

FY 2026 Mid-Year Accomplishment Report
October 1, 2025 – April 30, 2026

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Office of Trust Services
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ACRONYMS 144



Bison with Calf



Tipis-Shakopee Reservation

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OFFICE OF TRUST SERVICES OVERVIEW

1.1 Purpose of the Report

BIA's Office of Trust Services (OTS) prepares mid-year accomplishment reports to inform Tribes and OTS employees across the country of the significant contributions our programs make to Indian Country. We take pride in the fact that our jobs contribute to the reduction of fractionated Indian lands, modernize access to geospatial information, and further energy initiatives in Indian Country. Our work is diverse and challenging, and we provide opportunities to support, manage, protect, and develop Tribal trust lands and natural resources. We aid the management of irrigation, dam, and power facilities; develop policies for management of invasive species, travel long distances to assist with timber sales and continuous forest inventory projects; formulate and communicate policy and directives; and collaborate with our partners to advance our goals.

The OTS Mid-Year Accomplishment Report is prepared to report on six months of work performed by our 12 Trust Divisions. Current and prior year Mid- and Year-End Accomplishment Reports are posted on the main OTS website at <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots>.

1.2 Our Mission

The BIA OTS carries out the Indian Affairs' trust responsibilities to protect, develop, manage, and enhance Indian trust resources for the benefit of American Indian and Alaska Native peoples. This includes expanding economic opportunities through effective trust management that recognizes and supports Tribes' self-governance and self-determination.

1.3 Who We Serve

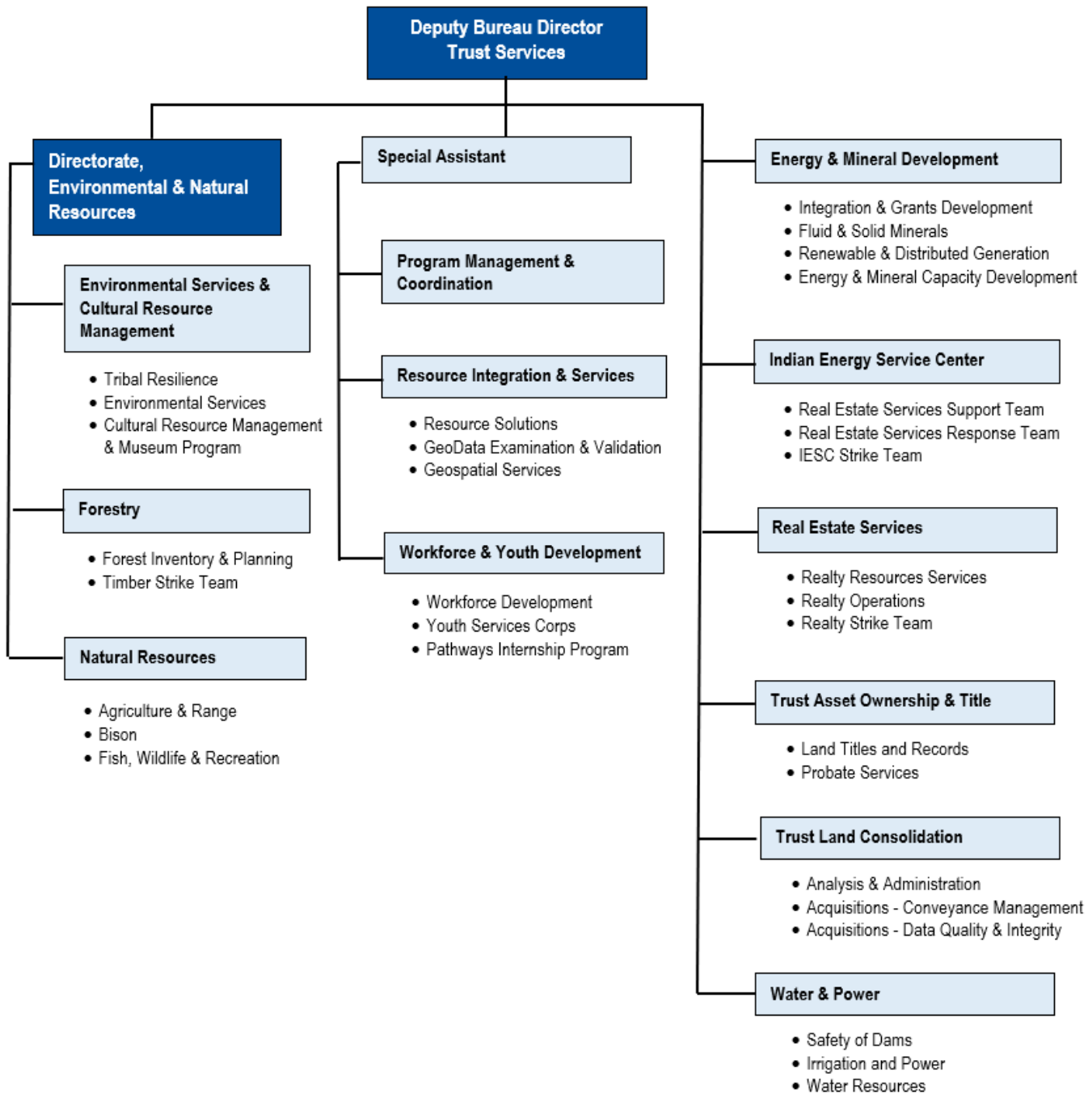
OTS has offices nationwide and assists 575 federally recognized Tribal governments and allottees in managing, protecting, and developing their lands and natural resources, which total 56 million surface acres and 59 million acres of subsurface mineral estates. OTS programs aid landowners in the stewardship of their cultural, spiritual, and traditional resources, and help Tribal governments create sustainable sources of revenue and jobs for their communities.

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OTS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



OTS STAFFING

Table 1. Office of Trust Services Staffing Levels by Division

Org		Full Time Employees	Vacant	Details	Interns	Contractors	Total
400	Deputy Bureau Director	2	0	0	0	0	2
401	Directorate, Environmental & Natural Resources	3	4	0	0	0	7
402	Workforce & Youth Development	5	7	1	11	0	24
404	Program Management & Coordination	7	2	0	0	0	9
405	Resource Integration & Services	21	15	0	5	14	55
409	Indian Energy Service Center	14	2	0	5	0	21
410	Trust Asset Ownership & Title	5	2	0	0	0	7
420	Real Estate Services	12	5	0	5	14	36
430	Trust Land Consolidation	5	1	0	0	0	6
440	Forestry	17	20	0	0	0	37
450	Environmental & Cultural Resources	16	15	0	0	0	31
460	Natural Resources	5	2	0	0	0	7
480	Water & Power	5	70	7	0	37	119
490	Energy & Minerals Development	7	24	1	0	28	60
	Totals	124	169	9	26	93	421



DIVISION OF ENERGY & MINERAL DEVELOPMENT (DEMD)

Section 1. Overview

1.1 Mission

The mission of the Division of Energy and Mineral Development (DEMD) is to provide the best possible technical and economic advice and services in assisting Indian mineral owners to achieve economic self-sufficiency by creating sustainable economies through the environmentally sound development of their energy and mineral resources.

1.2 Who We Serve

Working with Tribes to stimulate their economies, the Division of Energy and Mineral Development functions much like a full-service consulting firm. Armed with an expert team of geologists, engineers, marketing experts, and other key personnel, our staff facilitates all aspects of energy development for Tribes.

1.3 Services We Provide

The DEMD offers a suite of programs and services to assist Indian Tribes and Tribal Energy Development Organizations (TEDOs) in the exploration, development, and management of energy and mineral resources on Indian lands. Key services include:

- Consultation and technical assistance for Tribal energy and mineral resource development planning through dedicated and accessible engineers, geologists, geophysicists, and business-oriented staff.
- Producing and delivering best available scientific information and data to inform critical resource management decisions.
- Administration and processing of grant programs, including the [Energy and Mineral Development Program](#) (EMDP) and the [Tribal Energy Development Capacity](#) (TEDC) program.
- Capacity building to equip Tribal governments and organizations with the necessary legal, regulatory and business infrastructure to manage energy resources effectively.
- Energy and mineral agreement development and economic best interest review.
- Industry engagement to help tribes develop energy and mineral partnerships in Tribal communities.
- Collaborative interagency engagement with Federal partners that fosters an all-of government approach in meeting trust and treaty obligations to Tribes regarding Tribal energy and mineral resource development.



Ft. Berthold Oil Field



Coal



Aggregate utilized for road

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1.4 Staffing

7	Full Time Employees
24	Vacant Positions
1	Detailed Employees
28	Contractors

1.5 Branches

DEMD branches provide the best technical assistance to federally recognized Tribes, including Alaska Native Villages to identify and implement opportunities to maximize their revenue stream and resource development.

Branches Supporting Tribal Energy and Mineral Development

The Branch of Fluid Minerals, the Branch of Solid Minerals, and the Branch of Energy Systems all promote the responsible development of Tribal energy and mineral resources. Through subject matter expertise and analysis, these branches enhance Tribal energy sovereignty and expand economic opportunities. They provide technical assistance, conduct data analysis, support the development of energy and mineral agreements, and monitor post-award activities under the Division's grant programs. By engaging with industry and collaborating across agencies, these branches help Tribal Nations navigate complex development opportunities with confidence and clarity.

Branch of Fluid Minerals (BFM)

Supports the development and management of oil, gas, helium, hydrogen, CO₂ sequestration, and other fluid mineral resources.

Branch of Solid Minerals (BSM)

Focuses on coal, base metals, precious metals, uranium, critical minerals, aggregate, armor stone, and other solid mineral resources.

Branch of Energy Systems (BES)

Oversee a wide range of resources and technologies, including biofuel, geothermal, hydropower, natural gas, microgrids, energy storage, and related infrastructure.

Branch of Energy & Mineral Capacity Development (EMC)

The Branch of Energy and Mineral Capacity Development (EMC) serve as a strategic advisor to Tribes, specializing in the business and capacity-building aspects of energy and mineral resource development. With deep expertise in technical assistance, energy and mineral agreements, and post-award monitoring of Tribal Energy Development Capacity (TEDC) grants, EMC plays a critical role in helping Tribes build sustainable, income-generating ventures. The EMC team guides Tribes through evaluating new business structures, adopting foundational legal frameworks, and forming new enterprises that support long-term economic growth. The branch also leads Tribal outreach, marketing, and industry engagement to connect Tribal projects with potential partners, investors, and funding opportunities.

- As of mid-year FY 2026, EMC staff manage a portfolio of 57 TEDC grant projects, supporting 55 Tribes nationwide.
- In addition to TEDC post-award monitoring, the branch provided technical assistance to five Tribes, covering a range of resources including fluid minerals, solid minerals, energy systems, data centers, and more.

Branch of Energy and Mineral Data Services (EMDS)

EMDS advances Tribal energy and mineral resource development by providing program analytics, comprehensive data solutions, and digital platforms. Through systems such as [NIOGEMS](#) and the National Indian Energy and Mineral Resources Database, EMDS delivers accessible, high-quality information and tools that support data-driven decision-making and promote Tribal resource sovereignty. The branch collaborates closely with all DEMD branches to develop geographic information system (GIS) datasets and cartographic products that visualize energy demand, infrastructure, and resource potential.

Central to EMDS operations is the National Indian Energy and Mineral Resources Database (NIEMR), which includes:

- PIMED: A proprietary archive of Tribal energy and mineral data.
- GEOWIZ: A geospatial database tailored to Tribal resource mapping and analysis.

National Indian Oil, Gas, Energy and Mineral System (NIOGEMS)

NIOGEMS is a map-oriented software application developed and maintained by DEMD for managing reservation oil and gas leases, wells, production, and other energy and mineral resource data. The software, along with training and data, is provided to Tribes at no cost to support project development and resource management.

Branch of Energy and Mineral Integration (EMI)

The Branch of Energy and Mineral Integration (EMI) support Tribal energy and mineral development by coordinating the administration of both EMDP and TEDC grants, ensuring efficient and consistent program oversight. EMI also aligns program operations, reporting, and workflow management to advance Tribal resource sovereignty and expand access to high-quality technical support. Competitive Grant Programs offered include:

Tribal Energy Development Capacity (TEDC)

TEDC provides funding for Tribes and Tribal Energy Development Organizations (TEDOs) to enhance their management, organizational, and technical capabilities for energy resource development in alignment with their own goals and priorities. Recognizing the vast natural resource potential across millions of acres of Tribal lands, TEDC is designed to build Tribal energy development capacity and lay the foundation for long-term economic impact. By focusing on capacity building, the program equips Tribal governments and organizations with the legal, regulatory, and business infrastructure needed to manage energy resources effectively and take control of their energy futures.

<https://www.bia.gov/service/grants.tedc>.

Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP)

EMDP offers funding for Tribes and TEDOs to complete energy and mineral assessment projects that support pre-development activities, reduce project risk, and guide strategic decision-making. This program enables Tribes to conduct a wide range of technical studies—such as resource assessments, feasibility analyses, market evaluations, and engineering design planning—that are essential for moving projects from concept to construction. Outcomes from EMDP-funded projects often support final engineering design, financing applications, and long-term development strategies.

Millions of acres of Tribal lands hold vast natural resources. All energy and mineral resources—including oil, natural gas, coal, uranium, industrial minerals, precious minerals, base minerals, ferrous metals, biofuel, geothermal, hydropower, solar, and wind—are eligible for funding. We support development efforts led by Tribes in accordance with their goals and priorities. <https://www.bia.gov/services/grants/emdp>.



Section 2. Stewardship, Conservation & Powering Our Future

2.1 Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

2.1.1 Interagency Alignment for Tribal Energy – DOE/DOI MOU Planning, January 2026

In early 2026, the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Office of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs and the U.S. Department of Energy’s Office of Indian Energy convened a collaboration workshop to strengthen federal coordination in support of Tribal energy development. As part of the Interior delegation, the Division of Energy and Mineral Development (DEMD) contributed technical, programmatic, and on-the-ground project expertise to ensure that interagency planning efforts reflected the practical needs, challenges, and opportunities encountered across Tribal energy and mineral projects.

Throughout the two-day agenda, DEMD supported discussions on financial assistance, technical support, data and analytical tools, and capacity-building programs. DEMD grounded the workshop’s information sharing in real-world project experience and provided insights into where coordinated federal support can directly enhance Tribal energy project outcomes. The workshop concluded with a set of actionable next steps, advancing early groundwork for a potential formal Memorandum of Understanding. This two-day effort strengthened interagency alignment and contributed to long-term initiatives aimed at supporting Tribal energy sovereignty and capacity development.

2.1.2 Elevating Tribal Energy Opportunities on a National Stage

DEMD works to develop energy and mineral opportunities through a Tribally driven process that engages Tribes, private industry, and federal partners. Its goal is to help Tribes identify development pathways that offer the strongest benefits and best possible terms for their communities. Industry engagement remains central to helping Tribes develop effective energy and mineral partnerships.

As of mid-2026, DEMD has participated in 13 Tribal and industry engagement events, with more planned for the remainder of the year. Highlights include:

2.1.3 Geothermal Rising & Indigenous Geothermal Symposium

DEMD’s participation in the 2025 Indigenous Geothermal Symposium and the Geothermal Rising Conference strengthened industry relationships and advanced technical coordination on geothermal projects nationwide. These events expanded DEMD’s geothermal network, supported Tribes exploring new resource opportunities, and informed ongoing technical assistance efforts.

2.1.4 North American Prospect Expo (NAPE)

At NAPE 2026, DEMD provided on-site technical support and industry outreach to elevate the Osage Nation’s mineral estate opportunities. DEMD refreshed promotional materials and staffed the booth to strengthen industry engagement and investor interest. This coordinated presence advanced the Tribe’s long-term economic development goals tied to responsible oil and gas resource management.

2.1.5 *Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians (ATNI) Winter Session 2026*

DEMD used the ATNI Winter Conference to deepen coordination with Tribal leaders and federal partners, advancing technical assistance and energy policy support across the Northwest. Through participation in sessions on energy, infrastructure, and federal funding, DEMD supported Tribal efforts in transmission planning, environmental review, and clean energy siting. DEMD also contributed to ATNI's Responsible Energy Siting Pilot, applying lessons learned to improve Tribal data sovereignty, early engagement practices, and decision-support tools.

2.1.6 *Reservation Economic Summit*

During the 2026 Reservation Economic Summit, DEMD expanded national outreach and strengthened partnerships with Tribal leaders, industry, and federal agencies. Staff participated in breakout sessions on Mining and Energy Sovereignty and on Empowering Tribal Economies through Energy and Mineral Development, highlighting DEMD's technical assistance capabilities and engaging participants on new development opportunities. DEMD's engagement throughout the week supported new relationships, informed program planning, and reinforced its role in advancing Tribal economic growth.

2.1.7 *2026 Native Land Conference*

The March 2026 Native Land Conference brought together Tribal leadership, land offices, and federal agencies to discuss key issues in Tribal land management, including fee-to-trust processes, land buy back implementation, easements, probate, and GIS-supported decision making. DEMD used these sessions to advance improvements in energy-related land management efficiency, intergovernmental coordination, and Tribal capacity building.

2.1.8 *Tribal Self-Governance Conference*

At the 2026 Tribal Self-Governance Conference, DEMD increased its visibility by hosting a booth, engaging directly with Tribal leaders, and leading a panel on pathways for Tribal Energy Resource Agreements (TERAs). These discussions informed Tribes on DEMD's ongoing work to modernize Tribal energy administration. DEMD also contributed to the Tribal Energy Roundtable, where Tribes highlighted barriers such as lease workflow challenges, legacy leases, and orphan well remediation. DEMD emphasized its ability to help address these issues through lease sale support, industry outreach, TERA/TEDO capacity building, and technical analyses—positioning the division as a key partner in advancing a proposed Tribal-federal task force.

2.2 American Energy & Strategic Use of Natural Resources

2.2.1 *Modernizing Access to Tribal Energy and Mineral Information – NIOGEMS Version 5 Launch Coming Soon*

A major modernization effort is underway with the development of NIOGEMS Version 5. The legacy Version 4 desktop application—built on ArcGIS technology—reached end of life in March 2026. Version 5 is being developed as a web-based platform using centralized hosting and authentication services, which will increase efficiency, reduce maintenance needs, and improve the overall customer experience.

This next-generation release represents a significant step forward in DEMD's commitment to strengthening Tribal sovereignty by improving access to energy and mineral data, delivering modern analytical tools, and enhancing decision-support capabilities. Building on the strengths of previous versions, NIOGEMS v5 transitions to a fully web-based, centrally hosted platform, making it more

accessible, efficient, and resilient. The new version integrates multiple authoritative datasets to provide a unified, map-based resource for Tribes, federal partners, and DEMD staff. This integrated approach supports faster and more comprehensive evaluations of energy and mineral opportunities across Indian Country.

By modernizing the platform's architecture and expanding its analytical capabilities, NIOGEMS v5 empowers Tribal communities to make data-driven decisions, improve resource management, and pursue economic development opportunities with greater confidence. This release is not only a technical upgrade, but it is an important investment in Tribal self-determination and long-term energy and mineral planning.

2.3 Sound & Sustainable Natural Resources

2.3.1 Tribal Energy Profiles

Development of Tribal Energy Profiles continued for all federally recognized Tribes in the contiguous United States, as well as the Alaska Regional Corporations. This work includes compiling summary information on reservation road mileage, transmission and distribution infrastructure, data centers, substations, oil and natural gas resources, critical minerals, geothermal potential, and geological characteristics. Detailed attribute listings and high-level summaries were populated for each Tribe. This effort is ongoing and will expand as additional data and assessments become available.

2.3.2 Geospatial Analysis

EMDS provided analysis and processing of multiple datasets to support DEMD and Tribal technical assistance projects. Examples of mapped and analyzed data include uranium mines, electric transmission and distribution lines, geothermal potential, reservation geology, fiber-optic lines, critical minerals, and data centers.

2.3.3 Blackfeet Community College Technical Assistance (TA) Mapping

EMDS developed 11 energy and mineral maps for Blackfeet Community College to support Tribal and public consultations regarding existing infrastructure and project potential on Blackfeet Nation lands.

2.3.4 Energy and Mineral Dashboard

The Division Chief and EMDS are collaborating with the Division of Resource Integration Services (DRIS) on a comprehensive energy and mineral dashboard designed to present geospatial and tabular data on DEMD projects and Tribal Energy Profiles.

2.3.5 Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Development

EMDS continued developing SOPs for multiple data-update processes. These SOPs will guide current and future data staff in meeting monthly data-processing requirements. SOP development will continue through FY 2026.

2.4 Strategic Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

2.4.1 Grants Awarded and Technical Assistance

As of mid-year 2026, BFM staff managed a portfolio of 10 EMDP grant projects with 9 Tribes nationwide. In addition to post-award monitoring, the Branch provided technical assistance to 8 Tribes, supporting activities such as oil and gas seismic work, well reviews, and Tribal lands evaluations.

Branch of Fluid Minerals (BFM)

2.4.2 *Wind River Seismic*

The Wind River Tribes previously received an EMDP grant to support an 11.5-square-mile 3D seismic survey at the Sheldon Dome Oil Field, which produces nearly 8 million barrels of oil and 11 billion cubic feet of gas. The field is operated by the Wind River Energy Commission (WREC). DEMD provided comprehensive support in designing, permitting, recording, processing, and interpreting the survey. The resulting high-quality data is expected to identify new well locations and inform future enhanced oil recovery projects.



Wind River Reservation lands

2.4.3 *Osage CO₂ EOR Surface Infrastructure Feasibility Study*

The Osage Nation was awarded an EMDP grant to evaluate the technical and economic feasibility of expanding CO₂ capture and transportation infrastructure in and around Osage County, Oklahoma. The goal is to increase tertiary oil production from the Osage Mineral Estate (OME) and enable long-term CO₂ sequestration. Argonne National Laboratory completed the study and presented findings to the Osage Mineral Council, including identification of CO₂ sources totaling up to 26.6 million metric tons within 200 miles of suitable injection sites, and cost estimates for capture and transport. These deliverables will support informed decision-making regarding CO₂ EOR viability and next steps.

2.4.4 *Jicarilla Mancos Shale Play Review*

DEMD completed a marketing evaluation of oil and gas acreage in the Mancos Shale to help the Jicarilla Apache Nation assess development options. The review included geologic and economic analyses of the southern Mancos horizontal oil play and northern Mancos horizontal gas play, with findings identifying 144 potential oil drilling locations and 187–239 gas drilling locations. DEMD also prepared marketing materials summarizing Mancos development potential for use in promoting leasing and investment on Tribal lands.

Branch of Solid Minerals (BSM)

As of mid-year 2026, BSM staff managed 14 EMDP grant projects with 12 Tribes nationwide. In addition to post-award monitoring, the Branch provided technical assistance to 7 Tribes for resources including aggregate, armor stone, and coal.

2.4.5 Northern Cheyenne – Montana

A DEMD geologist helped the Tribe and its contractors identify potential sand and gravel resources on the Reservation. DEMD supported mapping efforts using historic geologic data, which led to the Tribe excavating 20 test pits and collecting samples. Results were promising and may support development of a future Tribal pit capable of producing high-quality construction materials. Short-term benefits include reduced transport costs—currently 58 miles to the nearest source—while long-term benefits include job creation and potential revenue from sales to outside entities such as the Montana Department of Transportation.

2.4.6 Round Valley – California

In 2024 and 2025, the Tribe received grants to drill and sample hard-rock deposits on the Reservation. Results confirmed high-quality material suitable for riprap, armor stone, concrete, and asphalt. With strong demand for aggregate in California, both the state and private companies have expressed interest in purchasing from the Tribe, which is also considering launching a trucking company to support deliveries. This initiative will create jobs and generate important income for the community.

2.4.7 Fort Independence Tribe

In 2021, the Tribe requested DEMD assistance in leveraging local aggregate resources to generate revenue, create jobs, and support infrastructure projects. Within six months, the Tribe established Grinding Rock Aggregates (GRA), a 100% Tribally owned sand and gravel company. GRA built a state-of-the-art processing facility and now operates in a high-demand market with limited regional competition. Due to a 200-mile shortage of aggregate supply in the Owens Valley, the Tribe has been approached by Caltrans, the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power, Inyo County, China Lake Naval Weapons Base, BLM, and the U.S. Forest Service. Net profits exceed \$3 million per year starting in 2025.



Grinding Rock Aggregate Plant

Branch of Energy Systems (BES)

As of mid-year FY 2026, BES staff actively managed 73 grant projects, providing oversight and technical support to ensure consistent progress and accountability. In addition to post-award monitoring, BES provided technical assistance to more than 15 Tribes on projects involving geothermal, hydropower, microgrids, and other energy technologies.

2.4.8 *Tanana Chiefs Conference*

The Tribe is initiating a geothermal resource assessment on Tribal lands in Alaska to evaluate future energy-generation potential. DEMD supports data collection, identifying information gaps, and developing a pathway from early-stage assessment to possible project implementation, advancing long-term energy independence in remote communities.

2.4.9 *Hopi Tribe*

DEMD is conducting a high-level evaluation of geothermal resource potential to help the Tribe determine whether utility-scale development is feasible. This initial screening will guide future decisions on energy diversification and infrastructure planning.

2.4.10 *Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation*

The Tribe is evaluating system configurations to improve resilience and reduce peak electricity costs for critical facilities. Through an EMDP-funded study, the Tribe is analyzing options such as combined heat and power and fuel-based generation to maintain operations during outages. The study aims to identify the most technically and economically viable system for long-term reliability and cost savings.

2.4.11 *Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation*

The Nation is developing a comprehensive energy sovereignty plan to assess local resources and guide future energy decisions. DEMD supports resource inventory analysis, community engagement, and the development of planning materials that reflect Tribal priorities.

2.4.12 *Guidiville Rancheria*

The Tribe is exploring the feasibility of pairing energy generation from subsurface resources with future data-center development. DEMD completed initial resource reviews and provided strategic recommendations regarding project pathways, business planning, site-control considerations, and potential funding opportunities.

2.4.13 *Pit River Tribe*

DEMD is helping strengthen a future EMDP application focused on geothermal resource development. Support includes site evaluation, identification of key data gaps, and guidance on developing a competitive proposal aligned with program criteria.

2.4.14 *Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe*

The Tribe is evaluating options to expand its energy-generation capacity while building long-term operational and workforce capabilities. DEMD is reviewing a proposed land-lease agreement for a new energy system to help ensure terms are fair, equitable, and aligned with the Tribe's economic interests.



Section 3. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

3.1 Opportunities

3.1.1 *FY 2026 EMDP and TEDC Funding Opportunities*

Funding opportunities for FY 2026 EMDP and TEDC are expected to be announced in May 2026. These competitive grant programs provide Tribes and Tribal Energy Development Organizations with opportunities to advance energy and mineral resource projects through technical studies, capacity building, and early-stage project development. These investments help Tribes unlock new economic potential, strengthen energy sovereignty, and pursue sustainable resource management aligned with community priorities.

3.1.2 *TERA Pathways Initiative*

The TERA Pathways initiative, developed in partnership with the Indian Energy Service Center, is creating a streamlined pathway for Tribes to assume greater authority over energy development on their lands. Through Tribal Energy Resource Agreements (TERAs), once approved, Tribes may issue energy-related leases, business agreements, or rights-of-way without review or approval by the Secretary—an unprecedented advancement in Tribal self-determination. The first TERA agreement is on track for approval in 2026, marking a historic milestone. The initiative enhances intergovernmental coordination, supports community-driven growth, and positions Tribes as leaders in energy governance.

3.1.3 *Expanding Domestic Energy Development*

Many Tribes are pursuing development of local energy resources—including subsurface assets and distributed energy systems—contributing to national energy independence while generating long-term revenue and jobs. DEMD is responding to increased requests for technical support from Tribes such as the Caddo Nation, Osage Nation, and Jicarilla Apache Nation for oil and gas evaluations. Meanwhile, advances in technology have expanded the feasibility of geothermal development, enabling Tribes to reassess their resource potential and explore new pathways for reliable, domestically sourced energy.

3.1.4 *Critical Minerals Initiative*

The Critical Minerals initiative is advancing major projects, including a significant effort in Alaska that could become the largest critical mineral mine in the United States. These efforts address national needs for minerals essential to defense, technology, and energy security. DEMD is also supporting Tribal partnerships to recover critical minerals from mine waste, aligning with federal directives to strengthen domestic supply chains while funding reclamation and environmental cleanup. These projects create opportunities for job growth, technical capacity building, and revenue sharing while contributing to sustainable development and national strategic objectives.

3.1.5 *Data Center Initiative*

The Data Center initiative supports Tribes in evaluating and advancing data center development as an emerging economic and energy opportunity. DEMD provides technical assistance on land suitability, power access, governance considerations, and long-term planning. The initiative recognizes that Tribes

hold unique advantages—such as land availability, strategic locations, and energy development potential—that can accelerate data center sites and investment. DEMD is also integrating data center planning into broader Tribal energy systems support.

3.1.6 *Proactive Tribal Project Support*

Leveraging DEMD's extensive portfolio of current, historical, and anticipated grant projects, the Division is proactively identifying high-potential opportunities for enhanced support. This effort includes data-driven strategic planning, expanded access to high-quality data, and increased technical expertise to help Tribe's advance sound, economically viable development projects and unlock new opportunities.

3.2 Challenges

3.2.1 *Limited Staffing and Funding Capacity*

Demand for technical assistance and project support continues to exceed available staffing and funding. This constraint can delay project timelines, limit the level of support provided to Tribes, and reduce the number of new initiatives that can move forward each year.

3.2.2 *Limited Local Capacity for Operations and Maintenance*

Several Tribes have identified gaps in the workforce capacity needed to operate and maintain energy infrastructure after project completion. Without targeted training and workforce development, long-term project sustainability may be at risk.

3.2.3 *Data Gaps and Resource Uncertainty*

In many cases, insufficient site-specific data—such as subsurface information or infrastructure availability—creates uncertainty in project feasibility. These gaps can delay development and make it more difficult to secure funding or private investment.

3.2.4 *Financing and Economic Feasibility Constraints*

Even when projects show technical promise, high upfront costs and uncertain returns can slow progress toward implementation. Additional support mechanisms or strategic partnerships may be needed to bridge the gap between feasibility and construction.

3.2.5 *Infrastructure and Geographic Constraints in Remote Areas*

Tribal communities in remote locations often face logistical challenges, including limited access to transmission, roads, and supporting infrastructure. These constraints can increase project costs and complexity, requiring customized solutions to ensure successful deployment.

3.2.6 *Regulatory and Market Barriers to Project Implementation*

Utility interconnection requirements, power-purchase limitations, and other market constraints continue to limit the ability of some Tribal projects to progress beyond early-stage development. Addressing these barriers is critical to ensuring that otherwise viable projects can advance to implementation.

3.3 Best Practices

3.3.1 *Early and Consistent Tribal Engagement*

Engage Tribal leadership and community stakeholders early and consistently throughout project planning and development. This ensures that energy and mineral initiatives align with Tribal priorities, cultural values, and long-term community goals, fostering transparency and shared decision-making.

3.3.2 *Data-Driven Decision-Making*

Use high-quality data, technical expertise, and comprehensive resource assessments to guide project planning and strategic investments. Access to accurate, up-to-date information helps Tribes identify viable opportunities, reduce project risks, and support development that is both economically and environmentally sustainable.

3.3.3 *Strategic Partnerships and Capacity Building*

Build partnerships with federal agencies, industry, and technical experts to leverage resources, share knowledge, and expand Tribal capacity. Investing in workforce development, technical training, and collaborative agreements enables Tribes to manage projects effectively, maximize benefits, and advance long-term self-determination.



Museum Art



Tipis on tribal land



Hall of Nations Tribal Flags

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DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES & CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (DESCRM)

Section 1. Overview

1.1 Mission

The mission of the Division of Environmental Services and Cultural Resources Management (DESCRM) is to work with Tribes to protect, develop, manage and enhance American Indian and Alaska Native environmental, cultural, and historical resources by providing technical assistance, service, and support to Tribes and through administration of federal laws and regulations.

1.2 Who We Serve

DESCRM partners with tribes to ensure that their environmental, cultural, and historical resources are served and protected by federal laws and regulations, such as the [National Environmental Policy Act](#), the [National Historic Preservation Act](#) (NHPA), the [Archeological Resources Protection Act](#) (ARPA), and the [Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act](#) (NAGPRA).

1.3 Services We Provide

- Tribal Community Resilience Awards Program
- Voluntary Community-Driven Relocation Program
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance
- Technical Assistance, Training, and Support to the Field, focusing on permitting and efficiency
- Environmental Management Assessment and Performance (EMAP) Auditing Program
- Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Program in Indian Country
- Cultural Resources Protection, Preservation and Promotion
- Compliance with Cultural Laws
- Museum Program Services
- NAGPRA Responsibilities and Repatriation Services

1.4. Staffing

16	Full Time Employees
15	Vacant Positions

1.5 Branches

Branch of Cultural Resources & Museum Program (BCRM)

The Branch of Cultural Resources Management (BCRM) partners with Tribal Nations and Alaska Native Villages to protect, preserve, and promote the cultural and historical resources of American Indian and Alaska Native communities. BCRM advances the Bureau of Indian Affairs' mission by upholding the federal trust responsibility for cultural resources essential to Tribal sustenance, cultural enrichment, economic development, and community well-being. The Branch promotes the conservation, development, and responsible stewardship of these resources to ensure their long-term benefit to Tribal communities.

BCRM is responsible for ensuring compliance with major environmental and cultural resource statutes, including NEPA, the [Antiquities Act of 1906](#), the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA), and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). Through this compliance oversight, the Branch provides guidance and support to regional and agency staff, Tribal partners, and programs engaged in cultural resource management and preservation.

BCRM provided critical support to the Branch of Environmental Services (BES) in meeting NEPA requirements by delivering cultural resource assessments, integrating Section 106 compliance into NEPA reviews, and coordinating with [Tribal Historic Preservation Offices](#) (THPOs), State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), and agency partners. This ensured that actions proceeded without delays while maintaining federal cultural resource protections. These efforts strengthened DESCIRM's capacity to manage infrastructure and environmental response needs in a legally compliant and culturally respectful manner.



Collage of artifacts from the BIA Museum collection

Complementing this work, the BIA Museum Program continued stewardship of more than three million archaeological artifacts, ethnographic items, archival materials, and works of art documenting the histories of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), and Native communities. Collections housed across BIA regional and agency offices, BIE schools, museums, cultural centers, universities, and partner repositories were maintained in alignment with federal standards and Tribal priorities. Together, these efforts advance the Department's mission to safeguard cultural heritage while supporting timely environmental decision-making.

Branch of Environmental Services (BES)

The mission of the Branch of Environmental Services (BES) is to work with Tribes to protect, develop, manage, and enhance American Indian and Alaska Native environmental resources by providing technical assistance, service, and support, and through the administration of federal environmental laws and regulations.

BES provides leadership, guidance, policy, and support for the protection of environmental and cultural resources, collaborating with federal, state, and Tribal governments to ensure compliance with environmental law on Indian trust lands, restricted lands, and federal facilities owned or operated by Indian Affairs. This includes oversight and guidance for implementing environmental requirements under NEPA, the [Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act](#) (CERCLA), and related statutes. The Branch also develops policy and provides oversight for sustainability and environmental compliance throughout the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

A current priority for BES is providing leadership for BIA’s Energy and Critical Minerals permitting efforts. The Branch co-organizes cross-program coordination meetings, leads regular progress reporting to leadership, and provides training and tools to improve field efficiency. This includes training on the use of Categorical Exclusions and offering guidance to support streamlined permitting processes across programs.

Branch of Tribal Community Resilience (BTCR)

The Tribal Community Resilience (TCR) program provides direct technical assistance and support to empower Tribal communities and Alaska Native Villages to strengthen resilience and address imminent threats to infrastructure, resources, human health, and safety. The program enhances Tribal capacity to develop and implement resilience strategies that reflect local needs and priorities, with projects prioritized based on risks and threats to Tribal communities.

TCR is committed to increasing government efficiency through interagency coordination to expedite project implementation and reduce federal costs. The program leverages partnerships to fulfill the federal trust responsibility and the United States’ moral obligation to ensure the protection of Tribal and individual Indian lands. Through this work, BTCR supports Tribal self-determination and community-driven resilience planning.



Section 2. Stewardship, Conservation & Powering Our Future

2.1 Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

2.1.1 Streamline Regional Workflow

The TCR team has worked collaboratively with regional offices and internal partners to increase process efficiencies. One example is the recently streamlined workflow between the Alaska Regional Office (AKRO) and the Office of Self-Governance (OSG), which is designed to accelerate the movement of funds into contracts, making them available to Tribes and Native Villages more quickly.

2.1.2 NEPA Strike Team

As part of a NEPA Strike Team effort, staff from BES, TCR, and the BIA Alaska Regional Office met in person to review the backlog of environmental reviews, resolve questions in real time with regional leadership, and develop an updated process to manage the workload given current staffing limitations. With all team members at the same table—and a wide range of national and regional expertise—the team was able to identify a more efficient path forward for in-progress and future environmental reviews. This

collaboration strengthened regional capacity, enhanced technical assistance, and helped Tribal partners advance projects and activities without delays.

2.1.3 Tribal Employee Access to NEPA Tracker

BES worked with the DOI Office of the Chief Information Officer to improve Indian Affairs NEPA Tracker system, including integrating Login.gov to allow Tribal employees to access the system as “Submitters.” This enhancement supports Regions with limited NEPA staffing capacity by improving centralized record-management practices for environmental reviews. Another improvement is the official tracking of “blanket actions”—activities that require no documentation and are entered in bulk by Regions or Agencies—which strengthens data management practices and improves efficiency.

2.1.4 Environmental Audits at BIA-Owned Facilities

The Environmental Management Assessment & Performance Program (EMAP) continues to collaborate with Regional Offices to fulfill BIA’s responsibility to conduct environmental audits at BIA-owned facilities and for BIA programs and activities on a three-year cycle. The Program also provides technical assistance to Facility Managers and Senior Line Officials during and after audits, reducing operational risks and hazards to staff and visitors. EMAP’s multimedia audits ensure Bureau accountability in implementing and maintaining environmental regulations under Departmental Manual ([515 DM 2](#)) and Indian Affairs Manual ([59 IAM 2](#)) policy.

This year, the Branch of Environmental Services launched its current three-year EMAP audit cycle with a Bureau-wide webinar held on April 7 and delivered by the EMAP third-party auditors and the BES EMAP Program lead. Audits will focus on high- and medium-priority environmental risks to human health, welfare, and the environment. For this cycle, BES has contracted Navancio LLC, with subcontractors from Benesh, to conduct BIA-wide audits. The first facility scheduled for review is the Choctaw Agency during the week of April 20.

2.1.5 Museum, ARPA and NAGPRA Activities

BCRM advanced key stewardship and Tribal-support outcomes in FY 2026 through coordinated Museum, ARPA, and NAGPRA activities. The Museum Program strengthened national accountability and long-term preservation by relocating more than 400 objects into improved housing, completing [Heritage Asset and Stewardship Land](#) (HASL) reporting, and initiating major Museum Collection Management System (MCMS) data cleanup. ARPA efforts protected trust resources through crime-tip processing, surveillance, damage assessments, and expanded training with Tribal and federal partners. The NAGPRA Initiative strengthened Tribal self-determination through repatriation notices, renewed consultations, and confirmation of BIA-controlled holdings across 58 institutions. Together, these integrated activities reduce administrative burden, support mixed-use trust land decisions, and expand opportunities for Tribal governance, economic growth, and co-management—advancing DESCRCM’s mission to protect cultural resources while enabling sustainable development.

2.2 American Energy & Strategic Use of Natural Resources

2.2.1 Implementation of new DOI Manual and NEPA Handbook

The BES team provided guidance and direction to the field on implementing the new DOI Departmental Manual and the *Handbook of National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures*. BES also hosted a Bureau-wide NEPA webinar on Categorical Exclusions on March 4, 2026, which was attended by

more than 120 participants. Numerous questions were raised regarding recent NEPA changes; Central Office staff addressed most inquiries during the session and committed to following up on any remaining questions. BES has scheduled future quarterly trainings based on regional input and will continue to prioritize and expand NEPA training.

2.2.2 *Categorical Exclusion for Oil & Gas Development on Tribal Lands*

The BES NEPA team is working with the Bureau of Land Management to co-develop the first-of-its-kind Categorical Exclusion for oil and gas energy development on Tribal lands. This effort will expedite environmental reviews and support Tribal sovereignty through economic development.

2.2.3 *Data-Driven Tolls for Cultural Resource Inventories*

The BCRM team supported DESCRCM's energy and natural resource mission by applying data-driven tools, cultural resource inventories, and compliance technologies to ensure accurate and timely permitting and project reviews. BCRM strengthened system resiliency by maintaining updated museum and archaeological datasets, coordinating surveillance and damage-assessment metrics with Tribal partners, and improving record accuracy through ongoing MCMS cleanup. The Branch advanced efficiency by standardizing cultural resource review workflows, supporting emergency permitting procedures, and contributing to improved environmental documentation processes.

2.2.4 *Cultural Site Assessments and Expedited Reviews*

Although BCRM does not directly manage water programs, its cultural site assessments and repository monitoring inform Tribal planning, land-use decisions, and resource protection efforts that intersect with water and environmental management. Through expanded use of Categorical Exclusions under NEPA and enhanced coordination with federal partners, BCRM helped expedite project reviews while ensuring cultural protections remain integral to energy, minerals, and land-use development across Indian Country.

2.3 Sound & Sustainable Natural Resources

2.3.1 *Grants to Tribes Safeguard Natural Resources, Infrastructure & Community Safety*

Through TCR's annual awards program, the Branch partners with and provides critical resources to Tribes and Native Villages to safeguard natural resources, infrastructure, and community safety. Four projects in the Alaska Region were approved to move forward in Q2 of FY 2026, including investments in village relocation, shoreline protection, and energy infrastructure. As the program enters its 15th year, several long-term projects are reaching completion. One example is a water infrastructure project at the Quapaw Nation, which has strengthened the Tribe's water sovereignty in a region increasingly affected by water scarcity. Additional details about this project can be found in Section 3.3.

2.3.2 *Funded Six Natural Resources Damage Assessment & Restoration Projects*

The BES [Natural Resources Damage Assessment and Restoration](#) (NRDAR) Program funded six BIA-involved NRDAR projects that received approval through the Office of Restoration and Damage Assessment (ORDA), totaling \$430,477. The program also successfully completed the FY 2026 Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 Environmental and Disposal Liability (EDL) reports in the EDL database and continued to work closely with BIA Regions and the BIA EDL Financial Team to complete reports ahead of schedule with exceptional accuracy.

BES represented the BIA as the Bureau Technical Support Group (TSG) representative at the in-person 2026 NRDAR TSG meeting in Washington, D.C. BES assisted ORDA and partner Bureaus in developing the CY 2026 Damage Assessment Funding Recommendations presented to the NRDAR Executive Committee Leadership.

2.3.3 *Collaboration supports Natural Resource Management*

BCRM continued to support sound and sustainable natural-resource management by ensuring cultural and heritage values were fully integrated into recreation, hunting, and land-use planning across Indian Country. Through ongoing collaboration with Tribal Nations, federal partners, and local communities, BCRM advanced cultural-landscape protection, contributed to co-management initiatives, and provided technical guidance that supports conservation and responsible public access.

2.3.4 *Conservation and Stewardship of Cultural Resources*

The Branch's Museum, ARPA, and NAGPRA activities helped Tribe's conserve and steward cultural resources central to healthy ecosystems and community well-being, reinforcing Interior's America 250 vision to invest in natural and cultural resources. BCRM's surveillance, site-protection, and damage-assessment work supported science-based decision-making, while coordination with partners on restoration and compliance advanced broader natural-resource outcomes, including Tribal land-restoration and environmental-quality initiatives. Collectively, these efforts strengthen Tribal capacity, support sustainable land management, and reinforce cooperative stewardship across trust lands.

2.4 Strategic Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

Branch of Cultural Resources Management (BCRM)

2.4.1 *Early and Consistent Engagement with Tribal Nations*

Throughout the reporting period, BCRM implemented a series of best practices that strengthened cultural-resource protection, enhanced coordination, and improved service delivery across BIA regions. Central to this work was early and consistent engagement with Tribal Nations, ensuring that project planning, communication, and decision-making were informed by Tribal priorities and cultural context. Coordination between cultural-resources staff and law enforcement continued to improve investigative efficiency and support effective responses to archaeological-resource crimes.

2.4.2 *Expanded Use of Advanced Monitoring Tools*

The program also expanded its use of advanced monitoring tools—including trail cameras, open-source intelligence (OSINT) methods, and drones—to improve detection capabilities across large land areas. Consistent application of cultural-resource-protection guidance, supported by well-designed training materials and diverse instructors, helped build regional capacity. Strengthening the connection between enforcement, education, and community outreach further supported long-term stewardship and increased public awareness.

2.4.3 *Repatriation-Centered Consultation*

Repatriation-centered consultation remained a cornerstone of program implementation. Staff ensured that all actions and decisions were grounded in Tribal perspectives, cultural protocols, and the overarching priority of returning ancestors and cultural belongings. Treating Tribal Nations as full partners promoted transparency, co-planning, and shared decision-making throughout consultation and inventory processes. Collaborative agenda-setting, clear expectations, and flexible consultation approaches helped maintain trust while accommodating evolving Tribal priorities and needs. Open communication acknowledged the sensitivity of collections and the trauma associated with historical dispossession, reinforcing the importance of honesty and respect in all interactions. Together, these practices strengthened relationships with Tribal Nations and supported culturally grounded, responsive repatriation efforts.

Branch of Environmental Services (BES)

2.4.4 *In-Person National Program and Field Staff Strategic Planning*

DESCRM prioritized bringing national program staff and field staff together for in-person strategic planning and team building. With teams dispersed nationwide and many staff carrying broad portfolios, these intentional gatherings strengthened collaboration and improved efficiency. A key example was the NEPA Strike Team's January visit to the Alaska Regional Office, where technical staff from BES, TCR, and the region met to discuss compliance questions and collaborate on streamlined, coordinated solutions.

2.4.5 *NEPA Guidance*

BES continued to enhance training for field staff by communicating regulatory changes, providing updates, and ensuring practitioners have access to the most current NEPA guidance. Recent revisions to NEPA regulations have also created opportunities to adopt Categorical Exclusions used by other DOI bureaus, increasing compliance options and improving efficiency. BES is committed to developing and adopting additional Categorical Exclusions to help field staff expedite permitting while supporting Tribal environmental protection and safeguarding cultural resources.

Branch of Tribal Community Resilience (TCR)

2.4.6 *TCR Staff Trained as Awarding Officials' Technical Representatives*

Most TCR staff have completed Awarding Official's Technical Representative (AOTR) training and actively assist Regional Offices in this role—helping ensure timely funding to Tribes and maintaining essential AOTR coverage. Staff who are not yet certified are scheduled to complete the next available training, expanding AOTR capacity across the Division. Strong partnerships with Regions have enabled DESCRM to leverage programmatic expertise and deliver consistent support to Tribes nationwide.

2.4.7 *Infrastructure to Strengthen Water Security for the Quapaw Nation of Oklahoma*

Through direct partnership with Tribes, the TCR program supported infrastructure projects that strengthen sovereignty. A recent success story comes from the Quapaw Nation of Oklahoma:

With support from the BIA Tribal Community Resilience program, the Quapaw Nation completed a 40,000-gallon rainwater-harvesting system connected to its Wash and Pack facility. This investment enhances water security, supports agricultural operations and food sovereignty, and provides reliable emergency and fire-suppression capacity for the community.

“We talk about food sovereignty a lot of the time, but this is more of the water sovereignty side,” said Jacob Shaffer of the USDA. “To be able to collect a natural resource without depleting groundwater is a big deal. This can be used for so many things but will primarily be used to water the gardens here as well as a fire-suppression system. Quapaw Nation Fire / Emergency Management Services can quick-connect to this 40,000-gallon system, and its location right across the street from elder housing is invaluable.”

The project exemplifies strong collaboration among the Quapaw Nation, BIA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (providing technical support), and private partners, culminating in successful system completion in 2026.



Section 3. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

3.1 Opportunities

Branch of Cultural Resources Management (BCRM)

3.1.1 *Expand Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unite (CESU)- Supported ARPA/NAGPRA Initiatives*

Expand CESU-supported ARPA and NAGPRA initiatives to additional regions, increasing Tribal access to training, technical support, and culturally grounded site-protection resources.

3.1.2 *Strengthen Workforce Efficiency*

Strengthen work efficiency by modernizing MCMS data systems, improving repository conditions, and advancing the BIA Curation Agreement to support more consistent national collections-management practices.

3.1.3 *Enhance Interagency Coordination*

Enhance interagency coordination with BIA Law Enforcement, federal land-management partners, and Tribal monitor programs to improve ARPA prevention, surveillance, and restoration outcomes.

3.1.4 *Increase National NAGPRA Capacity*

Increase national NAGPRA capacity by accelerating digitization, improving inventory accuracy, and expanding coordination with institutions to support timely repatriations and Tribal-driven priorities.

3.1.5 *Improve Strategic Planning and Technical Support*

Improve strategic planning and technical support for regional Cultural Resources Management (CRM) programs through expanded training, refined compliance processes, and standardized guidance for Section 106, ARPA, and NAGPRA responsibilities.

3.1.6 *Strengthen Tribal Engagement and Co-Management Opportunities*

Strengthen Tribal engagement and co-management opportunities by leveraging museum, repatriation, and site-protection work to support long-term stewardship and cultural-resource resilience across trust lands.

Branch of Environmental Services (BES)

3.1.7 *Development of Administrative Tools*

Developing tools, workflows, templates, and forms to assist field staff in carrying out their work. Collaborating with other OTS offices to develop guidance, tools, dashboards, and streamlined processes.

3.1.8 *Implementation of Oil & Gas Categorical Exclusion*

Finalizing oil and gas Categorical Exclusion in collaboration with the Bureau of Land Management. Working with field staff to adopt additional Categorical Exclusions from other agencies, as appropriate.

3.1.9 *Topical Trainings*

Providing topical trainings throughout the year, developed with input from field staff.

3.1.10 *Standardize Position Descriptions*

Establishing standard position descriptions for key permitting personnel to ensure a mission-ready workforce.

Branch of Tribal Community Resilience (TCR)

3.1.11 *Hard-Infrastructure Projects for 4 Tribes*

Coordinated closely with Tribes on hard-infrastructure projects funded through TCR, including four recently awarded Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funded projects: Alutiiq Pride Marine Living Shoreline and Coastal Armoring Implementation (Chugach Regional Resources Commission); Shoreline Protection (Native Village of Shishmaref); Pilgrim Hot Springs Geothermal (Kawerak); Alutiiq Tribe's Hydro Interconnection (Alutiiq Tribe of Old Harbor)

Streamlined the workflow between the AKRO and the Office of Self-Governance (OSG) to accelerate movement of funds into contracts, enabling faster availability for Tribes and Native Villages.

3.1.12 *Collaboration Meeting with Alaska Region on Environmental Programs*

Coordinated an in-person meeting in Anchorage on January 14–15 with BES and the AKRO Environmental Protection Specialist: – Strengthened inter-branch alignment and improved coordination among TCR, Alaska Environmental, and BES programs. – Established clear, coordinated approaches to environmental reviews, community-driven needs, and regional compliance work.

3.1.13 *Awarding official Technical Representative Services*

Provided AOTR and support-AOTR services for extensive construction and other TCR-funded projects already awarded to Tribes.

3.1.14 *Technical Assistance to Tribes*

Provided technical assistance to Tribes seeking support with hazard identification, risk reduction, and infrastructure needs.

3.2 Challenges

Branch of Cultural Resources Management (BCRM)

3.2.1 ARPA Initiative

Despite strong progress across program areas, the Branch continues to face several operational and structural challenges that affect implementation and overall capacity. For the ARPA Initiative, coordinating multi-agency damage assessments across large Tribal land bases remains logistically demanding, with weather delays and scheduling constraints frequently extending fieldwork timelines. Growing requests for Tribal monitoring training, ARPA presentations, and community outreach continue to exceed current staffing and resource levels, while the program must also manage increasing volumes of surveillance data and sustain long-term restoration efforts requiring specialized expertise and Tribal approvals.

3.2.2 Legacy System Transition

These pressures are compounded by internal systems challenges, including the ongoing MCMS transition, which has required significant adjustments to inventory processes and extensive cleanup of legacy data across nearly 140,000 records. The need to maintain consistent environmental monitoring across diverse repositories, navigate iterative reviews of key agreements, and balance competing reporting requirements further stretches limited capacity.

3.2.3 Improve Documentation Systems and Strengthen Collaboration

The NAGPRA Initiative likewise faces elevated workload demands: the federal shutdown created substantial delays in digitization, institutional coordination, and planning, generating a backlog of time-sensitive tasks layered atop regular responsibilities. Large volumes of BIA-controlled collections, longstanding documentation gaps, slow or incomplete institutional responses, and complex multi-institution repatriation cases all intensify scheduling and staffing pressures. Collectively, these challenges underscore the need for sustained resources, improved documentation systems, and strengthened collaboration with Tribal partners and external institutions to support timely, culturally grounded program delivery.

Branch of Environmental Services

3.2.4 Permitting Personnel needed to Address NEPA

The Department of the Interior introduced a new NEPA Handbook and Implementing Procedures with updates to regulations with challenges to new changes and updates, communicating changes to the field, and rescinding past Bureau-specific guidance including the BIA NEPA Handbook, which are currently being updated. Lack of key permitting personnel to address NEPA in the Regional and Agency offices has created many challenges. BES has been hosting monthly meetings with the Regions to communicate changes, get input on training and other developments, and allow the Regions to openly communicate key issues for BES to address with Solicitors to gain clarity and empower Regions to carry out their important work.

Branch of Tribal Community Resilience

3.2.5 *Need for More Awarding Officials and Awarding Officials Technical Representatives*

TCR continues to coordinate with Field Operations to ensure that the requirements for Subpart J and K for Level II awards involving construction agreements are met and that a coordinated strategy to implement projects throughout regions is moving forward. Level II Awarding officials are in short supply across the nation and in high demand.

Additionally, TCR needs additional certified Awarding Officials Technical Representatives (AOTRs) to service and support the hundreds of awards already completed to Tribes and Tribal Organization. The program is waiting for certification training to be offered.

3.2.6 *Strategic Hiring*

Staff capacity continues to be a challenge across programs. Workloads for current team members have continued to increase with the overall staff capacity decline over the last year. Strategic hiring efforts to increase staff capacity would greatly support program efficacy, the workforce, and the Tribes we serve.



DIVISION OF FORESTRY (DOF)

Section 1. Overview

1.1 Mission

The mission of the Division of Forestry (DOF) is to provide for the efficient, effective management and protection of trust forest resources for the benefit of American Indians and Alaska Natives through recognition and support of their resource management goals—all with the spirit of self-determination, and consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s trust responsibilities.

1.2 Who We Serve

The Division of Forestry works for the benefit of American Indians and Alaska Natives – supporting the management, planning, and best use of trust forest resources.

1.3 Services We Provide

The Forestry Program conducts management on Indian forest land in accordance with sustained yield principles to develop, maintain, and enhance forest resources. Indian Forestry has a unique standing among Federal land management programs in that Congress declared the United States has a trust responsibility toward the management of Indian forest lands pursuant to the [National Indian Forest Resources Management Act of 1990](#) (NIFRMA) (Pub. L. 101-630, Title III, 104 Stat. 4532).

Service Area Statistics on Management of Indian Forests

- 19.3 million acres in 33 States
- Commercial timber volume of approximately 67 billion board feet
- Generated \$44 million in revenue for the Tribes in FY 2025
- Allowable annual timber harvest of 680 million board feet

1.4 Staffing

17	Full Time Employees
20	Vacant Positions

1.5 Branches

Branch of Forest Inventory & Planning (FIP)

The Branch of Forest Inventory and Planning provide support and technical assistance to Tribes designing and conducting forest inventories and forest inventory analysis.



Forested mountainside



Cut wood



Seedlings at Colville Tribe

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Section 2. Stewardship, Conservation & Powering Our Future

2.1 Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

2.1.1 Pursue multiple and mixed-use strategies

The Timber Team collaborated with a Tribal natural resource program to develop a silvicultural prescription aimed at enhancing elk habitat across Tribal Trust Reserve acres in the southern Appalachians. The team conducted field reconnaissance, reviewed stand and access conditions, and identified treatment areas to promote resilient oak-hickory forest structure and improve wildlife habitat. This joint effort strengthened shared stewardship across jurisdictions while supporting long-term ecological and cultural resource objectives.

2.1.2 Generate revenue from land and resources

Through coordinated sale-preparation and fuels-treatment efforts across multiple regions, the Timber Team completed 60 variable-radius cruise plots on 50+ acres, 51 stand-improvement plots, and field layout and marking work across more than 102 acres of wildland-urban interface forest, while also identifying 50+ acres suitable for habitat-focused silvicultural treatments. These collaborative projects not only support long-term forest-health goals but also position Tribal landowners to generate future revenue from timber resources, improve stand resilience, and reduce hazardous fuels in Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas—ultimately helping protect communities from wildfire risk while ensuring that forest products can be sustainably harvested under sound management prescriptions.

2.2 American Energy & Strategic Use of Natural Resources

2.2.1 Developing and Testing three Artificial Intelligence Assisted Applications

FIP is advancing modernization and digital transformation across the [Forest Management, Inventory, and Planning](#) (FMIP) program. FY 2026 efforts included developing and testing three Artificial Intelligence (AI)-assisted applications—AI Powered FIA Insights, Forestry Metrics, and FMP Insights—improving processing speed, structured outputs, and verification workflows. These accomplishments were highlighted in the All-Employee Digest on February 24, 2026. The Branch coordinated with BIA and DOI partners on funding; piloted Box.com for secure, large-file exchange with contractors and Tribal staff; and created a standardized Power Business Intelligence (BI) tracker for Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) plot completion that can be scaled to other projects.

2.2.2 TAAMS System Enhancements

DOF is continually working to strengthen and modernize the forestry functions within the Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS). System enhancements are developed based on feedback from Tribes as well as input from Regional and Agency staff, ensuring that improvements reflect on-the-ground operational needs. These proposals are formally submitted to the TAAMS Change Management Board (TCMB) for review and prioritization. Over the past year, DOF has implemented significant streamlining of pre-sale processes and has advanced an additional seven enhancement proposals for TCMB consideration.

2.2.3 *Predicting Inventory Tree Heights Application*

This year FIP completed development of the P.I.T.H. (Predicting Inventory Tree Heights) application, a fully self-contained desktop tool that automates the height-estimation workflow for Continuous Forest Inventory datasets. By integrating species-specific Wykoff height-diameter modeling, multi-variant Forest Vegetation Simulator (FVS) coefficient support, interactive diagnostics, and seamless Excel/Access data exchange, the tool replaces manual spreadsheet processing and ad-hoc scripts previously required by field staff. Packaging the R Shiny application into a standalone installer eliminated the need for external dependencies, enabling foresters to run consistent, repeatable height regressions entirely on their local machines. This accomplishment directly improves data quality, reduces processing time, and supports more efficient inventory verification and analysis.

2.2.4 *Modernization of the National Analysis Program*

In addition, FIP achieved a significant milestone by completing the full verification and modernization of the National Analysis Program—an effort representing one of the most technically complex undertakings. The project required translating decades-old FORTRAN code into modern C#, consolidating three independent analysis systems into a unified platform, and rigorously validating every calculation to ensure accuracy and consistency. Each analysis' output was manually reviewed and confirmed, demonstrating an exceptional level of quality assurance. In addition, the team embedded the entire national analysis workflow directly into the application, eliminating the need for separate file transfers when returning projects to tribes for their forest data analysis. The verification effort also revealed that legacy data quality issues were a major contributor to processing errors. With the deployment of the newly developed tablet-based data collection system, these issues are expected to decline dramatically, resulting in cleaner incoming datasets and reducing the need for extensive post-processing. Collectively, this accomplishment elevates national data quality standards, shortens processing time, simplifies workflows for both field and tribal users, and delivers a more efficient, reliable, and modernized foundation for inventory verification and analysis across the entire program.

2.3 Sound & Sustainable Natural Resources

2.3.1 *Coordination with the Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation*

The Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation (FICOR) is a collaborative body that brings federal agencies together to improve outdoor recreation opportunities across public lands and waters. A core priority of FICOR is strengthening Tribal engagement—ensuring that recreation planning, infrastructure investments, and implementation of the Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act respect Tribal sovereignty, cultural resources, and local priorities. Through coordinated Tribal outreach, support for initiatives like Good Neighbor Authority, Gateway Communities, and expanded seasonal recreation, FICOR helps identify and advance opportunities for Tribes to enhance recreation access, including hunting and fishing, on Tribal lands. This includes improving interagency alignment, identifying funding pathways, sharing best practices, and removing barriers so that Tribes can develop, manage, or expand recreation programs in ways that reflect their own cultural and resource stewardship goals.

2.3.2 *Advanced National Silviculture Capacity*

FIP advanced national silviculture capacity through multiple initiatives. The Branch presented to Western Region forestry staff on [53 IAM 9 silviculture policy](#), providing clarity on requirements and supporting field application. FIP coordinated national discussions with Regional Foresters, Tribal participants, and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) partners to evaluate silviculture training modules within the National Advanced

Silviculture Program (NASP). Additionally, FIP solicited and reviewed applications for NASP Class 20, supporting the interagency selection committee and finalizing up to five BIA and Tribal nominees.

2.3.3 *Highlighting Tribal Forest Stewardship*

America 250 provides a powerful national platform for DOF to highlight Tribal Forest stewardship, trust responsibilities, and significant accomplishments. The celebration aligns with Interior's broader efforts to elevate stewardship and recognize the contributions of all Americans, offering DOF an ideal opportunity to showcase how Tribal Forest management—spanning more than 19 million acres and guided by sustained yield principles—continues to protect and enhance natural and cultural resources. Partnerships with the Society of American Foresters (SAF) further strengthen this effort, as SAF's Forests250 initiative promotes forest health, community resilience, and public engagement in ways that complement America 250 programming. Through the Capital Celebration and nationwide events, DOF can elevate Tribal stories, demonstrate federal–Tribal partnership in action, and use America 250 branding to unify communication about ongoing investments, accomplishments, and the shared responsibility of stewarding forests for the next 250 years.

2.3.4 *Evaluating a Unified Forest Inventory Data Platform*

FIP made significant progress in evaluating a unified forest inventory data platform centered on the United States Forest Service's FS Veg Suite of Applications. FIP facilitated demonstrations, cost inquiries, and technical planning sessions with BIA, USFS, and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) partners. Widespread interest and positive feedback from staff underscored strong Tribal and BIA support for expanded use of the Suite and future collaboration under the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

2.3.5 *Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)*

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) is central to the development of Forest Management Plans (FMPs), incorporating cultural priorities, ecosystem relationships, and stewardship values that guide how forests should be managed. When combined with the best applied science from federal and local partners, TEK ensures that management strategies reflect both scientific rigor and the Tribe's long-term vision for its lands. The Branch of Forest Inventory and Planning (FIP) support this integration by delivering technical expertise in forest inventory, mapping, analysis, and management planning. Through comprehensive data collection, training, modeling, and consultation, FIP helps Tribes translate their cultural knowledge and management objectives into actionable, defensible plans rooted in high-quality inventory data and modern science. This partnership strengthens sustainable forest stewardship, aligns management actions with Tribal values.

2.3.6 *New Partnership with the Intertribal Timber Council*

The Division of Forestry continues to strengthen cooperative management by working closely with Tribes and local stakeholders to ensure forest management activities reflect local priorities and uphold Tribal sovereignty. This commitment is further supported through a new partnership with the Intertribal Timber Council to support the Timber Team, expanding the capacity of Tribal forestry programs. The effort brings interns, early career professionals, and technicians into hands on fieldwork and mentorship alongside the existing BIA Timber Team, helping build skills in timber sale preparation, forest inventory, and silviculture. By engaging interns directly in this collaborative model, the initiative supports workforce development, enhances local capacity, and deepens long term partnerships with Tribes and communities.

2.4 Strategic Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

2.4.1 Implementation of High-Quality Forest Inventories

During FY 2026, FIP is advancing tribal and BIA forestry through technical assistance, modernization of forest inventory systems, policy engagement, and cross-agency coordination. The Branch supported multiple Regions and Tribes in implementing high-quality forest inventories, strengthening silviculture programs, and improving data workflows that directly inform forest management planning, timber programs, and habitat improvement projects.

2.4.2 National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (NIFRMA) Presentation

FIP delivered a NIFRMA presentation at a Tribal Forest Management Workshop. The session provided Tribes with a clear framework for understanding the requirements and core principles, supporting their efforts to develop effective and compliant Forest Management Plans.

2.4.3 Timber Harvest and Woodland Management Projects

In FY 2026, DOF funded seven Timber Harvest Initiative and seven Woodlands Management Projects to promote harvest of tribal wood for value-added products to boost tribal economy and reduce fuel loading. Woodlands projects can also contain culturally important values. For example, pinyon nuts for consumption or black ash fiber for baskets.



Section 3. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

3.1 Opportunities

3.1.1 On-the-Job Training

BIA Agencies and Tribal Forestry offices across the Nation have been reaching out to the Timber Team to provide on-the-job training for new hires. The Timber Team welcomes anyone working in Indian Country to participate in field projects to strengthen relationships, enhance collaboration, and provide valuable experience to the next generation of foresters. Seasoned foresters are also invited to join trips to support mentoring and additional training opportunities.

3.1.2 National Advanced Silviculture Program

The U.S. Forest Service's National Advanced Silviculture Program (NASP) is a graduate-level training program designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of professional foresters in silviculture. Candidates who successfully complete all course modules and the Silviculture Position Task Book may become certified silviculturists. Enrollment is open to U.S. Forest Service employees as well as professional foresters in other federal and state agencies.

Toward the end of each calendar year, the Branch of Forest Inventory and Planning (FIP) select up to five BIA or Tribal foresters—based on regional priorities—to attend the upcoming NASP session and its associated modules. Interested individuals should contact their BIA regional forester.

3.1.3 *Development of MOU for Interagency Silviculture Training, Mentoring and Certification*

FIP is also developing an interagency Silviculture Training, Mentoring, and Certification MOU with the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to strengthen support for BIA and Tribal foresters.

3.1.4 *Annual Intertribal Timber Council (ITC) Symposium*

Join us at the 49th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium, hosted by ITC, the Menominee Indian Tribe, and the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, June 8–11, 2026, in Keshena, Wisconsin, to learn more about Tribal forest management.

3.2 Challenges

3.2.1 *Forestry Funding*

The most recent [Indian Forest Management Assessment Team report](#) (IFMAT IV) found that Tribal forest management is funded at \$2.09 per acre. In comparison, the 2019 appropriation for National Forest acres (excluding wilderness) was \$12.24 per acre, and the 2019 Bureau of Land Management Western Oregon budget (excluding hazardous-fuel reduction) was \$41.41 per acre. This significant disparity in funding and staffing creates major challenges for sustainably managing Tribal forests for the benefit of Indian people.

3.2.2 *Staffing*

General Schedule (GS) 0460 (Forester) positions currently have a 50 percent vacancy rate. BIA Forestry must increase staffing and strengthen workforce recruitment efforts. Many agency and regional positions remain unfilled, even though these roles are essential for completing forestry fieldwork and advancing modernization initiatives. Additionally, Forestry Tribal Priority Allocation (TPA) funding has not kept pace with locality-pay increases, placing further strain on field-office budgets.

3.2.3 *Preparing the Allowable Annual Cut (AAC)*

In FY 2025, 316 million board feet of timber volume was prepared and offered for sale out of 680 million board feet available for harvest under the Allowable Annual Cut (AAC).

There is a direct correlation between staffing shortages and the inability to prepare and offer the full AAC. Additional foresters, technicians, and support personnel would be required to prepare, offer, and administer the remaining 364 million board feet that is currently not being harvested.

3.3 Best Practices

3.3.1 *Employee Safety*

During FY 2026, the Timber Team has been on travel status for a total of 10 weeks, with an additional 14 weeks scheduled for the remainder of the year. These assignments require extensive air and road travel and expose the team to a wide range of environmental conditions—from subzero temperatures in Minnesota to challenging terrain across multiple regions. Each trip is carefully planned, with a designated Timber Team member responsible for using Job Hazard Analyses (JHAs) and leading tailgate safety meetings before field work begins. These meetings continue to address critical safety topics, including driving conditions, terrain hazards, wildlife encounters, weather, and hydration needs.

The team has also begun incorporating AI-assisted tools into planning efforts to help anticipate weather risks, optimize travel routes, and identify emerging safety concerns. Team vehicles remain a priority and receive routine inspections and maintenance to ensure they remain in optimal operating condition throughout the year. The JHA can be shared with divisions, regions, and Tribes upon request.

3.3.2 *Utilizing Technology – GIS Timber Team Storyboard*

The GIS Timber Team storyboard showcases accomplishments since the team’s launch in 2020, with each project location featuring descriptions and photographs.

<https://biamaps.geoplatform.gov/timber-team-projects/>

3.3.3 *Utilizing Technology – Tribal Greenhouses Storyboard*

Maps Tribally and BIA-operated greenhouses and nurseries nationwide, including photos, species grown, and whether outputs include commercial timber species or culturally significant species.

<https://biamaps.geoplatform.gov/tribal-greenhouse/>

3.3.4 *Forestry Timber Sales Operations Group (TSOG)*

The Timber Sales Operations Group continues to work closely with regional offices on policy development related to forest-product harvesting and on matters affecting the TAAMS user community. TSOG participation is voluntary and includes employees from Tribal, agency, and regional programs. In FY 2025, most participants were regional timber sales staff from the Northwest, Midwest, Southwest, and Navajo Regions.

The group held two week-long meetings in Sacramento and met quarterly via Teams. Throughout the year, TSOG members played a central role in planning and delivering TAAMS and timber-sale training and provided substantive input on policy revisions—including updates to the Part 163 General Forestry Regulations. Members also contributed to TAAMS forestry enhancements and supported User Acceptance Testing (UAT).

3.3.5 *Forest Inventory and Planning Working Meetings*

Each quarter, BIA foresters from regions, agencies, and Tribes convene for dedicated forest-inventory and planning sessions. These meetings provide a consistent forum to identify issues, compare approaches, and share practical field experience. Sessions focus on methodology and workflow improvements, case studies, and policy or system updates, while encouraging participants to submit topics in advance or present on specialized subjects. Foresters are invited to connect with experienced colleagues for mentorship and support.

By fostering peer exchange, promoting defensible data and plans, and strengthening coordination across programs, these quarterly meetings help ensure high-quality, consistent implementation of forest-management, inventory, and planning activities nationwide.



INDIAN ENERGY SERVICE CENTER (IESC)

Section 1. Overview

1.1 Mission

The mission of the Indian Energy Service Center (IESC) is to fulfill the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Indian trust responsibility in the energy and mineral development arena. We do this by modernizing business processes to efficiently develop the Indian energy and mineral estate while protecting trust assets by removing barriers to energy and mineral development on Indian lands.

1.2 Who We Serve

The IESC serves the Indian trust mission of the DOI in the arena of energy and mineral management. IESC does this through providing technical assistance, guidance, and training to bureaus and offices within the department and to other federal agencies that develop energy and mineral resources on Indian trust lands, including the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), and others.

IESC facilitates nationwide cooperation between government offices to expedite Indian oil and gas development, standardize processes, and improve the efficiency of Indian energy and mineral development management to better serve Indian beneficiaries and Tribes.

1.3 Services We Provide

The Indian Energy and Service Center (IESC) coordinates and processes Indian energy, mineral and energy development, resource management and leasing activities for the BIA in coordination with our several Interior bureaus. IESC is staffed by BIA, the ONRR, BLM, and BTFA. The IESC facilitates energy, mineral and renewable energy development, resource management and leasing activities in Indian Country.

The IESC upholds the Department's fiduciary trust responsibility on behalf of individual trust beneficiaries and Federally recognized Tribes by:

- Expediting leasing, permitting, and reporting for conventional and renewable energy on Indian lands,
- Providing resources to ensure development occurs safely while protecting the environment,
- Managing risks appropriately by providing support and technical assistance in the assessment of the economic, social, and environmental impacts of energy development.



Oil rig at sunset



Abandoned oil rig



Ft. Berthold Oil Rigs

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1.4. Staffing

14	Full-time employees
2	Vacancies
5	Pathways interns

1.5 Branches

The IESC provides energy and mineral leasing, permitting, and agreement processing and support. The IESC–BIA team manages nationwide bonds for mineral leases and agreements across all regions, reviewing and processing requests for bond approvals and releases. The team also tracks and coordinates liability reviews and responds to bankruptcy notices from the Solicitor’s Office, ONRR, and the Department of Justice (DOJ) related to Indian oil and gas company filings. In addition, the IESC–BIA team develops policies, standardizes procedures, and implements best management practices for all types of energy trust resources. IESC Partnering Federal Agencies: BLM, BTFA, ONRR

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – Branch of Engineering

The IESC–BLM team provides well-permit processing, production-accountability reviews, communitization agreement (CA) assistance, and technical support to offices and agencies across multiple states and regions.

Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (BTFA) – Branch of Beneficiary Services

The Beneficiary Services Branch ensures Indian trust-asset funds are receipted and disbursed to Tribes and individual Indian beneficiaries. The branch provides fiduciary trust-officer support to BTFA staff at the Federal Indian Minerals Office and offers supplemental processing and outreach assistance to high-volume oil and gas field offices as needed to administer the Indian mineral trust-fund estate.

Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR) – Branch of Mineral Services

The Branch of Mineral Services, comprised of ONRR employees, has made significant progress in improving the management and accuracy of royalty collections from Indian leases. The ONRR team provides support for projects and inquiries from federal partners, Tribes, and individual Indian mineral owners nationwide.



Section 2. Stewardship, Conservation & Powering Our Future

2.1 Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

IESC, Branch of Real Estate Services

Energy and Mineral Policy and Procedures. The IESC maintains key documents that guide federal Indian energy and mineral policy.

2.1.1 Onshore Energy and Mineral Lease Management Interagency Standard Operating Procedures

A coordinated set of procedures agreed upon by multiple federal agencies for mineral leasing. IESC maintains the Indian-energy components of the SOP and works with partner agencies to ensure the document remains current and responsive to the needs of lessors, lessees, and coordinating agencies.

2.1.2 Fluid Mineral Estate Procedural Handbook

This handbook outlines procedures for BIA activities involving fluid-mineral development on Indian trust lands. The IESC is responsible for maintaining and updating this document.

2.1.3 Indian Energy Service Center Strike Team

The Bureau of Indian Affairs established a Communitization Agreement (CA) Strike Team in support of the Department of the Interior’s initiative under [Secretarial Order 3418 – Unleashing American Energy](#). The CA Strike Team operates under the direction of the Central Office Indian Energy Service Center (IESC) to address CA backlogs and support oil and gas, CA, and mineral casework. The Strike Team received a 90-day extension from December through March 26, 2026. Fort Berthold Agency (FBA) / IESC has received 7 new CAs this fiscal year.

The CA Strike Team continues to meet weekly and, as of FY 2026, has completed 8 CAs for the Uplands Region.

Table 2. Fort Berthold Communitization Agreement Status (Oct 1, 2025 – Mar 31, 2026)

Region	Communitization Agreements	Approved	Pending
Uplands	67	8	59
Big Missouri River	57		57
Little Missouri River	23		23
TOTALS	147	8	139

2.1.4 Nationwide Bonds (NWB) / Bankruptcies

Table 3. Status of Nationwide Bond Workload

Bond Status	Request	Pending Review	Pending Approval	Pending Objections	Objections Received	Completed
Approval	33	0	0	0	0	33
Release	60	1	0	10	2	47
Continuation	3	3	0	0	0	0
Rider	34	8	0	0	0	26
Replacement	21	1	2	0	0	18
TOTALS	151	13	2	10	2	124

2.1.5 Status of Nationwide Bond Workload

- February 2026: A total of 124 nationwide bonds were approved and distributed.
- An inventory was completed for transferred nationwide-bond physical files.
- IESC identified 400 Nationwide Bonds (NWBs) of varying status, all secured and properly filed.
- Since assuming this responsibility in May 2022, IESC has responded to 95 requests from the Solicitor’s Office and the Department of Justice (DOJ) for information related to energy and mineral bankruptcies.

IESC, Bureau of Land Management Branch

2.1.6 Orphan Well Plugging – Ute Mountain Ute Statement of Work

Developed plugging procedures and Conditions of Approval for 17 orphan wells in support of the Orphan Well Program office. Work included:

- Creating plugging procedures
- Reviewing drilling and recompletion reports
- Documenting current well-bore conditions
- Generating wellbore diagrams
- Evaluating regulatory requirements, well hazards, geologic formations, and risks related to injection, waterflood, and CO₂ incursions
- Assessing protection measures for Underground Sources of Drinking Water (USDWs)
- Reviewing casing design, cement and plug placement, and isolation strategies

2.1.7 Plugging and Cementing Program

Evaluated fracture gradients versus cement hydrostatic pressures to design appropriate plugging and cementing programs. Researched USDW data and cement-blend compatibility suitable for shallow depths (<6,000–8,000 ft) in northeastern New Mexico.

2.1.8 Completed Area of Review Process

Completed the Area of Review (AOR) process to assess risks of fluid migration, cross-zone communication, and behind-pipe channeling associated with SWD, waterflood, CO₂ injection, and fracturing operations. Downloaded and analyzed nearby injection-well data from state oil and gas commission databases.

2.1.9 Statement of Work Cost Estimates for 17 Wells

Coordinated with New Mexico state staff to reconcile design requirements and revise procedures and schematics. Consulted with the state geologist to identify formation tops and USDW depths for legacy wells (1950s era). Developed cost estimates for all 17 wells and consolidated engineering results into the final Statement of Work.

2.1.10 Osage Agency – Plugging Permit Reviews

Completed 5 plugging-permit reviews. Tasks included:

- Evaluating proposed plugging procedures
- Drilling and recompletion reports
- Wellbore documentation
- Regulatory requirements
- Geologic considerations
- Underground Sources of Drinking Water (USDW) protection measures
- Casing and cement design
- Oil and gas zone isolation strategies.

Coordinated with Osage staff to obtain geologic data and documentation for multiple SWD and injection wells, resolving gaps due to well age. Prepared Conditions of Approval and completed Area of Review analyses to assess fluid-migration risks.

2.1.11 *Suspension of Production (SOP) Adjudications*

Completed **21 SOP adjudications**. Tasks included:

- Evaluating 85+ leases and 36 wells
- Indian jurisdiction
- Lease and well reconciliation
- Paying-well determinations
- Proximity to fracturing and gas-gathering system maintenance
- Completion of communitization agreement
- Standard operating procedure
- Lease documentation

Prepared reconciliation sheets confirming wells, leases, and CA relationships. Coordinated with operators to verify API numbers and lease assignments.

2.1.12 *Paying Well Determinations – Concho Agency*

Completed **7 paying-well determinations** and issued **7 written orders** in AFMSS2 requesting operating-cost data. Tasks included:

- Reviewing and formatting OPEX data
- Creating maps
- Identifying associated wells
- Reviewing lease and CA documents
- Verifying lease expiration, production, and revenue
- Populating adjudication workbooks
- Conducting follow-up calls for overdue operator responses
- Resolving discrepancies in submitted data

2.1.13 *Orphan Well Inventory – Tres Rios Field Office*

Initiated inspection requests and compiled maps and location data to support field inspectors for the Orphan Well Inventory Data Development Project.

2.1.14 *Production Accountability – North Dakota*

- Completed 4 Production Accountability Records Analyses
- Completed 1 Records Verification Review
- Recovered 668 barrels of crude oil
- Recovered 35,131 MCF of gas

2.1.15 *Communitization Agreements*

- Adjudicated 3 CAs
- Completed 9 CA approval reviews for the Fort Berthold Agency
- Adjudicated 3 CAs for the Uintah & Ouray Agency.

2.1.16 *TAAMS Support*

- Fulfilled 3 TAAMS data requests for the Oklahoma Field Office.

IESC, Bureau of Trust Funds Administration Branch

The BTFA manages the financial assets of American Indians held in trust by the Department of the Interior.

2.1.17 *From October 1, 2025, to mid-year, BTFA processed 203+ inquiries from beneficiaries and Tribes, including:*

- Routine file maintenance updates
- Disbursement requests
- Locating “whereabouts unknown” IIM account holders
- Probate and death-notice processing
- Land and realty inquiries
- Financial-statement and balance requests
- Direct-deposit and debit-card updates
- Lockbox receipting and transfers
- General outreach inquiries
- BTFA assisted in closing more than 100 outstanding Ft. Berthold Beneficiary Customer Management System (BCMS) cases.

2.1.18 *Authorized over \$28 million in trust fund disbursements and over \$126 million in Tribal Investment Securities*

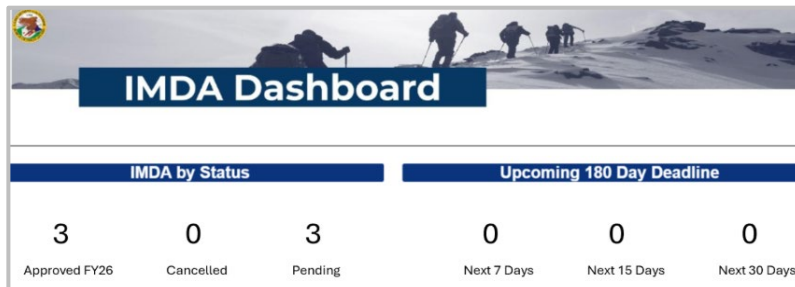
Table 4. FY 2026 Trust Fund Disbursements

Transaction	Funds Disbursed
Individual Indian Monies account holders	\$273,302
Tribal cash disbursements	\$27,822,554
Transfer in Tribal investment securities per Tribes’ instructions	\$126,000,000

2.2 American Energy & Strategic Use of Natural Resources

2.2.1 Digital Process Modernization

The IESC has developed an Indian Mineral Development Act (IMDA) Agreement platform that provides real-time tracking of IMDA reviews and approval status. This dashboard supports energy and mineral projects by enabling secure document sharing with federal partner agencies throughout the review process. The IESC plans to expand this digital platform to monitor additional projects, improving real-time reporting and enhancing information sharing among agencies involved in energy and mineral estate development.



2.2.2 Supporting Energy Development

For the BIA’s Indian Energy Service Center, improving productivity in oil and gas transactions requires a comprehensive approach focused on process optimization, technology integration, stakeholder coordination, regulatory clarity, and workforce development. By streamlining workflows, strengthening communication, and leveraging modern technologies, the BIA can expedite oil and gas transactions—allowing Tribes to benefit more efficiently from their resources while maintaining responsible land-management practices.

On December 16, 2025, the IESC Division Chief and staff met with AS-IA, Janel Broderick, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (PDAS-IA), Ken Bellmard, Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (Policy & Economic Development) (DAS-IAPED) and Jarrod Lowry, DOI Senior Advisor to discuss the IESC’s mission, programs, and its role in supporting energy development.

2.3 Sound & Sustainable Natural Resources

2.3.1 Outreach Events

The BTFA participated in the following outreach events, providing an overview of each Tribe’s current investment strategies for Tribal accounts, followed by Q&A sessions covering disbursements, drawdowns, transfers, and investment transactions:

- Tribal Self-Governance Conference – April 7–9, 2026
- Sage Coulee Elder Seminar – March 19, 2026

2.3.2 Collaboration Workshop

On January 22–23, 2026, the IESC Division Chief and the IESC BTFA Branch Chief participated in the DOI–DOE Collaboration Workshop. U.S. Department of Energy Office of Indian Energy Director Eric Mahroum and his staff met with representatives from U.S. Indian Affairs at the National Laboratory of the Rockies to explore collaborative opportunities related to Tribal energy development. Both agencies presented program overviews and discussed financial assistance, technical support, capacity building, and other topics relevant to advancing Tribal energy initiatives.

2.3.3 Federal Partners Meetings

IESC facilitates regular federal partnership collaboration meetings that bring together federal partners and Tribes to discuss shared oil and gas issues and develop coordinated solutions.

Table 5. FY 2026 Federal Partners Meeting Schedule

Federal Partner Charters	Meeting Dates	Scheduled Time MST
Fort Berthold (Feds Only)	June 4, 2026 August 6, 2026	8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Fort Berthold with MHA Nation	June 9-10, 2026 August 11-12, 2026	8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Navajo Federal Partners	October 28, 2025 April 7, 2026	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Uintah & Ouray Federal Partners	November 17, 2025 May 5, 2026	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Southwest	January 6, 2026 July 8, 2026	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas	February 3, 2026 August 4, 2026	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

2.3.4 Indian Energy & Minerals Steering Committee and Executive Management Group (EMG)

These entities provide coordinated oversight from Senior Executives across BIA, BLM, ONRR, and BTFA.

Table 6. FY 2026 Meeting Schedule

Meetings	Meeting Dates	Location	Agenda
Indian Energy & Minerals Steering Committee (IEMSC)	May 19, 2026	Lakewood, CO & Virtual	Present mineral information & progress updates
Executive Management Group (EMG)	May 20, 2026	Lakewood, CO & Virtual	IESC to provide updates on accomplishments & current projects

2.3.5 Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with Federal Partners, Including Pass-Through Partnerships

Current and developing MOUs involve coordination between IESC, DEMD, and multiple federal partners, including:

- DOI Office of the Solicitor (SOL)
- Bakken
- Appraisal & Valuation Services Office (AVSO)
- Division of Minerals Evaluation (DME)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

2.4 Strategic Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

2.4.1 TERA / TEDO

The IESC administers the Tribal Energy Resource Agreements (TERAs) and Tribal Energy Development Organizations (TEDOs) program and processes all incoming applications. Both TERAs and TEDOs strengthen Tribal sovereignty and improve the efficiency of energy development by removing the requirement for DOI approval for individual leases, business agreements, and rights-of-way on Tribal lands.

2.4.2 First Tribal TERA Agreement Approved – Southern Ute Indian Tribe

This fiscal year, the IESC facilitated the application process for the first Tribal TERA agreement between the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and the Department of the Interior. The agreement is on track for a decision by May 26, 2026. If approved, it will mark the first TERA ever approved since the program was authorized under the *Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act of 2005*—a historic milestone in Tribal self-determination.

2.4.3 Tribal Energy Summit Preparation

The IESC prepared for the Tribal Energy Summit, scheduled on April 29 – May 1, 2026. The Summit provided updates on DOI and BIA priorities supporting the future of energy development in Indian Country. The priority focus was on streamlining review and approval processes for exploration, leasing, siting, development, production, transportation, refining, and generation—while upholding Tribal

sovereignty and supporting community-driven growth. The Summit fosters intergovernmental coordination, information sharing, and collaboration across Federal, Tribal, and industry regulatory frameworks.

2.4.4 *SOP Fluid Minerals Training*

On December 9–10, 2025, the Indian Energy Service Center hosted a virtual Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Training for Indian Fluid Minerals with more than 30 attendees. The training provided an opportunity to understand the interconnected roles and responsibilities of DOI bureaus and offices involved in fluid-mineral (oil and gas) development and operations on trust lands nationwide.

2.4.5 *TAAMS Mineral Training*

On February 18–19, 2026, TAAMS Mineral Training was held virtually. The Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS) is DOI’s integrated land-management system, maintained and operated by contractors. TAAMS serves as the system of record for title and land-ownership data for lands held in trust for Tribes, American Indians, and Alaska Natives.

The system also manages the full leasing process, including invoicing and income distribution—to beneficiaries of lands held in trust by the Department of the Interior.



Section 3. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

3.1 Opportunities

The IESC has identified several opportunities to expand services and strengthen inter-bureau coordination:

3.1.1 *Acreage and Boundary Determinations*

Support for administrative appeals and precedent-setting acreage/boundary determinations for leases affected by updated cadastral findings along waterways where river migration has altered boundaries. These issues continue to delay development and royalty distribution to Indian mineral owners. IESC remains committed to working with all parties to resolve these barriers.

3.1.2 *Lands under Judicial Review*

Continued engagement on lands affected by active litigation in U.S. District Court—particularly lands underlying the bed of the Missouri River—where competing title claims remain unresolved.

3.1.3 *Orphan-Well Gap for Allotted Lands*

IESC identified a significant gap in orphan-well programming for allotted trust lands. Current grant programs support Tribal lands but do not cover allotted parcels, leaving wells on those lands unaddressed. IESC has submitted a budget request to close this critical gap.

3.1.4 *Expanded Engagement in Alaska*

IESC is receiving increasing requests to support energy projects in Alaska. Plans are underway to develop an Alaska Region charter as part of future federal-partner meetings.

3.1.5 *Energy*

In response to the National Energy Emergency and executive directives to unleash Alaska’s resource potential, the Department of the Interior issued Secretarial Orders aimed at reducing regulatory barriers and accelerating development of oil, gas, and renewable-energy resources on federal and Tribal lands. These actions support streamlined energy development while honoring trust obligations and Tribal sovereignty.

3.1.6 *Permitting*

Following President Donald J. Trump’s declaration of a National Energy Emergency, the Department of the Interior and the BIA are preparing **emergency permitting procedures** to accelerate development of domestic energy resources and critical minerals. The procedures are being designed to expedite the review and, when appropriate, approval of projects related to the identification, leasing, siting, production, transportation, refining, or generation of energy within the United States.

3.2 **Challenges**

3.2.1 *Government Furlough*

The government furlough from October 1 to November 12, 2025, significantly slowed or halted projects by disrupting staffing levels and interrupting operational continuity.

3.2.2 *Recruitment*

IESC has also been unable to fill multiple realty vacancies listed on the organizational chart, including positions needed for the IESC Strike Team. To address ongoing staffing shortages, recruiting efforts have been coordinated with other OTS divisions to run continuous, open announcements on USAJOBS to help fill Realty Specialist vacancies.

3.3 **Best Practices**

3.3.1 *Mineral Royalty Account Distributions Bi-Monthly*

IESC perfected the twice a month Mineral Royalty Account Distribution (MRAD) distribution by working with federal partners to split the MRAD file into two separate files: The large Fort Berthold Agency file is now processed alone and the rest of the Regions together to increase efficiency and reduce delays. This process change facilitates the processing of large files that had previously caused significant delays in royalty distribution.

3.3.2 *Detailing Employees*

IESC has incorporated alternate staffing plans to add personnel by offering detail opportunities and rotating volunteers to assist with multiple projects.

3.3.3 *Energy & Mineral Support Processing Initiative*

IESC has enhanced its processes to deliver higher-quality service through the Energy and Mineral Support Processing initiative. This allows government agencies to request operational support for energy and mineral projects. Agencies can request assistance by completing an online form at [Request for Indian Energy Service Center Assistance](#) or by emailing IESCRequests@bia.gov.



DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR)

Section 1. Overview

1.1 Mission

The mission of the Division of Natural Resources is to support the Fish, Wildlife and Agriculture stewardship of trust lands in Indian Country. The Division assists Tribes in the management, development, and protection of the Indian trust resource and landscape. The Division enables Tribal and Indian trust managers and landowners to optimize the use and conservation of resources, providing benefits such as revenue, jobs, and the protection of fish and wildlife, agriculture husbandry, cultural, spiritual and traditional indigenous knowledge resources.

1.2 Who We Serve

The DNR supports Bureau of Indian Affairs regional offices and agencies to provide programs and services for Tribes and Individual Indian landowners. DNR creates policy, directs funding and provides oversight to BIA agencies to provide planning, management, conservation, development, and utilization of soil, water, farmland, rangeland, fish and wildlife resources on trust land.

1.3 Services We Provide

- Non-Competitive Fisheries, Wildlife, and Recreation Programs
- Competitive Fisheries, Wildlife and Recreation Programs
- Noxious Weed Eradication Program
- Bison Project

1.4 Staffing

5	Full Time Employees
2	Vacant Positions

1.5 Branches

Branch of Agriculture & Rangeland Development (BRAD)

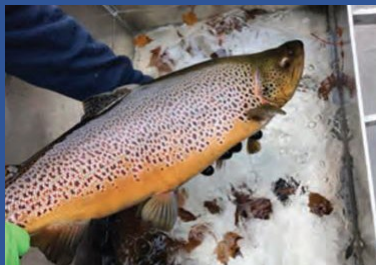
The Branch of Agriculture and Rangeland Development focus on inventory, programmatic and conservation planning, farm and rangeland improvements, vegetation monitoring, recruitment and placement of natural-resource agriculture student interns, lease and permit administration, and rangeland protection. BRAD held quarterly conference calls with Regional Agriculture and Range managers to promote consistency in program management.



Oil rig at sunset



Abandoned oil rig



Brown trout at Lac du Flambeau

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The Branch also worked to connect Regional BRAD staff with professional organizations and additional sources of technical expertise. These efforts supported staff performance and helped identify virtual training opportunities in partnership with USDA Farm Production & Conservation (FPAC), the USDA Office of Tribal Relations, and the Inter-Tribal Agriculture Council.

Branch of Fisheries, Wildlife & Recreation (BFWR)

The Branch provides scientific expertise to enhance program activities that support fish-producing Tribes with hatching, rearing, and stocking operations. These programs are a critical component of comprehensive landscape conservation and are closely aligned with environmental health and safety, water quality, economic benefits, rights protection, and habitat enhancement.



Section 2. Stewardship, Conservation & Powering Our Future

2.1 Strategic Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

DNR enables Tribal self-determination and self-governance. Our focus is to help Tribes expand economic growth, job creation, energy development, and co-management opportunities.

2.1.1 Tribal Template for Agriculture Resource Management Plans (ARMP)

Review and edit the Draft Tribal Template for ARMP to support technical assistance, automation, and future streamlining efforts.

2.1.2 Revision of 54 Indian Affairs Manual – Agriculture Handbook

Examine BIA 54 IAM 1-H Agriculture Handbook to ensure continuity in the current revision process, incorporating input and comments from the regions.

2.1.3 Update BIA Grazing Permit Forms

Work with Regulatory Affairs & Collaborative Action (RACA) to update BIA Grazing Permit Forms with input and feedback from Regional Field Offices.

2.1.4 Joint BIA/USDA Training

Collaborate with the USDA Office of Tribal Relations to deliver the USDA–BIA Joint Training in a national virtual format by fall 2026, aligned with the USDA–BIA Memorandum of Understanding.

2.1.5 Collaboration in Working Groups and Task Forces

Represent BIA in DOI collaborative efforts, working groups, and task forces focused on Noxious Weeds, Invasive Species, Bison Conservation Initiatives, and DOI Integrated Pest Management.

2.1.6 DOI Bison Shared Stewardship Strategy

Work closely with the DOI Bison Working Group to finalize next steps for the DOI Bison Shared Stewardship Strategy.

2.1.7 *Update BIA Branch of Agriculture Web Page*

Re-evaluate the DOI BIA Branch of Agriculture web page, coordinating with the web team to reorganize content and explore development of new BARD web pages that provide a Tribal-producer-friendly, one-stop resource for key documents, materials, dashboards, storyboards, Request for Proposals (RFPs), regional contacts, Secretarial Orders, and Bison information.



Section 3. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

3.1 Opportunities

Bison Branch

3.1.1 *Web Site Access Updated*

DNR staff managed official webpages to better illustrate alignment with Trump Administration priorities. These webpages provide Tribes an opportunity to access important documents and materials such as Request for Proposals (RFPs) for each of the BFWR programs, regional contact information, secretarial orders pertaining to Endangered Species Act (ESA) for Tribes and Federal and Tribal co-management of lands.

3.1.2 *Website Features Project Accomplishments & Photos*

Through communication with BFWR Regional Managers, project photos and accomplishments were collected and are featured on our individual competitive and non-competitive program pages.

3.1.3 *Base Funding Provided for Fish & Wildlife Organizations*

The Native American Fish and Wildlife Society (NAFWS) is the preeminent organization for tribal fish and wildlife managers. The BFWR provides the base funding for this organization and provides most fish and wildlife related funding across Indian Country. NAFWS conferences, workshops, and trainings are a hub for collaborating with other agencies, states, tribes, and partners regarding projects and initiatives benefiting Indian Country. The representation of BFWR staff at these events is imperative to spread awareness of DNR programs, strengthen relationships, and build partnerships with other government agencies and tribal entities.

3.1.4 *Participation in Wildlife Health, Conservation, Technology & Tribal Partnerships Forums*

BFWR Staff attended the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society (NAFWS) Great Plains Conference co-hosted by the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska on March 17-19, 2026. The conference featured a wide range of sessions covering wildlife health, conservation practices, Tribal partnerships, and emerging tools and technologies, alongside dedicated Conservation Law Enforcement Officer (CLEO) training and a regional competition shoot. Participants also had the opportunity to explore the Winnebago Tribe's lands through natural resource tours, highlighting the cultural and ecological importance of the Missouri River and surrounding landscapes.

Central Office staff will attend the NAFWS Annual National Conference in Verona, NY on May 5-7, 2026. Co-hosted by the Oneida Indian Nation of New York, the conference will feature general sessions, partnership updates, CLEO training, workshops, and other presentations focused on this year's theme, *From Ancestral Knowledge to Emerging Technology: Sustaining Native Fish & Wildlife*.

3.1.5 *Monthly Communication with Field Staff*

Central Office hosts monthly MS Teams coordination calls with regional staff to provide program updates and technical assistance to the regions, agencies, and tribes.

Branch of Fisheries, Wildlife & Recreation

3.1.6 *On-Going Collaboration*

Coordinates, cooperates, and consults with stakeholders in other Federal agencies, within Interior, Tribes and Tribal Organizations, institutions of higher learning and non-federal agencies, and other Division Chiefs to realize cost savings or improve operations. This includes the DOI Invasive Species Task Force and other interagency work groups.

3.1.7 *Feral Horse Populations*

Work closely with USGS conducting and reporting surveys to better determine the economic and ecological impacts of feral horse populations on tribal lands.

3.1.8 *Tribal Capacity to Manage Invasive Species Project*

Proactively worked with NAFWS to provide financial resources and technical support, bringing positive results in terms of increased membership and services provided to members. Coordination with NAFWS also included planning and implementing a project providing tribal capacity to manage invasive species and implementing Early Detection/Rapid Response regarding invasive species invasions.

3.1.9 *Use of Technology to Streamline Processes and Paperwork Reduction*

Achieved demonstrable improvements in efficiency, productivity, and quality of work and government services, including significant reductions in cost and paperwork using our OneDrive system, funding database and monthly coordination calls. The Branch has reduced program paperwork requirements by 100%, meeting all program deliverables within budget and introducing process improvements that save time for staff and stakeholders.

3.1.10 *Prioritized Permitting*

Prioritized funding projects that accomplish required permitting and allow Tribes to receive economic benefits from timber sales, oil and gas exploration, mineral development and other projects driving economics at the Tribal community level.

3.1.11 *Tribal Fish Hatchery Database*

Maintained and improved a database tracking tribal fish hatchery information, including fisheries production data.

3.2 Challenges

3.2.1 *Finances, PL 93-638 Contracts and Annual Funding Agreements*

DNR, will focus on activities related to full fiscal distributions consistent with program purposes and criteria. Items will be completed in conjunction with regional staff overseeing the 638 contracts and Annual funding agreements associated with line-item funds.

3.2.2 *Share Emerging Agriculture, Environmental & Fish & Wildlife Information with Tribes*

DNR will strive to continue monitoring all emerging agriculture, environmental and fish & wildlife international, national, regional, and local information that is of value and informs the tribal natural resource trust interest.

3.2.3 *Responsiveness to Data Calls, Tribes and the Public*

DNR will continue to respond with timely, correct information on data calls originating from Congress, all sectors internal and external within the administration, Tribes, public and judicial directives.

3.2.4 *Staffing*

Facilitate new DNR and Branch positions for FY 2026.

3.3 Best Practices

Agriculture and Bison

3.3.1 *Budget Coordination*

DNR AG and Bison strive to provide coordination with tribes, tribal organizations and tribal management efforts and our budget efforts at OTS Central Office. In-person interviews and site visits allow us to better understand and prepare justifications of tribal needs for our annual budget formulations. Coordination strengthens relations with BIA regional office staff, and we seek partnerships with other Federal partners.

3.3.2 *Agriculture Databases*

AG has a goal of improving coordination with BFWR to assist with the update of data sharing to improve systems for data call response and improved Agriculture databases.

3.3.3 *Bison Apprenticeship Program*

We continue to assist with the stand up and development of the Bison Apprenticeship program with fellow DOI agencies and departments to support tribes with their respective Bison programs successes.

3.3.4 *\$7M Bison Conservation Funding*

We have a goal of working with AG regional contacts and utilizing fair and equitable methodologies to the allocated \$7M in Bison Conservation funding. We also have improved upon our recently developed public AG webpages and developed Logic Models for performance.

Branch of Agriculture

3.3.5 *Tribal Template for Agriculture Resource Management Plans*

Reviewing and editing the Draft Tribal Template for Agriculture Resource Management Plans (ARMP) for technical assistance and automation efforts for potential development to support streamlining efforts.

3.3.6 *Agriculture Handbook and Grazing Permit Forms*

Examining BIA 54 IAM 1-H Agriculture Handbook for continuity in the current handbook revision process in coordination with Regional input and comment. Working with RACA to update BIA Grazing Permit Forms with Regional Field office input and comment.

3.3.7 *Collaboration with Federal Partners*

Collaborating with USDA, Office of Tribal Relations to deliver the USDA–BIA Joint Training in a national virtual format by fall 2026. Training will be tied directly to implementation of the USDA–BIA Memorandum of Understanding. Represented BIA on many DOI collaborative efforts, working groups, task force, relating to Noxious Weeds, Invasive Species, Bison Conservation Initiatives, and DOI Integrated Pest Management. Internally, the Branch is working to assist other Division Branches to respond to various Secretarial Orders to accomplish tasks with regard to important timelines as directed.

3.3.8 *DOI Bison Shared Stewardship Strategy*

Working closely with the DOI Bison Working Group to finalize the next steps for the DOI Bison Shared Stewardship Strategy.

3.3.9 *Design Customer Focused Branch of Agriculture Web Page*

Currently re-examining the DOI BIA Branch of AG web page to coordinate with the Web page team for reorganization and explore ideas to publish new BARD web pages for a one stop shop Tribal AG producers friendly page for Tribal access to important documents, materials, Dashboards, Story boards, RFP's, Regional Contact information, Secretarial Orders, and Bison Information.

3.3.10 *Bison Grazing Ecology on Tribal Agricultural Rangelands*

The Branch has coordinated technical assistance efforts to Tribes, and Tribal College Graduate programs on Bison Grazing Ecology on Tribal Agricultural Rangelands.

Fisheries, Wildlife and Recreation

3.3.11 *Recreation on Tribal Lands addition to Green Book*

DNR FWR provides coordination with tribes, tribal organizations and tribal management on a Recreation portion for the Green Book. In-person interviews and site visits allowed for better understanding and descriptions of tribal needs for the annual budget program line-item and overall budget formulation. BFWR seeks to incorporate program funding under the Greenbook, to support “Conservation Law Enforcement Officers” and a stand-alone program “Recreation on Tribal Lands”.



DIVISION OF REAL ESTATE SERVICES (DRES)

Section 1. Overview

1.1 Mission

The mission of the Division of Real Estate Services (DRES) is to provide comprehensive real estate services, technical and procedural assistance, as well as policy that upholds the highest standards of professionalism to all of the BIA regions and agency field offices as well Tribal Contract/Compact realty staff. We are committed to fostering partnerships with Federally Recognized Tribes and Individual Indian landowners to minimize risks to protect trust assets and resources in the management of trust and restricted fee lands under Tribal law, Federal law and regulations.

1.2 Who We Serve

DRES provides realty services to support Tribes and Individual Indian landowners such as conveyances, surface leasing, mortgaging, and granting rights of way crossing their trust and restricted fee lands. DRES also administers the processes for the Tribes to acquire trust land and make reservation proclamation requests.

DRES provides policy direction, technical assistance, training including administrative review and monitoring of real property operations to Tribes. American Indian and Alaska Native landowners, and BIA office and agency staff. DRES serves as subject matter experts for various Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS) training and production modules including Acquisition and Disposals (Conveyances), Fee-to-Trust, Tenure & Management (Surface Leasing), Rights-of-Ways, etc.

1.3 Services We Provide

DRES is a team of administrators, analysts, and realty specialist who work together to provide realty services to federally recognized Tribes, Alaska Native Villages, and individual Indian landowners. The BIA Central Office DRES develops and implements policy and processes as well as provides nation-wide training and technical assistance to Tribal governments and BIA field offices including the Lockbox and invoicing

Central Office DRES also provides [Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Home Ownership Act](#) (HEARTH Act) of 2012 training and reviews Tribal HEARTH Act ordinances submitted for Secretary approval.



Oil Rig at Sunset



House at the Suquamish Tribe



Border of Tribal/Non-Tribal land

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Other Services include:

- Administration
- Conveyances: Acquisition & Disposal
- Broadband Authorization & Permitting
- Fee to Trust Land Acquisitions
- Right-of-Way on Individually Owned Indian and Tribal Lands
- Surface & Business Leasing on Individual Indian and Tribal Lands
- HEARTH Act
- Mortgages in Indian Country

1.4 Staffing

12	Full Time Employees
5	Vacant Positions
5	Pathways Intern Positions
14	Contractors

1.5 Branches

The Department of the Interior plays a central role in stewarding trust lands, advancing clean energy projects, enhancing environmental protection, pursuing environmental justice, and honoring the nation-to-nation relationship with Tribes. Guided by these priorities, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) established these three branches within DRES (Branch of Realty Resource Services (BRRS), Branch of Realty Operations (BRO) and the Realty Strike Team.

Realty Strike Team

The Realty Strike Team consists of experienced Realty staff who review, analyze, and monitor processes and data encoded into TAAMS. The team provides TAAMS review and support to BIA Regions and Agency offices for Department and BIA priorities, backlogs, high workload volumes, complex processing needs, or as requested. The Strike Team supports field offices by providing additional processing capacity as needed, offering a cost-effective solution to fluctuating workloads.

In addition, the team also provides technical guidance to the BIA Office of Field Operations, DRES User Groups, and supports handbooks, policy, procedural trainings, TAAMS trainings, updates to business rules, change requests, and responses to data calls.



Section 2. Stewardship, Conservation & Powering Our Future

2.1 Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

Branch of Realty Operations (BRO)

2.1.1 TAAMS Mortgage Portal & Title Status Report (TSR) Portal

During the reporting period, significant advancements were made in mortgage-related systems and processes. Key initiatives included demonstrations of the TAAMS Mortgage Portal and Title Status Report (TSR) Portal, moving both platforms closer to final approval and deployment. A new email for TSR requests was introduced to streamline communication and request routing between field offices and the Land Titles and Records Office (LTRO), improving tracking, assignment, and completion of requests.

2.1.2 TAAMS Mortgage Module Training

Training was a priority, with comprehensive sessions conducted for the TAAMS Mortgage Module and Mortgage Approvers. These sessions were recorded and distributed to the field for ongoing reference. The Mortgage User Group meets monthly to provide updates, review and resolve pending cases, support updates to our Lender Contact List, and address change requests.

2.1.3 Weekly Mortgage Reports

Weekly mortgage reports were prepared and distributed to senior management, providing visibility into mortgage activities.

2.1.4 Residential Lease Form and Mortgage Rider for HEARTH Act Tribes

The Residential Lease Form and Mortgage Rider for HEARTH Act Tribes were finalized and released, supporting tribal housing initiatives.

2.1.5 Implementation of Title State Report Endorsement

Oversight of the TSR Endorsement rollout was another highlight, with approvals secured from both HUD and Ginnie Mae. Collaboration with Regional Realty Staff resolved early implementation issues and clarified technical and certification processes for TAAMS-generated TSR endorsements.

2.1.6 Public Mortgage Website Updated

To improve transparency and deadline management, change requests were submitted to add new date-tracking fields—covering received, incomplete, and resubmission dates—into the mortgage review process. The Lender Contact List on the public mortgage website was updated and publicized to ensure accurate lender information.

2.1.7 69 Mortgages Approved in FY 2026

Since October 1, 2025, a total of 83 mortgages has been received, with 69 approved and 14 pending. Subject matter expertise was enhanced through participation in a TAAMS Mortgage Training session.

Strengthening Inter-Agency Partnerships

2.1.8 *HEARTH Act Partnership ensures Policy Consistency and Clear Communication*

The Department maintains ongoing coordination with the Office of the Solicitor (SOL) for legal sufficiency and redline resolution, HUD for mortgage documents and policy guidance, and other partners such as DBIA, Indian Affairs- Office of Policy Analysis, RACA, and OTS. These partnerships ensure policy consistency and clear communication, directly supporting the timely adoption of leasing regulations by Tribal governments.

2.1.9 *Development of HEARTH Act Training Materials*

The Department develops training materials (including updated HEARTH overview slides, a Dear Tribal Leader letter, checklists, and national training videos), hosts recurring outreach webinars, and posts 508-compliant resources to the Indian Affairs public website for Tribal leaders and staff. The Department also works directly with Tribal legal counsel, answering questions about legal sufficiency when Tribes are drafting their own leasing regulations. This technical assistance translates statutes and regulations into usable resources—such as checklists, videos, and slides—that Tribes can use to build capacity and ensure compliance.

2.2 American Energy & Strategic Use of Natural Resources

Accelerated Processing

2.2.1 *Accelerated Processing of Realty Transactions*

DRES implemented shorter timeframes for processing and approving realty transactions, especially for surface, business, and residential leases. This enables more timely approvals and access to land and resources, reducing delays for applicants. Efforts to reduce applicant burden and streamline regulatory review processes are central to these improvements. By simplifying procedures and removing unnecessary hurdles, DRES enables quicker and more accessible leasing opportunities.

2.2.2 *Faster Mortgage Processing*

The TAAMS mortgage module has reduced cycle times for mortgage processes—including intake, TSR request/certification, lease/ROW validation, approval, closing, and servicing—by using set timeframes and automated notifications. Online TSR requests through a centralized email further streamline the process. Enhanced communication between BIA, lenders, Tribal contacts, and other partners is achieved through regular meetings and open correspondence with the BIA mortgage user group.

2.2.3 *Enhanced Tracking and Communication*

DRES has developed multiple dashboards and Smartsheets to communicate and track timeframes for key realty processes (e.g., Rights-of-way, Broadband, Acquisition & Disposal, Surface Leasing, Lockbox, HEARTH Act, Fee to Trust, Proclamations, Excess Lands, Workload Assistance) across regions and agencies.

Apply Technologies and Management Tools

2.2.4 *HEARTH Act Case Management Tools*

The 25 U.S.C. § 415(h) Act supports Tribal self-governance by encouraging Tribes to administer their own approved leasing regulations, requiring accurate data handling, records management and secure communication systems.

- Smartsheet and DTS are used for document tracking, version control, and automated routing, supporting efficient digital workflows. The [52 IAM 13](#) policy guidance mandates consistent review processes for submitted regulations—requiring technology tools for document tracking, version control, and automated routing. The Department actively uses Smartsheet and DTS to upload, track, and route Tribal leasing regulations, redline modifications, external and internal calls, acknowledgement letters, and general outgoing letters from the Department to Tribal leaders.
- The HEARTH Act national team provided Tribal outreach webinars, circulated forms, and engaged with HUD—all requiring effective communication platforms. This bullet aligns directly with statutory and policy requirements for efficient digital workflows supporting Tribal regulatory approval.
- Proactive case management and structured tools (communication briefs, surnaming, planning-leading meetings) are used to manage and track leasing regulations. Tribes receive consolidated feedback from the Solicitor, Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action (RACA) weekly and quarterly. The Departmental Tracking System (DTS) and Dashboards to track leasing regulation status.

2.2.5 *Water Management and Conservation*

Approved HEARTH Act Tribal leasing authority can include water-related activities such as agricultural, residential, and business uses. The Act supports Tribal capacity building for water resource planning and management by ensuring that environmental compliance and conservation provisions are integrated into leasing frameworks. According to the 52 IAM 13 guidance policy, Tribal regulations must comply with all applicable federal laws, including those related to environmental and water management.

2.2.6 *Strengthen water conservation for today and the future*

Tribal HEARTH Act leasing regulations may include specific conservation provisions. The legal sufficiency review required by 52 IAM 13 ensures that environmental protections are embedded within Tribal leasing frameworks. Water conservation is promoted by ensuring that Tribal HEARTH Act ordinances meet federal environmental standards during the internal review process.

2.2.7 *Renewable Energy Leasing under HEARTH Act*

Under 25 U.S.C. § 415(h), Tribes have the authority to approve their own wind and solar resource leasing regulations. This means Tribes can move forward with renewable energy projects—such as wind and solar farms—without waiting for additional approval from the BIA. This streamlined process helps Tribes take advantage of clean energy opportunities more quickly.

Indian Affairs Manual at 51 IAM Chapter 13, *Approval of Tribal Leasing Regulations under the HEARTH Act* outlines this process. For certain types of leases, specifically Wind Energy Evaluation Leases (WEEL) and Wind and Solar Resource (WSR) leases, there is an “elevated” review process to ensure all requirements are met. This process involves several steps:

- First, the BIA and the Office of the Solicitor review the proposed regulations.
- Next, the Office of the Executive Secretariat and Regulatory Affairs, the Office of the Deputy Secretary, and finally, the Office of the Secretary conduct their reviews.

During this review, Tribes must provide information such as:

- The reasons for pursuing wind or solar leasing authority,
- Whether there is a Power Purchase Agreement in place,
- The technical capability of the applicant to build and operate the project,
- The applicant's experience with similar projects,
- And whether other energy resources are available or feasible for the Tribe.

Leases that are not related to wind or solar energy (such as business or agricultural leases) do not go through this elevated review. Tribes may choose to submit these other types of regulations separately for a simpler approval process.

The HEARTH Act also encourages collaboration across federal departments and supports the alignment of Tribal leasing with national renewable energy goals. This authority is one of the strongest examples of how the Department supports Tribal self-determination and clean energy development.

2.2.8 *Partnerships for Resource Innovation, e.g., federal agencies, tribal entities*

The HEARTH Act strengthens Tribal–Federal partnership by empowering Tribes while keeping the Department in a supporting role. The 52 IAM 13 encourages interagency consistency and collaboration during regulatory review. The Department collaborates with the following offices and Tribal leaders on a national level.

- Housing and Urban Development
- Office of the Solicitor (SOL)
- Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs (DBIA)
- Indian Affairs – Office of Policy Analysis (IA-OPA)
- Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action (RACA)
- Executive Secretariat-Indian Affairs (ESIA)
- Deputy Assistant Secretary Policy and Economic Development (DA-SPED)
- Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs (PDASIA)
- Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs (AS-IA)
- BIA Regions
- Tribal Leaders

The HEARTH Act implementation functions exactly through these kinds of interagency and Tribal partnerships.

2.2.9 *Policy Development and Advocacy*

The Department's HEARTH Act work directly advances federal–Tribal policy development and implementation. Our team is actively involved in updating policies, hosting outreach sessions, reviewing ordinances, gathering feedback, and coordinating with partners like HUD.

Branch of Realty Resource Services - Acquisition & Disposal

2.2.10 Trust and Restricted Land Conveyances

DRES provided critical support to the Probate Surge Team in Realty Acquisition & Disposal Estate Planning. This included onsite outreach to the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation (Three Affiliated Tribes) on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota, resulting in 48 gift conveyance cases initiated, 8 applications approved, 8 deeds approved, and 8 cases completed. Outreach to the Gila River Indian Community led to 8 gift conveyance cases and 11 cases completed.

2.2.11 25 CFR 152 Handbook

In coordination with the TAAMS A&D User Group, DRES is developing the Trust and Restricted Land Conveyances Handbook under 25 CFR Part 152 to provide technical guidance to BIA regional, agency, and tribal realty staff. The handbook is currently in draft form, with ongoing collaboration between DRES, the Office of the Solicitor (SOL), and RACA.

2.2.12 Gift Conveyance and Negotiated Sales Flyers

Gift Conveyance Flyers have been completed for public distribution and were provided during Probate Surge Team outreach events in North Dakota and Arizona. The [Negotiated Sales Flyer](#), focused on Trust and Restricted Land Conveyances, was developed and made available online. DRES will continue to produce flyers addressing topics outlined in the Trust and Restricted Land Conveyances Handbook.

2.2.13 Modernizing Acquisition & Disposal (A&D) Business Rules

National A&D Business Rules were issued in May 2022, including guidance for the TAAMS A&D Module and fee-to-trust cases. Due to ongoing process modernization, A&D Business Rules were separated from FTT Business Rules as of August 2025. Once the Trust and Restricted Land Conveyances Handbook is finalized, A&D Business Rules will be updated as needed.

The TAAMS A&D User Group meets monthly to review the draft handbook, discuss and prepare for TAAMS enhancements, and identify user needs for immediate improvements to streamline realty staff processes.

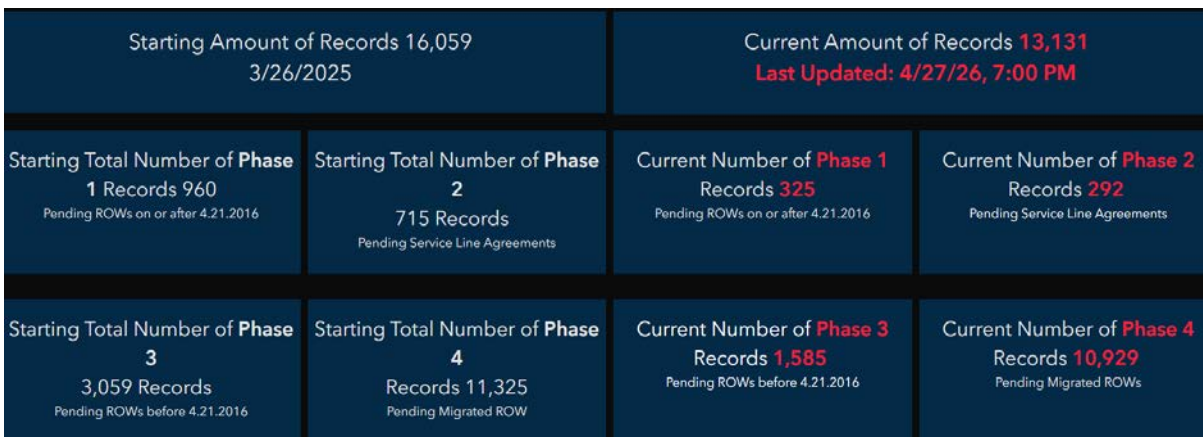
2.2.14 Modernizing A&D Information Sharing

The A&D Reporting Dashboard is in active production, providing a comprehensive overview across all regions. The A&D SharePoint site has been updated to streamline materials and deliver essential information for realty field operations. A preliminary data clean-up focused on gift deeds was initiated on January 12, 2026, to support Probate Estate Planning initiatives.

Key components of this data clean-up include:

- Missing close-out cases (cases not yet finalized, closed, or officially completed in the system of record)
- Deeds approved but not yet recorded by LTRO
- Applications mailed but not yet returned to BIA
- Cases created but applications not mailed
- Aged report for gift deeds from 2018 and 2019

Rights of Way Progress Metrics status during 4 Phases



2.2.15 *Fee-to-Trust and Proclamations*

The release of the Indian Affairs Manual Processing Fee-to-Trust Applications chapter, the Fee-to-Trust Acquisitions and Reservation Proclamations Handbook, and the National FTT Business Rules in 2025 marked the full establishment of the 2021 FTT Strike Team. Originally created to improve the efficiency of FTT acquisitions, the team has since evolved to ensure the integrity of FTT data within TAAMS.

The TAAMS FTT User Group continues to meet monthly to identify user needs and develop enhancements, ensuring streamlined processes and greater efficiency for Realty staff.

2.2.16 *Discretionary, Mandatory, American Indian Probate Reform Act (AIPRA), and Proclamation Flyers*

Flyers covering Discretionary, Mandatory, Mandatory [AIPRA](#), and Proclamation topics have been developed for public use and are available on the BIA DRES website.

2.2.17 *Modernizing Proclamation Information Sharing*

Development of the Proclamation Dashboard is ongoing, with DRES preparing to launch a data-driven reporting tool for BIA.

Rights-of-Way

2.2.18 *Modernizing TAAMS Business Rules*

On February 27, 2026, updated business rules for the TAAMS Proposal and Right-of-Way modules were issued. These, along with NPM-TRUS-48 (September 3, 2025) and the Right-of-Way on Indian Lands Handbook (January 10, 2022), provide a comprehensive framework for the receipt, review, approval, processing, and TAAMS encoding of right-of-way applications.

DRES hosted a virtual brown bag session on March 17, 2026, to discuss these new business rules with regional and agency staff. The session included a slide deck overview and a Q&A, and both the updated rules and the session recording are available on the DRES SharePoint site.

2.2.19 *TAAMS Enhancements*

In conjunction with the updated business rules, DRES submitted several TAAMS change requests and conducted user acceptance testing. Enhancements include:

- Required fields in the Right-of-Way module for bonding, right-of-way description, and purpose
- A “Grantee” radio button to better identify grant recipients
- Additional components for the Qlik search/query function

2.2.20 *Reporting to Leadership*

DRES continues weekly reporting to leadership, focusing on right-of-way applications received, approved, and pending across various timeframes. This process includes coordination with 12 regional offices, weekly certifications, and bi-weekly/monthly virtual check-ins to address field issues. As a result, pending right-of-way applications in FY 2026 were reduced from 360 to 252, with 239 identified as incomplete.

2.2.21 TAAMS Right-of-Way Cleanup Project

As of March 26, 2025, TAAMS data showed over 16,000 “pending” ROWs. Many of these were approved on paper but not properly encoded in TAAMS, often due to data migration issues. To address this, DRES initiated a four-phase cleanup effort in March 2026. Nearly 3,000 pending documents have been resolved to date. Cleanup continues, with the first three phases reduced by more than 50%, and contractor Montech assisting to reduce Phase 4 cases by nearly 400.

Surface Leasing

2.2.22 TAAMS Business Leasing Training

Significant progress was made in managing and overseeing surface and business leasing activities. A training session on TAAMS Business Leasing Business Rules ensured users were informed of procedural updates and best practices.

Wind and Solar Handbook and Indian Affairs Manual

Drafts of the Wind and Solar Handbook and Wind and Solar IAM were completed, advancing resources to support renewable energy leasing. The finalized TAAMS Business Leasing Business Rules further strengthened operational guidance.

2.2.23 Weekly Leasing Reports

Weekly leasing reports were prepared and distributed to senior management, providing ongoing updates on surface and business leases. As of the current reporting period, there are 1,025 pending surface leases and 2,632 approved surface leases. For business leases, 165 remain pending and 504 have been approved within the TAAMS Business Module.

2.2.24 TAAMS Surface Module and Business Leasing Module Training

Subject matter expertise was provided through participation in two TAAMS Surface Module training sessions and one TAAMS Business Leasing Module training session.

2.2.25 DRES Team Assists Agencies with Backlogs – processed \$796,275.00

The DRES team also assisted multiple agencies with case backlogs, successfully completing 120 cases, including 42 surface leases, four rights-of-way, and 74 lockbox items, resulting in \$796,275.00 in processed funds.

2.2.26 Centralized Surface Leasing Dashboard under Development

Monthly, high-level updates on leasing activities were communicated to Regional Realty Officers, fostering transparency and informed decision-making. Development is underway for a centralized Surface Leasing dashboard to enhance visibility into application processing, cycle times, and workload management.

American Energy & Strategic Use of Natural Resources

2.2.27 Leasing

Leasing strategies are designed to support increased energy production and allow for multiple and mixed-use approaches. Surface leases can be used for energy projects, business development, and residential expansion, ensuring that land is utilized to its fullest potential and generating revenue for both landowners

2.2.28 Mortgages

Expanding support for Tribal housing opportunities, including access to mortgage programs on and off trust land. Increasing collaboration with Tribal communities to ensure mortgage modules respect cultural considerations, housing priorities, and community planning efforts. Integrating educational and outreach initiatives within updated mortgage modules—guiding users through:

- Required documents
- Steps in the mortgage process
- Roles of BIA, Tribes, Lenders, and borrowers
- Ensuring environmental and cultural resource compliance steps are clear, trackable, and transparent within mortgage workflow tools.

2.2.29 Dashboards and Smartsheets

DRES uses these tools to track weekly processing timeframes for realty processes, identify issues, and provide transparency for regional offices and agencies. Transactions tracked include rights of way, broadband, acquisition and disposal/conveyances, surface leasing, lockbox and invoicing, HEARTH Act, Fee to Trust, Proclamations, Excess Lands, referrals and workload assistance. Dashboard created in coordination with DRIS facilitates better communication with regional office and agencies.

2.2.30 Mortgage Process Improvements

The TAAMS mortgage module enables early identification of bottlenecks and process delays. Technology such as digital intake, automated reminders, workflow routing, and shared dashboards improves communication and system resiliency to fluctuations in demand (refinances, trust land mortgage surges, seasonal patterns) and Title Status Report production and land status checks.

Expanding Economic Growth, Job Creation, Energy Development & Co-Management

2.2.31 Tribal Control over Leasing

The 52 IAM 13 policy recognizes that Tribal control over leasing can facilitate economic development, housing expansion, and other services. Once regulations are approved under HEARTH, Tribes have a predictable, Tribe-led path for business, residential, and energy leases (including wind and solar), reducing federal processing time and enabling local investment and employment. The Department supports these outcomes through collaboration on wind and solar guidance, outreach and training for lenders and Tribal staff, and case work that moves ordinances to Assistant Secretary approval and Federal Register notice—each a prerequisite for private capital, housing projects, and utility-scale renewables on Tribal trust and restricted lands.

2.3 Sound & Sustainable Natural Resources

The Division of Real Estate Services (DRES) is committed to supporting Tribes in managing their lands in ways that are both economically beneficial and environmentally responsible. Through the HEARTH Act, Tribes can develop and approve their own leasing regulations for a wide range of purposes—including recreation, hunting, fishing, agriculture, business, residential, and cultural uses—without the need for case-by-case federal approval. This flexibility allows Tribes to respond quickly to community needs and opportunities, while still meeting federal environmental and cultural standards.

2.3.1 *Expanding Opportunities for Tribal Communities*

The HEARTH Act reduces the timeline for authorizing recreation-related leases—such as campground areas, trail systems, or guided access agreements—supporting Tribal economic development while reinforcing Tribal jurisdiction over land uses tied to recreation, subsistence, hunting, fishing, and for recreation-related leases such as eco-tourism areas, guided hunting operations, and community fishing programs, expanding economic options while maintaining cultural stewardship.

Tribal leasing regulations under the HEARTH Act make it easier for Tribes to create new opportunities for recreation, hunting, and fishing. These activities not only generate revenue but also support cultural stewardship and community well-being. The 25 U.S.C. § 415(h) enables Tribes to approve their own surface leasing regulations once federally approved.

2.3.2 *Collaboration and Local Partnerships*

The HEARTH Act encourages collaboration between Tribes, local governments, federal agencies, and community stakeholders. By giving Tribes more control over leasing decisions, the Act fosters stronger local partnerships and more effective coordination on land use projects. Tribes often use their HEARTH-approved processes to negotiate project terms directly, leading to long-term, mutually beneficial relationships.

The 25 U.S.C. § 415(h) requires that Tribal leasing regulations include an environmental review process—functionally similar to NEPA—ensures that cultural, historic, ecological, and natural resources are evaluated before a lease is approved. This statutory requirement empowers Tribes to adopt culturally grounded conservation standards within their own regulatory frameworks. Faster, tribe-controlled leasing under the HEARTH Act helps tribes balance development with conservation by embedding environmental and cultural protections directly into their own regulations. Many tribes integrate tribal historic preservation rules and environmental safeguards that uphold cultural landscapes while allowing responsible land use.

Under 52 IAM 13, Indian Affairs reviews each Tribe's regulatory package for compliance with federal environmental and cultural laws before approval, ensuring conservation and stewardship language is embedded in Tribal regulations. By ensuring Tribal leasing ordinances meet environmental and regulatory requirements before federal approval, HEARTH Act helps Tribes integrate environmental safeguards and culturally informed review standards that support sustainable land use consistent with Tribal preservation priorities.

2.3.3 *Balancing Development and Conservation*

Environmental review is a key part of every Tribal leasing regulation approved under the HEARTH Act. This ensures that cultural, historic, ecological, and natural resources are carefully considered before any lease is approved. Many Tribes integrate their own cultural preservation rules and environmental safeguards into their regulations, helping to protect important landscapes while allowing for responsible development. Tribes can rapidly advance projects tied to cultural preservation, tourism, and heritage education. This positions Tribes to pursue time-sensitive opportunities—including those aligned with America 250—without lengthy federal review cycles.

HEARTH Act approved tribes are positioned to use streamlined leasing authority to attract investment and develop community-driven projects—cultural centers, interpretive sites, trail systems, and resource-based enterprises—that align with America 250 themes and highlight tribal stewardship. Through the HEARTH Act, tribes can more rapidly authorize projects aligned with cultural preservation and tourism tied to national commemorations. The 52 IAM 13 policy ensures tribal leasing regulations include clear approval, environmental, and review processes, supporting timely development of culturally significant projects.

2.3.4 *Celebrating Tribal Stewardship*

The HEARTH Act empowers Tribes to pursue projects that support cultural preservation, tourism, and heritage education—such as cultural centers, interpretive sites, and trail systems. With streamlined leasing authority, Tribes can quickly advance projects that align with national initiatives like the America 250 Celebration, highlighting the vital role of Tribal stewardship in the nation’s history and future.

2.3.5 *Co-Management and Shared Responsibility*

By shifting certain leasing powers from the federal government to Tribes, the HEARTH Act strengthens co-management of Tribal lands. Tribes can coordinate directly with local jurisdictions, utility providers, and environmental partners, ensuring that land use decisions reflect both Tribal priorities and community needs.

2.3.6 *Science-Based Decision Making*

The HEARTH Act environmental review requirement under 25 U.S.C. § 415(h) allows Tribes to craft their own review processes using Tribal ecological knowledge and best practices borrowed from federal and state frameworks. This supports a hybrid model that blends traditional knowledge with applied science for sound land-use decision making. Many HEARTH Act -approved tribes adopt a hybrid framework that uses tribal ecological knowledge alongside federal and state environmental methodologies. This applied science approach informs leasing decisions on grazing, conservation, energy, and housing projects.

HEARTH Act’s tribal-led process allows combining tribal ecological knowledge with federal and state science. Through the 52 IAM 13 policy review process, Indian Affairs ensures Tribal regulations contain legally sufficient environmental compliance frameworks before approval.

The HEARTH Act National team drafted and finalized a residential leasing form and rider, and associated materials in collaboration with DRES, SOL, and HUD, ensuring consistent standards informed by federal and tribal expertise. These interagency collaborations help Tribes implement scientifically grounded and culturally aligned leasing processes.

2.3.7 *Manage Cooperatively with Local Stakeholders and Tribes*

The Hearth Act simplifies communication channels, allowing Tribes to coordinate directly with local jurisdictions, utility providers, environmental partners, and community stakeholders on projects requiring land access. Tribes independently manage their leasing processes while coordinating with surrounding communities on infrastructure, zoning compatibility, emergency services, and resource management. The Act reinforces cooperative management by centering tribal jurisdiction and reducing administrative delays.

HEARTH Act regulations approved under 25 U.S.C. § 415(h) clarify tribal jurisdiction over land-use decisions, enabling tribes to coordinate infrastructure, public safety, and community planning while Indian Affairs ensures the regulations are complete, legally sufficient, and compliant. The HEARTH Act team maintained ongoing communication with multiple Tribal governments, providing updates, clarifying status, and preparing documents for Secretarial surnaming.

2.3.8 *HEARTH Act National Team Education & Outreach Initiatives*

The Act requires Tribes to develop complete leasing regulations—including environmental review, public participation, and administrative processes. As Tribes adopt and implement these regulations, education and outreach become essential. The statutory framework therefore supports Tribal training initiatives, community education, and workshops related to leasing, environmental review, and responsible land development.

Implementation of the HEARTH Act has led to extensive tribal training initiatives on real estate services, environmental review, valuation, compliance, and land-use planning. The HEARTH Act National team regularly hosts webinars to Tribes and BIA regions, and advocacy organizations, so stakeholders understand tribal processes under the HEARTH Act. The 52 IAM 13 policy, regulatory criteria, and the Legal Sufficiency Checklist are explained to Tribes. These sessions build Tribal capacity to meet HEARTH Act requirements and administer their approved regulations.

The HEARTH Act National team delivered significant HEARTH outreach, including responding to Tribal POCs, third-party requests, preparing materials for webinars, coordinating Tribal Outreach Sessions, and directing stakeholders to the OTS/BIA public website for training and resources. The Team has consolidated communications, circulated updated materials, and provided technical assistance to Tribes preparing or modifying their HEARTH Act leasing regulations.

2.3.9 *Expand Opportunities for Recreation, Hunting, and Fishing*

Under 25 U.S.C. § 415(h), Tribes can approve their own surface leasing regulations once federally approved. This authority shortens the timeline for recreation-related leases—such as campgrounds, trail systems, and guided access agreements—supporting Tribal economic development and reinforcing Tribal jurisdiction over land uses tied to recreation, subsistence, hunting, and fishing.

The Act also enables leases for eco-tourism, guided hunting, and community fishing programs, expanding economic options while maintaining cultural stewardship.

2.3.10 *Identify Opportunities and Collaborate with Partners and Local Communities*

The HEARTH Act requires that Tribal leasing regulations meet specific federal criteria before approval, fostering collaboration among Tribes, local governments, partner agencies, and community stakeholders. By granting Tribes the authority to approve leases, the Act supports more consistent coordination at the local level, allowing Tribes to negotiate directly with partners without federal delays. This approach has strengthened collaboration between Tribes and the federal government, as Tribes use their HEARTH-approved processes to negotiate project terms efficiently and build long-term partnerships. The 52 IAM 13 policy formalizes that once approved, Tribal leasing regulations carry full decision-making authority, reinforcing collaborative local planning while ensuring compliance with federal statutory and regulatory requirements.

2.3.11 Enjoy and Conserve Natural, Cultural, and Heritage Resources

The Act requires that Tribal leasing regulations include an environmental review process—similar to NEPA—to ensure that cultural, historic, ecological, and natural resources are evaluated before a lease is approved. This empowers Tribes to adopt conservation standards within their own frameworks. Faster, Tribe-controlled leasing under the HEARTH Act helps balance development with conservation by embedding environmental and cultural protections directly into regulations. Many Tribes integrate historic preservation rules and environmental safeguards that uphold cultural landscapes while allowing responsible land use.

2.3.12 Leverage the America 250 Celebration for Investment and Service

Tribes can rapidly advance projects tied to cultural preservation, tourism, and heritage education. This positions Tribes to pursue time-sensitive opportunities—including those aligned with America 250—without lengthy federal review cycles. HEARTH Act-approved Tribes can use streamlined leasing authority to attract investment and develop community-driven projects, such as cultural centers, interpretive sites, trail systems, and resource-based enterprises, that align with America 250 themes and highlight Tribal stewardship. The Act has expanded Tribal readiness for future development opportunities by providing outreach, responding to third-party inquiries, and directing stakeholders to public HEARTH Act resources.

2.3.13 Engage in Co-Management with Local Stakeholders and Tribes

The HEARTH Act empowers Tribes as primary decision-makers over qualifying leases. Local stakeholders interact directly with Tribal regulatory authorities, reinforcing sovereign-to-sovereign relationships. This shift enables coordinated planning with surrounding jurisdictions and agencies.

2.3.14 Clean-up Pollution from Legacy Wells

The HEARTH Act strengthens co-management and enables Tribes to address issues such as pollution from legacy wells. This legal recognition allows Tribes to coordinate directly with local stakeholders and take a leadership role in land management and environmental remediation.

2.3.15 Apply Science to Decision Making for Species Management

The HEARTH Act requires that Tribal leasing regulations include an environmental review mechanism that evaluates potential impacts, ensuring that scientific, ecological, and environmental data inform leasing decisions, especially where species protection or habitat assessment is required. Many Tribal regulations incorporate biological assessments and environmental criteria, aligning Tribal scientific review with federal standards. The legal sufficiency review ensures that Tribal regulations include federally required environmental review components, supporting biologically informed leasing decisions.

2.4 Strategic Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

Lockbox Coordination

DRES provides daily assistance to regional and field staff for timely processing and distribution of checks deposited into lockbox. Biweekly calls with Regional Lockbox Liaisons address updates, processes, and a review of current check records. Weekly outstanding lockbox reports are sent to liaisons and the BTFA to resolve outstanding issues. Individual regional and BTFA coordination is conducted weekly for updates on outstanding checks or large amounts. Monthly, BIA/BTFA and BIA/Suspense Deposit Team calls with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) address outstanding lockbox issues and define processes for timely processing.

2.4.1 *Processing Lockbox Metrics*

- From October 1, 2025, to April 28, 2026, funds totaling \$294,197,936.23 were received, processed, and distributed from TAAMS lockbox through coordinated efforts by BIA and BTFA.
- The Void/Paid file, used to mark invoices as paid or void in TAAMS via CGI, includes 327 checks totaling \$19,619,410.15 marked as paid or voided through coordination of DRES, Lockbox Liaisons, and field staff.
- BIA and BTFA developed a process to address insufficient checks cashed by Treasury that require fund recoupment from the remitter (Debit Voucher) to credit back to Treasury. Since October 1, 2025, 45 Debit Vouchers totaling \$678,034.05 have been recouped.

2.4.2 *Lockbox Handbook*

DRES is coordinating work sessions with Regional Lockbox Liaisons, BTFA, and the Suspense Deposit Team to develop and review the Indian Affairs Lockbox Processing Handbook (52 IAM 3-H), ensuring all processes are fully captured and defined for BIA staff. The draft is nearing final review and will be submitted for regional comment before submission to RACA. Once published, DRES and BTFA will coordinate training for BIA staff.

2.4.3 *Lockbox Training*

- DRES staff served as Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for TAAMS Lockbox training on March 24–25, 2026 assisting with lockbox-related guidance.
- DRES, in coordination with the Suspense Deposit Team, held Suspense Deposit System (SDS) Processing training on January 21, 2026, for BIA staff on non-trust funds and the SDS.
- DRES, in coordination with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) Accounts Receivable, held Collection Officer training on January 6, 2026, on collections received on site and submission to the TAAMS Trust Lockbox.

2.4.4 *HEARTH Act Website*

DRES maintains and updates the Office of Trust Services (OTS) public [website for the HEARTH Act](#), providing information on the Act and the Secretarial review and approval process for Tribes, including the elevated review process for wind and solar leasing. The HEARTH Act mandates a 120-day timeframe for Secretarial review and approval (25 U.S.C. 415(h) PL 112-151; 126 Stat. 1150). The 52 IAM 13 policy details the review and approval process.

2.4.5 *HEARTH Outreach Events*

In collaboration with the Office of the Solicitor (SOL), DRES and SOL conduct quarterly HEARTH Act outreach events for Tribes. These sessions, recorded and made 508 compliant, are posted on the Division of Real Estate Services Training page on the OTS website. Quarterly outreach dates include March 11, June 10, and September 16, 2026.

2.4.6 *HEARTH Act Wind & Solar Review, Residential Lease Form & Rider*

The National HEARTH Act team met several times from January through March 2026 to work on the HEARTH Act Wind & Solar Review with SOL. In collaboration with SOL and HUD, a HUD HEARTH Act Residential Lease Form and Rider were finalized for Tribes using Section 184 Program funding. DRES finalized a HEARTH Act Dear Tribal Leader Letter, uploaded it to the Data Tracking System (DTS) on February 19, 2026, and it was signed by the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs on March 23, 2026. DRES, SOL, and HUD will conduct two outreach events in April to notify Tribes and BIA DRES field staff of this new tool.

2.4.7 *HEARTH Act Status of Leasing Regulations Report*

Weekly HEARTH Act reports are prepared and distributed to senior leadership on the status of each leasing regulation received by DRES. From October 2025 through March 2026, Central Office DRES received four leasing regulations for review and approval:

- Lower Brule Sioux Tribe (Ag/Bus/Res/WSR/WEEL), January 15, 2026
- Cachil DeHe Band of Wintun Indians (Ag/Bus/Res), February 18, 2026 (resubmitted; WSR/WEEL removed)
- Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma (Ag/Bus/Res), February 19, 2026 (resubmitted; WSR/WEEL removed)
- Caddo Nation of Oklahoma (Ag/Bus/Res), February 20, 2026 (resubmitted; WSR/WEEL removed)

Number of HEARTH Act approvals from October 2025 – March 2026: 1 (Business: Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, Amended Business, October 31, 2025). Two HEARTH Act cases are pending in DTS for Secretarial surnaming and approval: Buena Vista Rancheria (IAFR001591) and Caddo Nation of Oklahoma (IAFR001607).

2.4.8 *HEARTH Act American Indian Records Repository (AIRR) Project*

The HEARTH Act records American Indian Records Repository (AIRR) project was completed December 5–8, 2025, to comply with records audit review.

2.4.9 *Streamlining Regulatory Review*

The 52 IAM 13 policy sets a consistent and objective review standard for Tribal leasing regulations. Streamlining actions include coordinated redline cycles with SOL, instructing Tribes to separate WSR/WEEL provisions for elevated review, and publishing updated checklists and guidance online. These measures reduce applicant burden and compress review timelines.

2.4.10 *Supporting Energy Production and Mixed-Use Strategies*

The Act provides a predictable pathway for agricultural, business, and residential leasing, and—when paired with policy work on Wind & Solar Resource (WSR) and Wind Energy Evaluation Leases (WEEL)—supports renewable energy readiness. Tribes can adopt leasing regulations for a variety of purposes, enabling them to process their own leases without case-by-case BIA approval, thus expanding Tribally led leasing capacity for agriculture, grazing, and other uses.

2.4.11 Revenue Generation

By enabling Tribal approval of leases, the HEARTH Act accelerates revenue generation at the Tribal government level. The policy explicitly links Secretarial approval of Tribal regulations to economic development and housing expansion.

2.4.12 Enhanced Communication

Systematic use of DTS and Smartsheets for uploads, tracking, and routing, along with quarterly webinars and published training materials, has increased transparency and reduced friction among DRES, SOL, and Tribes.

2.4.13 Mortgages

DRES is enhancing collaboration between the BIA, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD, Section 184), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), lenders, and Tribal governments to streamline mortgage approvals and communication. These efforts support Tribal self-determination by improving systems that give Tribes greater visibility into their mortgage-related transactions. Capacity is built through cross-training, workshops, and shared modules, ensuring that agencies, lenders, and Tribes have consistent knowledge of mortgage processes.



Section 3. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

3.1 Opportunities

3.1.1 Project Tracking Broadband and Rights of Way

Increase collaboration and project tracking for broadband projects, including rights-of-ways (ROWs)

3.1.2 Workforce Planning Tool

Workforce planning tool helped DRES in identifying gaps and needs.

3.1.3 Formation of a DRES Strike Team

The AS-IA created the new DRES Strike Team. This Team provides support to the field offices regarding DOI and BIA priorities and addressing backlogs. The Strike Team also reviews TAAMS clean-up and supports DRES with User Groups, policy updates and technical assistance.

3.1.4 Memorandum of Agreement on Cadastral Surveys

BIA OTS DRES has Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Interagency Agreement (IAA) to provide funding to BLM for Cadastral Surveys needs and provide salary for the 12 Regional Bureau Indian Land Surveyor (BILS) positions.

3.1.5 Data Management through Smart Sheets

DRES has created Smart sheets and Dashboards for enhanced tracking and monitoring of projects, workloads and deadlines

3.1.6 *Policy Presentations to Federal Partners*

Presentations at events on the policy update for [NPM-TRUS 44A2](#), *Streamlining the Rights-of-Way and Business Lease Application Processes for Federally Funded Tribal Broadband Infrastructure Projects-Amendment 2* provided to other federal agencies and industry

3.1.7 *Rights of Way System*

Assisted the Division of Resource & Integration Services (DRIS) with the feasibility studies for a rights-of-way system in FY 2026.

3.1.8 *Implement Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs and BIA's highest priorities*

- Energy including permitting and broadband projects for rights-of-ways (ROWs). DRES is tracking regulatory compliance for efficient and effective processing of business lease and ROW applications for the funded infrastructure projects.
- TAAMS Data Integrity, Tracking and Monitoring
- Workforce Efficiencies and Productivity
- Helping Expedite & Advance Responsible Tribal Home Ownership Act of 2012 (HEARTH Act)
- Mortgages (processing, tracking, and implementation of TAAMS Mortgage Module)
- Surface Leasing and Agricultural Regulation Updates to 25 CFR Part 162.
- Special Deposit System (SDS) and the Trust Funds Receivable (TFR) Lockbox processing, tracking and disbursement of funding

3.2 **Challenges**

DRES has 5 vacant positions.

3.3 **Best Practices**

3.3.1 *Daily Team Reporting*

The DRES team communicates the beginning of each workday on priorities and tasks and concludes the workday reporting out its activities.

3.3.2 *Plan Key TAAMS Training and Participants*

DRES coordinates with Regions and Agencies on TAAMS training lists and requests confirmation from the trainee in advance of the training to ensure a full class of active participants.

3.3.3 *Transparency in Communications*

Updates the field with Realty related information with brochures/flyers for the distribution to Tribes and landowners on realty transactions as well as the regularly updated Internal SharePoint site and public facing BIA Division of Real Estate Services Website.

3.3.4 *Support Probate Surge Team and Estate Planning*

DRES has played a key role in assisting the Probate Surge Team with Realty Acquisition & Disposal (A&D) Estate Planning. This included an onsite outreach to the Gila River Indian Community in Arizona. The outreach resulted in gift conveyance cases initiated, applications approved, deeds approved, and cases completed.

3.3.5 *Acquisition & Disposal Handbook*

Ongoing development of the A&D Handbook and Indian Affairs Manual includes coordinating working sessions, program outreach for comments, and managing next steps to get complete drafts to the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action (RACA) for review.

3.3.6 *DRES SharePoint*

Internal DRES SharePoint for A&D, FTT, and Proclamations are updated on a regular basis to address the most common technical assistance needs from the field.

3.3.7 *Establishment of a TAAMS User Group*

The A&D and FTT User Groups meet monthly to review proposed enhancements to TAAMS, discuss the most common technical assistance needs from the field, coordinate on unique case scenarios, and ensure the Region subject matter experts have the information they need to maintain day-to-day operations with the field.



DIVISION OF RESOURCE INTEGRATION & SERVICES (DRIS)

Section 1. Overview

1.1 Mission

The mission of the Division of Resource Integration is to enhance the use of geospatial information and data resources throughout the BIA by modernizing data resource communication, fostering prompt collaboration between programs and improving workflows.

1.2 Who We Serve

The Division of Resource Integration Services (DRIS) supports BIA regional offices and local agencies in integrating geospatial information systems (GIS) and data resources into their services and operations.

DRIS develops and implements software to assist with the development and management of BIA Trust resources. Currently DRIS is developing the Solutions Trust Accountability Tracker (STAT) and assisting with the rollout of the Box/Secure File Transfer (SFT) program, which is spearheaded by the Bureau of Indian Education. This program allows local BIA agencies to collaborate with one another and with the Tribes they serve.

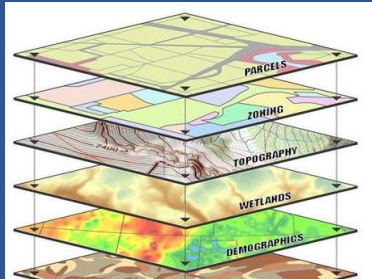
DRIS crafts policy and advises on best practices for implementing GIS and data resources into existing services, programs and workflows across the BIA. Additionally, DRIS provides training and technical assistance to BIA regional geospatial coordinators and other GIS professionals.

1.3 Services We Provide

- Geospatial Support Help Desk
- Geospatial Software
- Geospatial Training
- Development and Deployment of Tracking and Collaboration with STAT Tools
- Migration from Legacy IT Systems

1.4 Staffing

21	Full Time Employees
3	Pathways interns
15	Vacant Positions
5	Contractors



Geospatial Data



GIS parcel creation



Mapping Tribal lands

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1.5 Branches

Branch of Resource Solutions (BRS)

The primary mission of the Branch of Resource Solutions (BRS) is to coordinate, manage, and provide user support for enterprise software and geospatial data across the Office of Trust Services. The overarching goals are to integrate geospatial data and enterprise software solutions to share information more effectively, improve efficiency, and deliver better service to federally recognized Tribes, stakeholders, and the public.

Branch of Geodata Evaluation and Validation (GDEV)

The mission of the Branch of Geodata Evaluation and Validation (GDEV) is to modernize data resource communication and interfaces, promote collaboration among programs, and improve workflows throughout Indian Country in support of the BIA's mission and objectives. GDEV also supports the sharing of geospatial information and data resources among offices, programs, field offices, and Tribes to promote informed decision-making. A strategic plan has been developed outlining the mission, goals, strategy, and roadmap.

Branch of Geospatial Support (BOGS)

The mission of the Branch of Geospatial Support is to assist Tribal governments and Indian Affairs to manage the cultural and natural resources of Indian Country by providing geographic information systems software, training, and technical support.



Section 2. Stewardship, Conservation & Powering Our Future

2.1 Accomplishments

BRS staff priorities

2.1.1 Implementation of Solutions Trust Accountability Tracker (STAT)

BRS's current priority is implementing the Solutions Trust Accountability Tracker (STAT) platform across OTS. This effort has expanded to include tracking tools for the Office of Indian Services (OIS) and the Office of Justice Services (OJS). STAT is a cloud-based software package that works with BIA data, spanning legacy systems and desktop spreadsheets. It enhances the use of trust land data, improves accountability, supports project management and monitoring, and accelerates collaboration between business units. BRS has also supported the deployment of the Box Secure File Transfer (SFT) platform, originally championed by BIE, which expands the ability to securely share information and large files electronically with Tribal representatives.

STAT is designed primarily for tabular data and can represent that data graphically, in calendar style, Kanban/card mode, or spreadsheet format, with advanced project management functionality. Charts and graphs display key performance metrics, and data can be input via forms, imports, or a data shuttle for ongoing updates from other information systems. STAT also offers a range of collaboration, analysis, and modeling features. Building on a successful Authority to Operate (ATO) and several positive security

assessments, BRS staff continue to create and deliver new tools in STAT, focusing on Presidential and Department of the Interior priorities.

GDEV staff are actively engaged in three primary project areas for 2026

2.1.2 Fee-to-Trust Land Description Examination & Validation (LDEV) Reviews

The Fee-to-Trust Land Description Examination & Validation (LDEV) review team continues to process land development evaluations to support trust acquisitions. At midyear, 40 LDEV reviews have been completed, reflecting steady progress and alignment with projected annual targets.

2.1.3 Right-of-Way (ROW) Mapping & Realty Land Description Examination & Validation (RLDEV) Reviews

This new workflow, developed in collaboration with DRES, supports the modernization of ROW tracking and mapping. At midyear, 8 ROW RLDEV reviews have been completed. Given that this is the first cycle using the new process, the team is progressing well and helping to establish standards for future reviews. In addition to RLDEV reviews, 1,664 ROWs have been mapped out of TAAMS.

2.1.4 Parcel Fabric & TAAMS Parcelization Work

The Parcel team is heavily involved in data modernization efforts, focusing on the transition from legacy datasets to structured GIS parcel standards. Key accomplishments include the development of a Parcel Fabric Migration SOP and active collaboration with Regional Geospatial Coordinators (RGCs) to establish and document best practices for parcel creation, maintenance, and migration from TAAMS. This work supports long-term data quality improvements and future automation.

BOGS staff on-going projects

2.1.5 Helpdesk Support

The Branch of Geospatial Support aids Tribes and BIA personnel through the Geospatial Help Desk (Geospatial@bia.gov). Federally recognized Tribes can receive certain Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI) product licenses through the Help Desk. The Help Desk also assists users experiencing software challenges and offers training opportunities on geospatial software through ESRI and other private vendors. More information about training and schedules can be found at <https://www.bia.gov/service/geospatial-training>.

2.1.6 Dashboards and Applications

The Branch develops dashboards and applications hosted on the BIA Open Data Portal to support Tribes, other Bureau divisions, and BIA/AS-IA leadership. Highlighted applications include the BIA Tract Viewer, Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Agents Directory, Tribal Leaders Directory, and the Bison Management Application. The Branch of Geospatial Support (BOGS) regularly updates and adds new applications based on leadership priorities. These can be accessed at <https://onemap-bia-geospatial.hub.arcgis.com/pages/applications>.

2.1.7 System Support

BOGS operates and maintains the BIA Geospatial Portal, hosted by Amazon Web Services (AWS), which serves as the geospatial hub for the BIA. Regional Geospatial Coordinators maintain hub pages for user interaction. BOGS is currently working with DEMD to migrate NIOGEMS to the portal and plans to migrate the Division of Water and Power in the future. The goal is to make the portal a one-stop shop for GIS data for both BIA and Tribes. A significant step toward this goal is the implementation of Login.gov.

Recently, BOGS received approval for viewer access via Login.gov, paving the way for future Tribal access. BOGS is drafting policies to grant user access, which could facilitate data sharing between Tribes and the BIA. The portal will also be critical for NIOGEMS, DWP, and other divisions as they migrate to this platform.

2.1.8 Stakeholder Relations

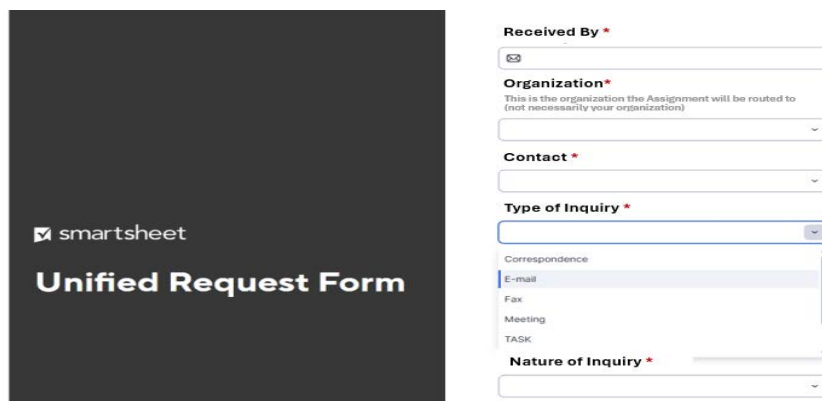
BOGS collaborates with many federal agencies to establish partnerships that benefit Tribes. Recently, BOGS has worked with NASA to develop a Tribal Resources Package, providing Tribes with more tools to create and analyze geospatial data. NASA is willing to help fund collaborative projects with the BIA. BOGS also works closely with the USGS to combine data and develop public datasets for Tribes and the public, and to explore crowdsourced datasets for future applications. BOGS coordinates the [Tribal Boundaries Working Group](#) with the Census Bureau, bringing together federal agencies and stakeholders every three months to share updates and presentations on geospatial Tribal developments.

2.1.9 Tracking Accountability Performance System (TAPS) Replacement

BRS is redeveloping the Tracking Accountability Performance System (TAPS), which currently operates on an outdated technology platform. TAPS tracks responses to inquiries, service requests, and monitors the day-to-day workload of regional and field offices. While the original TAPS solution primarily served LTRO offices, it is now being extended to encompass Real Estate Services functions as well.

2.1.10 Division of Workforce and Youth Development (DWYD)

The Pathways Internship Program, under the Division of Workforce and Youth Development (DWYD), identified the need for a tool to improve communication, enhance transparency, save time, and create more efficient workflows. BRS specialists gathered requirements and developed a student and staff submission dashboard that can conveniently and consistently process a wide variety of required forms and activities.



Screen shot of Student Submission for Pathways Student Interns

Previously, many DWYD workflows involved manual processing. The new STAT-based solution better aligns the program with modernization practices by combining these steps into a semi-automated process that can notify stakeholders and request action at the appropriate time. DWYD has been striving to implement best practices for onboarding, and this tool is a significant contribution toward that goal.



Students

Student Submission

Urgent *

Submitter Name *

Student Submission Type *

Student Submission Type *

Host Email *

Pay Period Year *

Pay Period *

Assigned Coordinator *

Pathways Task Tracker

Filter

Overall Request Status	Approved Date	Student Submission Type	Host Email	Assigned Coordinator	1 st Level Completed

My Submissions

Type of Inquiry *

Contact *

Student Submission Type *

Assigned Coordinator *

Classification *

Year *

Semester *

Screen shots for two of Pathway's most common intake items: payroll timesheets and semester transcripts

2.1.11 Login.gov

DRIS recently launched Login.gov viewer access in March 2026, enabling users to access government systems such as the DRIS open data portal without a government-issued PIV card. While view only access is currently available, DRIS is working on policies for user access, which could allow Tribes to share and access data more easily. This will also support future hosting of systems like NIOGEMS and the Division of Water and Power Geospatial Systems.

2.1.12 Regional Geospatial Coordinators Communication

Hub sites have been created on the portal to facilitate easier communication between RGC's and users.

- Application and Dashboards
- Revamped and improved the Fee to Trust Reporting application
- Launched the Internal Data Portal
- Added sections to the Acquisition & Disposal (A&D) Reporting dashboard
- In development: Surface Leasing Application, DEMD Tribal Profiles application, Fractionated Lands application, and NEPA Tracker application

2.1.13 GIS Training Opportunities

The DRIS provides training to BIA and Tribal employees on a regular basis. The following is a list of upcoming courses.

Table 7. Upcoming Trainings

Training	Dates	Target Audience
Building Web Apps with ArcGIS Experience Builder	April 22-23, 2026 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. MST	Active DOI/BIA Enterprise License Agreement Participants
Make an Impact with Modern Geo Apps	April 8 – May 6, 2026 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CT	Active DOI/BIA Enterprise License Agreement Participants

2.2 Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

- *MOU Planning Event:* Participated in the DOI/DOE MOU planning event to identify opportunities for improved data sharing
- *Workflow Tool Deployed:* Led the deployment and building of modern workflow tool for IMDA and CA processing for IESC
- *NIOGEMS Version 5:* Collaborated with DEMD on the development and deployment of NIOGEMS Version 5
- *Land Description Examination:* Providing efficient Land Description examination and Validation to support land transactions.
- *Geospatial Data:* Provided sound geospatial data and analytic tools to support land use evaluation to improve multiple use scenarios

2.3 American Energy & Strategic Use of Natural Resources

- *Automation of Data Workflows:* Automation of data workflows from disparate sources to provide dashboard visualization to support decision making and planning
- *Land Use Planning Tool Develop*
- DRIS has developed and land use planning tool for use by tribes and Bureau staff to evaluate land use strategies
- *Division of Water & Power Geospatial Activity:* Consolidation of DWP geospatial activities with the BOGS Amazon Web Services (AWS) GIS Portal

2.4 Sound & Sustainable Natural Resources

- *Collaboration with Tribal GIS:* Collaboration with Tribal GIS to better understand Indian Country data and GIS needs
- *Bureau Bison Data:* Expansion of the current Bureau Bison data to include opportunities for tribes and individuals to contribute to the Bison dataset
- *GIS Data Set:* Providing GIS data sets and layers to evaluate current state.
- *Implementation of Login.gov:* Implementation of Login.gov to provide tribes with better access to data and data tools.

2.5 Strategic Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

- *Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Broadband Datasets:* Collaboration with FCC to establish a training program to teach Indian Country GIS users how to use FCC Broadband datasets in GIS tools for analysis.
- *STAT for P.L. 477 and P.L. 638 Programs:* Building of tools for PL477 and PL638 in BIA-STAT to track the proposal approval process, ensuring tribes can maximize workforce development and self-determination opportunities



Section 3. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

3.1 Opportunities

Branch of Resource Solutions

3.1.1 Low Code No Code (LCNC) STAT Platform

BIA staff are increasingly empowered to build their own solutions using the Low Code No Code (LCNC) STAT platform. With minimal self-guided training, business unit team members can create tools independently. By staying within security and tool guidelines, they can leverage advanced technologies, including integrating STAT with SharePoint and geospatial tools.

- Continue collaborating with OTS, the Office of Indian Services (OIS), and the Office of Justice Services (OJS) to address business challenges and adopt best practices.
- Further develop support infrastructure and repurpose existing, proven systems and processes.
- Participate in data stewardship and custodial activities.
- Assist in designing and building tracker tools that deliver metrics for key processes aligned with business priorities.

3.1.2 System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM)

The BOGS branch chief and Help Desk collaborated with IT to implement automated software updates for the regions using SCCM. This improvement removes the Regional Geospatial Coordinator (RGC) as the point of contact for GIS software updates, such as Arc Pro. SCCM automates updates in the background, so users no longer need to submit requests through configuration management. This process saves time

for both RGCs and the BOGS Help Desk, providing users with better experience by delivering updates directly and promptly.

3.1.3 *Growth in Training Program*

BOGS increased the number of training courses available to BIA GIS users, Tribes, and regional staff from 24 in FY 2021 to 36. These courses help users enhance their GIS skills, learn mapping techniques, and create products that benefit Tribal communities. BOGS plans to expand the training program further in the future.

3.1.4 *Outdated Help Desk System*

The current help desk system is outdated. In recent months, BOGS has worked with stakeholders and BIA Security to gather requirements and evaluate available software solutions.

3.1.5 *Help Desk Quality Assurance Project*

BOGS Help Desk staff have focused on reconciling records, updating many entries, and verifying data with RGCs. The database is now up to date.

3.1.6 *Mapping Services*

BOGS is developing mapping templates for future use, allowing maps to be created in advance for leadership or stakeholder requests. A standardized process for printing large maps has also been established, increasing efficiency and consistency across BIA GIS maps and enabling quick turnaround on requests.

3.1.7 *Standard Operating Procedure*

BOGS is creating a master Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for all branch processes. This reference document will provide staff with guidance on all procedures, contributing to operational continuity and reducing risks during staff turnover. The SOP will also serve as a training tool as the branch grows.

3.1.8 *Land Area Representation (LAR)*

The LAR dataset is BIA's official geospatial representation of American Indian land areas. BOGS is modernizing the LAR by integrating it into AWS, allowing users to interact with the dataset and propose changes. This capability may enable Tribes to propose changes directly.

3.1.9 *Challenges*

- Collaborating with OTS divisions to address business challenges and adopt best practices.
- Developing and re-purpose support infrastructure and proven processes.
- Participating in data stewardship and custodial activities.
- Meeting regularly with regional staff on LDEV submissions and best practices.
- Shadow training team members in leadership, presentation skills, and meeting facilitation.
- Working with regional staff to complete Land Area Code (LAC) areas.
- Managing various project requests.
- Mapping parcels for each LAC.
- Providing Tribes and agencies with knowledge to support decision-making.
- Working on parcel fabric for the Parcel team.
- Hiring, onboarding, and supporting new BRS hires to maximize productivity.
- Reassigning staff from other teams to handle an influx of LDEV applications and maintain parcel data due to short staffing.

- Navigating the parcel fabric learning curve.
- Staff reductions limiting institutional knowledge as business processes are re-engineered.

3.1.10 *Best Practices - Branch of Resource Solutions*

- Utilize agile development techniques for additional BIA OTS STAT tool applications.
- Establish and maintain appropriate standard operating procedures for BIA OTS STAT.
- Conduct thorough User Acceptance Testing (UAT) for all generated solutions.
- Assist OTS divisions and branches with IT modernization needs, including cloud-based technologies, extending legacy systems, change management approval processes, and cybersecurity.

3.1.11 *Fee to Trust GIS Strike Team*

Prioritize LDEV applications, follow standard operating procedures, and maintain open communication with regional staff.

3.1.12 *Parcel Team*

Complete one LAC at a time, prioritizing parcel fabric migration and documentation.

3.1.13 *Rights of Way Team*

- Prioritize projects based on urgency and complete them in a timely manner.
- Utilize agile development techniques for additional BIA OTS STAT tool applications.
- Establish and maintain appropriate standard operating procedures for BIA OTS STAT.
- Assist OTS divisions and branches with IT modernization needs, including cloud-based technologies, extending legacy systems, and cybersecurity.

3.2 **Challenges**

- Collaborate with OTS Divisions to solve business challenges and adopt best practices.
- Develop support infrastructure and re-purpose existing, proven infrastructure and processes.
- Participate in Data Stewardship and/or Custodial activities.
- Meet with Regional staff regularly on LDEV submissions and best practices.
- Shadow train team members on leadership, presentation skills, and meeting facilitation.
- Working with Regional staff to complete Land Area Code (LAC) area.
- Receive various project requests.
- Having parcels mapped for each LAC.
- Able to provide Tribes and Agencies with knowledge to assist in making decisions.
- Working on Parcel Fabric for Parcel's team
- Hiring, onboarding, and facilitating new Branch of Resource Solutions (BRS) hires to be the most productive in the most effective way possible.
- Having to pull staff from other teams to fulfill an influx of LDEV applications. Having the team to complete and maintain parcel data. Short staffed.
- Parcel fabric learning curve.
- Staff reductions limit the availability of institutional knowledge as we re-engineer business processes.

3.3 Best Practices

3.3.1 *Branch of Resource Solutions*

- Utilize agile development techniques for additional BIA OTS STAT tools applications
- Establish and maintain appropriate standard operating procedures for BIA OTS STAT
- Conduct an appropriate amount of User Acceptance Testing (UAT) with all generated solutions
- Assist OTS Divisions and Branches with Information Technology (IT) modernization needs, including cloud-based technologies, extending legacy systems, the change management approval processes and cybersecurity.

3.3.2 *Fee to Trust GIS Strike Team*

Continue to prioritize LDEV applications as well as follow standard operating procedures and keep an open line of communication with regional staff.

3.3.3 *Parcel Team*

Completing one LAC at a time, prioritizing parcel fabric migration and documentation.

3.3.4 *Rights of Way Team*

- Prioritizing projects as they are being requested based on urgency and completed in a timely manner
- Utilize agile development techniques for additional BIA OTS STAT tools/applications
- Establish and maintain appropriate standard operating procedures for BIA OTS STAT
- Assist OTS Divisions and Branches with IT modernization needs, including cloud-based technologies, extending legacy systems, and cybersecurity



DIVISION OF TRUST ASSET OWNERSHIP & TITLE (DTAOT)

Section 1. Overview

1.1 Mission

The mission of the Division of Trust Asset Ownership and Title is to coordinate probate processing and record, maintain, and certify land management ownership records of Indian Trust assets.

1.2 Who We Serve

The Division of Trust Asset Ownership and Title serves federally recognized Tribes, individual American Indians and Alaska Natives, and government agencies by maintaining trust asset records.

DTAOT also administers the Trust Asset Accounting Management System (TAAMS), which is the system of record for trust land management for the Department of the Interior. The division provides user training, maintains documentation, and coordinates the ongoing development of TAAMS to enhance the trust asset management process for federal workers and compacted and contracted Tribes.

1.3 Services We Provide

- Begin the Trust Asset Probate Process
- Land Title Services
- Parcel Mapping Geodatabase

1.4 Staffing

- 5 Full Time Employees
- 2 Vacant Positions

1.5 Branches

Branch of Probate Services (BPS)

The primary mission of the Branch of Probate Services is to compile inventories of Indian Trust assets and family information, and to coordinate the timely distribution of assets with the Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA), the Branch of Land, Titles and Records, and the Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (BTFA).

BPS gathers information regarding decedent's family and property and prepares it for adjudication by OHA. After OHA issues a probate order, the Branch works with other trust offices to distribute the assets to the designated heirs or beneficiaries.



Gavel and lady justice



Last will and testament



Prep Probate Records

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Branch of Land, Titles and Records (LTR)

The mission of the Branch of Land Titles and Records is to maintain timely and certified Federal land title ownership and encumbrance services, to record, maintain, and certify land title documents, to provide certified Title Status Reports that are accurate, timely, and accountable and efficient, and state the complete status of title ownership and encumbrance for Federal Indian trust and restricted lands.

The Branch oversees nine regional and nine Tribal Land Titles and Records Offices (LTROs) which serve as the offices of record for all trust land and restricted land titles for Tribes and individuals. The Branch also develops policy, provides for the LTRO's normal day-to-day operations and maintenance costs, and maintains the documentation and title image repository for the Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS), the BIA's electronic trust land management system.

Table 8. BIA Land Titles and Records Offices

BIA Region	Contact	Phone
Alaska	Rebecca "Becky" Pohawpatchoko	907-931-7476
Eastern Oklahoma	Cristy McSpadden	918-781-4611
Great Plains	Charissa Peterson	605-226-7393
Midwest	Rosemarie Fesquez	715-685-2404
Northwest	Patricia Neal	503-231-6811
Pacific	Kimberly Yearyeon	906-978-6062
Rocky Mountain	Sandra Two Two	406-247-7993
Southern Plains	Jamie Allen	405-247-7993
Southwest	Irene Lorenzo	505-563-3500

Table 9. Tribal Land Titles and Records Offices

Tribe	Contact	Phone
Flathead Realty Office	Marla Couture	406-675-2700 ext. 1268
Palm Springs Tribal LTRO	Leslie Leon	760-416-2133 ext. 248
Citizen Potawatomi Tribal LTRO	Matthew Masion	405-395-0113
Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	Jami Best	509-634-2365
Choctaw Nation	Shreda Graham	580-642-6741
Cherokee Nation	Marshea Halterman	918-732-7704
Muscogee Creek Nation	Rachel Langley	918-732-7704
Morongo Band of Mission Indians	Erik White	951-849-4697 ext. 5235
Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community	Elysia Lupe	480-362-7976



Section 2. Stewardship, Conservation & Powering Our Future

2.1 Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

2.1.1 Office of Hearing and Appeals Acceptance

Added a weekly report column “Awaiting OHA Acceptance” to track probate acceptance data.

2.1.2 Centralized Title Status Request Process

Established a TSR centralized request process for the TSR request email shared with lenders and Tribes. In collaboration with DRES, a centralized email address to assist in streamlining the process for individual landowners, Tribes and lenders was created. The email will be used to request certified Title Status Reports (TSRs) for mortgages and other real estate transactions and will improve the efficiency and transparency of TSR requests from start to finish.

2.1.3 Detailed Employee

Recruited an employee from the Bureau of Trust Funds Administration to assist LTRO.

2.1.4 Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe Data Request

Successfully coordinated a data request for the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe to obtain their title and encumbrance data.

2.1.5 TAAMS

- Held two TAAMS Change Management Board meetings.
- Approved 5 Change Requests.
- Facilitated 24 TAAMS trainings, 18 were virtual via MS Teams and 6 in-person.
- Successfully facilitated TAAMS one-year extension for the new Contracting Officer Representative (COR).
- Facilitated 13 TAAMS releases.

2.1.6 BIA Probate Removed from High Impact Service Provider

Successfully removed BIA Probate from High Impact Service Provider (HISP) as a responsible entity for responding to various document requirements. BTFA will be responsible for the HISP reporting requirements.

2.2 Strategic Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

2.2.1 Death Notification and Case Preparation

Successfully Established 7,585 death notices and cases systemically. Saving hours of manual data entry for the field staff. Death Notifications and case preparation cases we established based on death notices received from the Department of Treasury’s Do Not Pay (DNP) file. All matched Individual Indian Money (IIM) accounts were updated with a date of death and moved to estate status where needed. For IDs that

did not have a case, or for which a DOD was not recorded, TAAMS was updated with a death notice, and a case was established systematically to avoid manual intervention.

2.2.2 *TAAMS Security Assessment*

Completed Security Assessment for TAAMS

2.2.3 *Timetables Set for Document Processing*

Successfully implemented a new document uploading process with a one-week time frame. All IT security permissions are completed within 5 days.



Section 3. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

3.1 Opportunities

3.1.1 *TAAMS Modules*

Continue to streamline business processes through the implementation of TAAMS Modules.

3.2 Challenges

3.2.1 *LTRO Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) Measure*

Monitors/tracks the number and percentage of complete and non-defective probate orders processed within 3 business days (72 hours) of receipt and the number of non-probate conveyance documents processed within 2 business days (48 hours) of receipt at the LTRO. Seven of the nine operating program offices met or exceeded the target goal. LTRO's not meeting targets had staffing issues.

3.3 Best Practices

3.3.1 *TAAMS Board*

Board consists of leadership and subject matter experts assembled to review requests for TAAMS contract modifications or new module implementation.



DIVISION OF TRUST LAND CONSOLIDATION (DTLC)

Section 1. Overview

1.1 Mission

The mission of the Division of Trust Land Consolidation is to facilitate sound land management and administration, support Tribal sovereignty and self-determination, and promote economic opportunity in Indian Country by reducing Indian land fractionation.

1.2 Who We Serve

The Division of Trust Asset Ownership and Title serves federally recognized Tribes, individual American Indians and Alaska Natives, and government agencies by maintaining trust asset records.

The Division of Trust Asset Ownership and Title also administers the Trust Asset Accounting Management System (TAAMS), which is the system of record for trust land management for the Department of the Interior. The division provides user training, maintains documentation, and coordinates the ongoing development of TAAMS to enhance the trust asset management process for federal workers and compacted and contracted Tribes.

1.3 Services We Provide

The Division of Trust Land Consolidation (DTLC) provides opportunities for individual Indian landowners to voluntarily sell fractional land interests, at fair market value, for consolidation under Tribal ownership. The DTLC supports Tribes by increasing Tribal management control over reservation lands, better enabling Tribes to protect and utilize lands for purposes benefiting the Tribal community.

- Begin the Trust Asset Probate Process
- Land Title Services
- Parcel Mapping Geodatabase

1.4 Staffing

5	Full Time Employees
1	Vacant Position



FMV offers for fractional interests



Aerial view of land and water tributaries



Sunset over leased lands

CONTACT INFORMATION

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1.5 Branches

Branch of Analysis & Administration (BAA)

The Branch of Analysis and Administration is responsible for supporting trust land consolidation efforts by analyzing land interests, developing strategies, and administering programs that promote efficient management and reduction of land fractionation. This branch plays a key role in coordinating acquisitions, appraisals, and ensuring that consolidation initiatives align with Tribal priorities and federal policies.

The Division of Trust Land Consolidation continually reviews its policies and strategies, including locations for implementation, to achieve the goal of consolidating the greatest number of interests. The DTLC is currently working with Tribes and Agencies, including willing sellers who are interested in participating in our Program. We have been working on a projected schedule of locations that will enable our team to operate with the greatest efficiency with the available funding for mass appraisals from the Appraisal and Valuation Services, (AVSO).

DTLC has also developed a tentative implementation schedule for FY 2026 land consolidation activities and provided it to AVSO to support mass appraisal efforts. AVSO is actively preparing mass appraisals for the Rosebud Tribe, Yakama Nation, and Fort Peck. Modeling for the Yakama Nation has been finalized, and appraisal work for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe is underway.

Mapping for Fort Peck is complete, with sales pending. Additionally, DTLC has provided tract lists for Standing Rock and Cheyenne River to support upcoming consolidation work.

Branch of Acquisitions – Conveyance Management (BOA-CM)

The Branch of Acquisitions – Conveyance Management is responsible for the acquisition process of fractional land interests, including managing conveyance procedures to transfer interests into Tribal ownership. This branch ensures that acquisitions are conducted efficiently, in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and with property coordination among stakeholders. Their work supports the broader goal of reducing land fractionation and enhancing Tribal land management and sovereignty.

The DTLC Supervisory Realty Specialist is overseeing the realty team's comprehensive review of approved Pine Ridge applicants to confirm payment completion for individuals who sold interests through the Land Buy Back Program (LBBP) between FY 2013 and FY 2022. This timeframe included 14 Offer Sets and more than 16,500 Indian landowners. To date, 8 Offer Sets have been fully reviewed, and the team is currently progressing through the 9th Set, which includes 734 offers.

Branch of Acquisitions – Data Quality & Integrity (BOA-DQ&I)

The Branch of Acquisitions – Data Quality & Integrity is responsible for ensuring the accuracy, consistency, and reliability of data related to trust land acquisitions and interests. This branch manages data collection, validation, and maintenance processes to support effective decision-making, compliance, and reporting. Maintaining high data quality and integrity is essential for the successful implementation of land consolidation efforts and for tracking progress in reducing land fractionation.

DTLC completed a comprehensive update of 17 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), incorporating detailed, step-by-step guidance to promote consistency, accuracy, and the protection of Indian landowners' information throughout all processes related to offer review, quality assurance, and

approval. These SOPs align with the 17 phases of Trust Land Consolidation (TLC) and Tribally Funded Offers (TFO), ensuring uniform implementation across all operational areas.

DTLC continues to collaborate closely with DRIS to support land consolidation activities by producing essential mapping products, including tract maps utilized in the development of offer packages.

As part of broader outreach and communication efforts, DTLC developed a dedicated informational brochure to enhance awareness of Tribal Land Consolidation and Tribally Funded Offers. This initiative strengthens coordination with other OTS programs and uses approved social media platforms—such as the BIA/AS-IA Facebook page—to extend outreach to a wider audience.



Section 2. Stewardship, Conservation & Powering Our Future

2.1 Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

2.1.1 Reducing Fragmentation

Clarifying land ownership and reducing fragmentation strengthens Tribal sovereignty and honors treaty rights. Indian Land Consolidation strengthens collaboration by respecting Tribal rights, expanding partnership opportunities, and improving data accuracy.

2.1.2 Foster Strong Relationships

Trust and shared stewardship among tribes, communities, and partners. Enhance trust by ensuring Tribal Nations can manage and benefit from their lands effectively. Transparent, culturally sensitive permitting ensures Tribal engagement, respects rights, and reinforces sovereignty in land-use decisions. Creates organized land parcels that make intergovernmental coordination more efficient and effective. Supports joint planning and permitting, aligning development with community needs and regional priorities. Encourages shared decision-making, strengthening partnerships across jurisdictions.

2.1.3 Trust Data

Produces accurate, comprehensive land records and data that partners can use for planning, conservation, and development. Uses scientific assessments to guide responsible land and resource decisions. Build transparency and trust by sharing data that supports collaboration and informed stewardship. This supports shared stewardship, coordinated action, and long-term, trust-based relationships—directly advancing focus on strong and effective partnerships.

2.2 American Energy & Strategic Use of Natural Resources

2.2.1 Support Energy Projects

Consolidation reduces land fragmentation, making large-scale energy projects—solar, wind, geothermal—more feasible and cost-effective. Create contiguous parcels that support efficient planning and construction of energy infrastructure.

2.2.2 *Shorten Permitting Process*

Streamlined permitting shortens project timelines and reduces development costs, contributing to lower energy prices. Ensures natural resource development proceeds responsibly through clear and timely permitting. Supports conservation and climate resilience by reducing fragmentation and improving ecological integrity. Ensure that valuable land and resource assets remain viable, productive, and available for future generations.

2.2.3 *Land Management*

Improves natural resource planning by organizing land into manageable units that support agriculture, conservation, and Tribal economic development. Indian Land Consolidation strengthens national prosperity by creating efficient land systems, reducing development costs, and supporting sustainable economic growth.

2.2.4 *Support Tribal Goals*

Supports Tribal goals by enabling sustainable, economically beneficial land and resource use. Establishes a more resilient and sustainable land base for long-term resource planning and stewardship.

2.3 Sound & Sustainable Natural Resources

2.3.1 *Sustainable Natural Resources*

Consolidation organizes land parcels, preserving long-term access for traditional cultural practices, recreation, and community use. Supports sustainable recreational development by streamlining permitting while balancing use with conservation. Ensures culturally significant areas remain protected and accessible for future generations. Reduces land fragmentation, creating a cohesive land base that strengthens ecological integrity and cultural site protection. Supports protective actions such as habitat preservation and sustainable resource use. Ensures natural resources and wildlife remain safeguarded during development and land-use activities. Indian Land Consolidation enhances sustainable natural resource stewardship by creating organized, accessible, and ecologically resilient land systems. Supports recreation, cultural heritage, ecological restoration, and biodiversity protection.

2.3.2 *Stewardship*

Promotes responsible development that follows environmental and cultural conservation standards. Enhance stewardship by aligning land use with long-term protection of natural and cultural resources. Improves feasibility and impact of ecological restoration by consolidating degraded or dispersed parcels.

Provides a structured framework for reviewing and approving restoration projects such as habitat rehabilitation or water quality improvements. Ensures that restoration activities meet environmental standards and Tribal priorities. Strengthens habitat connectivity and management, which are key to species conservation and biodiversity.

2.4 Strategic Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

2.4.1 *Strategic Collaboration*

Strengthens trust and shared stewardship by clarifying land ownership and reducing land fragmentation. Respects and reinforces Tribal sovereignty and treaty rights through consolidation that restores Tribal control. Supports Tribal self-determination by improving Tribes' ability to manage, develop, and protect their lands.

2.4.2 *Coordination*

Creates more organized, manageable land parcels that enable smoother coordination across jurisdictions. Enhance partnerships by supporting joint planning and permitting with states, local governments, and regional partners.

Improves cross-agency communication by providing clear land data to support collaborative land management. Provide reliable, valuable science information to our partners. Produces accurate, comprehensive land records and geospatial data to support informed planning and resource decisions. Integrates scientific assessments and environmental data to guide responsible, sustainable decision-making. Build transparency and trust by sharing data openly with Tribal Nations, agencies, and community partners. Supports long-term resource stewardship through science-based insights that strengthen collaborative outcomes.

2.4.3 *Indian Land Consolidation*

Indian Land Consolidation strengthens strategic collaboration by respecting Tribal rights, enhancing intergovernmental partnerships, and supporting informed decision-making.



Section 3. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

3.1 Opportunities

3.1.1 *Indian Land Consolidation*

Indian Land Consolidation represents an opportunity to reverse the costly, complex, and ongoing consequences of the failed Federal Indian policy of allotment. Purchasing fractional land interests from willing individual Indian sellers is an effective approach for reducing fractionation with broad support in Indian Country. The voluntary land acquisition approach complements existing statutory provisions aimed at slowing future fractionation through restrictions on inheritance and thereby achieves a greater reduction in the overall rate of continued fractionation at a faster pace. Once purchased land interests are restored to Tribal trust ownership, the fractionation process is permanently halted.

Consolidating fractionated tracts of Indian land under Tribal ownership allows for better utilization of the land for purposes benefitting the Tribal community, such as for economic development, conservation, and social or cultural purposes. It also reduces Federal government costs associated with the administration of highly fractionated land. The Interior Department has a duty to carry out numerous activities associated with managing fractional interests, and these activities cost the Department hundreds of millions of appropriated dollars each year. By consolidating lands through voluntary acquisition on an ongoing basis, the Department proactively reduces these costs, which will only continue to grow with continued fractionation.

3.2 Challenges

3.2.1 *On-Going Fractional Interest Purchases*

The main challenge for the Division of Trust Land Consolidation is limited to current funding and uncertain future funding. Appropriations cover both payments to willing sellers of fractional interests and administrative costs. The cost of determining fair market values is also covered by appropriations. Unless we can maintain the minimum number and type of employees necessary to carry out our land consolidation work in an accurate and accountable manner, our continued success is in jeopardy.

DTLC was established to build upon the success of the Buy-Back Program, utilizing existing infrastructure which was created for implementation of the Buy-Back Program from 2012 through its sunset in 2022. This infrastructure consists of experienced staff and highly efficient processes and procedures that make it possible to acquire fractional land interests more quickly and cost-effectively than ever previously possible, while providing outstanding customer service to participating individual Indian landowners.

Without sustained appropriations that enable the Division to maintain minimum required staff and continue purchasing fractional interests from willing sellers, the considerable achievements of the Buy-Back Program will diminish over time, with fractionation ultimately returning to pre-Program levels and increased from there.

3.3 Best Practices

3.3.1 *Automated Land Buy Back Process*

Streamlined, standardized, and automated process and procedures for acquiring fractional land interests, specifically designed to minimize associated administrative costs.

3.3.2 *Quality Control*

Robust quality control measures to ensure accuracy and accountability

3.3.3 *Appraisals and Fair Market Value*

Efficient and cost-effective appraisal methods for obtaining timely fair market values on large numbers of properties.

3.3.4 *Coordination with Participating Tribes*

Close coordination and collaboration with participating Tribes.



Lake sunset



Mesita Dam



CO River Irrigated Land

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DIVISION OF WATER & POWER (DWP)

Section 1. Overview

1.1 Mission

The mission of the Division of Water & Power (DWP) is to promote Self-Determination, economic opportunities, and public safety through the sound management of irrigation, dam and power facilities owned by BIA. DWP's mission also includes the protection of Indian water rights, water development projects, litigation support and attorney's fees as well as the BIA's responsibilities under the Federal Power Act (FPA) in re-licensing hydropower projects that affect Indian trust resources.

1.2 Who We Serve

DWP supports Tribal governments and BIA Regional Offices to manage their irrigation, dam, and power facilities by promoting self-determination, economic opportunities, and public safety through the sound management of irrigation, dam and power facilities owned by Bureau of Indian Affairs. DWP's mission also includes the protection of Indian water rights, water development projects, litigation support and attorney's fees as well as the Bureau's responsibilities under the Federal Power Act in re-licensing hydropower projects that affect Indian trust resources.

1.3 Services We Provide

The DWP provides a range of services relating to water resource management and power distribution and supply. General services provided are listed below.

Table 10. DWP Programs & Services

P	Services
Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptual Plans • Feasibility Studies, Plans • Specifications, Estimates
Engineering Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geotechnical • Structural, Mechanical, Construction Material • Hydrologic, Hydraulic • Environmental, Consequence Analysis
Dams Billing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Irrigation Information Management System (NIIMS) Operation & Maintenance and NIIMS 5.0 development • Irrigation project O&M billing and support • Federal Register, Irrigation O&M Rate setting

Program	Services
Dams Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act funds • Mandatory payment distribution • Prioritize and distribute funds • Water construction indexing
Dams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Warning System Design • Construction, Operation & Maintenance (O&M) for Dams • Emergency Management, Emergency Action Planning, and Security Assessment • Dam Engineering Inspection & Risk Management • Hydropower licensing technical assistance, Oversight of hydropower post-license implementation of license terms • Surveying, Construction Contracting, Construction Oversight, Water Measurement • Economic Evaluation, Operation Optimization, Safety and Modernization • Oversight, Risk Assessment
Asset Management – Maximo™ Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly Deferred Maintenance and report (DM&R) documentation and submission • Condition assessment cost indexing for assets and work orders • Maximo™ User Helpdesk Support • Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) progress tracking • Federal Real Property Profile (FRPP) annual report submission • Maximo™ user helpdesk support and training sessions • FY25 Maximo™/Financial Business Management System (FBMS) standing work orders created, funded, released • DWP Maximo™ Data Maintenance: Assets, Locations, Work Orders • DWP Property Management • Collaboration with Irrigation, Power SOD Programs and OTS GIS Staff for Asset Inventory Management
GIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field and data collection • Construction project details and status • Maintenance of irrigation and power geometry and attributes • Decision Support Tool (DTS) system administration, maintenance, and development • Create and maintain custom applications and interfaces to serve DWP staff, regional staff, and irrigation and power projects • Maintain lines of accounting in financial applications to support completing e-FED and Purchase Requests • Power utility load analysis and engineering support • Synchronization of GIS attributes with Maximo™ database and between individual ditch segments • Data call support • Mapping

1.4 Staffing

- 19 Full Time Employees
- 70 Vacant Positions
- 7 Detailed Employees
- 32 Contractors

1.5 Branches

Branch of Irrigation & Power (BIP)

The mission of BIP is to provide administration, policy, oversight and technical assistance to BIA-owned irrigation and power projects. Through the Branch of Irrigation and Power, DWP provides policy, advisory, oversight, and technical assistance to DWP power projects and authorized irrigation projects. DWP also distributes appropriated program funds and provides customer billing and collection for BIA-owned irrigation projects.

The BIP Irrigation Program utilizes Congressionally appropriated annual funding to administer over 17 BIA irrigation projects in five (5) BIA regions and over 16 Indian Reservations. These irrigation projects comprise a significant part of the water resources infrastructure for the Tribes, and the BIP Program provides regulatory guidance, technical support, and accountability to the implementation of irrigation water delivery and water management within Indian Country.

As part of the BIA Irrigation Program, the DWP also operates the National Irrigation Information Management System (NIIMS). NIIMS is a billing, collection, debt management and rate setting system supporting the BIA's irrigation operation and maintenance (O&M) assessments across 16 irrigation projects in Indian Country. NIIMS processes approximately \$35M in annual receivables which is the primary revenue source for the O&M of each irrigation project.

The BIP Power Program oversees three (3) power utilities that deliver electrical power to Tribes and non-Indian power customers. The Power Program operates, maintains, and rehabilitates power system infrastructure on each project, including power generating facilities, power substations, electrical switching stations, transmission lines, distribution lines and related infrastructure. BIA power projects currently provide electrical service to over 38K customers and generate \$73M in annual revenue.

Branch of Safety of Dams (SOD)

The mission of SOD is to reduce to potential loss of human life and property damage caused by dam failure by making dams under the administration of the BIA as safe as practically possible. SOD endeavors to ensure that its dams are maintained in satisfactory condition on a long-term basis and to promote awareness and access to the beneficial uses achieved through public investment.

The SOD Program utilizes Congressionally appropriated annual funding to administer over 140 high-hazard and significant-hazard potential dams in nine (9) BIA regions and over 40 Indian Reservations. These dams comprise a significant part of the water resources infrastructure for the Tribes, and the SOD Program provides guidance, support, and accountability to the implementation of dam safety within Indian Country.

The Branch of Safety of Dams carries out dam safety activities, which include risk management, emergency management, inspections and evaluations, maintenance and repairs, and dam security for dams under the BIA's administration to minimize risk of dam failure and to allow continued access to the beneficial uses these dams provide with available funding.

Branch of Water Resources (BWR)

The Branch of Water Resources serves as the DWP Division Chief's liaison to BIA Regional Offices, local BIA agencies, and tribal governments on issues involving water rights and negotiations, pre-development and water management, attorney fees, litigation support and water program evaluation. BWR manages the Water Management, Planning and Pre-Development Program and the Water Rights Negotiation and Litigation Program. Subject to the criteria established by the *Notice of Revised Instructions for Preparing and Prioritizing Water Program Funding Requests, Federal Register, Vol. 70, No. 201, October 19, 2005*, and availability of annual congressional appropriations, program funds are used to support regional water rights activities and water projects managed by Indian tribes and Alaskan Native governments.

Water Resources Management, Planning, and Pre-Development Program

BWR manages this program for the purpose of managing, conserving, and utilizing reservation water resources. The primary priority of these program funds is to provide the necessary technical research, studies, and other information for Indian tribes to serve as informed and prudent managers of adjudicated, decreed or water otherwise appurtenant to tribal and/or Indian trust lands including public domain allotments. This may occur through partnerships, coordination, and cooperation with other governmental entities by obtaining information describing the quantity and quality of water through surface and groundwater assessments, inventories, monitoring, modeling, and gauging. Additionally, the funds are used for the preparation of comprehensive reservation water management and development plans, use surveys, interagency drought management planning, and necessary assessments to define and characterize tribal water resources.

Water Rights Negotiation/Litigation Program

BWR manages this program for the purpose of confirming and defining Indian water rights and settling claims through negotiations if possible, or alternatively, through litigation and court decree. The primary priority of program funds is to provide all documentation and other materials deemed necessary to further the United States' water rights claims on behalf of an Indian tribe or an individual. This may include preparing hydrographic survey reports, including the determination of surface and groundwater supplies; identification of arable lands, including a practicably irrigable acreage (PIA) assessment; determining the exact owner and priority of the water right, source of water, whether surface or underground, points and means of diversion, purposes and places of use, and amount of water diverted or depleted ;conducting studies to determine the water needs of fish, wildlife, or other resources for which tribes have reserved rights; and determining the engineering and economic requirements for water delivery. Funds may also be used to provide similar documentation and materials as necessary to facilitate State and Federal Indian water rights adjudications and other active Indian water rights negotiations undertaken by the Secretary of the Interior.

Hydropower Compliance Program

While not a standalone branch within DWP, the Hydropower Compliance Program (HCP) endeavors to uphold the mission of the BIA by ensuring impacts to Tribal interests and resources are sufficiently mitigated in any hydropower license issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). This work is mandated by the Federal Power Act.



Section 2. Stewardship, Conservation & Powering Our Future

2.1 Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

The DWP (Division) strives to strategically manage program assets to provide the greatest benefit to Tribes.

2.1.1 Contracts

BIA contracting officers awarded a new 5-year Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) service support contract to Eco Data Analytics, LLC effective March 1, 2026, to support DWP. This contract provides all branches and programs within the division access to technical, administrative, and financial human resources necessary for mission execution.

Branch of Irrigation & Power, Internal Controls

2.1.2 Irrigation O&M Rates Adjusted

BIP staff coordinated with the Office of the Solicitor and Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action staff on drafting and publishing Federal Register Notices for the Final Irrigation O&M Rate Adjustments for calendar year 2025 and 2026.

2.1.3 Maximo™ Program

- Acceptance of Q2 2026 Deferred Maintenance Report
- Establish FY 2026 Standing Work Orders for the DWP for use in FBMS and QuickTime
- DWP Annual Property Inventory Completion
- Completion of SOD Program Work Order Indexing to FY 2026 Values
- Completion of Irrigation Program Work Order Indexing to FY 2025 Values
- Maximo™ In-Person User Training and Project Data Maintenance for Fort Hall and Flathead reservations
- BIA DWP Irrigation Conference Representation and Participation
- Offered 38 Training Sessions for DWP Maximo™ User Community
- Processed 4 SOD Program Dam Comprehensive Reviews (CRs) in Maximo™

2.1.4 NIIMS Program

To mitigate critical cybersecurity risks and ensure compliance with federal mandates, NIIMS staff have successfully deployed a multifactor authentication (MFA) solution for the legacy NIIMS application. This implementation significantly strengthens IT security by enabling users to authenticate using their Personal Identity Verification (PIV) card and Personal Identification Number (PIN), effectively eliminating reliance on vulnerable username/password logins.

This proactive measure directly supports the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memorandum M-22-09 and the Federal Zero Trust Strategy, aligning with DOI policies. Most importantly, it addresses the urgent requirement to implement phishing-resistant, application-layer multi-factor authentication (MFA) by the November 30, 2024, deadline. Failure to meet this mandate could expose the BIA Irrigation mission to serious operational and security risks.

By securing continued access to the legacy system during the modernization process, this solution not only protects sensitive data but also ensures uninterrupted service delivery for irrigation project staff.

2.1.5 *NIIMS Irrigation O&M Metrics (October 2025 through March 31, 2026)*

- 6,657 annual irrigation O&M and construction bills printed and mailed
- \$14,665,000 annual irrigation O&M revenue collected
- 2,095 total customer payments
- 990 electronic payments
- 45% total payments paid via electronic method
- 129 delinquent receivables referred to U.S. Treasury
- \$97,000 total revenue collected for delinquent irrigation O&M debt referred to U.S. Treasury

2.1.6 *Risk Management*

The BIP held in-person A-123 Program Reviews and initiated Self-Assessments in preparation for the FY 2026 IA Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Controls for Irrigation Operations, Power Finance, and Power Operations. Two (2) A-123 Program Reviews and two (2) Self-Assessments are in progress for the Irrigation program and one (1) Self-Assessment for the Power program. These include:

- Flathead Indian Irrigation Project
- Fort Belknap Indian Irrigation Project
- Self-Assessment Navajo Indian Irrigation Project
- Self-Assessment Uintah & Ouray Indian Irrigation Project
- Self-Assessment Mission Valley Power Project



Fort Hall Deteriorating Concrete at the Reservation Main Headgate

2.1.7 Fort Hall Deteriorating Concrete

BIP is undertaking a comprehensive effort to understand, measure and improve operation of the Reservation Main, Main, and North Main canals at the Fort Hall Irrigation Project. The canals listed divert water from the Snake and Blackfoot River in Idaho and distributed it over approximately 72,000 assessed acres. The annual value of the crops produced is greater than \$220M.

The project was initiated for several reasons including reports that the Reservation Main canal cannot divert its full flow rate due to canal deterioration and headgate/diversion dam problems. It was also reported that several critical structures including the Sand Creek Control Structure, Reservation Main Drop, and Ross Fork Creek Spillway require rehabilitation or replacement.

The A&E contractor has been tasked with obtaining topographic survey for the canals, development of plans and profile sheets to facilitate future canal repairs, safety evaluations of structure, initial environmental assessment, geotechnical analysis improvement of Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) controls, design of flow measurement devices, and cost benefit analysis of fish screening.

Information gained via completion of the project will be used to facilitate structure repairs and operational improvements throughout the irrigation project. The overall project cost is \$4M with a scheduled completion date of May 2027.

Safety of Dams, Internal Controls

2.1.8 Technical Guidance to Regions

Throughout FY26, the SOD Program provided technical guidance to Regional staff, dam tenders, and supervisors including one multi-day in person training, several virtual trainings, and regular monthly virtual meetings between Central and Regional SOD staff.

2.1.9 Annual Inspections

The SOD Program supported four (4) Regional offices to conduct annual inspections at 29 dams: Navajo (17); Pacific (1); Rocky Mountain (3) and Southwest (8).

2.1.10 Emergency Response Guidance

Additionally, the team provided emergency response guidance and analytical support to the Pueblo of San Felipe in the Southwest Region, including hydrologic evaluation of the storm event and associated reservoir routing. This storm triggered activation of Emergency Response Level 1, indicating a non-failure condition at the dam but requiring heightened monitoring and coordinated response actions. Additionally, the Tribe experienced significant natural flooding from this rain event which required careful communication differentiating the natural flood risks from the risk of dam failure.

2.1.11 Internal Control Reviews

Internal Control Review (A-123 Program Review) was completed for the Great Plains region to assess the region's practices and make recommendations to improve overall SOD operations within this region. A-123 Program Reviews are planned for Navajo and Rocky Mountain Regions.

2.1.12 Safety of Dams Program Handbook

All SOD Program work was conducted within the context of a newly updated and modernized SOD Program Handbook and improved project management capabilities driven by updates to the SOD Program’s project scheduling, resourcing, and financial data management software.

2.1.13 Dam Inventory Expanded and Streamlined

During FY 2026, the SOD Program continued to expand and streamline its dam inventory by updating the process of evaluating structures for inclusion in the inventory. This process involved systematically obtaining dam data from Tribes, disseminating inventory condition reports to BIA leadership and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ National Inventory of Dams, reassessing risk hazard classifications, and incorporating additional dams into the SOD Program inventory in accordance with the [Indian Dams Safety Act of 1994](#) (IDSA) (25 U.S.C. §§ 3801-3804) and the [Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act of 2016](#) (WIIN Act) (25 U.S.C. § 3805(e)).

The tables below are examples of the continued expansion and streamlining of the dam inventory.

Table 11. Adjusted Program Activities - 6 Existing Program Dams with Updated Hazard Classifications

Project Name	Reservation	State
Ambrose	Crow Creek Reservation	SD
Eagle Creek No. 1	Mescalero Apache Reservation	NM
China Diversion Regulating Reservoir	Duck Valley Indian Reservation	NV
Billy Shaw	Duck Valley Indian Reservation	NV
Sheep Creek	Duck Valley Indian Reservation	NV
Mountain View Dam	Duck Valley Indian Reservation	ID

Table 12. Initiated Program Activities- 2 Newly Added Program Dams

Project Name	Reservation	State
Educkett Creek Dam	Makah Reservation	WA
Tantaquidgeon	Mohegan Indian Reservation	CT

Branch of Water Resources, Internal Controls

2.1.14 Risk Management

The BWR held in-person A-123 Program Reviews and video conference calls for Self-Assessments in preparation for the FY 2026 IA Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Controls for Water Management, Planning and Pre-Development Programs. Assessment questionnaires were developed for the Regional programs enabling Regional Water Coordinators to provide region specific information. BWR coordinated with the Regions to arrange video conference calls or on-site meetings with the Tribes to aide Central office in gaining an understanding of the concerns and needs of the Tribes. BWR requested peer reviewer assignments of newly assigned Regional Water Coordinators in designed efforts to provide succession training to improve water programs. Final summary reports were prepared documenting the results for

each completed A-123 Program Review and transmitted to subject Regions. Two (2) A-123 Program Reviews and two (2) Self-Assessments are in progress for the Water Resources program. These include:

- Self-Assessment of Great Plains region
- Self-Assessment of Northwest region
- A-123 Program Reviews Alaska region
- A-123 Program Reviews Rocky Mountain region

2.1.15 Revision of Request for Proposal Applications

In collaboration with the Office of the Solicitor, the BWR has updated the request for proposal instructions and application for the FY 2027 funding cycles for the Water Resources and Attorney Fees/Litigation Support Programs to make the application and review process more efficient and transparent. The revised Language provides greater clarity and specific definitions for the criteria used to assess project eligibility, and new templates were developed to assist staff in collecting and transmitting project information.

Branch of Irrigation and Power, Design & Construction

Using land and water to grow agricultural products and generate revenue for the American people is the primary goal of the BIA irrigation projects. The following are projects where BIP invested financial and staffing resources to the benefit of the American people by increasing the stability, flexibility, and equitability of the irrigation systems.

2.1.16 Wapato Drop 1 Pumping Plant Rehabilitation - Wapato Irrigation Project, Washington

BIP engineers are working with Project and Tribal stakeholders on rehabilitation of the Wapato Drop 1 Pumping Plant. Rehabilitation planning activities were initiated in response to a 2014 high level structure evaluation and condition assessment that rated the Drop 1 Pumping Plant infrastructure as “Critical” and categorized it as a facility needing “Critical Health and Safety Capital Improvement.”

Recent detailed condition assessments were also completed and professional engineers concluded that the facility “is at an elevated risk of failure either in the event of a seismic event, high wind, or some form of soil failure.” In any of these events, there is potential for loss of irrigation operations, substantial injury to humans, and major damage to property. The Wapato Irrigation Project has an annual estimated economic value in excess of \$600M and failure of the Drop 1 Pumping Plant would put this economic output in jeopardy.



Overhead View of Wapato Drop 1

Ongoing engineering analyses are underway to select rehabilitation and replacement concept designs to be advanced to feasibility review and ultimately selection of a preferred alternative. The preferred alternative will be then advanced to final design and construction. BIA requires a funding mechanism that fully funds an expedited design and construction of the Drop 1 replacement or repair. As of April 2026, it is estimated that a full replacement or rehabilitation of the Drop 1 Pumping Plant may cost \$50M or more.

2.1.17 Drop 1 Pumping Plant Water Screens Safety Upgrade

In conjunction with the Drop 1 Pumping Plant Rehabilitation project mentioned above, the BIP is currently finishing a safety enhancement project. For many past irrigation seasons, Project personnel continually hand raked vegetative debris from stationary screens twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days a week, to prevent debris damage to the pumping plant hydro turbines. This safety upgrade included installing automated mechanical debris screening to eliminate unsafe conditions of hand raking manual labor. This efficiency upgrade now allows Project personnel to focus on other operations and maintenance duties.

Installation of six (6) new screens, weighing approximately six (6) tons each, at the forebay of the Drop 1 Pumping Plant began in fall 2025. The screens are powered by electricity and include a programmable logic controller for a wide range of operating conditions.



Photos of the new automated debris screening at the Drop 1 Facility (before and during irrigation delivery)



The screens also include an automated spray-wash system to prevent screen debris clogging on the new screens, followed by a debris conveyor and collection area. Site lighting upgrades, new fencing, additional safety signing, and a warning buoy floatation system were also installed as part of this project.

Performance testing and personnel training commencing in early April with construction finishing by May. RJS Construction Inc. (Jacobs), is a general construction contractor based out of Yakima, WA. Jacobs provides construction management services and serves as the designer of record.

2.1.18 Main Canal Checks 185 / 270 / 420 and Lateral 73-36 Check 1 Rehabilitation, Colorado River Indian Irrigation Project (CRIIP), Arizona

BIP engineers have spent several years advancing high-priority rehabilitation efforts for three critical check structures on the CRIIP Main Canal, as well as completing the full replacement design for the failed Lateral 73-36 Check 1 structure. The deteriorating radial gates on the Main Canal check structures pose a significant risk. Failure would effectively shut down the irrigation system and lead to substantial crop losses.



CRIIP Radial gate at Main Canal Check 420

For Lateral 73-36 Check 1, temporary emergency repairs have been in place for multiple irrigation seasons. These stopgap measures have already exceeded their intended service life, and their continued reliability is uncertain. Ongoing use of the structure without permanent repair is likely to result in failure and a loss of irrigation service to this portion of the project.

Construction costs for the rehabilitation of the three Main Canal checks and the replacement of the Lateral 73-36 Check 1 structure are estimated at \$21 million to \$24 million. The project is currently out for solicitation, with bids due on April 16, 2026. This solicitation represents the third attempt to procure construction services for this work.

2.1.19 Wapato Diversion Dam - Wapato Irrigation Project, Washington

BIP is currently working with Tribal staff, federal agencies, state agencies, local municipalities, project operators, Regional office staff, and other stakeholders on the rehabilitation of the Wapato Diversion Dam. The rehabilitation project was initiated in response to aging/failing infrastructure, staff safety concerns, and migratory fish fatalities.

In early 2026, the project stakeholders focused on evaluating individual project elements and developing options for the overall project layout. Currently there are three possible configurations for the future diversion dam, headgate and fish screen. To facilitate the evaluation, two physical models of the system are being developed. This allows the engineers to see and understand how the system operates prior to the first yard of concrete being placed.



Photo 1: Damaged Concrete at Wapato Headgates; Photo 2: Wapato Diversion Dam Sectional Headgate Model with Juvenile Salmon

The first model constructed is a 1:4 scale cross section of the headgate system. This model allows the engineers to test the hydraulic conditions of multiple headgate configurations. Juvenile salmon were provided by the Yakama Nation and sent through the scale model. This test was performed to evaluate injuries associated with the current headgate system and to develop gate options to decrease mortality. Currently, small sensors are being sent through the same model to measure hydraulic attributes of the headgate configurations so efficient gate configurations can be developed and tested.

In 2026, the project will be developing a scale model of the section of the Yakama River through Union Gap. This model will be used to evaluate the three diversion dam configurations to see which best facilitates water diversion, debris removal, sediment control and decreases upstream flooding. The data gained from this model will be extremely valuable when determining which diversion configuration will facilitate increased water irrigation diversion and decrease operation and maintenance costs.

The feasibility evaluation for all project elements will be completed in 2026. When the stakeholders know the project's direction, they will begin final engineering design and pursuit of funding opportunities for construction. Current estimates for construction range from \$100M to \$300M.

2.1.20 CRIP Headworks, Radial Gate, and Wasteway Evaluation – Colorado River Indian Irrigation Project, Arizona

BIP is currently working with project operators, Regional office staff, and other stakeholders on the rehabilitation of radial gates 11 and 12 at Headgate Rock Dam. The headgates are the primary diversion from the Colorado River into the Colorado River Irrigation Project Main Canal. The headgates are showing signs of deterioration and were identified as a safety concern during a recent inspection of the dam.



CRIP Headworks Radial Gate

The project includes inspection of the existing radial gates, operating systems, and concrete infrastructure. The project also includes survey of the downstream canal including the wasteway structure, assessment of the stoplog system that is currently non-operational, and an environmental assessment to define the process and implications of temporarily drawing down Lake Moovalya approximately ten feet to facilitate inspection and construction activities.

BIP engineers will be completing several hydraulic analyses on the gate and associated canal “in-house” to reduce the scope of contracted services and to refine the final deliverables. BIP will coordinate with federal agencies and other stakeholders to facilitate the temporary drawdown of Lake Moovalya.

Engineering for the project will be completed in 2026. Based on the structural and hydraulic information obtained, the decision will be made to perform minor repairs, rehabilitate the gates, or to perform a full gate replacement. Survey information acquired will also facilitate a hydraulic assessment of the first 1.4-mile section of the Main canal so various operation conditions can be analyzed.

2.1.21 Fort Hall Bannock Pumping Plant Modernization – Fort Hall Indian Irrigation Project, Idaho

BIP engineers are working with Project staff on the modernization of the Bannock Pumping Plant (BPP). The BPP supports irrigation water delivery within the Michaud Unit of the Fort Hall Indian Irrigation Project (FHIIP). Constructed in 1965, the BPP has outdated and inefficient pumping and electrical infrastructure.

A 2019 Rapid Appraisal Process report was prepared for the FHIIP and provided recommendations to improve energy efficiencies at the BPP by replacing pump motors, adding variable frequency drives and instrumentation, and replacement of electrical equipment.



Fort Hall Pumping Plant Interior of Bannock Pumping Plant

The BPP Modernization construction project will rehabilitate the existing pumping plant and construct new auxiliary features that support continued annual operations and provide safe, reliable irrigation delivery to irrigation customers. The Project also includes rehabilitating a nearby irrigation canal mechanical screening facility to reduce manual maintenance and improve operational safety.

In 2022, BIP hired an A&E contractor to begin an engineering analysis of the BPP modernization effort. Condition assessments were performed, and design alternatives selected. BIP then worked with the A&E contractor through final design development and permitting.

The project is in the initial stages of the construction solicitation process with bids scheduled to be submitted in June 2026. Construction is scheduled to be completed prior to the 2029 irrigation season. The cost of construction is estimated at \$20 Million.

2.1.22 Wapato Diversion Physical Modeling

BIA is currently working on a major modernization and rehabilitation effort to the canal headworks at the Wapato Main Canal Diversion Dam in the Yakima River. The project has several objectives including: improving the project's ability to divert water, increasing safety for the operators and public, decreasing flood risk, improving fish passage, and providing additional opportunities for subsistence fishing. Currently the project is working through the engineering design and feasibility stages.

Part of the design effort is to optimize the future diversion configuration for both water diversion and fish passage. To meet these sometimes-competing criteria, BIA has partnered with Yakama Nation Engineering and Fisheries to evaluate two alternative project designs in a scaled physical environment. This type of evaluation allows the effectiveness of each design to be tested and optimized before final design and construction.

The first physical model constructed was a 1:4 scaled sectional model of the main headgate. This sectional model was used to test the hydraulics of various headgate configurations using live fish, sensor fish and other instrumentation to measure hydraulic conditions. Data collected from model runs is providing important information on how high velocities flow through various gate configuration and head differentials affected the survival of juvenile salmonoids and lamprey. This model is also being used to evaluate sediment transport through different headgate systems and how sediment deposition will affect future operation and maintenance.



Photo of the tailwater gate testing in the 1:4 scale sectional model

A second round of scaled section model testing is scheduled for later in 2026. This analysis will focus on optimization of the preferred headgate design alternative. The data collected will also be used to evaluate what effects the preferred headgate alternative may have on the surrounding infrastructure.

The second model being constructed is a 1:26 scale general physical model of the river system, diversion dams, canal, and other infrastructure. The purpose of this model is to evaluate how different diversion dam and headgate configurations affect water diversion, sediment transportation, flood conveyance, and fish passage. The general physical model is very large (approximately 100 ft wide by 100 ft long) so it is currently being constructed in a warehouse in Vancouver Canada.

General physical models are a valuable tool for evaluating how the river system and various infrastructure will interact as a system. Data gathered from the testing will be used to refine the two current rehabilitation alternatives and to give the project stakeholder the information needed to make informed decisions.

Safety of Dam Branch, Design & Construction

The SOD Design & Construction program supports the program through the development of dam safety rehabilitation designs, development of contracting documents, and management of construction for prioritized high hazard program dams. These projects address critical life safety risks such as undersized and deteriorated spillways, non-functioning outlet works controls, seepage through embankments and foundations, and other factors, and are intended to address several years of deferred maintenance and bring the structures up to modern safety standards.



Ribbon cutting at Menager's dam on Tohono O'odham Nation, Arizona

Beyond mitigating critical safety hazards at dams, the SOD Design & Construction program also works to honor and preserve tribal cultural heritage. The SOD Program has facilitated the relocation of various endangered species, encompassing both wildlife and plant life. Dams located within Indian Country serve as vital resources for community recreation, agricultural irrigation, and the advancement of renewable energy.

The following tables highlight the key projects completed and progressed by the SOD Design & Construction team in FY26:

Table 13. Construction Projects – 1 Completed, 2 Progressed

Project Name	Reservation	State	Status
Menager’s Dam	Tohono O’odham Nation	AZ	Completed
Oglala Dam	Pine Ridge Reservation	SD	Progressed
Antelope Dam	Rosebud Reservation	SD	Progressed

Table 14. Rehabilitation Designs – 12 Progressed

Project Name	Reservation	State
Owhi Dam	Colville Reservation	WA
Willow Creek Dam	Crow Indian Reservation	MT
A-1 Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Bootleg Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Christmas Tree Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Cooley Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Davis Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Neopit Dam	Menominee Reservation	WI
Allen Dam	Pine Ridge Reservation	SD
White Clay Dam	Pine Ridge Reservation	SD
Ghost Hawk Dam	Rosebud Reservation	SD
Weber Dam	Walker River Indian Reservation	NV

Hydropower Compliance Program, FERC licensing of Tribally owned facilities

The Hydropower Compliance Program (HCP) staff collaborated with personnel from BIA’s Alaska Regional Office to draft a letter endorsing the Igiugig Hydrokinetic Project in Alaska. Owned by Igiugig Native Village, this facility serves as a vital source of electricity for Tribal citizens and operations. Currently, FERC is evaluating the facility’s relicensing application, and our letter was submitted to the docket to help support the case for relicensing. This effort aligns with the January 20, 2025 Presidential Memorandum, [Unleashing American Energy](#).

The Alutiiq Tribe of Old Harbor secured the license for Old Harbor Hydroelectric Project in Alaska and will receive Tribal Community Resilience funding to build electrical grid connections. HCP staff have committed to collaborating with BIA’s Awarding Official’s Technical Representative to offer hydropower expertise, supporting the Tribe in making full use of this valuable energy source. This effort aligns with the Presidential Memorandum.

2.2 American Energy & Strategic Use of Natural Resources

Safety of Dams Branch, Early Warning System (EWS)

The EWS program supports the program through the design, operation, and maintenance of remote sensing data collection equipment. These systems are critical to the real-time communication of conditions at program dams and the early detection of conditions that may lead to dam safety incidents. The following bullets highlight the key projects completed by the SOD EWS group in FY26:

- Completed 2025 annual EWS maintenance and initiated 2026 annual maintenance for 235 BIA EWS sites at and near BIA Program dams.
- Completed an EWS Website user account audit; currently the system has 307 users.
- On-site surveys were conducted to verify reservoir levels at BIA program dams, ensuring the information shown on the website is accurate and that alerts are delivered promptly and reliably.
- Conducted 3 EWS Working Group meetings focused on training and fostering collaboration, with attendance typically ranging from 30 to 40 participants.
- Established automated remote monitoring systems for environmental data—including reservoir elevation, stream levels, and rainfall—and implemented alert notifications for most BIA Program high-hazard potential dams.
- Initiated a new camera solution to reduce costs for visual monitoring of additional dams.
- Implemented Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES) technology at 2 newly established sites, allowing site data to be transmitted directly and reducing federal expenses associated with commercial data transmission fees.
- Maintained an Authority to Operate the EWS website, which maintains system data, sends alerts based on site conditions, and allows authorized users to access their data.

Table 15. Installations of New EWS Monitoring Sites – 3 Completed, 2 Progressed

Project Name	Reservation	State	Status
China Hat Dike Dam	Fort Hall Reservation	ID	Completed
Eustace Dam	Pueblo of Zuni	NM	Completed
Nutria No. 3 Dam	Pueblo of Zuni	NM	Completed
Weigand Reservoir Dam	Fort Belknap Reservation	MT	Progressed
Browns Dam	Rocky Boy's Reservation	MT	Progressed

Safety of Dams Branch, Emergency Management & Security

The Emergency Management & Security program supports the program through the development and Exercising of Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) and security assessments at all high and significant hazard Program dams. EAPs are critical for ensuring that communities living downstream of program dams are prepared to evacuate in the event of a Dam safety incident. Security assessments ensure that the program dams are adequately protected from vandalism and other criminal or hazardous activities in and around the facilities. The following tables provide completed, initiated and progressed projects for the Emergency Management & Security team.

Table 16. Emergency Action Plans – 7 Completed

Project Name	Reservation	State	Status
Sandia 83-A Dam	Pueblo of Sandia	NM	Completed
Upper Goose Pond East Dam	Wind River Reservation	WY	Completed
Upper Goose Pond Middle Dike Dam	Wind River Reservation	WY	Completed
Upper Goose Pond West Dike Dam	Wind River Reservation	WY	Completed
Kiwosay Dam	Red Lake Reservation	MN	Completed
Corn Creek Dam	Rosebud Indian Reservation	SD	Completed
Lake Capote Dam	Southern Ute Reservation	CO	Completed

Table 17. Emergency Action Plans – 16 Progressed

Project Name	Reservation	State	Status
Four Horns Dam	Blackfeet Indian Reservation	MT	Progressed
Lower Two Medicine Dam	Blackfeet Indian Reservation	MT	Progressed
Fourth Creek Dam	Coquille Indian Reservation	OR	Progressed
Tarheel Dam	Coquille Indian Reservation	OR	Progressed
Blackfoot Dam	Fort Hall Reservation	ID	Progressed
China Hat Dike	Fort Hall Reservation	ID	Progressed
Equalizer Dam	Fort Hall Reservation	ID	Progressed
Chuska Lake Dam	Navajo Nation	NM	Progressed
Allen Dam	Pine Ridge Reservation	SD	Progressed
Kyle Dam	Pine Ridge Reservation	SD	Progressed
Oglala Dam	Pine Ridge Reservation	SD	Progressed
White Clay Dam	Pine Ridge Reservation	SD	Progressed
Mesita Dam	Pueblo of Laguna	NM	Progressed
Browns Dam	Rocky Boy's Reservation	MT	Progressed
Belcourt Lake Dam	Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation	ND	Progressed
Gordon Dam	Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation	ND	Progressed

Table 18. Dam Security Inspections – 5 Completed

Project Name	Reservation	State
Ambrose	Crow Creek Reservation	SD
Gordon	Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation	ND
Belcourt Lake	Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation	ND
Bonneau	Rocky Boy's Reservation	MT
Ray Lake	Wind River Reservation	WY

Safety of Dams Branch, Reviews & Inspections

The Reviews and Inspections program supports the program through the development of formal engineering reviews and inspections at all high and significant hazard Program dams as required by the Federal Guidelines for Dam Safety. These reviews and inspections are critical components of the risk informed decision-making process that the program uses to assess risks and prioritize risk mitigation activities at all program dams. The following tables highlight the key projects completed, progressed and initiated by the SOD Reviews & Inspections team in FY 2026:

Table 19. Comprehensive Reviews – 27 Progressed

Project Name	Tribe	State	Status
Lower Two Medicine Dam	Blackfeet Indian Reservation	MT	Progressed
Twin Lakes Dam	Colville Reservation	WA	Progressed
Wild Horse Dam	Duck Valley Indian Reservation	NV	Progressed
Mission Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT	Progressed
Pablo Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT	Progressed
Jocko Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT	Progressed
Black Lake Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT	Progressed
Ninepipe Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT	Progressed
Tabor Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT	Progressed
Twin (Turtle) Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT	Progressed
Hell Roaring Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT	Progressed
Cyclone Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ	Progressed
Sunrise Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ	Progressed
Dulce Dam	Jicarilla Apache Nation	NM	Progressed
La Jara Dam	Jicarilla Apache Nation	NM	Progressed
Pine Tree Dam	Jicarilla Apache Nation	NM	Progressed
Grady Hamilton Dam	Jicarilla Apache Nation	NM	Progressed
Window Rock Dam	Navajo Nation	NM	Progressed
Ganado Dam	Navajo Nation	AZ	Progressed
Santa Ana Dam	Pueblo of Santa Ana	NM	Progressed
Black Rock Dam	Pueblo of Zuni	NM	Progressed
Trapped Rock Dam	Pueblo of Zuni	NM	Progressed
Parmelee Dam	Rosebud Indian Reservation	SD	Progressed
Ponca Dam	Rosebud Indian Reservation	SD	Progressed
Elgo Dam	San Carlos Indian Reservation	AZ	Progressed
Prairie No. 1 Dam	Standing Rock Reservation	ND	Progressed
Ray Lake Dam	Wind River Reservation	WY	Progressed

Table 20. Comprehensive Reviews (Formal Examination) – 15 Completed

Project Name	Tribe	State	Status
Horseshoe Cienega Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ	Completed
A-1 Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ	Completed
Bootleg Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ	Completed
Cooley Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ	Completed
Blackfoot Dam	Fort Hall Reservation	ID	Completed
Lake Mescalero Dam	Mescalero Apache Reservation	NM	Completed
Todacheene Dam	Navajo Nation	NM	Completed
7To'Hajiilee Dam	Navajo Nation	NM	Completed
Kyle Dam	Pine Ridge Reservation	SD	Completed
Paguete Dam	Pueblo of Laguna	NM	Completed
Rosebud Dam	Rosebud Indian Reservation	SD	Completed
Coolidge Dam	San Carlos Indian Reservation	AZ	Completed
Dry Lake Dam	San Carlos Indian Reservation	AZ	Completed
Point of Pines Dam	San Carlos Indian Reservation	AZ	Completed
Upper Point of Pines Dam	San Carlos Indian Reservation	AZ	Completed

Table 21. Period Reviews – 16 Completed

Project Name	Reservation	State
Fourth Creek Dam	Coquille Indian Reservation	OR
Tarheel Dam	Coquille Indian Reservation	OR
Willow Creek Dam	Crow Indian Reservation	MT
Upper Dry Fork Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT
Drift Fence Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Pacheta Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Bog Tank Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Davis Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Earl Park Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Shush Be Tou Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Shush Be Zahze Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Reservation Dam	Fort Apache Indian Reservation	AZ
Mem Dam	Paskenta Rancheria	CA
Allen Dam	Pine Ridge Reservation	SD
Water Tank Dam	Pueblo of San Felipe	NM
He Dog Dam	Rosebud Indian Reservation	SD

Table 22. Assessments to Evaluate Hazard Classification – 2 Completed

Project Name	Reservation	State
Standing Pine Dam	Choctaw Reservation	MS
San Francisco Dam	Pueblo of San Felipe	NM

Safety of Dams Branch, Geospatial Information Systems

The SOD GIS program supports the program through development of databases and mapping tools critical to the management of the SOD Program inventory of dams. The following tables highlight the key projects completed by the SOD GIS team in FY 2026:

- Completed 13 Inundation Mapping Projects and/or reviews for Emergency Action Plans to support the Emergency Management Program.
- Completed 4 Dam Failure Inundation Studies Mapping Project updates to support the Hydrology & Hydraulics Program.
- Completed 2 Hydrologic Hazard Studies Inundation Mapping Projects and Analysis to support the Hydrology & Hydraulics Program.

Safety of Dams Branch, Hydrology & Hydraulics

The SOD Hydrology and Hydraulics program supports the program through the development of hydrology, inundation, dam failure consequence, and hazard potential classification studies as required by the Federal guidelines for Dam Safety. These studies are critical components of the risk informed decision-making process that the SOD Program uses to assess and communicate risks and prioritize risk mitigation activities at all program dams. The following tables highlight the key projects completed and progressed by the SOD Hydrology & Hydraulics team in FY 2026:

Table 23. Dam Failure Consequences Analysis – 7 Completed, 1 Progressed

Project Name	Reservation	State	Status
Wild Horse Dam	Duck Valley Indian Reservation	NV	Complete
Twin (Turtle) Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT	Complete
Horseshoe Cienega Dam	Fort Apache Reservation	AZ	Complete
Coolidge Dam	San Carlos Reservation	AZ	Complete
Dry Lake Dam	San Carlos Reservation	AZ	Complete
Point of Pines Dam	San Carlos Reservation	AZ	Complete
Upper Point of Pines Dam	San Carlos Reservation	AZ	Complete
Mission Dam	Flathead Reservation	AZ	Progressed

Table 24. Failure Inundation Studies – 5 Completed, 4 Progressed

Project Name	Reservation	State	Status
Wild Horse Dam	Duck Valley Indian Reservation	NV	Completed
Mission Dam	Flathead Reservation	MT	Completed
Dry Lake Dam	San Carlos Reservation	AZ	Completed
Point of Pines Dam	San Carlos Reservation	AZ	Completed
Upper Point of Pines Dam	San Carlos Reservation	AZ	Completed
Lower Two Medicine Dam	Blackfeet Indian Reservation	MT	Progressed
Gordon Dam	Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation	ND	Progressed
Browns Dam	Rocky Boy's Reservation	MT	Progressed
Twin Lakes Dam	Colville Indian Reservation	WA	Progressed

Table 25. Hydrologic Hazard Studies – 8 Completed, 2 Progressed

Project Name	Reservation	State	Status
Lower Two Medicine Dam	Blackfeet Indian Reservation	MT	Completed
Standing Pine Dam	Choctaw Reservation	MS	Completed
Twin Lakes Dam	Colville Indian Reservation	WA	Completed
Mission Dam	Flathead Indian Reservation	MT	Completed
Grady Hamilton Dam	Jicarilla Apache Nation	NM	Completed
Dry Lake Dam	San Carlos Reservation	AZ	Completed
Point of Pines Dam	San Carlos Reservation	AZ	Completed
Upper Point of Pines Dam	San Carlos Reservation	AZ	Completed
Wild Horse Dam	Duck Valley Indian Reservation	NV	Progressed
San Francisco Dam	Pueblo of San Felipe	NM	Progressed

Table 26. Risk Hazard Potential Classification Studies – 4 Completed

Project Name	Reservation	State
Standing Pine Dam	Choctaw Reservation	MS
Educkett Creek Dam	Makah Reservation	WA
Osnuhsa Dam	Oneida Nation	WI
San Francisco Dam	Pueblo of San Felipe	NM

Branch of Irrigation and Power, Geospatial Information Systems

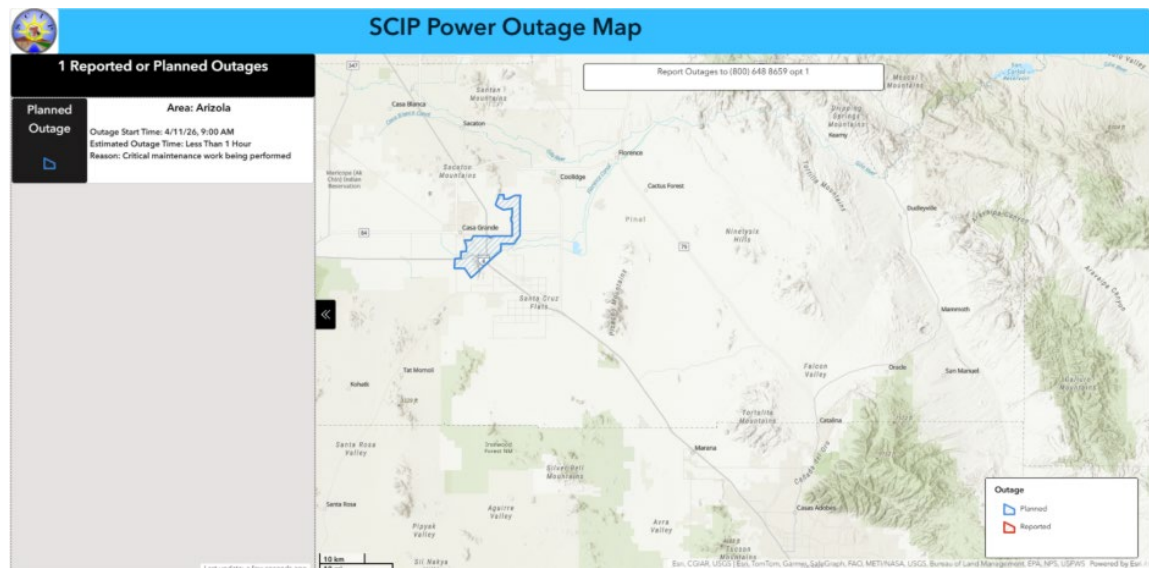
The BIP GIS team continues to emphasize the use of technology to improve decision making management tools and enhance efficiency. The Decision Support Tool and GIS databases are foundational to integration of data among the Maximo™, Irrigation, and NIIMS databases. After the recent Deferred Retirement Plans (DRP) and rifts, the GIS staff has implemented processes to ensure historical/project knowledge such as project plat maps, engineering design documents, canal capacities, water deliveries, water rotation, and operations are captured within the living database. These processes allow for operations to continue efficiently and effectively when affected by diminishing employee numbers and loss of intuitional knowledge.

The BIP GIS team supports program initiatives through configuration of geospatial datasets and mapping tools critical to the management of both Irrigation and Power infrastructure. The following tables highlight the key projects completed by the BIP GIS team in the first half of FY26:

- Prototype for migrating Water Tickets from paper to digital format at Colorado River
- Developed public facing Outage dashboards to track planned and un-planned outages
- Application and analysis of load data for SCIP Power in an effort to deliver proper voltage to customers and minimize number/size of outages
- Completed migration of Irrigation Data Viewer and SCIP Operations Application from Web App Builder to Experience Builder application providing enhanced security and functionality for users.
- BIP is collaborating with SCIP, Western Region, and DWP leadership on developing a San Carlos Irrigation Project (SCIP) Power Comprehensive Plan.

2.2.1 Public Power Outage Map Live for San Carlos

The BIP GIS team has been working with the Western Region and San Carlos Irrigation and Project (SCIP) on providing improved visibility and communication to SCIP power customers in central Arizona. This spring the SCIP Power Outage Map was made publicly available, with a link added on SCIP's BIA public-facing website ([San Carlos Irrigation Project | Indian Affairs](#)). The map provides the ability to communicate planned and unplanned outages to SCIP power customers in real time. Future enhancements are being considered to improve outage detection and customer reporting options. This outage map is a follow up to the Colorado River Agency-Electrical Services Outage Map released this past Winter.



SCIP Power Outage Map – (Simulated outage for display purposes).

2.2.2 Data Integrity and Efficiency

Data integrity is highlighted by the creation of automatic scripts to ensure a checks and balance system between databases. The scripts improve efficiency by highlighting discrepancies, allow for timely upkeep of the data, and illuminate collaboration among the Maximo™, Irrigation, and NIIMS databases.

The GIS team met milestones in regarding the mapping of the NIIMS parcel data on the GIS platform. The mapping of the parcels provides a physical relationship of the records within NIIMS to the landscapes of the projects. These parcels are integral to the online water ticketing systems that the team has begun implementing at Colorado Indian Irrigation Project.

2.2.3 Migration of Web App Builder to Experience Builder

Decision Support Tool online applications have been created to make data available across agencies, regions, and offices. Most recently the migration of Irrigation Data Viewer and SCIP Operations Application from ESRI Web App Builder to ESRI Experience Builder application was completed. This update provided enhanced functionality including improved viewing, searching, and map markup tools.

Branch of Water Resources, Planning & Management

Protecting, managing and developing water resources on Indian trust lands while supporting tribal sovereignty is a primary goal of the BWR. The BWR invested financial and staffing resources to the benefit of the American people by providing the necessary technical research, studies, and other information for Indian Tribes and Alaska Natives to serve as informed and prudent managers of adjudicated, decreed, or otherwise appurtenant water that affects Tribal or Indian trust lands including public domain allotments. In FY 2026, BWR funded 120 projects for technical assistance, funding for water management planning, and support for water rights negotiations/litigation to ensure sustainable water access in the amount of \$17 Million.

2.3 Sound & Sustainable Natural Resources

Branch of Irrigation and Power, NIIMS Public Outreach

In alignment with [Executive Order 14247](#) on *Modernizing Payments to and from America's Bank Account*, BIP-NIIMS program is actively promoting electronic payment options to better serve our customers and streamline operations. These efforts represent an opportunity to enhance financial inclusion, reduce administrative burdens, and improve customer experience. Key initiatives include:

- Deploying Quick Response (QR) codes, posters, and tri-fold brochures to promote digital payment methods.
- Coaching field staff to effectively communicate and train customers on available payment options.
- Continuously analyzing customer behavior to inform outreach and service improvements.
- Investigating third-party solutions for irrigation bill printing and mailing to increase efficiency.
- Exploring U.S. Treasury shared services for secure and stable options such as e-billing.

These activities not only support the federal vision for modern, inclusive financial systems but also position our program to meet evolving customer expectations with agility and innovation.

2.3.1 *Hydropower Compliance Program (HCP), Section 106 preservation of cultural resources*

The HCP evaluated 40 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission dockets for Section 106 compliance and shared all notices in these dockets issued in FY 2026 with Tribal Historic Preservation Officers with potential historic interests in the project footprints. For two dockets, Rock Island Hydroelectric Project in Washington and Pensacola Hydroelectric Project in Oklahoma, HCP staff participated in Phase 1 Archaeological Surveys. These surveys involved walking the project sites and performing occasional shovel tests to determine whether artifacts indicating historic Tribal presence exist in the area. This work is mandated by the National Historic Preservation Act and aligns with the Presidential Memorandum, "Unleashing American Energy".

2.3.2 *Hydropower Compliance Program, preservation of Tribally important natural resources*

HCP has worked with stakeholders for the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project to preserve fish species important to Tribal treaty fishing rights in Washington. The work of HCP staff led to a settlement agreement with Seattle City Light, the license for Skagit River Hydroelectric Project, which included improving fish passage at the dams comprising the project. This work is mandated by the Federal Power Act.

HCP is currently working with stakeholders for the Selis Ksanka Qlispe (SKQ) Hydroelectric Project's Drought Management Plan. The work of HCP staff seeks to preserve water in the basin for critical needs, balancing natural resources, human consumption, and recreational needs.

2.3.3 *Hydropower Compliance Program, assistance to other BIA programs*

HCP's lead served a detail the first three months of FY 2026 as Acting Division Chief for the Division of Environmental Services and Cultural Resource Management. This division supports energy permitting, so the work supports the Presidential Memorandum, "Unleashing American Energy".

HCP's lead also held a Red Card as a Resource Advisor in support of BIA's Wildland Fire Management team from October 1 to March 17. This was done in support of the Department of the Interior Secretarial Memorandum, "Strengthening and Preparing Interior's Wildland Firefighting Service for the 2025 Fire Year", with the fire year extending into FY26.

HCP's lead also participated in the Department of the Interior's FY 2026-2030 Evidence Capacity Assessment, which is required by Public Law 115-435, [Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act](#).

Branch of Water Resources, Co-management with local stakeholders and Tribes

2.3.4 *FY 2026 Funding for Water Rights Negotiation and Litigation Program (WRNL)*

The WRNL Program received 61 Water Rights Program funding requests from Tribes and Regional offices for a total requested funding amount from Tribes and Regional of approximately \$11.7 million. The \$8.1 Million in available funding allowed BIA to fund 49 Projects in addition to Regional administrative costs for the program and 3% Contingency holdback for emergency funding projects that may arise in 2026.

2.3.5 *FY 2026 Funding for Water Management Planning and Pre-Development Program (WMPPD)*

The WMPPD received 108 Water Rights Program funding requests from Tribes and Regional offices for a total requested funding amount of approximately \$20.8 Million. The \$9.4 Million in available funding allowed BIA to fund 71 Projects in addition to administrative costs for the program and 3% Contingency holdback for emergency funding projects that may arise in 2026.

2.4 Strategic Collaboration & Coordination Results in Better Outcomes

Safety of Dams Branch, Self-Determination Actions

The SOD Program enables tribal Self-Determination and self-governance through PL 93-638 and compacted contracts to conduct SOD Program activities. These contracts promote strategic collaboration and coordination with Tribes to P.L. 93-638 Self-Determination Contracts to perform SOD Operations and Maintenance task activities with 15 Tribes in 8 Regions.

Table 27. FY 2026 EWS & Maintenance Funding – Self Determination PL 93-638 Contracts

Tribe	State	Region	EWS Projects	Funding	Maintenance Projects	Funding
Rosebud Sioux Tribe	SD	Great Plains	9	\$18,000	11	\$367,000
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	ND, SD	Great Plains	2	\$4,000	2	\$97,000
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa	ND	Great Plains	2	\$4,000	2	\$74,000
Menominee Indian Tribe	WI	Midwest	1	\$10,000	1	\$15,000
Navajo Nation	AZ, NM, UT	Navajo	14	\$266,000	14	\$345,400
Metlakatla Indian Community	AK	Northwest	1	\$19,600	1	\$3,000
Confederated Tribes of Colville	WA	Northwest	2	\$50,400	2	\$38,000
Pit River Tribe	CA	Pacific	1	\$3,000	1	\$16,000
Chippewa Cree Indians	MT	Rocky Mountain	0	0	3	\$45,000
Mescalero Apache Tribe	NM	Southwest	3	\$15,000	3	\$90,000
Pueblo of Laguna	NM	Southwest	2	\$10,000	2	\$50,000
Zuni Tribe of Zuni Reservation	NM	Southwest	6	\$30,000	6	\$90,000
Southern Ute Indian Tribe	CO	Southwest	1	\$5,000	1	\$35,000
White Mountain Apache Tribe	AZ	Western	15	\$148,500	15	\$386,100
Hopi Tribe	AZ	Western	0	0	1	\$30,000
TOTALS				\$583,500		\$1,692,500

Self-Governance Compact Agreements to perform SOD Operations and Maintenance task activities with 7 Tribes in 3 Regions and the National Monitoring Center operated by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes on the Flathead Indian Reservation monitors over 130 EWS sites.

Table 28. FY 2026 EWS & Dam Maintenance Funding - Self-Governance Agreements

Tribe	State	Region	EWS Projects	Funding	Maintenance Projects	Funding
Coquille Indian Tribe	OR	Northwest	2	\$17,000	2	\$22,000
Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe	OR	Northwest	2	\$20,000	2	\$75,000
Confederated Salish & Kootenai	MT	Northwest	15	\$231,000	14	\$304,000
National Monitoring Center for 9 Regions			1	\$725,000	0	0
Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indians	OR	Northwest	1	\$16,400	1	\$16,500
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs	OR	Northwest	1	\$11,000	1	\$6,000
Pueblo of Santa Clara	NM	Southwest	4	\$40,000	0	0
Shoshone Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley	NM	Western	0	0	1	\$54,000
TOTALS				\$1,060,400		\$477,500

Agency Agreements to perform SOD Operations and Maintenance task activities with 26 Tribes in 7 Regions.

Table 29. FY 2026 EWS & Dam Maintenance Funding

Tribe	State	Region	EWS Projects	Funding	Maintenance Projects	Funding
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians	MS	Eastern	0	0	2	\$30,000
Crow Creek Sioux Tribe	SD	Great Plains	0	0	1	\$5,000
Oglala Sioux Tribe	SD	Great Plains	4	\$8,000	4	\$98,000
Spirit Lake Tribe	ND	Great Plains	0	0	10	\$203,450
Shoshone Bannock Tribe of Fort Hall	ID	Northwest	2	\$14,000	2	\$54,000
Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians	CA	Pacific	1	\$3,000	1	\$15,000
Blackfeet Tribe	MT	Rocky Mountain	0	0	2	\$40,000
Crow Tribe	MT	Rocky Mountain	0	0	1	\$15,000
Fort Belknap Indian Community	MT	Rocky Mountain	0	0	1	\$15,000
Eastern Shoshone Tribe of Wind River	WY	Rocky Mountain	0	0	3	\$37,500
Jicarilla Apache Nation	NM	Southwest	7	\$35,000	7	\$70,000
Pueblo of Acoma	NM	Southwest	1	\$5,000	1	\$25,000
Pueblo of San Felipe	NM	Southwest	2	\$10,000	2	\$50,000
Pueblo of Sandia	NM	Southwest	1	\$5,000	1	\$25,000
Pueblo of Santa Ana	NM	Southwest	1	\$5,000	1	\$25,000
Pueblo of Tesuque	NM	Southwest	1	\$5,000	1	\$25,000
Colorado River Indian Tribes	AZ, CA	Western	0	0	1	\$16,500
San Carlos Apache Tribe	AZ	Western	5	\$6,000	6	\$102,000
Tohono O'odham Nation	AZ	Western	0	0	2	\$24,000
Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah & Ouray	UT	Western	2	\$6,000	2	\$33,000
Walker River Paiute Tribe	NV	Western	1	\$6,000	1	\$48,000
TOTALS				\$108,000		\$956,450

Agency Contract to perform design activities with 1 Tribe in 1 Region.

Table 30. FY 2026 Design Funding – Agency Contract

Tribe	State	Region	Design	Funding
Menominee Indian Tribe	WI	Midwest	1	\$45,000

Additionally, the BIA has awarded three Self-Determination construction contracts.

Table 31. FY 2026 Design Funding – Self-Determination Construction Contracts

Tribe	State	Region	Dam(s)	Funding
Confederated Colville Tribes	WA	Northwest	Owhi	\$3M
Rosebud Sioux	SD	Great Plains	Antelope	\$30M
White Mountain Apache	AZ	Western	A1, Bootley, Davis, Cooley, Christmas Tree	\$10M
TOTALS				\$45M

Branch of Irrigation and Power, Self-Determination

The BIA Irrigation and Power Projects are operated and maintained under the direction of the Office of Field Operations by BIA, by Tribes under P.L. 93-638 contracts or compacts, or by water user groups under specific contracts or agreements. BIP provides consultation engineering on all projects offered to Tribes under P.L. 93-638. The following table demonstrates existing O&M and/or Construction contracts among BIA’s Indian Irrigation Projects.

Table 32. P.L. 93-638 Contracts - Operations & Maintenance or Construction

Region	Irrigation Project	State	Operation & Maintenance	Construction
Rocky Mountain	Blackfeet	MT		X
Rocky Mountain	Fort Belknap	MT	X	
Rocky Mountain	Fort Peck	MT		X
Rocky Mountain	Crow	MT		
Rocky Mountain	Wind River	WY	X	
Northwest	Flathead	MT		
Northwest	Wapato	WA		X
Northwest	Fort Hall	ID		
Southwest	Pine River	CO		
Western	Duck Valley	ID, NV	X	
Western	Pyramid Lake	NV		
Western	Uintah & Ouray	UT		
Western	Walker River	NV	X	
Western	Colorado River (Maintenance only)	AZ	X	
Western	San Carlos – Indian Works	AZ	X	
Western	San Carlos – Joint Works	AZ		

Branch of Irrigation and Power, Technical Support

Throughout FY 2026, BIP engineers have proven to be an invaluable consultation resource for the regions and Tribal irrigation partners. Engineering consultation services provided include risk assessment, post-construction performance evaluation, critical damage assessment, and rehabilitation design development. The following examples are projects where BIP was not the funding or contracting entity but were requested to provide advanced engineering services.

2.4.1 *Satus Main Headgate – Wapato Irrigation Project, Washington*

In May 2025, the headgate that diverts water into the Satus Main Feeder Canal from Toppenish Creek failed. The gate failure limited the project’s ability to divert water into the canal, thus affecting water users’ ability to irrigate.



Satus Main Headgate Prior to Failure

BIP Engineers worked with the Northwest Region Engineer and project staff to develop emergency response and short-term mitigation alternatives. The alternatives had to effectively divert water into the canal while allowing potential spring flooding to pass down Toppenish Creek.

The emergency fix consisted of placing “super sacks” full of sand in a crescent upstream of the failed gate. This alternative was implemented and has remained operational throughout 2025 and the beginning of the 2026 irrigation seasons. Plans for a new stoplog control system to replace the super sack system have been developed by BIP and are currently being constructed by the project.

2.4.2 *Camas Liners – Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP), Montana*

The BIP engineers have been working with FIIP personnel on the design of liner systems for three sections of the Camas area canals. The three areas identified during field investigations all show signs of excessive seepage, but the composition of the canal is very different for each. A unique reshaping, rebuilding, and lining design has been proposed for each section. BIP engineers will continue to work with FIIP personnel on the final design and implementation of the various lining solutions. Currently the project lacks the staff for installation, so the timeline for project completion is unknown.

2.4.3 Flathead Pumping Plant – Flathead Indian Irrigation Project, Montana

The three-pipe penstock that conveys water upward from the Flathead Pumping Plant to the head of the Pump Canal was constructed on an adversely steep slope. Over time, significant erosion of the soils/rock adjacent to the penstock foundation has occurred. Concrete retaining walls have been constructed near the pumping plant to protect the transformers from falling rock and to collect eroded sediment. Erosion beneath the penstock foundations and rocks falling from the exposed slopes represent an untenable risk to future operation of the irrigation system.



Flathead Pumping Plant Erosion Adjacent to and Beneath Penstocks

The Tribe has contracted the service of the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) Technical Services Center (TSC) to inspect the pipes and adjacent areas to facilitate development of erosion remediation options. BOR has performed several site visits and has proposed several possible solutions. BOR's current proposal includes a design build contract with a geotechnical specific contractor. BIP engineers will continue working with the Tribe, FIIP and BOR on the development of a long-term erosion and slope stability mitigation alternative.

2.4.4 Two Medicine Canal Slide – Blackfeet Indian Irrigation Project (BIIP), Montana

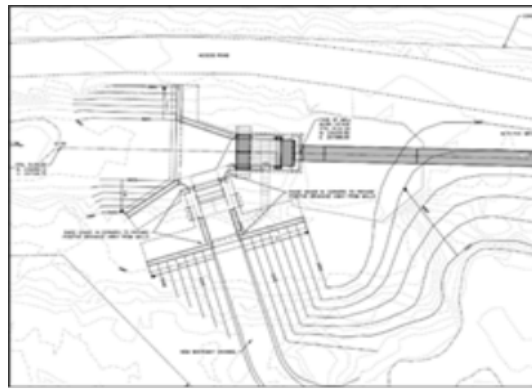


Photo 1: Two Medicine Canal Aerial Photo at Slide Area Below Canal; Photo 2: Two Medicine Canal Plans for Siphon to Replace V-flume

BIP engineers are working with Blackfeet Tribal and Rocky Mountain Region staff on the development of mitigation options for the Two Medicine Canal Slide. The slide was first noted in 2010 when tension cracks formed in the roadway adjacent to the canal. There have been several attempts to arrest slide movement over subsequent years. In 2024, evidence of continued slide movement was noted. The Tribe hired an A&E consultant to develop slide mitigation options. The alternatives developed were presented to the Tribe. The Tribe and the Northwest Regional Engineer then asked the BIP engineers to perform a review of the proposed alternatives.

After a comprehensive review, the BIP engineers met with the Tribe, the region, and the DOWL Company to discuss the mitigation alternatives. During that meeting BIP engineers presented an alternative that eliminated canal lining and reduced future O&M costs. The A&E consultant was tasked with completing and engineering evaluation of the proposed solution.

BIP has not received a revised plan or other evaluation documents. When the A&E consultant submits the revised analysis, BIP engineers will be available, at the Tribes request, to review.

2.4.5 Two Medicine Canal V-Flume – Blackfeet Indian Irrigation Project, Montana

BIP engineers are working with Blackfeet Tribal and Rocky Mountain Region staff on the development of rehabilitation options for the Two Medicine Canal V-Flume. The existing elevated steel pipe flume has reached the end of its design life and needs replacement.

Preliminary designs from the engineering contractor included an elevated pipe flume on pile foundations. BIP engineers review of the proposed plans generated questions related to the elevated flume's ability to pass flood flows and the stability of foundation elements. A subsequent meeting was held with the engineering contractor to discuss the findings of the review and to propose alternatives.

In response to BIP's comments, the engineering contractor developed a different approach to the rehabilitation that included a buried polyvinyl chloride (PVC) siphon. This option eliminates concerns related to flood damage without compromising the capacity of the canal. BIP engineers developed comments in response to the plan and have provided the comments to the Tribe and A7E engineering consultant.

When comments or final plan and specification documents are submitted, BIP engineers will be available, at the Tribe's request, to review.

Branch of Water Resources, Self-Determination

2.4.6 Indian Land & Water Settlement Payments

In January 2026, BWR worked with the Secretary's Indian Water Rights Office and one Federal Water Rights Settlement Team to verify and process payment of mandatory settlement dollars for the Confederated Tribes of the Salish Kootenai. The Branch facilitated FY26 funding allocations for one Indian Land & Water Settlement Claims:

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' (CSKT) Water Rights Compact FY26 Mandatory Funding Payment (\$90M)

2.4.7 *FY 2026 Tribal Priority Allocations – Water Resources*

The Branch completed funding transfers for the FY 2026 Water Resources Tribal Priority Allocations Tribal Priority Allocations (TPA) to provide federal funding to support Tribes and Alaska Native villages in managing and protecting their water resources through programs administered by the BIA. This funding empowers tribes to establish their own water resource priorities and effectively manage their water supplies to ensure sustainability on Indian trust lands, aligning with Indian Self-Determination principles. The TPA program supports various water-related activities, including water management planning, negotiations and litigation over water rights, and the development of infrastructure to deliver reliable and sustainable water services. Ninety-eight (98) Regional, Tribal and Compact Tribes were funded for a total of \$3.5 Million for water resource related costs.

2.4.8 *Water Resources Technician Training (WRTT) Program*

BWR has continued the Water Resources Technician training program in partnership with Conservation Legacy and various federal, state, and tribal host sites for the purpose of providing high quality technical skills and internship opportunities to Tribal youth in the water resources field. In partnership with Conservation Legacy and individual Stewards Placements with multiple federal, state and tribal entities hosts, the WRTT program placed a total of 15 interns across the country. Over the course of 26 weeks, BIA WRTT members will continue to support a variety of water related projects to help meet the project needs of the research sites, fisheries, field survey sites, data collection sites and various irrigation projects.

2.4.9 *FY 2026 Attorney Fees/Litigation Support Program*

The Branch conducted the FY 2026 Attorney Fees/Litigation Support Ranking Team in April of 2026. Based on the ranking produced from the team meeting, the Attorney Fees Review Committee finalized funding recommendations for the Indian Affairs Attorney Fees/Litigation Support program for FY 2026. The attorney fees requests were evaluated by a three-member committee comprising a delegate from the Office of the Assistant Secretary — Indian Affairs, a delegate representing the Deputy Bureau Director-Office of Trust Services, and a delegate representing the Associate Solicitor-Indian Affairs, as directed by 25 CFR §89.43. Having considered the factors set out in 25 CFR § 89.42, and in compliance with the Assistant Secretary's August 24, 2018, memorandum establishing a maximum hourly rate for attorney's fees, the Attorney Fees Review Committee unanimously recommends approving the below funding requests for the Tribes and in the amounts set out in the table below. The Committee reviewed 51 requests from 39 Tribes and Tribal consortia, totaling \$7,680,887. While unable to fully meet all Tribes' funding requests, the Committee's recommendation allocated the entire \$1.8 Million in available funds for FY 2026 and distributed 37 requests.

Branch of Water Resources, Technical Support

2.4.10 *Technical Assistance*

BWR met with Tribes as part of the A-123 interviews to initiate discussions aimed at gaining each Tribe's perspective on tribal water needs. These interviews also included site visits to various projects being implemented by the Tribes for management of reservation water resources. Interviews and project presentations were completed with Tribal Water Staff and discussions included receiving recommended improvements to the national water program and documenting suggestions that would better aid BWR in serving Tribal Water Programs.



Section 3. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

3.1 Opportunities

3.1.1 *Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Modernization*

BIA continues to develop modernization studies at BIA-owned irrigation projects and power utilities. The results of these studies will allow BIA to communicate with Tribes, irrigators and power utility customers with state-of-the art information and collaborate on future infrastructure investments.

3.1.2 *Geographic Information System (GIS) and Database Integration*

BIP is working to integrate data across the organizational systems that support BIA-owned irrigation projects and power utilities. This will create an opportunity to see asset data, work orders, and condition metrics spatially, as well as integrate NIIMS parcel information geospatially.

3.1.3 *Team with Tribal Irrigation Partners and Stakeholders*

BIA is working closely with the Yakama Nation fisheries to partner on funding grants to enhance the aquatic ecosystem as the Wapato Diversion Dam and Headworks is re-engineered and rehabilitated.

3.1.4 *Grand River Dam Authority (GRDA)*

An opportunity was created for the Eastern Oklahoma Region Tribes in January 2024 when FERC required the Grand River Dam Authority (GRDA) to obtain either land titles or flood easements for all lands seasonally flooded by Grand Lake as a condition of relicensing Pensacola Dam. This will allow impacted Tribes such as Seneca Cayuga Nation to be compensated for recurring losses due to the operation of the dam. Not only are Tribal lands flooded, but floods dislodge toxic sediments from the upstream Tar Creek Superfund site. As a first step FERC is requiring GRDA to report the location of all lands seasonally flooded upstream of the dam. Our office has encouraged Tribes with lands adjacent to the reservoir to determine which lands are flooded by the dam, in case GRDA's report does not match the total sum of lands they believe are affected. Staff from the Central Office program and from BIA's Eastern Oklahoma Region attended a site visit at Pensacola Dam this year as well, and met with staff from Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, Modoc Nation, and Cherokee Nation.

3.1.5 *Uintah Hydroelectric Project*

Another opportunity has been created by the planned license surrender at Uintah Hydroelectric Project. The dam floods land on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. Surrender of the license provides the opportunity to restore these lands to a condition acceptable to the Secretary of the Interior per the Federal Power Act (FPA). Currently an attorney from the DOI Office of the Solicitor is meeting with Tribal attorneys on the plan moving forward.

3.1.6 *Igiugig Hydrokinetic Project*

Another opportunity has been created by the license renewal for Igiugig Hydrokinetic Project. The operation is one of the few licensed by FERC and run by a Tribal entity, in this case Igiugig Village. The Hydropower Compliance Program has experts in navigating the FERC licensing process and has assisted the Alaska Regional Office in providing a timely letter to the FERC docket in support of the Tribe's continued operations of the project.

3.1.7 *Tribal Hydropower Expansion*

Additional Tribes are exploring the use of hydropower as an energy source for their communities, particularly in Alaska Region. Alutiiq Tribe of Old Harbor has been transferred the license for Old Harbor Hydroelectric Project and is working to build transmission lines and other infrastructure to connect the project to the village grid. Chignik Bay Tribal Council is working on constructing the Chignik Bay Hydroelectric Project. Kootznoowoo, Incorporated of the Angoon Community Association is working to construct the Thayer Bay Hydroelectric Project. Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin is exploring obtaining the license for Shawano Hydroelectric Project. The years of expertise in the FERC process learned by staff in the Hydropower Compliance Program will be used to assist Tribes in successfully navigating this process.

3.1.8 *Annual Water Resources Workshop*

The Branch of Water Resources began to plan for its annual water resources workshop anticipated to be held in August 2026. Sites being reviewed include Seattle, Washington, Southern California, and Eastern Oklahoma. Attendees will include Water Resources staff from various BIA Regional offices, Bureau of Reclamation, USGS, Secretary's Indian Water Rights office, Solicitor's Office (SIWRO), Conservation Legacy and selected Tribes within the regional area. The main topic for this year's workshop will discuss implementation procedures for Indian Water Rights Settlements, as well as discussion for improvement of the water resources programs. This workshop allows for staff collaboration and partnerships involving water resources projects throughout the country on behalf of Tribes. The Branch is currently seeking partnerships within the Department of Interior for this event.

3.1.9 *Partnerships to Fund Like Projects*

The Branch continues to partner with the Bureau of Reclamation International and Native American Affairs office, the United States Geological Survey (USGS), the Secretary's Indian Water Rights to fund like projects involving ongoing Water Rights Settlements and implementation projects. All projects include Trust protection projects to improve knowledge of Indian Water Rights. Funding allocations are expected to be transferred to the Regions and the Tribes as soon as BIA Trust accounts are funded for this year's budget allocations.

3.1.10 *Maximo™ Training*

The DWP Asset Management Program offers four (4) monthly Maximo application training sessions and two (2) monthly Office Hours opportunities for DWP end users. As training attendance and user system proficiency have improved, so has work reporting, which has assisted the Division in accurately reporting Deferred Maintenance and Government Performance Results Act (GPRA).

3.1.11 NIIMS Training

The NIIMS team continues to provide training and technical assistance to irrigation project field staff in-person and by virtual methods. In-person training at the local irrigation project provides an opportunity for field staff to identify project-specific needs and resolve issues in a timely manner. This initiative encourages field staff to ask questions and receive guidance without formal training or travel to central offices. This also provides faster issue resolution times and increased collaboration across geographic locations.

3.1.12 BIP “In-House” Engineering Services

There is currently insufficient funding to address all the deferred maintenance across the BIP portfolio of irrigation project. The funding available is allocated to high risk and/or projects that are considered critical to the sustainability of the irrigation projects. Rehabilitation needs that are of moderate risk and/or affect only a limited area are not addressed.

BIP is developing a revised approach to the noncritical projects. Through a combination of onsite observations and information provided by irrigation project personnel, BIP is developing a list of projects that can be performed “in house” and/or via a 638 contract with the Tribe. For the projects where the “in-house” approach is appropriate, BIP engineers will perform site assessments, survey, plan and specification development and other consultation service. BIP will also be working with the appropriate Tribe to facilitate other specialty services and construction through 638 contracts.

This approach allows BIP to complete more projects, develop stronger relationships with our Tribal partners, and reduce the workload for our contracting officers.

3.1.13 Cal Poly Irrigation Training and Research Center

BIP has continued to utilize the engineer expertise from the Cal Poly Irrigation Training and Research Center (ITRC) to gather and analyses information from the irrigation projects and to provide training to those who operate the systems. Active projects include economic studies, operation and maintenance manual development, rapid appraisal studies, and the development of project modernization plans. BIP has also utilized ITRC’s advanced engineering capabilities to perform Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) modeling complex gate systems and other water diversion structures.

Utilizing ITRC is vital to BIP effective management of the irrigation systems. The partnership gives BIP access to advanced engineering at a fraction of the cost of other A&E contractors. This allows BIP to get more accomplished with less resources. Engineering materials presented by ITRC give BIP the information needed to effectively manage and plan for the future of our water resources.

3.1.14 SOD Dam Tender Training

The SOD program offers dam tender training to regional, agency and tribal staff. Dam Tenders play a crucial role in maintaining the safety of the dams. The training provides general knowledge of dam and dam components, typical dam tender responsibilities, dam inspections, dam maintenance, identifying unusual conditions at the dam, and how to respond to a rapidly developing emergency. During FY26, four (4) virtual and one (1) in-person dam tender training were conducted, and one (1) dam tender training is planned for September.



March 2026 Dam Tender Training, Ft. Duchesne, UT



Dam Inspection at Midview Dam, Ft. Duchesne, UT

3.2 Challenges

In general, dams on Indian lands are in much worse condition than dams managed by other federal dam safety programs. Over fifty percent of the SOD Programs' current high-hazard potential dams (those that would probably cause loss of life if they failed) do not meet federal dam safety standards. To minimize downstream risk, eight Program dams are breached, and many Program dams have been fully or partially drained.

3.2.1 High Hazard Potential Dams

The SOD Program estimates that approximately \$1.5B is required to address all known life safety deficiencies at the high-hazard potential dams it administers that do not meet federal guidelines. Over fifty percent of the SOD Program's current high-hazard potential dams (those that would probably cause loss of life if they failed) do not meet federal dam safety standards. To minimize downstream risk, eight SOD Program dams are breached, and many Program dams have been fully or partially drained.

In addition to the \$1.5B in known deficiencies, an unknown, but not insignificant, need likely exists for hidden life safety deficiencies that are impractical or impossible to detect with existing methods, and for operational deficiencies that exist but do not pose a life safety threat.

There will also be additional deficiencies with the new dams identified through the Tribal Dam Inventory Request process (possibly up to 369 dams) that are expected to enter the SOD Program. While the SOD Program has identified and prioritized actions at current SOD high-hazard potential dams which pose unacceptable risk, addressing these issues remains a challenge.

3.2.2 Hydropower Relicensing

A challenge is created by a lack of additional funding to add additional BIA staff as well as additional Tribal funding to participate in hydropower relicensing activities and post-license compliance monitoring. Currently the program has one Central Office employee, one Northwest Region employee funded at 100%, and one Eastern Region employee funded at 60%. The program has worked to partially alleviate the staffing shortage through the efforts of a Pathways intern. The intern's primary tasks were to collaboratively compose responses to documents filed by hydropower license applicants to address Tribal trust and treaty interests impacted by the hydropower projects being relicensed. The intern also worked with Navajo Nation to update their Energy Policy to include support for green energy options such as hydropower.

3.2.3 Construction Cost Escalation

Actual construction costs over the last three years have increased significantly. Labor and material shortages, combined with a large amount of ongoing heavy civil projects, has inflated construction costs by 25% over the last three years (per the United States Bureau of Reclamation composite trend for Construction Cost Indexes).

Supply chain issues also exacerbate costs due to delays in acquiring equipment and materials. As these are outside of contractors' control, the Agency is responsible for any additional delay costs. For example, acquisition of electrical components that typically would have a 3 to 6-month delivery window are now over 12 months out (per discussions with irrigation project personnel, power utility managers and other associated with the management of projects).

The BIA Condition Assessment 2023 Update Summary Report, completed November 2023, further demonstrates the difficulties associated with construction cost escalation. Based on a comprehensive engineering evaluation and condition assessment of all BIA irrigation project assets conducted over a ten-year period ending in 2016, the 2023 report updates the past comprehensive indexing effort of 2015, and as previously stated, addresses other factors contributing to the large increases between expected and actual costs.

Costs associated with construction efforts increased significantly over those used in the 2016 report. The 2023 effort updated costs based on recent experience, accounted for work completed since 2016, and included road and railroad crossing sites. The increases in construction and material costs and inclusion of those additional assets increased the 2016 deferred maintenance estimated value from \$741 Million to \$2.3 Billion in 2023 dollars, a threefold increase. The last several years of historic increases in construction costs have far outpaced the financial ability of irrigation projects to fund rehabilitation projects using funds derived from annual O&M assessments.

3.2.4 *Replacement of Legacy NIIMS Application*

Replacement of the legacy NIIMS application allows for enhanced security features and additional functionality. The timing of replacement activities is aligned with BIA irrigation project billing lifecycles, and staff are working to minimize interruptions to the irrigation projects' daily operations. BIA is actively engaging in all invested program areas including irrigation project, agency, and Regional staff; Acquisitions; Office of Information Management and Technology; and the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

3.2.5 *Recruiting Challenges and Staffing Shortages*

Attracting and maintaining qualified staff remains DWP's most significant challenge. The root cause of this challenge is the lack of competitive salary rates for engineers. BIA does not offer the special salary rates available at other agencies for engineers in similar roles. By adopting the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) approved Special Salary Rates (SSR 0753, 0754, and 0755) within the DWP, BIA can attract highly talented individuals to fill these vital life-safety positions.

The DWP is currently facing significant staffing shortages throughout its organization; a total of 70 vacancies. These shortages have made it challenging to successfully achieve program objectives. Currently, all leadership roles within the DWP are unfilled. The departure of the DWP Chief along with the retirement of the Branch Chiefs for BIP and SOD in FY25, and the Water Resources Branch Chief in FY24, have resulted in four critical vacancies.

In addition to vacant leadership roles, other key positions are unfilled, such as the SOD Emergency Management Coordinator, NIIMS Program Manager, Water Rights Specialist, and Water Management Specialist. Filling the vacant positions will improve DWP's ability to address dam safety risks and water delivery in Indian Country and maintain continuity in services. Two independent external audits have highlighted that insufficient staffing levels pose a considerable risk to the overall success of DWP. These independent audits recommended that DWP petition for a special pay rate adjustment or implement recruitment and retention bonuses to eliminate the current pay discrepancy. DWP is in the process of petitioning to incorporate the special salary rate, however, as of today it has been unsuccessful.

3.2.6 *Staff Shortages at Regional and Agency Offices*

Regional and Agency Offices also struggle to recruit and retain skilled personnel including Regional safety of dam officers and dam tenders. Some of these positions have been vacant for years making it difficult for continuity in services. Many Regional and Agency staff perform dam safety work as a collateral duty. As a result, dam inspections and documentation of work performed are not completed in accordance with federal guidelines.

3.2.7 *Aging Infrastructure and Deferred Maintenance*

Another big concern for DWP is its aging infrastructure and lack of sufficient funding to address the backlog of deferred maintenance for all projects in the division: dam safety activities, irrigation and power.

3.3 Best Practices

3.3.1 *Recoverable Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Costs*

The Hydropower Compliance Program has submitted its recoverable costs to the FERC. The Federal Power Act allows the portion of hydropower project license fees attributable to the work of federal agencies protecting their reservations to be recovered to the U.S. Treasury. In the case of BIA these are the trust lands and reservations of federally recognized Tribes. By submitting BIA's costs to FERC, we also increase government transparency.

3.3.2 *Formal Call for Tribal Funding Proposals*

The program has developed a formal call for Tribal funding proposals with written criteria for prioritizing the funding of these proposals. Of highest priority are those proposals concerning hydropower projects that inundate trust and/or reservation lands. Having a written process also increases government transparency.

3.3.3 *Rehabilitation Funding*

Rehabilitation funding is prioritized for dams that currently present the greatest life-safety risk. Risk is measured using the Dam Safety Priority Rating (DSPR), a methodology based on the BOR's Public Protection Guidelines, and the risk analysis processes developed by the BOR and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition to considering the condition of a dam, DSPR evaluates design methodology, construction methodology, past performance, and downstream population at risk should a dam failure occur.

Rehabilitation funding is prioritized for irrigation infrastructure with the greatest impact on safety, delivery of water, and loss of crops. Of highest priority are assets with project wide impact such as the Main Diversion and Drop 1 at Wapato Indian Irrigation Project in Washington. BIP uses the Construction Ranking Matrix to identify priority projects based on Asset Priority Index, Health & Safety Rating, Impact on Acres Served, Deferred Maintenance, and Risk of Failure to Deliver Water. These criteria are derived from data sources such as Condition Assessments, GIS, Maximo™, and consultation with subject matter experts.

3.3.4 *National Irrigation Meeting*

BIA, Branch of Irrigation and Power hosted the 2026 National Irrigation Meeting in February 2026 at California Polytechnic State University's Irrigation Training and Research Center (ITRC). The meeting brought BIA staff across the irrigation program together, in person and remotely, to program policy, accomplishments, challenges and key issues affecting the program. In-person attendees also received a tour of ITRC's facilities and a short-course in water measurement.



2026 National Irrigation Meeting, ITRC, CA – Water Measurement Short Course



2026 National Irrigation Meeting, ITRC, CA – Irrigation Project Presentation

3.3.5 *Irrigation System Operator Training*

BIA, Branch of Irrigation and Power hosted the Irrigation System Operator (ISO) Training in February 2026 at California Polytechnic State University's Irrigation Training and Research Center (ITRC). This training brought BIA staff across the irrigation program together for classroom, site visits, and hands on training focused on water measurement, irrigation structures, and practical considerations for irrigation deliveries. Attendees also attended the World Ag Expo in Tulare, CA and toured Tulare Irrigation District facilities to observe irrigation practices and recent capital improvement projects administered and funded by the irrigation district.



2026 ISO Training, ITRC, CA – Water Measurement Field Training



2026 Irrigation System Operator Training, ITRC, CA – Water Measurement Classroom Training

3.3.6 *Water Resources Technician Training (WRTT) Program*

BWR has continued the Water Resources Technician training program in partnership with Conservation Legacy and various federal, state, and tribal host sites for the purpose of providing high quality technical skills and internship opportunities to Tribal youth in the water resources field. In partnership with Conservation Legacy and individual Stewards Placements with multiple federal, state and tribal entities hosts, the WRTT program placed a total of 15 interns across the country. Over the course of 26 weeks, BIA WRTT members will continue to support a variety of water related projects to help meet the project needs of the research sites, fisheries, field survey sites, data collection sites and various irrigation projects.

3.3.7 *Developed a Safety Guide*

BIP has republished and is distributing the BIA Irrigation Safety Guide to Regions and Projects in 2026 to ensure the availability of this critical information to staff during the recent period of significant staff turnover and retirement. BIP developed the BIA Irrigation Safety Guide to assist irrigation field staff in maintaining a safe work environment. The Irrigation Safety Guide focuses on irrigation-related matters (e.g., pulling flashboards, operating canal gates and chemical exposure). DWP and BIP's goals are for Field Operations, especially irrigation project staff, to improve overall safety culture and reduce employee and public risk to the greatest extent possible given the nature of work in the irrigation business.

3.3.8 *Data Quality and Standardization*

BIA-NIIMS continues to prioritize data quality; land analysis for potential geospatial integration; compliance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA) of 1996 to pursue delinquent debt; continuous promotion of electronic payment options for customers; migration of paper records to electronic; and reducing billing errors and revenue loss.

GIS, NIIMS, and Maximo™ teams are continuing efforts to standardize data between systems to increase efficiency and the ability to maintain and provide data that is current and accurate. GIS representation of NIIMS parcels is being created and will be used to help support and tie it into a Digital Water Ticketing System (DWTS).

3.3.9 *Dam Inventory Data Management System (DIDMS) Improvements*

Significant improvements have been made to enhance the accessibility, usability, and efficiency of the Dam Inventory Data Management System. The inventory is now integrated across multiple platforms, including SharePoint and Smartsheet, allowing users to easily access and review the information. This multi-platform improves collaboration, reduces data silos, and ensures that stakeholders are working from the most current dataset.

In addition, automated workflows have been implemented to streamline data entry and maintenance. Key fields are now configured to update dynamically when new information is entered, using location data and other relevant inputs to populate dependent fields. This reduces manual data entry, minimizing errors, and improves overall data consistency.

3.3.10 *Implementation of High-Flow Event Emergency Response Levels in Emergency Action Plans*

In FY 2026, the SOD Program updated its Emergency Action Plans to include the procedures for high-flow events as recommended in federal emergency management guidelines. A high-flow event is caused by heavy rainfall or rapid snowmelt that significantly increases the water discharge through dam outlet works and spillways and has the potential to impact communities downstream of BIA dams. The high-

flow event response levels are being implemented in coordination with Regional, Agency, and Tribal staff working with the dams.

Rehabilitation funding is prioritized for dams that currently present the greatest life-safety risk. Risk is measured using the Dam Safety Priority Rating (DSPR), a methodology based on the BOR's Public Protection Guidelines, and the risk analysis processes developed by the BOR and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition to considering the condition of a dam, DSPR evaluates design methodology, construction methodology, past performance, and downstream population at risk should a dam failure occur.

3.3.11 *National Irrigation Meeting*

BIA, Branch of Irrigation and Power hosted the 2024 National Irrigation Meeting in February 2024 at Cal Poly's Irrigation Training and Research Center (ITRC). The meeting brought BIA staff across the irrigation program together, in person and remotely, to program policy, accomplishments, challenges and key issues affecting the program. In-person attendees also received a tour of ITRC's facilities and a short-course in water measurement.

3.3.12 *Water Resources Technician Training Program*

The Branch has re-established the Water Resources Technician Training program and is currently working with a non-profit organization that performs the AmeriCorps program for student interns. Funding has allowed for the placement of seventeen (17) interns at various water resources host sites for twenty-six (26) week internships located across the country.

3.3.13 *Developed a Safety Guide*

BIP has developed and distributed the BIA Irrigation Safety Guide in 2023 to assist irrigation field staff in maintaining a safe work environment. The Irrigation Safety Guide focuses on irrigation-related matters (e.g., pulling flashboards, operating canal gates and chemical exposure). DWP and BIP's goals are for Field Operations, especially irrigation project staff, to improve overall safety culture and reduce employee and public risk to the greatest extent possible given the nature of work in the irrigation business.

BIA-NIIMS continues to prioritize data quality; land analysis for potential geospatial integration; compliance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 to pursue delinquent debt; continuous promotion of electronic payment options for customers; migration of paper records to electronic; and reducing billing errors and revenue loss.

GIS, NIIMS, and Maximo teams have begun efforts to standardize data between systems to increase efficiency and the ability to maintain and provide data that is current and accurate. GIS representation of NIIMS parcels is being created and will be used to help support and tie into a Digital Water Ticketing System (DWTS) using utility trace functionality.

3.3.14 *Wapato Diversion Dam Scour Hole Emergency Repair*

The Wapato Diversion Dam and Headworks is the main irrigation facility for the Wapato Irrigation Project that serves approximately 132,000 acres on the Yakama Nation located in central Washington. BIA is currently working on a major modernization and rehabilitation effort to the headworks which included a construction project at the Wapato Main Canal Diversion Dam in the Yakima River. The construction project has two main objectives: partially rehabilitate the Wapato Main Canal Headworks infrastructure and assess the existing conditions around the east and west diversion dams to inform future rehabilitation design efforts.

On November 6, 2023, after the removal of water downstream of the West Diversion Dam and Fish Ladder, a major scour hole at the toe of the dam and underneath the Fish Ladder structure was exposed. The scour hole created an emergency hazard for both the BIA Diversion Dam and the Fish Ladder owned by Bureau of Reclamation. A rapid response was mandatory to avert a catastrophic failure of these facilities. Approximately 1600 cubic yards of concrete were placed. From time of discovery, evaluation of alternatives, design, contract modification, environmental permitting, and final repair, took 15 days. BIA Division of Water and Power led the joint team effort between BIA, Yakima Nation, and BOR. BOR provided \$1M in funding. Total cost of the repair was \$2.1 million.

3.3.15 *More Information on Wapato Sour*

The condition assessment activities required placement of a temporary cofferdam upstream of the west diversion dam in the west branch of the Yakima River. The cofferdam allowed river upstream and downstream of the west diversion dam to be un-watered for the first time since the Reclamation fish ladder was constructed in the mid-1980's.

On approximately November 6, 2023, after the removal of water downstream of the west diversion dam and fish ladder, a major scour hole at the toe of the dam and underneath the fish ladder structure was exposed. The scour hole created an emergency hazard for both the BIA diversion dam and Reclamation fish ladder. A rapid response was mandatory to avert a catastrophic failure of these facilities. The photos below are representative of the conditions found downstream of the west diversion dam and the fish ladder.

BIA managed the scour hole emergency remediation since the BIA already had a contractor on-site conducting the rehabilitation and condition assessment work at the headworks and the diversion dam. A design team consisting of BIA, DOWL (BIA design consultant), Reclamation, Yakama Nation, and other relevant stakeholders developed a remediation plan for the scour hole. The remediation plan needed to be developed quickly so the prescribed work can be completed by BIA's contractor in advance of the forthcoming hydrologic increases in the Yakima River expected to occur at the end of November 2023.

The design team on the environmental permitting and consultation aspects of the scour hole emergency remediation to ensure they were adequately addressed.

The total cost for the scour hole emergency remediation was estimated to be between \$1M and \$5M. The estimated costs included: design development by BIA, construction management/oversight by BIA, construction, and contingencies unknown at this time. Since the affected facilities are owned by both the BIA (diversion dam) and Reclamation (fish ladder), the remediation costs will be equitably shared between the two DOI bureaus.

3.3.16 *Data Quality and Standardization*

BIA-NIIMS continues to prioritize data quality; land analysis for potential geospatial integration; compliance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 to pursue delinquent debt; continuous promotion of electronic payment options for customers; migration of paper records to electronic; and reducing billing errors and revenue loss.

GIS, NIIMS, and Maximo teams have begun efforts to standardize data between systems to increase efficiency and the ability to maintain and provide data that is current and accurate. GIS representation of NIIMS parcels is being created and will be used to help support and tie it into a Digital Water Ticketing System using utility trace functionality.



DIVISION OF WORKFORCE & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (DWYD)

Section 1. Overview



Single bison grazing



Pathways Students



Pathways Logo

CONTACT INFORMATION

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1.1 Mission

The mission of the Division of Workforce & Youth Development is to be prepared and equipped by the Office of Trust Services to meet both current and future challenge. Our Indian and Youth Service Corps and Pathways Internship programs mission is to enhance and sustain a skill-based talent by empowering students to become skilled professionals and career ready leaders.

1.2 Who We Serve

- American Indian and Alaska Native youth and emerging professionals engaged through IYSC and BIA Pathways to build skills, experience, and pathways to public service and trust responsibilities.
- Office of Trust Services via workforce planning support, competency development, and staffing solutions.
- Tribal communities and partner agencies collaborating on IYSC pilots and co-funded projects to increase opportunities for Native youth on federal and Tribal lands^{2l}

1.3 Services We provide

- Workforce development & support
- Education and training programs
- Youth development services
- Work experience opportunities

1.4 Staffing

5	Full Time Employees
7	Vacant Positions
1	Detailed
11	Pathways student trainees (placed across BIA)

1.5 Branches

Branch of Workforce Development (BWD)

During FY26, the Office of Workforce Planning liaised with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to conduct Competency Modeling & Gap Analysis as well as training initiatives for the Office of Trust Services workforce.

Indian Youth Service Corps (IYSC)

The Indian Youth Service Corps (IYSC) is a new Department of the Interior (DOI) initiative designed to provide Native youth with opportunities to engage in meaningful public service projects on federal and Tribal lands for the benefit of Native communities. In FY 2025, over 40 pilot project proposals were collected and assessed. The BIA OTS has collaborated closely with several DOI stakeholders and agencies to identify co-funding opportunities and joint projects, greatly improving interagency cooperation, information-sharing, and further reducing barriers for Tribes and Tribal enterprises interested in engaging in IYSC activities.

Pathways Internship Program (PIP)

The BIA Pathways Internship Program connects Native American and Alaska Native students to paid internships with the BIA and Tribal Nations across the United States. Through the Pathways Internship, Native students can work directly with BIA offices or Tribal Nations to gain hands-on professional experience in a wide range of fields. We are excited to help train and grow the next generation of Native professionals and leaders.



Section 2. Opportunities, Challenges & Best Practices

2.1 Opportunities

2.1.1 Changes to Pathways Authorities

OPM recently announced changes to their Pathways regulations that will reduce administrative burden on Programs and increase flexibilities related to program eligibility and conversion timelines. As DOI implements the changes and codifies the new rules in the DOI-Office of Personnel Management (OPM) MOU, the OTS Pathways Program will be updating its internal policy and SOPs to reflect the charges.

2.2 Challenges

2.2.1 Staffing

The Pathways Program is understaffed with two unfilled vacancies (Branch Chief for Pathways & Pathways Coordinator)

2.2.2 High Demand for Interns vs. Limited HR Support

While Pathways is consistently experiencing a high volume of host inquiries and requests, the Program cannot meet the demand due to 1) limited staff capacity, 2) limited support from HR/lack of bandwidth for HR to support efforts.

2.2.3 *Increased External Demand for Interns*

As the only active Pathways Program in Indian Affairs, our program receives numerous internship requests from non-OTS offices. In recent years, OTS Pathways has attempted to accommodate requests from outside offices if the opportunities aligned with our students' academic and professional goals. However, Pathways intends to scale back its interactions with external offices to ensure OTS needs remain the primary focus, particularly while the program is short-staffed.

2.2.4 *Stakeholder Confusion about Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM) Role in Pathways*

Following the hiring of the Pathways Program Manager (AS-IA, OHCM) and the release of the Pathways Programs Playbook, Agencies and Regional Offices have consistently expressed confusion about the new roles and responsibilities outlined in the policy. Most stakeholders do not understand that OTS Pathways is designed for and funded by OTS. It is still unclear if Office of Indian Services (OIS), Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (BTFA), or AS-IA intend to set up their own Pathways Programs as described in the Playbook.

2.2.5 *Human Resource Challenges*

Over the last several months, Pathways has experienced repeat challenges obtaining consistent, accurate, and timely HR support. Lapses in service have resulted in payroll errors and delays, incorrect separation actions in FPPS, and other disruptions. The challenges have been communicated up the chain of command, and Pathways I am hopeful to see improvements moving forward.

ACRONYMS

A123	Office of Management & Budget – Internal Control Requirements
A&D	Acquisition and Disposal
AAC	Annual Allowable Cut
AFMSS2	BLM Oil & Gas Management System
AG	Agriculture
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIPRA	American Indian Probate Reform Act
AIRR	American Indian Records Repository
AKRO	Alaska Regional Office
AOR	Area of Review
AOTR	Awarding Official’s Technical Representative
API	Application Programming Interface
ARMP	Agriculture Resource Management Plans
ARPA	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
AS-IA	Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs
ATNI	Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians
ATO	Authority to Operate
AVSO	Appraisal & Valuation Services Office
AWS	Amazon Web Services
BAA	Branch of Analysis & Administration
BARD	Branch of Agriculture Range Development
BBL	Barrel of Crude Oil
BBS	Branch of Business Services
BCRM	Branch of Cultural Resources Management
BCMS	Beneficiary Customer Management System
BES	Branch of Environmental Services
BFM	Branch of Fluid Minerals
BFWR	Branch of Fisheries, Wildlife & Recreation
BGDS	Branch of Geotechnical Data Services
BI	Business Intelligence
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BIE	Bureau of Indian Education
BILS	Bureau Indian Land Surveyor
BIIP	Blackfeet Indian Irrigation Project
BIP	Branch of Irrigation & Power
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BOA-CM	Branch of Acquisitions – Conveyance Management
BOA-DQ&I	Branch of Acquisitions – Data Quality & Integrity
BOGS	Branch of Geospatial Support
BOR	Bureau of Reclamation
BPP	Bannock Pumping Plant
BPS	Branch of Probate Services
BRAD	Branch of Renewable & Distributed Generation
BRO	Branch of Realty Operations
BRRS	Branch of Realty Resource Services
BRS	Branch of Resource Solutions
BSM	Branch of Solid Minerals
BSOD	Branch of Safety of Dams
BTCR	Branch of Tribal Community Resilience

BTFA	Bureau of Trust Funds Administration
BUS	Business
BWD	Branch of Workforce Development
BWR	Branch of Water Resources
CA	Communitization Agreement
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation & Liability Act
CESU	Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit
CFD	Computational Fluid Dynamics
CFI	Continuous Forest Inventory
CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
CLEO	Conservation Law Enforcement Officer
CM	Conveyance Management
CR	Comprehensive Review
CRM	Cultural Resources Management
CRIP	Colorado River Indian Irrigation Project
CSKT	Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe
DAS-IAPED	Deputy Assistant Secretary -Indian Affairs (Policy & Economic Development)
DA-SPED	Deputy Assistant Secretary-Policy & Economic Development
DBD-TS	Deputy Bureau Director-Trust Services
DCIA	Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996
DEMD	Division of Energy & Mineral Development
DESCRM	Division of Environmental Services & Cultural Resources Management
DFCA	Dam Failure Consequence Analysis
DFIS	Dam Failure Inundation Studies
DIDMS	Dam Inventory Data Management System
DM	Departmental Manual
DME	Division of Minerals Evaluation
DM&R	Deferred Maintenance & Report
DNP	Do Not Pay
DNR	Division of Natural Resources
DOE	Department of Energy
DOF	Division of Forestry
DOI	U.S. Department of the Interior
DOJ	Department of Justice
DPMC	Division of Program Management & Coordination
DQ&I	Data Quality & Integrity
DRES	Division of Real Estate Services
DRIS	Division of Resource Integration Services
DRP	Deferred Retirement Plans
DSPR	Dam Safety Priority Rating
DST	Decision Support Tool
DTLC	Division of Trust Land Consolidation
DTOT	Division of Trust Ownership & Title
DTS	Data Tracking System
DWP	Division of Water & Power
DWTS	Digital Water Ticketing System
DWYD	Division of Workforce & Youth Development
EAP	Emergency Action Plan
EDL	Environmental & Disposal Liability

ELA	Enterprise License Agreement
EMAP	Environmental Management Assessment & Performance
EMC	Energy & Mineral Capacity
EMDS	Energy & Mineral Data Services
EMDP	Energy & Mineral Development Program
EMG	Executive Management Group
EMI	Energy & Mineral Integration
EMS	Emergency Management Services
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ESIA	Executive Secretariat-Indian Affairs
ESRI	Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc.
EWS	Early Warning System
EXPLORE	Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences Act
FBA	Fort Berthold Agency
FBMS	Financial Business Management System
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
FHIIP	Fort Hall Indian Irrigation Project
FICOR	Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation
FIP	Forest Inventory & Planning
FIIP	Flathead Indian Irrigation Project
FMIP	Forest Management Inventory & Planning
FMP	Forest Management Plan
FPA	Federal Power Act
FPAC	USDA, Farm Production & Conservation
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FORTTRAN	Formula Translating System
FRPP	Federal Real Property Profile
FT	Feet
FTT	Fee to Trust
FVS	Forest Vegetation Simulator
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	General Accounting Office
GD	Geotechnical Data
GDEV	Geodata Evaluation & Validation
GDS	Geotechnical Data Services
GIS	Geographic Information System
GOES	Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
GRA	Grinding Rock Aggregates
GRDA	Grand River Dam Authority
HASL	Heritage Asset & Stewardship Land
HCP	Hydropower Compliance Program
HEARTH Act	Helping Expedite & Advance Responsible Tribal Home Ownership Act
HHS	Hydrologic Hazard Studies
HISP	High Impact Service Provider
HR	Human Resources
HUD	U.S. Housing and Urban Development

IA	Indian Affairs
IAA	Interagency Agreement
IAM	Indian Affairs Manual
IA-OPA	Indian Affairs – Office of Policy Analysis
ICR	Internal Control Review
ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act
ID	Identification
IDIQ	Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity
IDSA	Indian Dams Safety Act of 1994
IEMSC	Indian Energy & Minerals Steering Committee
IESC	Indian Energy Service Center
IFMAT	Indian Forests & Management Assessment Tool
IIM	Individual Indian Monies
IMDA	Indian Mineral Development Act
IRA	Inflation Reduction Act of 2022
ISO	Irrigation System Operator
IT	Information Technology
ITC	Intertribal Timber Consortium
ITRC	Irrigation Training and Research Center
IYSC	Indian Youth Service Corps
JHA	Job Hazard Analysis
LAC	Land Area Code
LAR	Land Area Representation
LBBP	Land Buy Back Program
LCNC	Low Code No Code
LDEV	Land Description Examination & Validation
LLC	Limited Liability Company
LTR	Land Titles and Records
LTRO	Land title and Records Office
MCF	One thousand cubic feet measurement for gas
MCMS	Museum Collection Management System
MFA	Multifactor Authentication
MIB	Main Interior Building
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRAD	Mineral Royalty Account Distribution
MS	Mail Stop
MS Teams	Microsoft Teams
NAFWS	Native American Fish & Wildlife Society
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act
NAPE	North American Prospect Expo
NASA	National Aeronautics & Space Administration
NASP	National Advanced Silviculture Program
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NIFRMA	National Indian Forest Resources Management Act of 1990
NIIMS	National Irrigation Information Management System
NIOGEMS	National Indian Oil, Gas, Energy and Mineral System

NPM	National Policy Memorandum
NRDAR	Natural Resources Damage & Assessment Program
NWB	Nationwide Bonds
O&M	Operation & Maintenance
OCFO	Office of the Chief Financial Officer
OHA	Office of Hearings & Appeals
OHCM	Office of Human Capital Management
OIS	Office of Indian Services
OJS	Office of Justice Services
OMB	Office of Management & Budget
OME	Osage Mineral Estate
ONRR	Office of Natural Resources Revenue
OPEX	Operating Expenditure
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
ORDA	Office of Restoration & Damage Assessment
OSG	Office of Self-Governance
OSINT	Open-Source Intelligence
OTS	Office of Trust Services
PDAS-IA	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
PIA	Practicably Irrigable Acreage
PIN	Personal Identification Number
PIP	Pathways Internship Program
PITH	Predicting Inventory Tree Heights
PIV	Personal Identity Verification
PL	Public Law
PVC	Polyvinyl Chloride
Q&A	Question & Answers
RACA	Regulatory Affairs & Collaborative Action
READI	Renewable Energy Accelerated Deployment Initiative
RES	Real Estate Services
RES	Residential
RFP	Request for Proposals
RGC	Regional Geospatial Coordinator
RHPC	Risk Hazard Potential Classification
RLDEV	Realty land Description Examination & Validation
ROW	Right of Way
SAF	Society of American Foresters
SCADA	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition
SCCM	System Center Configuration Manager
SCIP	San Carlos Irrigation Project
SDS	Special Deposit System
SFT	Secure File Transfer
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SIWRO	Secretary’s Indian Water Rights Office
SKQ	Selis Ksanka Qlispe
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SOD	Safety of Dams

SOL	Office of the Solicitor
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SOPA	Suspension of Production Adjudications
SSR	Special Salary Rate
STAT	Solutions Trust Accountability Tracker
TA	Technical Assistance
TAAMS	Trust Asset & Accounting Management System
TAPS	Tracking Accountability Performance System
TCMB	TAAMS Change Management Board
TCR	Tribal Community Resilience
TEDC	Tribal Energy Development Capacity
TEDO	Tribal Energy Development Organizations
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
TERA	Tribal Energy Resource Agreements
TFO	Tribally Funded Offers
TFR	Trust Funds Receivable
THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Office
TLC	Trust Land Consolidation
TPA	Tribal Priority Allocation
TRUS	Trust
TSC	Technical Services Center
TSG	Technical Support Group
TSOG	Timber Sales Operations Group
TSR	Technical Services Center
TSR	Title Status Report
UAT	User Acceptance Training
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USDW	Underground Sources of Drinking Water
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
WEEL	Wind Energy Evaluation leasing
WIIN Act	Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act
WMPPD	Water Management Planning & Pre-Development Program
WREC	Wind River Energy Commission
WRNL	Water Rights Negotiation and Litigation Program
WRTT	Water Resources Technician Training
WSR	Wind Solar Resources
WUI	Wildland-Urban Interface