative, Confederated Kootnai Tribe.

And, I'm (inaudible), and I'm also from the CFPP Department (inaudible).


MR. STUART: Good morning. Douglas Stuart, from Fort Belknap.

MR. SNELL: Good morning, everyone.

This is -- I'm Bill Snell, with the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders' Council, Executive Director.

MR. BEAR RUNNER: Good morning. I'm Ramon Bear Runner, Special Assistant to the
President, Oglala Sioux Nation.

MR. CLIFF: Good morning. I'm Lynn Cliff, Jr. I'm the Mountain Lakota Representative for the Fort Belknap Indian Community.

MR. WERK: I'm Andy Werk, Jr. I'm here for the Fort Belknap Indian Community.

Thank you, Mr. Killsbuck, for the prayer this morning, sir.

MR. FOX: Good morning. Steve Fox, Secretary-Treasurer for Fort Belknap Indian Community.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning. Thank you for the prayer, sir. I'm from Fort Peck. I work with Elk River Law.

We're here on behalf of the Fort Peck Tribes today.

MR. MADISON: My name is Clark Madison. (Whereupon, laughter was had.)

MR. MADISON: Some people call me Two Rivers.

MR. SANGER: I'm Richard Sanger. I'm Chief of Staff from the Chippewa Cree Tribe,
MR. CARLSON: Good morning. I'm Ervin Carlson.

I'm the President of the Intertribal Business Council. I'm also a member of the Blackfeet Tribe.

MS. RUSSELL: Good morning. I'm Majel Russell, and I'm with the Elk River Law Office here in town, and I'm also here representing the Intertribal Business Council for the Tribe.

MR. WENNER: Dan Wenner. I'm also with Elk River Law.

MR. JANIS: Friends, good morning. I'm Ben Janes.

I'm with the Lower Brule Tribe of South Dakota, and I (inaudible) and IBC. Thank you.

MR. (Inaudible): (Inaudible.)


MR. SPOONHUNTER: Good morning. My name is Lee Spoonhunter, Cochairman, Northern Arapaho Tribe.

MR. HORN: Morning. My name is
I go by the Christian name of Curtis Horn. I'm from the Fort Belknap Indian Community Assiniboine representative. Thanks.

MS. THOMPSON BOLLINGER: Good morning.

Donna Thompson Bollinger from Shoshone Bannock Tribe (inaudible).

MR. TISSIDIMIT: My name's Lance Tissidimit, with Intertribal Buffalo Council, Shoshone Bannock Tribe.

MS. (Inaudible): And, I'm a member of the Intertribal Buffalo Council and I'm also a member of the (inaudible) Tribe. And, I'd like to just share with you a quote from one of our leaders.

(Whereupon, a monologue was held in a Native tongue after which the following occurred:)

MS. (Inaudible): That means: Let me behold this day for it is ours to make. So, with that being said I should think, I think everybody should, you should get everybody's input into this and then make some good decisions that can benefit everybody. Thank you.
MS. ABOLD: Good morning. I'm Arnell Abold, and I'm the Executive Director for the Intertribal Buffalo Council and a member of the (inaudible) Tribe.

MR. (Inaudible): Morning. (Inaudible) Secretary of the (inaudible) Tribe.

MR. HARBANDER (phonetic): Morris Harbander, Secretary of the Intertribal Buffalo Council and a member of the Assiniboine.

MS. (Inaudible): Good morning.

(Inaudible.)


MR. LaVALLEY: Good morning. My name's Michael LaValley.

I'm not a tribal leader. I'm employed by Senator Tester's office.

MR. (Inaudible): Good morning. I'm (inaudible), Director for (inaudible) Council.

MR. KING: Good morning. Sheldon King, Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council.

MR. SMALL: Morning. Gene Small, Director of Northern Cheyenne Land and Grazing.
MR. SMALL: Good morning. Vernon Small, Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. ROWLAND: Good morning. William Rowland, Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council and (inaudible) District.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning. (Inaudible.) in a while.

MR. (Inaudible): Tribal Council.

MR. DAVIS: Good morning. Doug Davis, Native American Affairs Manager for Bureau of Reclamation.

MR. OELLERMONN: Good morning. Doug Oellermonn, with Bureau of Reclamation Native American Affairs Program here in Billings.

MR. HESSE (Phonetic): Good morning. I'm Charlie Hesse, Acting Deputy Regional Director for (inaudible) Services at BIA Rocky Mountain Region.

MR. (Inaudible): Good morning. I'm Jordan Frith (phonetic) (inaudible) here at Rocky Mountain Regional Office.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Morning.
(Inaudible.)

MR. NO SLEEP: Morning. Douglas No Sleep, Special Agent in Charge, BIA, (inaudible).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'm a Special Agent in Charge of the BIA.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER:

(Inaudible.)

MR. NOT AFRAID: Okay, ready to proceed?

Okay.

So, thank you, Chairmen. So, I'm going to offer this as an apology.

I know that's the protocol that, that you guys like. And, I'm from a Southern Plains Tribe.

I appreciate that, so I apologize. As we go around the country, so many different Tribes, so many different regions, they have different ways they want to proceed.

So, thank you for getting us off on a good foot this morning. Appreciate that.

So, where did this discussion start?

When President Trump took office last year he issued an Executive Order to each Agency to give a
Plan on how they could reorganize their agency to improve their efficiency, effectiveness, and the accountability of the agency.

Toward that, Department last year put out a tribal letter and held listening sessions at six locations in May and June. I think since then we've had two more, including at the National Congress of American Indians two weeks in Kansas City.

We had a listening session there, as well. So, where are we now?

So, really, the, our reorganization plan for Interior has not been written out, finalized yet. We have a lot of things in draft, including the map.

As I mentioned, you can go on the, the Interior web page and see a map there. I don't know.

It used to be interactive. You used to be able to play with, with the, the regional lines, and, but, I think they took that out of it because it was too costly.

Anyway, looking for new ways it was
intended. But, you can still do the map as, as it's proposed now.

And, so, for our part, now, where you've got at least a, a close-to-final proposed map. We wanted you to come out, and we also have a little more ideas.

Secretary's fleshed out a little bit more on this video and reorganization. For the Department, I, I now feel like I have enough information to come to you to have a good discussion.

So, we want to initiate consultation. We have eight initial ones that we're doing over the next month and a-half, and then, as I said at the very beginning, we'll, we'll take stock then of all the comments that we've received and lay out additional consultations then.

And, these initial ones that you -- The minute you see the map you'll see, I thought it would be a, an interesting exercise for us to do the initial consultations in places that are located in a, a new-proposed unified region.

And, then, that, that gets to some
geographic dispersion around the country. And, in the second round we can probably take additional places.

And, and, folks that have, some folks, some of these, there's a long way to travel. Feeling it was a long ways for the Great Plains Tribes that wanted to come, and, so, when we do another round we're also hoping we'll be able to place those in areas where people couldn't make one of these, and we'll be in an area closer to them.

So, in addition to -- So, we're doing our part seeking your consultation. We're also doing, at Indian Affairs, our part and talking to our employees.

So, we need to hear the employees, both in the (inaudible) office and the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education. And, we really need the rest of the Department; are doing the same thing.

They talk to their stakeholders. BLM talks to Governors, et cetera. Bureau of Rec talks to Governors and talks to Regional water pros.

And, they're also talking to their
staff. And, we've had several staff-level meetings that the Secretary has hosted, including January, inviting the senior career management and all get-togethers from the Department-wide.

Brought them into D.C. We had a three-day session, and, and, and we, we tried to flesh out new vision of where the new organization could be, and seek their advice.

So, obviously, other people that have, have a lot of input to put into this is Congress. But, at the end of the day, large pieces of this large reorganization plan will have to be affirmed by Congress because it will change some of the budget structures for the Bureaus, et cetera; how we interact with each other.

So, Congress is also a big stakeholder in this, as well. So, let me have -- Go ahead.

Not real loud, because I'm right here.


THE MODERATOR: And, so, I think it's helpful in continue centralizing the, the size of the challenge that we're taking on, and also why
it's important to look at Department-Wide. And, maybe I should take a step back and say:

So, what, what the concept the Secretary has put important are forward is really an overall department-wide reorganization, meaning that this is intended to create better coordination and coordination across the Bureau for decisions that the different Bureaus have to provide to each other, or give input to each other on.

It's not so much focused on reorganization down the side within that particular Bureau, but at a higher level so we can get better communication for proper decisions that come out of the Region. So, that's the idea.

Why is it important to us? The Department's huge.

We have 2,400 different locations, all operating locations, different offices, et cetera, in 12 (inaudible). So, literally, the Department is responsible for over half the globe.

We have over 7,000 employees. We interact with 600,000-plus volunteers who work in different areas of the Department at different
times, a lot of those in parks and (inaudible) and stuff.

But, a lot of other Bureaus get involved to help us, as well. As you know, you're out west here, big chunks of the country are under the management of the Department of Interior.

In fact, one-fifth of the United States, 20 percent of the surface area of the United States is under the direct management of Interior, under the direct management of the Bureau of Land Management.

But, most of that we hold, we hold in trust for you. And, so, that's included in that, in that calculation.

We also have lots of subsurface responsibilities. Twenty-five million acre-feet of water we're, we're responsible for helping the administration of.

So, the Department itself has not been reorganized in 150 years; really, since the Department was founded back in 1849. And, as most of you recall from your history, the Department of Indian Affairs was actually in the Department of
War.

Shortly after Interior was formed, they moved the BIA into the Department of Interior. So, Interior is the fourth, fourth largest Department in the federal administration.

So, BIA was part of that, that whole history in it. In addition to BIA, over time, the Department was given additional responsibility.

And, these bureaus were created to help the Department administer those responsibilities. And, they just got added into the portfolio, sort of ad hoc, as time went by, as new, new responsibilities came along.

So, there was no comprehensive thinking about how you would, you know, organize this large government administration for efficiency purposes. So, mainly the idea is take a look now at how the Department is organized across the board, try to improve our efficiencies internally, maximize our services to the American people, to Tribes, and the people we serve, and to consolidate the decision-making.

So, right now we often have a decision
for, for one decision, but we have multiple agencies who are coming up with their own ideas about how that decision should be implemented, which, obviously, creates a lot of inefficiencies for us.

Ultimately, problem solving, ultimately it's not a good decision. So, that's the main idea to, to make better decision-making, is the main goal.

Better decision-making, more efficient, more accurate on behalf of the, more cost-effective on behalf of the American people. So, how, how does this work into the map?

So, the idea would be to bring all the Bureaus into 13 unified regions. Right now you have nine Bureaus and, and a number of other offices.

These different Bureaus and offices collectively have 61 different regions that they operate under, regional structures. So, the idea is to bring all them into unified regions.

There would be a Regional Director. So, superstructure over the top of that unified region.
It doesn't impact the Bureau's regional management, but we provide -- You can think of them kind of like project managers. So, this Director would be responsible for the decisions that come out of that region, making sure that the bureaus, the multiple bureaus that are involved in each division are working together, coordinating from the very beginning on this.

And, he's sort of cracking the whip on the, the, the regional management and regional staff of each of those bureaus that are involved to make sure that they're working together; that the timeline for the staff that, you know, that are working, the timeline for the decision, that the end of the day, that this gets done faster, better coordinated.

And, he will be responsible for making sure the decision happens. If it requires elevation to Washington, D.C., then he will be the one to take it.

He will be reporting directly to the Deputy Secretary, and the only -- So, ideally, the, the only reason that the decision would be elevated
is if there would be, really, policy decisions that
needed to be made, and that all the Bureaus that
are still working on that decision aren't
necessarily on the same page.

So, that would be the only reason for
the elevation to the Deputy Secretary, who would
then forward it to the Assistant Secretary. With
all those bureaus, they would resolve whatever
policy issue it is, and they would be sent back
down for the, for the decision to be put out for
the, you know, regional director.

So, when you look -- When you step back
and you look at how decisions are made
Department-wide that require this input from
different agencies, you sort of buy three primary
functions, or three primary types of decisions that
we also have to have input from other, the other
Bureaus.

One is Recreation, two is Conservation,
and three is Permitting. So, if you go backwards,
I think that you guys do just enough permitting or
you are involved, have reason to be involved with
the permitting with BLM, et cetera, or if anybody
(inaudible).

And, so, again, the idea being that the decision from the lead agency (inaudible) should be different from these other agencies, making sure it happens in a timely fashion. That's really important.

Part of our service, service, part of our responsibility is to the Tribes, to American people, et cetera.

Conservation, we can wrap up in conservation the environmental work that we do. Again, the environmental reviews that we do are, are really important, not just because we're required to do it by law, obviously, but also because it, it's a big part of the whole decision, making sure that we're being environmentally responsible, good stewards.

Those decisions always require other agencies to have input. It's, it, it's actually very rare that we have an instance in which -- And, you can, you can take almost anything.

If you're going to, you know, put a bridge across a river, or something like that,
right? It impacts multiple bureaus.

And, so, to get those reviews done in a timely fashion, right now different bureaus, on their own timelines, come up with their Environmental Reviews. And, at an end point they try to reconcile them.

Sometimes they aren't able to reconcile them. Even if they do, we've created a rather, through the different bureaus, where we have questions raised about the ultimate decision coming out of that review.

So, by consolidating the decision, or consolidating the review, we'll have those agencies working together from the very beginning on one environmental review process. Again, cut down the time.

Cuts down on the, sort of the varied viewpoints so we can have a better decision at the end of the day. Why is this important?

Well, I'll tell you. Frankly, you know, we get sued almost by every decision that we make, by everybody, all right?

And, the environmental reviews that we
do are obviously a big part of, sort of the opening
door for the outside parties to, to sue us and
challenge the decisions that we make.

And, I, I would ultimately -- My view of
this is ultimately that the decisions that the
Department makes on your behalf, on behalf of
Tribes and individual Indians, is part of our trust
responsibility.

So, if we don't have a good decision,
meaning not just a decision that's good for the
Tribe, it's a decision that we can defend, then we
haven't done our job. So, when we do things that
invites litigation and invites the opportunity for
other folks to sue us, we're not doing our job very
well.

So, I think the primary function of this
conservation leg is to get us, Interior, itself, on
a better page as far as the way we make decisions
on your behalf.

The third one, the third one is
recreation. And, this one, if you think about it
first blush, I know you really probably get
involved more, you know, in Parks and, and Fish and
Wildlife, et cetera.

But, again, the decision that they need to get involved in recreation, and the Secretary was, really intended this be one of the primary, one of the primary functions because of the size of the recreation industry in this country.

It's over $800 billion. And, he wanted to be sure that Indian Country would have a chance to be a part of that (inaudible).

So, when we -- They had other Bureau -- Parks, they have a recreation project that they are doing.

Right now they kind of do it in a silo. And, they end up doing it in isolation.

And, even if they have, like on the Reservation, if they have another project nearby, they don't make any effort to connect those. Like, they don't go to Fish and Wildlife to say, "Hey, we're doing this RV park. We know you've got trails up there. You want to try to hook us up?"

They just -- They don't do that. So, the idea is that we have more, you know, officially recreational opportunities (inaudible).
That opens up a trust. Now, typically in this part of the country, with large vehicles, large cultivations, you have lots of opportunity, recreational opportunity that (inaudible).

The Secretary's vision is he believed he could be involved in Interior's input into the recreation industry and we'd be able to tag along with that. So, I think that's a really important part for Tribes to consider on that, on that third leg of the, the functions.

At the end of the day, though, our missions stay the same. I want to try to make this clear as, as we can.

Our mission for Indian Affairs and for the Department (inaudible) is to support, support the Tribes. We (inaudible).

And, so, these three functions I'm talking about are functions that each Tribe does in their own way. I mean, each group does in their own way.

But, the ultimate mission is to facilitate and support tribal sovereignty. So, hopefully that's the outcome if we are able to have
better decision-making.

I mentioned there's nine Bureaus, 61
regions. How, how, how are these regions --

Where's the map?

There we go. I think I'll just, you
know, skip to the map.

I can tell you. So, how, how, how was
this map first derived?

So, as I said, the Bureaus were kind of
added into it ad hoc over a century and a-half.
The Bureaus themselves developed their own regions.

So, ad hoc, if they felt it fit their
need to serve, or whatever their, their purpose
was, their, their functions, their mission. And,
so, nobody has taken a look at, before, at whether
we could actually have this kind of geographic
region for this, you know, inner Bureaus to
operate, and that would facilitate this.

So, the Secretary had to -- We had this
Bureau called the United States Geological Survey.
And, really, they're a bunch of scientists.

And, so, he went to them first off and
said: Coincide all the maps right now, all the
State boundaries and all these other things that, that have been used over time to create different regions in the Bureau, and if you were starting from scratch, how, what, how would you do it?

And, so, if you look at the Department-wide, you look at what does the Department do?

It does fish and it does minerals and it does watersheds. And, we've got wildlife corridors.

We've got watersheds. And, and, we have Tribes.

And, Tribes oftentimes -- And, sometimes it's very obvious why they've done what they've done, but a lot of tribal areas also follow some of the same patterns. And, so, if you work those out and you do, do it, do it kind of from a scientist perspective, and, and, ways you can best serve a geographic region, you know, and sort of what happens in that region, how would you do it?

And, so, that's how they came up with this basic map. And, we have overlaid on this, in the colors.
I don't know how easy it is to see.

But, so, our current resources are in colors, and then the black lines would be in the new unified regions, this new thing.

So, so, so, the idea, again, being that you can have better decision-making in this unified region. The, the -- We talk about this a lot of the times, right?

We don't have enough resources out in the field, right? I know you guys have heard the pitch with the Agency.

Our guys aren't as staffed as they should be. And, so, one of the, the ultimate goals with, in this, as well, is with better decision-making we would be able to access -- Right now we have to have -- Each Bureau and each office has to have staff for each function, right?

So, -- And, I think we have -- Officially we think we can do all that with shared resources.

And, we actually do this in some places. I know for the Bureau of Rec guys here, I know you interact with our office here a lot.
But, we don't do that enough. And, so, one would be to increase the resources available if we have more coordination between the, between the different Bureaus.

And, then, at the end of the day, this is intended to create more, more cost efficiency, as well. And, the Secretary's agenda has been as, as we ream costs and get more resources made available in, in the regions, we will keep that there.

It's not going to be pulled out for the Budget. It's not going to be pulled to D.C., or anything.

We'll keep it. So, we can be better staffed, and serve, serve the Tribes better.

The other Bureaus hopefully will be serving their, their constituents, as well. So, (inaudible) the Director will report directly to the Deputy Secretary.

He will focus on core, three core functions: facilitating problem solving, facilitating coordination between the, the Agencies, and, and, so, this is all part of the
sales job here.

The services for the American people, reduce jurisdictional barriers. These are all the things we've been talking about.

But, hopefully, at the end of the day it's how we'll support the Tribes better. I'll leave this up so we have -- This is the consultation schedule that we have.

From here on Monday we go to Albuquerque, and then to California. And, then we have a, a few-week break until the end of July, and then we pick up with four more.

In the meantime, obviously we appreciate your comments, your oral comments here. If you have any written comments here, please submit them to, to Elizabeth.

Those will all be part of the Record.

But, we also have, you can also submit written comments, as well, to consultation@BIA.gov, and that will all be part of the Record as we begin to review this and look at that.

So, I would say, one, if, if you want a little bit of a view into how this could operate,
Alaska obviously is a unique situation, right?

It's a region for us.

It's also, it's a single region for us.

It's also a single region for a lot of other Bureaus.

So, they're looking there. They essentially have, you know, a unified Region already.

What we don't have is coordination in the Bureaus in that, in that Region. So, they're already working on that there.

They're also looking at shared services. We have buildings, you know, like in, in Anchorage, where we have three Bureaus, but none of them share any staff to do any common issues that we have, even like HR services, IT services.

Each of them has their own people. So, they're already working there on some of those back-office issues, and coordinating those better.

They're working formally on establishing better decision-making across the Bureaus for, just to make for -- They do a pretty good job up there already anyways. They interact with each other
pretty well.

So, if you want to just take a look at your place, I believe we have a lot here. Maybe you could share with folks, too, at some point.

We have a (inaudible) as well in California, Sacramento, the Pacific Region. There are the, the different Bureaus.

Regions don't match up there, but Sacramento has a common office for one of the, the, the Bureau's Regional Offices. So, we have our Regional Office in the building, along with, I believe it's BLM and COR, Fish and Wildlife.

And, when we had the (inaudible) people in in January, one of the comments that the Regional Director of California, including ours, made was how great it was when they needed input on a decision, or they needed to get some, some facilitation from one of the other Bureaus for a decision that they're making, that they can just run across the hallway.

One of the challenges that you face when you have decisions that require multiple Bureaus is even though we have all this electronic
communications, is that it's always best facilitated face-to-face, in person. So, the, the -- In a different group you'll always have sort of, you don't always have the same sort of priority.

You don't necessarily have the same priorities. It's not necessarily a priority for Fish and Wildlife, but when those Regional Directors can run across the hallway and say, "No, I really, really need this done. Can you get it?" to their counterpart, they're able to facilitate, you know, getting that priority moved up so that their position can remain (inaudible).

So, anyway, that's, that's sort of the idea of how it could work on, on a day-to-day basis. Given you the map.

Talked myself into a little space where I'm ready to, anxious to hear from you guys and, and what your comments are. And, I don't know.

So, I am, I will we'll add this to -- Do we have a list of folks that they signed in? Do you have a list, or would you prefer that?

Or, would you prefer just to go around
the room, let everybody have a chance to talk? I don't know.

I'll leave that (inaudible) to you guys, and remind you that we also have to wrap up by 1:00 o'clock.

Chairman.

MR. OSGOOD: Yes, sir. Before I begin, though, it's customary for the Tribes -- Why don't you give her that one. It's, so, I know you're (inaudible).

THE MODERATOR: Really. Wow.

MR. OSGOOD: (Inaudible.) Appreciate you coming out to demonstrate the Executive Order on Reorganization. I have a pretty long laundry list of questions, but I also am an optimist.

I just, at this point, we have, among tribal leaders, we met yesterday, and we covered quite a few things. And, it was near to the heart of a lot of the tribal leaders in the Rocky Mountains that they're not proponents of the reorganization, only because of Treaty applications and so forth.

And, if, how would this reorganization,
I guess, in an optimistic way, could they be reaffirmed, or could they be improved in the -- You know, all different angles, all different experiences that every Tribe has (inaudible) as well.

And, when we talk about the budgeting, the national budgeting, we see the flaws in the budgeting, itself. So, does the reorganization take that into consideration?

And, should we have --

THE MODERATOR: It does.

MR. OSGOOD: It does? It does consider the budgeting in terms of other (inaudible) or plan to eliminate, or (inaudible) some Agencies?

That being said, I would, I would also certainly want to (inaudible) about Bureau of Indian Affairs for minding businesses in the, in the unit, and visionary or public. But, the other Agencies don't have, the other Agencies don't have Social Service programs.

The other Agencies don't have fish obligations. Again, it is the elective of the President to uphold these obligations.
And, yet, (inaudible) to be recognized for a sovereign nation, whether it's Park Service, Bureau of Reclamation, and Fish and Wildlife Services. So, there's a lot more that could be shared among the tribal leaders, but I just wanted to express that and welcome you to Billings and I feel I've do think if I could grab that.

For the Record, I'd like to just read the Executive Order (inaudible). In the first section where you, you talk about a Plan to reorganize governmental function, eliminate unnecessary agencies.

Then it's Statute, calling on Agencies and agency programs. You know, the, if there's a lot more interaction for feedback with Tribes, both directly and whether it be NCR or another Nation, I feel that the Plan to be implemented or initiated in 180 days, which is now?

THE MODERATOR: Correct. But, it would be effective before then.

MR. OSGOOD: And, those of you leaders that don't have a copy of the Executive Order, I, I ask you please to highly look it up. There are,
there are some things that are in, in the lives of
the Tribes with (inaudible) or all of the functions
of the Agency, a component, a program are
appropriate for the Federal Government, and would
be better left to State or local Governments, or
the private sector, free enterprise.

But, I thought I'd read that. It,
it's -- We, we understand it, it's national. It's
nationwide.

The issue I have with that is when you
have the three topics up here of permitting, and
(inaudible) contribution, and the (inaudible),
we're on a Reservation. We understand and provide
that for ourselves.

With the Executive Order, that kind of
leaves a needle for those regulatory authorities to
come off or give to the States, and then the States
(inaudible) on the Reservation. And, that's
definitely feared.

And, and, that totally violates our
sovereignty, for one. So, one of the major
comments that I believe we all share in this room
today (inaudible).
So, I'm really heavy on that out there. And, then, the cost of shutting down our region agency comprised of programs, including the cost of (inaudible).

But, again, this reorganization may hit home because of the government circle within the Reservation allows for economics. And, if that's taken out or relocated, that also hurts good jobs.

And, again, again, I don't want to waste time. I know it's valuable, and we have a lot of leaders in the room, but I'll be sure to (inaudible).

And, I sure appreciate you giving me the time to speak. (Inaudible).

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Thank you for the -- Thank you for raising those issues.

So, those are, those are really great questions. Maybe I don't need the mic.

I can be pretty loud. Those are really good questions.

I, I'd have to say, one, is, so, the Executive Order came out literally about six weeks after, I guess, after -- Not quite. -- maybe eight
weeks after the President took office. And, I would really say if that particular work was written now, it would include Tribes in that list of Governments.

So, he just -- He didn't -- You know, President didn't have a long history with Indian Country before he came into the office. And, but, his staff now have been great working with us, I have to say.

They've been coordinating a lot of issues on us with education, things that we have to be able to interact with other Departments, with Department of Labor and HHS. So, they've, they've been really great at facilitating that.

They have a commitment to respect tribal sovereignty. They see it as an important part of our federal responsibilities.

And to bring it down to the Department of Interior, a lot of you guys have met the Secretary. You know, he, he, he comes from Indian Country.

He's comfortable with the Tribes. He absolutely supports it.
So, everything that we do, you know, is, is his, has his full support. We are going to try to do our part in supporting tribal government doing what they do.

That, that comes all the way from the top of the, of the Department. So, I think that there are -- One of the, one of the things that the Secretary has been talking consistently amongst, in discussions, you know, with the all the Bureaus and all the things that are department-wide, is, -- I think I can say this honestly. -- is that he doesn't view this as an exercise in shrinking the Department and, and getting rid of people.

In fact, his observation, and, and his public statements always reflect the, in his experience, going around the country, -- And, he likes to do that. -- is that we don't have enough people out in the field.

We don't have enough boots on the ground. He's a military man.

He likes to talk about like that. We don't have enough boots on the ground.

So, his vision for the Department is
that we will (inaudible), and that will free up
resources that we already have, and then that will
be pushed down as far down as we can to, to the
Field Office, to the Agency office, et cetera.

So, that part of it -- And, you know, we
have to plan. But, but, the country is not a great
budget today.

You know what I'm saying? If you guys
were in running the government the Kermit runs his,
you probably wouldn't have an office -- Right? --
spending money you don't have.

So, the budget figure, looking forward,
is, is, is not, is not great for the United States
in general. We're kind of fortunate we have a lot
of support in Congress for Indian, Indian Health
and for Indian education, and, and, let's see,
(inaudible) probably third, but for the rest of the
Bureau, the BIA's function.

But, we have lots of support. Members
of Congress, you know, like, like to support issues
in Indian Country.

That's -- So, so, we have a pretty good
level of support that way. So, -- But, given that,
we still have to, for our purposes, we have to plan for tighter budgets. We have those in the past.

You know, we, we work internally and we sort of start in the worse-case scenario and work our way up from there. But, it -- What I'm trying to get to is that part of the (inaudible) the Secretary has is, he's said:

"As Secretary, I can't count on Congress giving me lots of extra money every year. So, how am I going to be able to -- You know, I have responsibilities that this wide, and I have a budget that's about this wide.

"How do I get those to match up? Well, the more efficiencies that can be wringed (sic) out of my current operations (inaudible) resources mean (inaudible) responsibilities.

So, that's where the priority calls. If you get new funding, if we get a larger budget by Congress, you know, in a year, I mean, that's great.

We have lots of places to use it. But, -- So, for planning purposes, though, we have to make sure that we're running as good an operation,
as efficient an operation as we can.

So, that, that, I think, is the -- I
hope that addresses your question. I think it's a
really good question.

And, there may be other cabinet Agencies
and their plans. They may propose getting rid of
agencies, et cetera.

But, that's not part of our plan.

Secretary has never mentioned anything.

In fact, he's constantly asking me, you
know, "Where should we try to find -- Where's the
next place to get resources? What's the next thing
we can do?"

So, you guys know we're putting a lot of
money into law enforcement; health (inaudible)
services. We're wrapping up the Drug Enforcement
Task Forces.

He's doing a great job of trying to pull
in other, other agencies, other cabinet agencies,
and get their resources to, to commit with ours to,
to do things, though. I mean, those are all good
questions.

If you've got another one that comes up,
we'll, we'll try to answer it.

MR. KILLSBUCK: (Inaudible). Is this --

This one doesn't have -- Jace Killsbuck, President,
Northern Cheyenne Tribe.

Thank you, Chairman Osgood. I know we
discussed some topics that we felt incented (sic)
on yesterday and we began to address those.

In the presentation, it did raise some
concerns. First of all, the idea that this
Administration is relying on scientists now to help
draw a map for the regions. (Inaudible).

We wonder what kind of scientists you
have over there, if any of them are Indian. And,
the other thing about that, why weren't the Tribes
even mentioned there?

You're Indian, too, so it would be
better to ask the Indians what we thought of that
restructuring of those Regions. Of those agencies
you mentioned, the (inaudible) of the three primary
functions: Permitting, recreation, and
conservation.

And, the fourth function that is crucial
and based on a trust responsibility, and that is
services. Services is one function that is missing in the reorganization.

We have social services, we have BIA, we have law enforcement. We have all those service programs that our Governments are responsible for, and we use the Treaty and our contracting to take those functions over.

Those are our lifelines for our community, especially in our region. We're rural. We're isolated. We're direct-service Tribes, and we still depend on the Federal Government for those kind of services.

So, I think that's got to be highlighted, and, and, and, and that kind of input got to be observed. Now, I'm a Chairman here.

There are other Chairmans here. I'd like to hear from BIA why isn't, with all this here, why isn't this occurring without us.

We know why. Because of the lack of fulfilling these positions, these (inaudible) in the BIA.

And, that's what it should be, consultation should be. While other Regions may be
different, and I'm, I'm glad you clarified that how you guys are down there.

But, up here the idea of using the geography or the (inaudible) systems to clump them together is something that the Northern Cheyenne can't support, nor our allies, like our brothers and sisters, Tribes to the east.

And, this next week we'll be celebrating our killing of Custer. So, you're welcome.

But, (Inaudible.) You know, we have a system here in the Rocky Mountain Region that has been built on partnerships with the Bureau, and that relationship has allowed us to be where we're at as far as the (inaudible) the Rocky Mountain Region.

So, that, through Tribal leadership and Government leadership. But, everything is different in different areas, so with certain biases we know we have to work together through the issues.

We know that there is still institutional racism. There's still bias in different regions and different areas of our
federal government.

We know that after the meeting here, that the Plains Tribes don't have the same relationship that Rocky Mountain has with his Tribes. And these are historic.

We've got to take those into consideration when trying to combine those regions and those authorities. They aren't -- They're not the (inaudible) that was put upon these Indian Tribes.

Those are really my major concerns, because I looked at (inaudible) maps, (inaudible) and we do this quickly and get it done. I was at BIA.

And, the comment made about the part of the map being really affected, that's another reason why we should stop to look at minimizing the (inaudible). We got a call in yesterday that if they're going to be (inaudible) programs or motivational programs, that (inaudible) and Indian Tribe and Indian services, we need more boots on the ground.

(Inaudible) or responses, make sure that
resource that was spoken of for a Tribe (inaudible)
the Bureau, both of those (inaudible) in these
Regions.

Also, let's try (inaudible)
special-interest --

(Whereupon, the conference operated
interrupted the presentation, after which the
following occurred:)

MR. KILLSBUCK: (Inaudible) with the
regionalization of these Interior Directors and
shared resources. And, that (inaudible) work for
(inaudible) relationship with a Trustee (inaudible)
Treaty, and --

(Whereupon, the conference operated
interrupted the presentation, after which the
following occurred:)

MR. KILLSBUCK: And, and, the power of
rivers, and the plants, and how the Indians go.
It's all in there with animals and trees.
And, that's where we belong. But, it's
a very maternalistic approach to (inaudible) and
the fact that we never really had anything in the
process.
And, we, we're doing this quickly.

We're getting it done.

We would say that a change like this, doesn't require such a hasty approach. It should be done.

It's almost done after the fact. And, so, some of, for the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, some of the questions we had.

But, again, I, I think the Northern Cheyenne Tribe representative, my people and my base, is opposed to this. And, we're opposed to this on behalf of even our Bureau constituents, our Bureau employees, our regional employees, our regional authorities here, because, like I said, this institutional relationship that was made for decades now that we don't want to see go away, that has helped us in our efforts to become self-reliant, self-determined nations, self-governments.

And, so, we want to continue to keep that relational base, including those authorities and those resources. Our fear, my fear is that this is the Federal Government again getting out of
the Indian business.

It seems to happen whenever we get a Republican Administration. And, we went through restructuring, reorganizing stovepiping, streamlining, all these other things that have happened, and we've never recovered from them, both nationwide, but also financially.

And, the Federal Government has, the Federal Government was either. So, I want to make that known, because, that we oppose it.

And, if it does happen, I think that there has to be actions that's taken by the Federal Government to look at the consultation recommendations and make sure that those are included in there (inaudible) before, because if we, again, went through the steps of meaningful consultation, you know, we can all (inaudible) that we disagree with this, and yet maybe make something meaningful.

But, if it's not, then I think that most of the Tribes make it here today, they have to be included in those steps to, to regionalize the Interior. Thank you.
THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Chairman Killsbuck. So, we'll try to, if I can remember everything you said.

So, a really good point on services aspect. In fact, I kind of have, as one of my stock talking points about this, is the Deputy and that the rest of the Department does trees and rocks and deer and fish and water, and we do people, because we're really the only one of the, of the nine Bureaus whose primary focus is on people.

So, appreciate that comment. The reason that's not in there is really so we're, we're the only Bureau who has a primary function and its primary mission to serve people.

So, we don't -- We need the other Bureaus to coordinate with us in achieving that mission from time to time. But, where we need their assistance is primarily in these three areas.

We don't, we don't necessarily need their assistance in telling us how to interact with tribal leadership, how, how the programs that we have, services that we provide differ. A lot of
the things that we do are, you know, fairly unique within the Department.

So, what the, the intent of this would be is the, is, for our purposes, for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, is to say, you know, through this structure we'll be able to elevate the decisions that we need to make on your behalf.

That would make those equal with the other Bureaus and the positions that they have to make, and the decisions that they do. Right now that's not how of it happens.

Each Bureau is kind of a mud-wrestling match, right? They have their own priorities.

They've got their own dates. They have (inaudible).

It's a struggle to kind of get that in in a timely fashion. In other Bureaus, if it's not a priority for my Bureau and for the other Bureau ahead is, is asking me to put resources in to help them make a decision, it's not, you know, not, let's put it it's not in my professional assessment as an employee, right?

And, it's not part of mine, so it
doesn't become a priority to me until I'm really forced to. And, one of the, the consequences of that historically has been when you have this lack of coordination and this lack of commonness in facilitating of decisions is each time, each time it happens it has to go to Washington, D.C., to be resolved.

Well, you guys probably know whenever we get something in D.C., it takes a long time to get it addressed. So, if this facilitation happened and we could have, say, potential to have it happening at a regional level, to me, that facilitates that.

That elevates our ability to represent you within the Department for those decisions, actually, to the other Bureaus. I don't think that's been there.

In my observation, -- I used to work on the Hill. I heard tribal leaders there. I heard it from BIA folks back then. My observation, now it's a struggle for the Bureau of Indian Affairs to get some of the equal consideration, equal time from the other Bureaus
when they need input from them.

And, I think this is a, this is a mechanism, basically a process to get that, to make that happen. And, you'll have a Regional Director who will, you know, basically crack the whip and make sure that happens.

That will be part of his job responsibility. So, got another question.

So, that's how we look at it. It -- I will say, too, while I would think that the, the Tribe's responsibility, especially, lies with the (inaudible) Government, -- Right? -- because realistically we have a really big part, right?

The Department of Interior has the primary responsibility (inaudible) to serve our (inaudible), right? It's not just the BIA.

And, so, when we can get better respect for the priority decisions that we need from the other Bureaus, I think that helps us perform that mission with you better. Again, from -- Another comment?

MR. KILLSBUCK: I really appreciate that. And maybe that's something that you could
articulate better on your presentation that,

"Here's what's going on with the Interior. Here's
what would happen with the Bureau, whether it's
line of authority or those things you've mentioned.

However, with that being said, I would,

I would (inaudible) to impose this, I think we
recommend BIA being exempt from this, because you
guys are a service provider. And, let the other
Agencies deal with permitting, recreation, and
conservation, and let the Bureau be exempt from
this.

And, that would only, again, be, be by
recommendation, because I don't think you need to
be telling Tribes that, you know, change is hard
and it's going on in the Federal Government. We,
we understand that.

But, actions have already shown that the
current system has been used, and that we, on
current system, as a Bureau, has already shown by
action that there is inconsistencies in getting
some of these decisions made to send up the chain.

But, right now I know you guys are, you
don't know who's in charge. And, if you come up --
And, some have been waiting months for Headquarters to get it done.

To me, that's not a bureaucracy. To me, that's leadership.

And, there isn't leadership in there to get things done. And, that may be something to reevaluate, also, is the leadership in the, the Bureau.

A SPEAKER: My (inaudible) real quickly.

And, I understand the multi-functions of the multiple agencies you mentioned.

One of the things with that is a unified policy, rather than unifying all the Agencies.

Look at the Policies that are in place.

What's the concept of that? And, have a unified Policy for all Agencies to follow.

I mean, there's so many things. This will be written up in that book.

I just have so many questions. But, I know there's a lot of folks here that, that have also a lot, many questions. Thank you.

A SPEAKER: I think that's a good job.

(Inaudible).
And, so, one of the concepts is that if you have a better leadership in the Region, if you have a unified Region, you can have unified Policies to the extent that, you know, if they facilitate the decision experience you may have in that Region.

But, also, (inaudible) the flexibility for, you know, that Region. Obviously, different Regions, different, Tribes in different Regions have kind of a different way of doing things.

You know, some of the other Bureaus, they have, you know, regional differences around the Country as well. So, this allows us to have a little bit of flexibility to meet the unique needs of that Region.

But, we can have better expectation of, of common Policies, and that's, at the end of the day, you know, these are the Policies that, you know, we would institute for Tribes. These are Policies about, "What is, what is the environmental review needed for this decision?"

(Inaudible.) And, so, instead of us having the Policy about what we did for
environmental reviewing this decision, but BLM having a different one (inaudible).

So, what that means ultimately, that you will have less decisions that have to be elevated to the Federal Office, the State, or the Region. So, we'll work for facilitation for that in many of those decisions.

I want to make sure -- You also raise a familiar point. I want to try to make it perfectly clear, the Secretary's commitment that, you know, we're not restructuring the Bureau.

We're not pulling resources out, either at the 8 level or further up. His intention is to push resources further down.

And, so, first, first, our employees that, that work with you in the Agency offices, nobody's trying to shut down an Agency office. Nobody's trying to move you out.

Let them know the Secretary's commitment to you. And, so, that also -- And, a second point.

But, also, though, brings me to, though, the, the Secretary's commitment has been, from Day 1, that as far as the Tribe's role in this, it's
your decision. And, at the end of the day, and, I hope to, through this consultation, get this information out, have the initial discussion with you, and then have another round after you've been able to chew this.

But, at the end of the day, you know, if Indian Country says, "We want no part of this. We don't want the BIA, who provides all these services to us, et cetera, to be a part of this," then the Secretary says, "I'm not going to force you to, to do that. You can do it."

You can make that decision. There are some Regions of the country that, that do want to have a unified Region with the other Bureaus, okay?

And, we'll try to facilitate that as best way we can with other, with other Regions that don't want to do that. So, that's what we've got to try to work through.

But, I will say, if Indian Country doesn't want to be part of this, or even if, if most of Indian Country doesn't want to be a part of this, you're allowed to do that. And, you'll have to figure out, you know, how Bureau of Indian
Affairs is going to interact with these few (inaudible), and that will just be, you know, all these people will come to you and get your input, and that will be part of that (inaudible) at the end of the day if that decision is made not to.

MR. KILLSBUCK: That's (inaudible) the trade, right there. That should have been done. Maybe we'll get there.

A SPEAKER: And, I think I want to correct the following: The Uniform Policy yet is an alternative to restructuring, not, you know, if they restructure, there will be a Policy with uniform anyway.

We were saying there could be a Policy that requires, you know, that uniform process to go through with approvals of authorities. So, --.

THE MODERATOR: It's sort of underway now. We have to think to try to get things like wildlife biologicals, biological issues, environmental issues done.

You know, the Deputy Secretary has issued some Directives to the Regions in the various Bureaus, but -- It's better without the
MR. STAFNE: You know, no disrespect, but maybe we should limit the, the responses to you so we can get one representative from one Tribe can be on the Record and commentate (inaudible). So, with that, I, I, I want to introduce myself.

My name is Grant Stafne. I am the representative for the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes.

I'm the Chairman of the Land Committee. So, maybe that might stand for something.

But, I do hear quite a bit of comments about who, who drew up this map. It's the scientists, correct?

Is that the same scientist from the Administration that said there's no such thing as global warming? But, what does that have to do?

But, you know, this is a consultation. And, my opinion with consultation is the Department of superior has already made up their mind.

They're telling us how it's going to be, and they just want to appease the, the, the Tribes and get some comments on Record.
That's all this is. They're possibly going to have to work with us (inaudible), but there is a glimmer of hope.

The Assistant Secretary was up at the our Reservation. You followed Secretary Zinke. And, there is a glimmer of hope by Secretary Zinke saying if the Tribes don't want this -- I forgot. I wrote the words down here. -- we won't do it.

He gave us a glimmer of hope. I'm not sure if he stands by that, but he did.

It's hope for me. Let's see here. He, he stated that it, it, it's a long ways to come to this meeting. You, you stated that before this started.

And, you know, there's one Regional Office now over in Canada, according to these maps. That means how far are you guys going to be driving for each visit, you know, there?

You know, that's a long ways there.

I'll drive 300 miles if I come to see the Regional Director.

But, you know, but I'm going to say it
really is based on financial. You're, you're
trying to save money.

To me, the way to save money is, is just
the Office of Special Trustee of American Indians
that has a budget higher than the BIA. The BIA
does all the work for our tribes.

I'm sure a lot of it you guys
(inaudible) and all you need is, you know, for the
-- I did work for the BIA years ago, and, you know,
now I'm with Tribal Council. And, you know, I do
feel like I feel a little bit better.

I continue on my own better, you know,
rather than being a bureaucrat. You know.

I, I can generally state my mind. Oh, I
see they had a sunset clause.

They had one since 1997, '98. I think
it's time to put up that sunset clause.

Their budget, like I stated here
earlier, their budget is higher than the Bureau of
Indian Affairs. You know, I've been to the office
in Albuquerque where there's 500 employees, and
they're all SDS employees, which is higher than the
GS- 15.
And, they're employees, FCS employees compared to GS employees. And, (inaudible).

You want to save money, there's your, there's your program right there. I don't want (inaudible) go to them, you know, (inaudible) go into the Bureau.

When I worked there there was one
individual that took care of all IM accounts. And, now you have, you know, the GS, the highly paid federal employee on the Reservation assuming the same thing.

(Inaudible) than that. Other than that, I want to thank you for listening to me, and I want to go on the Record that Fort Peck is against this.

A SPEAKER: Good morning again. I agree with a lot of the comments already mentioned.

It's good to hear actually a, somewhat of a Plan coming forward in a consultation. You know, we've come before, and basically there was no information on the Government's side.

And, the Tribes could complain all they want, and say, "We don't like it," but at least there's something in writing, which, which I
appreciate that. And, also, looking at what you have, I guess, or as Chairman Not Afraid talked about the Executive Order to establish a lot of the guidelines (inaudible).

It looks like there was a lot of discussion over the past year that I think a lot of Tribes (inaudible) this Plan, including a lot of things, you know, that had been coming up in the national papers you read in Indian Country and all these places.

But, one of the things that you don't, you don't, as the Administration, as well as the Interior aren't dealing with, is the discussion of moving BIA top two people that were there. And, and, it's mentioned where there was a lot of knowledge and insight to how to work.

So, you guys, you're having this, this discussion with people who haven't really technically been with the Tribes. They're people that have been reassigned.

Actually, they were -- You know, that was such a -- Because, one of the examples here, you look in the Rocky Mountain Region, you look at
the Title Plan. It's here, right here in Billings.

So, we talked about a reorganization.

You know, where is that going to go?

I mean, there's a statement that there's

a hard thing being discussed because the, the key

thing I see in this is you, you go talking about

your presentation. Oh, there's going to be this

budget.

There's going to be a budget. There's

going to be -- You know, we're, we're not going to

do this and we're not going to cut that.

But, one of the things that you hear

nationally, again, as, as you mentioned over and

over, I mean, was the cuts. Well, it's not going
to affect Indian Country.

But, what I see is people (inaudible).

Oh, we're going to have savings.

Well, really, people suffer. And,

Indian Country has already faced that.

And, as you look at the discussion with

the military, what (inaudible) increase (inaudible)

Tribe.

You've got the Border discussion. Same
thing.

So, when, when we talk about this consultation and how we're looking at it, your question I haven't heard yet, is, okay, we can have this, but what is the impact to Tribes? And, if you're talking about service, that's obviously going to have an impact.

And you've already talked about how this tight budget is already going to happen for the, for the Governor. Well, you know, I was looking around at a few things that Zinke was saying.

We have a lot of energy. But, if you look at (inaudible), because we haven't had a visit from the Secretary, himself, either.

You know, we're, we're one of the few large land-based tribes with 2.2 million acres in Wyoming. You know, we have two Tribes.

We've, we've never heard any of this discussion; only a briefing of what he said would happen. But, we look at the comments here about why did we have this organization?

And, I would agree. You know, it's going to happen, because you look at, you know,
what, what he's stated, you know, and he's already referred to what President Trump has already said about, you know, doing away with all of this, this overspending and the issues, you know, in the government.

And, you know, he talked about this as a military approach for him. And, again, you know, it's like history repeating itself.

You know, Tribes remember this, what happened to them. You know, this, this is a military action that he has stated not once, not twice, but almost in every speech that he talks about.

That's my concern when I look at this. And, again, as, as the Tribes, you know, we will know some things the people cut.

So, the thing is, you look at the Rocky Mountain Region, you look at the Great Plains, my question that comes across is: Why are, why are these two regions put together?

You, you know. I mean, that's one of my biggest questions.

Why? Why would there be a savings?
Because, you know, let's be honest about this. You know, to the Tribes that are here, that's what's equal.

You know. And, that's my concern as we talked about this, because I know for the Eastern Shoshoni Tribe, I know that we don't support this because (inaudible).

You know, we're kind of the step-child here because what we get today is a, is a plan that now, you know, the Tribes in Wyoming are going to be part of this Colorado Basin. I mean, and this, this is what I've seen now.

I've seen -- Last month we've seen two maps. I was told that the one had to do with the national forest.

I'd agree this is going to happen, but I think I do want to challenge in saying the Tribes are against this. You know, the Tribes really have to speak.

But, again, the one thing that I'm concerned about for Tribes to remember is that we're also have to represent yourself. And, and, you know, we act as parent, and you're telling us,
"Oh, I'm going to take care of you."

But, this is going to be another one of the examples that I really hope doesn't happen, but I think is, is a possibility, because we are still part of the Government. And, that's one of the two things that nobody's discussing.

But, you know, I've held out that we'll have written comment, but I just wanted to make those comments, you know, just looking at where we're at, because I, I would be willing to keeping things is same, because if they had to look at the reorganization of the Bureau, I would agree.

I would agree with the Bureau. But, there has to be some big internal fixes, because we still deal with, you know, issues that, whether it's oil and gas leases or -- I've, I've, I deal with that stuff.

And, oil rigs -- You know, we've already had to live through that. You know, we've already had it here.

You know, we've accrued something.

That's, you know, internally with the Bureau; yes, but not regional.
And, to me, that, you know, when, when we look at any organization that's reorganized, what's going to happen? It costs you to reorganize.

If there was somebody here in Billings that wanted to move these offices to another downtown building, (inaudible), well, where's that money coming from? Oh, it's going to be the savings.

That's what it's going to be. I mean, -- And, you just have to be honest with, you know, because I'd like to see as we move forward with this, it's actually the budget you're talking about.

The money you're talking about is written down and saying, "This is how this is going to work."

Because you can sit up there and, and say, "Oh, yeah. You know, we've discussed this for almost a week," because you look at the internal overhead of the Bureau right now, and all the Regional Directors out here, or sitting in Washington, D.C., and acting, you know, (inaudible)
our Regional Director that was here (inaudible) he
told me last month (inaudible).

Look at what are the Regional Directors.
You know what that means.

Well, they all want to act like business
managers. Well, if you look at the Regional
Directors, half of them are all Acting, you know.

And, that's another key for Tribes to
remember if something's moving forward. Because,
after these Regional Directors, what happened in
one of the, the things that I'm advocating,
especially for the large land-based Tribes, because
you have Navajo, who's going to be cut in half.

You know, (inaudible) is a competition.
(Inaudible) some of the people (inaudible) are just
fighting over this small piece. You know, we are.

And, and, yet, the economy gets bigger.

You know, I've never heard a (inaudible) saying,
"Oh, well, you know, there's (inaudible)."

That's not true. You know, it seems to
be get smaller and smaller.

But, even in this plan and, and even
with the Interior Zinke's talking about, you know,
it's not going to make it easier for a lot of
Tribes, especially smaller Tribes who don't have
more resources.

And, so, I, I would have, as you move
forward with this presentation, you guys
(inaudible) that. Show us the Budget.

Show us how these impacts are going to
happen. And, I, I'm interested in that.

So, I guess with that I'll, you know,
I'll, I'll, I'll pass the mic on. But, I would
hope that, you know, (inaudible) not just in Indian
Country, but this whole national budget would look
like, especially in a reorganization, because I, I
would tend to figure with people moving from east
to Albuquerque right now, that costs a pretty
penny, you know.

And, I -- And, I would hope that you
guys would be able to show what that would cost.
So, you know, with that I know we will have written
comments, but I just wanted to say a few words.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Charlie. And
I think, you know, you have really good point.
The -- If -- The point about our own internal organization, or if you want to call it, you know, I, I think of it more as, as trying to improve our organizational excellence, right? And, so, that's sort of the ongoing effort.

I guess somebody would think that the Bureau's doing a (sic) A-plus job. So, obviously there's room for improvement.

So, we do have here -- Obviously we do have -- A lot of things are happening, you know. So, we have a proposal through OST back under (inaudible), and to be a (sic) appropriate step towards funding the federal Trustee.

There's a lot of Tribes that don't want that to happen, so -- But, at least an additional step is to, is to bring it back out, immediate Office of Secretary into, into the Assistant Secretary's Office.

And, so, there's some structural things like that that are underway. A lot of those require, like OST, requires congressional action to effectuate that.

And, and, right now Congress isn't doing
a whole lot. So, that's a -- And, then we have to, you know, try to figure out how to work with it.

And, staffing is a, -- I'd have to say this. -- is, is, is a cause for concern.

It should be -- It's a cause of concern to me. It should be a cause of concern to you.

And, we have -- So, we don't have enough staff now, and a large part of that is we struggled to, we struggled to find the folks who qualified for the positions that we have open. So, -- And, we -- And, and, it's only getting worse.

Across the Department, the Interior's workforce, in five years, 40 percent of them are going to be eligible for retirement. That's a, that's just a fact we have to deal with.

It's pretty much the same with us at anyplace. And, at BIA, Forty percent of our employees will be eligible for retirement.

That's a huge brain drain. And, what that means is, that's a huge brain drain because those are senior people that are retiring because they've been there and made careers out of it, and now they're leaving.
We're losing all that staff. So, now we're losing all that built-in knowledge.

I would say honestly that we have not done, the organization has not done a good job of preparing our next level, our next generation of leadership. We don't have the level of sort of mid-level leadership who should be ready to step up.

I think we haven't done a good job of that over the years, training, is my observation. So, that, you know, that's an issue we have to deal with.

What that means, too, in the short term is, you know, sometimes we scramble. We do have to put, you know, Acting Directors in place because we have people who technically we have told put into positions that they can't stay at because they don't qualify for the (inaudible).

They have the skills and the, the ability to do the job, but they don't have -- You know, We have a lot of workplace rules that apply. So, we also have to work through that.

So, that's, that's a, a, that's a
long-term challenge that we face. And, we, we're starting to look at that.

We're starting to try to get back to -- Years ago, the Department, and the BIA in particular, had a large internal training program, so, also to help our staff get training in the e-book leadership, as well as, you know, position training, et cetera.

So, we're, we're trying to -- We're coming back to that, as well, so we can start developing our, our own workforce in turn, as well. I've been trying to do that.

I've beamed around the country trying to, you know, trying to develop people. BIA could be a good career, especially to young people coming out, you know.

Think about that. Thirty years ago the BIA had about 15,000 employees.

We're below seven-- now. But, a good chunk -- There's (inaudible) around the country.

What it means, sort of generally speaking, is the Tribes took a lot of those people for a lot of those jobs. We have self-governance.
We have self-determination. I tried to pull a lot of (inaudible) 30 years ago. They pulled them in (inaudible), which is what's supposed to happen.

I mean, we're supposed to be supporting the Tribes. So, that has, that has moved a lot of our workforce into tribal land, tribal government, and we have -- But, we still have the same functions that we had to do, you know, the same (inaudible) functions, you know, that we have to have, ultimately, signed off by a Bureau employee.

And, we have not done, one, we have not done a good job of preparing and, and recruiting people for that. And, two, we haven't done, we actually haven't (inaudible), we haven't done a great job of making sure, as we're doing 63(d) or self-governance Compacts with Tribes, that we are training enough staff behind to hopefully do the (inaudible) that we had before.

What that means for you is, even though you've contracted or you've contacted the function or a service or whatever, if it has, we have to sign off by, you know, the Regional Office, if
there's not somebody there whose job it is to do
that, then, then it takes longer to get that final.

That slows down decision-making on our
part, as well. So, I don't know.

And, that's a good question about the
budget, and I hope we have more information on that
in the future. And, it really (inaudible)
consultation.

It's supposed to be, or tends to be sort
of our initial, you know, discussion about this.
It's always a fine line for us, as you know,
because I don't want to waste your time coming to
you with some ideals that are nothing to talk about
and waste your time.

And, I don't want to come when you're
saying, "Oh, you might want (inaudible)." You
know, try to find this middle ground.

I mean, try to have information to start
a conversation, get your input, and then we can
have additional conversations after that to flesh
it out more, see how that works.

That's kind of where we are now. I hope
to actually have more information, you know.
(Inaudible) you know, level budgets, (inaudible) budgets.

So, I don't know how all that -- I'll try to find a way to get more information in the future (inaudible) because, hopefully, at some point, you know, we realize that, how that impression it gives (inaudible) our Budgets appear in the Federal Government, and in, in the -- Our Budgets appear in the Department (inaudible) the Tribe. So, we (inaudible) these are all part of the discussion we had.

If, if the Region, or, or just more Tribes want to, want to, you know, put a (inaudible) Region want to participate in a intertribe region, we'll have to work through how to make sure that, that the Tribe understands how hard (inaudible) budget as well (inaudible).

So, that's a future discussion. If you have -- I just have to get over this first question.

Really, it's, it's a tribal issue to, you know, you want to have the, the Bureau essentially has (inaudible) in your organization.
So, appreciate that.

And, then, (inaudible) I just won't (inaudible) first part on it. (Inaudible) just have to figure out (inaudible) how interactive (inaudible).

But, we'll just have to figure out how to interact with the resident partners.

A SPEAKER: Good morning, sir. I'm not going to take up too much time.

I had wanted (Inaudible.) My question is on each and every (inaudible) August fifteenth, one is more procedural.

I know that, that, that this is just the first round of consultation, and I've been here when Tribes, there's been a lot more competition in other areas, so (inaudible) in Alaska, and we've heard of (inaudible) as well. (Inaudible.) Drop dead?

THE MODERATOR: No. No.

And, really, we want to think about this as more for us in terms of, so we can, we can sort of, you know, after we thought about the competition, that we will collect and start
processing those internally, you know, for us.

And, (inaudible) available for us to, to have a, review the comments, you know, what responses we have that are in, and start that process instead of waiting until, like, the summer.

All right? So, (inaudible.) That's what happens (inaudible). And, I would think, you know, somebody's going to (inaudible.)

And, so, those are still taken into consideration. So, but, forwarding, yeah, we would have a, a new date, layout, figure out competitions.

MS. KINGMAN: Yeah, Gay Kingman, Executive Director of Great Plains Tribal Chairman Association; member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

I wanted to, like to thank Mr. Medicine Bull for helping us with performing the prayer and saying the (inaudible). I'd also like to thank Secretary Zinke for coming out and meeting with (inaudible).

And, the thing that we always have to start with is if we hold our Treaties and recognize
our Indian sovereignty. This is our right to self-government, (inaudible), and actually our water, our people, and our government.

(Inaudible) Great Plains, all 16 Tribes are Treaty Tribes, and we stand on our Treaties. And, all, all 16 Tribes, now, (inaudible).

So, I not only look at 720 Tribes across the Nation. Many are small and many are, do not operate (inaudible) like ours do.

Ours have (inaudible), and so in a lot of ways we're different. It's not like (inaudible) but (inaudible).

And, we know that the Secretary drafted those because he said that without (inaudible) we must, must happen. When you look at our Tribes in the Great Plains in the Rocky Mountains, Genesey (phonetic), here, made sure when he spoke with Secretary Zinke, that there must be tribal input in whatever happens.

(Inaudible) very simple to our conversation with what happens. The tribal leaders must be constantly involved in what's going to happen because it's going to affect us on the
ground up here.

And, we did see what Secretary Zinke had
to say as to (inaudible) that he, he (inaudible).
And, that's what he feels that the tribal, the
Tribes are in that line.

And, we do want the voice and the power
and the authority at the front lines on our tribal
level. That said, though, we have (inaudible).

We have not taken official action
collectively with 16, all 16 Tribes. In the
initial meetings, they're not happy with the
gerographical maps.

There's two things we're looking at.
One is the geographical map. And, then, what to do
with the Bureau, the Bureau of Education and the
Office of Tribal Justice, which are the two key
bureaus that we deal with.

And, we don't want them involved
(inaudible), but we will make oral comment. And
Genessy also states that we don't want to
(inaudible), but we will be giving you opposition
plans, actually feedback, tribal feedback.

That would be for our future. I also
want to correct the Record from the Michigan hearing.

I'm just getting the question to you, Dr. Sheila, that: Is there any Tribe that is supporting this?

And, Chairman (inaudible) is supporting this. And, I move to correct that record because there was no such statement made, and that, that, that's not (inaudible) the statement made.

So, please correct the Record on that.

That is not true. And --

A SPEAKER: I'm sorry, (inaudible). Did I say that?

I think what I was thinking is it seems likes he was receptive to having a discussion about that. So, if I did say he actually supported it, that, you're right.

That is inaccurate and I shouldn't have said that.

MS. KINGMAN: It is inaccurate.

A SPEAKER: All right. So, if I did say that, we can make sure --

MS. KINGMAN: Okay. (Inaudible.) So, I
I want the Record corrected on that.

A SPEAKER: I'm sorry, could you please let Jennifer know? Because, that was not my intention to, to --

MS. KINGMAN: You know why we wanted to get it on your record. All right.

Well, those are the initial comments, and we will be submitting official comments for the Record. Thank you.

A SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you.

And, thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, for the reading, as well. Maybe what -- I think I was intending to be honest on Tuesday.

I was a little fuzzy. I had about three and a-half hours' sleep that night trying to get there the night before.

But, I did appreciate that, that (inaudible) Frazier and the other leaders there, you know, at least that, you know, something to think about, right? And, instead of just saying, "Well, this is nothing we even want to think about or talk about."

So, it was codified. What I was trying
to get at, really, is it seemed like there was a 
reception to having a discussion about this.

A SPEAKER: (Inaudible) we want to,
people to resolve your political (inaudible) and then (inaudible) with another. And, then the power of the earth, a separate ecostation in which the laws of nature and nature's favor entitles that.

The respect of mankind acquired the nation declared because they tell them the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

That to secure these rights, Governments are constituted among men, deriving their (inaudible) from the consent of the governed, and whatever they (inaudible).

But, these things, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to make a new government, laying its foundation on principle, and (inaudible) and to them shall be no (inaudible) to protect their safety and happiness.
(Inaudible) to dictate that,

(inaudible), establish shall not be paid with life and (inaudible). And, according to the (inaudible) so that mankind, our Lord is supposed to suffer.

Our evils are sufferable, and the right (inaudible) by abolishing the things to which they are accustomed. But, when they go (inaudible) of our, our, our ownership.

That way we can have economic development. It can be a nation within the United States.

In a nation older than the United States, to begin with, only, you know, given up quite a few acres of land. Also, the people made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our way of life.

So, when you come out and tell us, you know, you're going to do this, you're going to do that, let's do it, how we going to do it when we first met. That way we can hold you responsible.

That's the same thing that happened to Custer, whereby he smoked the pipe with the Cheyenne Tribe. So, from that day forward, he smoked that pipe with them, and that Harold keeper
that smoked with them, put the ashes on the hill to
the sign of peace.

If you ever raise another weapon, you
can end up like that. That was on his own hill.

So, you will have to abide by his rules
or by God he should abide by our rules. We're
human made by the Creator, and that's how we do
things.

We do things with the pipe, and that's
their problem. But, I think that they need to get
real here.

You have asked for consultation. Now, I
can't hardly hear you or see you, but it's the same
thing as your ancestors.

But, your ancestors, still everybody's
hurt. And, some of you was, are long-winded, but
we have to tell what we feel because this might be
the only chance.

So, if we want to be overtaken, you'll
have to think about what I said. You thought of to
put an end on the ownership of our land, so we can
decide what to do or tell these other Nations.

Highly regulated, but watched by
everybody. Almost everybody.

It almost, you know, those days are over. We're not your enemy.

All we're Native American. We have to go to war and protect the United States of America.

Where do you get that recognition? Back in the day they were sent to school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

They become farmers, businessmen, and have a successful life. And, then BIA got (inaudible) because they're making too much money.

Well, that was the intent. But, what is their intent now?

So, there's a lot of questions that need to be answered before there's any kind of more regulation. I think I have a Constitution here that will eliminate all this that we have to jump through.

So, we either move forward or we just going to continue to, you know, be under BIA rule?

The traditionalists want to reorganize this.

That don't work. They realize that.

I think it took Trump to realize that.
So, maybe Trump would like to meet a Tribe face-to-face instead of sending somebody to change what we say back when he goes back to Washington.

That always happens. The Government always, they don't care what is said here.

And, I want to probably say how much on the other people. I want to say something.

I want to talk.

A SPEAKER: Thank you, sir.

So, it's 11:15, so you'll feel pressure to follow on and talk from our Elders here and have a few-minutes' break, take a bathroom break, coffee break, and be back in, like, ten minutes. You do that? Thank you.

(Whereupon, at 11:18 a.m. MT, those present took a brief recess and returned at 11:35 a.m. MT, after which the following occurred:)

A SPEAKER: Okay, I'm ready to start again if you guys are. Are there still people out in the hallway, or -- ?

Okay. So, we're a little over halfway through our allotted time, and what I want to make sure is that every Tribe that's represented here
gets a chance to, to get their comments on the
Record.

So, if we could make sure we have, like,
every Chairman, or if you're the Designated
Representative of your tribe, make sure that you
get a chance to, to speak before we open it up to
more broadly, I'd appreciate that.

MS. PITKA: Good morning. I am Rhonda
Pitka, Chief of Beaver Village Council and Chair of
the Athabaskan Tribal Governments.

The Athabaskan Tribal Governments is a
consortium of ten Tribes of the Yukon Plateau,
Alaska. Much of our traditional territory is now
federal land.

We have, we have National Park Service
land and a huge amount of territory in the National
Wildlife Refuges, (inaudible) national wildlife
refuges (inaudible) National Wildlife Refuge.

So, our interest in this is that we're,
we're heavily impacted by federal land in Alaska.
And, you know, we, we also would like to ask for
more tribal consultations.

In Alaska, the only consultation that we
see is going to be in Juneau, and, unfortunately for me, (inaudible) we'll be getting married, so I can't make it to that one, so I did fly to Billings.

Juneau is, is far away for a lot of the Tribes in Alaska. Even having the consultation in Fairbanks would be better and more (inaudible) those Tribes.

And, actually, really concerned because you said something earlier that -- You said something that consultations are being held in places where the reorganization will happen. So, if, if Juneau is one of those place where the reorganization will happen, then I have a big problem with that just because of how difficult it is for our Tribes to get there.

We (inaudible) to take into consideration about mineral land in Alaska and the Native challenges faced by the people and the Tribes in Alaska. Again, I told you, you know, we need to stay well within Park Services, Refuge land, and those, those, those unique challenges faced by people living within, you know, Refuges or
Park Services definitely needs to be taken into account.

(Inaudible) changes that increase efficiency and streamline processes, but we're just concerned that, that we (inaudible) actually do that. We, we really need a lot more information about the pilot project in Alaska.

What you said was that you would be adding an office, so we're not exactly sure how that would streamline, you know, streamline processes or, or cut money if you're going to be adding something. And, I, I -- It's, it's kind of concerning to see how, how that would work within all the conditions that already exist in Alaska, like, you know, the Office of Assistant Management.

And, there's a lot of though things already because of the different, you know, the Bureau of Land Management in the State of Alaska, that office may be affected, but it's already done a lot of the things that are with this, so it's kind of confusing.

You know, the Council for Alaska Tribal Governments has several angles (inaudible) with
BIA, (inaudible) from requiring tribal agreements of coordination and planning with staff. So, these, these agreements need to be honored, whatever reorganization happens.

Beyond BIA Agreements, there's only a few in the Nation, and (inaudible) two of them. We have Agreement with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and an agreement with the BLM.

And, at least the BLM Agreement is, is in jeopardy right now. You know, they, they are.

You know, they, they are, they're discretionary Agreements with the Agencies. So, when an Agency has change, then sometimes their priorities shift and, and the Tribes lose out.

So, I think any, any type of reorganization must take those Agreements into consideration, and put into place things that protect those Agreements. There needs to be clear lines of authority among the non-BIA Agencies involved with BIA.

The non-BIA Agencies need to have accountability, and so they meet their responsibilities to the Tribes. A lot of the
Agencies don't, don't really have very good consultation or coordination with the Tribes.

The coalition of our natural resources needs to be increased in Alaska. We do have several comanagement Agreements, and I'm, I'm actually concerned that some of those would go away, you know, under these types of reorganization plans.

So, I think that's mostly -- We just want to ensure that the BIA upholds the responsibility to our, to our Tribes, and we're not sure how that, how that would happen. But, that definitely needs to happen.

The non-BIA, the non-BIA Agencies and Bureaus, they, they definitely need to be more accountable to Tribes. I really appreciate you taking the time to, to come here and visit our (inaudible), but I've been at consultations recently, and at public meetings, where it's basically just a check-off, like the scoping, scoping commentary for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge leasing, leasing plan.

Like, it just felt like, to a lot of the
people in the room, that the government Agencies in
there were basically (inaudible), and not really
listening to the people, and not really engaging
with the public like they should have been.

Even, even as a Tribe working through
that system, it took us eight years with the, the
BLM Environmental Impact Statement for Interior. I
mean, that's just, that's one plan.

So, -- And, the point that concerns me
when you try to, you know, make, make this process
a streamlined or something, because there's so many
things to take into account. So, so, those
processes alone are, are pretty concerning.

If, in fact, they will be more
efficient, and they will be more streamlined, that
will be useful to people in Alaska, especially.
You know, we live off the land still.

We still have traditional fishing.

(Inaudible.)

We, we're sort of the last fishing, the
only wild fishing in the whole world right now.
And, and even those resources are under attack
continuously.
Right now we're facing, you know, (inaudible) in salmon and (inaudible) the Porcupine caribou herd. Those, those two things are resources that our, our people depend on quite heavily.

I've heard about economic development in a lot of different arenas, but we don't talk about our own economy very much, you know, the crash of our own economy; the crash of our subsistence economy; that, that the way that we get food, and our security is at risk right now.

And, I think that sometimes we need to really look at those effects and the effects that it will cost not only monetarily, but to culture and to the spirit of the land. So, I really appreciate you listening to me, and (inaudible), thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

MR. (Illegible): All right. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Assistant Secretary.

And, once again, welcome. I have a brief statement here that I want to share with you.

And, my name is Len Tjuji (phonetic). I
am the, a member of the Tribal Council of the
Salish Kootnai Tribe.

We're located in the center of western
Montana on our 1.3-million-acre Reservation. And,
so, once again, thank you.

Now, (inaudible) we have viewed the
documents on the BIA web site concerning the
Department reorganization efforts. We believe the
overriding goal of any reorganization should be to
improve the Trust responsibility and services
provided to Indian Tribes.

To the greatest extent possible, we feel
the makeup of Tribes in any region should be a
Tribe that shares similar values and
characteristics. Currently the (inaudible) in the
BIA Northwest Region we have similar Treaties and
Treaty language like other Tribes in the region.

In addition, many Tribes within
Northwest Region are self-governance Tribes, and
not Directorate Tribes. We would like the
Department to take these things into consideration,
as well as how to have knowledgeable staff and
leadership at the regional level that are familiar
with the priorities of the Tribes that they work
with.

Throughout the year we have built relationships with other Agencies within the Department such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service.

We are hopeful that any reorganization will not disrupt, but, instead, improve upon the years of relation, relationship-building and trust that the Tribes have with these Agencies. It would be very helpful if the reorganization improved the Department's capabilities to make it more efficient and providing services to the Tribes.

And, once again, I'd like to thank the Department and the representatives for the Department here today for giving me this opportunity to present our thoughts about the reorganization efforts and pertaining to Indian Affair research.

The Salish Kootnai Tribe respectfully requests the Department keep Tribes like us informed as the process moves forward. And, once
again, thank you.

And, for the purposes of moving this meeting forward, I'll provide a written response.

So, once again, thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Tutju (phonetic).

MS. SNYDER: I'm going to make a quick comment, although Kevin (Inaudible) has already spoken on behalf of the Eastern Shoshoni Tribe.

But, I would like for you to deliver a message to Secretary Zinke that he needs to come and visit the Tribe.

THE MODERATOR: Would you give your name for the Record?

MS. SNYDER: Oh, I'm sorry. It's Karen Snyder, and I'm an official for the Shoshoni Tribe. I would just really like (inaudible) to come and visit us.

On behalf of the Northern Arapaho Tribe, they are here, but I'd like him to come and visits us as one of the land-based Tribes. Just a broad statement.

I think the restructuring is, lacks
logic. It's just another administrative layer that we're going to go through, and, I mean, the (inaudible) primary factors are based on recreation, conservation, and permitting.

I would like to say it might make perfect sense to organize those other Agencies, Bureaus. But, don't but the BIA in the mix.

It's, like, how dare you.

(Whereupon, at 11:48 a.m. MT, the automated telecon operator interrupted the proceedings, after which the following occurred:)

MS. SNYDER: So, (inaudible). So, that's my broad comment, but we -- Again, I feel I'd very much appreciate if you would deliver that to Mr. Zinke that we would like to have a consultation. Thank you.

A SPEAKER: Yeah, the next tribal leader at this time. I'll speak later.

THE MODERATOR: All right.

(Inaudible.)

A SPEAKER: I'll, I'll (inaudible) as well.

A SPEAKER: You want me to say some
A SPEAKER: I don't think you want to hear from me.

MR. BEAR RUNNER: Good morning again.

I'm Ramon Bear Runner.

I'm Official Assistant to the Oglala Sioux Tribe President. I'm proud to be here.

I'm not really a tribal leader, but I've worked with the Sioux Tribe of South Dakota for 27 years. And, the reason for this consultation meeting is that, as we said earlier, is preparing our Tribe (inaudible).

MR. CLIFF: Good morning. My name is Lynn Cliff, Junior, (inaudible) Representative, Fort Belknap Indian Community.

To me, this sounds just basically like dictatorship; that you guys are dictating to us. You know, I don't agree with it.

From my Council seat, I don't know what the rest my Council speaks, but one of the questions that I have is you talk about the written Plan hasn't been written yet. Who is going to be writing that Plan, and when is it going to be
written, is the question that I have.

Also, I wanted to talk about the scientific rationale, I guess you'd say, for these meetings. And, also, (inaudible).

Indeed, I only -- What I have got is, you know, we've got to protect the land. And, this is going to open up, make it easier for corporations to come in and don't have to (inaudible) and don't have to do this and that, because kind of feel bad for Alaska, too, what's going on up there.

You know, those are my concerns. I don't have a lot to say here.

There are other tribal leaders. I am here, but, you know, that's just one question that I have.

A SPEAKER: Couple minutes here, but good morning. First of all, thank you for coming out.

I'll try to be brief. I'd really like to listen.

It's -- There's a document, you know, I talked to you about, but just wanted to make it
clear for the Record that our Leaders' Council wasn't here, but we had a representative here on that yesterday afternoon. I think they just signed us off.

I just want to make it clear for the Record, John, that this document will have been submitted for the Record here today on behalf of the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council. The document, one of the things that I really want to clarify in there is that you mentioned in your opening comment is that the discussion about it, as we move forward, and there's going to be a cost savings.

That, you know, that money, you know, we move forward, we stay within a new region, as we move forward with plans in the Region, that that cost savings to stay in that area, or, you know, get back down to the field.

So, I just wanted to find out if there's a cost savings, that it stays in that area. The other thing, too, I was looking at the Executive Order, again, as has been discussed here, just mentioning again, that the, you know, obviously,
1. you know, (inaudible) the initial Executive Order
2. that the Tribes weren't clear on that they wanted
3. along the same lines as State or Local Governments.
4. The other thing, also, is using my
5. experience (inaudible) in the past, where's the
6. State Representative from OMB that comes to these
7. meetings? If that's something that you could talk
8. to the Secretary about, and possibly talk to the
9. President about, or talk to OMB about, I'd
10. appreciate that.

But, quick question. I know -- I think
Tiffany's been working on it, and this is for
anybody in the room, you guys, one question before
I finish. Has the President signed off on a, like,
his version of what he wants (inaudible) this
Executive Order 13175? Does anybody know that in
the room? Phil? (Inaudible.)

A PARTICIPANT: Are you talking the
consultation?

THE SPEAKER: Yeah.

A PARTICIPANT: He has not.

THE SPEAKER: Okay.

A PARTICIPANT: But, he has, has been
clear that it's still in full force and effect. We abide by it, so --

THE SPEAKER: Okay. Well, that's why we want the request on the Record here today, is that, you know, you talk to the, the Secretary and the Secretary talks (inaudible) the President (inaudible) that the Executive Order 13175 (inaudible) we have a discussion here today about meaningful consultation and making (inaudible).

But, that, I mean, I, I like the, the idea of, of watersheds. I like the idea of that. I definitely think that the BIA specifically needs to be the organizer, and regardless of who's in Congress and the Administration, Congress has been talking about that a long time.

But, we need to be cautious about that, also, and learn from the attempts that have been made in the (inaudible) past, and the consultations that is here today as far as getting caught up in the leadership path. So, -- And, I'm optimistic about the watershed.

One of the things that I'd like to say,
I guess, is looking at what's being proposed as far as the large land-based Tribes, is that if we don't follow through on this and continue to have consultation about it, that looking at the need and looking at the, you know, starting focus on pushing resource dollars, and that's going to be a priority, that you look at different factors, and especially in this area as far as large land-based Tribes are concerned.

And, the Region 6 being proposed is, is, it's going to be a big region if that's something that comes to fruition. You've got a lot of large land-based Tribes in there.

I want to advocate -- I know you talked about it a little, but (inaudible) presentation, (inaudible) I just want to make that clear, that I advocate for this office to stay open.

I (inaudible). There's good relationships here, and this is a real problem for our Tribes in this region.

So, I'd be advocating that this office stays open. We've talked about the three primary factors a little.
That's all based on, you know, what are they? They're recreation and, and --

A PARTICIPANT: Conservation.

THE SPEAKER: -- conservation, and (inaudible). So, just, just trying to reclarify all the things that -- And don't get caught up in that also.

(Inaudible) off of our Treaty. And, we, we have to be mindful of that, that we don't get caught up in that like we have been before in the past.

But, (inaudible). But we'll always be mindful of that.

And, you know, (inaudible) for all the Tribes. We're all different, so, I know you heard that today.

And, another thing, too, is, is we heard a lot about reorganizing and (inaudible) another loophole in the consultation, which I know (inaudible). Another factor that, you know, (inaudible) should be placed on is economic development, because (inaudible) the Tribes.

A third part of that reorganization
(inaudible) has some changes that could happen, (inaudible), and that's another part of it that we have to think about and (inaudible) you'll see.

But, we'll be submitting comments for the Record before the deadline, and we'll continue the discussion.

One of the things, real quick, I wanted to mention just on a side note, when I went out there in February, one of the things that the Secretary started talking about was to get a Trust consultation done. So, I'd like you to maybe consider that because, you know, at least try to schedule the Great Plains (inaudible).

So, it seems like, you know, I don't know what the schedule is, but plan that. It was skipped over.

So, if possible I'd like to see a Trust consultation here. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, President.

A SPEAKER: I (inaudible) our tribe in a appointed capacity, so at this time I yield to any elected officials. But, but, I'd like to make a comment when it's open to the Floor.
MR. SANGER: Good afternoon, John, and welcome back to Montana. I know we've met with Zinke, with the Secretary Zinke about a month and a-half ago, but, you know, it's, it's good to see these other Departments within DOI be reorganized. This is a good effort to reorganize the BIA. And, consultation process on the last, the last try wasn't, didn't pan out.

So, any representatives from Interior, they met in a number of different cities, and I was invited to speak with these. And, that got eight points of consultation throughout the Country, but the intent of it was BIA did what they wanted to in the first place.

They never took the consultation that seriously. None of the changes were made that the tribal leaders had recommended.

And, I hope this may not be the case under this reorganization. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Would you state your name for the Record, please?

MR. SANGER: I'm Richard Sanger.

A SPEAKER: Hello. I'm (Inaudible),
Council member of the (Inaudible) Tribe. I have been involved in Tribal Council, you know, very much involved in Tribe's, my tribe for many years.

One of the things that, that my concern would be about this change is the area that we're in, the Rocky Mountain area and also that's where a lot of large land-based Tribes are. And, there are a lot of issues, you know, within, within those areas.

To make it one area, or one region, I guess, for so many Tribes there, we, the Regional Director would have to be spread real thin, I guess, you know, to deal with all the issues the Tribes have there.

And, I don't see how, I don't think any more efficient (inaudible) living in that area. And, then, certainly, you know, (inaudible) the large land-based Tribes in that area and that you have to look at.

So, you just look at, you know, increasing, you know, the workforce out there, or the services, or -- And, just to make it a lot easier, I guess, for the Bureau to handle those
issues.

So, I just look at it that way, and, you know, that, asking, you know, how it would be, you know, cutting (inaudible) or banking reserves is a lot better for the Tribes.

I wanted to -- I wanted to ask, also, is right here it talks about, you know, the issues like simplify the process and make it an environmental (inaudible) simplify the process and make the offices more efficient.

You know, now our Tribe's spent a long time waiting for a lot of this, and, you know, so that's, again, there and again (inaudible). So, we're just interested about that, and (inaudible).

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

Are there other tribal leaders --

A SPEAKER: Yeah. Tribal leaders?

THE MODERATOR: -- who want to come up, or, or tribal representatives who you're representing a Tribe?

MR. FAST HORSE: Good morning, everybody. Steve Fast Horse, for the Record;
Northern Arapaho Tribe, (inaudible) Council member.

And, the Northern Arapaho Tribe mission, for right now, is to, again, be, we, we oppose the re-, reorganization brought to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. But, then, again, we're at the beginning of the process.

But, again, there's not a lot of information that we can get as far as how, how that's going to develop and be planned. And, so, again, until we actually get more information to, to see what that looks like, like, that, that is our mission.

I just want to echo Councilwoman Karen Snyder from the Eastern Shoshone Tribe comment which was that we would like to get a meeting with Zinke; have him come to the Wind River Reservation, because, again, we, we haven't been afforded the opportunity for that yet.

But, we would like to get face-to-face with him to, to look at this overall and be able to express our concerns moving forward. And, again, for the Northern Arapaho and the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, you know, we, we fit in a very unique
position here because we, we are two Tribes on one Reservation, which has always been a, a very big issue overall for, for the, for the two Tribes trying to get services from the BIA.

And, so, you know, we want to make sure that that is noted in, in, in our comments, because, again, we, we are a unique (inaudible) pertaining to a lot of the other sovereigns that are in this room.

And, so, you know, we want to make sure that there's opportunity for us to accept that. You know, again, that's, that's always been a historical fact and it's, again, a historical issue for both Tribes.

And, we want to make sure that before we are a part of this reorganization, that we actually are, are afforded a chance to correct some of those issues and find a, a better path forward as we move.

And, then, the second part would be, again we, we, we look at the, the overall strategy to implement such a, such a undertaking, because, again, as was mentioned earlier, we've met before
throughout the history, but, again, I think it's
prehistoric, because, again, it's pretty important
that it includes the whole Interior versus just the
BIA.

And, so, so, again, that could possibly
be a, a good thing, you know, because, again,
National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife, you know,
there's, for some, for some people that have been
missing as far as, as far as the Tribe, when it
pertains to some of the lands that are, that are
involved, that are under their care, you know.

And, again, ancestral ties to some of
those areas makes it very significant to a lot of
these Tribes within this room. And, I know there
was some times there where we, we mentioned bears
here.

Like, one of the issues here, the big
issue right now, and, again, in our area, the
Yellowstone National Park, the Shoshone National
Forest, we're talking about, again, those are some
of the, the area. But, again, the Tribes were not
consulted or even considered when some of those
things were put into place.
And, again, I think that this could have been a (inaudible) to again (inaudible). So, we, we've had a very good understanding that, you know, those are (inaudible), you know, to, to afford the Tribe the, the first offer on a lot of the decisions there.

And, again, we've had an overall good partnership with a lot of the, the Agencies as far as the BLM and, and Fish and Wildlife and, and, and so forth. And again, we, we, we feel that that's a good thing as far as being able to look at some of those things that could be updated that could possibly affect the Tribes and some of us in that.

But, for the (inaudible) of the reorganization of the, of the region, that one is a, is a big question mark for us because if we're comparing these to, again, some of these were Alaska, to the watershed, the Indian Reservation watershed runs north.

You know, it flows right into Montana.

So, again, I don't know what types of data you were using on that end, but, again, we, we'd like to see how that, how that has played out.
Again, most of us, like I said, we're for that watershed. So, we just need an opportunity to, to get a better consultation going, and, again, get more information to help us better understand what this process will look like going forward.

Thank you for your time.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Council.

MS. BOLLINGER: Okay. I love that new Arapaho guy.

Thank you. I'm Donna Thompson Bollinger, Shoshone Bannock Tribe.

I'd like to take a moment and thank all the other Tribes for their comments. I believe we all have the same concerns, but if, you know, you continue to speak of, you know, each individual Tribe, but in a Defense Budget Hearing that I have, you know, sort of documented, if you stay at 1.6 billion proposed budget cuts from Interior, and to remove 400 positions from the workforce.

So, we find it hard to believe the commitment to Tribes. And, as with our sister tribe, the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, I also would
like to extend an invitation for President Trump to
visit the Shoshone Bannock Tribe (inaudible) so
that we can express our concerns and our issues
with him.

But, for the Record, I want to identify
that we also oppose the reorganization, and believe
this will weaken the Federal Government’s Treaty
obligations to Indian Tribes and individuals,
specifically the Shoshoni Bannock Tribe.

(Inaudible) we rely on 93-638
contracting, and have received no assurances that
these funding and contracts would not be impacted.
The Proposal states that the ability for BIA
Directors and Managers would be efficient and
productive, saving federal dollars.

Unfortunately, this would be on the
backs of Tribes and individual Indians who would
have to constantly educate and reeducate high-level
Directors in the different and unique aspects of
Indian Tribes, as we are all different.

This proposal also elevates State and
Local Government input to even higher, higher
levels than before by including consideration of
their concerns to the proposal prior to tribal consortium, or, tribal consultation. This is unnecessary, and is inconsistent with federal Indian policy.

And, and, finally, the Federal Government, under the direction of Trump's Administration, should not experience, experiment with management of Indian Reservations, Indian Trust benefits, and with the judiciary responsibilities that they have to Indians and Tribes.

And, so, with that I will, we will be submitting a written comment, but these are just some of the points that we would like to make at this time, presentation. So, thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Counselor. Any other tribal representatives?

Tribal leaders?

(Whereupon, no response was had.)

THE MODERATOR: So, if not, I'll open it up to secondary comments. Is that right?

MS. RUSSELL: Thank you. I guess it's afternoon.
Good afternoon. I think that a lot of the comments that have, have been very, very big.

I'm Majel Russell, and I am here, and I am General Counsel for Fort Peck, and I also represent Intertribal Buffalo Council.

So, I think I can safely say that I've represented every Tribe here in the Rocky Mountain Region in some manner or another. I guess, as you know, I sit in your shoes ten years ago in this same area, and did the very same thing that you're doing, which is to come and present a vague reorganization Plan.

And, that Plan followed all the Plans that Mr. Sanger talked about. None of those Plans ever started with an identification of what the problems are in Indian Country, and how we might fix them.

In this Region, and in the Great Plains Region we're dealing with Trust lands transactions every day. And, that still is the key responsibility of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in these two Regions.

That's to protect the land, the
resources, the water, all of the natural minerals. And, that's a big job here.

That's why this is such a big building, with 470 employees here in the Great Plains. So, every time we talk about reorganization, we don't say, "What is wrong out there in Indian Country, and how do we fix it?"

Instead -- And, I've been part of those efforts. -- we have a Plan that someone thought up back in D.C., which, frankly, we have to admit has always been to save money.

And, then we take it out to Indian Country and we try to get support for that. So, I think, I think it's reality that we should, before we do any reorganization, look at:

What are those problems in Indian Country? And, if you ask today, "What are the problems of land management in Indian Country?" we don't have enough money to manage the land properly.

We're failing our Trust responsibility when it comes to lead compliance; when it comes to protecting natural resources. We just don't have
the kind of services that we should have.

So, I think that we need to start at the bottom up and look at what the problems are, and how do we improve them. So, looking at the Plan, I have some concerns about how it should be maybe to be increasing bureaucracy for BIA; maybe not for the other Agencies.

And, I understand, and I think -- I looked at the literature that you have about how the IRVs would basically be a problem-solver between agencies when agencies may have disputes in there. And, they have some examples.

And, I think that makes sense. And, and, we are dealing with some of those issue.

Right now the Fort Peck Tribe is involved with the Trans-Canada pipeline. And, we're involved with every Agency that has (inaudible) different (inaudible).

And, they have different authorities.

So, when you complain to one Agency, they tell you to run to another one; from ArctiCorp to DOR to BIA.

You know. So, so, there is some, there
is some logic maybe to looking at how we streamline those Agencies' commitments to Tribes.

But, on the other hand, for the Bureau, what I'm concerned about is all the Contracts that were entered into. Do we now have to go through another level of approval?

And, look how hard we fought to get Indian preference in this agency. You know, look how hard we fought to try to make sure that we have consultation on key positions in Indian Country.

Is that going to be maintained when we have a super-agency with IRD? And, are we going to have any chance at Indian preference?

You know, how will that position work with approval of contracts? Again, 638 Contract, is that another level?

So, I guess I could possibly go on and on, because I have seven pages of notes here. However, I won't do that.

I do think, though, that we need to identify what are the problems that need to be fixed before. And, and, I think we should have that feedback.
I think you should tell us exactly how this Plan would impact Indian Country, impact existing services, improve or change those services. I think that would be very helpful.

And, then, I did hear people talk about financial impact. I think we need something like a fiscal move.

We need to know, you know, what does that mean to, for the budget to Indian Country? Is it helpful?

Is it hurtful? We need to really understand where we're going with this.

I think that the August seventeenth date is coming up right around the corner, and you're expecting comment with very little detail. I think that this PowerPoint is pretty brief on detail in order for us to make knowledgeable comments.

And, the more information you provide, the better comments that, that we can make. So, that's it.

Thank you very much.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Majel.

Yes.
A SPEAKER: Thank you. I've just got a brief comment.

I'm Bill Snell, Executive Director, Rocky Mountain Trial Leaders. And, we know you have (inaudible) and have submitted some (inaudible) here for your consideration and, and review.

One of the things I think that -- And, I don't want to repeat everybody in regards to what was said, but we went over a number of questions yesterday, 50 to 60 questions. You probably seen it, of all the questions that were asked and answered.

The greatest answer to these questions was, "We don't know." And, so, I don't think that's adequate in regard to answering a question in regard to many of the things that are considered here today.

And, I just want to tell you that we heard from history. And, historically, you know, the way that the Bureau has treated Tribes really created a bureaucracy and a failed system.

Well, learning from that, I think we
need to move forward with a very comprehensive and strategic plan that you need to do in regard to possible reorganization or restructuring.

So, we've got reorganization issues that I don't know that will be wise. But, re-, restructuring the Bureau I think no one will argue that point.

So, strategically, from a strategic perspective, and, what you're presenting, we need to be able to respond to something that is comprehensive, that has been (inaudible) and analyzed so that we can move forward in a very formalized and effective and efficient way so that we can better our people in what we have to deal with what is done here today.

MR. STUART: I'm Douglas Stuart, Fort Belknap with my (inaudible) testimony (inaudible). I just have a couple brief comments, but out of respect for the many more-knowledgeable people in the room (inaudible).

You know, our history in the Fort Belknap (inaudible) began by leasing tracts of land from the Bureau (inaudible) the Bureau of Land
Management for another reason, Federal Government, all of those types of issues.

And, I'm respectful of the comments that they made regarding that, and the, the problems and challenges that have been associated with that, and especially, I guess I'm starting to (inaudible) today when I commented about it because it never really dawned on me until today.

I'm thinking, I'm listening, I knew all along the administrative part of the BIA has always been top down, but it doesn't really listen. I mean this in no disrespect, but you never really listen.

They're listening to a series of things dealing with operational efficiency. You're dealing with how to make it easier for Washington, D.C., to streamline decisions.

And, then, I wondered: How are we effectively economically making our Reser-, and enabling our organization become the financial powerhouse that we are truly independent?

And, then combined with (inaudible) I guess I've, I've, you know, if you were the CEO of
Indian Country and you get a corporate look at this, have you were ever going to buy the Bureau of Indian Affairs, we would look at all of the products.

We would look at the services. We would look at the multi-multi-million-dollar portfolio that's being managed. The Tribes here are wealthy; not cash-wise, but resource-wise.

And, it's (inaudible) a resource, I guess, but that's alright (inaudible). (Inaudible) but, if I would, if I were mining this, you'd be looking at, first of all:

How do you streamline it in such a way that you put all of that talent on these individual franchises, if you want to look at it that way, as a (inaudible)? And, how do these people create wealth, and, at a corporate level, streamline it such that they keep everybody out of the way and deregulate as much as possible?

And, people are going to make it on their own, or they're not. Now, there's a Trust responsibility, and we all understand it.

And, there's others in this room that
understand it much better than me. And, we all respect it.

But, within that concept I never used the word "paternalistic" in many years, but I'd respectfully suggest I just, that word kept coming to me today. So, I'm just possibly -- My background, my mother started with 120 acres up in Sheridan, Wyoming.

(Inaudible). Ended up with about 30,000 acres, a real testament to the Indian women never giving up.

And, of course, all the subsequent things that go along with that that chopped it down. But, dealing with the Administrations and the Bureau's ups and downs and all that.

But, out of respect for what's going on. But, my thought would be: I think we're quite capable.

There's lots of people in the room like me who have many (inaudible) professionally (inaudible), by the way. We should be designing our own Plan.

We're the customer of this wonderful
bureaucratic organization. We're the customer. We're, we're the ones being served. And, in fact, you're serving at the request of the Government through a Trust status. But, we're the ones that know what needs to be changed. I appreciate (inaudible) something, but I, I'd be willing to challenge some of this. There's nothing preventing that, from taking our own MBA approach to this, based on our historical experience, the elders in the room, and saying:

This is what we can do, and not them saying, "This is what we can do."

And, my closing thought is (inaudible) as the CEO I would take the whole thing as lock, stock, and barrel, and take it over (inaudible).

A PARTICIPANT: You said, "I suspect that you would tell you that we should tell you to take it over for us.

MR. STUART: Well, there's different aspects, but you understand where I'm coming from. But, I just say it very respectfully.

And, there's people in the room much
more knowledgeable than me, so they know.

THE MODERATOR: Is there anybody else?

When you're done, I'll offer some, a few comments. Maybe you'll have some response to that, too.

MR. FOX: Well, I just got a real quick comment.

THE MODERATOR: Can you, sir, give your name for the Record?

MR. FOX: Oh, Steve Fox, Secretary-Treasurer for Fort Belknap.

You know, the, the biggest complaint that the Tribes have about the BIA is their underfunded programs. And, you know, also, with this reorganization, you know, from the President, it almost seems like they kind of missed the mark here in a way that I think, you know, there's that Government-to-Government relationship that I think needs to happen that, but, also, you know, there's -- If, if you reorganize, you, you think the idea behind that would be to make things better.

But, I, I guess that's the big question to me is, you know, how are things going to get
better with this reorganization?

And, I think that each year's budget, starting next year, will be less with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Isn't that correct?

A PARTICIPANT: I don't know. So, ultimately we can have our own ideas about our budget part of the (inaudible), but Congress is, like, the big daddy with the check.

They decide what those priorities have, should be, and how they're going to fund them, and then we have to spend our money the way they tell us to.

MR. FOX: Right. Because I, I was, I attended the south Governors' meeting in Albuquerque, so, when you spoke there.

But, to me, it, it just doesn't make very good sense if your, if your budget has a potential of being cut, and then, you know, are you used to the Regional offices to be a, a much longer commute?

You know, that kind of thing. I think those are all the things that need to be considered here, you know.
But, you know, how is it going to make, make it better after all this reorganization, is my question. So, you know, just leave that to you.

Thanks.

THE MODERATOR: So, making these remarks I think that I'll start off with what you just said. So, those are good observations.

I think that -- And, a couple other comments or questions were raised, too. I want to make sure to say it, or try to say this at the beginning.

I'll repeat. So, there's not any intent to change sort of the Bureaus on the ground, right?

And, really it's not the intent -- This departmental reorganization is not really focused on reorganizing BIA. It's reorganizing the Department Bureaus, how they interact with each other, and, you know, ultimately, for decisions that get made at that, at the Bureau.

So, there's, there's also the opportunity here. The Secretary has, has made clear that, in all the Bureaus, there may be some common-sense adjustments that need to be made.
And, let me just say as an example, so, I know Wind River Tribes, you have a lot more in common with the Great Plains Tribes, than you do with the Tribes if you went farther down the Colorado Basin. That's just a factor of history and culture, right?

So, it may be that we could figure out how to keep functionally your agency working with the, you know, with, with the Great Plains Tribes' agencies, with the Regional office there. And, so, there's, there's intended to be a lot of flexibility on the ground where the different Bureaus should be able to meet their needs on the ground.

And, so, if that's what -- It works through all departments, so, the later discussion, if, if it, you decide that you'd like to be part of this unified region structure. Also, -- So, part of the negotiation to not be affecting resources on the ground is saying, you know, there's both conceptual and, and reality.

Conceptually, you know, we don't want you to disrupt things that are working well. We
1. don't want to remove -- Obviously, we, you need our folks who are there at the Agency level and above there, to be available to you to perform the services that, that you, they have to provide.

    We don't want to interrupt that.

2. There's also the reality that, you know, we have, you know, physical infrastructure.

    We have buildings. We have leased space.

3. These are not things that we can jump out of overnight. And, so, again, you know, sort of the, the secondary discussion I think will, will evolve in each of the Bureaus and our discussion with you would be:

    Okay. So, if, if you want to participate in this unified region, you know, how could we, what would be, what would be your thoughts?

    How could we continue to do our job well or better? How would that work.

    You know, how would you see that working? And, we can state how we, how we can respond to that, how we can -- If it means moving
an office, sure.

But, if it means leaving an office where it is, you know, that's fine. It may be that we have functionally sort of, you know, still have, well, it could functionally be two Regional Offices.

We could still have an office here. We might have an office in Aberdeen.

Although, it sounded like the Chairmen, they would rather have an office in Rapid City than Aberdeen, I think. But, those are things that can be discussed as part of the, you know, the change after, after, afterwards when a decision's made on whether a tribal leader wants to participate or not.

So, I think that if the Plan would, you know, -- So, I guess a second step in the Plan would be to hear from you, discuss how we can accomplish that. You know, we have -- Obviously our first responsibility is to you, our Trust responsibility, Trust responsibility is to you.

But, we have a responsibility to our people, too, who work for us; the staff, or, you
know, people who have built lives who live in town. And, there's no intent to just uproot our employees who are working hard for us and for you without, you know, sort of thinking it through.

And, so, you know, that's part of --

We've had several internal discussions with our employees about how this could or could not impact positively and negatively for them, and how we can work through that with them, so, which led me to a really big point.

I think that it's important for you to understand, and I want to impart that the is -- So, this is a big topic, you know, reorganizing across Bureaus and the Department. That means that at the end of the day it's going to take a while to implement.

Even just implementing the unified Regions, the Secretary's told us, look, we need to plan on about five years to get for this to be, like, implemented and actually operating, right? The, the full implementation, I suspect, will take longer than that.

So, what that means is, realistically,
is we have to have buy-in by all the stakeholders that will be involved and have a say in this.

That's you guys as Governors -- Right?

It's Congress. They're the ones to be the ones who say it's okay for us to do this and spend money to do this, and spend money continually in our Bureau in a restructured way.

So, all these, all these different stakeholders in this have a say. And, they can all have an attack on it.

Huge stakeholder for us is obviously our employees as well. You know, if, if our employees aren't comfortable with this, then it's going to be a challenge for us to implement it as well, in turn.

So, (inaudible) is a reality. It's a fact, you know, that we have to bring into our discussion.

And, so, it's, you know, not that it's happening overnight. This Plan, you know, you know, the Executive Order has to be submitted in October; that's true.

So, that's really, like, the first
preliminary step is just respond to that. The actual, you know, filling it out, how it operates, comes later.

So, I, I want to impart that. I know, I know you're -- There's been -- I've heard from several folks.

We had listening sessions, and it was their concerns that that means that this was going to be implemented by October. Far from the truth.

This is going to be used ahead to do this. So, -- But, I do also want to make clear the kind of -- I know the question was raised about, well, why do Governors get to have a say before the other folks?

So, again, you know, there's the aspect of we felt we had to have enough information to come to you to even to start our discussion. And, two, was, frankly, the Secretary's committed to Indian Country; that we won't be -- If you don't want the Bureau to be part of this, we'll hold BIA back.

That doesn't apply to BLM. It doesn't apply to Fish and Wildlife.
So, the Governors, while they have input, they don't get a veto on it. It's happening.

(Inaudible) they're primarily concerned about. So, they've had their input early on.

They were really concerned about, you know, why we, how that would impact them. And, so, that's sort of just, you know, matter-of-fact reasons of why we didn't, we didn't want to go out until we had all the information to come to you.

But, why the Governors, as soon as they got rid of the first map, they were all, you know, lobbying in. Obviously they have a lot of impact with Congress as well; again, another stakeholder we have to deal with.

So, I hope that answers a part of your question. I think, too, I want to make sure that, that this is -- Well, we're discussing -- The departmental organization is, is at the top of the Bureau, basically -- Right? -- in getting this, facilitating this action.

This is not reorganizing the BIA. I'm very much on board with the notion that we need to
restructure a lot of things that we do in the BIA, and I think that that's, that's a different effort.

And, some of the things that we're doing now, and things we're considering, I think it would have been great for you guys to give me your plan, if you could re-, reorganize it and re-do it. I could tell you, you know, I'm, I'm still pretty early on coming on as a bureaucrat into the federal government, and, but, I've been in the Senate.

I've interacted with -- I've had clients, Tribes that interacted with BIA. And, so, when I came in I really had no idea how it ran.

I thought I did, but I didn't. So, there's a learning curve for me as well.

I'd love to hear from you guys. You interact with them on a daily basis, and I think there's certainly a good discussion that could be had with us internally about how we, you know, how we see we do things, how you see we do it, and how we, you know, find a way forward, the best way to do it.

I think that would be helpful. And, you know, there's fits and starts.
There was a (inaudible) center which was supposed to be, you know, a multi-Bureau sort of Task Force to get energy decisions done quickly. And, you know, even Chairman Mark Fox, with (inaudible) came and said, "Well, you know, it's not really working like we thought it was going to."

And, I'm trying to get a better understanding why it's not. So, I think that there are things that we can work on internally in the BIA, as well.

So, -- And, that, that would be something I'd love to help you. Six-thirty-eight Contracts: So, 638 Contracts, and the process for that is set into law.

So, that's not something we can change with a (sic) administrative reorganization. And, the funding for that is also protected by law.

So, however the reorganization takes place, you know, that's something that we have to deal with. We have to figure out, make sure that we're not breaking the law; that we're still facilitating the courts, still facilitating the
self-governing Contracts and stuff.

And, so, does that raise any other questions while I'm trying to remember?

A SPEAKER: Thank you, John. What you just said, John, was (inaudible) President.

I was on the Council for three terms before, and now I'm back. But, what you said just a few moments ago, that's about the best things I've heard ever come from Department of Interior on the Record here today, John.

(Inaudible) start planning for that and we'll focus on that at Fort Belknap (inaudible) in a community that's in the spirit of, of negotiated (inaudible) and consultation. So, thank you for that.

THE MODERATOR: So, let's see if I can just -- I thought it was a really good point that Mr. Tudji (phonetic) made, and also Brooks and Choban (phonetic).

So, obviously there, there are cultural and, cultural and historical and even spiritual similarities between Tribes, and there's a lot of differences. And, one of the things that we hope
is not negatively impacted by this would be to have
the flexibility in the regions so that they can
continue to respond to the unique needs of those t
in those regions.

I think that's critically important for
us. I really, I really believe -- I liked the
first time I heard it.

And, the Secretary, again, comes from a
military background, okay? So, his description,
you know, his vision of how, how, how you
accomplish things on the ground is to have clear
direction to the folks who are on the front line.

You give the authority to make decisions
based on that direction, and the resources to
implement them, and then you let them run with it.
And, that's something in his mind, and I really
believe it.

That's effective leadership. That's not
how we, we're structured.

I mean, it's a really good point about
how we (inaudible). I mean, we have a lot of
decision-making at the top, and we, over time we
pull it out of, out of the region; we pull it out
of the agency level.

So, I think that -- And, this is partly,
or, a good part of this, I think, is us internally,
really, for us. That -- Some of the other Bureaus
(inaudible) may do a little better job of this.

I think all the Bureaus have a similar,
you know, problem. There's too much
decision-making that's required to be made at the
top.

But, if we can provide more resources on
the ground, but if we can also provide the
direction and the authority to make decisions
further down the chain, that should facilitate, you
know, faster decisions for you; should facilitate
your ability to input into those decisions, as
well.

So, I just, I think that, to be very
honest with you, I think one of my observations,
being in the field, again, sort of a short time
here, is that the result of a lot of flexibility,
probably in a negative paternalistic way years ago
in different regions of the BIA has led to, one,
fuller decisions further up to get more
consistency, and, two, having too much variegation in decisions that are made in the regions.

And, I would, my observation, again, would be that those variegations are not helpful flexibility. They're actually unhelpful.

And, a lot of them come from, you know, the decisions that were made on how to handle an issue in a region 30 years ago maybe, right? So, I think that -- And, again, I relate this back to, to getting input from, from you, the tribal leadership. -- is: How can we change that?

So, how can we have clearer direction to our regional agency folks, but that it be consistent with, so the policies that we have, and implemented by them so they can have the decision and implement that on the ground so that we have the flexibility that you need and your interactions with them, but we're not running the risk of, you know, legal liability, the risk of litigation, or just going down the road that leads to bad, a bad policy.

We even have some of these that has ethical implications for our employees. We're,
we're taking a look at that to make sure that we're being as open and, and hon-, up front with, you know, through our engagement with you to, to our employees, as well.

So, I think that -- But, that would be, in our mind, you know, largely our responsibility. But, that certainly is direction from the Secretary down, to, is for us to look at how we do our business on the ground, and try to push authority, push decisions down to the how it's going to be made there.

I've talked on myself, unless you guys have something else. Anybody else?

A SPEAKER: (Inaudible) it's not critical. That's something that, give the people in this room a chance.

You guys can look -- It makes you look like geniuses in D.C., if we really can have true consultation, and, and actually put the, you know, the true ideas together based on how we would do it.

And, (inaudible). And, I don't speak for everyone in the room, but I was very glad what
you said.

  I think that's a pretty interesting thing on the Record, is that you're really willing to do that. That was not a original thought.

  You know, there's been some talk in the room, but I still wanted to get it out because I, I believe this is something that you can tell my friend, Ryan Zinke, we can make him shine pretty bright when he runs for President.

  (Inaudible.) Thank you.

  A SPEAKER: I want to thank you all. I think we were worried here in the beginning.

  A little shaky here, but as we got going through it your responses were well-taken. They were clear and forthright.

  I think your responses from consultation in this region in years combined, actually, feedback. So, we can say meaningful.

  And, we'll, we'll wait and see if it's honest. But, I really appreciate your ability to engage with each of s tribal leaders here.

  I think that that's really setting a good foundation for how you move forward with it.
So, I want to thank you for that.

So, that would be the last comment from a couple leaders. Brad, I'm sure you've got something more to say.

All right, I'll see you in D.C.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Well, thank you very much. And, we'll close out this consultation session.

Look forward to seeing some of you either other places or when we do a second round.

I have -- I know that Secretary committed to Chairman Frazier that we'll do one of these in Rapid City, so we'll definitely be one there.

And, we're will looking at a second round up, like, in Portland up in the Northwest.

Thank you, guys.

And, again, it's quite an honor to be here and visit with you. And, thank you.

(Whereupon, at 12:47 p.m. MT, the above matter was concluded.)

I certify the foregoing to be a
true transcript from my notes.

E-signature: D. I. Bunn

CSR CP RPR

CERTIFICATION

I, D. I. Bunn, a Registered Professional Reporter, Certified Conference Reporter, and Notary Public, do hereby certify that the foregoing testimony was duly taken and reduced to writing before me at the place and time therein mentioned. I further certify that I am neither related to any of the parties by blood or marriage, nor do I have any interest in the outcome of the above matter.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal, at Chadron, Nebraska, USA, this 27th day of July, 2018.

E-signature: D. I. Bunn

Notary Public