



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

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Dear Tribal Leader:

The Indian Trust Asset Reform Act was passed into law on June 22, 2016. Title II of the act authorizes the Secretary of the Department of the Interior to establish and carry out an Indian Trust Asset Management Demonstration Project (Demonstration Project). I am pleased at this time to announce the establishment of the Demonstration Project.

Under the Demonstration Project, Tribes engaged in forest land management and/or surface leasing activities on trust lands may apply to participate. If selected to participate, Tribes may submit an Indian Trust Asset Management Plan (ITAMP) for the management of Tribal trust assets. An approved ITAMP may allow Tribes to develop Tribal forestry and surface leasing regulations, and assume certain approval authorities currently held by the Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

Earlier this year, the Bureau of Indian Affairs hosted three Tribal consultation sessions regarding the Demonstration Project. The input received from Tribes during the consultation sessions was critical in helping us develop the guidelines necessary to move this important project forward. For responses to specific comments received during consultation, please see the "Response to Tribal Comments on Establishment of the Indian Trust Asset Reform Act Demonstration Project" posted at <https://www.bia.gov/as-ia/raca/regulations-development-andor-under-review/itara-demonstration-project>.

Eligible Tribes may request to participate in the project by submitting to the Secretary a complete application package. To be eligible, Tribes must have land held in trust or restricted fee status for the benefit of the Indian Tribe. For Tribes that would like to include forest land management activities in an ITAMP, the Tribe must have, or be in the process of obtaining, an approved Forest Management Plan. Applications must include a copy of a Tribal resolution or other appropriate action by the governing body of the Tribe authorizing the application and state that the Tribe is requesting to participate in the Demonstration Project. Tribes should also include in their applications a summary of their goals for participation and the assets they intend to include in their ITAMP to allow the Secretary to evaluate applications and select participants. Further guidance is available at the above website. The Secretary will provide a written notice to each Tribe regarding the approval or disapproval of their request.

I appreciate your participation in the consultation sessions and look forward to receiving your applications. For further information, please contact Ms. Johnna Blackhair, Acting Deputy Director, Office of Trust Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs, at (202) 208-5968, or email Johnna.Blackhair@bia.gov.

Sincerely,

Tara Sweeney
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs