



THE ASSOCIATE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON, DC 20240

MAR 24 2006

Dear Tribal Leader:

This letter is to inform you about an upcoming meeting to discuss the potential adverse impacts on Tribal programs associated with my recent decision to utilize \$ 2.0 million from a Bureau of Indian Affairs budget subactivity account entitled "Rights Protection – Attorney Fees" to pay court ordered fees to the Cobell plaintiff attorneys. For more background, please refer to my January 26, 2006 "Dear Tribal Leader" letter on the subject.

On February 27, 2006, during a question and answer session hosted by the National Congress for American Indians (NCAI) in Washington D.C., Dennis Smith, Vice Chairman, Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Reservation, asked me to meet with Tribes that may be adversely affected by my decision to redirect the appropriated attorney fees funds to another purpose. I agreed that I would be willing to meet with all Tribes who believe that they will be adversely affected. In addition, Joe Garcia, President, NCAI, challenged me to seek other funds to restore the \$ 2.0 million in attorney fees funds that were redirected.

As a first step, I would like to listen to your views regarding the potential adverse impacts you envision from not having the attorney fee funds available during FY 2006. Please be advised that the requested meeting to discuss this matter will take place at the **Adam's Mark Hotel in Denver, Colorado, on Thursday, April 6, 2006, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** The Adam's Mark Hotel is located at 1550 Court Place, Denver, CO. 80202, phone (303) 893-3333. We have contracted with the hotel to hold a block of rooms for those attending the meeting at the current federal government rate for Denver. To have one of these rooms guaranteed, you must make your reservations with the hotel by next Wednesday, March 29, 2006. Your early reservation will also enable us to arrange for a sufficient meeting space and quantity of light refreshments for the meeting. When you call the hotel, please tell them that you are with the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Tribal meeting.

It would be helpful if you are able to provide a written synopsis of your concerns in addition to oral dialogue we'll have at the meeting. With this information, I will be more prepared to respond to President Joe Garcia's challenge to seek replacement funding for the \$ 2.0 million attorney fee funds discussed herein.

If you have any further questions regarding this meeting, please contact my Special Assistant, Kristin Minster at (202) 208-6291 or kristin\_minster@ios.doi.gov. We are looking forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this situation.

Sincerely,

James E. Cason  
Associate Deputy Secretary