THE WHITE HOUSE

2023 PROGRESS REPORT FOR TRIBAL NATIONS

PREPARED BY THE DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL

[W]e recognize the invaluable contributions of Native peoples that have shaped our country and honor the hundreds of Tribal Nations who continue exercising their inherent sovereignty as vital members of the overlapping system of governments in the United States.

We also recommit to supporting Tribal sovereignty; upholding the Federal Government's solemn trust and treaty responsibilities; and working in partnership with Tribal Nations to advance prosperity, dignity, and safety for all Native peoples….

Despite centuries of violence and oppression, Native peoples remain resilient and proud.

Today, Native Americans are essential to the fabric of the United States.

–President Biden
A Proclamation on National Native American Heritage Month, 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report documents progress the Biden-Harris Administration has made in 2023—including following through on commitments and developing new policies and initiatives that support Tribal Nations and Native communities. President Biden's relationship with Tribal Nations and their citizens is built on respect for Tribal sovereignty and self-governance, honoring federal trust and treaty responsibilities, protecting Tribal homelands, and conducting regular, meaningful, and robust consultation with Tribal Nations.

The work documented in this report is extensive—reflecting the Biden-Harris Administration's deep commitment to Indian Country. President Biden is committed to delivering on policies that will make things better for Native communities. Policies that will protect what is most precious to Tribal communities—from their children to their languages. And policies that will strengthen the most vital institutions for the well-being of Native people: their Tribal Nations. This Administration is dedicated to championing a new era of the Nation-to-Nation relationship with Tribal Nations. One where Tribal Nations are recognized and supported in their significant role as part of the tapestry of governments that make up the United States and provide vital services to the American people. And one where Tribal Nations are, above all, respected as the sovereigns that they are.

This report documents significant accomplishments across the Federal Government in 2023. As discussed in detail in this report, over the past year the Administration:

- Took significant steps to reform and improve Tribal consultation;
- Continued to appoint Native Americans to the Federal Government in record numbers;
- Sent the highest ranks of the Federal Government to Indian Country;
- Continued championing innovative co-stewardship and co-management agreements to ensure Tribal Nations have a role—and can bring their invaluable knowledge and expertise—to federal land management;
- Worked to ensure federal employees properly understand and respect Tribal treaty rights and sacred sites;
- Implemented both local and all-of-government approaches to combatting climate change's effects on Tribal homelands;
- Centered environmental justice and Tribal priorities in our approach to conserving and protecting our Nation's lands and natural resources;
- Fought for unprecedented levels of funding for Indian Country—including securing reliable advanced funding for Indian Health Service for the first time in history;
- Took bold steps to make federal funding more accessible to Tribal Nations;
- Expanded the Federal Government's efforts to buy from Native-owned businesses;
- Worked to restore healthy and abundant Bison populations;
- Brought much needed updates to the Indian Health Service and launched innovative new programs to help expectant mothers;
- Expanded funding to build child and elder care facilities in Indian Country;
- Successfully defended one of Indian Country's most precious laws—the Indian Child Welfare Act—before the United States Supreme Court;
- Expanded work to prevent homelessness amongst Native veterans;
- Built new electric vehicle infrastructure in Indian Country and helped Tribes transition to a green economy;
- Made homes more affordable for families on reservations;
- Supported teacher retention in Tribal schools;

- Continued difficult but important work to record the history of Indian Boarding Schools and move toward healing;
- Expanded broadband infrastructure to bring internet to more Native homes;
- Updated processes to protect Native arts and crafts; and
- Affirmed the value of Indigenous Knowledge in work throughout the Federal Government

The Biden-Harris Administration is proud to report on these accomplishments in detail in the pages that follow, but we know we have more work to do. We are ready to keep working—to finish the job we have started: building a new era of partnership, respect, and continued progress for Indian Country.

Student Maya Giidaaba Tilousi Lyttle delivers remarks and introduces President Joe Biden at the Historic Red Butte Airfield in Tusayan, Arizona Tuesday, August 8, 2023, before he signs a proclamation establishing the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument. (Official White House Photo by Cameron Smith).

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Leadership on Tribal Policy

White House Council on Native American Affairs

President Biden reinstated the White House Council on Native American Affairs (WHCNAA) in his first 100 days in office. WHCNAA is co-chaired by Department of the Interior Secretary Haaland and White House Domestic Policy Advisor Neera Tanden, and includes the top leadership of all other agencies and offices with major equities in Indian Country. Throughout 2023, WHCNAA held monthly staff meetings and committee meetings to coordinate Tribal policy across WHCNAA member agencies and develop new policy initiatives. The leadership of WHCNAA—including Cabinet secretaries and senior advisors to the President—met three times during 2023, including the Tribal Nations Summit, to discuss the Biden-Harris Administration's priorities in Indian Country and coordinate commitments. In addition, on May 30, Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael Regan, and Senior Advisor to the President for Clean Energy Innovation and Implementation John Podesta, held a WHCNAA Tribal leadership engagement on the Administration's work implementing the Inflation Reduction Act.

Presidential Proclamations

Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day. President Biden, recognizing the importance of increasing awareness for the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People, declared May 5, 2023, Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day.

Indigenous Peoples' Day. President Biden issued a proclamation declaring October 9, 2023, as Indigenous Peoples' Day, to show our gratitude for the myriad contributions that Indigenous People have made to our world, and renew our commitment to respect Tribal sovereignty and self-determination.

Native American Heritage Month Proclamation. In November 2023, President Biden issued a presidential proclamation declaring November as Native American Heritage Month.

The story of America's Indigenous peoples is a story of their resilience and survival; of their persistent commitment to their right to self-governance; and of their determination to preserve cultures, identities, and ways of life.

–President Biden
A Proclamation on Indigenous Peoples' Day, 2023

Strengthening the Nation-to-Nation Relationship

Tribal Nations Summit

The Biden-Harris Administration is deeply committed to honoring and strengthening the Nation-to-Nation relationships the United States has with Tribal Nations. Hosting the Tribal Nations Summit every year is at the core of this commitment. The President will host the third White House Tribal Nations Summit of the Biden-Harris Administration on December 6-7, 2023.

This year's Summit will increase the opportunity for Tribal leaders and top Administration officials to have meaningful conversations about the most important issues facing Tribal communities by featuring closed-press Nation-to-Nation conversations between Tribal Leaders and Agency Leadership These smaller group sessions will facilitate a more open exchange of ideas between federal and Tribal officials. The Summit will also feature new Administration announcements and updates that implement vital policy initiatives supporting Tribal communities—which are encompassed in this report.

President Joe Biden delivers remarks at the 10th Tribal Nations Summit, Wednesday, November 30, 2022 at the U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C. (Official White House Photo by Adam Schultz)

Tribal Consultation

Presidential Memorandum on Uniform Standards for Tribal Consultation. At the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit, President Biden issued a new *Presidential Memorandum on Uniform Standards for Tribal Consultation* to provide more consistency in how agencies initiate, provide notice, conduct, record, and report on Tribal consultations. Agencies were directed to require annual Tribal consultation training for all employees who work with Tribal Nations or on policies with Tribal implications. Additionally, DOI and OPM were tasked with establishing a uniform training module. Agencies were directed to do this work with direct input from Tribal Nations.

9 Agencies
revised Tribal Consultation policies or developed trainings

By the end of 2023, nine federal agencies—ACHP, DOI, DOJ, DOL, NOAA, NEH, Treasury, USACE, and USDA—will be on track and/or have completed **revised consultation policies and/or consultation trainings**. Furthermore, 12 federal agencies—DOC, DOD, DOE, DOL, DOT, ED, EPA, HHS, OPM, Treasury, USACE, and USTR—have issued guidelines on how they will implement new Tribal consultation policies; hosted listening sessions on what

12 Agencies
are on the path to updating their consultation policies

these trainings should entail for their agency; and/or have developed interim courses and modules.

> OPM, with guidance from DOI and funding from VA, announced it is set to **deliver the uniform Tribal consultation training for the Federal Workforce in 2024**. OPM is currently working with DOI, DPC, and OMB on securing funding for this initiative. Trainings could be offered as soon as May 2024.

Agency Guidance on Working with Tribal Nations

DOD's Tribal Protocols Guidebook. In June 2023, DOD's Legacy Resource Management Program published a *Tribal Protocols Guidebook*, which serves as a resource guide on how to build and enhance relationships with Tribal governments in the Lower 48 states. The guidebook serves to aid DOD personnel—such as commanders, cultural resource professionals, natural resource professionals, Tribal liaisons, legal counsel, and public affairs staff—who engage with federally recognized Tribes in the process of meeting federal trust responsibilities. A webinar has been posted to promote the Guidebook within DOD.

EPA's Tribal Treaty or Similar Rights Guidance. EPA finalized its Tribal Treaty or Similar Rights guidance in November 2023. It will serve as the backbone of the EPA Tribal Program and further EPA's commitment to working with Tribal Nations, as well as assess how EPA's decisions impact Tribal rights.

U.S. Forest Service's Action Plan on Strengthening Tribal Consultation. In February 2023, USDA released its USFS Action Plan on Strengthening Tribal Consultation, outlining steps the agency will take to advance Tribal consultation and strengthen Nation-to-Nation relationships with federally-recognized Tribes.

Social Security Administration Action Plan Reaffirmed its Commitment to Consultation. In April 2023, SSA released its Fiscal Year 2023 Tribal Consultation and Call to Action plan, providing six objectives the Agency will take to facilitate robust engagement regarding policies with Tribal implications.

Native Americans in the Federal Government

Native American Federal Judges

President Biden continues to nominate Native Americans to the federal bench. In October 2023, President Biden nominated **Sara Hill (Cherokee)** to serve as a **federal judge** in the **United States District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma**. Hill has a wealth of experience in federal practice and federal Indian law, having served as the **Attorney General for the Cherokee Nation**. Hill is President Biden's fourth Native American judicial nominee and, if confirmed by the U.S. Senate, would be the first American Indian woman to serve as a federal judge in Oklahoma.

Historic Number of Native American Federal Officials

President Biden has continued to appoint Native Americans to positions across the Federal Government. In 2023, President Biden made the following appointments:

Agency	Position (*New Position)	Appointee
DOC	*Director of the Office of Native American Business Development	Shaun Deschene
DOL	Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management	Carolyn Angus-Hornbuckle
DOT	*Assistant Secretary for Tribal Government Affairs	Arlando Teller

ED	Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Advancing Education Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities	Naomi Miguel
Peace Corps	Senior Advisor on Climate	Alexandra Lawrence
SSA	*Director of the Office of Native American Partnerships	Richard Litsey
State	Ambassador to Barbados, Federation of Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Antigua & Barbuda, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, & Saint Vincent, and the Grenadines	Roger Nyhus

Federal Boards and Commissions

President Biden has also continued to prioritize the nomination and appointment of Native Americans to serve on federal boards, commissions, and independent agencies in 2023, some of which include:

Board or Commission	Appointee
Board of Directors of AmeriCorps	Alvin Warren
Great Lakes Fishery Commission	Karen Diver
Institute of American Indian Arts Board of Trustees	Johnpaul Jones
Institute of American Indian Arts Board of Trustees	Madeline Fielding Sayet
Institute of American Indian Arts Board of Trustees	Jane Semple Umsted
Institute of American Indian Arts Board of Trustees	Rose Simpson
Institute of American Indian Arts Board of Trustees	Manuelito Wheeler
Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Foundation	Tadd M. Johnson
Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Foundation	Rion Ramirez
National Advisory Council on Indian Education	Duane A. Bedell
National Advisory Council on Indian Education	Jolene Bowman
National Advisory Council on Indian Education	Donna Brown
National Advisory Council on Indian Education	Lucyann Harjo
National Advisory Council on Indian Education	Sedelta Oosahwee
National Museum and Library Services Board	Kelli Mosteller
President's Commission on White House Fellowships	Libby Washburn
President's Committee on Sports, Fitness, and Nutrition	Ben Jacobs
President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities	Philip J. Deloria
President's Export Council	Brett Isaac

New Tribal Affairs Positions

First Assistant Director for Indigenous Engagement and Native American Affairs at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy's. In November 2023, OSTP brought on its first-ever Assistant Director for Indigenous Engagement and Native American Affairs. The creation of this position arises from OSTP and CEQ's Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge, released at the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit. This position will lead OSTP's engagement with Indian Tribes, Native Hawaiians, and other Indigenous Peoples and will provide a whole-of-government approach to elevate and incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into federal decision-making.

Secretary Haaland gathers with Native American Federal Officials and Senior Staff to celebrate Native American Heritage Month on Nov. 29, 2023 (Official White House Photo).

Along with the White House Staffers at the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, and Domestic Policy Council, President Biden's White House has four positions dedicated to Indian Country.

Complementing the White House's efforts, Agencies across the federal family have also established and/or filled Tribal Affairs positions over the past years. The below positions are established career roles across the Federal Government.

Agency	Position (*New Position)
DOC, NOAA	*Tribal Liaison – Alaska
DOC, NOAA	*Senior Tribal Liaison
DOC, NOAA	Director for Climate Initiatives for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
DOD	Senior Tribal Advisor and Liaison
DOD, Dept. of Navy	*Tribal Affairs Program Manager
DOI	*Director and Senior Attorney Advisor for the Office of Indigenous Communications & Technology
DOL	Tribal Liaison
GSA	*Tribal Liaison
GSA, Federal Acquisition Service	Program Advisor, Tribal Affairs*
GSA, Federal Acquisition Service	*State, Local, Tribal, & Territorial Customer Advocate and Business Development Specialist
NEH	*Strategic Advisor for Native & Indigenous Affairs
USDA	*Special Policy Advisor on Tribal Agricultural Lands

New Tribal Leader and Native Advisory Committees

In 2022, DOI, DHS, GAO, HUD, and USDA established new **Tribal Advisory Committees** to ensure that Tribal leaders have direct and consistent contact with federal agency decision makers and to institutionalize Tribal voices within policy. These committees are in effect and ongoing. At the 2023 Tribal Nations Summit, USDA announced the members for its inaugural Tribal Advisory Committee.

In September 2023, NOAA announced the selection of its members for **Inaugural Marine and Coastal Area-based Management Advisory Council**. The Council will advise agency leadership on science-based approaches to area-based protection, conservation, restoration, and management of coastal, Great Lakes, and marine places. Two of the new Council members will provide representation from Tribal and Indigenous communities.

In total, the Biden-Harris Administration now includes the following advisory bodies on Tribal policy:

Agency	Position
DHS	Tribal Homeland Security Advisory Council
DOE	State and Tribal Government Working Group
DOI	Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee
DOJ	Attorney General's Tribal Nations Leadership Council and the Attorney General's Advisory Council's Native American Issues Subcommittee
DOL	Native American Employment and Training Council
ED	National Advisory Council on Indian Education
EPA	National Tribal Caucus
FCC	Native Nations Communications Task Force
GAO	Tribal and Indigenous Advisory Council
HHS	Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee
HUD	Tribal Intergovernmental Advisory Committee
Treasury	Treasury Tribal Advisory Committee
USDA	Tribal Advisory Committee
VA	Advisory Committee on Tribal and Indian Affairs

New Tribal Offices

Office of Strategic Partnerships at the BIA. In 2022, DOI established Office of Strategic Partnerships within BIA to build partnerships, leverage resources, and promote innovative solutions. DOI, in collaboration with Native Americans in Philanthropy, is working on partnerships to support Native-led conservation, economic development, and education.

Office of Native American Partnerships at SSA. SSA established an Office of Native American Partnerships in their Office of the Commissioner and created a 2023 Action Plan. This new office's work thus far includes: engaging with Tribal Leaders; building partnerships with community organizations; supporting Tribal applicants' disability, retirement, and survivor claims; determining where to install new Video Service equipment to bridge the distance between Tribal communities and SSA Field Offices; and recruiting Native students by promoting direct hiring authority opportunities. Additionally, SSA held listening sessions, meetings with Tribal advocates in urban Indian centers and the Pine Ridge Oglala Reservation, and held two formal consultations in Pine Ridge and the National Indian Council on Aging Conference. The Office also conducted a successful pilot program which served Alaska Natives in remote areas and are working to establish a Commissioner's Tribal Advisory Committee.

Office of Indigenous Communications & Technology at DOI. DOI established the Office of Indigenous Communications & Technology to assist Tribal Nations and entities in managing, developing, and maintaining broadband infrastructure; creating new electromagnetic spectrum leasing mechanisms; providing technical assistance for the establishment of wireless, digital, and technological projects on Tribal lands; and developing technological services that can foster partnerships between Tribes and the tech industry (i.e., electric vehicles, light detection and ranging, and career opportunities in the tech industry for Indigenous participants). DOI Office of the Secretary, alongside BIA, is currently working on establishing the office's organizational structure, mission, and policy development goals. In addition, DOI announced two new positions including its Director and Senior Attorney Advisor positions.

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Honoring Native American Contributions

In a March 2023 ceremony, **Henrietta Mann** and the national radio program "**Native America Calling"** were named recipients of the **2021 National Humanities Medal** by the White House and NEH. Henrietta Mann is a citizen of the Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma, celebrated professor of Native American studies, and leading figure in the development of programs devoted to Native American studies. "Native America Calling" is a national radio program focused on issues affecting Native communities in the United States.

President Joe Biden presents the 2021 National Humanities Medal to Henrietta Mann at the National Arts and Humanities Medal Ceremony, Tuesday, March 21, 2023, in the East Room of the White House. (Official White House Photo by Cameron Smith).

Visits to Indian Country

Vice President and Second Gentleman's Visit to Gila River. In July 2023, Vice President Kamala Harris visited the Gila River Indian Community. She addressed a crowd of elected leaders and community members, alongside Governor Stephen Roe Lewis, and highlighted Tribal leadership on clean energy and climate resilience. She also underscored the Administration's commitment to protecting Tribal voting rights, investing in Tribal community banks, and promoting mental health resources. Prior to the meeting, the Vice President met with a group of Native youth leaders from O'odham Tribes in the region.

Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff joined the Vice President for the visit and met with a group of Gila River military veterans. Following the remarks, the Vice President visited a reclaimed water pipeline project funded with $83M from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Governor Stephen Roe Lewis of the Gila River Indian Community welcomes Vice President Kamala Harris and Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff to the Gila Crossing Community School at Gila River Indian Community.

First Lady Jill Biden's Visit to Menominee Nation. In October 2023, First Lady Jill Biden visited Menominee Nation, alongside Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland. Her two-day visit included touring the Menominee Tribal Enterprises' sawmill, which operates the Tribe's lumber businesses, the College of Menominee Nation, and the Keshena Primary School to greet students. She ended her visit speaking at the Women's Empowerment Summit. During her visit, she highlighted the Biden-Harris Administration's support for Tribal sovereignty and honoring the unique Nation-to-Nation relationship, as well as the impact Tribal women have made within their community, especially to protect the environment.

The Biden-Harris Administration has made visiting Indian Country a priority. Below are maps that capture the travel of Senior Administration Officials since President Biden took office.

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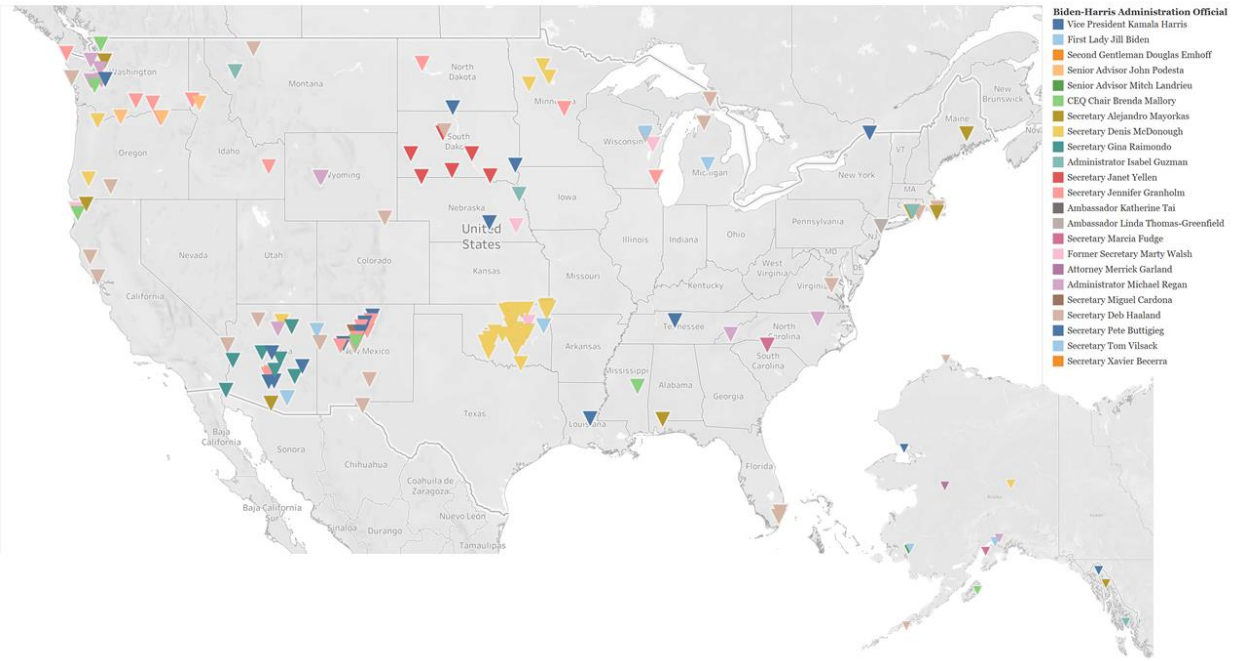
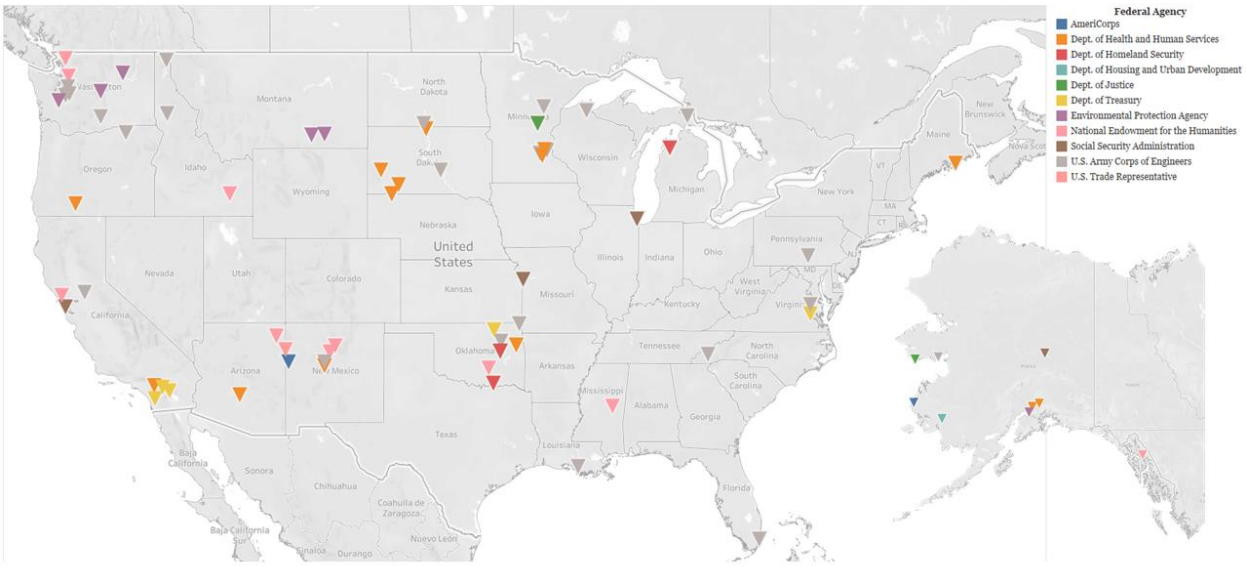
White House Leadership & Cabinet Secretaries in Indian Country

during the Biden-Harris Administration



Federal Agency Senior Officials in Indian Country

during the Biden-Harris Administration



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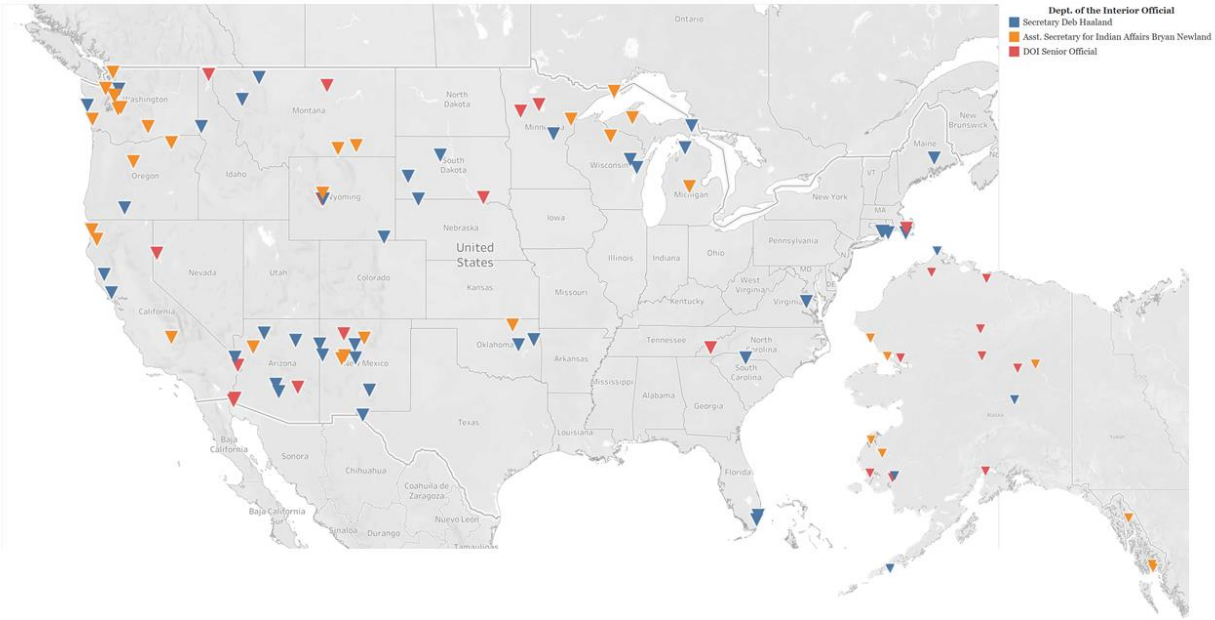
Dept. of Interior in Indian Country

during the Biden-Harris Administration



Restoring and Protecting Tribal Homelands

Co-Stewarding or Co-Managing Land with Tribal Nations

The Administration is championing an innovative way of partnering with Tribal Nations by signing agreements with them to co-steward or co-manage the lands and waters that are most precious to Tribal communities. This kind of work represents the respectful and mutually-beneficial partnership that is indicative of the Biden-Harris Administration's hopes for a new era of Nation-to-Nation relationships between Tribal Nations and the Federal Government.

New Agreements

New Tribal Agreements to Co-Manage or Co-Steward Federal Lands and Waters. In 2021, DOI and USDA announced Joint Secretarial Order 3403 on Fulfilling the Trust Responsibility to Indian Tribes in the Stewardship of Federal Lands and Waters, which committed both agencies to a process for establishing Tribal co-stewardship agreements. In 2022, DOC additionally signed on, and DOI and USDA announced they had signed over 20 new co-stewardship agreements in the first year since the Joint Secretarial Order.

In 2023, DOI signed 70 new co-stewardship and co-management agreements and USDA's U.S. Forest Service signed over 120 new co-stewardship or co-management agreements. USDA's work came with investments of approximately $68 million, more than triple its investment in FY 2022.

190+
New Tribal Co-Stewardship or Co-Management Agreements

NOAA Tri-Sovereign Agreement on Chinook Salmon. Separate from the process outlined in the Joint Secretarial Order, DOC's NOAA partnered with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Winnemem Wintu Tribe to sign a co-stewardship agreement in May 2023 to restore Chinook salmon, including a call for the Tribe to contribute traditional ecological and practical knowledge of the species to the mountains north of Redding, California.

Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. At the 2021 Tribal Nations Summit, NOAA announced the process to designate a national marine sanctuary off the coast of central California. In August 2023—with input from Tribal Nations, state and federal agencies, Indigenous communities, and the public—NOAA released a proposal to designate a 5,617 square mile area of ocean from Montaña de Oro State Park in San Luis Obispo County to Naples along the Gaviota Coast in Santa Barbara County as a national marine sanctuary. The draft management plan includes a framework for Tribal and Indigenous collaborative management that would provide suitable opportunities for Tribes and Indigenous communities to join in decision-making processes. The public comment period for the draft proposal closed October 25, 2023, and NOAA is currently reviewing the feedback it received. The final decision on sanctuary designation is expected in 2024.

Hanford National Monument Sacred Sites Memorandum of Understanding. DOE and DOI announced it will enter into a Secretarial Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish a collaborative framework to improve protection of/access to Laliik or "Rattlesnake Mountain," located within the Hanford nuclear site in Benton County, Washington. This effort will increase access to conduct traditional harvesting and enable cultural and ceremonial activities for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Nez Perce Tribe, Yakama Tribes, and the Wanapum Band.

USFS and Chippewa Bands Agree to Co-Stewardship. In May 2023, USFS Superior National Forest signed an MOU with the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (the "Bands") to provide co-stewardship and protection of the Bands treaty-reserved rights under the 1854 Treaty within the Superior National Forest. This agreement is the first of its kind between the Bands and the Superior National Forest.

USFS and The Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes Memorandum of Understanding to Co-Steward the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center. The Forest Service recognizes the importance of Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area within the Tongass National Forest to Tlingit & Haida people and acknowledges the value of Tlingit & Haida Indigenous Knowledge in the administration of the MGRA. USFS has signed a historic MOU with Tlingit & Haida regarding the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center.

USFS Tribal Co-Stewardship Keystone Agreements. USFS committed $100 million that address Tribal priorities within Forest Service mission critical work. In 2023, the USFS has been working to develop agreements with both Tribal organizations and large-scale Tribal/Forest Service partnerships in the field. The USFS is also expanding similar types of agreements designed to increase Tribal workforce capacity and engagement in co-stewardship with the Forest Service on Tribal priorities and mission critical work.

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Work to Support Co-Stewardship

Other than signing co-stewardship agreements, these federal agencies are supporting co-stewardship and co-management within their agencies in the following ways:

Department of the Interior

- Created an Inter-Bureau Co-Stewardship Committee and a Solicitor's Co-Stewardship Working Group.
- Established performance evaluation standards for co-stewardship.
- Creating a dashboard tracker for co-stewardship.
- Developed co-stewardship trainings for DOI employees and executives.
- Securing funding to expand Tribal co-stewardship of public lands.
- Developing a BIA Excess Lands Handbook to identify and support Tribal opportunities for co-stewardship or consolidating Tribal homelands.
- Issuing an annual report on co-stewardship and legal authorities supporting it in November and December 2023, respectively.

United States Department of Agriculture

- Produced and published a list of statutory authorities that govern land exchanges, purchases, and in limited circumstances transfers, and a document outlining the financial resources available to Tribes in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act.

Department of Commerce

- Established a Co-Stewardship Committee.
- Identifying resources of significance and value to Tribes managed by DOC and notifying all Tribes under DOC management of identified resources.
- Producing a legal review from NOAA on advancing co-stewardship that includes a summary of actions taken so far and a list of current land and water treaty responsibilities and authorities that support co-stewardship in March 2024.

United States Army Corps of Engineers

- Developed and published best practices and processes for the use of Tribal Cooperative Agreements to increase co-management and co-stewardship opportunities.
- USACE will begin the development of a uniform approach for Tribal co-land management and co-stewardship, including reviewing its authorities, guidance, and regulations to support Tribal co-stewardship or co-management activities on USACE-owned lands.

Tribal Lands Protection and Expansion

Avi Kwa Ame National Monument. On March 21, 2023, President Biden proclaimed and reserved the 506,814-acre Avi Kwa Ame National Monument on DOI-managed lands in Nevada. Avi Kwa Ame is considered to be among the most sacred places on Earth by the Mojave, Chemehuevi, and some Southern Paiute people. It is also important to other Tribal Nations and Indigenous Peoples including the Cocopah, Halchidhoma, Havasupai, Hopi, Hualapai, Kumeyaay, Maricopa, Pai, Quechan, Yavapai, and Zuni Tribes. Its scenic peaks include Avi Kwa Ame (Spirit Mountain), which is designated as a Traditional Cultural Property on the National Register of Historic Places in recognition of its religious and cultural importance.

Castner Range National Monument. On March 21, 2023, President Biden also proclaimed and reserved the 6,672-acre Castner Range National Monument outside of El Paso, Texas. Castner Range hosts significant cultural sites documenting the history of Tribal Nations, including the Apache and Pueblo peoples and the Comanche Nation, Hopi Tribe, and Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma.

Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument. On August 8, 2023, President Biden proclaimed and reserved nearly one million acres as the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument. This designation was responsive to the tireless leadership and calls for protection of the region by an interTribal coalition comprised of 12 Tribal Nations with ancestral homelands in the area. Baaj nwaavjo means "where Indigenous Peoples roam" in the Havasupai language, and I'tah kukveni means "our ancestral footprints" in the Hopi language—reflecting the significance of the Grand Canyon area to not just one, but many Tribal Nations. The monument protects over 3,000 known cultural and historic sites, including 12 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and sites precious to many Tribal Nations in the Southwest since time immemorial – including the Havasupai Tribe, Hopi Tribe, Hualapai Tribe, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, Las Vegas Paiute Tribe, Moapa Band of Paiutes, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Navajo Nation, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Yavapai-Apache Nation, Pueblo of Zuni, and the Colorado River Indian Tribes. These sites include Gray Mountain, called Dziłbeeh by the Navajo, which is a part of Navajo ceremonial songs, stories, and rituals; and Red Butte, where President Biden signed the monument proclamation, which towers above the southern portion of the monument and is known as Wii'I Gdwiisa by the Havasupai Tribe.

President Joe Biden delivers remarks and signs a proclamation establishing the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument on Tuesday, August 8, 2023, at the Historic Red Butte Airfield in Tusayan, Arizona. (Official White House Photo by Oliver Contreras).

Land Buy Back Program Report. DOI issued a *Ten Years of Consolidating Land and Building Trust* report documenting the implementation of the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations. DOI created this program in 2012 to carry out the land consolidation aspects of the *Cobell v. Salazar* (2009) Settlement Agreement. During the program's 10-year history, approximately three million equivalent acres were returned to Tribal trust ownership and $1.69 billion was paid to more than 123,000 individuals. The Buy-Back Program made a meaningful impact in addressing fractionation, which created economic opportunities for both Tribes and landowners and supported Tribal sovereignty. To achieve these results, the Program partnered with more than 50 Tribes in 15 states, including: Arizona, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, and Washington. The program's funding ended in November 2022, per the Settlement and Claim Resolution Act of 2010. Unfortunately, fractionation remains a significant hindrance to many Tribes and their communities. The report emphasizes the need to continue land consolidation efforts and identifies potential new or revised policies that could be considered.

Implementation of Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation Act. In December 2020, the Leech Band of Ojibwe Reservation Restoration Act was signed into law, which transfers approximately 11,760 acres of public land to DOI to be held in trust for the benefits of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. Previously, it was managed by the Chippewa National Forest. To implement this Act, USDA developed and published a map of proposed parcels for transfer on the Chippewa National Forest in August 2023.

HEARTH Act Ordinance Approvals. Under the HEARTH Act, Tribes with Secretary of the Interior-approved Tribal leasing regulations are authorized to negotiate and enter into leases without further approvals by the Federal Government. To date, 105 Tribal leasing regulations have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

Boundary Waters Withdrawal. On January 6, 2023, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland signed Public Land Order 7917, withdrawing approximately 225,504 acres in the Superior National Forest in northeastern Minnesota from disposition under the United States mineral and geothermal leasing laws for a 20-year period, subject to valid existing rights. This action will help protect the Rainy River watershed, including the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and the 1854 Ceded Territory of the Chippewa Bands, from the potential adverse impacts of new mineral and geothermal exploration and development.

Beaufort Sea Withdrawal. On March 12, 2023 President Biden withdrew approximately 2.8 million acres of the Beaufort Sea in the Arctic Ocean nearshore in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska as indefinitely off-limits for future oil and gas leasing. This withdrawal bars the area from extractive development, ensuring perpetual habitat and subsistence protection for whales, seals, and polar bears.

Sacred Sites

Sacred Sites Best Practice Guide. The *Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Interagency Coordination and Collaboration for the Protection of Indigenous Sacred Sites*, signed in 2021, commits the signatory agencies to identifying best practices for the management and protection of sacred sites on federal lands and waters. Fulfilling this commitment, WHCNAA has completed a *Best Practices Guide for Tribal and Native Hawaiian Sacred Sites*, which provides best practices, procedures, and guidance for the management, treatment, and protection of sacred sites, identifies impediments to federal-level protection of sacred sites, and acts to address and remedy impediments. The initial draft was based on comments heard at two federal listening sessions, and the final version has been expanded and improved based on comments received through Tribal consultation.

Domestic Mining Law Reform Working Group and Report. At the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit, DOI and USDA announced efforts to implement new regulatory and policy recommendations designed to protect Tribal interests and resources from impacts of mining. These efforts are in place to increase Tribal engagement in mining proposals and promote well-designed mining activity that accounts for climate change, current mining best practices, and most up-to-date technology developments. The Biden-Harris Administration established an Interagency Working Group on Mining Regulations, Laws, and Permitting and, developed, submitted, and presented its report to Congress in September 2023. The report includes recommendations on ways to:

1. Engage Tribes early during the development of mining proposals on public lands;
2. Give Tribes a seat at the table in discussions regarding mining proposals; and
3. Improve consideration and protection of Tribal interests and resources as mining decisions are being made.

Grazing and Land Use

USDA Completed Analysis of Base Property Requirements for Grazing Permits Issued to Tribes. The U.S. Forest Service reviewed rangeland management program policies, and identified a need to clarify the flexibilities available for base property requirements to ensure the grazing program is equally available to

all, including in Indian Country. Specifically, USDA clarified that Tribal trust land can be used for satisfying the base property requirement.

Streamlining Tribal Agricultural Land and Related Program Access. BIA and USDA are working to coordinate, plan, and implement USDA programs on lands held in trust or with restricted status. Specifically, USDA and BIA are supporting updates to agricultural and grazing permits to better facilitate Tribal participation and identify barriers to Tribal participation in agriculture, grazing and conservation programs. Additionally, USDA plans to exchange data with BIA in order to cross reference agricultural activities and land ownership for more efficient payment and distribution of funds in USDA farm production and conservation programs.

USFS Handout on BIL and IRA Resources. USFS Office of Tribal Relations prepared and provided a handout that maps financial resources available in BIL and IRA for Tribal leaders present at the 2023 Tribal Nations Summit.

Treaty Rights

Tribal Treaty Rights and Reserved Rights Memorandum of Understanding. At the 2021 Tribal Nations Summit, 17 federal agencies, coordinated through WHCNAA and signed the *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Regarding Interagency Coordination and Collaboration for the Protection of Tribal Treaty Rights and Reserved Rights*, committing to integrate Tribal treaty rights into agency decision-making processes.

In 2022, the 17 signatories developed and released the ***Best Practices Guide*** *for Identifying and Protecting Tribal Treaty Rights, Reserved Rights, and Other Similar Rights in Federal Regulatory Actions and Federal Decision-Making*. This year, the MOU Workgroup focused on addendums to the Best Practice Guide and is in the process of integrating an **Addendum on the Indian Cannons of Construction** that will provide information to federal agency officials on the application of the Indian Canons of Construction to treaties with Tribes and certain statutes. The MOU Workgroup is also exploring **Promise to Purchase and Hire** provisions into the Best Practice Guide.

In August 2023, WHCNAA hosted a Tribal consultation to take recommendations from Tribes regarding what action federal agencies can take to further protect Tribal treaty rights, reserved rights, and similar rights. Tribal leaders offered substantive written and verbal comments, which will inform the direction and deliverables for the MOU Workgroup and relevant WHCNAA workstreams. Additionally, the WHCNAA and the MOU Workgroup is currently in the process of **creating a training curriculum** with BIA Office of Human Capital for federal agencies to inform and provide best practices on making agency decisions and policies with respect to Tribal treaty rights, reserved rights, and similar rights.

BIL Funds for Protecting Tribal Treaty and Reserved Rights. Utilizing funding from BIL and the IRA, NOAA committed a minimum of $404 million towards protecting Tribal Treaty and Reserved Rights (TTR) by prioritizing climate resilience, Tribal fisheries' needs, and Tribal communities. This includes Tribal set-asides in fish passages, habitat restoration, capacity building, science support and investments in fish hatcheries (including funds for distribution through BIA's 638 contracts).

USDA-DOI-DOD Tribal Treaties Database Announces Extensive Expansion. USDA, along with the DOI and DOD, partnered with Oklahoma State University on the creation of a Tribal Treaties Database. The first phases of the database included working with Oklahoma State University to create the interface for the database, digitizing and indexing Charles Kappler's *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties* with emphasis on refining all Tribal connections (signatory Tribes to modern federally recognized Tribes a.k.a. successor-

in-interest Tribes). In phase three, Oklahoma State University completed extensive research on additional resources not found in Kappler's Volume II. These resources are being populated into a public-facing database and include the identification of 350+ new agreements (treaties, unratified treaties, Congressional Acts, and other related documents).

Environment, Energy, and Infrastructure

Regional Strategies and Supports

Arctic Strategy Implementation Plan. In October 2022, the Biden-Harris Administration released an implementation plan for the *2022 National Strategy for the Arctic Region*. Key items relating to Alaska Natives include:

1. Community driven relocation efforts to assist environmentally threatened communities in Alaska facing relocation, managed retreat, or protection-in-place challenges;
2. Accelerating efforts to clean up and address lands that were contaminated when transferred under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act;
3. Pursuing new co-management and co-stewardship agreements for lands and resources in Alaska; and
4. Improving the delivery of water and sanitation services to Alaskan communities**.**

NOAA's Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy. In May 2023, NOAA Fisheries released its first-ever national *Equity and Environmental Strategy* to guide the agency to serve all communities more equitably and effectively. This national strategy describes the path NOAA will take to incorporate equity and environmental justice into the vital services NOAA provides to all communities, including Tribal Nations, communities, and organizations.

Tribally Specific Resource Guides to Support North Atlantic Priorities. NOAA has many tools that can help Tribal Nations address a host of oceanic, atmospheric, and environmental challenges. To better assist Tribal Nations, NOAA is learning more about each Tribal Nation's priorities and developing a NOAA resource guide for interested Tribal Nations. In April 2023, NOAA finalized its web-based NOAA resource guides for the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinah). Currently, NOAA is creating a resource guide for the Passamaquoddy Tribe and Pleasant Point.

USACE Proposed Policy and Procedural Guidance on Alaska Native Corporations. USACE announced it is working on a policy and procedural guidance for USACE partnerships with Alaska Native Corporations as non-federal interests. USACE anticipates the final guidance to be published following Tribal consultation in June 2024.

Whole-of-Government Environmental Justice Agenda

Executive Order 14096, *Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All*.
In April 2023, President Biden signed Executive Order 14096, which recognizes that addressing Tribal concerns, respecting Tribal values, and fulfilling obligations related to sacred sites, are all important parts

of the Administration's whole-of-government commitment to advancing environmental justice. Executive Order 14096 reaffirms the need for the Federal Government to respect Tribal sovereignty by ensuring that Tribal Nations are consulted on federal policies that potentially affect human health and environments that have Tribal implications. It underscores the importance of recognizing, honoring, and respecting cultural practices, subsistence practices, ways of living, Indigenous Knowledge, and other traditions of Tribal Nations. This executive order provides a Federal Government-wide definition of environmental justice for the first time, which includes "the just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of income, race, color, national origin, *Tribal affiliation,* or disability, in agency decision-making and other federal activities that affect human health and the environment." This order charges each federal agency to make achieving environmental justice part of its mission.

Justice40 Initiative. For the first time in our nation's history, the Federal Government has made it a goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution, including federally-recognized Tribal entities. President Biden made this historic commitment, launching the Justice40 Initiative, when he signed Executive Order 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*, within days of taking office. To help agencies advance this goal, in November 2022, CEQ launched version 1.0 of the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, which is a geospatial mapping tool designed to identify disadvantaged communities, or "Justice40 communities." To respect Tribal sovereignty and self-government and to fulfill federal trust and treaty responsibilities to Tribal Nations, land within the boundaries of federally-recognized Tribes are highlighted as disadvantaged on the map. Alaska Native Villages are included as point locations that are smaller than census tracts. This decision was made after meaningful and robust consultation with Tribal Nations. In addition, in January 2023, the White House issued an addendum to the Justice40 Interim Implementation Guidance making clear that all federally-recognized Tribes and Tribal entities are disadvantaged communities for the purpose of this Initiative, whether or not they have land. Through the President's Investing in America agenda, federal agencies are making historic levels of investment to advance the Justice40 goal, including in Indian Country.

Contamination Cleanup Efforts

Orphaned Wells Cleanup to Reduce Impacts of Methane Pollution in Tribal Communities. As a part of BIL investments in cleaning up methane pollution, $150 million is set aside for Tribal orphaned well cleanups. In September 2023, DOI awarded $39 million in BIL funding to 10 Tribes to plug hundreds of orphaned oil and gas wells and remediate legacy pollution in Tribal communities. Additionally, DOI has awarded $560 million to support Tribal communities and states that have plugged 6,000 orphaned oil and gas wells. DOI recently released another round of funding—$50 million—to Tribes to plug, remediate, and restore orphaned wells and well sites on Tribal lands. These activities will help reduce methane emissions, clean up legacy pollution, and provide cleaner air and water for Tribes. Tribes can also use these grants to develop orphaned well programs and increase Tribal capacity in locating and characterizing orphaned wells.

Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Contaminated Lands Initiative. EPA launched the new Contaminated ANCSA Lands Grant Program, which provides $18 million in funds over the next few years to help with the assessment and remediation of contaminated sites. In September 2023, EPA selected three Alaska Native Corporations to receive over $2.5 million in an initial round of funding. Ukpeaġvik Iñupiat Corporation received funding to assess lands impacted by a fuel spill and conduct lead and asbestos testing and abatement at the former Naval Arctic Research Laboratory in Utqiaġvik. Tyonek Native Corporation received funding to conduct an inventory, characterization, and decommissioning of abandoned drums and cleanup of remaining petroleum and other surface contaminants on the Iniskin Peninsula. Ounalashka Corporation was funded to remove soils contaminated with PCBs and conduct an initial round of soil and groundwater sampling at a WWII-era warehouse in Dutch Harbor. EPA expects to select additional projects

for funding in late 2023 or in 2024. EPA also launched a Dashboard that provides an inventory of contaminated ANCSA lands in September 2023. In November 2023, EPA announced it set aside $50 million for Alaska Tribal lands, including cleanup of contaminated ANCSA lands as a part of its Environmental and Climate Justice Change Grants Program.

Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program. In September 2023, EPA announced two competitions for $4.6 billion to implement pollution reduction plans, including a $300 million set aside for Tribes and U.S. territories through the IRA. This grant program supports the development and deployment of technologies and solutions that will reduce greenhouse gases and harmful air pollution, and transition America to a clean energy economy that benefits all Americans. EPA anticipates awarding approximately 25 to 100 grants ranging between $1 million and $25 million under the Tribes and Territories Competition in December 2024.

$300 MILLION
Tribal set aside for pollution reduction

Developing Viable and Sustainable Disposal Options for Waste in Navajo Nation. In 2023, EPA convened with several federal agencies—IHS, DOD, DOE, DOI, USDA, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission—as well as several states, Tribes, and Tribal communities to address waste disposal issues in two separate efforts for the Navajo Nation. In June 2023, EPA joined IHS to deploy a mobile app pilot program that allowed Navajo Nation to verify the location and assess the contents of 55 open dump sites that meet the IHS open dump clean-up criteria. This helped update Navajo Nations records for the Operation and Maintenance Data System. This pilot project is the beginning of the long-term development of cleanup projects for mismanaged waste in open dumps, and serves as a link to plans for additional transfer stations and other disposal options. In addition to this project, EPA is continuing to address uranium mine waste issues at the Navajo Nation and surrounding communities to expedite cleanup efforts. EPA is in the process of hosting multiple meetings to engage federal partners, states, Tribal regulators, and Tribal communities, including non-governmental organizations to better understand community concerns and identify and develop options for uranium waste disposal of uranium mine waste on and off the Navajo Nation.

Environmental Justice and Climate Resilience

National Climate Resilience Framework. In September 2023, the White House released the first-ever National Climate Resilience Framework, vision for a climate resilient Nation designed to guide and align climate resilience investments and activities by the Federal Government and its partners. The Framework identifies multiple opportunities for action to strengthen Tribal resilience and incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into climate resilience efforts, including by supporting Tribal Nations in pursuing Presidential emergency or major disaster declarations in response to extreme weather events, reconnecting important freshwater ecosystems, and working alongside Indigenous scholars and community experts on data, science, and trainings.

ACHP Policy Statement on Climate Change Includes Indigenous Knowledge. ACHP released a *Climate Change and Historic Preservation Policy Statement*, which informs federal agencies on how to clearly define connections between climate change and historic properties, articulate policy principles ACHP will integrate into the Section 106 process, and guide public-serving institutions on how they may acknowledge, plan, mitigate, and adapt to climate change impacts on historic properties. This policy recognizes Indigenous Knowledge as expert knowledge, highlights the need to consider sacred sites in planning and response actions, and urges federal agencies to adopt or align with existing practices or standards of Indian Tribes.

EPA Administrator Michael Regan fishing in the Village of Igiugig on the Journey to Justice Tour in Alaska. (Photo Courtesy of EPA).

Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program. In November 2023, EPA launched the Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program, which will award approximately $2 billion in IRA funding to community based organizations and their partners, including Tribes, for financial assistance to carry out environmental and climate justice activities to benefit disadvantaged communities. EPA set aside $300 million for Tribes.

Environmental Justice Government-to-Government Cooperative Agreement Program. The Environmental Justice Government-to-Government Program provides funding at the state, local, territorial, and Tribal level to support government activities that lead to measurable environmental or public health impacts in communities disproportionately burdened by environmental harms. Government-to-Government projects are intended to leverage existing resources to develop processes or tools that integrate environmental justice considerations into governmental decision-making at all levels. EPA awarded $84.1 million through 88 cooperative agreements nationwide in October 2023.

FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Grant Program. In FY 2022, FEMA prioritized 40% of funding of its Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program for disadvantaged communities, which included a $54 million set-aside for Tribal Nations—doubling prior funding levels. FEMA is approving the Tribal applicants for FY 2022 funding, supported by BIL, and recently released the NOFO for FY 2023. FY 2023 applications are due February 29, 2024. Under the program, FEMA also is providing technical assistance to 28 Tribal Nations that includes support for climate risk assessments, community engagement, partnership building, hazard mitigation, and climate adaptation planning.

$54 MILLION
Tribal set aside to address natural disasters and foster community resilience

Supporting Community-Driven Relocation in Indian Country. In 2022, DOI, with support from USDA, FEMA, the Denali Commission, and other federal agencies, launched three new community-driven relocation projects. Through BIL and IRA investments, DOI committed $115 million for 11 severely-impacted Tribes to advance relocation efforts and adaptation planning Additional support for relocation will be provided by FEMA and the Denali Commission. DOI has completed the planning phase of this initiative, and is currently working on relocation plans, which includes construction. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Services Office committed to allocate $40 million in BIL funding to assist with community-driven relocation of Alaska Native Villages due to climate change, erosion, and flooding. This funding will cover feasibility studies, watershed planning, National Environmental Policy Act compliance, and move design.

White House Council on Environmental Quality Chair Brenda Mallory and Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Chief Cyrus Ben in Mississippi. (Photo courtesy of CEQ).

Tribal Climate Resilience. In July 2023, DOI announced the availability of $120 million in funding through BIL and IRA to help Tribal communities plan for the most severe climate-related environmental threats to their homelands. Tribal communities can use this funding to proactively plan to adapt to these threats and safely relocate critical community infrastructure. This was one of the largest amounts of annual funding made available to Tribes and Tribal organizations in the history of the BIA's Tribal Climate Annual Awards Program.

Environmental Justice Convening. In February 2023, DOJ's Environment and Natural Resources Division committed hosted an Environmental Justice Convening with federal officials and Tribal leaders to develop strategies to prevent and address harms caused by environmental crimes, pollution, and climate change in Indian Country. DOJ also held regional convenings in the Pacific Northwest (July 2023), Minnesota (September 2023), and New Mexico (October 2023). These convenings focused on opening a dialogue between Tribal representatives and federal participants on how to improve litigation and settlement outcomes in DOJ Tribal water rights and treaty rights cases. The convenings also provided an opportunity to receive input from Tribal representatives on how DOJ and other federal agencies can best support Tribal government climate change adaption and resilience plans.

White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Nations Workgroup. The President established the first-ever White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council, which provides independent advice and recommendations to the Chair of CEQ and the Council on ways to address current and historic environmental injustice. In January 2022, an Indigenous Peoples and Tribal Nations Workgroup was established to make recommendations to the Council for improving federal policy regarding environmental justice for Tribal Nations and Indigenous Peoples as it relates to addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health, environmental, climate-related, and other cumulative impacts, as well as the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts, and underinvestment in housing, transportation, water and wastewater, infrastructure, and health care.

Sustainable Energy

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program Funding Releases. The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program helps keep families safe and healthy through reducing costs associated with home energy bills, energy crises, weatherization, minor energy-related home repairs, and other energy costs. ACF allocated 99.75% of the total funds across all sources of funding for FY 2023, supported by BIL. To date, 150 Tribes and Tribal organization recipients have received approximately $68 million in FY 2023 awards.

Increasing Outreach and Collaboration with Tribal Communities for the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program. In support of the Biden-Harris Administration's and ACF's commitment to equity, ACF worked with its Tribal advisors to make this program more accessible to Tribal communities. This includes:

1. Translating the Waterhelp.info website into Cherokee and Yup'ik;
2. Releasing a LIHWAP Tribal Grant Recipients Toolkit responsive to their training and technical assistance needs; and
3. Conducting a webinar panel with Tribal program administrators.

Inflation Reduction Act: Elective Pay & IRA Low-Income Bonus Credit Program Guidance. Treasury issued draft elective pay guidance and conducted Tribal consultation. To increase Tribal access, a Tribal Elective Pay Fact Sheet was published. For the Low-Income Bonus Credit Program, Treasury conducted consultation and issued final guidance for the 2023 Program Year that reserves 200 Megawatts for projects on Indian lands, provides a reservation of available energy for certain applicants like Tribal governments, and permits single-family housing projects based on Tribal consultation feedback.

Solar for All Program. In June 2023, EPA announced its $7 billion Solar for All Program, which is a part of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. EPA has committed to award up to five grants to deploy more rooftop and community solar in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities.

Tribal Electrification Program. On August 15, 2023, DOI announced the launch of a new program and availability of $72.5 million in initial funding through the IRA to help Tribal communities electrify homes. This investment is a critical step toward the goal of electrifying all homes in Indian Country with renewable energy sources and advances the Biden-Harris Administration's work to reach a carbon-free electricity sector by 2035.

Tribal Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates Program. DOE released application guidelines for Tribal governments to apply for $225 million in funding under IRA's Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate program. These funds will provide rebates to low- and moderate-income households installing efficient electric technologies. This program will provide up to $14,000 per eligible Tribal household for energy efficiency and electrification home upgrades.

Implementation of the Indian Energy Purchase Preference at Federal Facilities. DOE, in coordination with WHCNAA, DOD and GSA, launched a new initiative to increase federal agencies' use of Tribal energy through purchasing authority established by Title V of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. This law allows federal agencies to preference purchasing electricity and other energy products from Indian Tribes and Tribal enterprises, though it had been unused for 17 years. In 2023, these agencies held a joint listening session with Tribes to inform OMB Guidance on Federal Procurement of Tribal Power & Energy Products at federal facilities. These agencies are in the process of developing a Secretary of Energy memo to initiate the development of procurement procedures for the Indian Energy Purchase Preference and language to align the preference with the Buy Indian Act. Additionally, these agencies are in the process of developing a **pilot program focused on Tribal energy production** to develop electricity procurement strategies in early 2024. GSA completed market research on this pilot program. In October 2023, **DOE signed a first-of-its kind solar lease agreement for IHS to buy power from Yakama Power Utility**. This procurement agreement serves as a potential model for other Tribes to follow which will save IHS money in the long term and build Tribal energy capacity. Training and resources through DOE for Tribes and Tribal businesses are available to foster technical expertise in the development of further projects of this type.

Renewable Energy Accelerated Deployment Initiative for Indian Country Initiative. At the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit, DOI announced and launched the Renewable Energy Accelerated Deployment Initiative for Indian Country Initiative with the goal of centralizing Native renewable energy expertise and expediting renewable energy resource development on Indian lands. To advance these efforts, in June 2023, BIA formed a READI Technical Workgroup. BIA plans to solicit input from Tribes regarding needed updates to available resources, policy, and regulatory processes for developing energy on Indian lands, and will continue engaging with federal partners.

MOUs to Support Tribal Clean Energy Transition at Hopi and Navajo. DOE announced two new MOUs signed by DOE, DOI, ED, USDA, EPA, DOT, DOL, and the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council to create structured support for the Hopi Tribe and amend the existing Navajo Nation MOU with federal agencies. These MOUs primarily focus on transitioning from convention to clean energy

and identify projects that represent an all-of-Navajo and all-of-Hopi approach to addressing community issues. In May 2023, DOE completed the *Navajo Nation Clean Energy Transition Implementation Plan*.

Offshore Wind Transmission Technical Assistance. DOE's Grid Deployment Office launched this program in direct response to Tribal input to support engaging with Tribal Nations in activities related to the planning and development of U.S. offshore wind transmission. This program offers capacity-building through educational resources, training, and on-call assistance from technical experts and researchers at DOE's national labs. It also provides funding to mitigate the financial burden on Tribal participation in key offshore wind transmission forums. This program is supported in part by the IRA.

Secretary Grandholm with Chairman Jamie Stuck and Vice Chairman Dorie Rios of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi. (Photo courtesy of DOE).

Additional Federal and Private Funding for Tribes to Support Permitting Project Review. The Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council announced an initial $5 million in IRA funding for Tribes to support their capacity and enhance Tribal engagement in the environmental review and authorization process for FAST-41 covered projects. In February 2023, the Council held multiple Tribal consultations in order to help design this program. It is likely that private foundations will match these funds to enable greater and earlier Tribal review of proposed projects and their potential impacts, to better inform government to government consultation.

WATER

Indian Water Rights Settlements. Through DOI, BIL distributed $2.5 billion in funding for Indian Water Rights Settlements. DOI has allocated over $2.4 billion of the BIL Indian Water Rights Settlements to date. The settlements that have received funding are: Ak-Chin Indian Water Rights Settlement Operations, Maintenance & Replacement, Aamodt Litigation Settlement, Ak-Chin Indian Water Community Rights Act, Animas-La Plata (Colorado Ute) Operations, Maintenance & Replacement, Animas-La Plata Project (Colorado Ute), AZ Water Settlements Act Implementation - San Carlos Irrigation Project Rehabilitation, Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement, Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes - Montana Water Rights Protection Act, Crow Tribe Water Rights Settlement, Gila River Indian Community - Pima Maricopa Irrigation Project, Navajo-Gallup O&M, Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Operations, Maintenance & Replacement, Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, Navajo-Utah Water Settlement, Nez Perce Settlement, Nez Perce Water Rights Settlement Operations, Maintenance & Replacement, San Carlos Apache Tribe - Distribution System, San Carlos Irrigation Project Rehab, and the Southern Arizona Water Rights Settlement - Farm Extension.

$2.5 Billion *to Tribal Nations for Indian Water Rights Settlements*

Bolstering Tribal Water Infrastructure. In February 2023, DOI provided $26.33 million through BIL for the Garrison-Diversion Unit of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program in North Dakota for efforts associated with construction of water treatment plants, as well as efforts to support service on the Spirit Lake, Standing Rock and Fort Berthold Reservations; $15 million for the Fort Peck Reservation – Dry Prairie Rural Water System in Montana to support substantial completion of the project; and $12 million for the Jicarilla Apache Rural Water System in New Mexico to support progress toward water treatment

plant upgrades. Currently, DOI is continuing to implement the $250 million in BIL funding for dam safety, water sanitation, irrigation and power systems, and other facilities.

EPA Issues Clean Water Act Final Determination for Bristol Bay in Alaska. In January 2023, EPA issued a Final Determination limiting the use of certain waters within a portion of the Bristol Bay watershed as disposal sites for certain discharges of dredged or fill material associated with developing Pebble deposit. Based on extensive scientific and technical research and engagement with the public, stakeholders, and Tribes, EPA determined that certain discharges associated with developing the Pebble deposit will have unacceptable adverse effects on salmon fishery areas. This Final Determination is just the fourteenth such final determination issued in the 50-year history of the Clean Water Act.

New EPA Baseline Water Quality Standards Rule. In May 2023, EPA published a proposed rule to establish federal water quality standards for Indian reservation water that do not have their own standards in place under the Clean Water Act. This rule would establish human health and environmental objectives as the basis for protections and safeguards water quality until Tribes adopt standards themselves. EPA anticipates the rule will be finalized by Spring 2024.

New EPA Regulations to Protect Tribal Reserved Rights. EPA is in the process of developing a final rule that revises the federal water quality standards regulation to protect Tribal reserved rights, defined as "aquatic and/or aquatic-dependent resources reserved or held by Tribes, either expressly or implicitly, through treaties, statutes, or executive orders." This rule would require states to evaluate Tribal reserved rights to aquatic and/or aquatic-dependent resources in or downstream of an area when developing new and revised water quality standards. If right(s) do exist, the rule would require states to evaluate available data to inform the level of water quality necessary to protect that Tribal reserved right and if necessary, revise their standards to ensure protection. The final rule is anticipated to be published in Winter 2024.

USACE Policy and Procedural Guidance on Water Tribal Partnership Program. USACE finalized comprehensive policy and procedural guidance for its Tribal Partnership Program in November 2023. The program allows the Secretary of the Army, in cooperation with Indian Tribes and the heads of other federal agencies, to carry out water-related planning activities, or activities related to the study, design, and construction of water resource development projects that substantially benefit Indian Tribes and are located primarily within Indian Country or in the proximity to Alaska Native villages.

Fish Restoration

Presidential Memorandum on Salmon Restoration in the Columbia River. In September 2023, as part of the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to honor the United States' obligations to Tribal Nations and protect and restore America's natural wonders for future generations, President Biden signed a *Presidential Memorandum on Restoring Healthy and Abundant Salmon, Steelhead, and Other Native Fish Populations in the Columbia River Basin*. President Biden directed all relevant federal agencies to utilize their existing authorities and available resources—as well as assess what additional authorities and resources they might need—to advance the restoration of salmon, steelhead, and other native fish populations to healthy and abundant levels, while helping ensure the United States upholds its treaty and trust responsibilities to the Tribes. In addition, the President directed the Chair of CEQ and the Director of

OMB to craft a formal partnership with Tribal Nations and states in the Columbia River Basin to ensure that federal, Tribal, and state entities are working together to achieve this goal.

In September 2023, the U.S. announced a historic agreement to support Tribally-led efforts to restore salmon in blocked habitats in the Upper Columbia River Basin. This agreement with the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and Spokane Tribe of Indians provides $200 million over 20 years to advance "Phase 2" of the four-part implementation plan for reintroduction. DOI also announced it is providing $8 million over two years through the Bureau of Reclamation to support these efforts.

Hosted by the Yakama Nation, White House Senior Advisor for Clean Energy Innovation and Implementation, John Podesta, and Deputy Secretary of Energy, David Turk, visit a fishway at Lyle Falls that helps salmon and steelhead travel along the Klickitat River in Washington. (Photo courtesy of EOP IRA Implementation Team).

Expansion of Fish Hatcheries. DOI announced $10 million in funding from the IRA to support the construction and expansion of fish hatcheries in the Pacific Northwest. Additionally, NOAA announced $300 million in IRA funding to address deferred maintenance and repairs to hatcheries that produce Pacific salmon and steelhead. This funding will support Tribal hatchery programs and fish passage facilities to mitigate for declining salmon populations across the Pacific Northwest.

Removal of Enloe Dam. DOI and NOAA have committed over $3 million to the removal of the Enloe Dam in Washington. This effort is led by the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and will provide access to 1,520 miles of potential spawning and rearing habitat for endangered salmon and steelhead. This dam removal continues to be a priority for the Administration as it works with its Tribal partners to restore this habitat and increase the climate resiliency of the region.

Restoring and Supporting Fish Passages. Since 2022, BIL has invested $73 million in 79 projects through the DOI U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Fish Passage Program. These funds are investing in our nation's infrastructure and natural resources by reconnecting fragmented rivers, improving fish migration, and enhancing local economies. With implementation underway for some of these projects, 18 barriers have been removed and 271 stream miles have been reopened as of the end of FY23. When completed, these projects will address 212 barriers and open over 6,200 stream miles. In addition to these efforts, in April 2023, DOI announced a $35 million investment in FY 2023 funding from the BIL for 39 projects in 22 states that will address outdated or obsolete dams, culverts, levees and other barriers fragmenting our nation's rivers and streams. The announcement is part of the Department's five-year $200 million commitment to restore free-flowing waters, allowing fish migration and protecting communities from flooding rivers and streams. It is also part of an over $3 billion investment in fish passage and aquatic connectivity projects under the Investing in America agenda, which includes funding from the BIL and IRA. In July 2023 NOAA announced two funding opportunities totaling $260 million to support new fish passage projects through BIL and IRA. The $175 million Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal will fund projects that reopen migratory pathways and restore access to healthy habitat for fish across the coasts and Great Lakes. The $85 million Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal will support Tribes and Tribal organizations in implementing fish passage work and building Tribal capacity to sustain these efforts.

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Supporting Climate Resilience for Indian Country. To support climate resilience in Indian Country, NOAA recommended more than $16 million in BIL funding for 13 Tribal priority fish passage projects; more than $5.6 million in funding to federal-recognized Tribes for coastal habitat restoration and resilience; and more than $9.4 million for transformational habitat restoration and coastal resilience grants. Additionally, NOAA awarded $1.1 million to three federally-recognized Tribes and one Tribal organization—the Makah Indian Tribe, Quinault Indian Nation, Quileute Tribe, and Columbia River InterTribal Fish Commission—to support Tribal actions related to regional ocean and coastal priorities and initiated Aquaculture Opportunity Area efforts in Alaska.

Coastal Habitat Restoration Program. In September 2023, NOAA announced the availability of $45 million in funding from the BIL and IRA for projects that will advance the coastal habitat restoration and climate resilience priorities of Tribes and underserved communities. Of the $45 million in funding available, $20 million was a Tribal set aside. The remaining $25 million will be available to all eligible applicants to support opportunities for Tribes and underserved communities to meaningfully engage in coastal habitat restoration activities.

Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund. In August 2023, NOAA announced more than $106 million in funding from BIL and IRA for sixteen West Coast and Alaska state and Tribal salmon recovery programs and projects through the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund. Of the 16 applicants recommended to receive funding, 11 are individual Tribes or Tribal commission/consortia. During the Tribal Nations Summit, NOAA released a new NOFO with the next round of funding.

Culvert Removal, Replacement & Restoration. In August 2023, DOT announced over $195 million in funding for 169 projects that replace, remove, and repair culverts and weirs to meaningfully improve or restore fish passage for anadromous fish.

CONSERVATION

CEQ Secures Additional Private Funding for Tribal Conservation. In March 2023, Native Americans in Philanthropy and Biodiversity, in partnership with 15 leading funders, announced its commitment to invest over $102 million to support Tribal-led conservation over the next five years. CEQ expects outside funders to nearly double this number to more than $200 million to support Tribal conservation by the end of 2023.

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Michael Connor with Governor J. Patrick Aguino of Ohkay Owingeh and Governor J. Michael Chavarria of Santa Clara Pueblo signing Design Agreements with each pueblo for the Espanola Valley Ecosystem Restoration project. (Photo courtesy of Army Corps. Of Engineers).

***America the Beautiful* Challenge Grants.** In 2022 and 2023, the Biden-Harris Administration joined the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and public-and private-sector partners in announcing a total of more than $232 million in grants through the *America the Beautiful* Challenge. The $91 million announced in 2022 landscape-scale conservation projects across states, U.S. Territories and Tribal nations, including 14 Tribally led projects in 2022 and 21 in 2023. Approximately 40% of 2023 grants and funding will support projects implemented by Indigenous communities, representing an unprecedented level of funding dedicated to Tribally led projects for a single grant program at NFWF.

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Conservation of Tribal and Ancestral Lands Tribal Projects. NOAA provided $2 million in BIL funding to the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians to purchase and begin conservation efforts for the ecologically and culturally significant "Cape Foulweather" property on the central coastline of Oregon. Additionally, partners have built a conservation and education program that strengthens community resilience in an inclusive, informed manner. Additionally, NOAA provided $3 million in BIL funding to the Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe, through the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program, to acquire and conserve 866 acres of historic Tribal lands along the Tribe's namesake river, the Mattaponi, within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This is the Tribe's first opportunity to acquire ancestral lands for conservation, which will allow them to pursue future activities to enhance culturally significant fish, wildlife, and plants through habitat restoration.

Federal Funding for Indian Country

President Biden's FY 2024 Budget Request

$32.6 Billion
in the President's FY 2024 Budget for Indian country

President Biden is continuing to ensure the Federal Government honors its commitment to Tribal Nations and Native communities. Under his leadership, the Administration has deployed record investments to Tribal Nations and Native communities, including through ARP, the largest direct federal investment in Indian Country in history; BIL, the largest single investment in infrastructure for Indian Country ever; and the IRA, a historic investment in clean energy and climate action with specific funding for Tribal Nations.

The President's 2024 Budget continued to demonstrate the President's commitment through historic investments in IHS, Tribal public safety, affordable housing, education, and more.

These historic proposals were developed in dialogue with Tribal Nations and include over **$32.6 billion** in funding investments for Indian Country including:

An additional $3 billion for IHS, on top of the historic $5.1 billion of advance appropriations from FY 2023, for a total of **$8.1 billion** in discretionary funding.

$4.7 billion (+$690 million) for DOI's Tribal bureaus and reclassifying contract support costs and self-determination leases (often called "105(l) leases") at DOI as mandatory funding. Including:

- **$717 million** in Tribal Public Safety and Justice funding.
- **+$28 million** for Native Language Revitalization grants.
- **+$61 million** over the 2023 enacted level for education programs across BIE, including a **+$148 million** for education construction and replacement funding.
- **$12 million** for a new BIA program to support Tribal land acquisition for conservation and outdoor recreation and promote Tribal sovereignty through Tribal co-stewardship.
- **$2.8 billion** in additional mandatory funding to fulfill Indian Water Rights Settlements.

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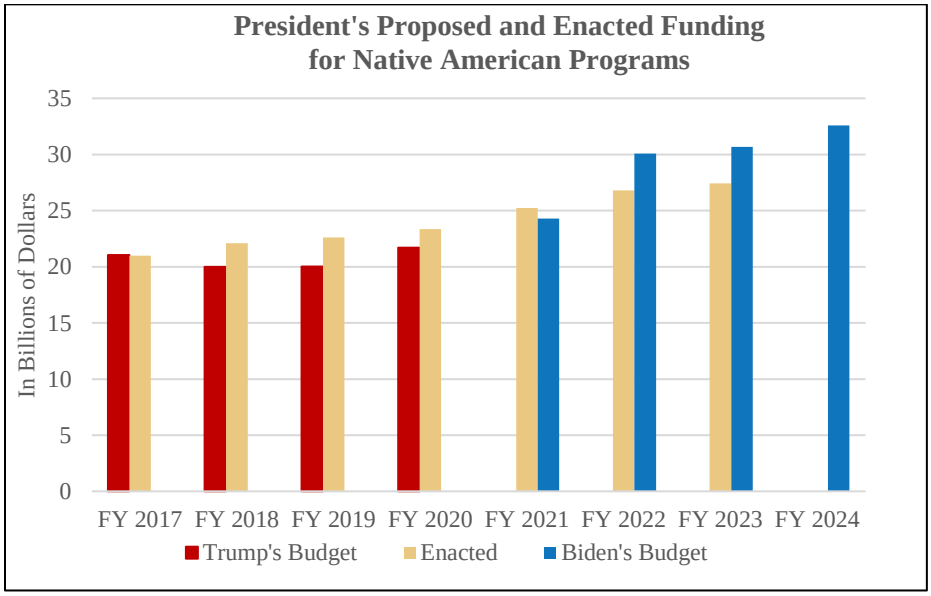
Over $1 billion to fund Tribal efforts to expand affordable housing, improve housing conditions and infrastructure, and increase economic opportunities for low-income families. Including, **a reduction in mortgage insurance fees** for the Indian Housing Loan Guarantee Program.

$35 million for DOJ's culturally-specific services program authorized by VAWA.
$15 million (+$4 million) to assist enforcement of Tribal special domestic violence jurisdiction.
$3 million to support Tribal Special Assistant U.S. Attorneys.
$519 million (+$260 million) for the Family Violence Prevention and Services program and the National Domestic Violence Hotline

$32 million to expand USDA's Rural Partners Network to help Tribal and rural communities access resources and funding to create local jobs, build infrastructure, and support long-term economic stability on their own terms.

$108 million in dedicated resources for cancer activities at IHS as part of the Cancer Moonshot. Requested funds would be used to develop a nationwide coordinated public health and clinical cancer prevention initiative to implement best practices and prevention strategies to address incidence of cancer and mortality among Native populations.

Increases over FY 2023 enacted noted with a "+"



Pulled from Native American Crosscut Numbers. FY 2017 – 2021 budgets only include discretionary funding. FY 2022-2024 budgets include both discretionary and mandatory funding.

OMB Crosscut Improvements. OMB's annual Native American Funding Crosscut is the best picture we have of federal spending to support Indian Country. To provide further budget transparency to Tribal Nations and federal policymakers, OMB published **a significantly more detailed** FY 2024 Crosscut. The FY 2024 Native American Funding Crosscut contains summary funding tables, detailed funding tables, and an appendix that provides detailed funding levels by Agency and program, alongside summaries of the

major changes in FY 2024, the methods agencies used for reporting and selecting programs, and how funds are expended for each program.

Economic Development

The Buy Indian Act

The Buy Indian Act allows for federal agencies to prioritize the procurement of supplies, services, and constructions from Tribal and Native businesses. DOI, GSA, HHS, and SBA are working together to breathe new life into this Act by setting ambitious goals and coordinating resources to meet those goals.

FY 2023 Implementation of the Buy Indian Act
% Of Total Acquisitions Supporting Buy Indian Act

Agency	Goal	Actual	Amount
HHS	--	3.8%	
Indian Health Service	20%	30.6%	$444 million
DOI		16.9%	$1.4 billion
Indian Affairs: Indian Economic Enterprise Awards (ASIA, BIA, BIE)	75%	74.6%	$626 million
Non-Indian Affairs: Small Business and Economic Enterprise Awards	10%	9.10%	$447 million

Buy Indian Act Industry Day and Matchmaking Event. In April 2023, HHS partnered with DOI to host this event to promote Buy Indian Act connections between government and relevant Native procurement businesses. HHS plans to make this an annual event.

SBA Technical Assistance. SBA provided technical assistance to Native businesses to participate in Buy Indian contracting. This included hosting a two-day Tribal, ANC, and NHO Working Group for feedback on the 8(a) Business Development Program and participating in RES 2023.

Other Tribal and Native-Owned Businesses Support

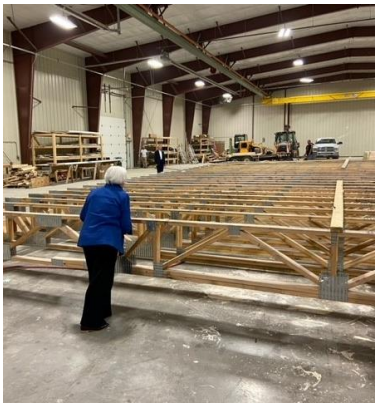
GSA Supports Self-Governance Tribes with Procurement. GSA—in coordination with DOI, IHS, and DOT—is expanding its support for Tribes. GSA is working to reduce administrative burdens and better support the Tribes in their procurement while utilizing self-governance authority to run previously federal programs. To support this effort, GSA conducted a comprehensive government analysis of all funding agencies and authorities to make funding eligibility clear and readily available to Tribes and updated its Tribal webpages to support procurement from Native businesses. GSA is also working to train staff, build audience-specific resources, and develop tools to better support Tribes as they use their self-governance funds. Additionally, GSA is working with DOT, DOI, and IHS to assist Tribal governments in executing acquisitions, including using the Federal Government's negotiating power and to realize cost savings for Tribes. GSA is also working with DOI and SBA to identify Native American-specific procurement policies to create a consolidated government-wide training for contracting officers and officials to understand the many unique ways in which the Federal Government can support Native American businesses. GSA

released its updated Tribal resource guide with details, authorities, and programs that it uses to support Tribes, and announced its new Native American Affairs website, which went live in October 2023.

New Search Feature for Native American Businesses in GSA Search E-Tools. GSA announced its new search feature that enables buyers to search for Native American business categories in the GSA Advantage!, GSA eBuy, and GSA eLibrary e-tools to find commercial products and services. Federal and general users now have the ability to identify current 8(a) status for Native businesses, to support both the Buy Indian Act and interTribal commerce. To supplement these efforts, GSA is also establishing a partnership with SBA to ensure data is accurate in the SAM.gov system.

Inaugural Native American-owned Business Industry Day. GSA hosted its inaugural Native American-owned Business Industry Day in November 2023 to further its efforts to enhance Native American businesses' access to the federal marketplace. At the convening, GSA agency officials and Native industry business leaders looked at FY 2024 opportunities and shared GSA's new market research resources to better engage both the industry and the government when partnering with Native American-owned businesses.

Tribal College Small Business Achievement Pilot Program. The Office of Native American Affairs at SBA launched the Tribal College Small Business Achievement Grant Pilot Program and began accepting applications in July 2023 to fund proposals housed at TCUs. The Pilot Program will fund four locations, each receiving $250,00 to provide funding for entrepreneurial development services to Native American communities, focusing on supplying services to socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs in areas out of reach of current SBA resources.



Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen visiting a factory located on Rosebud Indian Reservation that was funded by Treasury's recovery funds to build housing. (Photo courtesy of Treasury).

Small Business Credit Initiative Awards, Technical Assistance, and Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund. Treasury made the first-ever Tribal awards under this program in June of 2023, which provided $73 million to 39 Tribal Governments. It recently announced over $150 million in increases in State Small Business Credit Initiative Tribal capital allocation awards. This is the first ever inclusion of dedicated, direct support to Tribal governments in SSBCI to support Tribal enterprises and Native small businesses. Utilizing ARP investments, Treasury also increased Tribal Technical Assistance Awards under this program by $21 million. Treasury also opened up a second tranche of the $250 million Tribal set-aside in the Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund which can be used for small business support.

New Small Native Businesses Search Tool. In 2023, BIA developed and released SBA's new Small Business Search Tool—streamlining SBA's Dynamic Business Search Tool—which allows enhanced searchability for government certifications and ownership and self-certifications, including any Native American-owned business. SBA provided help with outreach and raised awareness of this new tool.

New SBA Training on 8(a). SBA is in the process of establishing a new training for SBA staff who work with Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations (ANC), and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHO), including a new training module for Business Opportunity Specialists who assist these enterprises in the federal 8(a) Business Development Program. Additionally, SBA—in collaboration with BIA—is in the process of developing a more streamlined annual certification process for Tribal, ANC, and NHO enterprises in the SBA 8(a) program.

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8(a) Multiple Award Schedule Pool Initiative. In May 2023, GSA and SBA released this initiative to help small disadvantaged businesses participating in the 8(a) program to gain access to more federal contracts in GSA's MAS Program by establishing a pool of 8(a) firms to make it easier for procurement officials to locate and contract with these businesses across industries.

Minority Serving Institutions Industry Day. GSA hosted a virtual Minority Serving Institutions Industry Day in August 2023, including Tribal College and Universities, and hosted a bigger event which included HUBZone—historically underutilized business zones—training and a Minority Serving Institutions Vendor Showcase.

Native Community Development Financial Institutions & Financial Literacy Listening Session. Treasury hosted a listening session on Native Community Development Financial Institutions and a Financial Literacy and Education Commission meeting on Native financial literacy.

Access to Capital in Indian Country

At the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit, several federal agencies—SBA, DOC, DOE, DOI, Treasury, USDA, OMB, and the White House Council of Economic Advisers—announced the Access to Capital Initiative to increase awareness, access, and utilization of financing opportunities for Tribal Nations. This initiative is coordinated by WHCNAA's Economic Development, Energy, and Infrastructure Committee.

Access to Capital Federal Funding Clearinghouse. DOI announced an online beta version of a Federal Funding Clearinghouse, which will provide a one-stop-shop for Tribes and Native businesses to identify up-to-date federal funding opportunities, including grants and loans, across all federal agencies.

Treasury Case Study Report on Access to Capital. In addition, Treasury will report on its market study on Native entity access to New Market Tax Credits, which includes extensive case studies. This market study was created and published by Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund.

List of Tribal Federal Financing Opportunities. Earlier this year, the Initiative published a list online of all federal financing opportunities available to Tribes, Native entrepreneurs, Tribal enterprises, and Native financial institutions as well as hosted webinars and outreach at Tribal events to connect Tribal communities with these resources.

Access to Capital Info Sessions. SBA hosted a series of information sessions with the Native American Finance Officers Association, National Congress of American Indians, and Reservation Economic Summit in 2023 to increase awareness of available funding opportunities to Tribes. These sessions had representatives from SBA, Treasury, DOC, DOI, and WHCNAA to explain the Initiative and provide updates on deliverables from the work plan.

Ongoing Access to Capital Work. The Initiative is in the process of examining policy, regulatory, and statutory actions to strengthen Tribal economic sovereignty; establishing public-private partnerships with philanthropy and the private sector; and considering MOUs with non-federal partners and the use of Intergovernmental Personnel Act Mobility Program to mobilize this Initiative.

Improving Federal Funding Accessibility

OMB Assesses Improving Tribal Access to Federal Grants in Low-Broadband Areas. While Tribal Nations have seen historic federal investments as noted above, administrative burdens, the lack of staffing

resources, reliable broadband, and electricity makes it challenging for some Tribes to access and navigate grant application and compliance processes that are often online. *Executive Order 14058* instructed OMB, including the U.S. Digital Service, to collaborate with federal agencies to conduct human-centered design research and document customer experience challenges related to accessing grant programs to which Tribal governments are entitled. Following the discovery phase, OMB publicly shared findings, and the OMB CX team convened a cross-government team with representatives from HHS, Treasury, OMB's Office of Federal Financial Management, and OSTP to develop, with Tribal customers, a new approach to financial reporting that can support Tribal compliance efforts in low-broadband areas.

Enhancing Tribal Participation in the 477 Program. At the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit, 12 federal agencies announced a *Tribal 477 Program MOA*, which implements the Indian Employment, Training, and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-477, called the "477 Program"). The 477 Program reduces administrative burdens on Tribes by allowing them to consolidate federal funding for job training and workforce development into a single plan with a single reporting requirement. DOI, in coordination with DOL, also developed and released guidance and training materials to assist Tribes in using the 477 Program.

Acting Secretary Su with Navajo Nation President Nygren (Photo courtesy of DOL).

Compliance Trainings and Deadline Extensions. Treasury extended deadlines in over six programs to increase Tribal access to available funds in ARP funded programs. Treasury also conducted its first on-site Tribal Compliance and Grants Management Training for Tribes that lack access to broadband in Alaska and hosted over 5 Tribal compliance trainings.

Reports, Analysis, or Guidance

Implementation of the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act. The Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act makes sure that certain benefit program payments from Tribal governments do not count as income for federal tax purposes. Treasury is currently in the process of drafting its guidance on this law and will seek Tribal consultation for feedback on this guidance.

Offline Compliance Reporting for Tribes without Broadband. Treasury announced its partnership with OMB-Customer Experience Office and HHS-Grants Quality Service Management Office to foster a government-wide approach to offline compliance reporting for Tribes who lack access to reliable broadband.

BIA, BTFA, and IHS Charged with Improving Customer Experience. As part of the Administration's ongoing efforts to improve accountability for customer experience and service delivery under *Executive Order 14058,* BIA, BTFA and now IHS, are designated as *High Impact Service Providers*. These entities are thus charged with improving service quality and experience and receive additional technical assistance from OMB and the General Services Administration. In 2023, BIA analyzed customer feedback and operational data to better understand their probate case processing and have begun implementing solutions aimed at improving processes and reducing the current backlog. BTFA developed and implemented modernized services for beneficiaries managing trust assets, including launching an updated call center and

designing a pilot for an online account management tool. To view the customer trust data reported by both agencies visit the CX data page.

Inflation Reduction Act Tribal Guidebook. As a part of the President's Investing in America Agenda, the White House published an Inflation Reduction Act Tribal Guidebook, which provides an overview of the clean energy, climate mitigation and resilience, agriculture, and conservation-related funding programs in the IRA for which Tribes are eligible.

Assessing the Distributional Effects of Trade and Trade Policy. The results of the USTR-requested, independent investigation on the distributional effects of goods and services trade and trade policy on U.S. workers was released in November 2022. Among other findings, the investigation revealed the lack of disaggregated data and research on the impact of past trade policies on Native/ Indigenous, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander workers within the United States. USTR is now partnering with colleagues across the government to close these data gaps and improve access for researchers. In January 2023, USTR requested that the U.S. International Trade Commission repeat the distributional effects investigation every three years for the next 15 years. Consequently, policymakers, researchers, and the public will be able to monitor and ensure progress in closing data and research gaps and gathering the necessary information to assess-improvements of the distributional effects of trade and trade policy on U.S. workers. Information gathering on the first investigation in the series began in October 2023.

Community Economic Development

Community Economic Development Program Support for Native Communities. This program administered by ACF invests in community development corporations that create and expand businesses and job opportunities in low-income communities. In FY 2023, the program worked to increase interest in Native communities by awarding bonus points for applicants whose projects demonstrate they will support economic mobility in Native communities.

First Lady Jill Biden and Secretary Deb Haaland meet with workers at Menominee Tribal Enterprises' sawmill on the Menominee Nation. in Wisconsin.

Community Service Block Grants. In 2023, HHS released its Community Service Block Grant quarterly allocations to all grant recipients, including Tribes and Tribal organizations. For FY 2023 Quarter Two, the total Tribal allocation was $1.5 million. Eleven of the awardees also consolidated their awards through the 477 Program discussed above. For FY 2023 Quarters Three and Four, Tribes received $2.7 million.

Implementation of the Community Reinvestment Act. In October 2023, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Federal Reserve Board, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation issued a final rule to strengthen and modernize regulations implementing the Community Reinvestment Act to better achieve purposes of the law. The Act, originally passed in 1977, encourages banks to help meet the credit needs of local communities, including communities of color and low-and moderate- income neighborhoods.

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This final rule clarifies and expands CRA eligibility to increase access to capital and credit in Native American communities and on Indian Reservations, which historically had little impact in the past.

Government Support and Entitlement Policies

Developing Training for the Native American Precedent and Resource Center. SSA has been working to create a Native American Precedent and Resource Center in order to address concerns from Tribes about Tribal income and Supplemental Security Income payments. This includes a repository of information regarding Tribal income programs, documentation of income, and potential exclusions under Supplemental Security Income policy. SSA has finished developing its training on relevant policies and exclusions that can mitigate impact on benefits for people who receive financial support through Tribal benefits.

Treasury Tribal Consultation Policy. Treasury announced the publication of its revised Tribal Consultation policy, extending consultation obligations to IRS.

Flexible Guidance for COVID Fiscal Recovery Funds and Tribal Housing Stability Report. Treasury issued guidance implementing the Consolidated Appropriation Act of 2022 edits to the $20 billion Tribal set aside in the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund to increase flexibility in the use of funds. Additionally, Treasury released its *Tribal Housing Stability Report* featuring housing construction, preservation, and stability projects and services that Tribes have invested pandemic recovery funding to reduce barriers to affordable housing at the 2023 Tribal Nations Summit.

Food and Agriculture

Bison Restoration Initiative

At the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit, DOI, in coordination with USDA, announced a plan to restore bison populations.

Secretarial Order on Bison Restoration. Secretary Haaland issued *Secretary Order 3410: Restoration of American Bison and Prairie Grasslands* to enhance DOI's work to restore wild and healthy populations of American bison and the prairie grassland ecosystem through collaboration among DOI bureaus and partners such as other federal agencies, states, Tribes, and landowners using the best available science and Indigenous Knowledge. The Order formally established a Bison Working Group.

New Branch of Bison Restoration. BIA's Office of Trust Services is in the process of establishing a Branch of Bison Restoration that will work toward restoring wild and healthy populations of American bison and the prairie grassland ecosystem. This Branch will collaborate within and outside the Federal Government to achieve this goal, and will offer a program for Tribes working on Bison to secure supportive services from DOI. This program will support Tribes establishing large bison herds, restoring grassland ecosystems on Tribal lands, and entering into co-stewardship agreements for bison management. BIA is now recruiting and hiring staff for the office.

Bison Apprenticeship Program. BIA is establishing a Bison Apprenticeship Program to bolster a talented and large workforce within Tribal communities to help Tribes with bison management. The program will

provide apprenticeship opportunities for Tribal youth to work on lands managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service.

Partnership with InterTribal Bison Council. DOI has partnered with the InterTribal Bison Council (ITBC) to work on bison restoration, and USDA entered into a formal MOU with ITBC to support Tribal bison conservation. In July 2023, funds were provided to the ITBC to support herd development work.

$5 Million for Tribal-Led Bison Restoration. In September 2023, DOI announced $5 million, including $3.5 million from IRA, to support the restoration of bison populations and grassland ecosystems in Tribal communities. The funding will support Tribally-led initiatives to strengthen bison conservation and expansion, improved management of existing herds, and ecosystem restoration efforts in native grassland habitats.

$5 MILLION
for Tribal-led bison restoration

Handbook for Humane Handling and Harvesting of Bison and Food Sovereignty and Safety Curriculum. USDA, in partnership with ITBC developed and released a handbook on best practices for humane handling and harvesting of bison in the field and created a hands-on curriculum and training focused on food sovereignty and food safety in September 2023. Additionally, USDA strengthened value-added bison meat processing through ITBC's creation of a mobile buffalo processing trailer and developed the first Indigenous Animals Meat Processing Grant for processing indigenous animals.

Bison Purchasing Pilot Program. USDA strengthened bison markets through a new Bison Purchasing Pilot Program aimed at offering more localized ground bison meat for Tribal communities through the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations. The pilot changes how USDA purchases bison to better support buying meat from local, small, and mid-sized bison herd managers and delivering it directly to local Tribal communities. In October 2023, USDA awarded bison contracts to four Tribal and local producers:

1. Akicita Consulting (owned by the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe);
2. Brownotter Buffalo Ranch (operating on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation);
3. Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Buffalo Authority Corporation; and
4. Dakota Pure Bison (operating on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation).

Agreements to Promote Native Grasses. USDA entered into Cooperative Agreements with the Tribal Alliance of Pollinators and the Institute of American Indian Arts to propagate native grasses and forbs that support bison.

Supporting Public-Private Partnerships for Tribal Bison Expansion and Conservation. USDA and DOI have joined together to support the InterTribal Buffalo Council and Native Americans and Philanthropy in their partnership with World Wildlife Fund, The Nature Conservancy, and other buffalo focused non-profit organizations. This relationship will improve upon the federal investments already being made by USDA-DOI Buffalo Initiative in grasslands and working lands restoration, Tribal buffalo conservation and expansion, and opening Tribal buffalo market opportunities.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Subsistence Management. Subsistence practices are vital to the life ways of Alaska Native communities and people, who depend heavily on subsistence practices for their nutritional, social, economic, and traditional cultural needs. In response to Tribal recommendations heard through DOI-led consultations and listening sessions, the President's FY 2024 budget proposes to transfer the functions of the Office of Subsistence Management from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to the Office of the Assistant Secretary

for Indian Affairs, along with a program increase of $2.5 million for the program. The requested increases directly respond to comments received on ways to strengthen the program going forward.

FDPIR Tribal Self-Determination Demonstration Project Expanded to 16 Tribes. The 2018 Farm Bill authorized the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations Demonstration Projects. Through these projects, Tribes have more control over the contents of their food packages, selecting and purchasing some of the foods themselves. Cherokee Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Gila River Indian Community, Quinault Indian Nation, Sokaogon Chippewa Community, Spirit Lake Tribe, Tohono O'odham Nation, and White Mountain Apache Tribe collectively received $4.4 million dollars in Round 2, bringing the grant total thus far to over $10 million to 16 Tribal Nations. USDA previously funded eight other Tribal nations, bringing the total to $10 million across the 16 Tribal nations participating in this demonstration project. FNS worked with BIA on the negotiation of the final contracts with the selected Tribes.

$10 Million
to 16 Tribal Nations through the FDPIR Tribal Self-Determination Demonstration Project

Indigenous Food Hubs Pilot Program. At the September 2022 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, DOI announced its Indigenous Food Hubs Pilot Program, which aims to provide traditional Indigenous foods and commit to adopting Indigenous-based land and agricultural management practices to four BIE-operated schools and four BIA-operated detention centers. Currently, DOI's eight selected food hubs—four BIE-operated schools and four BIA-operated detention centers—are fully operational and, in 2023, hired its first nutritionist to join and lead the Indigenous Food Hub program.

Food Sovereignty and Public Health Center at North Dakota State University. USDA's Office of Tribal Relations received an appropriation to develop a Tribal Public Health Resource Center at a land grant university with existing Indigenous public health expertise to expand current partnerships and collaborative efforts with Indigenous groups, including Tribal colleges to improve the delivery of culturally appropriate public health services and functions in American Indian communities focusing on Indigenous food sovereignty. The office is working with North Dakota State University to develop a center focused on the intersection of Tribal food sovereignty and public health**.** The first project will be a summer program for students to engage with leaders and experts in the food sovereignty field to provide them with the tools to improve public health in their communities.

Indigenous Foraging and Cooking Videos. USDA partnered with the North American Traditional Indigenous Food Systems to produce a series of regional-based videos on Indigenous foods foraging and cooking for the Northeast and Southeast regions to complement USDA's Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (commonly referred to as "commodities") food packages. Last year, USDA released videos for the Midwest, Mountain Plains, and Southwest regions, and next year videos will be produced for Alaska and Hawaii.

***Sovereignty Gardens*: Children's Educational Animated Series to Promote Indigenous Food Sovereignty and Gardening.** This series of short educational shows will help build excitement and pride in children about using Indigenous Knowledge in gardening, food sovereignty, traditional foods, and healthy eating habits. "Sovereignty Gardens" uses animation and puppetry to follow Stompy the buffalo and his friend Bran through a series of learning adventures, which include cameos by Indigenous and scientific leaders. USDA's Office of Tribal Relations entered into a cooperative agreement with Dr. Lee Francis (Pueblo of Laguna) (Indigi-Nerd/Native Realities) to create this animated series.

Produce Prescription Pilot Program. In 2022, Congress authorized IHS $3 million annually to create a Produce Prescription Pilot Program to increase access to produce and other traditional foods within Native communities. The pilot will demonstrate and evaluate the impact of Produce Prescription Programs on

Native people and their families, specifically by reducing food insecurity; improving overall dietary health by increasing fruits, vegetables, and traditional food consumption; and improving healthcare outcomes. To date, there are five Tribes/Tribal Organizations that have been awarded funding for this purpose.

HEALTH CARE

Hall of Tribal Nations at HHS. In 2023, HHS installed and formally dedicated a Hall of Tribal Nations at HHS headquarters in Washington, D.C. The Hall displays the flags of the Tribal Nations represented on the Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee and honors the Nation-to-Nation relationship with all Tribes.

Strategy for Tribes to Access Strategic National Stockpile. At the 2023 Tribal Nations Summit, HHS announced a forthcoming strategy for best practices on how IHS, Tribal health departments, and Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) can access the lifesaving federal repository of drugs and medical supplies to support Native communities, prevent supply shortages, and reduce health disparities. In March 2023, it hosted a virtual Tribal consultation to inform its strategy.

MENTAL HEALTH

Implementation of National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. SAMHSA awarded funds to five Tribal grantees, including the Seattle Indian Health Board, to implement the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* to support community efforts to prevent suicide. This program intends to enhance collaboration with key community stakeholders; raise awareness of the available resources for suicide prevention; and implement lethal means safety. Currently, these grantees are receiving technical assistance to implement the strategy.

Behavioral Health Grant Awards and Agenda. In 2023, 48 Tribes and Tribal organizations received SAMHSA behavior health grants to prevent and reduce suicidal behavior and substance use/misuse, reduce the impact of trauma, and promote mental health among Native youth. In addition, Cherokee Nation and Native American Health Center, Inc. signed cooperative agreements to address suicide, and SAMHSA launched a new program to support an American Indian Alaska Native Behavioral Health Center for Excellence that will develop and disseminate culturally informed, evidence-based behavioral health information and provide technical assistance and training on issues related to addressing behavioral health disparities in Native communities.

48 Tribes
received SAMHSA behavioral health grants

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Tribal Focus. HHS announced a new $35 million grant opportunity, enabled by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, to better support the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline services in Tribal communities. This program aims to:

1. Ensure Native people have access to culturally competent, trained 988 crisis center support through existing and/or new 988 Lifeline centers;
2. Improve integration and support between 988 crisis centers, Tribal Nations, and Tribal organizations to ensure there is navigation and follow-up care; and
3. Facilitate collaborations between Tribal, state, and territory health providers, UIOs, law enforcement, and other first responders in a manner that respects Tribal sovereignty.

To date, SAMHSA funded a total of 43 Tribes and Tribal organizations through the Support for 988 Tribal Response Cooperative Agreements and is providing technical assistance to Tribal grantees to assist with crisis care response in Tribal communities.

Tribal Behavioral Health Initiative and Agenda. HHS released its *Roadmap for Behavioral Health Integration*, which leverages President Biden's bold national strategy to prevent, treat, and provide long term recovery supports for mental illness and substance use disorders. As a part of this roadmap, SAMSHA is updating the *National Tribal Behavioral Health Agenda* to reflect the behavioral health climate post-pandemic and to improve accessibility. SAMHSA is in the process of creating a Tribal landing webpage on the SAMHSA website and will host a series of ongoing trainings on the Cultural Wisdom Declaration and the foundational elements of the Trial Behavioral Health Agenda.

Mental Health Awareness Training Grants. Through the Mental Health Awareness Training Grants, SAMHSA awarded 25 grantees. This grant included a set-aside that allotted up to two awards to be made to Tribes or Tribal organizations. This program trains individuals (i.e., school personnel, emergency services personnel, veterans, armed service members, etc.) to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental disorders and how to safely de-escalate crisis situations involving individuals with a mental illness and; provides education on resources available in the community for individuals with mental illness and other relevant resources, including how to establish linkages with school and/or community-based mental health.

Behavioral Health and Wellness Program. Over the past year. BIE successfully grew its Behavioral Health and Wellness Program. The program provides students and staff at all Bureau-funded schools and programs with Indigenous focused, evidence-based and trauma-informed behavioral health and wellness supports. Services are tailored to meet the unique and diverse mental, cultural, spiritual, emotional, and social needs of Indigenous communities served by BIE. Services include onsite crisis support, tele-behavioral health counseling focused on providing short-term, solution-focused, and culturally sensitive virtual counseling, a BIE-specific 24/7 call line, and crisis support. The clinical team is primarily staffed with Indigenous clinicians who have direct experience serving Native communities. The program also provides various types suicide prevention and other resiliency-focused topics trainings and technical assistance. Staff at BIE-funded schools will continue to have access to training and certification for Youth Mental Health First Aid, virtual talking circles, monthly behavioral health webinars, and professional development opportunities.

CANCER

Cancer Prevention and Intervention in Native Communities. IHS launched a cancer working group and established clinical and community demonstration projects that will implement evidence-based interventions to increase preventive screenings, enhance referrals for follow-up and/or treatment, and support cancer patients and their families. These demonstration projects include:

1. Colorectal Cancer Screening Pilot project launched in New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Minnesota;
2. Increased training for Public Health Aides to provide cancer navigation for patients, with the goal of assisting patients and families with overcoming the medical, financial, and emotional burdens that cancer brings; and
3. Partnerships with academic cancer centers to establish regional cancer hubs to allow patients and families to access and receive cancer care near home.

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Indian Health Service Improvements

Indian Health Service Sanitation Facilities Construction. Over FYs 2022-2023, IHS allocated $1.4 billion of a total $3.5 billion investment from BIL to build projects that will bring critical sanitation services to Tribal communities across the country.

Jerry Carlyle, vice-chairman of the San Xavier District, performs a traditional blessing to welcome First Lady Jill Biden at the San Xavier Health Center in the San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Nation near Tucson, Arizona.

Ongoing Prioritization and Mission Support for Indian Health Service Communities. HHS's Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) is continuing to prioritize officer assignments, recruitment efforts, and deployment for IHS communities. As of June 2023, approximately 25% of all Public Health Service (PHS) Officers serve within IHS to support the health and wellness of Native American populations throughout Indian Country. CCHQ also has established policies and procedures that prioritize recruitment and assignments of PHS to IHS over other operation divisions.

Health Information Technology Modernization at Indian Health Service. The IHS awarded a 10-year contract to General Dynamics Information Technology to build, configure, and maintain a new enterprise Electronic Health Record system utilizing Oracle Cerner technology. This selection was made after a detailed and rigorous federal acquisition process that was open to all vendors. Throughout the process, the IHS coordinated with Tribal and urban Indian organization partners through extensive Tribal engagement via Tribal consultations, listening sessions, urban confers, advisory committee meetings, an Industry Day, and the participation of hundreds of Tribal, urban Indian, and IHS system users in vendor product demonstrations. The Health Information Technology Modernization Program will help improve patient safety and outcomes, clinical quality measures, agency performance reporting, and disease management.

Health Research and Data Sharing

Tribal Consultation on New Draft HHS Tribal Epidemiology Data Access Policy. HHS announced Tribal consultation on its new draft Tribal Epidemiology Data Access policy. The Department-wide policy will include guidance on data available to Tribes and Tribal Epidemiology Centers on the development of HHS division-specific protocols for responding to Tribal epidemiology data requests.

Newly Expanded Native American Health Research Center and Programs. The Newly Expanded Native Research Centers for Health Program is a Native health research capacity-building program. NIH announced the release of an updated NARCH Notice of Funding Opportunity that incorporates improvements to the program based on feedback from a recent program evaluation and formal Tribal Consultation. Updates include significantly increasing the portion of the budget in each award that must be spent at Native organizations; providing clearer instructions for applications and reviewers; adopting culturally appropriate reviewer guideline language in the review criteria; and extending awards from four to five years to allow Tribal organizations more time to develop and accomplish their goals. Additionally, NIH launched the *Native Collective Research Effort to Enhance Wellness Program: Addressing Overdose, Substance Use, Mental Health, and Pain* to support research driven by Native communities toward culturally-based interventions that address the overdose crises.

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New Native Health Research Related Grants. NIH also announced several grant programs in development to build Tribal health research capacity including:

1. Grants to assist Tribes with the application process;
2. Tribal Institutional Review Board Development grants to train key personnel to review and monitor research involving human subjects and ensure that it is culturally appropriate; and
3. Tribal institutional training grants to support undergraduate and graduate students.

Substance Use

National Tribal Recovery Summit. SAMHSA hosted the National Tribal Recovery Summit in Dallas, Texas. The summit was an opportunity to share best practices and experiences that can help improve substance use disorder recovery-related outcomes. Attendees discussed strategies for successful service to the community, emerging innovations, and the importance of sharing information about successful practices. Approximately 100 people attended in-person and almost 200 attended virtually and speakers were mostly Tribal citizens serving their communities to promote recovery.

Secretary Becerra tours the Cherokee Health Center. (Photo courtesy of HHS).

Funding to Support Opioid Epidemic Response Efforts. In May 2022, SAMHSA announced $55 million in funding for its Tribal Opioid Response grant program, which addresses the overdose crisis in Tribal communities by increasing access to FDA-approved Medications for the treatment of Opioid Use Disorder and supporting the continuum of prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support services for Opioid Use Disorder and co-occurring substance use disorders. To date, SAMHSA has awarded 398 Tribal grantees, totaling to $310 million in funds. Additionally, SAMHSA awarded 13 Tribes or Tribal Organizations funding for the Medication Assisted Treatment Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction Program. This program increases access to this treatment and decreases illicit opioid use and prescription opioid misuse.

Increased Outreach and Training for Tribes in High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas. The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy's Drug-Free National Program engaged the leaders of the 33 regional High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas, including in Indian Country, to inform them of resources, such as the Overdose Mapping and Application Program information sharing and training opportunities.

Tribal Learning Series. SAMHSA's Office of Tribal Affairs and Policy hosts a bi-monthly internal Tribal Learning Series. These meetings help educate SAMHSA staff on Tribal sovereignty and working with Tribes.

Public Health funding

In August 2023, CDC's National Center for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Public Health Infrastructure and Workforce launched a new five-year cooperative agreement— CDC-RFA-TO-23-0001: Strengthening Public Health Systems and Services in Indian Country—to help improve public health outcomes and lessen health inequities in Indian Country. This program continues CDC's commitment to Tribal health. As of

October 2023, CDC has provided nearly $26 million to 26 federally-recognized Native Tribes and regional Native Tribally-designated organizations to improve Tribal public health infrastructure and services to Tribal communities.

NATIVE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

On June 15, 2023, the Supreme Court upheld the Indian Child Welfare Act in *Haaland v. Brackeen*, a vital law for Native families and children. It protects the best interest of Native children, protects the future of Tribal Nations, and honors Tribal sovereignty. The Biden-Harris Administration celebrates this decision, and will continue to defend and uplift this law in its programs and policies.

CHILD CARE

Meeting the Child Care Needs in Tribal Nations: Request for Information. HHS published a *Meeting with Child Care Needs in Tribal Nations: Request for Information* in July 2023, requesting comment on ACF's Child Care and Development Fund program and funding policies for Tribes, which is open until January 2, 2024. Through this process, ACF will find out whether the current program addresses child care needs and the unique challenges in Tribal communities.

Increased Facilities and Expansion of Tribal Child Care and Development Fund Construction and Renovation. ACF has supported a dramatic expansion of Child Care and Development Fund resources directed toward early childhood facilities projects in Tribal communities over the past six years. Funding has increased substantially, from $137 million in 2017 to $557 million in 2023, as well as an additional $1.2 billion in ARP funds in 2021. ACF developed a Tribal Strategic Plan to effectively tailor support and resources to assist Tribes in maximizing the use of their funding, including through Tribal set aside of funding for construction and major renovation of Tribal child care facilities. In 2022, ACF approved 49 construction and major renovation funding requests. In May 2023, ACF's Office of Child Care approved Tribal CCDF plans for 214 Tribal grantees for three years and allowed Tribes to obtain fiscal waivers to make these funding awards more flexible, along with support to help Tribes spend these funds by their extended deadlines. In September 2023, ACF approved another 25 projects for construction and major renovation for childhood facilities. Additionally, ACF announced a joint application and streamlined process for Tribal Early Childhood Facilities using both Head Start and CCDF funds that is set to be completed in Summer 2024.

Tribal Protections in Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care Oversight Toolkit. In October 2023, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a new Medicaid toolkit, the "Tribal Protections in Medicaid and CHIP Managed Care Oversight Toolkit," for states to provide more detail on what states can do to maximize the benefits of Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) managed care for Native enrollees and for Indian Health Care Providers (IHCP), consistent with the statutory and regulatory Indian managed care protections. Specifically, the toolkit includes resources and strategies on the following topics for states:

1. Improving state-Tribal relationships in the implementation of the Indian protections in Medicaid and CHIP Indian managed care, including through Tribal consultation;
2. Showing how maintaining a Tribal liaison position can improve access to care for Natives and improve claim processing and relationships between states, plans, and IHCPs;
3. Improving contracting between managed care plans and IHCPs by using the model Medicaid and CHIP-managed care contract addendum;

4. Developing internal processes to improve understanding of the managed care delivery system for Natives and IHCPs; and
5. Showing how states can partner with Tribes or Tribal organizations to develop an Indian Managed Care Entity.

Cross-Cultural Understanding and Cultural Humility Training for Early Childhood Researchers Working with American Indian and Alaska Native Communities. In October 2023, ACF created and published Cross-Cultural Understanding and Cultural Humility Facilitator Training Materials that are designed for training data collectors participating in the American Indian and Alaska Native Family and Child Experience Survey to ensure that research study staff are rigorously trained on how to work respectfully within Tribal programs and communities. The Facilitator Training Materials focus on how to practice respectful and ethical research in Native communities, including increasing cultural awareness and reflecting on one's own assumption and biases.

Reproductive Health Care

Ensuring Access to High-Quality Contraception at IHS. In response to President Biden's *Executive Order on Strengthening Access to Affordable, High-Quality Contraception and Family Planning Services*, IHS added new over-the-counter contraception options to the IHS National Core Formulary, which will expand access to high-quality contraception for patients. IHS encouraged Tribally or UIO operated IHS facilities to make the same options available to patients.

Youth Mental Health

Behavioral Grant Awards. In September 2023, SAMHSA awarded nine Tribes and Tribal organizations funding for the Planning and Developing Infrastructure to Promote the Mental Health of Children, Youth, and Families in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities Program. This program provides Tribes and Tribal organizations tools and resources to plan and design a family-driven, community-based, and culturally and linguistically competent system of care.

Maternal Health

National Maternal Mental Health Hotline Partnership with IHS. In May 2022, HHS's Health Resources and Services Administration launched a new National Maternal Mental Health Hotline (1-833-TLC-MAMA), which provides 24/7, free, confidential emotional support, resources, and referrals to any pregnant and postpartum mothers facing mental health challenges. This hotline features professional counselors that offer support in English and Spanish through phone and text. Interpreter services are available in 60 additional languages and, a relay service is offered for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. In July 2023, the hotline partnered with IHS to promote the hotline through IHS clinics; informational webinars for IHS grantees, providers, and partners; and "starter kits" by mail.

Providing Culturally-Specific Resources on Maternal and Child Health at IHS. IHS launched a patient-centered maternal and child health website for access to reproductive health information and resources available through IHS and other divisions. IHS is also working in collaboration with the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board to develop a training curriculum on Indian Country Care and Access for Pregnant People—on topics that include contraception and postpartum care.

IHS Maternal Child Safety Workgroup. IHS established a multidisciplinary workgroup of IHS leaders from Obstetrics/Gynecology, Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Behavioral Health, Chief

Medical Officers, and IHS Headquarters to address rising Native maternal and infant mortality rates, and provide best practices for safe and quality care at IHS sites. In September 2023, the Workgroup completed its draft of the Obstetric Readiness in the Emergency Department Manual, which provides rural sites in maternity care deserts with readiness checklists, quick reference protocols, and training curriculum for safe triage, stabilization, and transfer of pregnant patients and newborns. Currently, the Manual is pending public release.

Advisory Committee on Infant and Maternal Mortality Focus on Improving the Health and Safety of Native Mothers and Infants This Committee advises the HHS Secretary on department activities, partnerships, policies, and programs directed at reducing infant mortality, maternal mortality, severe maternal morbidity, and improving the health status of infants and women before, during, and after pregnancy. In 2021, the Committee decided to focus its attention on developing recommendations to improve birth outcomes within the Native population and submitted these recommendations to HHS in December 2022. Work to implement the recommendations with support from HRSA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, IHS, and other federal agencies has been ongoing throughout 2023.

$1.2 Million

to South Puget InterTribal Planning Agency to provide diapers and diapering supplies

Diaper Distribution Demonstration and Research Pilot Program. ACF launched this Pilot Program to help address diaper needs and increase economic security, and in 2022 awarded the South Puget InterTribal Planning Agency $1.2 million to provide diapers and diapering supplies to children at the Confederated Tribes of Chehalis Reservation, the Nisqually Tribe, the Shoalwater Bay Tribe, the Skokomish Tribe, and the Squaxin Island Tribe. Throughout 2023, the pilot project has been adding diaper distribution to the established monthly food distribution program for all Tribal members. In 2023, the second year of the program, the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation was selected. Further, the "Birth of a Child" Life Experience team is piloting a *Newborn Supply Kit*, which includes basic physical supplies and health products for baby and mom, crucial to the first few weeks after delivery, in New Mexico with a community partner that serves Tribal customers as one of three sites nationwide.

Healthy Start Piloting a *Benefits Bundle* for New Families. To better serve families interacting with the Health Resources and Services Administration's Healthy Start program, the "Birth of a Child" Life Experience team is collaborating with the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board, Turtle Mountain Reservation Healthy Start team on a *Benefits Bundle* Peer Navigator employment initiative. The *Benefits Bundle* project aims to connect families welcoming a new baby to a bundle of supportive services through personal and community-tailored case management with a mom that successfully completed the Healthy Start program and can be a trusted and convenient peer navigator.

IHS Piloting Maternity Care Coordinator Program. IHS is piloting a Maternity Care Coordinator Program to provide telehealth and home visitation to support to the maternal and infant dyad. This program aims to increase screening, education, and intervention during pregnancy and during the postpartum period.

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. HHS announced a plan to issue an additional NOFO in 2024 for the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. The program supports pregnant women and parents with young children who live in communities that face greater risks and barriers to achieving positive maternal and child health outcomes. In 2023, the program more than doubled its Tribal set-aside funding from the previous year—from $12 million to $30 million. This increased funding was able to support 41 grantees, compared to 23 in FY 2022.

41 Grantees

received awards for the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

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VETERANS

NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVE

At the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit, VA and HUD launched an interagency initiative through WHCNAA's Health Committee to increase access to care and services for Native veterans at risk or experiencing of homelessness in urban areas. This initiative involves partnerships with UIOs and focuses on intake and referral services to ensure that Native American veterans are aware of and have access to available resources.

The Initiative took the following actions in 2023:

- VA and IHS developed an **informational brochure** for Native American veterans experiencing homelessness and distributed these brochures to UIOs, IHS facilities, and external partners across the country.
- VA and IHS developed and launched an **interagency interactive map** of UIOs and VA healthcare systems with points of contact information in June 2023.
- VA developed and implemented **training webinars** for UIOs to raise awareness of VA homeless programs among Native American veterans and to build or increase effective, responsive, and collaborative relationships between UIOs and VA.
- VA and various UIOs collaborated on **Stand Down events** in Seattle, Phoenix, Los Angeles, Albuquerque, and soon Alaska. These one-to-three-day events bring VA staff and volunteers together to provide food, clothing, and health screenings to homeless and at-risk veterans and receive referrals for healthcare, housing solutions, employment, substance use treatment, mental health counseling, and other essential services.

CEMETERIES

Expanded Allowance for Qualifying Burials in Tribal-Owned Cemeteries. In March 2022, President Biden signed the Burial Equity for Guards and Reserves Act, which expands the VA's authority to pay a plot allowance benefit for qualifying burials in cemeteries owned by a Tribal organization on trust land or held in trust for a Tribal organization. Previously, only state veteran cemeteries—and not Tribal veterans cemeteries—were eligible for plot allowances. This Act allows for retroactive payment of this benefit and began on January 5, 2023.

National Cemetery Administration Meetings for Tribal Veteran Cemeteries. Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Matt Quinn and staff from VA's National Cemetery Administration are in the process of meeting virtually with leaders of Tribal governments operating grant-funded cemeteries to raise awareness of VA resources, learn about Tribal burial customs, and ensure that current requirements are not preventing individuals from using Tribal cemeteries or practicing their customs and traditions.

Metlakatla Veterans Memorial Cemetery. In July 2022, the Metlakatla Veterans Memorial Cemetery—the first VA grant-funded Tribal veterans cemetery in Alaska and the 14th Tribal cemetery overall through the Veterans Cemetery Grants Program—was officially dedicated in a ceremony attended by local leaders, veterans, and U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan. The new Tribal veterans cemetery consists of crypts and gravesites as well as a memorial wall. It is located in Annette Island, Alaska, which is home to the only remaining Tribal reserve in the state.

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VETERAN'S HEALTH AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Copayment Exemption for American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans. The Veterans Health Administration amended its medical regulations to implement a statute exempting eligible Indian and urban Indian veterans from copayment requirements. This change is based on a requirement within the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020. As of October 2023, 2,674 Native veterans have been approved for the copayment exemption, with copayment cancellations totaling just over $1.5 million.

Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act. In August 2022, President Biden signed the bipartisan Sergeant First Class Health Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics ("PACT") Act. The PACT Act is will substantially increase the numbers of Native veterans receiving VA compensation benefits and, increase Native veteran eligibility for VA healthcare. Under expanded PACT Act eligibility, 3,453 Native veterans enrolled in VA healthcare between August 2022 to May 2023—a 21.63% increase from the same time period last year. Additionally, the VA Office of Tribal Government Relations held 43 Claim Clinics/PACT Act events in FY 2023—over 2,000 Native veterans attended these events. This year, VA implemented toxic exposure screenings at VA medical centers nationwide. As of June 2023, more than 3.7 million veterans have received toxic exposure screenings.

Veterans Affairs Utilization of Data for American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans. VA's Data Governance Council announced it recently approved enterprise race and ethnicity collection standards that include Native veterans. The Council is also working towards developing and updating standards for data collection more specific to Tribes, as well as an optimization of IT systems that store this data.

VA Secretary Denis McDonough with Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren. (Photo courtesy of VA).

Tribal Health Strategic Plan and Survey at Veterans Health Administration Office of Tribal Health. In June 2022, VHA established the Office of Tribal Health to support Native veterans—engaging with Tribal Nations, Native veterans, and other partners on priorities that support Native veterans. This year, it developed and implemented a strategic plan and will complete a survey to attain a baseline understanding of work across the VHA healthcare system in support of Native veterans to identify gaps and best practices to inform strategic priorities, goals, policies, guidance, and resource sharing.

Suicide Prevention for American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans. In 2022, teams within VA's Office of Tribal Government Relations met in Oklahoma to share insights on how the existing Governor's Challenge model to prevent suicide prevention needs to be adjusted and reimagined. In addition to this, the White House Integrated Task Force for Military and Veterans Mental Health, which VA is a part of, awarded $52.2 million to 80 organizations through the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program to coordinate a range of suicide prevention, education, and resource services for veterans and their families. Organizations awarded include: Choctaw Nation Warrior Wellness Program, the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, and the Televeda Project Hózhó.

Veterans Affairs Tribal Representation Expansion Project. The VA Tribal Representation Expansion Project aims to collaborate with Tribal governments to promote access to culturally competent representation to Native veterans. Generally, individuals may represent veterans in their VA claims if they

are authorized as an accredited representative of a VA-recognized organization, agent, attorney, or specially authorized by VA's General Counsel. The project seeks to expand the number of VA-recognized Tribal organizations and individuals providing representation in Indian Country through outreach, training, and innovative process. Both the Navajo Nation and the Gila River Indian Community have been accredited.

TRANSPORTATION

ELECTRIC VEHICLE INITIATIVE FOR TRIBAL NATIONS

At the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit, ten federal agencies—DOT, DOE, DOI, DOL, ED, EPA, HHS, HUD, GSA, and USDA—announced their commitment to ensure Tribal Nations and Native communities are a part of the Electric Vehicle (EV) future of the country. These agencies have made the following strides within this initiative over the past year:

Tribal Content in Rural EV Infrastructure Toolkit. In May 2023, DOT published a revised version of the Rural EV Infrastructure Toolkit which includes information on the EV provisions in BIL and expanded content on Tribal planning and engagement, transit, micro mobility, and accessible design. The toolkit is available on the ROUTES website.

In November 2023, USDA, with DOT and the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation, led participating agencies in the development of an updated Tribal EV website hosted by the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation. The website highlights federal funding opportunities that are particularly relevant to Tribes, lists current technical assistance resources that are available to Tribes, and it features examples of Tribal EV and charging station projects and collaborations across Indian Country and Native communities. This resource was initially planned to be a Tribal companion to the Rural EV toolkit. It was published as part of the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation's Tribal Resource Page (mentioned below) to create a central on-line resource where Tribes can find relevant and timely EV information from across federal agencies. The participating agencies will continue to collaboratively update and cross-market the website.

Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program. DOT prioritized projects that will serve rural and underserved areas, including Tribal lands and Native communities in their selection of awards under this program. The Joint Office of Energy and Transportation also provided technical assistance to Tribes who were interested in applying for Charging and Fueling Infrastructure funds.

EV Secretarial Symposium. In July 2023, DOT hosted an EV Symposium at DOT Headquarters to bring together state, local, and Tribal governments along with EV industry companies to provide opportunities and solutions to provide and develop EV and EV infrastructure in Indian Country.

Clean Cities Coalition "Tribes and Transportation" Training. DOE worked with over 75 Clean Cities coalitions through the Clean Cities Energy and Environmental Initiative to develop local partnerships with Tribal communities, facilitate community engagement, and provide technical assistance related to EVs and EV infrastructure deployment. As a part of this project, DOE—in partnership with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory—launched a "Tribes and Transportation" educational training series for Clean Cities coalitions to learn best practices for building relationships with Tribal communities to promote EVs and EV infrastructure.

Updated Tribal Resource Page on driveelectric.gov. In May 2023, the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation updated a Tribal resource webpage on driveelectric.gov to provide education, technical assistance, and information on funding opportunities for Tribes to deploy EV infrastructure.

National Electric Vehicle Initiative for Tribal Nations Map and Dashboard. In March 2023, BIA completed an online dashboard that houses 12 EV corridor maps—one for each BIA region—along with a 13th national map. Additionally, BIA developed an online dashboard that maps the distance between BIA, BIE, and HHS facilities and existing EV charging stations and Alternative Fuel Corridors.

Secretary Buttigieg and Assistant Secretary Teller in Alaska with Kotzebue Village leaders. (Photos courtesy of DOT).

EV Coordination Meetings. In July 2023, WHCNAA began coordinating monthly EV coordination meetings that include staff from DOT, DOE, USDA, and BIA to continue efforts to bring EV infrastructure, resources, and funding to Indian Country.

Building Pathways to Infrastructure Careers Grant Program. In September 2023, DOL conducted direct outreach to Tribes, TCUs, and other Tribal organization applicants for the Building Pathways to Infrastructure Careers Grant Program which will competitively award funds for sector-based training programs across infrastructure-related sectors including training for professional, scientific, and technical occupations that support renewable energy.

Outreach for USDA EV Programs. In December 2022 and January 2023, USDA consulted with Tribal governments regarding USDA's Rural Development programs funded by the IRA and how this program can be used to support the development of EV charging infrastructure on Tribal lands and in Native communities. USDA is in the process of conducting outreach to Tribes through panels and other virtual engagements about programs under the Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, and the Rural Utilities Service-Electric Program that supports EV charging station infrastructure, related businesses, EV buses, and agricultural vehicles.

Tribal Education on Zero-Emission Vehicles and Electric Supply Equipment Procurement. To improve its relationship with Tribes in regards to purchasing or leasing electric or other alternative fuel vehicles, GSA conducted a Tribal consultation at the 2023 Reservation Economic Summit on EV procurements. GSA also hosted two nationwide, virtual Tribal-specific EV procurement trainings in March and May. In addition, GSA partnered with DOE and WHCNAA for a Joint Agency webinar on Zero-Emission Vehicle funding and resources in March 2023 and published new FAQs on the GSA Fleet website to support Tribes in ordering vehicles. These efforts led to an increase of zero emission vehicle leasing procurements by Tribes—from only 3 procurements in FY 2022 to 73 procurements for FY 2023, as of July 2023.

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Highway Safety

Improving Highway Safety in Indian Country. DOT's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in partnership with BIA, is leading a multi-agency effort to address highway safety in Indian Country. This campaign will bring awareness to the higher rates of fatal crashes in Indian country and will include safety strategies for Tribes. As a part of this campaign, DOT is working together on a Native Language Initiative to help translate and record safety messages in the languages of Tribes who wish to participate. Additionally, in November 2023, DOT held a symposium for Tribes on highway safety in Indian Country.

Transportation Infrastructure Development

DOT's Thriving Communities Program. This program provides its recipients technical assistance to ensure its communities have the technical tools and organizational capacity to comprehensively plan for and deliver quality infrastructure projects and community development projects that enable communities and neighborhoods to thrive. The first round of selected communities included five Tribal Nations—Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe of the Shoalwater Bay Indian Reservation, Nisqually Tribe, and Forest County Potawatomi Community.

Tribal Transportation Program. BIL includes nearly $3 billion in funding for the Tribal Transportation Program. Funding is deployed through a number of vehicles toward transportation projects that increase safety, mobility, and access for Tribal communities. Federally-recognized Tribal governments are eligible to apply. Funds will be administered over five years and additional guidance on eligible uses of funds will be announced in the coming months.

Tribal Transportation Facility Bridges. BIL sets aside a proportion of funds under the Bridge Formula Program for Tribal bridges. Over four years, DOT will invest $825 million in planning, designing, engineering, replacing, improving, or constructing bridges on Tribal lands. In addition, Tribal governments are eligible for a $200 million set-aside from the Bridge Investment Program to improve the condition, safety, efficiency, and reliability of bridges on the National Bridge Inventory.

$825 Million

will be invested in replacing, improving, or constructing bridges on Tribal lands

Tribal Transit Program. BIL includes approximately $230 million to the Public Transportation on Indian Reservations program. This includes over $180 million to a formula grant issued to federally-recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Village for public transportation on Tribal lands, as well as more than $45 million in competitive funding for the same purpose.

Tribal Transit Symposium, Tribal Aviation Symposium, and Tribal Maritime Roundtable. In May 2023, DOT and the Federal Transit Administration held its first-ever Tribal Transit Symposium. The event provided Tribes the opportunity to meet agency leadership; receive technical assistance; learn about funding opportunities through BIL; and learn about the Tribal Transit Program which funds planning, capital, and operating assistance for Tribal public transit services. In June 2023, DOT and the Federal Aviation Administration hosted its 2nd Annual Tribal Aviation Symposium, which featured information and resources regarding grant applications, Tribal access to airports and commercial sea-plans, drone usage, and youth engagement and education. In September 2023, DOT and the Maritime Administration held its first-ever Tribal Maritime Roundtable to update Tribes on the federal funding available and workforce development opportunities in the maritime sector.

HOUSING

Section 184 Indian Home Loan Guarantee Program Updates. HUD announced its plan to publish a final rule to strengthen the Section 184 Indian Home Loan Guarantee Program in 2024. This final rule will modernize the program and provide more homeownership opportunities in Indian Country by: (1) codifying program requirements governing underwriting, loan origination, and claims; (2) introducing much needed certainty into the program to attract more participating lenders; (3) authorizing HUD to establish a minimum level of lending on trust land.

HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge's trip to Kenai, Alaska in August 2021. (Photos courtesy of HUD).

New HUD Housing for Skilled Workers. Earlier this year, HUD implemented a new Section 184 Demonstration Program that provides financing to Tribes to construct rental housing for skilled workers in Tribal communities. This new program aims to attract skilled workers within these communities, with the goal of providing overall wellbeing and sustainable economic growth for Tribes. Currently, HUD has issued guidance outlining programmatic requirements and has made this loan product available to Tribes.

Reducing Homebuyer Fees Under Section 184. HUD made homeownership more accessible and affordable by Native American families by reducing the fees charged to homebuyers who obtain a Section 184 loan. A Section 184 borrower purchasing a $194,000 home will save approximately $500 in the first year and up to $6,800 over the term of the loan thanks to this change in the fee structure. In addition to the savings to borrowers, the lower fees help more people qualify for a mortgage.

Reducing Reporting Requirements for all Native American Programs. To address burdensome reporting requirements for Tribal grantees, HUD published a Notice that reduced the frequency of federal financial reports required from most Tribal grantees from quarterly to annually for all of its Native American Programs. This has and will continue to provide significant administrative relief to Tribal grantees.

Streamlined Indian Housing Block Grant Applications. HUD announced its plan to publish its FY 2023 Indian Housing Block Grant Competitive NOFO, which incorporates feedback from Tribes. This grant competition will equitably compete $150 million in funding that will primarily be used to construct much needed affordable housing in Tribal communities, streamline the process, and reduce burdens.

Tribal Interagency Streamlining Toolkit. In May 2023, the Tribal Housing and Related Infrastructure Interagency Task Force, led by HUD, developed and published a toolkit, which is a hub for Tribes and agencies to find environmental requirements for Tribal housing and related infrastructure from eight different agencies—HUD, USDA, DOI, DOE, DOT, EPA, USACE, and DOC. It also provides guidance and best practices for coordination, including coordinating endangered species and historic preservation

reviews. HUD is currently conducting further Tribal consultation on the Toolkit and will make further improvements based on Tribal consultation.

National Tribal Housing Summit. In October 2023, HUD hosted a three-day National Tribal Housing Summit in St. Paul, Minnesota. The event was attended by approximately 500 attendees and provided numerous learning and networking opportunities including 60 breakout sessions, a tradeshow, and community activities. Additionally, HUD collaborated with various federal partners to highlight other federal resources to support housing in Tribal communities.

USDA Expands Local Partnerships to Increase Homeownership Opportunities for Native Americans. USDA Rural Development provided $9 million through long term, low interest rate loans, to eight Native Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) to expand homeownership opportunities for Native Americans living on Tribal lands through the Native CDFI Relending Demonstration Program.

Public Safety and Justice

Missing and Murdered Indigenous People & Violence Against Native Women

In November 2021, President Biden signed an *Executive Order on Improving Public Safety and Criminal Justice for Native Americans and Addressing the Crisis of Missing or Murdered Indigenous People* (E.O. 14053). DOI, HHS, and DOJ have continued efforts to implement E.O. 14053 throughout 2023.

Not Invisible Act Commission: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples and Human Trafficking Crisis Report. In November 2023, the Not Invisible Act Commission (NIAC)—a 40-member cross jurisdictional advisory committee composed of law enforcement, Tribal leaders, federal partners, service providers, family members of missing and murdered individuals, and survivors—announced and publicly released its recommendations titled, "Not One More" to confront the crisis of MMIP and Human Trafficking. NIAC submitted its recommendations to Congress, DOI, and DOJ in November 2023. From April to August 2023, NIAC held seven in-person hearings and testimony across the country to gather public comments from survivors, and families and relatives of victims to include in its report. DOI and DOJ will provide a response to the NIAC report no later than January 30, 2024.

MMIP Regional Outreach Program. In June 2023, DOJ established the MMIP Regional Outreach Program to support and coordinate outreach and resolve MMIP cases. The program places MMIP Assistant U.S. Attorneys and MMIP Coordinators in five designated regions within Indian Country who will work on prosecuting MMIP-related violations of federal law across the regions and jurisdictions. This program complements and coordinates with DOJ's Native American Outreach Services Liaison.

HHS's Comprehensive MMIP Prevention, Early Intervention, and Victim and Survivor Services Plan. HHS—in consultation with DOI, Tribal Nations, research and community-based organizations, and UIOs—developed a comprehensive plan to support prevention efforts that reduce risk factors for victimization of Native Americans and increase protective factors, including by enhancing the delivery of services for Native American victims and survivors as well as their families and advocates. The Plan was submitted to the White House Domestic Policy Council in January 2023 and was submitted to the President.

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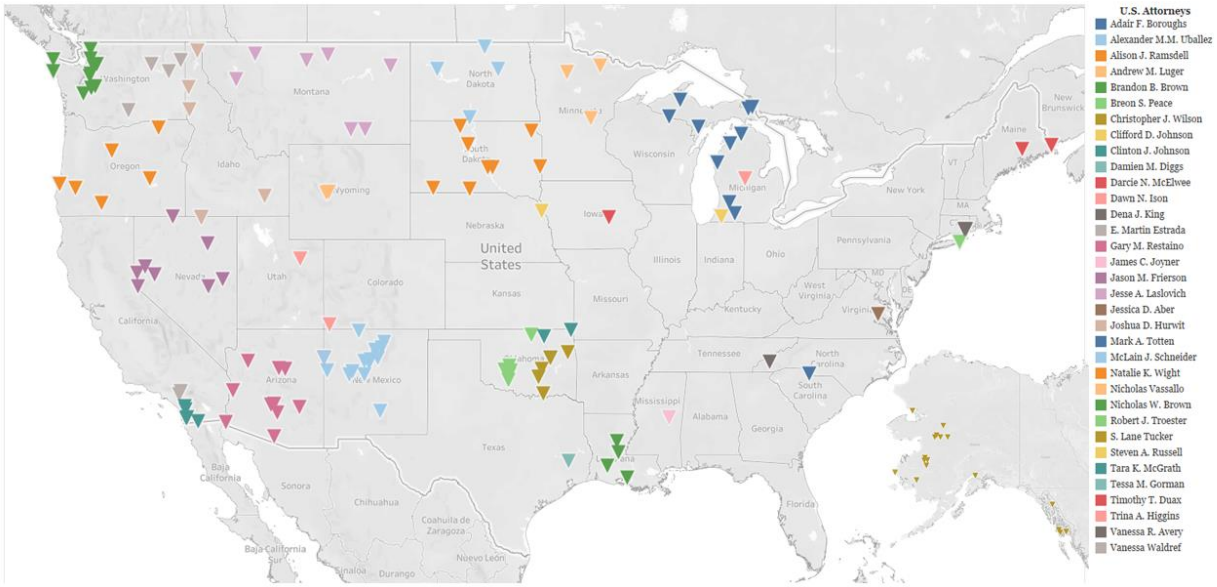
U.S. Attorneys in Indian Country

during the Biden-Harris Administration



Child Abuse and Neglect Report. HHS and DOI completed a report that audited existing procedures within their respective agencies for reporting child abuse and neglect. This report addressed barriers to reporting and appropriate actions to make reporting of child abuse and neglect by IHS more streamlined.

Building Capacity to Develop and/or Expand Forensic Services Initiative Funding. In March 2023, the IHS Division of Nursing Services' *Building Capacity to Develop and/or Expand Forensic Services Initiative* awarded grants to support building local community capacity by developing and expanding their forensic nursing program. Funding is being used to ensure services such as medical forensic services and resources are available to all individuals across the lifespan affected by violence (i.e., sexual assault, child sexual abuse, intimate and domestic violence, etc.) in Native communities. In August 2023, IHS awarded a contract that allocates $10 million over a five-year cycle.

Implementation of BIA-FBI MOU on MMIP. At the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit, the FBI and BIA signed an agreement to establish guidelines to provide for the effective and efficient administration of criminal investigations in Indian Country. This is the first update to an MOU between both agencies since the early 1990s. As a part of the MOU, BIA announced it will embed a criminal investigator and program analysts from the DOI Missing and Murdered Unit (MMU) into the FBI headquarters-level unit in charge of Indian Country to facilitate MMIP case intake. The goal of this initiative is to expedite and enhance law enforcement's approach to MMIP cases from the outset. An MMU program analyst was onboarded by the FBI to begin interagency coordination on Indian Country cases. Additionally, BIA and FBI are in regular discussions about placing a criminal investigator into the FBI Indian Country Unit.

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Indian Country has been gripped by an epidemic of missing or murdered Indigenous people, whose cases far too often go unsolved. Families have been left investigating disappearances on their own, demanding justice for their loved ones, and grieving pieces of their souls. Generations of activists and organizers have pushed for accountability, safety, and change. We need to respond with urgency and the resources needed to stop the violence and reverse the legacy of inequity and neglect that often drives it.

–President Biden
A Proclamation on Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Awareness Day, 2023

Multi-Disciplinary Teams to Confront MMIP. Complementing the MOU, the BIA MMU and the FBI have begun creating a system for all federal partners to assist, or investigate missing and murdered cases in Indian Country, including establishing multi-disciplinary missing and murdered case review teams. The MMU is currently working with U.S. Attorneys Offices across the country to develop pilot programs to support Multi-Disciplinary Teams of federal, Tribal, and state law enforcement to review missing and murdered case referrals.

Research on MMIP. The National Institute of Justice at the DOJ is funding a research team comprised from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the Urban Institute that are tasked with studying MMIP cases in New Mexico. The goal of this research project is to provide essential baseline data for the New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives Task Force for context regarding missing person cases in the state—baseline data includes developing partnerships and policy priorities; extending prior research by identifying gaps in current data collection; and developing recommendations for improving long-term data collection and sustainable data reporting for MMIP cases in the state. South Dakota and Washington pilot programs are expected to launch in the near future.

National Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. In May 2023, the White House released the first-ever *U.S. National Plan to End Gender-Based Violence: Strategies for Action*. Through this National Plan, the Biden-Harris Administration is advancing a comprehensive, government-wide approach to preventing and addressing gender-based violence in the United States. Building upon existing federal initiatives, the National Plan provides an important framework for strengthening ongoing federal action and interagency collaboration, and for informing new research, policy development, program planning, and service delivery. The National Plan also recognizes the disproportionate rates of gender-based violence impacting Indigenous women and girls, and it outlines goals, objectives, and strategies for action that support efforts to prevent and address gender-based violence in Tribal communities.

Report on Crime and Victimization and Extractive Industries. DOJ National Institute of Justice is in the process of developing a report that will feature extant literature on extractive industries and their relationship to crime and victimization experienced by Indigenous populations in the United States, and other dissemination products, such as webinars and infographics to support this report.

Expanding Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction with Support to Native Communities Following the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 (VAWA 2022). VAWA 2022 expanded special Tribal criminal jurisdiction (STCJ) beyond domestic violence-related crimes to cover non-Native perpetrators of sexual assault, child abuse, stalking, sex trafficking, obstruction of justice, and assaults on Tribal law enforcement officers on Tribal lands. It also supported the development of a pilot program to enhance access to safety for survivors in Alaska Native villages. With this expansion:

- DOJ moved quickly to identify and deploy resources to support Tribal implementation;
- DOJ Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) issued an award to the Tribal Law and Policy Institute for new technical assistance to support Tribes exploring or implementing STCJ;
- OVW made an award to the Alaska Native Justice Center and four Alaska-based partners to establish an Alaska-specific InterTribal Technical Assistance Working Group and provide

technical assistance to Alaska Tribes interested in exercising STCJ through the VAWA 2022 Alaska Pilot; and

- DOJ launched the Alaska Pilot Program.

DOJ Launched New Tribal VAWA Reimbursement Program. In April 2023, OVW issued an interim final rule for the new Tribal Reimbursement Program authorized under VAWA 2022, to reimburse Tribal governments for expenses incurred in exercising STCJ. The rule provides details on how the reimbursements will be administered, including Tribal eligibility, reimbursement frequency, eligible costs, the annual maximum per Tribe, and conditions for waiving of that annual maximum. OVW plans to release the first Notice of Reimbursement Opportunity for the program in December 2023, which allows Tribes to request reimbursement up to the annual maximum under VAWA 2022.

Strengthening Sovereign Responses to Sex Trafficking in Indian County and Alaska National Conference. OVW will be hosting this conference on January 23-25, 2024 in San Francisco, California. It will focus on victim safety, offender accountability, and service provider and justice system responses to sex trafficking.

Attorney General Garland with the Louden Tribal Council in Alaska. (Photo courtesy of DOJ).

Alaska Native Tribal Resource Center on Domestic Violence. The ACF Office of Family Violence Prevention and Services awarded $1,000,000 in Family Violence Prevention and Services Act funding to support an Alaska Native Tribal Resource Center on Domestic Violence. The Resource Center will focus on the intervention and prevention of family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence by offering statewide information, training, and technical assistance specifically designed to reduce Tribal disparities within Alaska Native villages and communities.

$1 Million
awarded to support an Alaska Native Tribal Resources Center on Domestic Violence

National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUS) Native Cases Added and Resolved. DOJ announced that 204 cases—from October 1, 2022 to June 23, 2022—involving missing Native people were added to the NamUS database and that this database was directly involved in resolving 121 missing Native person cases.

NamUS Tribal Program Specialists Positions Filled. Additionally, DOJ announced it has created and filled its Tribal Program Specialist and Associate Tribal Program Specialist positions. Both specialists are registered members of the Navajo Nation and are committed to ensuring the integrity of American Indian and Alaska Native cases in the database.

18th Annual Violence Against Women Government-to-Government Tribal Consultation. In August 2023, OVW hosted the 18th annual Violence Against Women Tribal Consultation with Tribal leaders on behalf of the U.S. Attorney General. During the Tribal consultation, DOJ, HHS, and DOI solicited recommendations from Tribal leaders on administering Tribal funds and programs; enhancing the safety of American Indian and Alaska Native women from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault,

homicide, stalking, and sex trafficking; strengthening the federal response to such crimes; and improving access to crime information databases and criminal justice information systems.

20th Meeting of Inter-Tribal Technical Assistance Working Group on Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction. On December 5-6, 2023, DOJ is convening the Inter-Tribal Technical Assistance Working Group in-person to discuss topics and issues regarding implementation of special Tribal criminal jurisdiction and its impact on reducing violence against Native women. This group of Tribal representatives exchange views, information, and recommendations on how Tribes can best exercise the expanded jurisdiction recognized in VAWA 2022.

OVW's Annual Alaska Tribal Governments Program Grant Project Implementation Workshop. On December 13-14, 2023, OVW will host its annual workshop to build the capacity of Tribal governments, Tribal justice system professionals, and Tribal victim services organizations to respond effectively to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sex trafficking. This workshop has significantly increased successful grant applications from Alaska Tribes—from seven active awards in 2017 to 41 active awards in 2022. OVW plans to replicate this workshop regionally for Tribes in California and Midwest regions.

Inaugural Veterans Affairs Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples Roundtable. In March 2023, the Veterans Health Administration hosted the VA's first in-person roundtable, *Building Trusted Partnerships and Addressing Social Determinants of Health: A Roundtable on Addressing the Crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons*, in Helena, Montana. The roundtable was attended by representatives from VA, representatives from Montana state legislature and law enforcement, Tribal honor guards, and Tribal leaders.

DHS's Blue Campaign to Support MMIP Crisis. The DHS Blue Campaign is a national public awareness campaign designed to educate the public, law enforcement, and other industry partners to recognize human trafficking indicators and how to appropriately respond to possible cases. In June 2023, DHS released a new human trafficking awareness toolkit, tailored to Tribal gaming and hospitality professionals. From July to September 2023, DHS partnered with the StrongHearts Native Help Line—a Native domestic violence hotline developed by and run by Native advocates to support Tribal communities across the United States—to execute a two-month, geographically targeted digital, audio, and/or out-of-home advertising campaign to reach Native American adolescents and adults in Washington and Alaska. Currently, DHS is developing culturally sensitive human trafficking awareness materials for Tribal communities in line with the goal of ensuring safety and justice in Indian Country.

Prioritization of the National Human Trafficking Hotline to address the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Crisis. HHS prioritized its hotline to ensure it can refer to mental health organizations and health care providers enrolled in its National Human Trafficking Referral Directory, including organizations and providers who are culturally competent in working with Indigenous Peoples. HHS consulted with the ACF Office on Trafficking in Persons on the status of referrals and expanded outreach to providers with trauma training as well as culturally and linguistically appropriate competencies to ensure inclusion in the hotline referral directory. Currently, there are 29 providers within the National Human Trafficking Hotline's Referral Directory who are culturally competent in working with Indigenous Peoples in North America and the Pacific. The referral recruitment form allows providers to indicate if they offer trauma-informed and culturally and linguistically-appropriate services.

OVW's Tribal Government Summit. In September 2023, DOJ hosted its Tribal Governments Summit in Jacksonville, Florida. The Summit focused on key issues, promising practices, and emerging trends for Tribes in addressing dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking, and stalking,

including methods and strategies to improve victim safety, offender accountability, and effective collaboration between Tribal, federal, service providers, and state governments.

Law Enforcement

BIA Law Enforcement Pay Parity. BIA is focused on improving the recruitment and retention of BIA law enforcement. BIA's foremost strategy on staffing is a pay parity initiative to bring BIA law enforcement pay levels in line with other federal law enforcement, resulting in up to an additional $30,000 annually for BIA law enforcement officers.

Tribal Access Program Expansion. In June 2023, DOJ announced an open application period for federally-recognized Tribes and interTribal consortia to participate in the Tribal Access Program for National Crime Information, which improves public safety by providing federally-recognized Tribes the ability to access and exchange data with national crime information databases for authorized criminal justice and non-criminal justice purposes (i.e., NICS). DOJ selected an additional 14 federally recognized Tribes to participate in the continued expansion of the Tribal Access Program. With these additional Tribes, there are now 132 federally recognized Tribes participating in the Tribal Access Program.

Tribal Memorandum of Understanding/Memorandum of Agreement Sample Resource Library. In May 2023, DOJ released its sample resource library designed to provide users resources they need to research and successfully draft MOUs and MOAs between Tribal, state, and federal law enforcement. The purpose of this library is to help agencies develop and solidify partnerships to address MMIP cases and provide a wide range of other related opportunities for collaboration. This resource library includes MOU/MOA templates, training, and samples in relevant subject areas. This resource is available online at the COPS Tribal Community Policing Resource webpage.

Funding to Support Oklahoma-based Tribal Governments. Consistent with the Supreme Court's decision in *McGirt v. Oklahoma*, BIA received an additional $62 million in FY 2023 to support law enforcement in Indian Country. In February 2023, BIA distributed $61 million in base funding with $1 million reserved until an FY 2024 appropriation is passed. The FY 2024 President's Budget Request maintains the FY 2023 enacted level of $62 million for Tribes affected by the Supreme Court decision.

$62 Million
in additional funds provided to BIA to support law enforcement in Indian Country

Holistic Public Safety Work

Healing to Wellness Court Event. In September 2023, DOI, DOJ, USDA, and WHCNAA, in collaboration with the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Nations, hosted an in-person three-day training on healing to wellness court practices and federal funding to support these courts.

Mentoring Behavioral Health Students in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities. SAMHSA and IHS Behavioral Health Consultants are leading a Partnerships for Equity with American Indian and Alaska Native Communities Group. This group supports Native behavioral health students and practitioners by developing mentorship programs with experienced Native behavioral health practitioners; building a support network among cohorts of students and practitioners; and creating quality career exposure opportunities with IHS partners.

Tiwahe Initiative. DOI's Tiwahe Initiative is an extensive and bold approach to furthering Indian self-determination and self-governance in human services, public safety, and justice programs. In 2023, the initiative received $4 million in additional appropriations to expand the program to new Tribes. BIA, through consultation and with input from six Tiwahe demonstration sites, developed an application process that was easy, equitable, and transparent. Two Tribes were invited to become Tiwahe demonstration sites and BIA was able to award $100,000 of one-time funding for programming or planning to 10 additional Tribes.

Assistant Secretary Bryan Newland meets with Tribal Youth. (Photo courtesy of DOI).

Department of Justice Funding and Grants. DOJ grantmaking components—Office of Justice Programs, Office on Violence Against Women, and Community Oriented Policing Services Office—announced FY 2023 awards in support of a broad range of public safety and capacity building goals. DOJ announced more than $69 million through the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation, DOJ's Office on Violence Against Women awarded more than $68 million, and DOJ's Office for Victims of Crime announced $103 million in awards to support Tribal Victim Services programs.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Native Worker Safety and Health. In March 2023, CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health published the American Indian and Alaska Native Worker Safety and Health Strategic Plan, which serves as a guide for the nation to develop research and outreach activities to prevent injuries, illnesses, and fatalities for American Indian and Alaska Native workers. The plan is to be viewed as a starting point to stimulate collaboration and activities to improve American Indian and Alaska Native worker safety and health.

Federal Law Enforcement Training Center Tribal Work. The DHS Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers support Tribal law enforcement communities by providing low-cost and no-cost training opportunities conducted on its campuses as well as Tribal host locations across the United States. These training programs support the development of specialized law enforcement knowledge and skills, and most have no tuition for sworn Tribal law enforcement officers.

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Drug Trafficking

Shadow Wolves Enhancement. The Shadow Wolves are an ICE Homeland Security Investigation's tactical patrol unit comprised of Native American Special Agents, specializing in the interdiction of human and drug smugglers. The Shadow Wolves are currently operating in Sells, Arizona within the Tohono O'odham Nation that runs along the Mexico-United States border. ICE is currently seeking amendments to the Schedule A hiring authority that established the Shadow Wolves program to allow for the conversion of Shadow Wolves Special Agents from excepted to competitive service upon completion of three years of satisfactory service with the purpose of implementing key provisions of the Shadow Wolves Enhancement Act signed into law in April 2022.

DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas meeting with Chairman of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe March 20, 2023. The meeting was held at Tohono O'odham Nation. (Photo courtesy of DHS).

Youth and Juvenile Justice

Tribal Legal Code Resource: Guide for Drafting or Revising Tribal Juvenile Delinquency and Status Offense Laws. In December 2022, the Tribal Law and Policy Institute updated the DOJ funded, *Tribal Legal Code Resource: Guide for Drafting or Revising Tribal Juvenile Delinquency and Status Offense Laws*. This resource is designed to assist Tribal communities with creating, re-evaluating, and strengthening their juvenile codes. Additionally, it serves as a starting point for drafting and revising Tribal juvenile justice laws as it highlights federal and state law considerations and includes provisions from model codes and existing Tribal juvenile codes.

Tribal Consultations for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. In October 2023, DOJ's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention held a virtual Tribal consultation with Tribal leaders and representatives across the country, which focused on how to increase Tribes' access to juvenile justice funding and improve federal and state coordination with Tribal communities. Additionally, DOJ held an in-person Tribal consultation with Alaska Tribes to establish a framework for regular communication between DOJ and Tribes to better serve Alaska Native youth and their families.

DOJ Tribal Youth National Conference. In December 2022, DOJ's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Tribal Youth Resource Center hosted its Tribal Youth National Conference in San Diego, California. The conference provides opportunities for young people to reinforce connections to Indigenous traditions and strengthen their identities as Native people. The conference included nearly 40 sessions and activities for organizations serving Tribal youth, including DOJ-funded Tribal youth programs and juvenile Tribal Healing to Wellness Courts.

DOJ Session at United National Indian Tribal Youth Conference. In July 2023, DOJ's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention held an interactive listening session at the United National Indian Tribal Youth Conference with youth and adults from across the country to discuss issues impacting Native youth, including involvement in or with child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice systems.

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DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Center for Domestic Preparedness 9th Annual Tribal Nations Training Week. FEMA's Center for Domestic Preparedness will host its 9th Annual Tribal Nations Training Week: *Developing Generational Resiliency Through* Training March 9-16, 2024. Training courses offered will include topics such as emergency response and preparedness, and health. Registration is now open and free to any Tribal Nation.

FEMA Proposal for Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program Reform. After Tribal consultation, FEMA proposed changes to Congress that would improve the Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program, which supports Tribal Nations and Tribal first responders in reducing risks from manmade and natural disasters. The proposed changes better meet the needs of Tribal Nations and acknowledge Tribal sovereignty.

Increasing Bio-Defense Preparedness in Bio Watch Covered Regions. DHS's Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office operates aerosol bio-detection equipment in partnership with state and local entities across the nation. The Bio Watch program has strengthened preparedness as it pertains to Tribal Nations by partnering with the BIA Office of Emergency Management. This partnership ensures any bio-incident detected by the Bio Watch program across the U.S. will include necessary notification and response support to any affected Tribal Nations through the BIA's Tribal Assistance Coordination Group. The Coordination Group is now present in all federal post-incident situational awareness calls managed by the Bio Watch program and is invited to participate in all exercises as a federal partner to Bio Watch.

FEMA National Tribal Affairs Advocate Kelbie Kennedy meets with Miccosukee Tribe of Indians lawmaker Pete Osceola Jr. at the Nation's HQ regarding Tribal emergency management. (Photo courtesy of FEMA).

Federal Emergency Management Agency 2022-2026 National Tribal Strategy and Tribal Declarations Guidance. FEMA is in the process of implementing its 2022-2026 National Tribal Strategy, which commits to transform its service to Tribal Nations to acknowledge Tribal sovereignty and respond to the needs of each Tribal Nation. As a part of this Strategy, FEMA, in 2023, hosted nine Tribal consultations and listening sessions on the Tribal Declarations Guidance. FEMA will release updated guidance for public comment in early 2024 to solicit additional feedback from Tribal Nations. The final version of guidance is set to be completed in 2024. This guidance serves as a primary vehicle for Tribal Nations to request a federal disaster declaration from the President and access Disaster Relief Fund resources.

FEMA Equity Guide. FEMA created an equity guide, *Achieving Equitable Recovery: A Post-Disaster Guide for Local Officials* in January 2023 to help communities focus their efforts on building relationships, holding conversations about equity, and prioritizing post-disaster recovery projects and resources. FEMA hosted a virtual consultation with Tribal Nations to solicit feedback and recommendations on the drafted Equity Guide and is seeking public feedback from Tribal Nations, partners, stakeholders, and the general public for the guide's implementation.

Supporting Tribal Communities with Long Term Planning for Disaster Preparedness. HUD facilitated an MOU between a HUD-funded Technical Assistance Provider and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians to help the Tribe develop a comprehensive long-term plan to enhance community resilience and disaster preparedness and recovery.

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EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

USDA Support for Tribal Colleges and Universities. USDA took the following actions to increase support and partnership with TCUs:

- Moved its TCUs Program to the Office of Tribal Relations, as requested and supported by Tribal leaders and TCU presidents, and renewed its congressionally-mandated MOA between the Secretary of Agriculture and TCUs with land grant status (also known as "1994 Institutions") to ensure equitable access to USDA's employment programs, services, and resources.
- Re-established its Terra Preta do Indio Tribal Fellowship for faculty and staff which is designed to increase collaborations between TCUs and USDA.
- Formed a leadership group with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium to ensure TCUs have equitable access to USDA's employment, programs, services, and resources.
- USDA's Agriculture Research Service is also continuing its research collaborations with United Tribes Technical University, Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College, and North Great Plains Research Laboratory in Mandan, North Dakota to promote Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Food Systems.
- Is increasing the number of USDA TCU liaisons from one to six and made scholarship and internship opportunities more accessible for TCU students by providing a living stipend within offered scholarships; reducing scholarship application length; allowing all TCUs to participate in scholarships; and partnering with third-parties to recruit TCU and Native students for internships.

NEH Support for Tribal Colleges and Universities. NEH took the following actions to increase support and partnerships with TCUs:

- Included TCUs in a new program that financially supports institutions whose faculty are awarded NEH Awards for TCU Faculty Fellowships. These new grants provide funds to allow TCUs to fill teaching positions while TCU faculty are on research leave associated with their NEH grant. Grants are for up to $2,500/month of the fellowship.

EPA Support for Tribal Colleges and Universities. EPA took the following actions to increase support and partnership with TCUs:

- Launched a webpage for TCUs and hosted three webinars for TCU students.
- Is increasing efforts to recruit TCU students through internships and career development opportunities, including providing new TCUs grant opportunities, and supporting Tribal capacity building with TCU students in EPA-funded internships.

INTERNSHIP, APPRENTICESHIP, AND SERVICE PROGRAMS

American Climate Corps and Indian Youth Service Corps. In September 2023, President Biden launched the American Climate Corps (ACC), a workforce training and service initiative that will ensure more young people have access to the skill-based training necessary for good-paying careers in the clean energy and climate resilience economy. ACC draws on existing programs from USDA, NOAA, AmeriCorps, and DOI, including the Indian Youth Service Corps (IYSC) program. USDA established the USDA Forest Service Indian Service Youth Corps in partnership the Office of Tribal Relations and the Forest Service reforestation team. Since February 2023 USDA has allocated more than $5 million and

signed six multi-year agreements, which have supported over 200 indigenous students. Two of the agreements were entered directly with Tribes in the amount of $1.48 million for FY 2023. DOI committed $15 million in IRA funding to expand IYSC and youth programs with underserved communities. In remarks at the Clinton Global Initiative, Secretary Haaland issued a call to action for philanthropy to support IYSC programs with Tribes. Additionally, DOI signed an MOU with the Aspen Institute to develop and support public-private partnerships to leverage resources, and assist communities in developing community-led projects. DOI and AmeriCorps are also collaborating to expand post-secondary education opportunities for Native youth participating in the IYSC.

AmeriCorps Native Nations Convening. AmeriCorps hosted a three-day convening and training for Tribal Nations and Indigenous grantees and partners in Las Vegas, Nevada which included remarks and a listening session with AmeriCorps CEO Michael Smith. The convening featured resources, trainings, collaboration, and networking activities, with meaningful conversations amongst Tribal partners leading programs in areas such as natural resources; developing pathways to college and the workforce for Tribal youth; and fighting the devastating consequences of the COVID-19 crisis and opioid epidemics. The convening focused on building stronger partnerships, addressing barriers, and Indigenizing service. In FY23, the AmeriCorps State and National Native Nations Grant and AmeriCorps Native Nation Seniors Demonstration Program awarded more than $8.5M to Tribal Nations and Native-led organizations. Additionally, AmeriCorps invested $927,378 in education awards for those completing their term of service.

Federal Railroad Administration Virtual Job Fair for Tribal Colleges and Universities. DOT's Federal Railroad Administration announced it will host a virtual job fair with TCUs in May 2024. This event will provide recent graduates from TCUs an opportunity to engage with leadership and learn how to apply to work at the Federal Railroad Administration.

Multi-Agency Partnership with the American Indian Science and Engineering Society. In 2023, OPM, NOAA, and USDA continued their support for the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), a national nonprofit organization focused on substantially increasing the representation of Indigenous people of North American and the Pacific Islands in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) studies and careers. OPM reestablished its partnerships with AISES by hosting AISES's Annual Government Relations Council meeting at OPM Headquarters. This event was the first in OPM's efforts to build a longer partnership with AISES. NOAA's division in Boulder, Colorado was featured in AISES spring publication, *Winds of Change Edition* Cover where NOAA was honored as one of the top 50 places for Indigenous STEM professionals. USDA, in partnership with AISES, funded and is in the process of helping to develop an Indigenous Knowledge research track to use for the annual AISES National Conference, and developed program materials to support students and teachers designing Indigenous Knowledge research products. Utilizing USDA funding, AISES provided project support funds for up to 10 Indigenous Knowledge projects.

Supporting the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science. For the past several years, NOAA has supported, presented, and attended the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science STEM conferences.

Good Jobs in Tribal Communities Convening. DOL hosted a convening in Washington, DC with Tribal leaders, employers, labor unions, and workers to engage in discussions with Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su on how Tribal communities are creating good jobs with equitable workforce development pathways such as Registered Apprenticeship programs, and how those strategies can be used with Investing in America funds across the Biden-Harris Administration.

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Supporting Schools and Educators

National Fund for Excellence in American Indian Education. Last year, DOI renewed this congressionally chartered, but long unused, non-profit organization to support education opportunities for American Indian students attending BIE schools. DOI is working to reinvigorate the organization to support Tribally-led education initiatives, including DOI's work on Native language revitalization. In March 2023, the fund held its first board meeting, and in June 2023, DOI counsel completed a full legal review of existing funds. BIE has announced a $300,000 commitment to support the National Fund's work on initial projects.

Secretary Miguel Cardona visits the Standing Rock Sioux Boys and Girls Club in McLaughlin, South Dakota. The Secretary learned about the medicine wheel and sage bundles. (Photo courtesy of ED).

Trust for Public Lands' Tribal Community Schoolyards Pilot Program. BIE announced its partnership and identified nine pilot schools for this Pilot Program which aims to create outdoor educational spaces to support healthy Tribal communities. In 2023, BIE held Tribal consultation and nine Tribes have signed onto an MOU to pilot this program.

Native American Teacher Retention Initiative. ED awarded over $2.75 million to support the first of its kind grant. The funding will help address the shortage of Native American educators and promote retention by creating opportunities for Native teachers to serve in leadership roles in their schools. This initiative will also fund projects that help educators of Native American students provide culturally appropriate and effective instruction and support for Native American students.

Healing from Destructive Past Policies

Indian Boarding Schools

In June 2021, Secretary Haaland launched the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative to shed light on the troubled history of federal Indian boarding school policies and their legacy for Indigenous Peoples.

Volume II of Investigative Report. After the release of Volume I of the investigative report called by Secretary Haaland in May 2022, DOI is continuing its investigation and will complete and release Volume II of the report in 2024. DOI's current work is focused on identifying marked and unmarked burial sites as well as names and Tribal identities of attendees, and the top-line amount of federal support for the system.

The Road to Healing. In response to recommendations from the report, Secretary Haaland launched *The Road to Healing* in July 2022. As part of the nationwide tour, Secretary Haaland, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland and other DOI leaders traveled across Indian Country to allow Native and Native Hawaiian survivors of the federal Indian boarding school system to share their experiences through oral and written testimony. The 12 stops will help inform Volume II of DOI's report. Transcripts from each visit are now available on DOI's website.

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$4 Million
provided by NEH to support the Federal Indian Boarding School Oral History Project

Boarding School Oral History Project. In 2023, with $4 million in support from NEH, Secretary Haaland established the Oral History Project for the Federal Government to—for the first time—document experiences of federal Indian boarding school survivors as part of the public record and for public memorialization. NEH's funds will go towards supporting digitization efforts and making these stories publicly accessible as well as federal and Tribal partnerships for future research efforts. The Department and Smithsonian National Museum of American History are in ongoing discussions about how to support this work.

Digitizing Boarding School Records. In 2023, NEH entered into a $500,000 cooperative agreement with the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition to digitize and describe 120,000 pages of records from federal Indian boarding schools. This project is set to be completed by the end of 2025.

Grants for Boarding School Research. In August 2023, NEH announced a Special Call for Chair's Grants that is geared towards supporting Indian boarding school-related projects. Eligible projects are to help address the impacts of federal Indian boarding schools and uplift the stories and experiences of survivors, descendants, and communities where applicants can receive up to $30,000.

First Lady Jill Biden greeting Ayaprun Elitnaurvik students at Bethel Regional High School in Bethel, Alaska.

Project on DOD's Role in Boarding Schools. In FY 2023, the DOD commissioned a report on its role during the Federal Indian Boarding School Era. The project's goals are to improve knowledge and understanding of DOD's involvement in the policy and operations of Indian boarding schools to lead greater accountability and more meaningful consultations with American Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian Organizations. Colorado State University's Center for Environmental Management and Military Lands was selected to support this research. The study was funded by the DOD Legacy Resource Management Program and is set to be completed in 2024.

Protecting Native Children

Adoption and Foster Care Collection Rules. HHS announced a proposed rule updating data collection for the Adoption and Foster care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) to ensure equitable treatment of all children and youth in child welfare, including Native American children and youth. Today, AFCARs data is used for planning, technical assistance, discretionary service grants, and research and evaluation, all with the goal of reducing entry into and improving outcomes of children in foster care. This additional data can be relevant for understanding implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act at the state level.

Defending the Indian Child Welfare Act in the Supreme Court. In *Haaland v. Brackeen*, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected a constitutional challenge to the Indian Child Welfare Act in June 2023. DOJ successfully argued the case before the Supreme Court and collaborated with Tribal Nations in litigation strategy. ICWA protects Tribal children from being unnecessarily separated from their parents, extended family, and Tribal communities.

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Re-Launching the Interagency ICWA Taskforce and Consulting on Next Steps. To support the objectives of ICWA, federal agencies—including the DOJ—are conducting a series of consultations seeking input on ICWA and what steps they can take to promote federal protections for Indian children and their parents and caregivers.

Voting Rights

Making BIE Tribal Schools Voter Registration Sites. In 2022, New Mexico and Kansas became the first-ever states to designate DOI's two post-secondary schools: Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute and Haskell Indian Nations University, respectively, under the 30-year-old National Voter Registration Act. The states' designations will ensure that Haskell and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute students and community members have access to voting information and opportunities to register to vote. In September 2023, the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute announced the establishment of its first-ever on-campus Voter Registration Office to start the new school year and, to complete the full implementation of the President's Executive Order 14019, "Promoting Access to Voting."

Vice President Kamala Harris participates in a meeting on Native American Voting Rights Tuesday, July 27, 2021, in the Vice President's Ceremonial Office in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building at the White House. (Official White House Photo by Lawrence Jackson).

Championing Voter Registration at Indian Health Service. In 2023, the Indian Health Service announced that for the first time in history, an IHS facility in Phoenix received state approval to be a voter registration site. Shortly thereafter, IHS announced its second voter registration site in Santa Fe. Several more sites are expected to be announced in late 2023 or 2024.

Indigenous Languages, Knowledge, and Culture

Indigenous Knowledge and Historic Preservation

White House Office of Science and Technology Policy's Assistant Director for Indigenous Engagement and Native American Affairs. In November 2023, OSTP staffed its first-ever Assistant Director for Indigenous Engagement and Native American Affairs. The creation of this position branches from OSTP and CEQ's Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge released at the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit. This position will lead OSTP's engagement with Indian Tribes, Native Hawaiians, and other Indigenous Peoples and will provide a whole-of-government approach to elevate and incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into federal decision-making.

New ACHP Policy Statement on Indigenous Knowledge and Historic Preservation. ACHP announced it is in the process of developing a new policy statement that establishes a set of standards, guidelines, and recommendations to improve its historic preservation practices and programs for Indigenous sacred sites and artifacts as well as ensure that Indigenous Knowledge is accounted for in all steps of historic preservation decision-making. This policy statement will support federal agency and department actions subject to the National Historic Preservation Act and *Executive Order 13007: Indian Sacred Sites* and was developed in collaboration with Tribal Nations and Native Hawaiians. This policy statement will be completed and released in March 2024.

Safeguard Tribal Objects of Patrimony Act of 2021 and Implementing Regulations. In December 2022, President Biden signed the Safeguard Tribal Objects of Patrimony (STOP) Act of 2021 into law. The STOP Act prohibits the exportation of Native American cultural items and archaeological resources that were illegally obtained; provides for the return of such items, including voluntary returns; and establishes and increases related criminal penalties. DOI convened eight consultation sessions with Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian Organizations between May and August 2023 to discuss what should be included in the STOP Act regulations. Since then, the Departments of the Interior, State, Justice, and Homeland Security are in the process of drafting new regulations to implement the STOP Act, including a process to obtain an export certification and standing up working groups. The four agencies anticipate meeting the statutory deadline of late December 2023 to release these regulations.

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Tribal Consultations
were convened with Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian Organizations to discuss what should be included in STOP Act regulations

National Park Service Theme Study on Indian Reorganization Act Period. Secretary Haaland announced that the National Park Service is initiating a new Theme Study that, when completed, will help tell the story of the Indian Reorganization Period (1934 -1950). A theme study provides a national historic context for specific topics in American history or prehistory, as well as evaluation guidance and a list of properties for study as possible future National Historic Landmarks. This particular theme study will help the NPS broaden its interpretation and representation of this time period in which greater appreciation for American Indian culture developed, more concern was given to self-determination and self-government, and movement began on developing more economic opportunity on Tribal lands.

Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff plays Choctaw stickball at the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Interagency Work to Integrate Indigenous Knowledge into Federal Research, Policy, and Decision-Making. At the 2022 Tribal Nations Summit, OSTP and CEQ announced and published the *Memorandum and Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge* (guidance) to recognize and include Indigenous Knowledge in federal research, policy, and decision-making. In March 2023, a Subcommittee on Indigenous Knowledge was chartered under the North Shore Tribal Council's Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Sustainability and has been meeting monthly to ensure implementation of the Indigenous Knowledge guidance. In July 2023, federal agencies submitted a 180-day progress report to track progress related to the implementation of the guidance. In late 2023 or early 2024, OSTP and CEQ intend to issue a fact sheet that summarizes agency submittals and highlights implementation progress and cross-agency challenges.

The North Shore Tribal Council also launched the Environmental Justice Subcommittee pursuant to Executive Order 14096, which is charged with developing a Research Plan that will identify opportunities for agencies to coordinate with the research efforts of State, Tribal, territorial, and local governments, among others, to accelerate the development of data, research, and techniques—including consideration of Indigenous Knowledge—to address gaps and inadequacies in data collection and scientific research that may affect agencies' ability to advance environmental justice. OSTP issued a Request for Information to Support the Development of a Federal Environmental Justice Science, Data and Research Plan that specifically asks for examples of Indigenous Knowledge and for ways the Federal Government can improve its collaboration with non-Federal entities, including Tribal governments.

Indigenous Knowledge Chapter in DOI's Departmental Manual. DOI announced that it is instituting departmental guidance for DOI bureaus on inclusion and protection of Indigenous Knowledge in federal decision making and scientific research. DOI is also developing an Indigenous Knowledge handbook and training to support implementation of the Departmental Manual chapter.

NOAA Indigenous Knowledge Guidance. In July 2023, NOAA announced the release of this updated guidance which facilitates the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge into NOAA's environmental science, policy, and decision-making process and, builds partnerships with Indigenous Peoples.

USACE Policy Statement on Indigenous Knowledge. USACE announced it is working on a policy statement to further the use of Indigenous Knowledge in USACE decision-making processes to operationalize OSTP and CEQ's Indigenous Knowledge Guidance throughout the Civil Works program. This policy statement is set to be completed and published in 2024.

Clearinghouse for Indigenous Knowledge Governmental and Non-Governmental Trainings and Resources. In June 2023, the National Science and Technology Council Subcommittee on Indigenous Knowledge compiled and published a spreadsheet of known existing governmental and non-governmental trainings and other resources pertinent to the use of Indigenous Knowledge in federal research, policy, and decision-making and made it available to all federal employees.

Native American Cultural Competency Training at AmeriCorps. As a part of AmeriCorps' commitment to honoring their obligation to federal trust responsibility and strengthening Nation-to-Nation relationships, 150+ AmeriCorps staff attended a Native American Cultural Competency Training in 2023 to provide awareness and better inform staff on the importance of acknowledging Indigenous Knowledge and culture and sovereignty, within their programs and workstreams.

Graves Protection and Repatriation

Final Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act Rule. DOI announced final revisions to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act's regulations. These regulations provide a systematic process for returning human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony to AI/AN Tribes and Native Hawaiian Organizations. These changes streamline the requirements for museums and federal agencies to inventory and identify human remains and cultural items in their collections.

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ACHP Guidance Document on Burial Sites, Human Remains, and Funerary Objects. ACHP released a *Burial Sites, Human Remains, and Funerary Objects Discussion and Guidance Document.* This guidance document addresses the role that Indigenous Knowledge, climate change impacts, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and sacred sites have in the ongoing consideration of, and care for, burial sites, human remains, and funerary objects. This document also explicitly supports DOI's Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative.

Nancy Vickery (Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian), Bronia Ashford (Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement), and Jeremy Baker (DHS/CBP), on a tour of the Museum's collections in Suitland Maryland, in furtherance of successful repatriations. (Photo courtesy of DHS).

Native Languages

At the 2021 Tribal Nations Summit, several agencies and offices—DOI, USDA, HHS, ED, Institute for Museum and Library Sciences, NEA, NEH, DOT, and White House CEQ—signed a *Memorandum of Agreement on Native Languages*, kickstarting a new interagency initiative to preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native languages. Since 2021, several other agencies have signed on to the MOA including, ACHP, OPM, SSA, SBA, OMB, DHS, DOC, DOL, DOS, VA, AmeriCorps, and EPA.

First Ever Federal Survey to Measure Native Language Vitality. HHS announced the development of the first-ever federal survey to measure Native language vitality nationally, authorized by the Durbin Feeling Native American Languages Act of 2023. The Survey will be informed by a Community Working Group consisting of Tribal leaders and Native language experts, and Tribal consultation on survey questions, data parameters, and data collection. HHS will complete the initial survey design by January 2024, with the goal of updating Congress with content of the survey and dissemination options no later than January 5, 2024. ANA will publish a draft of the Native Language Vitality Survey by September 2024.

Native Language Community Coordination Demonstration Pilot Project Report. HHS released this Report in October 2023 to document the Native Language Community Coordination's cohort model, which gave Tribal language programs and federal staff the opportunity to collaborate around best practices across their programs. The pilot also resulted in improved partnerships within Tribal communities to work towards language revitalization.

10th Annual Native Language Summit. HHS—in partnership with BIE, ED, and USDA—hosted this Summit in October 2023 and centered programming around the four pillars of the draft 10-Year Native Language Plan: Awareness, Recognition/Affirmation, Integration, and Support.

Grants to Support Native Language Resource Centers. ED awarded over $2.2 million to four universities—Little Priest Tribal College, University of Oregon, University of Arizona, and University of Hawaii—to support the development of Native Language Centers that will work to preserve Native American languages and integrate them into their classrooms. This funding is dedicated to developing centers across three geographic regions—Central, Northwest, and West—as well as one national.

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NEH to Establish a New Program to Support the Revitalization and Reclamation of Native Languages and Culture. NEH is currently developing a $1.5 million program that will support the development of Native language programming and humanities-based cultural activities. The creation of this new program will leverage the expertise of Tribal Nations and provide partnership opportunities within NEH and across Federal Government. This effort is in response to the Biden-Harris Administration's Framework on Native Language Revitalization for supporting, preserving, and revitalizing Native American languages.

Crosby Kemper, Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Shelly C. Lowe (Navajo), Chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Maria Rosario Jackson, PhD, Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, during the conference's Opening Ceremony in a keynote session entitled, "Sustaining and Advancing Indigenous Cultures: The Role of Federal Agencies." (Photo courtesy of NEH).

Living Languages Grants Program Revisions to Encourage Native Languages. ED, in collaboration with DOI, also reviewed the Living Languages Grant Program solicitation language and suggested mechanisms to award additional grant points for applications that integrate, support, and promote Native language revitalization and address grant accessibility concerns raised in Tribal consultations. These mechanisms align with the broader stated policy frameworks and goals of the 10-Year Plan.

SSA Native Languages Accessibility Improvements. SSA is enhancing interpreter services and seeking opportunities to translate relevant SSA publications into Native Languages. In 2023, SSA developed strategies to translate targeted publications and market interpreter services in Tribal communities, implemented new Tribal outreach to Urban Indian Centers in Limited English Proficient communities, and worked on hiring bilingual employees.

Updated Resources Guide on Federal Funding for Native Languages. NEA released an updated and comprehensive overview of federal funding sources to support Native arts and cultural activities, including Native language revitalization.

Indian Arts and Crafts

Indian Arts and Crafts Act Updated Regulations. DOI is revising the regulations implementing the Indian Arts and Crafts Act. This proposed rule would modernize the Indian Arts and Crafts Board regulations to better meet the objectives of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act to promote the economic welfare of the Indian Tribes and Indian individuals through the development of Indian arts and crafts and the expansion of the market for the products of Indian art and craftsmanship.

First Lady Jill Biden greets Tohono O'odham Nation citizens in the San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Nation near Tucson, Arizona.

Developing Resource Materials for Native American Constituents. NEA developed a resource for Native American Constituents related to NEA grant opportunities and fellowships. This resource guide is a consolidation of opportunities offered by federal agencies for organizations

looking for funding and other resources to support Native arts and culture activities.

Traditional Medicine

Traditional Medicine Summit. The WHCNAA Health Committee—comprised of several federal agencies—will convene its 2nd annual Traditional Medicine Summit in the spring of 2024. The Summit will focus on traditional Indigenous healing practices to address behavioral health and related health challenges in Indigenous communities within the United States. The Summit will highlight successful models of integrated healthcare with traditional healing in prevention, intervention, and treatment methods for behavioral health and related conditions. The Summit will be attended by Indigenous healers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, policy makers, and members of the public.

Position Paper on Traditional Medicine Efficacy. In addition to the Summit, the WHCNAA Health Committee, in partnership with a group of scholars, are in the process of developing a position paper on the efficacy of traditional Indigenous medicine in treating behavioral and other health challenges in Indigenous communities.

Technology, Broadband, Spectrum and Cybersecurity

Internet and Broadband

Tribal Spectrum MOU. In November 2022, DOI, DOC, and FCC announced a new Tribal Spectrum *MOU* to advance consistent interagency coordination to promote electromagnetic spectrum access and the deployment of broadband and other wireless services on Tribal lands. The MOU provides a framework for exploring new opportunities for Tribal policy development for wireless services, including spectrum access and data exchange, in support of Tribal political and economic self-determination. DOI established a bi-weekly workgroup among staff of OSTP, DOI, FCC and NTIA to form improved and effective communication and information exchange to coordinate policies and outreach, including on national broadband and spectrum policy development and agency updates related to Tribal lands.

Presidential Memorandum: Modernizing U.S. Spectrum Policy & National Spectrum Strategy. The new Presidential Memorandum Modernizing U.S. Spectrum Policy and National Spectrum Strategy includes language honoring the trust relationship with Tribal Nations, significance of Tribal equities, and the DOI-FCC-DOC Tribal Spectrum MOU announced during the 2022 White House Tribal Nations Summit to enhance interagency coordination on spectrum and broadband access on Tribal lands. The Memorandum and Strategy promote efficient and modern electromagnetic spectrum use for wireless communications and spectrum-based technologies.

Affordable Connectivity Program Discounts for Tribal Internet Service. The Affordable Connectivity Program provides an enhanced benefit of up to $75/month for eligible households on qualifying Tribal lands. Households are eligible if they earn 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or less or if they already participate in certain federal programs, including a wide range of Tribal assistance programs. To ensure that Tribal communities are aware of this benefit and to encourage participation, the FCC created an

outreach program directed at Tribes—the Tribal Competitive Outreach Program – and awarded more than $7 million across two competitive funding rounds**.**

$1.86 Billion
awarded to 226 Tribal entities under the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program

Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program Awards. DOC's National Telecommunications and Information Administration has, to date, awarded over $1.86 billion to 226 Tribal entities under the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program. Tribes can use these funds to connect Tribal households and businesses to high-speed Internet service, plan for future Internet infrastructure investments, and upgrade network equipment. In July, NTIA opened a second round of the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program. This round makes another $980 million available for the deployment of Internet infrastructure, affordability programs, telehealth, and distance learning initiatives.

Cybersecurity

Tribal Cybersecurity Grant Program. In September 2023, DHS released a BIL-funded $18.2 million Tribes grant program to build cybersecurity resilience across Indian Country. In August 2022, FEMA and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency hosted a joint Tribal consultation on how to adjust the Tribal set-aside portion grant requirements of this program to better reflect the challenges across Indian Country. As a result of the consultation, both DHS and DOI waived the non-federal cost share for Tribal Nations, adjusted the planning committee requirements that Tribal Nations will need to meet for this NOFO.

International and Border Issues

Repatriation

Implementation of the Safeguard Tribal Objects of Patrimony (STOP) Act. In December 2022, President Biden signed the Safeguard Tribal Objects of Patrimony (STOP) Act, which increases penalties for violations of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act; imposes regulations to stop the export of Tribal objects of patrimony; establishes a federal framework to return items of cultural heritage; and establishes a Tribal and interagency working group. The Act directs DOI, in conjunction with DOJ, State, and DHS, to promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the Act. DOI announced that its draft of regulations to implement the STOP Act will be completed at the end of 2023 for Tribal consultation.

International Museum Guidance for Native American Repatriations. The WHCNAA International Indigenous Issues Committee is in the process of developing guidance for international institutions to encourage and facilitate repatriations of Native American ancestors and sensitive and significant cultural property currently held in international collections. Draft guidance was completed and sent out for Tribal consultation in November 2023. The final guidance is set to be completed by Spring 2024.

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Reciprocal International Repatriation Museum Exchange. State and DOI launched the International Repatriation Museum Exchange, which provides Tribes and international museums the opportunity to foster mutual understanding, explore collaborative relationships, and open further dialogue on the subject of repatriation. In Summer 2023, five Tribal Nations—Blackfeet Nation, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, and the Pawnee Nation were selected for the Exchange. These five Exchanges will begin Spring 2024 and be completed by Summer 2024.

5 Tribes
selected for the Reciprocal International Repatriation Museum Exchange

Border Issues

Continuing Efforts to Produce Enhanced Tribal Cards. U.S. Customs and Border Protection is continuing its efforts to enter into agreements with federally-recognized Tribes to permit the production and use of Enhanced Tribal Cards (ETCs). These ETCs would provide Tribal members with secure, Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative-compliant travel documents that can be used to denote identity and citizenship in lieu of a passport at land and sea ports of entry when arriving from contiguous territory or adjacent islands in the Western Hemisphere. The agency is currently in MOA discussions and negotiations with 18 Tribes, and signed three MOAs with Tribes in 2023. These three Tribes are now in the production phase of the process.

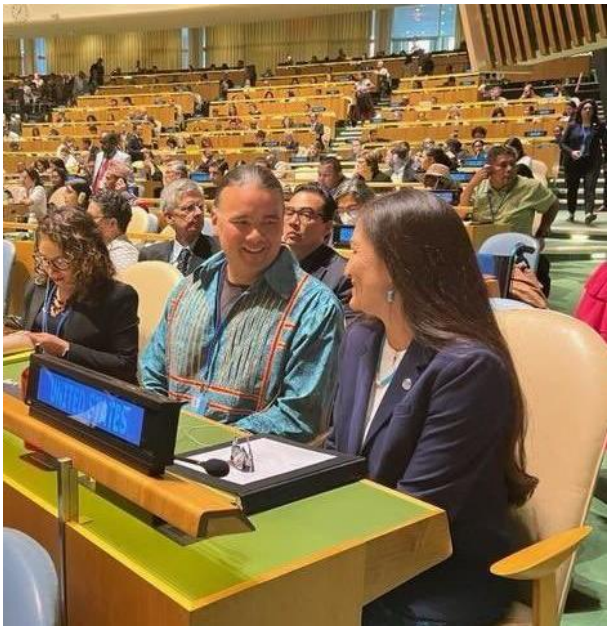
Reciprocal Indigenous Mobility. DHS is spearheading an initiative that identifies and removes barriers that impede the access of Tribal Nations and Alaska Native Villages to border-crossing and immigration benefits. DHS announced progress towards completing an arrangement with Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas that intends to better implement the statute regarding the Tribe's unique pass/repass privileges. DHS also announced progress towards addressing Indigenous mobility at the southern border of the United States. DHS submitted a 180-day report to the President in September 2023 with progress on the initiative and, recommendations for any new operational procedures or legal authorities necessary to support these efforts. As a part of the initiative, DHS is in the process of engaging with TSA leadership and frontline personnel to understand TSA's perspectives on best ways to improve screening experiences for Tribal Nations citizens and improve indigenous mobility; and educate frontline personnel on TSA's obligations as a federal agency and its implications on ID verification procedures. In October 2023, DHS visited airports in Alaska and Washington. In 2024, DHS plans to visit airports in 22 states (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, New England, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, and Wyoming).

International Indigenous Rights and Partnerships

Trilateral Working Group on Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls. In September 2023, the Government of Canada hosted the Fifth Convening of the Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls, in collaboration with Indigenous leaders and government officials from Canada, the United States, and Mexico. This Working Group was first established as an outcome of the 2016 North American Leaders' Summit, and this particular Convening was a 2022 Summit commitment. Secretary Haaland represented the United States at this Convening. Participants at the Convening exchanged information about policies, programs, and promising practices to prevent and respond to human trafficking and reduce the barriers that Indigenous Peoples—especially women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals—face when seeking justice. The three countries reaffirmed our commitment to continue working together, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and particularly with Indigenous women, to

advance prevention efforts, increase support for survivors, and enhance regional coordination to better address root causes that increase vulnerability to all forms of gender-based violence.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Study. The WHCNAA International Indigenous Committee, led by DOI in partnership with State, are collaborating with a group of Harvard students to produce a cross comparative analysis of several nations' progress in pursing the goals of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The full analysis is set to be completed and presented to the Committee in November 2023.



Secretary Haaland and Assistant Secretary Newland represent the United States at the United Nations. (Photo courtesy of DOI).

Supporting Global Progress on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous People. In 2023, USAID invested $84 million to support development efforts that align with USAID's *Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in several countries.

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. ACHP co-sponsored and presented at a side event, *Advancing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, during the 22nd session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at United Nations Headquarters in New York City. During the event, ACHP provided examples on how it has incorporated articles of the Declaration in the recently adopted Policy Statement on Burial Sites, Human Remains, and Funerary Objects.

Convening on Indigenous Leaders for the Pacific. DOI and USAID are in the process of supporting a pilot project to convene Indigenous leaders from the Pacific, Native Hawaiian community leaders, and Tribal leaders to discuss issues facing Indigenous communities in the region. Issues to be discussed include economic development, climate resilience, adaptation strategies, and climate relocation. This pilot project is set to convene in 2024.

Inaugural International EV Corridor. In September 2023, DOT announced its International EV Corridor—a national network of plug-in EV charging and hydrogen, propane, and natural gas fueling infrastructure—in Kalamazoo, Michigan and Quebec, Ontario. To complement this announcement, DOT hosted an inaugural EV Corridor Workshop near the Corridor that covered topics including grant applications, technical assistance, the DOT EV toolkit, and the use of EV from both the individual and Tribal perspective. Both U.S. Tribes near the Corridor and First Nation Tribes in Canada were present.

International Indigenous Tourism Workshop. In August 2023, DOI and USAID hosted an in-person workshop of U.S. Tribes and Indigenous Peoples focused on Indigenous-led tourism and economic development in Cherokee, North Carolina. The workshop brought together Native Act grantees with Indigenous Peoples representatives to share lessons learned, exchange best practices, and co-create a pilot program that will support continued engagement between U.S. Tribes and Indigenous Peoples communities to foster Indigenous-led tourism growth and economic development.

Enabling Global Engagements for Indigenous Leaders. In August 2023, USAID—in collaboration with BIA—hosted a "Indigenous Tourism—A conversation with Panama and Guatemala leaders" at BIA's

Office of Indian Economic Development's first annual, "Building Connections: Strengthening Indigenous Communities Toward Economic Self Sufficiency" grantee meeting. This event engaged Tribal representatives with global Indigenous communities who are seeking joint efforts to promote tourism. Additionally, a delegation of Brazilian Indigenous leaders was invited by the Native American & Wildlife Society to attend the 2023 Great Lakes Regional Conference and, visit Pueblo of Santa Ana in New Mexico. This invitation builds on USAID and DOI's collaborations in learning exchanges of land management between Tribes and Indigenous Peoples in Brazil.

Strengthening International Collaboration. Secretary Haaland traveled to Brazil, Australia and New Zealand to highlight the kinship between Indigenous communities across the globe. She committed to ongoing U.S. support as global partners work to honor Native communities; preserve their languages and cultures; invest in resiliency efforts; and bring Native leaders to the table for critical policy-related discussions.

Enhancing Indigenous Peoples' Engagement and Contributions at COP 28. USAID, in partnership with the Forest Stewardship Council Indigenous Foundation and the U.S. Center, will host a side event at COP 28 featuring Indigenous leaders speaking on Indigenous Peoples' perspectives on Just Transition and Green Energy initiatives. Additionally, USAID contributed to the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Forest Tenure Pledge second annual report. This pledge supports the advancement of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' forest tenure rights.

Inter-American Foundation Inaugural Cities Summit. In April 2023, the Inter-American Foundation brought a delegation to the inaugural Cities Summit of the Americas in Denver, Colorado. The Foundation's Indigenous Exchange hosted the only plenary panel focused on Native American and Indigenous Issues, "Strengthening Native American and Indigenous Collaborative Partnerships and Municipalities." The panel featured leaders from Native American and Indigenous organizations—Nez Perce Tourism, Fundación TIERRA, Wakan Tipi Awanyakapi and Guambia. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and Colorado Lieutenant Governor Dianne Primavera provided remarks prefacing the IAF's panel. The Foundation's Indigenous Exchange also held the only Summit side event focused on the leadership of Native American and Indigenous people as well as actors committed to uplifting Indigenous community-led work. The Indigenous Exchange provides a forum for Indigenous communities in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Tribal Nations in the United States to exchange ideas, experiences, and ultimately foster sustainable collaborations.

USAID Grant Award to Support the United Nations' Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples. USAID is in the process of working with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to develop a $1 million, five-year grant to support the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples. The grant aims to increase the Fund's capacity to deliver training and support the participation of Indigenous women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other populations in global mechanisms for Indigenous Peoples' rights including the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Inter-American Foundation Program on Native Women Entrepreneurship. In March 2023, the Inter-American Foundation hosted its first hybrid program with 15 in-person and many virtual participants who were all leaders or members of Indigenous or Native women's enterprises. Topics included Native American and Indigenous women cultural arts, entrepreneurship, and networking.

The United States Department of State: International Youth Leadership Coalition. State's first Special Representative for Racial Equity and Justice, in collaboration with DOI and the White House, created a catalyst coalition of young international Indigenous leaders to elevate the voices of Indigenous youth in global civic and political participation. The six members of the Indigenous Youth Leadership Coalition

from Brazil, Canada, Mexico, Honduras, Colombia, and Guatemala participated in the annual White House Tribal Youth Forum and met with an array of senior U.S. government officials and members of civil society. The inaugural cohort shared their unique perspectives with Native American youth and policy makers on critical issues that impact Native American and Indigenous communities across the Western Hemisphere, such as climate change, community health challenges, gender-based violence, and Indigenous Knowledge preservation. The goal of the coalition is to cultivate lasting relationships and solution-driven knowledge exchanges between international Indigenous youth and Native American youth on shared borderless issues affecting their communities.

Trade and Investment Policy

President's Trade Agenda and Annual Report. Released every March, the President's Trade Agenda and Annual Report now include unprecedented objectives and updates on engaging with Tribal Nations, Native and Indigenous community-based organizations, academia, entrepreneurs, and enterprises. In response to recommendations during USTR's Tribal Consultation meetings, USTR appointed Indigenous experts to serve as cleared advisors on trade advisory committees and sought public comment to inform inclusive, worker-centered trade objectives and positions in all trade and investment policy areas for both enhanced engagement and subsequent negotiations. In addition, USTR is working with colleagues across the government to explore how trade tools and rules may better address issues like misappropriation of Indigenous goods and capacity building for Native entrepreneurs and workers.

Chairman Greg Sarris, Federated Indians of the Graton Rancheria; Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr., Cherokee Nation; Ambassador Katherine Tai, the U.S. Trade Representative; Chief Lynn Malerba, Treasurer of the United States. (Photo courtesy of USTR).

Asia-Pacific Economic Corporation Indigenous Peoples Dialogue. At the 2023 Asian-Pacific Economic Corporation (APEC), the United States hosted the first APEC Ministers' Meeting Dialogue with Indigenous Peoples in San Francisco, California. The dialogue brought together Indigenous panelists from across the Asia-Pacific to further learn how policymakers can make trade and investment more inclusive for Indigenous Peoples, including more support, transparency, and agency for Indigenous Peoples in developing future policies. The Dialogue was hosted by Ambassador Katherine Tai, United States Trade Representative and moderated by Chief Lynn Malerba, Treasurer. The panel consisted of Chairman Greg Sarris from the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (CA), Chief Chuck Hoskins Jr. from the Cherokee Nation (OK), Ambassador Justin Mohammed representing the First Nations People of Australia, Marc LeClair representing Metis Nation in Canada, and Pita Tipene, Chairman of the Waitangi National Trust Board in New Zealand.

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Appendix A. - List of Acronyms

Acronym	Term
ACF	Administration for Children and Families (part of HHS)
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Native	American Indian / Alaska Native
ARP	American Rescue Plan
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs (part of DOI)
BIE	Bureau of Indian Education (part of DOI)
BIL	Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
BTFA	Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (part of DOI)
CEQ	White House Council on Environmental Quality (part of EOP)
CBP	United States Customs and Border Protection (part of DHS)
CX	Customer Experience
Denali	Denali Commission
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOC	Department of Commerce
DOE	Department of Energy
DOI	Department of the Interior
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOL	Department of Labor
DOT	Department of Transportation
DPC	White House Domestic Policy Council (part of EOP)
EOP	Executive Office of the President of the United States
ED	Department of Education
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EV	Electric Vehicle
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation (part of DOJ)
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FDA	Food and Drug Administration (part of HHS)
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency (part of DHS)
FPISC	Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GSA	General Services Administration
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
HRSA	Health Resources and Services Administration (part of HHS)
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement (part of DHS)
IHS	Indian Health Service (part of HHS)
IMLS	Institute of Museum and Library Services
IRA	Inflation Reduction Act
IRS	Internal Revenue Service (part of Treasury)

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ITBC……...	InterTribal Buffalo Council (non-governmental)
NASA…….....	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NEA……...	National Endowment for the Arts
NEH…….....	National Endowment for the Humanities
NIH…….	National Institutes of Health (part of HHS)
NOAA……	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (part of DOC)
NOFO…….	Notice of Funding Opportunity
NTIA……..	National Telecommunications and Information Administration (part of DOC)
OMB……...	Office of Management and Budget (part of EOP)
OPM……...	Office of Personnel Management
OTR……	Office of Tribal Relations (part of USDA)
OSTP……..	Office of Science and Technology Policy (part of EOP)
SAMHSA……...	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (part of HHS)
SBA……	Small Business Administration
SSA……	Social Security Administration
State/DOS……...	Department of State
TCU……	Tribal Colleges and Universities
Treasury…….	Department of the Treasury
TSA……	Transportation Security Administration (part of DHS)
UIO…….	Urban Indian Organization (non-governmental)
USACE……...	United States Army Corps of Engineers (part of DOD)
USAID……	United States Agency for International Development
USDA…….	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS……..	United States Forest Service (part of USDA)
USITC……	United States International Trade Commission
USTR……...……..	United States Trade Representative (part of EOP)
VA……..	Department of Veterans Affairs
WHCNAA……..	White House Council on Native American Affairs