



Trust Land Services, Resource Stewardship, Results that Matter

Message from the Deputy Director



Greetings from Trust Services!

This has been a whirlwind of a Fiscal year for Trust Services and I am so proud of all we have been able to accomplish. The POTUS visit to our National Interagency Fire Center this month highlighted the importance of wildland fire management.

Our own Secretary Haaland chairs the Council on Native American Affairs (page 6). The Administration’s priorities include tribal consultation, climate change, Tribal homelands and treaties, wildland fire management, and economic and clean energy development. We are refining our FY 2022 Trust initiatives in these areas.

In this issue new team members are introduced along with a list of our upcoming job openings. We are not done growing and have room for more highly motivated team members. See a list of upcoming positons (page 2).

Our “Share your Experience” photo contest announced in Issue 2 has been extended through Monday, December 6. I encourage you to submit your photos, newsletter feedback, and suggestions for future articles to our newsletter email at [BIATrustQuarterly@bia.gov](mailto:BIATrustQuarterly@bia.gov). I want to personally thank the Trust program employees at the Central Office and Regions for making a positive difference in Indian Country. We are successful because of your dedication and hard work.

Johnna Blackhair  
Deputy Director-Trust Services

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**Zhawenim giwii-jii-bi-maadaziim we-we-ni doo-daw ga-ye**

*[Be kind to others and treat them well.] – Ojibwe, Great Lakes Chippewa*

## About Trust Services



Photos above (left to right): Trust Offices in Lakewood, CO, Washington, DC and Albuquerque, NM.

## Office of Trust Services Organization

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Office of Trust Services' (OTS), is committed to serving Tribal Communities and their members by ensuring the activities associated with management and protection of trust and restricted lands; natural resources; forestry and wildland fire management; irrigation, power and safety of dams; and real estate services are improving tribal government infrastructures and communities, along with other components of long term sustainable economic development, to enhance the quality of life for their tribal members and protect and improve trust assets of American Indians, Indian tribes and Alaska Natives.

There are 56 million acres of trust land and 45 million acres of land held by Native Alaskan state-chartered corporations. BIA has 12 Regional offices and 83 Agencies.

## Upcoming Job Openings



You may apply for jobs online at <http://www.usajobs.com>

### **Energy and Minerals Development**

*Mechanical Engineer (2 positions)*      GS-0830-12      Lakewood, CO

### **Indian Energy Service Center**

*Supervisory Realty Specialist*      GS-1170-13      Lakewood, CO

*Senior Realty Specialist*      GS-1170-13      Lakewood, CO

### **Land Titles and Records**

*Program Analyst (2 positions)*      GS-0343-13      Lakewood, CO or Aberdeen, SD

### **Natural Resources/Cultural Resources**

*Archeologist*      GS-0193-14      Albuquerque, NM

*Environmental Biologist*      GS-0401-13      Albuquerque, NM

*Museum Curator*      GS-1015-13      Reston, VA or Washington, DC

### **Special Projects (TAAMS System)**

*Program Analyst*      GS-0343-12      Albuquerque, NM

*Program Analyst*      GS-0343-7/9      Albuquerque, NM

### **Tribal Climate Resilience Program**

*Program Analyst*      GS-0343-13      Albuquerque, NM

*Natural Resource Specialist*      GS-0401-7/9/11      Albuquerque, NM

## News You can Use



### BIA Trust Quarterly Newsletter

The Trust Quarterly Newsletter is produced collaboratively by the Trust Services Divisions under the direction of Deputy Director Johnna Blackhair. To find out more or to submit your ideas and suggestions for future issues, please contact editor Dawn Selwyn by email at [Dawn.selwyn@bia.gov](mailto:Dawn.selwyn@bia.gov) or [BIATrustQuarterly@bia.gov](mailto:BIATrustQuarterly@bia.gov). Your input and photos are appreciated!



Please submit content for the December Issue by  
**Thursday, November 18, 2021**

Newsletters are available for viewing on the BIA website at <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots>

### “SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE” STAFF PHOTO CONTEST

Submit your photos by Monday, December 6, 2021, to [BIATrustQuarterly@bia.gov](mailto:BIATrustQuarterly@bia.gov). Questions? Send email or call Dawn Selwyn, Trust Officer at (202) 494-4688.



**Photos categories and limit 3 submissions per person**  
**TRUST RESOURCES • BIA WORK LIFE • PEOPLE IN NATURE • LANDSCAPES IN INDIAN COUNTRY**



### Special Veteran’s Day Issue planned for November

Calling on all Vets within our ranks to submit a bio and photos for a special Trust Quarterly issue to honor you. Submit bios and photos due by **Friday, November 19, 2021**, to [Dawn.selwyn@bia.gov](mailto:Dawn.selwyn@bia.gov).

- Name, Title, Duty Station
- Branch of Service, Rank and service or deployments
- Position and brief description of duties
- Describe one of your most memorable experiences working with the BIA.

Thank you for your service and positive contributions to BIA Trust Services.

## News You can Use



### Did you know BIA is on Facebook and Twitter?



Follow us on Facebook and Twitter at [@BureauIndAffrs](https://www.facebook.com/BureauIndAffrs). Stay connected to get Bureau news you can use!

### Curious about news and announcement related to Indian Country?

Follow the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs' social media across Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube [@USIndianAffairs](https://www.instagram.com/USIndianAffairs).

### Secretary's Modern Day Suggestion Box



Remember that the "Ask Deb" inbox is DOI employees' direct line to ask questions, submit suggestions, and voice concerns to the Office of the Secretary. Email the "ask Deb" inbox at [AskDeb@ios.doi.gov](mailto:AskDeb@ios.doi.gov)

### It is Official!



Welcome Bryan Newland as our Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs. Mr. Newland was ceremonially sworn in by Secretary Haaland in her office on Wednesday, September 8, 2021.

### Sharing on Social Media



Do you or your program have an announcement or something fun you want to share on BIA's social media channels?

Here's how you can contribute:

- Send your short announcement and photo (.jpeg) to [socialmedia@bia.gov](mailto:socialmedia@bia.gov)
- Includes suggested date for posting
- Provide a caption or details for each photo. The photo credit will note "BIA", if information is not provided.



10/15/2021- Tribal Water Infrastructure Investments, Wildland Fire Preparedness and Tribal Conservation Investments

10/7/2021 – DOI Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan released

9/17/2021-Water Rights Settlement Agreement with Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

9/15/2021 – MOU signed with Intertribal Timber Council to strengthen Wildland Fire Management Collaboration

9/14/2021 – DOI to hold Government-to-Government Consultations on Protecting and Restoring Tribal Homelands

See <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/> for full stories



### **BIA Developing a Plan to Strengthen Tribal Consultation by October 23, 2021**

Each Federal agency head is to submit a detailed plan of action to implement policies and directives following Consultation with Tribal Nations no later than October 23, 2021, and annually thereafter.

Bryan Newland, Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs was designated as the lead and the DOI Tribal Governance Officer for implementing the DOI’s plan to implement Executive Order 13175 regarding Tribal Consultation.

You can expect to see a centralized consultation website, staff training, an updated policy, rescission or revision of policies inhibiting consultation, establishment of a Secretary’s Tribal Advisory Committee (STAC) among other action items. See deadlines at <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/detailed-plan-for-improving-interiors-implementation-of-e.o.-13175-omb-submission.pdf>



### **9.6 Million U.S. Residents Self-Identify as American Indian/Alaska Native**

The American Indian and Alaska Native population, alone and in combination, increased from 5.2 million in 2010 to 9.7 million in 2020, an 86.5 percent increase. This means the AI/AN people represent 2.9 percent of the population.

- 3.7 million people self-identified as AI/AN with no other race
- 5.9 million self-identified as AI/AN in combination with one race or more
- 9.6 million self-identified as all or some AI/AN

Native Americans were not counted in the U.S. Census until 1860. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders were not counted. The U.S. had 331 million residents in 2019, a 7.4 percent increase from 2010. Source <https://www.census.gov/>

NOTE: Self-identification as Native American for purposes of the 2020 Census differs from meeting the individual blood quantum requirements for membership in a federally recognized Indian Tribe.



### **Tribes self-certify Enrollment Numbers for American Rescue Plan Allocations from Treasury**

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) appropriated \$20 billion to assist Tribal governments to aid with pandemic and recovery efforts. The Secretary of Treasury was charged with distributing \$1 billion equally to all 574 federally recognized Tribes, \$12.35 billion based on a pro rata, self-certified Tribal enrollment and \$6.65 billion on self-certified Tribal employment data. This Tribal Allocation Methodology was developed after Tribal Consultation. For more information see <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/>

BIA collected enrollment numbers from all but five Tribal governments in April 2021 for the Enrollment Allocation. Tribes were asked to confirm these numbers. The final deadline set by Treasury for enrollment data submission was June 21, 2021.

## White House Priorities



### White House Council on Native American Affairs

Did you know an Executive Order was signed June 26, 2013, to establish a White House Council on Native American Affairs (WHCNAA) consisting of a council of Federal leaders across the government in response to requests from Tribal leaders? The Council was established to improve coordination of Federal programs and the use of those resources available to tribal communities.

### Secretary of Interior Chair of the WHCNAA

Secretary Deb Haaland is Chair of the WHCNAA with membership representing a cross section of leaders from 30 federal government agencies. The Council was established by Executive Order on June 26, 2013. On August 6, 2021, Secretary Haaland called to order a second meeting of the Council attended by 11 Cabinet Secretaries and senior administration officials. Two priorities came out of this meeting:

- The Department of the Interior, White House American Rescue Plan Implementation Team and Domestic Policy Council committed were to lead an interagency process to support Tribal Nations' use of federal funding dedicated to tribal needs
- A Nation-to-Nation dialogue on COVID-19 and improving health services in Indian Country to be scheduled for the Fall of 2021.

Secretary Haaland is a member of the Pueblo of Laguna.

### Rodman Second Appointment to Executive Director Position

You may recognize Anthony "Morgan" Rodman's smiling face from the Trust hallways of Interior when he was leading the Indian Affairs, Office of Economic Development from 2019 through our pre-pandemic era operations. Since his appointment to Executive Director of the White House Council on Native American Affairs on May 28, 2021, Mr. Rodman has been busy. He held this position when the Council was first established and was ready to hit the ground running on this second appointment to the position.

Mr. Rodman will be working towards improving Tribal consultation, formalizing working committees, laying the groundwork for action items across the federal government. Key issues for him that fall within the Trust Services mission include climate change, Tribal homelands and treaties, and economic and clean energy development.

Mr. Rodman is a member of the Cherokee Nation and Osage Nation.

### WHCNAA FOCUS

**Tribal homelands treaties • Economic Development • Energy and Infrastructure • Health care Education • Public Safety and Justice • International Indigenous Issues**

## Policies and Procedures

### Fiscal Year 2021 Accomplishments

Trust Services focused on designing guides to major decisions, actions, and principles of our programs in Fiscal Year 2021. They are in the form of National Policy Memos (NPM), Indian Affairs Manual (IAMs) and Handbooks. See <https://www.bia.gov/directives-system> to access the electronic records.

Over the course of the last year, BIA comprehensively updated the policies and procedure including IAM Part 90 for the Branch of Wildland Fire Management (BWFM). The BWFM is responsible for managing and overseeing safe and effective wildland fire protection programs on Indian lands held in trust by the Federal Government, a program engaged in a historically active fire season.



Photo credit: Bob Wick, BLM

### Approved Policy, Manuals and Handbooks

#### *Agriculture and Range*

- 54 IAM, Chapter 1 – **Agricultural and Rangeland Management Overview** (7/14/21)
- 54 IAM, Chapter 6 – **Trespass** (10/14/20)
- 54 IAM 1-H **Agricultural and Rangeland Management Handbook** (7/14/21)

#### *Broadband*

- NPM-TRUS-40, Policy Memo – **Streamlining the Rights-of-Way Application Process for Telecommunications Projects** (5/5/21)

#### *Forestry and Fire*

- 53 IAM, Chapter 7 – **Forestry Trespass** (10/14/20)
- 90 IAM 5-H **Wildfire Prevention Program Handbook** (3/19/21)
- NPM-TRUS-39 A1 – **Amended Guidance re Secretarial Order 3379 and Unmanned Aircraft Systems** (9/7/21)

#### *Land Titles and Records*

- 51 IAM, Chapter 1 – **Recording and Custody of Land Title Documents** (6/21/21)
- 51 IAM, Chapter 4 – **Examination and Certification of Land Title** (6/21/21)
- NPM-TRUS-41, Policy Memo – **Creation of Owner Identification Numbers for Probate Distribution** (5/18/21)

#### *Real Estate Services*

- 52 IAM, Chapter 14 – **Business Leases** (9/30/21)
- 52 IAM-14-H **Business Leasing on Indian Lands** (9/30/21)

## Energy and Mineral Development



### The Importance of Tribal Sovereignty in Energy Development

Comprehensive energy and mineral development are a major strategy for developing resilient tribal economies. To support American Indian nations and Alaska Native villages the DEMD provides:

- Technical assistance and Grant programs
- Experience with tribal economic development strategies
- Access to the latest energy development approaches

DEMD shares a menu of the latest energy development approaches and identifies opportunities for Tribes to select the right approach for their local communities and resources.

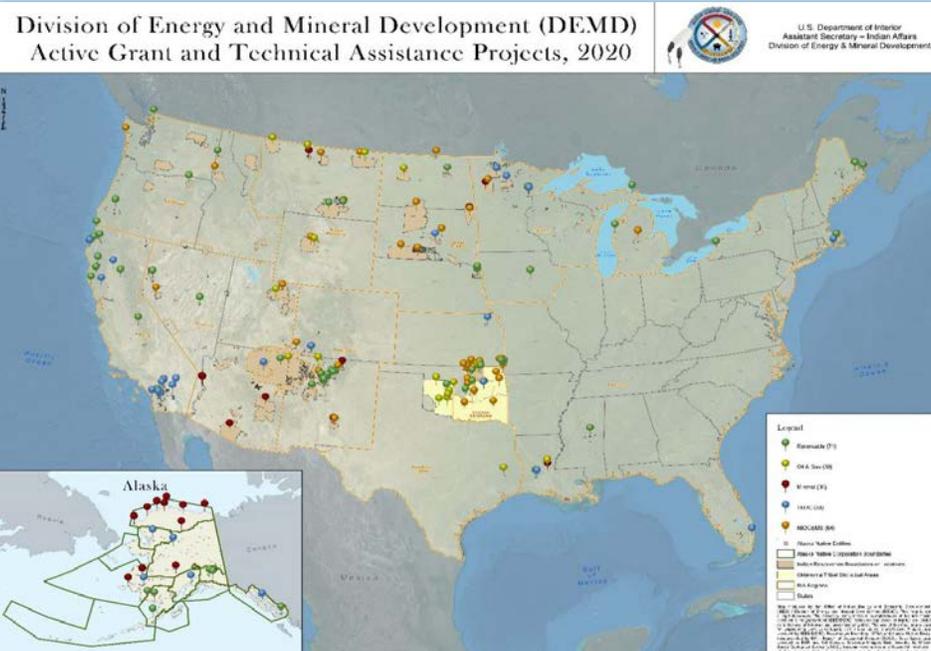
### BIA Announced over \$6.5M in Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP) Grants Awarded to 34 Tribe and Alaska Native Corporations

27 Federally recognized tribes and seven Alaska Native corporations in 15 states were awarded EMDP grants. The BIA's EMDP grants help eligible applicants obtain technical assistance funding to hire consultants to identify, evaluate or assess the market for energy or mineral resources the tribe will process, use, or develop. Funds may be used to conduct resource inventories and assessments, feasibility studies, or pre-development studies necessary to process, use, and develop energy and mineral resources.

### DEMD Map tracks both Grants and Tribal Technical Assistance Projects

As of July 2021, the Division of Energy and Mineral Development is currently active on 229 technical assistance and grant projects with 145 Tribes

Locations depicted on the project map to the right will be updated and available at <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/demd> in FY 2022.



● 71 Renewable Energy Projects ● 64 NIOGEMS reservation deployments

● ● ● 30 Energy Capacity Building Projects

## Energy and Mineral Development



### Wind River Circle Ridge Field transition to Tribal Operations

The Northern Arapahoe and Eastern Shoshone of the Wind River Reservation requested DEMD's technical assistance for the transition of the Circle Ridge field. Historically, the Circle Ridge lease provided income to the Tribal government and supported per capita payments to about 15,000 Tribal members. Monthly per capita payments ranged between \$800,000 - \$1,500,000 per month.

By operating this field, the Tribes can add and additional \$400,000 - \$1,000,000 per month bringing the revised monthly total to \$1,200,000 - \$2,500,000 per month.



### Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)

In 2019, an Energy and Mineral Development (EMDP) Grant was awarded to the Wind River Reservation to boost oil production and income to the Tribes via Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR) implementation.

EOR uses thermal, chemical, or fluid phase behavior effects to reduce or eliminate the capillary forces that trap oil within pores, to thin the oil or otherwise improve its mobility or to alter the mobility of the displacing fluids.

For information on EMDP's go to <https://www.bia.gov/service/grants/emdp/>

### Tribal Operating Results as of July 2021

Tribal operating results have had the following positive outcomes:

- No environmental incidents, no injuries, and no damage to property
- Produced 47 wells (Merit Oil and Gas company operated 81)
- Production levels at 51,874.29 bbl. within 5% of Merit levels with 40% less wells
- Revenues were 63% higher than June
- Net Operating Expenses were 22% lower than June
- Earnings were 132% higher than June

Tribal operations have created a positive cash balance. After only two months of operations, the tribes were able to prioritize repaying themselves back all start-up expenses. See next page for revenue and earnings tables.



### Tribal Plans going Forward

- Negotiate field EQUIPMENT PURCHASE to complete transition
- August average of 1700 barrels of oil per day (BOPD)
- \$2.8M in revenue with \$700K operating expenses
- Evaluating field solar capacity needs (up to 5MW) to provide green power to current field operations and to support EOR carbon sequestration growth potential.

## Wind River Circle Ridge Revenue and Earnings Data

### Significant Improvement

Revenues going up, operating expenses going down, equates to earnings going up. The tribes have a positive cash balance, after two months of operations, allowed tribes to prioritize covering all start-up expenses.



### Current Assessment

**Positive.** Decision to own operations and hire a service contract operator to run day-to-day operations, has generated more than **\$3.3M** in additional tribal income as well as multiple new high-skill, well-paying jobs in just two months.



## Energy and Mineral Development



### National Indian Oil and Gas, Energy and Minerals System (NIOGEMS)

The National Indian Oil and Gas, Energy and Minerals System (NIOGEMS) is an in-house resource management software provided free to tribal governments and federal offices with a trust responsibility.

### Module to include Rights of Ways

The next NIOGEMS Module is focused on Rights of Ways (ROWs) as these are integral in the development of trust energy and mineral resources.



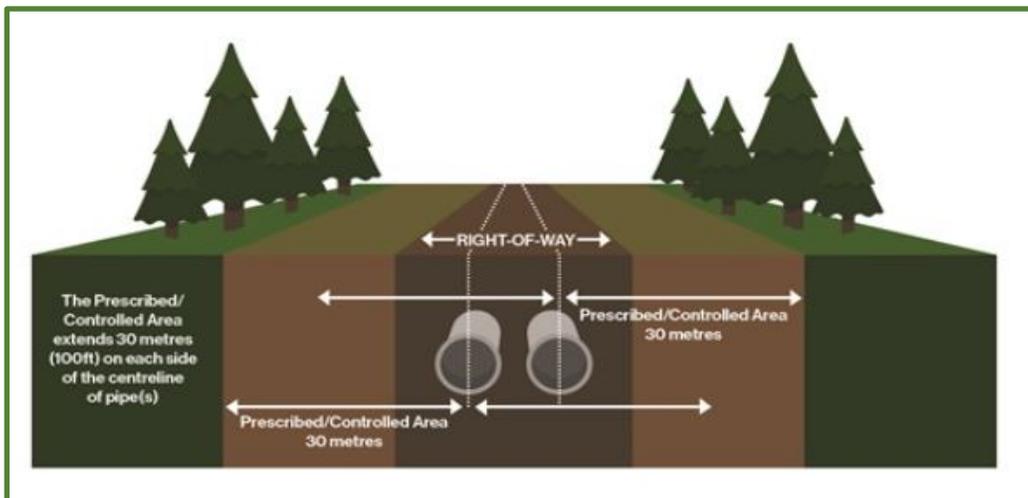
*A right of way extending from the center of the road to include sidewalk in front of homes in a residential area.*

### Tribes benefit from Rights of Way (ROW) Mapping

All energy and mineral projects require ROWs for access roads, pipelines, electric transmission lines, etc. Mapping these ROWs will allow Tribes to better understand their economic opportunities in two key areas:

- Tribes can leverage expiring ROWs for access to energy markets that could help in the building of new energy generation assets.
- Tribes can also plan for future negotiations and revenue associated with expiring ROWs.

NIOGEMS goal is to generate graphs of data associated with electrical and pipeline ROWs. The ROW Module objective is to have the data viewable in tabular and map forms. This project will be on-going through Fiscal Year 2022.



*Graphic of a right of way for a pipeline. Source: enbridge.com*

## Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP) Grants



### Inupiat Community of Arctic Slope (ICAS) requests DEMD assistance

DEMD is assisting the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS) to locate high-quality aggregate for their eight remote Villages. These isolated Villages in the Arctic Slope Region are far from any road system and rely on daily air freight for food, fuel, and construction materials.

### DEMD Grant and Technical Assistance



*Photo left to right: Ray Atos, Director Environmental and Natural Resources, ICAS, Doreen Fogg-Leavitt, Vocational Rehabilitation Director, ICAS and North Slope Borough Assembly), Dennis Bodenchuck, DEMD, Chris Benson, DEMD and Ralph Burke, Tribal Transportation Program, ICAS.*

Through Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP) grants and direct technical assistance, DEMD is working to find long-term solutions that will provide aggregate to the Villages and enable their vision of building an inter-Village road system a reality.

For information on EMDP grants go to <https://www.bia.gov/service/grants/emdp/>

### Sand and Gravel in High Demand

Sand and gravel are an expensive commodity for the remote Inupiat Communities. A housing crisis across the territory has reached unprecedented levels. Access to sand and gravel will support:

- Commercial construction
- Airport runway maintenance
- Road construction
- Housing construction
- Coastal erosion measures
- Job creation and economic development

All these activities are ultimately hamstrung by a lack of reliable high-quality sand and gravel near each village.



### Barges Travel 2,000 Miles to these Remote Communities

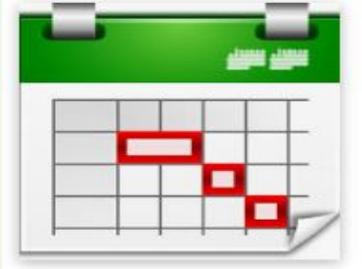
As a short-term fix, one Village is purchasing external aggregate at a high cost and barging it over 2,000 miles to meet high-priority Village needs.



## Forestry: Timber Team Update



### Timber Team Schedule



#### September 2021

- **Northwest Region**  
The timber team worked from home (Billings, Montana), on a large-scale GIS forest cover-type mapping project.
- **Rocky Mountain Region**  
The crew to conduct two additional weeks of fieldwork, cruising, and preparing timber sales on the **Crow** and **Northern Cheyenne Reservation** in the Rocky Mountain Region by September 30.

#### October 2021

- **Northwest Region**  
Start timber sale preparation and cruising work trips for the **Flathead Reservation** and the **Colville Reservation** in the Northwest Region.

### Timber Team mapped 592,000 acres across 14 Reservations

In January 2021, the timber team began working on a large-scale GIS forest cover-type mapping project for the Eastern Oklahoma Region. This project was completed in late February, culminating in the mapping of over 592,000 acres of forestland across 14 reservations in Eastern Oklahoma.

The photo below shows the Timber Team locating the boundary of the “Next Cutting Unit” on the Uintah-Ouray Fire Salvage Sale and a team member collecting data for forest cover-type mapping.



### Team Hit the Ground Running in March 2021

The timber team’s first field season began in March 2021. Since March, the timber team has traveled for a total of 18 weeks, conducting field work for 12 tribes and BIA agencies across 7 different states. This fieldwork includes:

- **Thlopthlocco Tribal Town** - the crew completed their first field assignment in Okemah, Oklahoma. A timber trespass cruise of over 5,000 stumps, across 59 acres of forested Hohahta land.
- **Rosebud, Omaha, and Winnebago Reservations** - Remeasured 115 Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) plots in South Dakota and Nebraska
- **Ho-Chunk and Potawatomi Reservations** - Completed 180 stand exams in Wisconsin
- **Cruising over 8,000 acres** of mixed conifer/hardwood stands across eight different reservations, and
- Prepared 3,300 acres of timber sale cutting units totaling approximately **37 MMBF of merchantable volume**

## Wildland Fire Management



*Lone firefighter working a fire, fire crew building a fire line, and training new firefighter recruits*



### New Wildland Fire Management Officer

Mr. Aaron Baldwin begins his new position as Chief, Branch of Wildland Fire Management on October 25, 2021. He is an enrolled member of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska.



*“Serving tribes and helping them become self-determined, while taking responsibility to protect tribal assets, is a key mission for the BIA”*

#### Aaron Baldwin

Wildland Fire Management Officer

### 25 Years of Experience

Aaron Baldwin began his career in 1996 as an administratively determined wildland firefighter for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Western Nevada Agency in Carson City, Nevada. He has worked in wildland fire management for 25 years, as an engine crew member, interagency hotshot crew overhead, logistics coordinator, fire operations supervisor, and fire management officer.

### Fire and Aviation

Most recently, Aaron served as the division chief of fire operations for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Fire and Aviation program. In this role, he oversaw over 100 personnel in the following programs:

- National Interagency Coordination Center
- National Interagency Incident Communications Division
- Great Basin Smokejumpers
- Training
- Workforce Development
- Veterans Program
- Fire Facilities
- National Fire Equipment program

### Policy and Resource Protection

Aaron spent several years working in Washington, D.C. as the BIA Associate Director of Wildland Fire Management Policy and Resource Protection, where he was responsible for bureau and departmental senior leadership briefings in coordination with the Department of the Interior's (DOI), Office of Wildland Fire.

In 2013, he worked on the \$25 million Tribal Resource Management Initiative, which increased the BIA's focus on workforce development, and funding for fuels management treatments on tribal reserved treaty rights lands. While in D.C., he also served on a Wildland Fire Science and Technology White House Task Force as the DOI Fire Management Lead.

## National Interagency Fire Center



*Fire crew in front of NIFC buildig and MAFFS 3 dropping retardant on the Rockport Fire in Utah, 2014*

### National Interagency Fire Center

The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) is a 55-acre facility near the Boise, Idaho airport and it serves as a national support center for local and national wildland firefighting including developing and implementing wildfire training and policy.



*Firefighters on duty*

The facility provides administrative support, stores equipment, retardant tanker operations and aircraft operations, and services (refueling, loading/unloading and maintenance).



*Type 3 Model Engine*

Visit <https://www.nifc.gov/> for the latest NIFC information.

### Honoring Michael “Mike” Wallace



Michael Wayne Wallace “Mike” passed away from breast cancer at home in Kuna, Idaho on October 10, 2021, at the age of 70. Mike was beloved by his family and friends for his grit, warmth, humor, and passion for adventure. Mike was born at Fort Lewis, WA in 1951. As a young man he loved working with his hands, fixing cars, playing linebacker in football, any type of water sport, and hunting throughout the Pacific Northwest. Mike was awarded a football scholarship to attend Wenatchee Valley College, becoming the first in his family to pursue higher education.

He went on to earn a Bachelor’s in Forestry and Master’s in Fire Science from the University of Washington. Mike started his career in wildland fire as the first fire planner for the State of Nebraska. In 1979, he began work for the BIA Colville Agency at Nespelem, WA. It was there he received his greatest achievement, the birth of his beloved daughter Randi Jo. He spent 9 years with the Coville Agency helping Indian Country and creating lifelong friends, being mentored and mentoring others. By 1988, he moved to the Boise Interagency Fire Center in Boise, ID, as the Chief of Fire Operations for the BIA. While at BIFC, his career continued to grow, participating in many Interagency working Teams, instructing fire training courses, as a member of the DOI Wildland Fire Budget Team and working on several incidents and again building lifelong relationships. In 2004, Mike transferred to the National Park Service located at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, ID, where he retired in 2008, as the National Director of Fire and Aviation.

A memorial to honor Mike’s work and legacy will be held at the Wildland Fighter Monument, NIFC, 3833 S. Development Avenue, Boise, ID on November 11, 2021, at 3 p.m., followed by a Celebration of Life at 4 p.m. at his home. He is survived by his wife Sheila Wallace and his three children.

Donations can be made in memory of Mike to the Wildland Firefighter Foundation at <https://wffoundation.org> or to the Breast Cancer Organization at <https://give.breastcancer.org>.

## POTUS Visits National Interagency Fire Center



*Federal partner conversation with POTUS*

## Wildland Fire a Priority



On September 13, 2021, President Biden was provided a tour of the NIFC facility, fire vehicles and an explanation of the tools employed by wildland firefighters in the field.

So far in FY 2021, 44,000 wildfires have burned over 5.4 million acres. In response to these facts, President Biden remarked, “that’s larger than the entire state of New Jersey” giving some perspective to the significance of our fire management mission.

## Meet and Greet with NIFC Coalition Partners



*POTUS shaking hands before touring of the NIFC facility*

NIFC was established 50 years ago as a model for intergovernmental coordination. The inception of the NIFC model originated as a National Weather Service operation in Boise, Idaho. Today NIFC has eight primary coalition partners

**Bureau of Indian Affairs**      **Bureau of Land Management**  
**National Park Service**      **U.S. Forest Services**  
**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**      **Department of Defense**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
**Department of Homeland Security**

## Federal Partners Roll out the Red Carpet for the POTUS



*Pictured from Left to Right: Charles Foreman, NMAC-Military Liaison, Josh Simmons, BIA-Director, Wildland fire Operations and NMAC Chair, Chad Fisher, NPS-Chief, Branch of Wildland Fire, George Geissler, Washington State-State Forester, Bodie Shaw, BIA-Chief, Branch of Wildland Fire Management, Aitor Bidabura-FEMA U.S. Fire Administration, Elizabeth Lund, USFS-Assistant Director, Operations, Chris Wilcox, USFS-Chief, Branch of Fire Management, Kim Christensen, USFS-Deputy Assistant Director, Operations, and Grant Beebe, BLM-Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation Directorate*

## Wildland Fire Management



### White House Firefighter Pay Initiative

August 17, 2021, Interior and Agriculture announced implementation of President Biden’s pay initiatives to recognize and support federal wildland firefighters. The initiative will increase the amount paid to 3,500 firefighters with the U.S. Department of the Interior and more than 11,300 firefighters at the USDA Forest Service to ensure all firefighters are paid at least \$15 an hour.

### Statement by Secretary Haaland

“As climate change brings longer fire seasons and more extreme fire behavior, we must remain steadfast in our commitment to fire preparedness and response. The brave women and men on the frontlines deserve fair pay for their work to protect our families, our communities, and our lands from the increasing threat of fire. By improving pay, we will not only support our wildland firefighters in a challenging year but also improve our ability to hire and retain top talent.”

### Firefighters Pay Increases June 30, 2021

Effective June 30, 2021, all firefighters will be paid at least \$15 per hour. Backpay dated to June 30, 2021 and will appear in firefighter paychecks on or around August 24, 2021.

### Firefighter Awards on the Way

In addition to pay increases all temporary frontline firefighters will receive a \$1,300 award. Permanent frontline firefighters up to GS-9 will receive an award equal to 10% of six months of their base pay.

### Dixie Fire smoke Plume visible from Space

On August 4, 2021, an astronaut on the International Space Station, and member of the crew of Expedition 65 snapped a photo of the Dixie fire plume in Northern California. Image available on NASA website at [Eoimages.gsfc.nasa.gov/images/imagerecords/148000/148669/ISS065-E-220417-lrg.jpg](https://eoimages.gsfc.nasa.gov/images/imagerecords/148000/148669/ISS065-E-220417-lrg.jpg).



This fire surpassed the Bootleg fire in Oregon to become the largest fire so far this year in the United States.



By August 6, 2021, the Dixie fire in Northern California had charred more than 432,000 acres (675 square miles). Wind gusts as high as 40 miles per hour and dry conditions contributed to the quick moving fire.

## Wildland Fire Management

### Fire Safety...every Second Counts

The Dunmore Rural Fire Brigade in Australia posted a video showing the devastation of a fire in under 3 minutes after the wind shifted.

**Firefighters first notice wind shift** and immediately evacuate site.



**60 Seconds** - Wind fills the air with black smoke. Fire crew in photo departing site.



**120 Seconds** - Trees and brush catch fire and the fire crosses the road.



**180 Seconds** - The fire passed leaving charred earth, burning foliage, trees, and smoke.



The video went viral and can be seen at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v+8T\\_pBZenLi8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v+8T_pBZenLi8)



### Greenville Indian Rancheria receives replacement Type 4, Model 52 Fire Engine

The Dixie Fire is the largest California has undergone. 700,000+ acres, 6,000 firefighters and a loss of almost 1,300 structure. On August 4, 2021, the Greenville Indian Rancheria lost their fire and fuels crew office, equipment, and a new *Type 3 Model 62 Engine* leaving them without firefighting essentials. The crew consists of a 12-member crew that continued to work the fire despite some losing their homes.



*Photos: Type 3 Model 62 (lost to fire) and a Type 4 Model 52 Engine replacement delivered August 17, 2021*

The BIA, US Forest Service and Tribal fire crew met to deliver a new *Type 4, Model 52 Fire Engine* on August 17, 2021. Matt Flying, BIA Pacific Regional Fire Operations drove the new engine from Sacramento, California.

The Plumas National Forest (PNF) provided the hoses, pack pumps, and fuel for the new engine. Chase truck, gear, and engine on loan through the remainder of the fire season, or until the Tribe obtains a new engine and replacement.

*“We are fighting on the same fire lines side-by-side, even though we wear different patches and uniforms; we are out there with the same tools and engines, fighting on the same mountains together.”*

**Jeff Dupras**

**Fire Management Officer  
Plumas National Forest**

## Geospatial Support



*“I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to work with the Branch of Geospatial Support (BOGS). GIS is an ever-evolving field since it converges data with technology resulting in a visualized image; thereby, allowing users to analyze and understand patterns and their spatial relationships”.*

**James C. Halbert**  
**Geospatial Database Administrator**



### Welcome our new Geospatial Database Administrator

James C. Halbert, Geospatial Database Administrator is an enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe. He served 4 years in the U.S. Marine Corps prior to earning a Bachelor of Science degrees in Electrical and Mechanical Engineering from South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. He went on to earn an MBA in Finance from the University of Colorado Denver.

His first Engineering position was with US West Telecommunications as an Outside Plant Network Engineer where he designed Telecom Networks for both Copper and Fiber facilities using a GIS based system called OSPFM (Outside Plant Facilities Management), later transitioning to Software Development to help with implementing the GIS system across the US West/Qwest geographical states. His roles varied within Information Technology from Software Test, Data Analysis, implementing new Technologies for Broadband internet, developing virtual networks for testing new Broadband equipment, and supervising teams in both the United States and India.

He later transitioned from Telecommunications to the space exploration field when he took a Lockheed Martin position on NASA’s Orion Spacecraft and the Artemis I Crew Module Propulsion system. He developed, tested, and verified Python code to test spacecraft specifications in a simulation environment before testing the script against the actual hardware on the spacecraft located at the Johnson Space Center Lab in Houston, TX. His next assignment was with the Artemis II program where I developed code that tests the Translational Hand controllers (X, Y & Z axis) and the Rotational Hand Controllers (Roll, Pitch & Yaw). These controllers were used by the Commander and Pilot to maneuver the spacecraft.



*Photos: NASA photo of Orion Spacecraft, James on assignment in India*

## Broadband



### National Tribal Broadband Summit



The 2021 National Tribal Broadband Summit held September 17, 24 and October 2, 2021, offered a platform for leaders across the broadband development ecosystem to share best practices, new ideas, and lessons learned from their real-world experience of bringing high-speed internet to Tribal businesses, governments, and homes.

The NTB Summit was open to Tribal leaders, representatives of tribal organizations, Tribal colleges and universities, schools and school districts serving under-connected Native students; Tribal libraries, museums cultural centers; private sector stakeholder organizations; and federal program managers and policy makers.



### FCC Broadband Deployment Report

**18 million** Americans have no access to high-speed internet service  
**1.5 million** on Tribal lands lack basic broadband and wireless service  
**35 percent** of those living on tribal lands lack broadband access

Source: <https://www.fcc.gov/reports-research>



### FCC Program to Help Households during the Pandemic

The Emergency Broadband Benefit is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program to help families and households struggling to afford internet service during the COVID-19 pandemic. See <https://fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit> for more information

#### Benefits Provided

- Discount of up to \$50 per month towards broadband services for eligible households
- Discount of up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands.
- Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet with a personal contribution between \$10-\$50 toward the purchase price.

#### How to Apply

Go to <https://GetEmergencyBroadband.org> to apply online and to find participating internet providers near you.

#### Eligibility

Full details on household eligibility can be found at <https://fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>. You may be eligible if you received a Federal Pell Grant during the award year or someone in your household experienced a substantial loss of income due job loss or furlough Since February 29, 2020. Income must be at or below \$99,000 for single filers and \$198,000 for joint filers.

## Irrigation and Power



### Online



Pay your bill at [pay.gov](https://pay.gov) or through your bank's online bill service

### Mission

The goal of the irrigation and power program is to improve the management of land and natural resource assets through the delivery of water consistent with applicable State and Federal law, in an environmentally responsible and cost-efficient manner.

### Program Overview

The BIA Irrigation and Power branch promotes economic opportunities by delivering irrigation water to tribes and water users

- **17 Congressionally authorized** Irrigation Projects in the Western United States
- **25,000** water users served
- **780,000 acres** of land irrigated

### Program Areas

This program seeks to provide modern business practices and promote innovative techniques to meet the ever-changing needs of the Tribes and water users in three main areas:

- Electronic payments of irrigation billing
- Irrigation Decision Support Tool
- Irrigation Construction and Rehabilitation

### Irrigation and Power Electronic Payment Methods Expand

Prior to 2020, BIA Irrigation and Power customers primarily made payments utilizing cash, paper checks and money orders. Payments could also be made over the phone with a credit card for power consumer accounts. BIA leadership identified the challenges with traditional payments and directed that the project and central office team expand the ability for customers to do business digitally.

### Great News for the San Carlos Irrigation Project Power Customers

San Carlos Irrigation Project Power (SCIP) customers in Coolidge, Arizona may choose to pay their SCIP Power bill online or through their banks' online bill service. It's never been easier to pay SCIP. Customers may pay online or through an automatic payment system by calling (800) 648-8659 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <https://www.bia.gov/programs-services/power-utilities/scip-power/>



## Electronic Payments of Irrigation Billing

### Operating Capital

Assessments to customers at BIA's Irrigation and power projects are the primary source of operating capital, and thus processing customer payments is the main mechanism for ensuring that funds are available for project operations and maintenance.



Prior to 2020, BIA Irrigation and Power customers primarily made payments utilizing cash, paper checks and money orders. Payments could also be made over the phone with a credit card for power consumer accounts



BIA leadership identified the challenges with traditional payments and directed that the project and BIA headquarters team expand the ability for customers to do business digitally. Customer acceptance has been solid.

### Why Paper Payments are still Popular

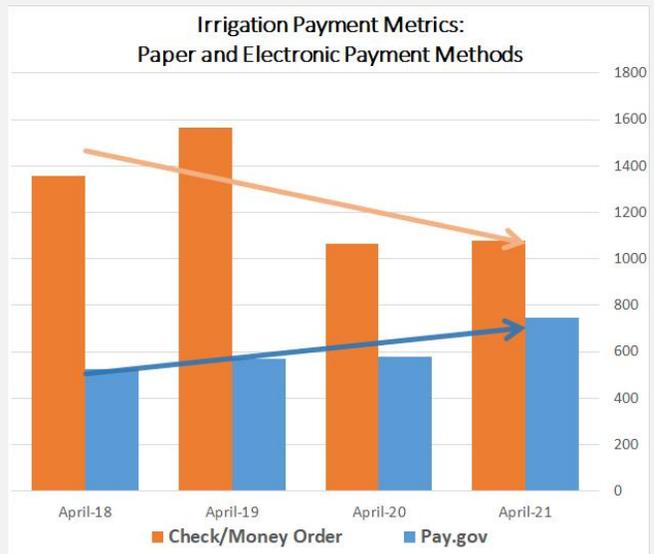
Many reservations not located near major metropolitan areas left utility customers without ready access to banks and other financial institutions. Dollars spent converting cash for bill payments could be a substantial expense, mailing paper checks or money orders tied up customer funds longer and processing paper is labor intensive and costs more to process.

Improving the customer experience and paperless payment and billing solutions is instrumental in meeting our mission goals, improving data quality, and reducing overhead.

### Customer Expectations

Customers expect electronic ways of doing business, however, BIA cannot leave out those who do not have access to digital tools.

The graph below shows customer payments by paper exceed electronic payments from 2018-2021. In 2018, approximately 1 of 4 customers utilized electronic payments. In 2021 an increase in electronic payments was realized, however, more work is still needed to complete the Electronic payment transition.



The orange bars represent checks/money orders and blue bars are electronic payments made through Pay.gov for the month of April over a four-year period.

### E-Pay and E-Billing Guidance Available

Electronic payment choices can be performed via a computer browser or smartphone or by phone.

- **Toll Free (800) 648-8659** Automated Pay by Phone (APP) for power customers at SCIP 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- **Online Pay.gov** expanded to include credit cards, debit cards, electronic checks, Amazon Pay, and PayPal eliminates mail time
- **Electronic billing** introduced for power customers if they choose to opt-in and go paperless

## Decision Support Tool for Irrigation

### Communication Dashboard

- Nationwide geodatabase and geospatial tool covering 17 Irrigation Projects and 3 Power Utilities
- Incorporates data from numerous sources (Maximo, FBMS, JPEGs, SharePoint, File Explorer)
- Construction tracking for projects implemented using appropriated funds
- Backend collaborative workspace for budgeting and planning
- Quick asset lookup for local personnel
- Centralized document repository for consistent reporting throughout the Division



### Status of Projects and Funding Distribution

The Irrigation Decision Support tool provides information by the structure type, shows construction appropriations since 2006 and distribution by region and project, status of projects (completed, budgeted, pending), total number of contracts, percentage of projects in planning, design, and construction.



### Searchable details for each Irrigation Project Budget

The funding appropriated for each project can be viewed by project and associated five-year plan. The system can generate bar graphs by project or regional office.

## Decision Support Tool for Irrigation



**BIA Division of Water and Power** Additional Data in Layer List Below

Find address or place

(1 of 4) Headgate

Facilities Condition Index	0.43
Asset Priority Index	30
Remediation Priority Index	13

Structure Picture - 9/22/2004

Zoom to

Two Medicine Unit

0.4mi

### GIS Mapping

The BIA Division of Water and Power Decision Support Tool viewing irrigation data of headgates at the Two Medicine project located on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation.



*Structure picture of Two Medicine Canal*

The system user has the option to view:

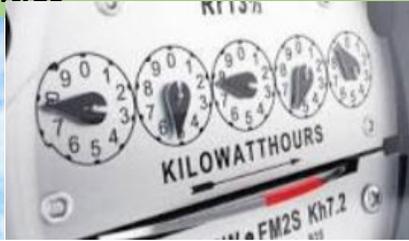
- Documentation
- National maps
- Project maps
- Download data
- Access Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

*Headgates on Two Medicine Canal in the Decision Support Tool*

### Irrigation (defined)

Irrigation is the artificial process of applying controlled amounts of water to land to assist in crop production

## Decision Support Tool for Power Utilities



*San Carlos Irrigation Project logo, utility meter and an electric lines pictured above*

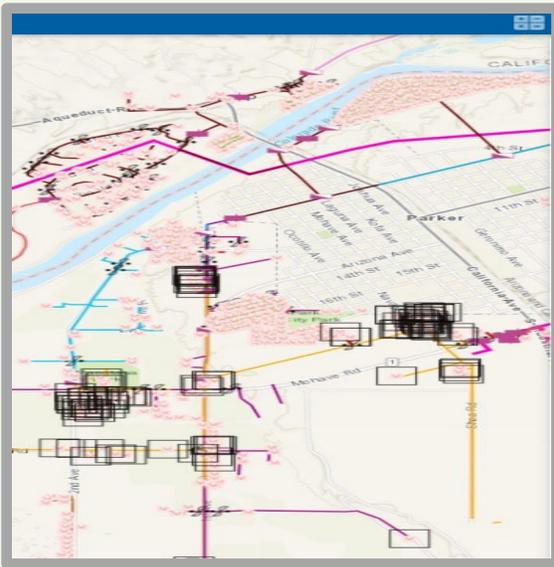
### Communication Dashboard

The Branch of Irrigation and Power is using GIS as a medium for gathering and analyzing BIA data to run power utilities. A communication dashboard allows users to:

- Dynamically visualize emergency scenarios and locate infrastructure at risk of failure
- Increase data availability and access through use of mobile web maps for field crews
- Instantaneous meter lookup and routing to quickly respond to customer callouts
- Access seasonal load distribution for advanced planning and year-round outage management
- Multi-user editing environment implemented to maintain data integrity

### Mapping of Power Utilities

A map of circuits and kW load are available in real time.



### How much is a kW of power?

One kilowatt is equal to 1,000 watts. Electric companies charge by how much electricity you use per kilowatt hour (kWh) and measures the number of kilowatts you use over time.

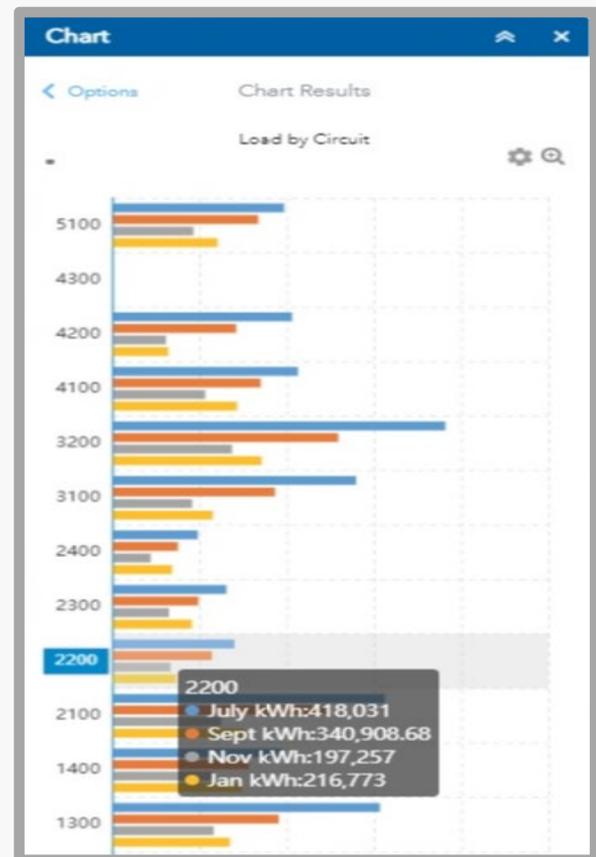


The average 100-watt light bulb uses only 0.1 kilowatts each hour.  
*Light bulb pictured to the left*

### Bar Graph of kW Usage

kW load is available as a bar graph in real time.

The bar graph below displays January, November, September, and July electrical usage.



## Decision Support Tool for Power Utilities

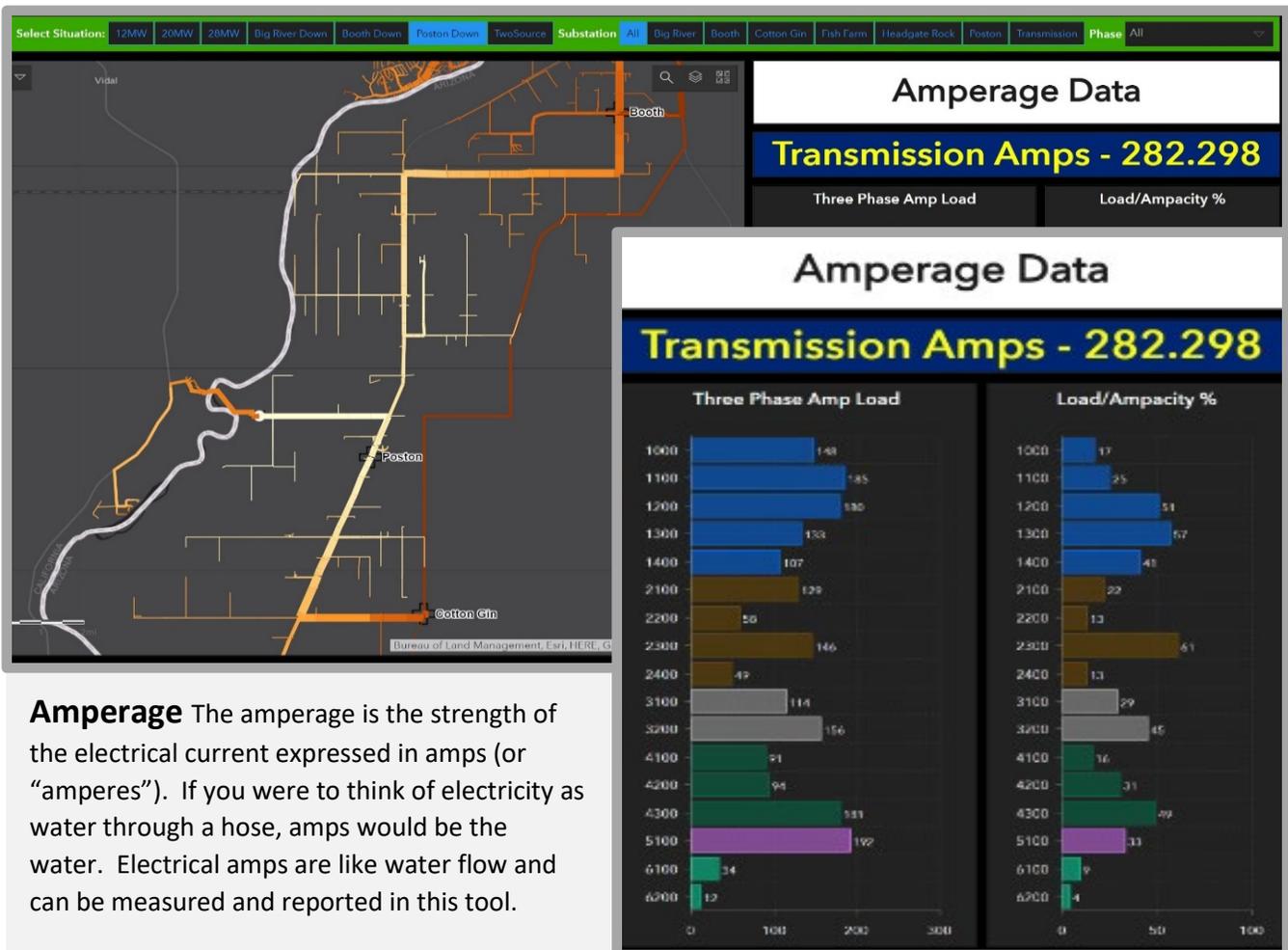


*Substation San Carlos Irrigation Power, Coolidge Dam, and power lines*

### Technology instrumental to Management of the San Carlos Irrigation Project (SCIP)

The SCIP located in Coolidge, Arizona is a federally owned electric utility that was authorized by an Act of Congress in 1924 to provide irrigation water to lands on the Gila River Reservation and certain lands adjacent to the reservation, in Pinal county and parts of Pima, Maricopa, Graham and Gila counties. The customer base is primarily agricultural and rural in the San Carlos, Gila River and Oracle areas.

**16,000+ customers • 29 substations • 250 miles of transmission facilities • 3,000 miles of distribution lines**



## Irrigation, Construction and Rehabilitation



### Wapato Main Diversion Dam

The Wapato Main Diversion Dam is an integral component of the Wapato Irrigation Project (WIP), providing water to approximately 140,000 acres of irrigated land on the Yakama Indian Reservation in Washington state.

The Diversion Dam is located on the Yakima River and was originally constructed in 1916 and includes two diversion structures spanning the east and west channels of the Yakima River. This structure allows diversion of roughly 2,000 cfs into the Main Canal of the Wapato Irrigation Project (WIP).

### Challenges for Wapato Staff

- Sedimentation and existing structure make it difficult maintain adequate water diversions during low flow conditions
- Crews cannot safely dewater the Main Canal headworks forebay to work on canal gates or the intake structure due to deteriorated facility
- Structure limited in ability to pass transported river sediments downriver, so sediment accumulates upstream exacerbating operations
- Dredging upstream is expensive, time consuming, and provides only short-term relief

### Flood Events Impacts

In 1996, a severe flood event on the Yakima River resulted in undermining below the east diversion. This was repaired in 2004 and subsequent flooding events occurred.

- Current fish passage facilities do not pass all species and life stages impacting the Pacific lamprey, a significant resource to NW tribes
- Recent flood events have come close to overtopping the railroad tracks. In addition to infrastructure risk, an overtopping event could result in uncontrollable release of water into the WIP Main Canal, with catastrophic result
- Existing safety features, specifically the trash rack mechanism, do not meet current industry standards. This is particularly problematic as large wood is frequently transported by the Yakima River and become lodged on the diversion structure.

### Partnerships for Remediation by 2027

The BIA partnered with the Yakama Nation to perform temporary repairs on the Main Canal Headworks structure adjacent the diversion. The engineering firm DOWL was to develop and design a more permanent solution to address ongoing operational, structural, and environmental issues of the facility.





### **25 CFR Part 150 Refreshed after 40 Years**

The Final rule for 25 CFR Part 150 was set to become final on September 15, 2021. This regulation was last updated in 1981. This long-awaited update defines current operations, technological advances, updated business rules, procedures and other regulations that had changed over time.

Here are some highlights:

- Removes the list of Regional Land Title and Records Office. BIA will post the list on the website so it can be updated.
- Establishes the Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS) as BIA's national System of Record.
- Defines the role of the LTRO along with services provided and available reports.

### **FY 2022 Policies and Procedures**

Implementation of the 25 CFR Part 150 will have a trickle-down effect for existing Handbooks and National Standard Operating Procedures as well as business rules and processes.

- Handbook last updated in 2006
- SOP draft updates have been started and will be shared with LTRO Regional Managers to review, discuss, and provide comments.
- Business rules that will be implemented will be uniform except for Region, Agency, or Tribal specific needs that may require a slightly different process.
- Flow charts are being considered but will not be addressed until the Handbook and SOPs are approved and in place.

### **Status of National Parcel Project**

The Division of Land Titles and Records has nine Cartographic Technicians creating parcel mapping from data held in the Trust Asset Accounting Management System (TAAMS). Apart from Eastern and Alaska Regions, the project is approximately 33% complete.

- 12,077 parcel mapping updates have been completed of the original 38,373 to be done (excludes Eastern and Alaska).
- Eastern and Alaska Region Cartographic Technician positions remains vacant. Discussion is ongoing on how to fill these positions to get the mapping project started.
- Western Region recently lost their Cartographic Technician.
- Vacant positions will be advertised soon.

### **TAAMS Probate Module**

DLTR is working closely with the Division of Probate and Estate Services and the Office of Hearings and Appeals in the development of a new probate module with TAAMS. The module will add more automated processes and enhance service to our Regions and beneficiaries. The module will replace ProTrac and enable tracking of all work in a single database. Business rules are under development to allow the new TAAMS module to flow smoothly. A pilot project with Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA), Probate and LTRO is automating the process through MS Teams channels to allow for quicker distribution of new probates as they are finalized by OHA. The implementation dates for the TAAMS Probate Module are pending User Acceptance Testing.

## Museum Program



July 28, 2021 Hopi Vice Chairman Clark Tikhonova met with Secretary Deb Haaland to present and donate the Hopi Nation Tribal flag to the BIA Hall of Tribal Nations Museum Program.

### Hall of Nations

On September 8, 2000, the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs' corridor in the U.S. Department of the Interior's main interior building in Washington, DC, was dedicated as the "Hall of Tribal Nations" to honor the federal recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes of the United States.

Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Kevin Gover officiated at the dedication ceremony that included the unveiling of over 40 tribal flags on permanent display in the Hall, which has grown to 164. The event was held on the same day as the Bureau of Indian Affairs' 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. In his remarks, Assistant Secretary Gover described the Hall of flags as a reminder to Bureau employees and a tool to educate others in the Department about the government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes and the trust responsibility that the BIA has to the tribes. The flags call upon us to honor these commitments every day. The BIA encourages tribes to contribute their flags for the Hall as part of our museum collection.

The Hopi Tribe's presentation brings the inventory of flags to 164 Tribes currently on display. For a full list see <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/division-natural-resources/museum/hall-tribal-nations>

### FY 2022 Museum Projects Underway

1. The BIA Museum Program now oversees, curates, and manages the Hall of Nations and plans a formal national outreach to include all Federally Recognized Tribes in the Fall.
2. The outline developed for the initial stages of an oral history project and online exhibit for the Hall of Nations. The project will include three-minute videos on each tribe, the origin of the flag and tribal logos
3. Provide the Art from the BIA collection to Federal Offices to showcase the art and culture of Indian Country.

### DOI Museum is 83 years old

The Interior museum opened March 8, 1938, with the goal of making Federal agencies more transparent and publicly accessible. Their mission is to inspire and educate employees and visitors about DOI's ongoing stewardship of the nation's public lands, heritage, and natural resources.

The DOI Museum has over 1,500 artifacts from 100 American Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages from the late 1800s to early 1900s. This includes 18 katsinas, 50+ textiles (rugs, saddle blankets), 170 ceramics, and 800+ baskets.

### BIA Museum Collections

BIA virtual link to the Museum collection

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/bureau-of-indian-affairs>

Bureau of Indian Affairs has just under 4 million individual objects, 52,000 lots, 6,600 cubic feet of artifacts, and 450 linear feet of archives housed in BIA facilities and the DOI Museum in Washington, DC. BIA collections housed in non-bureau facilities equate to 2 million objects. (Source: FY2010 DOI Accountability and Preservation of Museum Collections (Report No. C-IN-MOA-OOIO-20080)).

## Museum Program



*“A staff curator is responsible for the inventory and management of the BIA Collections while keeping abreast of national museum standards and developments”*

**Justin Giles**  
**BIA Staff Curator**



### Welcome our new BIA Staff Curator

We are pleased to welcome Justin Giles to our Trust team. Mr. Giles is an enrolled citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation from Rekackv (Broken Arrow) tribal town, of the Katcv (Big Cat/Tiger) Clan, and is of Cherokee, Welsh, and Scottish descent.

He grew up outside Washington, DC, in Northern Virginia, receiving his bachelor’s degree in anthropology from the University of Virginia. During his early college years, he was a member of the University of Virginia and Iroquois Nationals lacrosse teams as an Attackman. Mr. Giles was recently appointed to serve on the World Lacrosse Diversity and Opportunity Commission on December 10, 2020.



Mr. Giles has a multitude of professional experiences garnered from the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (NATHPO), Bureau of Indian Affairs, Central Intelligence Agency, Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Cultural Center and Archies, and the Seminole Tribe of Florida as the Oral History Coordinator.

He currently resides in Washington, DC with his wife and continues his service to Indian Country by telling our cultural history through contemporary issues and lacrosse.



**Curator** is someone employed by a museum or gallery to manage a collection of artworks or artifacts. Their duty is to acquire, care for and develop a collection. The curators in the photo above are examining, photographing, and completing an inventory on a new collection.

## Museum Program

### Who Owns the Past?

View this brief YouTube video entitled, “Bones of Contention: Battling for Human Dignity at the Salina Indian Burial Pit” on the burial ground issues in Kansas prior to the creation of NAGPRA and the Indian Museum in Washington, DC.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2ZcJTsyMbU>



### Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)

A museum or Federal agency must ensure requirements are met for any Native American cultural items under its legal control regardless of where the cultural item is physically located.

Requirements:

- Consult with Tribes on human remains and other cultural items
- Protect and plan for Native American human remains and other cultural items that may be removed from Federal or tribal lands
- Identify and report all Native American human remains and other cultural items in inventories and summaries of holding or collections; and
- Give notice prior to repatriating or transferring human remains and other cultural items.

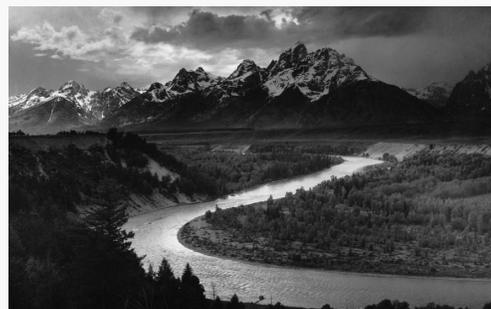
### NAGPRA Objects

Over 300 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) objects at non-DOI facilities were assessed and documented by the previous Museum curator.

- 340 accession records were created
- 321 NAGPRA items and 3,432 non-NAGPRA items catalogued,
- inventory of 8,728 objects completed
- 100 cubic feet of objects were rehoused and catalogued at non-DOI facilities

### Ansel Adams: The Mural Project, 1941-1942

In 1941, the Department of the Interior commissioned Ansel Adams to photograph national parks, Indian reservations, Bureau of Reclamation dams, and other projects in the West intending to use the images as photomurals in the new Main Interior building. In June 1942 departmental resources were redirected due to World War II and the photo murals in the DOI building were never realized.



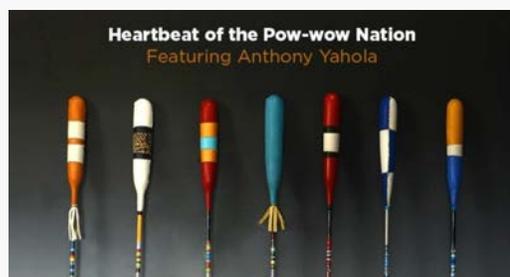
The photos of Indian reservation lands were donated to the U.S. National Archives and can be viewed on their website at [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

### Virtual Exhibits

In the past, BIA had developed ten virtual exhibits in Google Arts and Culture, which resulted in increased outreach to more people than could ever visit the objects in person. Virtual exhibits are planned to share our BIA collection in the future.

See past BIA virtual exhibits online at:

<http://iacbmuseums-viewingroom.exhibit-e.art/viewing-room>



*Flyer for Anthony Yahola exhibit*

## Pathways Internship Program Success Story

### Natural Resources Program hires former Intern

Ryan Portalatin is a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. He learned about the BIA Pathways Program through an email newsletter sent out by his Tribe and immediately applied for a position. At the time he was pursuing a bachelor's degree in Natural Resources Management at the Texas Tech University where he eventually graduated in the Fall of 2017. He interned with the Branch of Environmental and Cultural Resources Management within BIA Office of Trust Services and supported the work of the Division of Natural Resources by helping with records management projects and other organizational tasks. He was hired as a Rangeland Management Specialist for BIA's Central Office Branch of Fish, Wildlife and Recreation located in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



*Ryan Portalatin, Texas Tech University graduate and now BIA Rangeland Management Specialist*

### Questions and Answers about Pathways

**Ryan, what did you like about the program as a student?** I enjoyed the opportunity to surround myself in a professional environment and learn about the inner workings of the Federal Government. Pathways staff did an excellent job of fostering my interests and placing me in a division/branch that best suited my career goals.

**What were some of the benefits you received from Pathways?** The experience of working with BIA personnel and meeting people among all the DOI's bureaus and offices. I was blessed that many BIA personnel took on a mentorship role with me and I was given a lot of great career advice from many great people. I was afforded the opportunity to travel to Billings, Montana for a National Environmental Science meeting and to Rapid City, South Dakota to visit Tribal schools experiencing problems with environmental compliance. The greatest benefits by far are the experiences such as these that I can (and did) take forward with me into my career with the BIA.

**What would you say to someone thinking about Pathways as an option?** To someone considering Pathways as an option, I would strongly encourage them to apply. The Pathways program is the best opportunity for Native American youth looking to begin a career in the BIA or the Federal Government. The Pathways program provides students with invaluable experiences that prepare them for Federal Employment upon graduation.

**List three words that describe your position.** Conservation, Self-Determination, and Trust Responsibility

**What are your hobbies and what do you like to do you in your free time?** Living in Albuquerque is an outdoorsman's paradise! In my free time I like to go birdwatching, fishing, backcountry hiking, and otherwise explore all of New Mexico's natural beauty. Whether we are hiking high in the Sandia Mountains or wading through the murky waters of the Rio Grande River, I always bring my Spanish Mastiff, Mia, along for the journey.



*Make a*  
**POSITIVE  
DIFFERENCE**  
*in BIA and the*  
**TRIBAL COMMUNITIES  
WE SERVE**



*Ryan in Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs hearing room and hiking in his free time in New Mexico*

## Tribal Climate Resilience



**Bryan Newland**  
Assistant Secretary- Indian Affairs

*“Climate change is being most keenly felt in Tribal communities throughout Indian Country and in the unique coastal and interior environments across the State of Alaska, which are home to thousands of Alaska Native people”*



**Darryl LaCounte**  
BIA Director

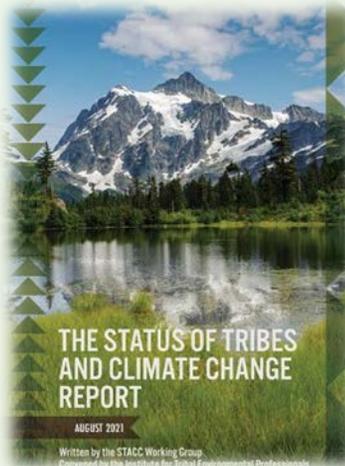
*“This [TCR Grant] funding is part of our on-going commitment to support Tribes in managing and adapting to a changing climate”*



*“We lost most of our land, it used to be another mile where the ocean is now” - Photo credit: Tammy Iyatunguk, Shishmaref High School, Grade 12*

### Tribes and Alaska Native Villages facing Relocation due to Climate Change

This report is currently going through the surnaming process and is due to be posted on the website. The report is being developed in response to a Congressional Request from the House Appropriations Committee.



### The Status of Tribes and Climate Change (STACC) Report

The STACC report was funded by the BIA. The report honors the voices of Indigenous people across the U.S. to increase understanding of Tribal lifeways, cultures, and worldviews. It highlights climate change impacts Tribes are experiencing, the solutions they are implementing, and how we can support Tribes in adapting to our changing world.

The report is available at <http://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/Home>. BIA partnered with the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) to prepare and post the report online. ITEP was created in 1992 to act as a catalyst among tribal governments, research, and technical resources at Northern Arizona University. The mission of ITEP is to strengthen tribal capacity and sovereignty in environmental and natural resource management through culturally relevant education, research, partnerships, and policy-based services.

### BIA Announced Tribal Climate Resilience Grants totaling \$13.84 Million

The BIA awarded grants to dozens of American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Tribal Nations and organizations to support their climate adaptation planning, ocean and coastal management planning, capacity building, and relocation, managed retreat, and protect-in-place planning for climate risks.

The 135 awards directly fund 79 Tribes and 13 Tribal organizations while supporting additional Tribes through cooperative planning, information-sharing, and planning tools. The list of awardees can be found on our website at <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/annual-awards-program>.

## Spotlight on the BIA Midwest Region



### Logistics of Service

The BIA Midwest Regional Office is in Bloomington, Minnesota. This Region includes staff located at four BIA agencies on or near the 36 Tribes in this geographic service area.

### Trust Branches in the Region

Programs at the Regional level are more hands on when it comes to working with Tribes. Branch Chiefs work closely within Regional Offices to respond to services for Tribes in the following program areas:

- Environmental, Cultural Resources and Safety
- Fee to Trust
- Fish, Wildlife and Parks
- Forestry and Wildland Fire Management
- Land Titles and Records Office
- Lockbox Coordination
- Probate
- Real Estate Services
- Water Resources

### Service Area Map

The Midwest Region has jurisdiction working with Tribes in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Iowa. The map below highlights the service area.



Map indicates jurisdiction of BIA Midwest Region

## MIDWEST REGION

### Who we are...Who we serve

4 BIA Agencies  
36 Federally recognized Tribes  
62 million acres  
Service area: IA, MI, MN, and WI

### Regional Trust Point of Contact

Patricia Olby, Deputy Regional Director-Trust  
BIA, Midwest Regional Office  
5600 American Blvd W, Ste 500  
Bloomington, MN 55437

### Midwest Tribes

Tribes in the Midwest Region encompass approximately 62 million acres, including treaty-ceded territories, representing millions of acres of forests, lakes, streams, and wetlands. The Tribes have sustained programs that support their self-determination, cultural, political and subsistence needs including such programs as fisheries and wildlife management, wild rice, wetlands, and waterfowl restoration.

As a result of the Tribe's collective efforts with the states, other federal agencies, various universities and private landowners, these programs have served as national models for collaborative, landscape-scale work.

### Trust Leadership

The Deputy Regional Director for Trust Services oversees a staff of specialists responsible for natural resources (water resources, forestry and fire, irrigation, and safety of dams), agriculture (farm, pasture, and range), fish, wildlife and parks, real estate services (land acquisition and disposal, land title records office, probate, rights-of-way, and leases/permits).

Ms. Patricia Olby, Deputy Bureau Director-Trust Services agreed to an interview on his experiences. (See Interview on pages 35-36.

## In the Spotlight: Midwest Deputy Regional Director



### PATRICIA OLBY Biography

Patricia L. Olby is a member of the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin. She earned an Associate degree in Accounting from Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in Ashland, Wisconsin. She has held positions as Information Technology Specialist, Realty Officer and Superintendent for the Minnesota Agency in Bemidji, Minnesota.

### The Interview

Ms. Olby joined the Trust leadership team as a Deputy Regional Director in 2020, and she was recently interviewed about her experiences. Here is what she had to say.

### What was your first government job?

I first started my career with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1992 as an Emergency Hire Probate Clerk. I worked on backlog cases where the decedent died in the 1800's. Imagine working on these cases without search engines or the internet! We wrote many letters and made many phone calls in hopes of building the family history and finding probable heirs.

### Which Trust duties were a surprise?

I don't feel like I've been in the position long enough, or under normal circumstances to answer. Most of my time as the DRD has been during the pandemic. Nothing is normal. In fact, I haven't even personalized my office yet – no pictures of family or pets. I started the beginning of February 2020, and started maximum telework in March. I believe my experience has equipped me with the skills needed to be successful in my current position. Each day is different, and I love that part of it. Who would have expected a global pandemic though?



### What is your favorite Trust program?

Realty. I love working with the landowners. I love sharing my knowledge of what it means to be a landowner, how land became so fractionated, their options and rights.

### What do you do for fun?

I am a pianist, and love learning new pieces. During the past year I have learned to sew and have gone from being unable to sew a straight line to sewing hundreds of face masks. I've given masks to friends and family and have donated many to the schools. I've been told that kids lose their masks like they lose mittens and gloves.



*Children in masks and Godspell cast photo*

I also love to be involved in theater, usually with music. I am currently the Musical Director for "Godspell" for our local community theater. Additionally, I am a karaoke nut. I love to sing.

### Share a positive work memory

There are many, but one that comes to mind is the White Earth Land Settlement Act, 10,000 Acres project, where the State of Minnesota transferred 10,000 Acres back to the White Earth Band in trust status. Signing off on the final deed was very memorable and rewarding. Photo of signing ceremony at the top of this page. See the full article published in the Bemidji Pioneer newspaper at <https://www.bemidjipioneer.com/1439774-land-transfer-white-earth-completed-under-settlement>

## In the Spotlight: Midwest Deputy Regional Director

### What advice would you give others who would like to be a DRD?

I'm still learning – ask again in 10 years!

### What was your greatest challenge in FY21?

Again, since I've only been in this position since 2020, I would have to say the Virtual Partners in Action Conference. Nearing the end of the pandemic, hopefully, will bring some type of normal back into the office. Adapting to more changes and providing guidance to employees while ensuring safety and still providing the same level of service, or better yet, improved service, to our clients is always a challenge.



### Describe a positive business practice you implemented to improve the customer experience in a 100% telework environment.

The Midwest Region organizes an annual conference, Partners in Action, where all Midwest Tribes, Tribal Leaders, and Tribal Program Staff are invited and are our targeted audience. We invite Federal Partners to present and share information as well. The event gets larger and larger each year. Last year because of the pandemic we conducted this event virtually and it was a huge success. We were able to deliver 60 training sessions using Microsoft Teams to 600 attendees. This Fiscal Year the event will take place virtually again beginning July 19 – August 13.

### I am a public servant (Federal employee) because

I love serving people. Customer service is one of my greatest skills. I believe and support the Bureau of Indian Affairs mission statement. I have studied the history of federal Indian policy and believe I can make a difference in changing the Bureau's bad reputation; making and building new relationships and partnerships that are positive, in support of Self Determination and Self Governance.

### Did you have a mentor in BIA?

Yes – Darryl LaCounte. I am a 2011 graduate of the Pathways to Leadership Program from the DOI University where Mr. LaCounte first became my mentor. I had previously met Darryl while working together on a team which established the first Fee to Trust Handbook. I liked his leadership style and the ability to get things done. I haven't had to call on him in recent years, but I did take advantage of having a mentor early on when first becoming a Superintendent. It was great knowing that I had someone to help me think through decisions and bounce things off when I was first learning the ropes.

### Do you have a humorous story to share?

In recent times, just this past year as you know we've moved into a virtual environment using Microsoft Teams for meetings. We all had to learn how to use it quickly and am sure we've all experienced a hot mic out there when on a call.



*My good dogs Reggie and Lucy*

I consider myself savvy in IT matters, so I was so surprised that I was the guilty party with the hot mic during a rather large conference call. It wouldn't have been so bad; except I was talking to my dog! "Hi puppy! You're so cute!! Who's a good boy? Huh? Are you a good boy?" No one said anything, but the presenter stopped talking and I noticed the silence and that my mic was not muted. I was mortified!

### How would you like others to remember your time as Deputy for Trust?

Committed to providing exceptional service, building relationships, making our office a better place to work, and improving the reputation of the BIA through honesty, empathy and demonstrating integrity.

## Midwest Region: HEARTH Act at Pokagon Band of Potawatomi



**Matthew Wesaw**  
former Tribal Council Chairman

*“Prompt access to affordable, decent housing has benefited many Pokagon Band citizens, including James and Elizabeth Topash, who in June 2013, moved into Pokagon Band’s elders housing.*

*James is a Pokagon Band elder, veteran, and former Pokagon Band council member. He is a double amputee who needed a handicap accessible housing unit as soon as possible. The Pokagon Band’s quick implementation of the HEARTH Act allowed for quick approval of his lease, which greatly improved his living conditions”*

### **Pokegonek Edwat “Where the Pokagon’s live”**

The Pokegonek Edwat is a Tribal residential community with 20 elder homes, 14 single family homes, 16 elder duplexes, and 16 townhomes on a 330-acre plot of land. The homes were made available for lease or mortgage to members under approved tribal HEARTH Act leases.



### **Tribal Leasing activity Streamlined**

The Pokagon Band worked quickly to implement the HEARTH Act by enacting their own Residential Leasing Act. They were one of the first tribes to apply for approval of their Tribal Leasing regulations and the third in the United States to be approved in 1993.

A letter of appreciation was sent to the BIA soon after explaining the benefits they realized for a tribal member noting the HEARTH Act is historic because it supports tribal self-determination by recognizing greater tribal control within Indian Country. The letter from former Tribal Council Chairman shared the positive impacts to two community members in this letter. Excerpt of his letter to the left.

### **Benefits of HEARTH**

The Band submitted 14 residential leases and 9 mortgages for recording to the BIA Michigan Agency shortly after approval. Pokagon Band citizens were able to move into the Pokagon Band’s housing development without waiting for the BIA to approve residential leases under 25 CFR Part 162.

## Midwest Region: Partners in Action Conference



### Virtual Partners in Action Conference: Adapt, Improve, Overcome

July 2021							August 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30	31				

The BIA Midwest Region held their 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Partners in Action (PIA) Conference, from July 19 – August 13, 2021, to accommodate a virtual audience of Federal and Tribal partners. Despite the challenges of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the conference was hosted virtually and outpaced previous conferences by several metrics

- 4-week virtual conference
- 749 registered participants
- National presence from all 12 BIA Regions
- 76 Tribes including 40 from outside the Midwest Region
- 50 individual government agencies
- 72 courses spread over 86 sessions

Virtual attendance allowed participants to attend the conference from the convenience of a laptop, cell phone, or tablet.

### 50 Government Agencies

The conference participants included 50 individual government agencies and departments ranging from the US Environmental Protection Agency and the US Department of Transportation to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the US Department of Agriculture as trainees and trainers.

### Opening Ceremony on YouTube



You may watch the opening ceremony on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1mtUjeCd9Q>

### Sampling of Courses Offered

What is on the minds of Tribal officials in working with the BIA? The Partners in Action conference topics are selected based upon outreach to tribal leaders, surveys, and open requests for topics.

The 2021 PIA Conference gave participants and opportunity to learn and engage on a wide array of topics. This year's conference offered a staggering 72 courses spread over 86 sessions.

- FEMA Flood Risk Studies for Native Sovereign Nations
- Gaming Compacts
- Sports Betting and iGaming
- Manoomin (Wild Rice) Monitoring & Restoration in the Lakes Michigan-Huron Basin.

The top five registered courses include:

- BIA History - BIA Today
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in Indian Country 101
- Introduction to the Bureau: Overview for New Tribal Leaders

## Midwest Region: Probate and Estate Services



### What is a Probate?

Probate means the legal process by which applicable tribal, Federal, or State law that affects the distribution of a decedent's estate.

### The Probate Process

When a property owner dies, the assets are commonly reviewed by a probate court. The probate court provides the final ruling on the division and distribution of assets to beneficiaries. A deceased person may leave instructions on how their assets should be distributed after death in a will. In some cases, the deceased does not leave a will.

### Why do I work in Probate?



**Mandy Priester**  
Legal Admin Specialist

**MIDWEST REGION**  
8 years

I enjoy researching and putting together probate packages. To me, it's like putting pieces of a puzzle together, or solving a mystery, and working hard to find that last piece, or that last clue. And the feeling of accomplishment is so rewarding when each probate case is complete.

I enjoy genealogy research and seeing family trees come together. But most of all, I enjoy working with the families, helping them find closure for their deceased loved ones. It's a tough time to go through, and I want to be there for them and make it easier to get through the process. And finally, I like being a civil servant, especially for BIA, and giving back to our Native communities. It is a very rewarding position.

### How is Probate work rewarding?



**Shannon Miller**  
Legal Admin Specialist

**GREAT LAKES AGENCY**  
7 years

I enjoy my work as an LAS because the job duties are challenging yet rewarding. Some cases are extremely complex and require a great deal of research, outreach, and brain power. I have often made the joke that I feel like a Private Investigator at times, because when researching a case, you need to really dig into the decedent's life. We discover the milestones: marriages, divorces, children, adoptions, while gathering the supporting documents in the form of vital records.

My position also requires me to contact family members to gather additional information. I have heard numerous stories from family members about their deceased loved ones; some are happy memories, and some are on the sad side. When the time comes to hand the case over to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, it feels as though I know the Decedent. It feels personal. I recall one case that I worked on where I had to inadvertently reunite family members that had never met, and they called me up to express their gratitude. What I enjoy most about the job is making connections with individuals and the humanity element that accompanies it by showing compassion or being able to lend an ear to someone who needs it. Having Trust responsibility and doing my part in the transfer of Trust Assets is a secondary form of job satisfaction for me personally, but I have always considered myself to be a "people person".

## Midwest Region: Probate and Estate Services



### What keeps you engaged in your job after 19 years?



**Jill Graves**  
Contact Representative

**MINNESOTA AGENCY**  
19 years in Probate

Probate can be a very rewarding job. When you connect with people you are given the opportunity to change the face of the BIA in a positive light. I have come across many famous Natives from many different reservations. I've worked on probates for actors, inventors, circus entertainers, authors, and artists. Every case is so unique, so every day my job is different.

No matter how long you work in probate you never stop learning. The laws change through the years and keeping up with them can be a challenge, you never get bored!

*(Continued)*

With the American Indian Probate Reform Act (AIPRA), came the Purchase at Probate option. In the Midwest, I received one of the first cases that had a Tribe use the purchase at probate. AIPRA was new and there were no procedures on how to start the process. It has evolved throughout the years, making it more streamlined.

Our Agency, Minnesota Agency, currently has 1 Tribal band, Fond du lac, who is actively purchasing at probate. There are two others, White Earth, and Leech Lake, who have utilized purchase at probate as well. We also have an individual who is a co-owner of land, who is purchasing land interests from a certain tract that they own interests on. The Purchase at Probate process can make a case closing take a little longer, but I believe it benefits the Tribes to help get some of their land back. Many of these land interests are very small and have many owners. At our Minnesota Agency we have helped our Tribes to understand Purchase at Probate and guided them along the way to start purchasing. It gives me great pride to work for the BIA, helping others any way I can.

### How does the Probate Process Work?

The Probate process is the analysis and transfer of estate assets previously owned by a deceased person. Just like any good story the probate cases have a beginning, middle, and end.



The flow chart on the next page provides additional detail on the tasks performed by the Probate staff.

## HOW DOES THE PROBATE PROCESS WORK?

The Probate process is the analysis and transfer of estate assets previously owned by a deceased person. Just like any good story the probate cases have a beginning, middle, and end.

### The Beginning PRE-CASE PREPARATION

First, BIA gets notification of a death. We can get notified by family, Tribe, Tribal Enrollment or another probate office. Next we verify the death, review the Decedent's trust assets, and either close the case if there are no trust assets, or advance the case preparation if there are trust assets.

### The Middle CASE PREPARATION

We research the family information and obtain documentation to verify the information, basically putting together the family tree for the Decedent. Examples of documents we obtain: death certificates, wills, marriage certificates, divorce decrees, adoption decrees, etc. Each family is different and therefore the required documentation for each case will be different. Next, we verify addresses for possible heirs and verify their Tribal enrollment. Finally, we verify their trust assets by obtaining certified inventories and/or IIM account history and balances.

### The Middle ADJUDICATION

BIA submits the probate package to the Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA). OHA reviews the information received. Then, they hold a probate hearing (if needed) and issue a Probate Order.

### The End CLOSING

BIA reviews OHA's decision order. After waiting for the appeal period to finish, we initiate closing out the trust assets. First, Land Titles and Records Offices (LTRO) will distribute the land and then Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (BTFA), formerly OST, will distribute the money, all according to the OHA Decision Order. Once that is complete, BIA will do one final review, and then close the probate case file.

## Midwest Region: Land Titles and Records Office Success Story



### Our Vision

LTRO improves ownership information and protects and preserves trust lands and trust resources through efficient and accurate processing of land titles.

### Our Mission

The mission of the LTRO program is to maintain timely and certified Federal title, encumbrance, and ownership services and to provide land title services that are accurate, timely, accountable, and efficient for all Federal Indian trust and restricted lands. The LTRO is truly an “office of historical trust records” for the Midwest Region and Tribes



*“I thoroughly enjoy working on documents that outline the history of our lands and find it quite remarkable to discover where we were and how far we have come. History is amazing!”*

**Heidi Gordon**  
**Midwest LTRO Manager**  
**29 years of Federal service**

### Over 20 Years Ago

Leadership in the Midwest Region had a vision for the future of establishing a dedicated Land Title and Records Office for the Midwest Region and Tribes. Unfortunately, new laws and regulations released, put this plan on the backburner. Here is our story.

### Our Journey

Twenty years later, a dedicated Midwest LTRO came to fruition and here is how our journey began. Negotiations were conducted with the Great Plains Region and LTRO to organize the transfer of function to the Midwest Region. Soon after the Midwest Region set out to hire LTRO employees, establish administrative functions, and started training the new staff to have them ready by June 1, 2015.

### Collaboration on Training New Staff

Subject matter experts at the Northwest Region LTRO made themselves available to provide side-by-side training to our new Midwest LTRO staff.



*Midwest LTRO staff looking over the shoulder of a Northwest LTRO employee providing training*



*Northwest LTRO Staff pose for photo*

## Midwest Region: Land Titles and Records Office Success Story



### Tracking Accountability and Productivity System (TAPS)

The Midwest LTRO and Regional staff came together with the Southern Plains LTRO for procedural guidance and lessons on the Tracking Accountability and Productivity System (TAPS).

TAPS allows the Midwest LTRO to track where all files are, help management to locate documents, and assists in tracking employee progress and how long each document takes to go through the system from beginning to the end. Midwest drafted Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on this Northwest visit. The TAPS system is a great management tool.



*Northwest LTRO Staff members pose for group photo during Midwest visit in Portland, Oregon*



*Midwest leadership debriefing after Southern Plains training and discuss plans for the next steps to the 2015 Midwest LTRO grand opening.*

### Transfer of LTRO Function in 2015

Once LTRO records were indexed by Midwest Region and Agency staff members our LTRO staff physically traveled to Aberdeen, South Dakota to retrieve the hard copy records, and finally bring them home where we feel they belonged.

The toughest part of becoming our own LTRO was the data verification and placement. After all records were accounted for and properly put away in our Records room, we were ready to begin.



*Midwest agencies and Regional staff verifying records now the property of the Midwest LTRO*

### Midwest LTRO Next Steps

- Implement a paperless LTRO process
- Begin staff training from three Regions
- Have CGI train on Title Modules in the Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS)
- Receive short-term operational assistance from Northwest and Southern Plains LTRO's
- Establish remote positions for the LTRO with a presence at each Agency and the Region. We began with 3 and added 6 more positions (4-Great Lakes Agency, 1-Minnesota Agency, and 1-Region).
- Train Midwest employees on standard operating procedures and outline expectations

Now six years since the transition, the Midwest LTRO is holding strong, making sure our tribes and agencies' needs are met. We have become more efficient and love that the Midwest Region as its "own" LTRO.

## Midwest Region: Wildland Fire Management



### Helitack Crew Mission to Protect Resources ends in Rescue of Young Boy

#### Initial Attack Dispatch Alerted

This year during Minnesota's Spring fire season, the Red Lake Nation's Helitack crew stayed busy responding to several initial attack and extended attack fires. The Red Lake Nation partners with BIA for a helicopter contract. On this day, Haydn Gaw from Sinton Helicopters, based in California was the pilot.

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, while returning from a recon flight near Redby, MN, Helicopter 4SH spotted smoke west of the community of Red Lake. Once overhead the crew identified a ¼ acre fire burning near the Circle Pines subdivision.



#### Unconscious Child

Challenge Johnson, helicopter crew member, noticed a boy swatting at the fire near the heal. As the helicopter circled overhead for the crew to size up the fire, the boy collapsed and appeared to be unconscious as the fire was backing towards him.

#### Dispatch Alerted

Helicopter Manager, Darrell Crowe, radioed Red Lake Dispatch to inform them of the situation. Dispatcher Wendy Pemberton immediately requested police and an ambulance respond to the fire.

#### Child Returned Home

The crew from 4SH discussed options and risks and made the decision to land in the sub-division. Darrell Crowe ran towards the fire and found the boy conscious and dragging himself from the fire with one arm. He had injured his ankle and was overcome with exhaustion and anxiety as the fire had already burned his shoe. Darrell rescued the young boy and returned him to his home northwest of the fire. Police, EMS, and Red Lake wildland engines were on scene and Darrell returned to the helicopter. The fire was caught at a ¼ acre by Red Lake Fire resources.

#### Thank you, Red Lake Helitack and Dispatch!

We want to recognize the extraordinary effort of the Red Lake Helitack Team and Dispatch. All in a day's work turned out to be a successful rescue effort.



*Pictured (L to R): Haydn Gaw, Challenge Johnson, Wendy Pemberton, and Darrell Crowe*

#### Crew Resource Management (CRM) 7 Skills

Flight crews are trained in the importance of decision making, assertiveness, mission analysis, communication, leadership, adaptability, and maintaining situational awareness. The quick thinking, decisions, teamwork, and actions made by the entire crew made this a successful rescue. Helicopter 4SH's pilot manager, crew members, and Red Lake Dispatch provided an excellent display of CRM skills in this coordinated rescue.

## Midwest Region: Fee to Trust



### Fee to Trust

The Fee-to-Trust division is current processing 102 pending applications and six reservation proclamations. The Division processed the trust acquisition of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community's Hočokata Ti Cultural Center and surrounding lands. (See photo above).

The Division of Fee to Trust processes land-into-trust applications and reservation proclamations for five tribes in the Midwest Region: Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Oneida Nation, and the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community of Minnesota.

The Division operates pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and is funded by reprogrammed Tribal Priority Allocation funds. Key features of the program include:

- Monthly reporting
- Quarterly meetings
- Annual accounting
- A dedicated staff (Supervisory Realty Specialist, Program Analyst, Environmental Protection Specialist, and Realty Specialists)
- Member tribes benefit from customized training sessions and technical assistance

## Midwest Region: Wildlife and Parks

### \$13M Great Lakes Restoration Initiative



*Lake Superior shoreline in Wisconsin*

As of August 2021, the BIA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), Distinct Tribal Program (DTP), has awarded over \$13 million to Midwest Tribes for FY2021. Funds will protect an estimated 1,400 acres, Control 860 acres of invasive species, and open 30 miles of aquatic connectivity.

The GLRI DTP, unique to the BIA Midwest Region, was established in FY2020 after 10 years of successful partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency's GLRI program. The GLRI DTP allows for maximum flexibility in funding for each GLRI Focus Area, expanding trust responsibility to tribes and promoting self-determination.

### \$700,000 Circle of Flight Awards

Also unique to the Midwest Region, the Circle of Flight (COF) program has awarded over \$700,000 in FY2021 to tribes for protection of wetlands, waterfowl, and wild rice. An estimated 220 acres of wild rice will be seeded, 5,160 acres protected, and 140 tribal youth educated.



*Wild Rice growing on a lake in Michigan*

Since the mid-1990s, COF has supported tribal projects aiming to monitor, protect, and restore native species and thousands of acres of wetland habitat while simultaneously supporting tribal self-determination, traditional lifeways, cultural revitalization, and local food systems.

## Midwest Region: Regional Geospatial Coordinator



### A Message from Christopher Kaczmarek Midwest Regional Geospatial Coordinator



*This job requires the “boots on the ground” to be the ones caked in mud.*

Navigating new territories has always been a strength in geographers both new and old. We replaced hand crafted maps drawn out on clay tablets, paper, and silk for digital maps that can be viewed, analyzed, and referenced from any point on Earth at any given time.

As we chart our days working in a hybrid office model, the technology used in today’s mapping environments have helped us overcome challenges in developing geospatial data while delivering maps and products to our staff digitally and remotely.

To coordinate the initiative in managing geospatial data, developing the infrastructure to host and analyze the data, as well as distribute and make products available at the national and regional level, and accessible to all BIA staff and stakeholders, can often be an overwhelming undertaking.

The opportunities to grow as the new Regional Geospatial Coordinator (RGC) for the Midwest Region are bountiful. Not only have I grown in this position, but those at the region taking advantage of GIS and its potential have also gained appreciation of the flexibility and capabilities of incorporating GIS in their working environment.

### Coordination of 2021 ESRI GIS Training



This Midwest program is working with ESRI to schedule the Midwest Region 2021 training schedule. We successfully hosted six virtual, ESRI instructor led training sessions for both BIA and Tribal staff.

Training sessions ranged from Migrating from ArcGIS Desktop to ArcGIS Pro, to Field Data Collection and Management.

### Why Data Standardization is Important

Geospatial standards are a set of guidelines agreed upon through a community. These guidelines determine how GIS data is created, stored, dispersed, designed, and managed. The geospatial standards that are currently being developed within the BIA are both technical documents and are geospatial by design.

Standards are essential to ensure consistency, transparency, and data integrity. Standards reduce confusion by promoting common, clear meanings for data that is reused. They optimize processes while improving the quality of overall geospatial data, which in turn is utilized as a base to measure from or improve upon.

## Midwest Region: Regional Geospatial Coordinator



### Benefits of Standardization for Stakeholders

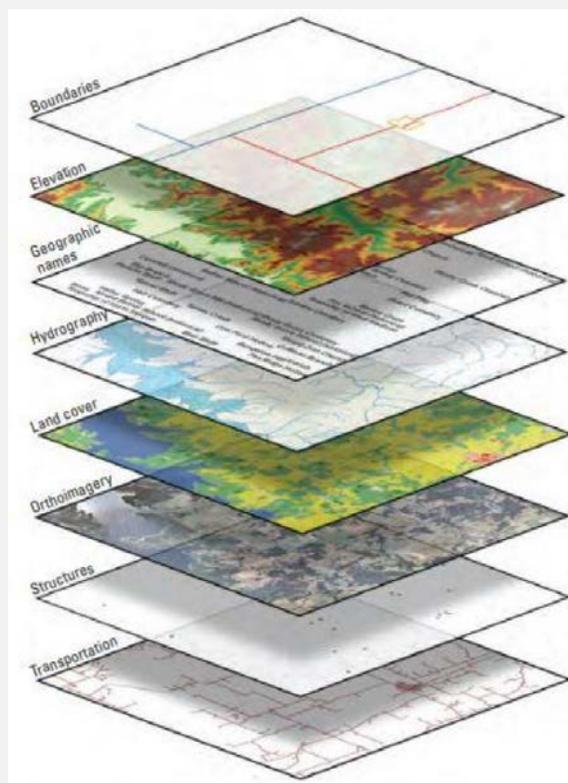
- Fine tune technical product or service
- Create efficiency
- Optimize operations
- Improve quality
- Enhance customer satisfaction
- Increase productivity
- Benefit users by reducing cost
- Enhance user performance

### Data Standardization Work Group

The Midwest Regional Geospatial Coordinator is involved with several work groups focused on creating National Geospatial Data Standards that follow the Federal Geographic Data Committee <https://www.fgdc.gov> guidelines to meet the needs of regional GIS users as well as stakeholders who rely on BIA managed geospatial data themes.

The current data themes include Cultural Resources, Land Area Representation, Trust Parcels, Forestry, Transportation and Water Resources

### GIS Mapping provides Useful Information



GIS mapping allows users access to several layers of data. The graphic to the left is an example of potential layers that may be captured or displayed by GIS users.

- Geographic names
- Hydrography
- Land cover
- Ortho imagery
- Structures
- Transportation

The data is valuable for decision making.

### BIA ESRI Portal Web Maps

Our BIA ArcGIS enterprise portal was used to develop and host web maps and data. Our, "BIA Midwest Regions Parcel Viewer", is an extremely useful web map allowing the user to retrieve land boundaries, survey information, review current Fee-to-Trust lands and their status, trust parcels and tract locations.

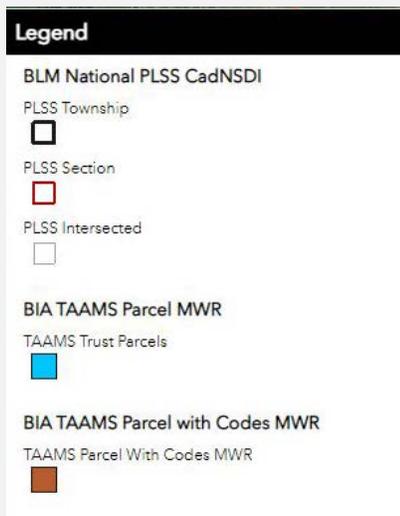
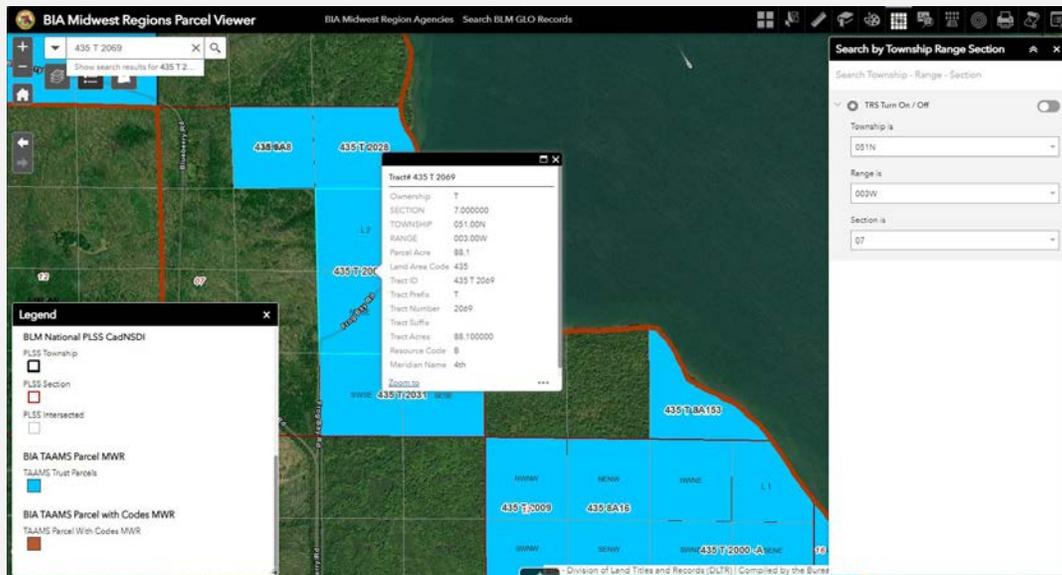
BIA employees may access other federal GIS data with a simple search and add functions from servers across the nation. This was designed for non-GIS users who wanted direct access to parcel information as it reflects BIA trust land found in our Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS). Contact your Regional Geospatial Coordinator for more information.

Screen shots of the Midwest Region Parcel Viewer are on the next page.

## Midwest Region: Regional Geospatial Coordinator

### BIA Midwest Region Parcel Viewer

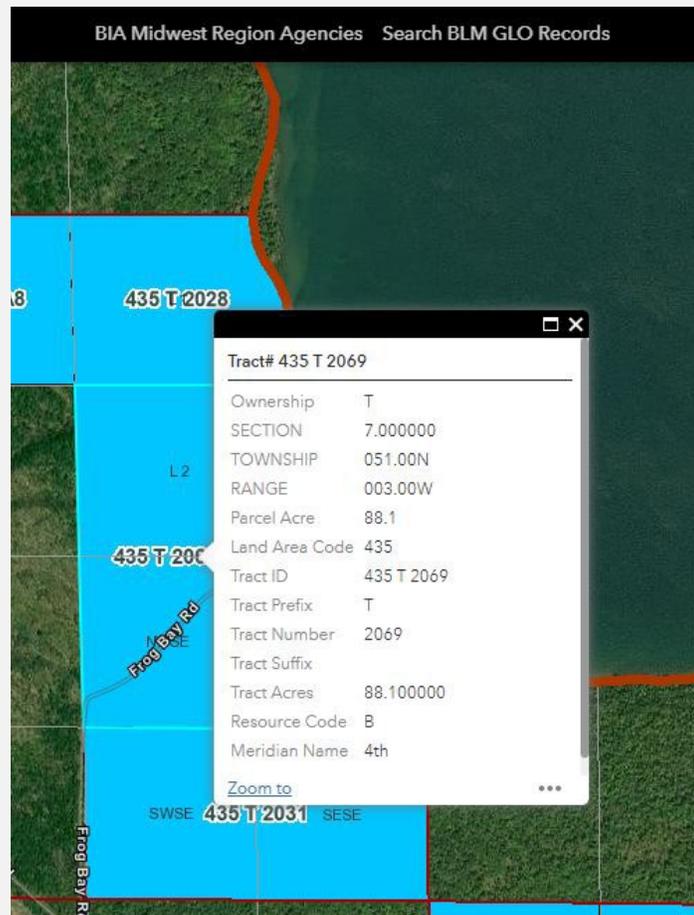
Parcel Viewer allows searches by Township, Range and Section, Tract ID, Land Area Code, etc. Results displayed for Tract ID 435 T 2069 totaling 88.1 acres



#### Find TAAMS Parcel Information

Non-GIS users have direct access to parcel information as it reflects BIA trust land found in our Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS).

TAAMS Trust parcels are clearly delineated in blue.





### Indian Preference Policy

Did you want to know more about Indian Affairs' authorized use of the Indian Preference policy in hiring? The Indian Preference policy is specific to BIA, the Indian Health Services in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and authorized by Congress, to encourage qualified American Indians and Alaska Natives to seek employment with the BIA and IHS. The policy allows certain persons of American Indian or Alaska Native descent to receive preference when appointments are made to vacancies in positions within the BIA.

Please share the frequently asked questions on our Indian Preference page with all potential applicants [https://www.bia.gov/jobs/Indian\\_preference](https://www.bia.gov/jobs/Indian_preference)



### Thrift Savings Plan Millionaire Club

Start investing early in the Thrift Savings Plan with at least 5% of your income to receive the government matching contribution. Schedule your bi-weekly contribution and automatic deposits towards your future now.

As of April 1, 2020, there were 55,000 TSP accounts with over a million-dollar balance, and 300,000+ with a minimum of \$500,000 and are still earning money. The average timetable to reach millionaire status could be perfectly timed to your retirement date estimated at 25 to 29 years. See [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov) and article at <https://www.fedweek.com/tsp/what-it-takes-to-be-a-tsp-millionaire-in-todays-dollars/>, [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov)

### New! DOI Remote Work Option Policy

Effective August 23, 2021, DOI issued a first agency-wide policy for implementing employee-initiated requests for remote work arrangements. See Personnel Bulletin for more details at <https://www.doi.gov/telework/remote-work>.

Currently Trust staff are on a 100% *telework schedule due to COVID*. Prior to COVID-19 BIA had a limited number of positions advertised for *remote work*, however, employees may now have another option subject to the discretion of management. The difference between **telework** and **remote work** is the employee's duty station.

- A *teleworkers* official duty station is the agency worksite (e.g., BIA office) and you are expected to report to the regular worksite at least twice a pay period while the employee performs duties from an approved alternative worksite (e.g., home or telework center).
- A *remote workers* official duty station is where the work is performed (e.g., personal residence). This employee is not expected to report to an agency worksite on a regular or recurring basis.

### Federal Benefits 101

Navigating Federal benefits can be complicated for non-Human Resources staff. Fortunately, support is available. Visit the web site at <http://f3online.org/workshop-topics/> to sign up for free short webinars from financial experts offering their expertise on a variety of topics:

- Retirement Planning
- 10 Steps to Financial Freedom
- Estate Planning
- Federal Benefits Best Kept Secrets
- Federal Insurance Programs
- IRA, TSP and 401(k) Rollovers

The Foundation for Financial Education is a financial wellness 501(c)(3) nonprofit offering virtual workshops and volunteer support to Federal employees as they take charge of their financial wellness.

## Training Opportunities

### Trust Strategic Workforce Project Training

Trust Services is engaged in Workforce Planning to ensure our organization understands the policies, procedures, and practices of our organization to ensure it effectively and efficiently meets the mission. Sign up for these courses today.

#### SUCCESSION PLANNING November 9-10, 2021



**Purpose:** Provides technical material focused on aligning BIA's mission, goals, and emerging needs to their succession management strategy. You will receive guidance on the use of Office of Personnel Management (OPM) succession planning tools, including the 9-box Talent Metric and Succession Profile Worksheets.

#### WORKFORCE PLANNING December 7-8, 2021



**Purpose:** Provides technical material focused on aligning BIA's mission, goals, and emerging needs to their workforce management strategy. Guidance on the use of workforce planning tools will be provided.

**Target Audience for both classes:** Those interested in learning about succession planning and knowledge management. The training is geared towards non-executive level professionals and technical staff.

**Registration:** Email [otsworkforce@bia.gov](mailto:otsworkforce@bia.gov)

### Rocky Mountain Senior Leadership Academy Graduate



*Leslie Underwood, Program Specialist (NIIMS Program) in the Division of Water and Power was interviewed about her experiences in the Rocky Mountain Senior Leadership Academy.*

#### Describe your current duties.

I am a Program Specialist with the Branch of Irrigation and Power. I help manage the National Irrigation Information Management System (NIIMS) which was originally a mainframe green screen legacy system implemented in 1992. NIIMS is a billing, collection, debt management, and irrigation operation and maintenance (O&M) rate setting system supporting BIA's Indian Irrigation projects in accordance with 25 CFR 171. O&M rate setting involves estimating and proposing irrigation O&M rates to customers. As the Federal process coordinator, I work with irrigation project staff to propose program budgets and O&M rates for tribes and BIA Irrigation projects.

## Training Opportunities

### Rocky Mountain Senior Leadership Academy Interview (continued)

#### What is the Rocky Mountain Senior Leadership Academy?

The Colorado Federal Executive Board offers a nine-month seminar consisting of three three-day in person and virtual sessions targeting Federal, Military, State and Local Tribal Managers.



This cross-sector academy introduces coaching, project work and insight into participants leadership style. The Registration is \$5,000 per participant.

#### How long have you been a manager for BIA? How many people do you supervisor?

I am an aspiring manager and have set this as a long-term goal in three to five years. I don't supervise anyone now; however, I have been team lead on A-123 Program Reviews; I lead the Irrigation O&M rate setting process; in coordination with the NIIMS Program Manager, I often lead NIIMS User training, and I am the team lead for a procurement contract for capital planning.

#### How did you learn about the Rocky Mountain Leadership Program?

David Fisher, my manager recommended this opportunity for my personal growth.

#### Tell us about the program content and something you learned.

Group assignment 1 was a Panda Express case study on how they value their employees. We compared our own organizational model and leaders. FEMA and the U.S. Mint make an organizational investment in training on an individual employee basis including a line item in the budget for training. BIA Field, Region and Central Office have no similar consistent uniform approach to training our employees. In BIA, employee training is dependent on the priority placed on this by the program manager. I appreciate Dave Fisher for his investment in my growth and career.

#### Who would you recommend this training program for in BIA?

Anyone, but especially aspiring managers. Facilitators emphasized just because you don't have a title of manager the course isn't restricted to only management.

#### What skill taught in the class were you already fully using in your day-to-day work life?

I am already a great listener, give everyone a chance to express themselves, and I actively seek out ideas from others.

#### Describe your class experience.

Although the class was a cross-section of Federal Tribal, State and Private Sector participants and we had similar challenges, and we could exchange ideas on how to handle difficult situations. For example, everyone had experience with micro-managers who didn't let anyone else contribute ideas.

#### What areas of strength were identified in your leadership style?

I am calm and level-headed, available for all tasks, a team player, and a good listener.

## Training Opportunities

### Rocky Mountain Senior Leadership Academy Interview (continued)

#### Name two opportunities for growth you will focus on in the next year, and why?

Procrastination. I work best under pressure and I can go full blast when a deadline is approaching. I will also work on finding my voice and taking initiative

#### Top 5 quick tips you think are shareworthy for your Trust Services colleagues.

- *Model the Way.* Set the example and let our talk align with our actions and our mission.
- *Challenge the Process.* Don't be afraid to take risks, learn from your failures, search for growth opportunities.
- *Enable others to Act.* Give people encouragement, check-in with them, give them opportunities to grow, and let them figure out their own solutions to issues.
- *Be aware of Culture and Self.* This is not necessarily a tribal way of doing things, but being aware of workplace norms, rituals, and varying beliefs. Respect the similarities and differences of others.
- *Be able to Adapt.* Mike Tyson was quoted saying "Everyone has a plan until you get punched in the mouth". No plan is set in stone. Have your outline but be ready to pivot

#### Identify the leadership skills of someone you admire in your career who was an inspiration to you.

That leader is very organized, has a clear vision, is not concerned with the tasks and how we get to the goal as much as the outcome. This leader gives employees the opportunity to approach the task in their own way and is not concerned about the how; they check on the employee periodically and offers guidance. A good leader is in the moment, takes time to listen, maintains good eye contact and body language which shows active engagement in your conversation.



*Wind River mountains on the road to Moccasin Lake (Leslie's favorite spot to hike, fish, and camp) located on her home reservation, the Wind River Indian Reservation. Photo credit: Leslie Underwood*

## Work Life Balance



### Veterans Crisis Line



Are you a Veteran in crisis or concerned about a loved one who served? Connect with the Veterans Crisis Line to reach caring, qualified responders with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Many of them are Veterans themselves. Connect via chat at [veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat](https://veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/chat)

### Veteran Services



Service members and their families can learn more about VA Clinics, Crisis Line, and VA Caregiver Support lines on these VA blogs at <https://Blogs.va.gov/VAntage/93577/lets-talk-about-afghanistan-resources-veterans-families/>

### Employee Assistance Program



#### Feel Overwhelmed? Help is Available Now

Everyone has personal problems from time to time. Interior's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers professional, confidential counseling and consultation that can help you resolve these issues. Services are available at no cost to you or members of your family.

[Espyr.com](https://www.espyr.com) professionals are here for employees and their dependents to help identify and clarify your concerns, look at all your options, and develop a plan of action to create solutions that work. Espyr provides confidential counseling and consultation at no cost via telephone or other virtual means.

Use Member Access password "interioreap" on the web at [www.doi.gov/pmb/hr/eap](http://www.doi.gov/pmb/hr/eap) or call 800-869-0276, a live counselor is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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