



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

**JAN 27 2017**

Dear Tribal Leader:

In December 2016, Congress enacted and President Obama signed into the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN Act). Section 3211 of the WIIN Act established an Indian Irrigation Fund to address the deferred maintenance needs and water storage needs of certain Indian irrigation projects.. Subject to appropriations, the Indian Irrigation Fund will include \$35 million each year for the next five fiscal years (FY17 – FY21) plus any interest accrued.

The WIIN Act also authorizes a new BIA program to address deferred maintenance needs at eligible projects. Pursuant to Section 3222 of the WIIN Act, eligible projects are those that are: (1) owned by the Federal Government; (2) managed and operated by BIA; and (3) have deferred maintenance documented by BIA. Based on these criteria, we have initially determined that the following Indian Irrigation Projects meet these eligibility requirements: Blackfeet, Colorado River, Crow, Duck Valley, Flathead, Ft Belknap, Ft Hall, Ft Peck, Navajo Indian Irrigation Project (NIIP), Pine River, Pyramid Lake, San Carlos Irrigation Project (SCIP)-IW, SCIP-JW, Uintah, Walker River, Wapato, and Wind River.

We invite you to consult on draft goals for the new program and funding prioritization criteria for distributing the funds, if appropriated. We have scheduled the following sessions at centralized locations.<sup>1</sup>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>Monday, February 6, 2017</b>	9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Local Time	Bureau of Indian Affairs Medicine Wheel Room - Third Floor 2021 4th Avenue North Billings, MT 59101
<b>Wednesday, February 8, 2017</b>	9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Local Time	Indian Pueblo Cultural Center Silver / Turquoise Conference Room 2401 12th Street NW Albuquerque, NM 87104
<b>Friday, February 10, 2017</b>	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	Bureau of Indian Affairs

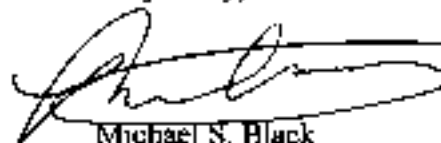
<sup>1</sup> Please note that these sessions are held the same day, but at a different time, from consultations addressing WIIN Act's provisions on dam safety. A separate letter inviting you to those consultation sessions is being distributed.

	Local Time	Federal Building Auditorium 911 NE 11th Avenue Portland, OR 97232
--	------------	---

BIA is developing drafts of the programmatic goals and funding prioritization criteria for discussion at the consultation sessions. These documents are available at <https://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/BIA/OTS/IPSOD/index.htm>. If after attending the sessions or reviewing the posted information, you would like to provide written comments, please direct them to [consultation@bia.gov](mailto:consultation@bia.gov) by March 3, 2017.

The funding authorized by the WIIN Act will allow for repairs, replacements, modernization, and maintenance on Indian irrigation projects. The Act will also allow BIA to better address Tribal, regional, and watershed-level supply needs by facilitating the construction of new water storage. If you would like additional information, please feel free to contact Yulan Jin, Division Chief, Water and Power, (202) 219-0941, [yulan.jin@bia.gov](mailto:yulan.jin@bia.gov).

Very Truly,



Michael S. Black  
Acting Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs