



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Office of Trust Services

FY2024 Mid-Year Accomplishments



BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

200TH YEAR



Honoring a New Era
of Tribal Revitalization



Trust Land Resources • Resource Stewardship • Results that Matter



Office of Trust Services Overview

Purpose of the Report

The Office of Trust Services (OTS) prepares mid-year accomplishment reports to inform Tribes and OTS employees across the country of the significant contributions our programs make to Indian Country. We take pride in the fact that our jobs help provide climate resilience, support efforts for ecosystem restoration, contribute to the reduction of fractionated Indian lands, and provide opportunities to support, manage, protect, and develop their trust lands and natural resources. Our work is challenging. We may be supporting the management of irrigation, dam, and power facilities, or protecting lives, property, and land from Wildland Fires, developing policy for the management of invasive species, traveling long distances to assist with timber sales and continuous forest inventory projects, formulation and communication policy and directives or collaboration with partners to advance our goals.

Employee Demographics

Central Office staff located in Washington, DC, Albuquerque, NM, Billings, MT, Boise, ID and Lakewood, CO. Additional Field staff positions are located at each of the twelve Regions and 83 Agencies nationwide. The pie chart shows a breakdown of our trust positions.

Visit our website at

<https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots> for more information about BIA Trust Services.

Our Mission

The mission of the Office of Trust services is to protect, develop, manage, and enhance Indian trust resources for the benefit of American Indian and Alaska Native peoples and expand economic opportunities through effective trust management that recognizes and support a Tribe's self-governance.

Who We Serve

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Office of Trust Services (OTS) has offices nationwide, and assists Tribal governments and allottees in managing, protecting, and developing their trust lands and natural resources, which total 56 million surface acres and 60 million acres of subsurface mineral estates. OTS Programs aid landowners in the stewardship of their cultural, spiritual, and traditional resources, and help Tribal governments create sustainable sources of revenue and jobs for their communities.

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Division of Energy and Minerals (DEMD)

Mission

The Division of Energy and Mineral Development (DEMD) is charged with administration and processing of Indian affairs (IA's) Tribal grant and technical assistance program supporting Tribal efforts to build economic development through developing energy and mineral resources. The DEMD provides meaningful technical assistance to Tribes to support Tribal efforts to negotiate potential minerals agreements and to develop energy in the areas of electrification, oil and gas permitting, renewable energy permitting, energy efficiency, electricity generation, transmission planning, and coordination with water, environmental, cultural, and other resource management activities that would assist Tribes in developing or using energy resources. The DEMD maintains a staff of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) professionals with expertise in energy and mineral development and Tribal capacity building to fulfill BIA's responsibility to provide advice, assistance, and information to Tribes in developing energy and minerals. The DEMD supports BIA's OTS and Field Operations in considering approval of proposed minerals agreements with respect to economic assessment and potential economic return.

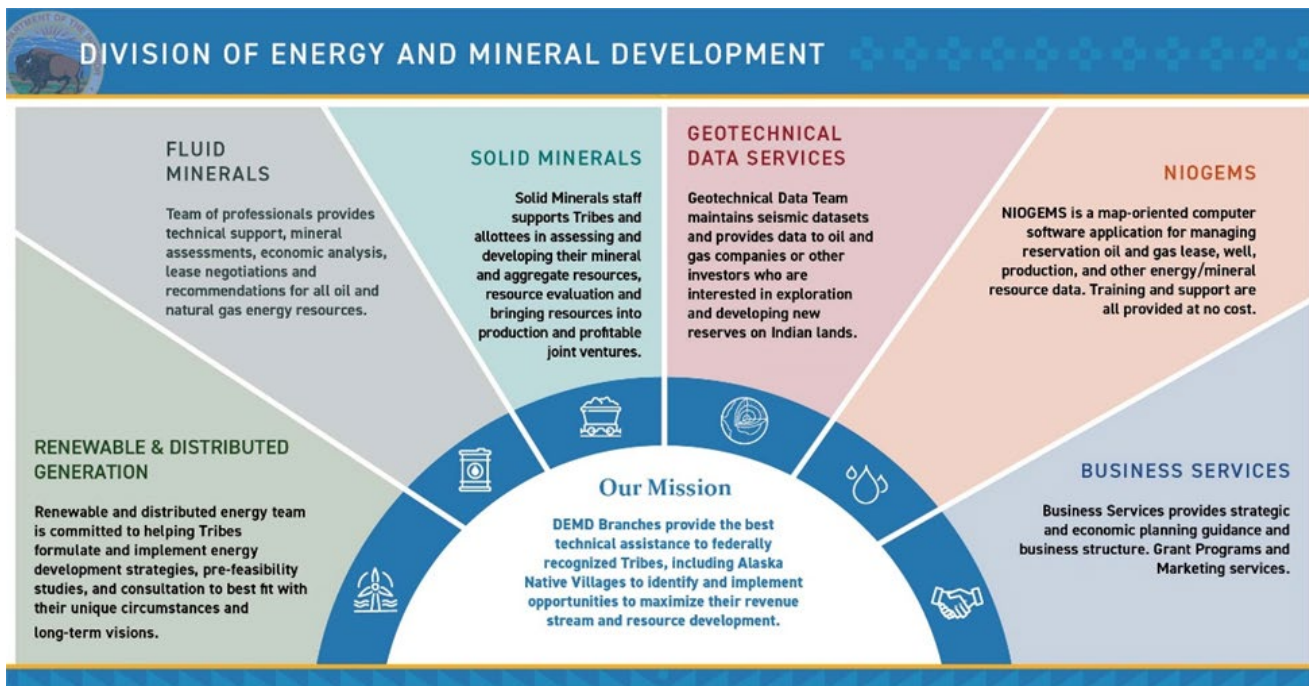
DEMD Modernization and Streamlining

The DEMD has been in existence since the 1980s and has focused throughout its history on providing technical assistance and grant funding for Indian minerals owners. That mission is constant and remains unchanged, though the office has recently undergone significant realignment. The DEMD has undergone recent, significant modernization efforts to increase the effectiveness and service delivery and to better coordinate BIA's energy programs into a common programmatic platform.

Prior to 2021, the DEMD was housed under the Office of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs (AS-IA), within the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (OIEED). Realignment saw DEMD moved from the Office of the AS-IA to BIA's Office of Trust Services (OTS). The DEMD works with other OTS Divisions to improve service delivery to Indian Country and Alaska Native villages for energy development and production, promote end-to-end planning for energy development projects, enhance related energy and mineral functions within OTS, offer Tribes a centralized office for energy questions and issues, and promote a more unified IA voice for positions on energy matters.

DEMD Leadership and Staffing

The DEMD Division Chief position has recently undergone turnover, with the retirement of the former Division Chief and the selection of a new, permanent Division Chief in 2023. In recognition of the need to maintain a capable, STEM workforce available to Tribes for assistance advancing economic development through developing energy and mineral resources and related Tribal capacity building, the DEMD has enacted some initial updates to its staffing approach, reducing the size of its professional services support group from 45 to 17 professionals and continuing to develop future staffing and recruitment plans to fulfill its mission with an emphasis on maximizing Federal hiring.



DEMD is organized into Six Branches. The first three Branches are based on the Available energy commodity resources:

DEMD, Branch of Renewable and Distributed Generation

Solar, Wind, Biomass, Hydropower, Geothermal (from the usage perspective), Microgrids, Hydrogen, and more.

1. Fluid Minerals

Oil, Natural Gas, Helium, Geothermal (from the perspective of locating and well drilling/completion), and more.

2. Solid Minerals

Sand and Gravel, Limestone, Industrial Minerals, Precious Minerals, Critical Minerals, Coal, and more.

The second three branches provide direct support to Tribes to aid in the effective development of these commodities that maximize the economic return and community impact.

6. Geotechnical Data Services

Maintains Tribal energy and mineral resource data essential to the resource development process. This includes over \$258 million in seismic datasets, electric infrastructure (transmission lines, power plants, substations), road infrastructure, solid mineral geologic data, solar, wind, biomass, and more.

4. NIOGEMS

The National Indian Oil, Gas, Energy and Mineral System is a map-oriented software application developed and maintained by DEMD. The software, training, and data are provided to Tribes to aid in project development and resource management.

5. Business Services

Focuses on business organization, economic and strategic planning – including developing a portfolio of projects, and tribal capacity development.

Professional Services

Each Branch is comprised of professionals in their respective fields and provide direct technical advising and services to Tribes. DEMD remains aware of internal and external market influences – both those that will positively affect tribal economies and those that may pose negative impacts. For example, increased financial and political support for road infrastructure maintenance and development could make local markets viable for long-term tribal sand and gravel companies.

All projects are tribally driven, with DEMD staff serving as partners in the projects. DEMD's involvement varies based on each Tribe's requests, the Tribe's preference and DEMD's current availability.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

Competitive Grant Programs

Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP) Energy and Mineral projects require a multitude of pre-development studies and planning steps. The EMDP grant is a mechanism for completing these tasks and the results of these studies allow Tribes to reduce the risk of the projects and make decisions on how to move forward.

Some common task areas include:

- Resource Assessment
- Exploration Studies
- Feasibility Studies
- Market Studies
- Engineering Studies
- Economic Evaluation
- Defining Potential Targets for Development

The EMDP grant notice for FY2022 funding received 79 project applications totaling \$44.9 million in work. The EMDP funding opportunity for FY 2023 is posted to www.Grants.gov, and closes on May 24, 2024. Applications for this round of competitive funding will be accepted in Grants.gov until the May deadline.

Tribal Energy Development Capacity (TEDC)

The TEDC grant is designed to aid Tribes in Tribal management, organizational and technical capacity needed to maximize the economic impact of energy resource development on tribal lands. Tribes can enhance the management and regulation of energy projects through implemented organizational and business structures, legal and regulatory infrastructure specific to energy projects. The Business Services Branch has the lead role in the implementation of the TEDC grant.

The TEDC grant can be used for a variety of projects, and these are some of the frequent studies:

- Establishing a Tribal Utility Authority
- Developing the legal infrastructure to create a Tribal energy business.
- Establish an energy-focused corporation under Tribal or state incorporation codes.
- Establishing an energy-related Tribal business charter under federal law (IRA Section 17 corporation)
- Developing or enhancing tribal policies, codes, regulations, or ordinances related to energy resource, including land-lease regulations in accordance with the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership (HEARTH) Act for energy development purposes or for business purposes connected to an energy project.

The TEDC grant notice for FY 2022 funding received 34 applications requesting over \$7.8 million in proposed work. Awards were made to 19 projects at a total of \$2.8 million. The TEDC FY 2023 funding grant notice closed in January 2024. DEMD received 28 grant applications totaling \$8.3. Grant proposal ranking is nearly complete, awards are expected to be processed in the coming weeks.

DEMD, Branch of Business Services (BBS)

Structure

The Branch of Business Services (BBS) provides direct support to Tribes and their economic development goals for energy and mineral projects. The BBS provides expertise to all DEMD projects in need of capacity development services.

Business Services team members have professional backgrounds to aid in tribal capacity development include MBA's, financial analysts, business planning specialists, marketing specialists, and commercial lending experts. DEMD involvement in tribally driven projects may begin through direct coordination with the Business Services Branch. If coordination begins in another Branch the BBS is linked into the project development team.

Typical technical services include:

- Business Planning, Entity Formation and Project Management
- Business Partnering, Deal Structuring and Evaluation
- Grant Fund and Loan Guarantee Financing Guidance
- Strategic Planning
- Portfolio and New Venture Performance Management
- Create strategic, comprehensive income-generating portfolios (financial and economic analysis) to monetize a Tribes' resources.
- Advise Tribes on business structures, or foundational infrastructures, best suited for project financing options.
- Advise on new venture partnerships.

Portfolio Planning Expansion

The Business Services Branch has expanded their services available to tribes. The new service focuses on portfolio planning, assisting tribes on their assessment of their business goals, risks, resources, and other criteria to help inform which projects will be right for them. additional access to funding at the city, State, and Federal level.

BBS utilizes IMPLAN economic impact software to provide economic input output modeling and analysis. This tool will provide Tribes more insight into energy and mineral development projects and provide industry standard data analysis and open additional access to funding at the city, State, and Federal level.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

Business Services actively worked with 18 different TEDC grant projects, in the first half of FY 2024, providing technical support beyond grant monitoring. Fourteen Tribes are receiving DEMD Technical Assistance work. Activity includes Energy Generation Feasibility, Energy Planning Strategy, Financial Analysis, Oil and Gas Planning and Strategy, Solid Mineral Planning and Strategy, Business Plan drafting, and Tribal Utility Study Feasibility. Technical Assistance occurs in office, during site visits, Tribal Council Meetings, and in-person meetings.

Some examples of assistance include:

- BBS supported a Tribe in California to aggregate business plan to pursue financial investment into mine development and material sales; operations planned to begin 2025.
- BSB is working with the Morongo Band, and other Tribes regarding usage of the IRS Energy Community Bonus Credit Amounts under the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022.
- BSB performed a reserve analysis for producing oil and gas fields on to assist the Tribe in resource planning and assists in developing business ventures.

DEMD, Branch of Fluid Minerals (BFM)

Structure

The Branch of Fluid Minerals (BFM) is staffed with geologists, engineers, and other technical staff to provide to federally recognized tribes and allottees technical services in the following areas.

Typical technical services include:

- Technical advisement in development of oil, natural gas, and helium
- BFM and the Branch of Renewable & Distributed Generation (BRAD) work together for Tribes on geothermal development of utilities, CO2 capture and sequestration, and Hydrogen development.
- BFM works with other DEMD branches and federal agencies to support Tribes in their goals for economic growth and job creation and to maximize results.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

North American Prospect Expo (NAPE) Representation

The annual [North American Prospect Expo](#) (NAPE) event in Houston, TX hosts nearly 14,000 attendees! The February expo allows companies to explore opportunities and make connections to investors regarding oil, helium, other energy resources and, more recently, renewables. NAPE also provides Tribes a paramount chance to proactively seek developers and discover economic growth partners.

DEMD hosted a booth for six different Tribes and their representatives. Potential partners were provided open acreage brochures and maps created on behalf of in-person representatives of Tribes attending NAPE.

NAPE in recent years expanded to include renewable energy opportunities. BFM collaborated with the BRAD team to showcase renewable energy opportunities on Tribal lands.

OPPORTUNITIES

With strong (\$80+/BO) oil prices, the BFM anticipates significant interest in technical assistance from oil and gas producing Tribes.

Also, with immense focus on geothermal energy development, the BFM anticipates technical assistance requests from Indian country across the country.

CHALLENGES

The BFM has identified two challenges in FY 2024.

- Building rapport with council leadership given frequency of turnover in this leadership.
- Continuing to staff operations to meet the increasing demand for services.

DEMD management has determined that attendance at the NAPE conference will be discontinued. While the event does provide some benefit for marketing Tribal energy resources, resources applied to TEDC and EMDP grants and other activities that support Tribal energy and mineral development yield much greater benefit to Tribes.

Uintah & Ouray Grant and TA Support

BFM staff are supporting the U&O Project Integrated Modeling for Well Spacing on Tribal Mineral Lands (BIA Southwest Region). The project assesses oil and gas development to maximize economic returns. Specific project activities include computer modeling calibrated historical production data to optimize well spacing to maximize production volume.

Rocky Boys 3D Seismic Grant Project

DEMD staff, from the BFM and the Branch of Geotechnical Data Services (GDS), worked with the Chippewa Cree Tribe on the Rocky Boys Reservation (BIA Rocky Mountain Region) on processing, interpretation, and reporting results on their Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP) grant for a 3D seismic project. In late September 2023, the DEMD staff presented the results of the project to the Tribal council.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

- Providing technical assistance to Tribes and Allottees at requested and the currently engaged Tribes.
- Making trips to visit Tribal leaders.
- completing the 3D seismic EMDP grant and resource assessment projects.
- Attending the SUIT/Payne/NAMES conference in May 2024.
- Attending the Navajo Energy Conference in June 2024

DEMD, Branch of Solid Minerals (BSM)

The Solid Minerals Branch is staffed with professional geologists, mining engineers, and land acquisition specialists, working in collaboration with the Branch of Business Services.

Commodities Served

Base and precious metals – e.g., gold, silver, copper

Industrial materials – limestone, gypsum, clay, building stone.

Aggregates – sand & gravel, crushed stone

Critical minerals – e.g., rare earth elements, lithium, manganese, tungsten, coal, uranium



Solid Minerals Branch Geologist logging drill core, Crow Reservation, Montana

Typical technical services include:

- Direct assistance and grant program support for Tribes, allottees, and Alaska Native Regional and Village Corporations in assessing and developing their solid mineral resources.
- Evaluating economic viability of resource development
- Bringing resources into production and profitable businesses.

The result is improved infrastructure, jobs, and increased sustainable tribal revenues.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

Aggregate Development

Aggregate (sand & gravel, crushed stone) is a valuable and abundant natural resource that can be developed rapidly to generate sustainable jobs and economic growth for Tribes. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is expected to increase the commercial demand for sand and gravel significantly.

Over the first half of FY2023, the Branch evaluated specific economic costs for several different development scenarios for Tribes. The objective is to help move several Tribes nationwide from project concept, through feasibility, and on to revenue generating operations. This work includes:

- Analysis of geology
- Quantity and quality assessments
- Identification of internal and external markets
- Optimization of capital and operating costs, and
- Transportation to external markets.

Tribal Critical Minerals Assessment

DEMD Solid Minerals Branch provided oversight for a critical minerals assessment grant (EMDP). Results are highly encouraging for moving to the next phase of a high-grade manganese resource development project.

Tribal Metallic Deposit Assessment

DEMD assisted the Tribe with completion of a preliminary grant to determine potential for metallic deposits. A second grant was proposed and awarded to advance exploration to a drilling stage.

Tribal Aggregate and Clay Assessment

DEMD provided EMDP grant assistance. The grant consisted of three parts: 1. Aggregate exploration, 2. Clay exploration, and 3. Marketing study. DEMD assistance included: Geological and soils review of the pueblo, identification of sampling sites, assistance with RFP for a driller and for a marketing company, and technical assistance with interpretation of data received from the lab and from the marketing company.

Tribal Solid Mineral and Business Technical Assistance

The Solid Minerals and Business Services Teams assisted the Tribe in the establishment of an aggregate business operation. This business has subsequently won a bid to provide a large amount of aggregate material over 3 years, as a high value contract. The Business Services Branch is now helping the Tribe to vertically integrate, and start up a Trucking business, to service lucrative hauling contracts that business will require to deliver material. DEMD awarded the Tribe funds for an EMDP aggregate assessment grant to firm up the locations of future aggregate resources to feed the business.

Tribal Rock Barging Scope of Work Development

DEMD designed a rock barging project scope of work for request of proposals to three different consulting firms. Study includes barging rock from seven rivers. Study is intended to determine which mines and river systems produce the best lowest price and greatest rock quality for the Tribe. Finished Carlson software drawings of the Tribes land and topography near an identified river for a port location.

Tribal Forest Road Aggregate Assessment

Completed pit and road design, and helped the Tribe understand geologic mapping and which material would work best on forest service roads with extremely large amounts of rain per year. Give a capital cost estimate on the following mobile equipment: Jaw Crusher, Cone Crusher, Screens, and various mining equipment for quarry operations. The Tribe supplied lidar data of their lands and that was used by DEMD to design a Quarry for forest service road use. DEMD has assisted the Tribe in opening an aggregate pit to supply aggregate material for a variety of infrastructure projects. Pit development is complete, and there is a stockpile of aggregate available for future roads projects.

Tribal Aggregate Pit Design

Downloaded ownership and topography data for an aggregate pit design project. DEMD Created draft pit designs and researched aggregate product prices in the Tribe's business area.

Tribe Coal Technical Assistance

DEMD provided the Nation with recommendations on Track 1 coal mine plans, the feasibility of mining uranium, and implications of reduction in severance taxes paid by the existing company. The Tribe was also informed of potential aggregate development sites.

Tribe Aggregate Business Options

DEMD provided the Tribe with business infrastructure options and costs including CAPEX/OPEX in setting up a Tribal aggregate business.

Tribe Rare Earth

DEMD has collaborated with the Tribe to assess the economic feasibility of developing their rare earth element-zirconium resource. DEMD funded a study to determine whether the metals can be economically separated from the rock (metallurgy). If economic, this resource could provide from 35 to over 100 highly paid jobs and generate multimillion-dollar annual tribal revenues for over 20 years.

Tribe Cement Plant Business Agreement Review [Solid Minerals]

DEMD provided in-depth economic analyses of a potential agreement with a company for construction of a cement plant.

Tribe Mine Lease Re-Negotiation Preparation [Solid Minerals]

DEMD Solid Minerals Branch provided technical assistance regarding re-negotiation of a mine lease, including all terms of the lease that should be addressed, what items need to be requested from lessee prior to re-negotiation, royalty options, etc. DEMD aided with grant closure for several completed EMDP grants.

Tribe Aggregate Mine Technical Assistance [Solid Minerals]

DEMD Solid Minerals Branch provided the Tribe with technical assistance involving an existing aggregate pit. At the request of the Tribe, DEMD Solid Minerals Branch assisted with a general overview of past mining practices, permitting overview, and, how the tribe might move forward with their existing aggregate pit.

Tribe Crushed Stone Aggregate Business Economic Evaluation [Solid Minerals]

DEMD, upon a request from the Tribe, began the process of determining the economic feasibility of a crushed stone aggregate resource. Detailed geological mapping, LIDAR imagery, and review of the local market were all examples of DEMD assistance.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

Locating and Defining Resources

Continue initiating dialogue (BIA Regional Directors/Superintendents, Tribal transportation, Tribal leadership, natural resource staff) on the following topics:

- Where are the Tribe's resources located?
- How much do they have?
- How do they extract it?
- Do they have the appropriate permits in place?
- How much are they "selling" it for?
- Do they need assistance in locating and permitting projects?
- Do they need assistance in setting up a Tribal business to extract, process, and/or transport resources?

Locating and defining local resources is only the first step in the holistic economic development aspect; natural resources can be used as a stepping-stone to jump start local, sustainable jobs and businesses.

OPPORTUNITIES

Construction Aggregate Development

There are many reasons construction aggregate development is vital for a robust local economy and can serve as the cornerstone for all Tribal economic development:

- Aggregate is required in all construction projects.
- Aggregate development provides good-paying Tribal jobs, revenues, and cost-savings to the tribal administration, and
- Developing aggregate resources retains money in the local economy, helping to generate a robust, diversified local economy.

Local aggregate production meets many Tribes desires to strengthen their sovereignty, to utilize local materials for the benefit of their own people, and to strengthen local economies.



Laying down aggregate road base

Customized Aggregate Demand Reports

The Branch has a new outreach program beginning with Wisconsin Tribes preparing customized local aggregate demand reports. Tribes can visualize aggregate development opportunities via maps and easily digestible reports demonstrating potential revenue streams they might be able to exploit.

Coal to Hydrogen

Coal is an abundant resource in Indian Country (over 20 billion tons) and has long been the source of revenue that drives the economic engine on every Tribe that possesses large surface minable coal reserves.



Demand for coal mainly for power generation has dropped 50% from 2006 to 2021. Tribes are in desperate need to replace this revenue stream.

Solid Minerals Branch has been working diligently to help Tribes mitigate the economic downturn on these reservations by investigating a variety of coal utilization techniques and products that can be put in place to utilize coal in ways other than burning it to generate electricity.

Promising opportunities exist for the environmentally benign conversion of inexpensive coal to value-added products. These opportunities begin with the process of gasifying coal rather than burning it to produce non-carbon fuels, specifically hydrogen and ammonia. An environmental benefit of the gasification processing to Hydrogen is a carbon footprint about 1/8 that of green Hydrogen processing.

The Great Plains Synfuels Plant in North Dakota, opened in 1984, is a model of how coal can be used to produce energy in an efficient and environmentally responsible manner. The Branch continues to assist coal producing Tribes as they evolve toward environmentally sound methods to produce power and generate sustainable revenues using their immense resources.

Critical Minerals

[Presidential Executive Order 13817](#) is part of a government mandate to lower U.S. dependency on foreign minerals critical to economic stability and national security. Many of the 35 elements identified by the USGS in the Executive Order such as lithium, rare earth elements, and manganese, are primary ingredients for the technical needs of the emerging green economy. Solid Minerals Branch is assisting Tribes to develop high-demand minerals.

BEST PRACTICES

The Branch of Solid Minerals is available to assist both tribes and allottees with their mineral requests, in a holistic approach to development. This includes:

- Initial discovery and assessment of the resource
- Mine and reclamation planning
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance
- Lease negotiation and application.
- Mining, delivery of product, and mine shutdown and reclamation
- Advise Tribes on appropriate corporate structures.
- Setting up legislation concerning effective business environments
- Financial analysis and loan guarantee information

CHALLENGES

Staffing

Tribal and BIA tribal transportation staff are underfunded, understaffed, and overworked.

Tribes in some Regions are having difficulty accessing BIA archaeologists and biologists to perform Section 106 (National Historic Preservation Act) and Section 7 (Threatened and Endangered Species Act) assessments as a part of the project permitting process.

Accessing Aggregate

Many Tribes do not know where their specification-grade aggregate is located, nor do they have any mineral lease agreement (with associated mine and reclamation plans, agreed upon unit rates, or environmental clearances) with which to remove the aggregate if an opportunity were to present.

Some Tribes who wish to produce aggregate do not have the equipment, experience, or capital to do so.

Use of Aggregate for Transportation Projects

Tribes and Federal Agencies oftentimes do not consider sand and gravel to be a valuable trust asset. The Doctrine of Trust Responsibility includes a federal obligation to provide those services required to protect and enhance tribal resources. One example of a breach of the responsibility is Federal Government programs are incentivized to encourage Tribes to donate aggregate material to transportation projects rather than paying fair market pricing for this valuable resource.

Roads projects already have significant regulatory hurdles and paperwork with which it is difficult to comply.

DEMD, Branch of National Indian Oil & Gas, Energy, and Minerals System (NIOGEMS)

The National Indian Oil & Gas, Energy, and Minerals System (NIOGEMS) was developed in the early 1990s to consolidate various natural resource, realty, and geo-technical data into a single management software application. It is a map-oriented computer application that provides Tribes and federal users with access to natural resource data on Indian and non-Indian owned lands, both in and around reservations, to track and make decisions on leasing, developing, and managing energy and mineral resources.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

NIOGEMS Enhancements

The NIOGEMS Software is always changing and improving. In FY2024, NIOGEMS has been approved for a major upgrade for go from Version 4 to Version 5. Version 5 is envisioned to be cloud based and prioritize easier Tribal Access to the software and data.

Tribal Access

Currently, 13 Tribes have access to NIOGEMS that includes free use of the software, monthly data updates, training, and support. Tribes are encouraged to reach out to NIOGEMS to request access to the system.

Federal Access

Federal Agencies with a Trust Responsibility may be granted access to NIOGEMS. Currently, there are NIOGEMS Users among the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Office of Natural Resources Revenue, Appraisal and Valuation Services Office, and the Orphaned Wells Program Office.

Cloud Based Host for NIOGEMS

DEMD is assessing a path to implementing a hosting solution for Tribal Users to improve the service NIOGEMS provides to Tribes and Tribal users. A cloud based centralized solution will make accessing the software easier for Tribal Users and allow NIOGEMS staff to improve services to Tribes.

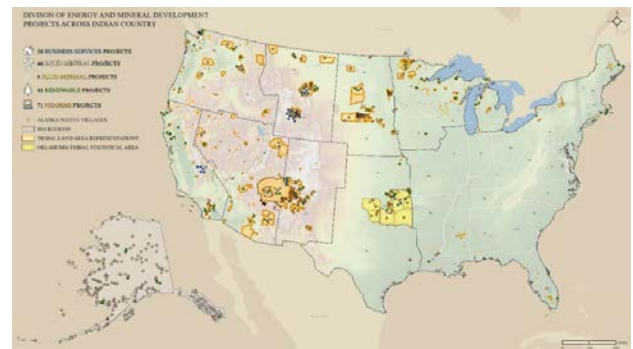
Benefits

- Current barriers to entry are eliminated.
- More Tribes will be encouraged to request NIOGEMS access.
- Eliminate the need for additional NIOGEMS staffing.
- Eliminate the NIOGEMS staff labor-intensive method of installing software on Tribal Servers

CHALLENGES

The major challenge faced by NIOGEMS in FY2024 is the reduced staffing levels. The NIOGEMS Team is looking for efficiencies to meet the high workload with reduced resources.

FY 2022-2023 DEMD Project Map



The interactive DEMD map provides geographic locations and descriptions of current projects. This includes 38 Business Services, 46 Solid Minerals, 6 Filled Minerals, 81 Renewable, and 71 NIOGEMS projects.

DEMD, Branch of Geotechnical Data Services (GDS)

The Branch of Geotechnical Data Services (GDS) provides geophysical and geospatial solutions to support Tribal energy and economic development goals through DEMD's work on Tribal grant and technical assistance projects. The GDS is comprised of geophysicists, geographers, geographic information system (GIS) specialists and data analysts.

Typical technical services include:

- Assist Federally recognized Tribes, Alaska Native Villages and individual Indian landowners with energy and economic development goals.
- Seismic surveys/Seismic data consists of both 2D, and 3D surveys acquired from the early 1980s to present day.
- Provide data on elevation and imagery.
- Develop geographic information systems (GIS) datasets and cartographic (map) products that show energy demand, existing infrastructure, and energy generation potential.
- Process and provide data on infrastructure (pipelines, transmission lines, wells, roads, turbines) and land ownership (leases, tracts)

Tribes can authorize oil and gas companies or other investors who are interested in exploration and developing new prospects on Indian lands to view this data at DEMD.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

GDS designed over 50 maps to support the DEMD's EMDP and TEDC grant programs and technical assistance projects for the benefit of approximately 40 Federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Villages.

Produced seven (7) new NIOGEMS Tribal databases. Includes collection, analysis, and processing of datasets for well production, tribal land ownership, public land survey system, high resolution imagery, soil surveys, digital elevation models, and other geospatial. Reprocessed over 165 miles of Tribal 2D seismic lines, and additional 20 square miles of 3D seismic surveys related to current and potential Tribal projects. Completed seismic acquisition and processing of two 2D lines on Wind River Reservation relating to an awarded EMDP grant. A 3D survey will be acquired in the upcoming year for the Wind River EMDP Grant.

Analyzed over 5,000 lease and ownership records for accuracy and digitized the records for display in DEMD, Tribal maps, and in NIOGEMS.

Managed 1,400 2D seismic lines (10,000 linear miles) and 64 3D seismic surveys for 26 Tribes with a valuation of approximately \$258 million.

Provided seismic data technical assistance in response to seven (7) Tribal requests.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

- On-going analysis and processing of lease and ownership records
- NIOGEMS databases are updated monthly
- New Tribal databases may need to be created ad hoc.
- Continued monitoring, updating, and archiving of the seismic database with new additions and any edits or corrections.
- Support DEMD branches with Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP) and Tribal Energy Development Capacity (TEDC) grants and technical assistance projects that run multiple fiscal years.

OPPORTUNITIES

- GDS opportunities will be driven by the award of new EMDP, TEDC and technical assistance projects and meeting DEMD and Tribal project requirements.
- DEMD seismic staff will attend oil & gas industry events like the North American Prospect Expo (NAPE). NAPE is the energy industry's marketplace for the buying, selling, and trading of prospects and producing properties. DEMD partners with Tribes during NAPE attendance.
- GDS will continue to stay on top of data and industry trends to apply new geospatial and analytical processes to further enhance maps and projects.

BEST PRACTICES

GDS best practices lie in meeting DEMD, and Tribal project needs with well researched, accurate datasets and up to date informative map products, assuring data quality and consistent presentation to all DEMD branches.

Priority in managing analog and digital datasets proprietary to Tribes is paramount.

CHALLENGES

Maintaining staffing levels of GDS federal and contract staff is important for meeting the demands of current and upcoming projects.

Managing several terabytes of seismic and geospatial data so data remains current.

DEMD, Branch of Renewable and Distributed Generation (BRAD)

The DEMD Branch of Renewable and Distributed Generation (BRAD) is staffed with engineers and natural resource specialists to provide Federally Recognized Tribes, Native Alaskan Villages, and Individual Indian owners technical assistance and consultation in developing renewable energy and distributed generation projects on their land. See

<https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/demd/renewable-energy>

Typical technical services include:

- Font-end planning phases for both utility scale and distributed energy development
- Helping Tribes bring projects to the point where they can secure financing.

Commodities Served

- Solar
- Wind
- Biomass
- Geothermal
- Hydro
- Microgrids
- Hydrogen, and other forms of distributed generation.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

Grant Projects

The Branch continues work on forty (40) active grant projects for both the Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP) and the Tribal Energy Development Capacity (TEDC) Grant Program.

Summary highlights of grant activity include:

- Helped Tribes pursue or improve already existing energy utilities with activities such as improving energy codes and completing development final feasibility studies.

- Assisted multiple Tribes with identifying Combined Heat and Power systems fueled by natural gas to save money while powering their casinos and other large energy loads.
- Completed a feasibility study for a utility scale natural gas-powered generation station to provide power a casino.
- Supported renewable microgrid system studies for tribal self-sufficiency at tribal campuses and for housing developments.
- Completed solar feasibility studies on multiple Tribally owned buildings to utilize clean and sustainable energy.
- Concluded renewable energy development feasibility studies that informed tribal leadership about the quality and quantity of the Tribe's renewable energy resources.
- Supported, along with the Branch of Fluid Minerals, geothermal resource exploration studies where a Tribe wants to move forward with next steps into test drilling and planning a utility scale geothermal project.

Technical Services support to 12 Tribes

BRAD has provided technical support directly to 12 tribes between October 2023 and April 2024. Summary highlights include:

Assessments

- Microgrid solutions as a means of improving energy resilience and reliability at critical tribal facilities.
- Technical and economic viability of solar development on or adjacent to tribal facilities
- Working with tribes to assess resource potential and economic feasibility of geothermal development and subsequent energy generation.

Technical Assistance

- Identify portfolio solutions of multiple renewable energy options for enhancing tribal sovereignty and promoting cost savings and/or revenue generation for the Tribe.

- Informing tribes on grant funding opportunities, both within and outside of DEMD, available for clean energy development.
- Explain the many benefits provided to Tribes under the [Inflation Reduction Act](#), including incentives that are specific to tribal clean energy projects

Renewable Energy Accelerated Deployment Initiative (READI) for Indian Country

BRAD, in partnership with the Indian Energy Service Center, completed eight Tribal consultations, August 2023 through November 2024 to garner input on additional resources needed to create expanded pathways for the BIA to support Tribes in harnessing the vast renewable energy potential that exists in Indian Country.

The final report summarizing input and recommendations is expected to be released in Spring 2024. BIA will then begin implementing recommendations in the remainder of FY 2024.

Interagency Agreement with the Hopi Tribe and Navajo Nation

The Division continues to support the U.S. Department of Energy in two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Hopi Tribe and the Navajo Nation in economic revitalization efforts following the closure of the Navajo Generating Station and Kayenta coal mine. DEMD leadership has attended multiple planning meetings with both tribes and provides on-going collaboration on grant programs and technical assistance services.

Signatories to the MOUs include:

- U.S. Department of Energy
- U.S. Department of the Interior
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Transportation
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Labor
- Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council

Success Stories

In September 2023, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced \$38 million in funding for 13 Tribal clean energy projects. Four of the thirteen projects selected for award are projects that utilized DEMD grant and technical assistance programs for early phase project planning, feasibility, and design. These include:

- **Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa** (Cloquet, MN): The project will install a biomass heating facility to provide district wood heat in place of propane for the Brookston housing subdivision and community center. This project builds off an EMDP 2020 award to assess, evaluate, design, and engineer the biomass heat system.
- **Metlakatla Indian Community** (Metlakatla, AK): The community and its utility, Metlakatla Power and Light, will install a 1.5-MW direct drive wind turbine on Annette Islands Reserve, producing approximately 4.15 million kWh of electricity per year. This project builds off an EMDP 2020 award to complete a wind resource analysis and feasibility study.
- **Muscogee (Creek) Nation** (Okmulgee, OK): The Tribal Utility Authority will install a 924-kW ground-mounted solar PV system to serve the Okemah Community Hospital and Okemah Indian Health Center. This project builds off an EMDP 2018 award to evaluate the feasibility for developing solar energy at Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal health facilities, including those mentioned in the DOE grant award.
- **Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa** (Tama, IA): The project will install 135-kW of solar PV on the Meskwaki Tribal Center and the Meskwaki Apprenticeship Program Facility. This project builds off an EMDP 2020 award to evaluate the feasibility of harnessing the Tribe's renewable energy resources to power a microgrid system for the Tribe's facilities.

OPPORTUNITIES

Energy infrastructure Rights of Ways continue to be an area of opportunity for tribes to leverage industry partnerships to advance local energy development visions.

CHALLENGES

DEMD is seeing increased requests from Tribes related to renewable energy lease negotiations. Coordination with IESC to establish standard lease terms for renewable energy projects could help address these requests.

Throughout the READI consultation series, Tribes consistently expressed need for additional resources to support Tribal staff capacity limitations for managing energy development.

Tribes continue to reach out to DEMD staff for ongoing support in grant administration. This includes assistance in requesting period of performance extensions, modification requests, and submitting reports in Grant Solutions. DEMD promptly resolves all grant assistance requests.

DEMD continues to aid in understanding the EMDP and TEDC grant application process and how to submit competitive proposals.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

Grants

In the upcoming half of FY 2024, we will be kicking off thirty to forty (30-40) new grant projects. This includes supporting the Business Services Branch in initiating new TEDC grants and new EMDP grants.

Technical Assistance

Many of the current technical assistance projects will continue for the remainder of the year and more requests are expected to be received as we head into grant season. BRAD will continue to provide the best possible technical advising to Tribe's requesting assistance with developing their energy resources.

OPPORTUNITIES

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022

The IRA provided unprecedented tax credit opportunities for Tribal renewable energy projects, which most notably includes cash payment options that Tribes can receive directly. Prior to the passage of the IRA, Tribes could not directly receive renewable energy tax credit benefits because they were non-taxable entities, and complicated tax-equity projects were required to receive benefits. The new opportunities provided from the IRA are a game changer for Tribal renewable energy projects.



Division of Environmental Services & Cultural Resources Management (DESCRM)

Strategic Planning

In November 2023, the Branch of Environmental Services (BES) hosted a retreat and strategic planning meeting with the Regional Environmental Scientists (RESs). A 5-year National Strategic Plan for the Program was produced as a result. Four priorities were identified and action items with target dates were set to ensure the goals were met.

In Fiscal Year 2024, the Division of Environmental Services and Cultural Resources Management continued its focus on hiring, strategic planning, and acceleration of support to Tribes. All three branches of DESCRM, the Branch of Cultural Resources Management & Museum Program, the Branch of Environmental Services, and the Branch of Tribal Climate Resilience have increased their capacity and are reporting a wide variety of accomplishments.

DESCRM, Branch of Cultural Resource Management (CRM)

The Cultural Resources Management Branch (CRM) contributes to the mission of the BIA by fulfilling and executing the Federal government’s trust responsibilities relating to the cultural resources utilized by the tribes for sustenance, cultural enrichment, and economic development and support; and by promoting the conservation, development, and wise use of these resources for the maximum benefit of Indian people. The CRM is responsible for ensuring compliance with environmental and cultural resource statutes, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA). administers the BIA museum and complies with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) for the respectful return of human remains, and sacred items curated in non-federal repositories under control of the BIA.



BIA National Environmental Services Program, Albuquerque, New Mexico, November 16, 2023

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA)

In responding to Government Accountability Office - GAO 21-110 report, *"Responding to Risks of Theft and Damage of Native American Cultural Resources,"* the Branch of CRM has renewed a five-year Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) agreement with Archaeology Southwest to assist in a unique nationwide ARPA Assistance Program. This program helps to eliminate archaeological resource crimes from Tribal lands. Archaeological resource crimes, including looting, vandalism, and trafficking of cultural items, continue to threaten and destroy archaeological sites and harm communities on Indian lands. In addition, these acts violate federal, state, and Tribal laws and degrade Tribal sovereignty and security. The consultant work with BIA Central Office, BIA Regional Offices, ARPA subject matter experts, law enforcement, and Tribal heritage and historic preservation offices to:

- Detect and respond to potential ARPA violations.
- Prevent damage to cultural resources through public outreach and education, and
- Work with Tribal organizations, youth programs, and other federal agencies to remediate damaged archaeological sites.

One (1) ARPA class was conducted with the Office of Justice Service's Indian Police Academy at the Santa Ana Pueblo on January 22-26, 2024. The course is focused on the professional development of Tribal archaeologists, law enforcement personnel, Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPO), and cultural preservation programs in archaeological investigations. The five-day course is designed to provide insight into archaeological and cultural resource investigative matters, with both classroom and actual field work curriculum. Students learn about new techniques/investigative material and will learn how to implement those techniques during actual fieldwork.

Upcoming ARPA training are scheduled in Tulsa, Oklahoma and Billings, Montana this Fiscal Year.

BIA and ASW assisted Tribes with ARPA Damage Assessments in Indian Country. The team provided support for Gila River Indian Community Cultural Resource Management Program (GRIC-CRMP) in a rock art restoration program and a monitoring program at significant sites on Gila River lands. The team also assisted the Hopi Tribe with an ARPA violation response at a petroglyph site within the Navajo Nation's jurisdiction and conducted a field damage assessment and provided restoration support. In addition, we are assisting the Yakama Tribe in a damage assessment after the Tribe reached out to the BIA's Central Office.

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

The Branch of CRM assisted National Park Service, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in reviewing applications from Tribes aspiring to become Tribal Historic Preservation Offices. BIA reviewed and approved the Tule River Indian Tribe of the Tule River Reservation, California, and the Lovelock Paiute Tribe of the Lovelock Indian Colony, Nevada to assume certain Historic Preservation Officer functions, pursuant to Section 101(d) (2) of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 302702). We anticipate the approvals them becoming THPOs soon.

Last fiscal year, BCRM participated in reviewing the THPO program plan applications and recommended approval of three Tribes to become Tribal Historic Preservation Offices. With BCRM's recommendation, the Modoc Nation became the 219th to become a THPO, the Kiowa Tribe became the 220th THPO, and the Lovelock Paiute Tribe became the 221st Tribe to assume historic preservation duties that were previously the responsibility of the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)

Effective January 12, 2024, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 final ruling revises and replaces definitions and procedures for lineal descendants, Indian Tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, museums, and Federal agencies. As a federal agency the BIA is working diligently to comply with the new ruling by bolstering its inventory of NAGPRA collections and engaging with Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations to facilitate the respectful return of ancestors, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. The BIA vision is not having any NAGPRA collections under its control and to return all Ancestors to their respectful places.

Federal Register Notices

Under NAGPRA, the BIA follows a process for Native American remains or cultural items to be removed from or discovered on Federal and tribal lands. NAGPRA also requires museums, agencies, and universities housing BIA-controlled collections to compile detailed summaries and inventories in their groups and consult with Native American tribes to allow the repatriation of ancestors, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony. No Federal Register Notices were published since the beginning of the current fiscal year because museums, repositories and federal agencies were awaiting the new ruling.

Transfer of Control

Under NAGPRA, we are collaborating with six Tribes on transferring control of 18 ancestors and 326 associated funerary items published in the Federal Register. In the past few months, BIA has learned of other NAGPRA collections that require our attention. We will be working with additional repositories and Tribes and will give updates as things progress.

Consultation with Repositories and Tribes

The BIA CRM is collaborating with at least twenty-five repositories and universities housing BIA museum collection, thirteen Tribes and Pueblos, and two sister agencies (National Park Service and Bureau of Reclamation). As a funding mechanism the BIA is using the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) agreements to provide financial assistance to museums to perform its NAGPRA inventories. Currently BIA has a five-year agreement with the University of Arizona - Arizona State Museum, Arizona State University (where the majority of NAGPRA collections reported to Federal NAGPRA are located), the Museum of Northern Arizona, and the Northern Arizona University. We are anticipating extending agreements to the Museum of American Indian Art and Culture soon.

DESCRM, Museum Program

The Bureau of Indian (BIA) Affairs Museum Program curates and preserves a collection of over 3 million archeological artifacts, ethnographic objects, archives, and artwork reflecting the history of the BIA, the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), and Native American culture for present and future generations. The collection is located throughout the United States and exhibited in BIA regional offices and local agencies, BIE schools, as well as museums, cultural centers, universities, and other repositories.

Museum Exhibit Cases

In January, fourteen new museum-quality exhibit cases were installed in the BIA hallway, Corridor 4600, at the Main Interior Building (MIB). The exhibit cases allow for the preservation and exhibition of BIA's Museum Collection while engaging and educating visitors.



Photo. New Era contractors assisting with installing new museum-quality exhibit cases in BIA hallway, Corridor 4600.

Museum Collections Inventory

In October 2023, the Museum Program received all the FY2023 Museum Collections Annual Inventories and Survey Certification responses from all Indian Affairs (IA) and non-IA Repositories. For FY2024, the Museum Program has prepared and sent the 2024 Museum Collections Annual Inventories and Survey Certifications for the Bureau of Indian Education Repositories and Non-Indian Affairs Repositories. An inventory is the process of physically locating all museum objects and verifying location and condition information of the objects to maintain accountability.

Museum Facility Site Assessments

Since October 2023, the Museum Program conducted museum facility site assessments at four BIA and non-Federal Repositories in Colorado and Nevada. Approximately 91% of repositories housing BIA museum collections are in good condition and the remaining 9% in fair to poor condition. Under 411 DM, *Identifying and Managing Museum Property* and DOI Museum Property Directive 14, *Facility Checklist for Spaces Housing DOI Museum Property*, the Museum Program must evaluate each IA or non-IA facility housing BIA museum collections on a long-term basis at least once every five years.

BIA 200th Anniversary Exhibit in SOI Office

In March 2024, the Museum Program installed an exhibition in the Secretary of the Interior's Office in collaboration with the DOI Interior Museum. The exhibit commemorates the founding of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Objects on display represent cultures from Alaska, Northwest Coast, Southwest, to the Plains, Great Lakes, and Southeast.



Photo showing BIA Museum Collections on exhibit in the Secretary of the Interior's Office at the Main Interior Building in commemoration of the 200th BIA Anniversary.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

- Continue preparing the 2024 Museum Collection Annual Inventories for the Bureau of Indian Affairs Repositories. BIA Repositories should receive annual inventories by the end of March 2024.
- Continue conducting museum facility site assessments at repositories identified as high priority. High priority facilities are repositories that have received a "Poor" condition rating in the past or facilities that have yet to be evaluated.
- The Museum Program will publish two online exhibits in collaboration with the Museum Program's Pathway Intern, Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum Staff, and Haskell Cultural Center and Museum Staff. The BIA published 13 online exhibits which can be viewed at <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/bureau-of-indian-affairs>
- The Museum Program will exhibit the artwork of the DESCRM Student Art Contest winners for one-week at the Main Interior Building in the BIA hallway, Corridor 4600.
- BIA Collection Space Renovation, Room 1071, at the Main Interior Building. Museum Staff Curators submitted a Statement of Work to purchase high-capacity compact storage systems to efficiently and properly house museum property collections.

OPPORTUNITIES

The Museum Program will collaborate with other Federal Museums on collection care and management and future exhibitions.

- National Park Service – Collaborate with NPS on how best to present and display objects in a community curation capacity.
- State Department America 250 – The Department of State's Office of Cultural Heritage is in the process of developing an exhibition to highlight Indigenous peoples of today. State Department Curators would like to collaborate with BIA Staff Curators along with other Agencies on this exhibition. This exhibition will premiere at one of the embassies in London, England.

DESCRM, Branch of Environmental Services (BES)

The Branch of Environmental Services (BES) provides leadership, guidance, policy, and support for the protection of environmental and cultural resources, working with federal, state, and Tribal governments to ensure compliance with environmental law on Indian trust lands, restricted lands and federal facilities owned or operated by Indian Affairs. This includes oversight and guidance for implementing a range of environmental laws and regulations, including the [National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\)](#) and [Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act \(CERCLA\)](#).

Graphic: 5 Integrated Stages of the NEPA Process



[ACCOMPLISHMENTS \(October 2023-March 2024\)](#)

NEPA Training

BES has provided NEPA 101 training to Tribes and other Federal Agencies with the goal to educate and inform Tribes and Federal agencies about BIA's NEPA process. This training has been proven to be successful and promotes a viable relationship with Tribes and our Federal partners.

OTS Permitting Team Summary

Given the Biden-Harris Administration focus on infrastructure development, the BIA's Office of Trust Services has prioritized improvements to its permitting process. To address this priority, the OTS Permitting Team was formed. The team currently meets biweekly to discuss permitting topics that are submitted by each program. Environmental Services is the co-lead along with the Division of Real Estate Services. We have invited representatives from BIA Regional Offices to participate in the Biweekly meetings.

OTS Permitting Team Accomplishments

- We quickly created a cross program team with a regular meeting schedule and created access to shared files via Teams.
- Our Kickoff meeting was October 16, 2023.
- We submit Biweekly progress reports to OTS Leadership.
- We completed paperwork for contracted permitting support for the Regions and Direct Service Tribes.
- The team also developed and submitted an IT Solutions Proposal to DOI.

FY 2024 Goals/Priorities

- Select and on-board the Contractor.
- Develop an OTS Permitting Dashboard.
- Gain a better understanding of the number of permitting projects coming our way.
- Continue to support Regions with their hiring efforts through funding and other opportunities.
- Continue to support Regions through monthly meetings where information about permitting is shared.

New Categorical Exclusion for Sanitation Lines

BES is reviewing the proposed adoption of the Indian Health Service's (IHS) categorical exclusion (CatEx) determination under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for sanitation facilities on Indian lands. Sanitation facilities refers to water and sewage pipe and tunnel lines for sanitation purposes. This CatEx reduces staff time resources spent analyzing proposals determined to not have potentially significant environmental impact, positively impacting tribes.

NEPA Tracker 2.0

With new information that will need tracking in NEPA Tracker 2.0. Regions have requested for fields to be added for record keeping and to improve reporting. Currently NEPA Tracker 2.0 will BETA test a few more fields to assist our Regional Offices in reporting permitting projects, contractor support to include support to Direct Service Tribes, and Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA). Updates to the current resources are in review and will be updated in the next quarter. BES continues to aid regions for user and document requests.

Central Hazmat Funding (CHF)

Central Hazmat Fund Technical Review Committee (TRC) is responsible for approval of funding for DOI bureaus' Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability (CRECLA) or "Superfund" contaminated sites. The TRC reviews all requests for funding and makes final recommendations on which projects receive funding, maintains the Central Hazmat Fund Database Cost Tracking, and ensure accurate costs are being reported. In FY23, received Central Hazmat Fund for ongoing cleanup work at the Tar Creek Mining Site, Oklahoma.



Tar Creek Superfund Site – chat pile (Photo credit: EPA, 2008)

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR)

BES provides oversight, coordination, and guidance to BIA Regional case managers on 19 NRDA cases located around the country. BES ensures Tribes involved in NRDAR cases receive necessary funds from the Department of the Interior to support Tribal claim development. BES participates on the Department's Office of Restoration and Damage Assessment (ORDA) Technical Working Group (TWG) and reviews all funding requests.

Remedial Projects Going Forward

BES continues to provide both assistance and funding to support remedial activities for the Tuba City Landfill, Shiprock Demolition, Tuba City Abandon Building Abatement, and Great Plains Regional Office Cleanup Projects.

Environmental Disposal Liabilities (EDL)

Worked with OEPC on the Environmental Disposal Liabilities (EDL) database reporting and cleanup of sites listed.

- Provided guidance and approved funding to regions for ongoing work and future removal of Environmental Disposal Liabilities (EDL) sites requiring longer cleanup.
- Reviewed all sites quarterly to ensure at least 90% accuracy of the projects and relevant documentation.
- Sites reviewed for compliance and remedial/removal actions to accelerate removal of sites from DOI EDL list.
- Worked with the Division of Financial Reporting and Analysis (FRA) to report BIA liabilities associated with actual and potential asbestos contamination.
- Reviewed and approved environmental projects and expenditures for the Division of Facilities, Maintenance, & Construction (DFMC).
- Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) inspections, fuel spills, groundwater cleanup, mold, and asbestos removal.
- Kept information and guidance current on the EDL/Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), Superfunds Amendments and Re-authorization Act (SARA) SharePoint IT site.

Sustainability

BES staff actively participate in 11 different Departmental Sustainability workgroups that track and report BIA's plastics use and reduction, recycling and waste disposal, facilities compliance, and energy consumption. BES works closely with other BIA Programs to gather the appropriate data and develop waste reduction plans.

CHALLENGES

BES has multiple vacancies and is in the process of hiring management and staff positions.

DESCRM, Branch of Tribal Climate Resilience (TCR)

Mission

The mission of the Branch of Tribal Climate Resilience (TCR) is to enable climate preparedness and resilience across all Indian Affairs programs and for all Federally recognized Tribal Nations and Alaska Native villages through technical and financial assistance, access to scientific resources and educational opportunities.

[ACCOMPLISHMENTS \(October 2023-March 2024\)](#)

Annual Awards Program and Grant Solicitation

With a goal of providing \$120 million through the Annual Awards Program, TCR has been successful in announcing 146 awards to 102 Tribes and 9 Tribal Organizations. The press release was announced on 3/14 through an embargoed press conference, and the Press Release was issued on 3/15, hitting many major news networks and outlets, gaining major coverage. This was a major milestone for TCR doubling the dollar amount of awards throughout the existence of the program, going from \$120 million in awards from FY11 to FY22 to \$240 million total, as of FY23. Thanks to the amount of funding provided through the BIL and IRA legislations, much more funding and projects have been made available to Tribes. TCR now turns towards the FY24 Annual Awards Program Solicitation in anticipation of providing over \$100 million more to Tribes for the remainder of this year.

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces \\$120 Million from President's Investing in America Agenda to Enhance Climate Resilience in Tribal Communities | U.S. Department of the Interior \(doi.gov\)](#)



Erosion by Alaskan Village

Community Driven Relocation Program

TCR and contractor staff continue to support the ongoing efforts of Tribal Communities selected as a part of the Community Driven Relocation Program. To date, 10 of the 11 Tribes have received their initial and critical funding of \$250,000 to hire coordinators and staff to begin planning and implementation activities and map out their goals. TCR staff are currently working with CDR Tribes on a retreat to share stories, learn more about their projects, and provide direct technical assistance for a meeting planned in Anchorage, Alaska on May 1st and 2nd. TCR worked with the staff in the Branch of Geospatial Support to create a Story Map to show the project Tribes, share their stories, and to showcase their projects located here: [Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Climate Resilience: Community Driven Relocation \(geoplatform.gov\)](#)

TCR Branch Logic Model

As a requirement for the BIL/IRA funding received, and as well to satisfy requirements from the Department, TCR developed a logic model to map out program outcomes and develop measures of program success. These measures will help TCR continue to report out its many successes, as well as lead the way for other programs to develop logic models for Indian Affairs. The logic model was developed with TCR staff in coordination with the Indian Affairs Chief Data Officer and the Department's Division of Performance Planning and Management.

Program Objective: Support climate preparedness and resilience for all Federally recognized Tribal Nations and Alaska Native villages through technical and financial assistance, access to scientific resources and educational opportunities.

Logic Model for Tribal Climate Resilience

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	Activities	Participation	Short	Medium	Long (Impact)
Finances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congressional Appropriations • BIL • IRA 	Providing financial assistance to tribes for climate planning and implementation projects	Tribes Partners and collaborators Tribal organizations	Tribes produce and implement plans to protect communities, infrastructure, and environment	Planned projects for communities, infrastructure and the environment are successfully completed	Tribal communities, infrastructure, and the environment are protected from, and more resilient to, the effects of climate change
Partnerships and Collaborations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White house • Other Federal agencies • BIA divisions • BLM • USGS • CESU Members • Tribal Organizations • Universities • Tribal Liaisons 	Provide technical assistance to Tribes Build internal (Federal) and external (non-federal) programs and networks to support Tribes	Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) Tribes and Climate Change Program American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC)	Tribes have access to financial and technical resources through TCR RMP Coordinators have the skills to lead coordination and planning on construction/relocation projects	Tribes have the capacity to access more funding resources for climate related projects AI/AN successfully compete for positions in climate related positions in the federal or tribal government	Federal and tribal governments successfully retain AI/AN in climate related positions Tribal and Federal governments collaborate to mitigate the effects of climate change
Tribal Climate Resilience Staff	Develop and participate in interagency working groups Hold outreach events Scientific data collection and dissemination Conduct trainings	Great Plains Tribal Water Alliance (GPTWA) Native American Fish and Wildlife Society (NAFWS) United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET)	Native youth/students/early career professionals build knowledge and skills around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change • Science • Cultural competence • Teamwork • Public speaking 	Tribal data is collected, standardized, and used for climate related decisions Tribes use most up to date science and Indigenous Knowledges in their climate change decision-making	Federal policies on climate change are influenced and supported by Indigenous Knowledge

DESCRM Young Tribal Leaders Art Contest

TCR partnered with the other DESCRCM Branches, Environmental Services and Cultural Resources Management to host an art contest. Native youth and young professionals across the Indian Country submitted art pieces centering themes of culture, environment, and climate. A handful of winners were selected with travel sponsorship to share their work at the 2024 National Tribal and Indigenous Climate Conference in Anchorage, Alaska this September. These select winners and more are featured in an online gallery as well as in the Main Interior Building in Washington D.C. for public viewing.

Learn more and visit the online gallery at <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/descrm>



Staffing

Positions Filled

2 Regional TCR Coordinators, the Eastern Regional Coordinator starts on 3/24/2024 and the Alaska Regional Coordinator has been selected and is currently going through the background investigation process.

Positions to be Filled

2 Pathways Interns are planned to be filled and added to our team.

Contractors

2 Contractors under Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract Contractors to support Climate Driven Relocation Demonstration Projects and support the Branch of Tribal Climate Resilience overall.

CHALLENGES

Level II Awarding Official Coordination

TCR continues to coordinate with Field Operations to ensure that the requirements for Subpart J/K for Level II awards involving construction agreements are met and that a coordinated strategy to implement projects throughout Regions is moving forward. Level II Awarding Officials are in short supply across the nation and in high demand. TCR will support the effort, knowing the limitations, by providing contractor support and by having Regional Coordinators available to share awarding documents, provide technical assistance, and ensure awards are completed. This coordination is facilitated through AS-IA and Field Operations leadership.

Awarding Official Technical Representative Certification

Updated Awarding Official Technical Representative (AOTR) Certifications are needed for all staff to support awards made through P.L. 93- 638 Contracts and Compacts. TCR staff, given they are under Central Office and not Field Operations, are not always able to get the training needed. Some staff have had training, including 2 TCR staff that have received Subpart J AOTR training.



Division of Forestry (DOF)

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

Service Area Statistics on Management of Indian Forests

- 19.2 million acres in 33 States
- Commercial timber volume of approximately 63 billion board feet
- Generated \$50 million in revenue for the tribes in FY 2023
- Allowable annual harvest of 741 million board feet

[ACCOMPLISHMENTS \(October 2023-March 2024\)](#)

Forest Management

Forests provide a key source of revenue and jobs for tribes and individual Indians and play an important role in sustaining tribal cultures and traditions. Management activities within forest lands are governed by forest management plans which outline ecologically, and biologically sustainable forest management practices formulated to meet tribal goals and objectives. Forest management activities include timber sales, timber stand improvement (thinning and pruning), and reforestation.

In 2023, 274 million board feet of timber volume was harvested generating \$50 million in tribal income. Reforestation (tree planting) was completed on 19,581 acres and 13,848 acres were pre-commercially thinned to improve the health, stocking, composition, and productivity of forest stands.

Forestry Youth Camps

Thus far In FY 2024, BIA Forestry has provided \$300,588 to support eight Tribal Forestry Summer Youth Camps. Youth engagement is an effective way to educate tribal youth and generate interest in the management of Indian forests. Indian forestry has witnessed a decline in students completing college forestry programs and pursuing forestry careers. The BIA has a trust responsibility to help Tribes manage forests to provide a sustained yield of forest products and to restore and maintain resilient and ecologically functional lands. The BIA supports tribal goals aimed at achieving a balance of the protection of valued landscapes with the production of economic benefit through active forest management. The lack of trained tribal personnel in forestry has a direct adverse economic impact on the Tribes. Engaging tribal youth to promote Indian forestry and education is a positive step toward fostering interest in the management of Indian forests.

Inventory and Planning

Technical assistance was provided for 18 tribal forest inventory projects in 8 Regions. Technical assistance includes inventory consultation and design, Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) material development, field data collection support, data cleaning, and forest inventory analysis guidance.



Northwest Region Timber Sales Workshop, Ocean Shores, Washington

Policy Update

The Indian Affairs Manual Part 53 (53 IAM) Chapter 3 Harvest of Forest Products has been signed and issued as of March 2024. The corresponding handbook, 53 IAM 3-H, was issued the same date. The handbook replaces both the previous 53 IAM 3-H and 4-H handbooks as Contract and Permit Harvest Chapters were combined into one Harvest of Forest Products handbook. Exhibits and templates can be accessed at [Forestry Documents for Handbooks | Indian Affairs \(bia.gov\)](https://www.bia.gov/forestry/documents-for-handbooks)

The 53 IAM Chapter 8 Inventory and Monitoring has been signed and issued as of January 2024. This chapter documents the policy, responsibilities, and standards applicable to the collection, analysis, and use of scientifically based inventory data for monitoring and management of forest resources on Indian lands. The corresponding handbook is under development.

The 53 IAM Chapter 9 Silviculture and has been signed and issued as of March 2024. This chapter documents the policies, standards, and responsibilities relevant to the application of silviculture on Indian forest lands.

Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS)

The TAAMS Forestry module now includes an improved document upload function to allow easy upload of images from the document toolbar.

Informal training was provided at Yakama and at the Western Regional Office to update TAAMS forestry users about the new functionality that was introduced this fiscal year and last. The intent of the training was to ensure that users are utilizing the improved functionality.



TAAMS informal training at Western Regional Office in Phoenix, AZ

Three formal TAAMS Forestry courses have been offered to date this fiscal year. Introductory TAAMS Forestry was offered at the Northwest Regional Office in Portland in February. Advanced TAAMS Forestry was offered at Northwest Regional Office in March. A TAAMS Forestry Management Overview course was also offered in March using Microsoft Teams. All three courses were filled to maximum capacity.

Timber Sales

The Northwest Regional Office held a Timber Sales Workshop in Ocean Shores, Washington hosted by the Quinalt Indian Nation. The workshop had approximately 130 attendees, including line officers, forestry, and fire staff from Tribal, Agency, Regional and Central Office. Chief Forester Peter Wakeland provided an update on the national forestry budget and key legislation. A key message given to attendees is the importance of keeping forest management plans updated so that our allowable annual cut is prepared and offered for sale.

CHALLENGES

Forestry Funding

Tribal Forest Management is currently funded at \$2.09 per acre (Fiscal Year 2023). In comparison, the most recent Assessment of Indian Forests and Forest Management in the United States (IFMAT IV Report) reports the Appropriation Budget for 2019 for National Forest Acres less Wilderness was \$12.24/Acre, and the Bureau of Land Management Western Oregon 2019 Budget excluding hazardous fuel reduction was \$41.41/Acre. Underfunding and understaffing are creating numerous challenges to sustainably managing tribal forests for the benefit of Indian people.

Staffing

BIA Forestry must increase staffing and workforce recruitment. We have many vacant positions at the agencies and regions. These positions are critical in accomplishing forestry field work.

Preparing the Allowable Annual Cut (AAC)

In FY 2023, 297 million board feet of timber volume was prepared and offered for sale out of the 741 million board feet of timber available for harvest (AAC).

There is a direct correlation between staffing reductions and the ability to prepare and offer for sale the full AAC. Additional foresters, technicians, and support positions would be required to prepare, offer, and administer the sale of the 467 million board feet which is currently not being harvested.



Marking trees designated for harvest in a salvage timber sale on the Stockbridge Munsee Indian Community of Wisconsin.

DOF, Timber Team

The Timber Team hired an additional five foresters in FY2023, which provided additional aid and assistance to Tribes across the Nation. Accomplishments continue to grow, and the Team is staying very busy as shown in the table below since the start of FY2020.



Timber Team staff after a hard day's work measuring timber on the Narragansett Indian Tribe of Rhode Island

Utilizing Technology

A GIS storyboard was developed to show all the Timber Team accomplishments since the inception in 2020. Each location lists information of the specific accomplishments achieved and photographs.

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

Technical Assistance to Tribes

The Timber Team is now accepting project requests for FY 2025. For more information, please visit the Timber Team website at <https://www.bia.gov/service/timber-team>.

2024 Technical Assistance to Tribes

Tribe	BIA Region	Project	State
Narragansett Indian Tribe	Eastern	Cruised 199 plots in mixed pine and hardwood stands and recreated the forest cover-type mapping for all trust lands	RI
Swinomish Indian Tribal Community	Northwest	Completed 262 stand exam plots	WA
Stockbridge Munsee Indian Community	Midwest	Windfall salvage prep on 982 acres and remeasured 137 CFI plots	WI
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians	Eastern	Cruised 294 plots across loblolly pine plantations	MS
Eastern Shawnee Tribe	Eastern Oklahoma	Completed 47 stand exam plots and prepared 74 acres of mixed hardwoods for a commercial thinning	OK
Seneca Cayuga Nation	Eastern Oklahoma	Prepared 94 acres of mixed hardwood stands for a commercial thinning	OK
Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation	Northwest	Completed 123 stand exam plots	WA

Remaining 2024 Schedule

Tribe	BIA Region	Project Type	State
Skokomish Indian Tribe	Northwest	Stand exam plot measurements	WA
Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	Northwest	Timber sales preparation	WA
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation	Northwest	Planting contract inspections	OR
Cherokee Nation	Eastern	Timber sales preparation	NC
Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation	Northwest	Timber sales preparation	WA
Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation	Northwest	Timber sales preparation	OR
Pueblo of Jemez	Southwest	Timber sales preparation	NM
Pueblo of Acoma	Southwest	Woodlands survey stand exam measurements	NM

OPPORTUNITIES

[Intertribal Timber Council Symposium](#)

May 13-17, Cherokee, NC

[Society of American Foresters \(SAF\) Convention](#) September 17-20, Loveland, CO

BIA Agencies and Tribal Forestry offices have been reaching out to the Timber Team to help with providing on the job training to new hires across the Nation. The Timber Team has openly invited anyone working in Indian Country to join our team to strengthen relationships, enhance collaboration, and provide unique experiences to the next generation of new foresters. The team also invites seasoned foresters to join on trips for mentoring opportunities and additional training.

Forester



Measuring the diameter of a grand fir while conducting stand exams on the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community of Washington, come join the Timber Team for any assignments.

The National Advanced Silviculture Program (NASP) aims to provide continuing education in advanced silviculture concepts. It is a rigorous and academically challenging program taught at the graduate level courses. Each year, up to five foresters are selected to attend from the BIA and Tribes.

Opportunity exists to provide additional TAAMS training this fiscal year. Additional training has been approved by the TAAMS Change Management Board and will be scheduled based on need. The DOF is maintaining a list of nominations.

The United States Forest Service (USFS) Urban and Community Forestry program provides grants for technical and financial assistance to maintain urban forests. Their goal is to enhance and protect the urban forest by creating a valuable opportunity for tribes to apply for grants. These grants ensure that tribal urban forests continue to provide benefits for tribal members. Tribes can partner with the USFS to apply for funds. [Urban and Community Forestry Grants - 2023 Grant Awards | US Forest Service \(usda.gov\)](#)



Indian Energy Service Center (IESC)

The Indian Energy Service Center (IESC) coordinates and processes Indian energy, mineral and renewable energy development, resource management and leasing activities for the BIA in coordination with our several Interior bureaus. IESC is staffed by BIA, the Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Bureau of Trust Funds Administration (BTFA). The IESC facilitates energy, mineral and renewable energy development, resource management and leasing activities in Indian Country.

The IESC upholds the Departments fiduciary trust responsibility on behalf of Individual trust beneficiaries and Federally recognized Tribes by:

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

[ACCOMPLISHMENTS \(October 2023-March 2024\)](#)

Communitization Agreements

The IESC has perfected over 254 Communitization Agreements (CA) in coordination with the Fort Berthold BIA Agency, Uintah & Ouray (U&O) BIA Agency, and the Southern Ute BIA Agency, since 2017, resulting in over \$1.9 billion in estimated royalty revenue to Indian Tribes and individual Indian mineral owners.

IESC Strategic Plan 2022-2026

Completed.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Section 40601 Tribal Orphaned Well Grant Program

IESC continues collaboration with and providing on-going technical assistance for the Orphaned Well Tribal grant program. A grant management specialist has been hired to assist in this collaborative effort with the Orphaned Well Project Office. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides a total of \$4.7 billion to address orphaned wells across the country, including \$150 million specifically for Tribal communities.

IESC is coordinated a series of Tribal Listening sessions, on January 24th, 31st and February 7, 2024, to present changes that had been made for Phase two Grant Guidance.

The final Phase Two Tribal Grant Guidance announced March 15, 2024, provides instructions to Tribes on how to apply for two categories of orphaned well grants 1) development grants and 2) implementation grants. The updated guidance reflects feedback from Tribes on how to streamline and clarify application requirements. The Department invites applications for Tribal grants through May 14, 2024. 50 million is available during phase two of this program.

This guidance also informs Tribes that they may also request direct assistance from the Department, through “In Lieu of Grant” funding. This request requires the BIA to administer and carry out plugging, remediation and reclamation activities on the Tribe’s behalf. Tribes may submit requests for Phase Two In Lieu of Grant assistance for review and award on a rolling basis through September 2024.

Application requirements and technical assistance is available to Tribes through the Orphaned Wells Program Office [web page](#) and the Indian Energy Service Center-Bureau of Indian Affairs [web page](#). The IESC will continue to assist the OWPO in “office hours” sessions on each Wednesday through the application period.

IESC has continued work on developing a comprehensive inventory of orphaned oil and gas wells on Trust lands. The IESC received the well data from BOGS and from BLM and is currently compiling this data. The work has been completed on an Idle well list; this list will then be drilled down to an actual orphaned wells listing.

Current Active Projects

Engineering Activity:

- Completed 22 engineering reviews for Applications for Permit to Drill in support of the BLM North Dakota Field Office
- Continuing Production Accountability Records Analyses for 15 cases in North Dakota, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah
- Completed 5 Suspension of Production reviews on North Dakota Indian leases.
- Completed 60 engineering reviews and 60 adjudication reviews on Indian leases for Oklahoma Field Office Diligence program.
- Conducted data analysis for Indian orphan well inventory.
- Reviewing production and analyzing economics of low-producing leases for Concho Agency
- Adjudicated 2 Uintah & Ouray (U&O) Communitization Agreements (CA) and currently adjudicating 5 other U&O CAs
- Adjudicated 2 Ft. Berthold Communitization Agreements (CA) and currently adjudicating 4 other Ft. Berthold CAs
- Provided several BLM instructors for in-person and virtual SOP Trainings
- Provided instructor for CA Bootcamp Training
- Participated in all FY24 Federal Partners Meetings

Fort Berthold BIA Agency Active Projects:

- Provided CA Bootcamp, Legal Description and Right of way /Easement Training to MHA Nation, Energy Department, and other Federal staff on December 4-6, 2023, in Bismark, ND.
- IESC has provided (3) staff to support the Ft. Berthold BIA Agency in the form of details to the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent and Realty Specialist positions.

- Hosted a CA Operator's Meeting October 24, 2023, for Operator's on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation, ND addressing CA processing on the Little Missouri River. The next Operator's meeting is scheduled for March 27, 2024, in Lakewood, Colorado.
- Continuing coordination with Federal Partners on the approval of Fort Berthold CAs.
- Reviewed Fort Berthold Agency pending Upland CA's (59) for 100% allotted ownership for further adjudication and recommendation to approve.
- Indian Mineral Development Act (IMDA) Lease reviews. IESC has coordinated and completed (3) Indian Mineral Development Agreement (IMDA) lease reviews and provided recommendations for approval to the BIA, Ft. Berthold Agency.

Beneficiary Support to BIA Agency

- The IESC coordinated a workgroup to process, research, and report on Phase II Lockbox balances and outstanding invoices. Lockbox cleanup is a priority of the AS-IA.
- Phase II Lockbox cleanup has been completed and the lockbox has \$0.00 balance > 30 days.

Document Processing

- The IESC assists the BIA agency by processing Accounts Receivable routing transactions, Oil and Gas Leases, Oil and Gas Lease Assignments, and Communitization Agreements.
- The IESC monitors approved CAs and coordinates with ONRR when Operators fail to correct reporting reflecting allocated royalties in accordance with the approved CA.

Southern Ute BIA Agency Active Projects:

- _____

Ute Mountain Ute Agency Active Projects:

- IMDA Reviews IESC has coordinated (1) Indian Mineral Development Agreement (IMDA) lease review and provided recommendations for technical assistance to BIA, Southwest Regional Office and the BIA, Ute Mountain Ute Agency Office.

Uintah & Ouray (U&O) BIA Agency Active Projects:

- 52 Communitization Agreements submitted by the U&O Agency: 13 CAs have been completed and 39 are in the adjudication process.
- 12 CA lease amendments: 9 completed, in process.
- 49 Oil & Gas lease assignments completed.
- Created SOP for the U&O Communitization Agreement adjudication process for the IESC, U&O Tribe & Agency.
- U&O ROW Name Change Project - 1,021 ROWs were submitted to IESC, of these 1,011 have been completed, the remaining 8 are pending Agency Action.
- U&O ROW Assignment Project - 743 ROWs submitted to IESC, of these 738 ROWs were completed and 114 need to be corrected for defects. 5 ROWs are pending Agency Action.
- The IESC is assisting with a Lease Expiration Project and energy related ROWs and Assignment processing. Also, began the lease segregation process for EDA leases for current & future submitted CAs.

Fort Peck Agency Active Projects

- Oil & Gas Lease Sale
- Compiled and provided FPA and DEMD with tract listing of 2,513 potential/active mineral tracts.

Indian Lease Valuation Review

- The IESC is reviewing lease instruments for more than 6,000 producing Indian leases to determine special lease terms for oil and gas. Many of these terms affect the royalties collected by ONRR.

Meetings and Trainings

Federal Partnership Collaboration Meetings

The IESC facilitates regular meetings between Federal partners and Tribes to facilitate problem solving on shared oil and gas issues.

- Southwest Federal Partner meeting - July 11, 2023, Jan 9, 2024 (Virtual)
- Great Plains Feds Only Federal Partner Meeting held June 21, July 31, Oct 26, 2023 & Mar 20, 2024 (virtual)
- Fort Berthold Federal Partners Meeting with MHA Nation (Tribe), June 27-28, 2023, and November 6-7, 2023, Lakewood, CO, (Hybrids), Aug 7-8, 2023, in New Town, ND (Hybrid)
- OK/TX/KS Federal Partner meeting held Aug 22, 2023 & Feb.6, 2024 (virtual)
- Rocky Mountain Federal Partners Meeting held Sep 14, 2023 (virtual)
- Navajo Federal Partner meeting held Oct 5, 2023 (virtual)
- Western U&O Federal Partners Meeting held Nov 2, 2023, in Vernal, UT. (Hybrid)

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

- These entities provide BIA, BLM, ONRR, BTFA coordination and oversight. Members include Senior executives.
- On February 21, 2024, the EMG met in person and virtually in Lakewood, CO for IESC to provide an update on accomplishments and current projects.
- On February 22, 2024, the IEMSC met in person and virtually in Lakewood, CO to provide mineral status, mineral information updates, and to report on action item progress. The next IEMSC meeting is scheduled for June 2024.

Standard Operating Procedures Attachment Updates (BIA, BLM, ONRR, BTFA)

- Completed the updates for the SOP Attachment F (IMDA process) as approved by the Indian Energy Minerals Steering Committee, IEMSC.

IESC Scope Increased

The IESC was notified by BIA Director memorandum dated March 23, 2022, certain Division of Real Estate Services functions are to be performed by IESC. The IESC scope increased to include DRES functions that will allow for modernized energy related business processes, thereby achieving better protection of Trust records and combined efficiencies in energy and mineral development.

Delegation of Authority Updates

The IESC Indian Affairs Manual 48 IAM has been published reflecting organizational realignments, roles, and responsibilities consistent with IESC's new delegation. Please find the publication here:

https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/assets/public/raca/manual/pdf/48-iam-1_iesc-overview_final_signed_508.pdf

Mineral Royalty Accounting Distribution (MRAD)

The IESC has been overseeing twice-monthly distribution of allotted (individually owned) revenues to Individual Indian owners, nationwide. IESC is also now responsible for the oversight and certification of the transfer of financial data from ONRR to BIA and troubleshooting issues.

MRAD operations involve engagement with the following Departments and three integrated systems: ONRR's Mineral Revenue Management Support System (MRMSS), BIA's Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS), and BTFA's Trust Funds Accounting System (TFAS) now the Innovest System.

The IESC also certifies the transfer of financial data from ONRR to BIA and troubleshoots issues. Have recently split the file into two separate files: FBA and the rest of the Regions.

TAAMS Mineral User Group

The Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS) User Group is a body of subject matter experts/Realty Specialists. The group meets regularly to identify user needs for the TAAMS system, draft system modification requests, complete user acceptance testing, business rule development/modifications, and works with the Contracting Officer's Representative for the TAAMS contract to address CGI, Inc. (TAAMS vendor issues or recommendations).

TAAMS Minerals Training

The IESC has hosted and provided subject matter expertise to the following TAAMS minerals training this year.

- Feb 27-29, 2024

Upcoming TAAMS mineral trainings are scheduled for the follow dates:

- Jul 16-18, 2024
- Nov 19-21, 2024

Mineral Bonds/Sureties for Nationwide Bonds

The IESC will house and maintain original BIA nationwide sureties for energy and mineral companies.

Nationwide bond processing was transferred to IESC in April of 2022 receiving final approval in October 2022. Inherited was a backlog of approximately 36 bond requests pending from 2016 to 2022. IESC has completed processing of 30 of the backlogged bonds.

Overall, 91 nationwide bond requests have been logged and 70 have been approved, completed & distributed. This number includes recent submittals to IESC.

A complete inventory was completed for the nationwide bond physical files ending in a total of 400 nationwide bonds that vary in status and have been filed.

Since transitioning from DRES in March 2022, the IESC has responded to 43 requests from the Solicitor and DOJ for information related to energy and mineral bankruptcies.

The IESC is coordinating the Mineral Users Group for BIA and is currently reviewing the TAAMS business rules for the Mineral Module.

Onshore Energy and Mineral Lease Management Interagency SOP, Indian Solid Minerals training coordinated by the IESC held on July 31-Aug 1, 2023, and Oct. 31-Nov 1, 2023.

NATIONWIDE BONDS	REQUEST	PENDING REVIEW	DRAFTED	PENDING APPROVAL	APPROVED	PENDING CORRECTIONS	CORRECTIONS RECEIVED	COMPLETED
APPROVAL	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	21
RELEASE	34	0	0	0	0	9	2	23
CONTINUATION	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
RIDER	22	5	0	0	0	0	0	17
REPLACEMENT	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
TOTALS	91	8	0	0	0	9	2	72

Beneficiary Services & Outreach

IESC provides direct Fiduciary Trust Officer and BTFA Field Office support services to the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and the Southern Ute Tribe in Colorado through the BTFA field office located in Farmington, NM. Our office has the responsibility to focus on customer service to account holders; including the management of Tribal and Individual Indian Monies (IIM) trust assets, accounts, and to process income revenues and disburse funds to account holders and Tribes.

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The IESC has developed a documented process to track its review and response times and enhance data collection efforts. This ensures that BIA has data needed to track its review and response times. Each month the IESC has provided a depiction of the number of pending and approved contracts involved with oil and gas for the current fiscal year. The data is broken out by region and has been presented at the monthly Regional Realty Officer Meetings.

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To date the IESC/BTFA Branch and Farmington Field Office has completed:

- 89 Financial and/ or Routine File Maintenance Transactions
- 94 Beneficiary Contacts (interactions)
- 36 beneficiary contacts (incident calls)
- \$7,097,634 of Tribal Financial transactions/ disbursements processed.
- (6) Tribal trust administrative Reviews
- (3) Tribal Trust Investment Portfolio Reviews

BTFA Branch has contributed and participated in the following Beneficiary Outreaches:

- (1) Virtual Outreach for the Beneficiaries of Ute Indian Tribes, 1/23/24.
- (2) Virtual Outreaches for Beneficiaries of Ft. Berthold Indian Reservation on 2/13/24 & 3/5/24.
- (1) In person outreach at White Mesa, UT for Ute Indian Tribal members.
- (2) in person, Estate planning Will Clinics in Farmington, NM and Towaoc, CO.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

The IESC continues to support Inter-bureau coordination on:

- Administrative appeals and precedent-setting acreage/boundary determinations for leases affected by updated cadastral determinations along water ways on Indian lands because of river course migration.
- Lands affected by judicial review (active litigation in the US District Court System), with respect to lands underlying the bed of the (Big) Missouri River, which are subject to competing claims against title.
- IESC is a signatory on the Hopi and Navajo Energy Transition MOUs. This effort is primarily coordinated by DOE and requires IESC leadership to attend planning sessions with both tribes. This work will be ongoing throughout FY 2024.
- IESC is increasingly being asked to engage on energy projects in Alaska. Most recently, IESC attended the BIA Providers Conference in Anchorage AK, where a READI Listening Session was hosted (more information on the READI program below).

Renewable Energy Accelerated Deployment Initiative (READI) for Indian Country

The IESC established a work strategy to support the Department's goal to further clean energy initiatives. The READI process is aimed at presenting clean energy development options to Tribal and Individual Indian Owners and receiving input through structured and coordinated dialogue. The READI Program provided a forum, via (7) listening sessions held throughout the country, for tribal leaders to voice their needs for federal coordination as they develop renewable energy resources. A final READI report is currently under review and should be released in spring/summer 2024 on the READI website. Please visit <https://www.bia.gov/readi> for updates and more information on the program.

Division of Real Estate Services

DRES has increased our communications and collaboration with other federal agencies, including BIA's Agency and Regional field staff on policy development and prioritized initiatives in following program areas:

- Interagency working groups on ROWs for Tribal broadband infrastructure projects
- Federal funded programs in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (NTIA) and Department of Commerce NTIA's Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP)
- Regional Realty Officers Monthly conference calls
- Legislative amendments for Tribes who are now eligible to participate in e.g., Recreational and Public Purposes Act

Mortgages

- DRES responded to several inquiries for mortgages (data, timelines, processes) in relation to GAO 105875 engagement and GAO-23-105875.
- TAAMS Mortgage Module approved. Start buildout November 2023.
- Mortgage Smartsheets
- CBO inquiry on S. 70 (Tribal Trust Land Homeownership)
- Sen. Rounds - TSR Inquiry
- Lending Focus Group data call on CTSR's
- ONAP (Office of Native American Program) research for HUD foreclosures- ongoing
- Provide technical assistance to Regional/ Agency personnel regarding leasehold and land mortgages.
- Provide technical assistance to lenders, HUD-ONAP and VA on mortgages.

Collaboration

- HUD (Revised Section 184 - comments)
- Lenders (Tribal lenders & traditional banks)
- BIA
- Tribally Designated Housing Authority's (TDHE's)

Proclamations

Thus far in FY2024, DRES has provided a weekly Proclamation report to ASIA and BIA Leadership with the submitted proclamation request cases received and reviewed for completeness:

- Great Plains Region
- Northwest Region
- Western region

DRES processed the Proclamation request for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, which was approved and signed by ASIA on January 29, 2024, for 1,483.03 acres.

The DRES Team is currently working on updating the Proclamation Toolkit to provide uniform guidance to Regions for Proclamation Package submissions, as well as Training Information to be incorporated at the National Realty Conference this year.

Excess Real Property Transfers (On and Off Reservation Transfer Requests)

DRES served as a full-service nationwide point of contact responsibilities on the GSA utilization and disposal management process, administration, and direction of the excess real property for on and off reservation transfers available to tribes including:

- GSA issued Notices of Availability (NOAs) sent out to the Regions (10 NOAs sent to various BIA Regions. Assisted with the development of a Smartsheet for tracking GSA NOAs)
- Excess Land Transfer Handbook
- IAM for Redelelegation to RD's
- IAM for Process Transfers under 40 U.S.C. Section 523 and ISDEAA P.L. 93-638 Authorities. DRES initiated internal disposal policy development for the analysis, and interpreted real property policies, regulations and procedures approaches to reduce the burdens and the time involved in the transfers of BIA held properties. Coordinated the regulatory and statutory aspects of acquisitions and disposals of excess real property from other federal agencies.

Provided technical guidance to the BIA's Region and agencies field staff to determine the effectiveness of current processes and determined effectiveness of streamlining efforts by working with contractor to develop a Smartsheet dashboard for excess real property requests for on and off reservation available to tribes.

DRES Central office serves as the point of contact for the General Services Administration by inter-agency coordination on excess real property transfer for on and off reservation requests from tribes:

- Develop several streamlining activities to process to reduce barriers for transferring excess lands to tribes for their use and needs:
- Developed an IAM r on excess real property transfers under ISDEAA 93-638 and 40 U.S.C. Section 523 authorities available to transfer real property to tribes.
- Drafted Excess Real Property Transfers Handbook.
- Drafted IAM on the redelegation to Regional RDs to determine and approval for BIA held excess real property transfers for properties located within the boundaries of a Reservation for economic development projects and other projects benefitting the tribal community.

Fee to Trust (FTT) and FTT Strike Team

Support Indian Affairs priorities for Tribal Homelands agenda and co-management: Expand on FY2022 success increasing the number of FTT applications processed in a year, by reducing the time needed for mortgage processing by 50% and instituting a public facing dashboard.

Land Acquisitions, Fee-to-Trust and the Restoration of Tribal Homelands remains the highest priority within Indian Affairs by the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs (AS-IA). The BIA is coordinating internally through the DBIA, DBD-Trust Services, DBD Field Operations, Regional Directors (RDs), Solicitor's Office, Office of Trust Services, Division of Real Estate Services (DRES) to ensure the priority and efficiency in processing fee-to-trust acquisitions.

Total Pending Cases for CY2024 = 924

- Discretionary = 860 / Total Acres = 281,467.90
- Mandatory = 61 / Total Acres = 10,010.31
- Gaming = 23 / Total Acres = 2,148.13
- Non-Gaming = 921 / Non-Gaming Acreage 291,478
- Tribal = 785 / Total Acres = 259,817.05
- Individual = 136 / Total Acres = 31,661.16

DRES is updating the handbook to include the guidance for requesting Legal description reviews and clarify what documents are required for Title Opinion Reviews. DRES is updating handbook guidance to clarify what processes can run concurrently and allow for internal timeframes for processing applications.

DRES continues to coordinate with the GIS Strike Team regarding FTT land description reviews. The GIS Strike Team continues to support Regions with technical direction and assistance to the onsite staff for Land Description Reviews which will facilitate the timely submission of Fee to Trust transactions. Capturing BLM Indian Lands Surveyors (BILS) subject matter expertise is critical for incorporating Southwest/Navajo Region data into a BIA nationwide GIS. The GIS Strike team will meet with Regional SMEs to ensure future LDEVs are completed using GIS best practices and will work alongside the Regional Geospatial Coordinator (RGC) on current national mapping efforts, including right of way data incorporation. DRES and the FTT Strike Team attended these Regional meetings virtually and presented on Realty processes and requirements of FTT and TAAMS.

DRES working with contractors on updating the TAAMS system portal to allow online submissions from applicants. This will streamline the process for applicants by providing a means to submit large application packages that typically are sent through mail. It will also allow immediate receipt by BIA and provide transparency on the process to the applicant through the portal.

Rights-of-Way

DRES implemented actions on the Biden-Harris Permitting Action Plan that established a federal environment review and permitting process to effectively, efficient and being accessible through early cross agency coordination to appropriate reviews, reduce barriers and establish clear timeline goals for broadband and infrastructure projects. DRES provided updated technical guidance for the Secretary's initiatives on the legal complexities in a variety of broadband rights-of-way and other priorities to the Regions.

- Briefings for congressional testimony on realty transactions barriers for tribes for the funding on the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).
- Responded to GAO's engagement and six (6) recommendations from the November 2023 report, *Bureau of Indian Affairs Should Take Additional Steps to Improve Timely Delivery of Real Estate Services* and taking steps to increase communication and collaboration with the field staff on improvements for rights-of-way (ROWs).
- Responded to OIG's engagement on the metrics for ROW approvals and receipts received for the last five years.
- Provided CGI TAAMS trainings for ROWs with the information from GAO's findings to ensure that the field is complying with regulatory timeframes and other metrics found in their report.

Broadband

Tribal broadband projects funded through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP), Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) through various federal agencies brought historic funding for the President's Internet for All initiative goal. The funding has provided support to Indian Affairs' priorities related to climate, environment, and renewable energy: Complete at least 85% of permitting work to support broadband deployment on Tribal lands through facilitation and procurement of national contracting support.

DRES has engaged, collaborated, and coordinated with federal inter-agencies and OST program areas on policy development, streamlining efforts and management of setting land use designations for rights-of-way for broadband related projects with the following working groups meetings:

- ABI Streamlining Federal Permitting
- DOI Broadband and Infrastructure Updates
- Federal inter-agencies on the PAC Region's CALTRANS Middle Mile Project
- OTS Permitting
- FPSIC broadband projects funded through TBCP.

BIA and NTIA entered an MOU on the environmental reviews for broadband funded projects to use FAST-41 with the Steering Permitting Council to streamline the ROWs for broadband projects.

DRES has drafted an update to the NPM-TRUS-44 A 1, "*Streamlining the Rights-of-Way (ROW) and Business Lease Application Processes for Federally Funded Tribal Broadband Infrastructure Projects*" for broadband projects funded through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) aka Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The updated NPM will be implemented before the current NPM expires on April 18, 2024.

HEARTH Act

Each week a HEARTH Act report is prepared, analyzed, and distributed to Senior levels on the ongoing status of each leasing regulations received by DRES.

From October 2023 thru April 2024, Central Office DRES received 4 leasing regulations for review and approval.

- Number of HEARTH Act Approvals: **2**
- Number of HEARTH Act Approvals completed under the 120-day statutory timeframe: **0**.

Agriculture (0); Business (1); Residential (1); Ag/Bus/Res/WSR/WEEL (2).

- Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin (Amended Residential), October 26, 2023
- Lone Band of Miwok Indians (Business), Pending approval

The National HEARTH Act team conducted overview sessions for Tribes, throughout the first half of the fiscal year on the Helping Expedite and Advance Responsible Tribal Homeownership (HEARTH) Act. The webinar trainings were held on:

- November 7, 2023 (Tribal Outreach)
- February 7, 2024 (Tribal Outreach)
- March 26, 2024 (Tribal Outreach)

A total of five (5) HEARTH Act cases were closed out. Subsequently, the Indian Affairs public website for HEARTH Act was updated with five (5) approved Tribal regulations information. The HEARTH Act Coordinator works with the Web Content editor to update the Indian Affairs website for HEARTH Act. The new published content for DRES has added links and up to date information for HEARTH Act submissions, approvals, policies, and trainings.

Trainings and Webinars

DRES staff participated in TAAMS CGI Webex training classes as subject matter experts:

- Fee to Trust (FTT) - 3
- Acquisition & Disposal (A&D) - 2
- Rights of Way (ROW) - 1
- Business Leasing - 2
- Lockbox - 1

DRES staff conducted Realty Webex training classes for field staff on the following topics:

- Conducted training for tribes, third parties.

Cadastral Surveys

- Facilitating creation of Smart Sheets intake form and system for tracking requests as well as pending legislation for land transfers. Eventually, converted data from former cadastral tracking will be verified.
- Ensured approval of yearly Reimbursable Services Agreement with BLM for appropriated budget amounts. Ensured \$387,000.00 is available for Cadastral Program.
- Providing technical assistance on Shoshone Bannock boundary issue impacting approximately 1.2 million acres of tribal lands.

Leasing

- Actively participating in revising the Agricultural lease regulations in 25 CFR 162. The DRES participated in work sessions and compiled comments from field staff on the draft regulations. The draft regulations underwent tribal consultation on the following dates: 1) November 13, 2023, Tulsa, OK (In-person); 2) November 15, 2023 (Virtual); 3) November 17, 2023, Bismarck, ND (In-person); 4) December 13, 2023, Listening Session, Las Vegas, NV (In-person).
- DRES responded to tribal commenters and provided draft language to preamble of regulations and facilitated recent calls to ensure publication of a proposed regulation.
- Surface Lease User Group worked on updating the Residential lease handbook.
- DRES is facilitating a Trespass group to develop guidance on handling trespass situations on non-agricultural lands.

GAO Responses

- DRES provided responses to interviews for GAO 105875, Real Estate Services to Tribes
- DRES provided responses to interviews for GAO 106542, Navajo Land leases.

Technical Assistance Guidance

Other Federal Agencies

- BLM – Recreation and Public Purpose Act
- USDA – Participating in several interagency workgroups on agricultural land topics.

DRES recommended the NPM for Administrative Fee's be edited to include Forestry administrative fees before a final iteration as an IAM.

OMB A-123 Circular Self-Assessments

In compliance with OMB circular A-123, Management Responsibility for Internal Controls, DRES reviews and documents internal controls and key processes, evaluating programs to ensure realty field offices are meeting their intended goals. DRES has six accessible units: Real Estate; and Leasehold Mortgages; 25 CFR 162 Agricultural Leasing, Part 162; 25 CFR Part 162 Leases and Permits, Subpart C, D and E (Residential, Business, Wind Solar Resource, and Wind Energy Leases); 25 CFR 169 Rights-of-Way; 25 CFR 152 Acquisitions (Fee to Trust); and 25 CFR 151 (Trust to Trust and Trust to Fee).

Completed IA Integrated Risk Registers for all components identified on the inventory. Completed and updated Control Matrix for A & D component.

Performance Measures (Agency Performance Goal):

The Agency Performance Goal (APG) measures timeliness of processing Fee to Trust requests. These metrics are reported quarterly, and various timeframes are tracked including timeliness of acknowledgements and Notice of Decisions, and internal processes.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

DRES is currently planning to host a National Realty Conference (tentatively scheduled for June 2023). It has been seven years since the last National Conference. The conference will provide training on various policies and procedures for BIA field staff as well as Contract/Compact Tribal Staff with real estate functions.

DRES has been involved with several collaborative efforts along with other federal agencies on new initiatives and discussions:

- Participation Broadband Permitting Collaboration Discussions
- Streamlining Federal Processes
- Cadastral Surveys
- Audio/Visual Production
- Smart Sheets for HEARTH Act Application Tracking System (HAATS) on-line application tool for submission and tracking of Tribal HEARTH Act Regulations. Excess Real Property Transfers tracking of Notice of Availability (NOA)

Staffing

- DRES has brought on one detail FTE in March 2024 to lead the FTT Strike Team.
- DRES has ten (10) vacant positions; and three (3) vacant Pathway positions.
- DRES Strike Team has five (5) vacant positions.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase collaboration and project tracking for broadband projects.
- Workforce planning tool should assist DRES in identifying gaps and needs.

BEST PRACTICES

- DRES is a remote team that communicates the beginning of each workday on priorities and tasks and concludes the workday reporting out its activities.

CHALLENGES

- DRES is currently trying to advertise and recruit additional staff.



Division of Natural Resources (DNR)

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

Consultation with DNR Branch Chief staff is approached on an issue and standards basis reflecting program management office guidance on merit principles, diversity and inclusion strategic workforce, employee participation and performance related operations.

Protection of the Work Environment

DNR ensures all training covering work environment efficiency and adherence to pertinent obligations and responsibilities is completed per training schedule provided through DOI Talent.

Effective Resource Program Management

DNR ensures all training covering work environment efficiency and adherence to pertinent obligations and responsibilities is completed per training schedule provided through DOI Talent. And, helped distribute/forward newsletters, notices of job opportunities, and other significant publications pertinent to natural resources management.

Accountability for Administrative Management

- Ensures all training covering work environment efficiency and adherence to pertinent obligations and responsibilities is completed per training schedule provided through DOI Talent.
- Responded to data calls with various accomplishment related information request.
- Held quarterly conference calls with regional Agriculture and Range managers to bring consistency in program management.
- Worked to connect regional AG staff with professional organizations and other sources of professional knowledge benefitting their job.

- Successfully managed over 40M in annual funding across three programs within the Branch of Agriculture and Rangeland Development (BFWR).
- Successfully followed Congressional direction report in FY 2024, budget.
- Held quarterly conference calls and hosted an in-person meeting at Albuquerque New Mexico with Regional Agriculture and Range managers to bring consistency in program management with participation from USDA Office of Tribal Relations, USDA NRCS and Farm Service Agency.
- Agriculture provides Point of Contact for all Bison Development efforts with DOI Bison Work Group and Bison Conservation Initiatives.
- Held quarterly conference calls and hosted an in-person meeting at Albuquerque New Mexico with Regional Agriculture and Range managers to bring consistency in program management with participation from USDA Office of Tribal Relations, USDA NRCS and Farm Service Agency.
- Maintained and updated BFWR database system of tracking funding and responding to data calls with various accomplishment related information.
- Held quarterly conference calls with regional BFWR managers to bring consistency in program management.
- Worked to connect regional BFWR staff with professional organizations and other sources of professional knowledge benefitting their job and mental well-being amidst a covid environment.
- Worked to connect Regional Branch of Agriculture staff with professional organizations and other sources of professional knowledge benefitting their job and mental well-being amidst a covid environment.

- Continues to manage over 100M in annual funding across six programs within the Branch of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Recreation (BFWR) Successfully observed Congressional direction report in FY 2024, budget.
- Coordinate with BIA, regions in managing proposal based, and competitively ranked/funded programs (ESA, Invasive Species, Hatchery Maintenance, and Youth Initiative)
- Coordinated on the management and allocation of Alaska Subsistence project special appropriation funding.
- Responded to data calls with various accomplishment related information request.
Held quarterly conference calls with regional Agriculture and Range managers to bring consistency in program management.
- Worked to connect regional Branch of Agriculture staff with professional organizations and other sources of professional knowledge benefitting their job and mental well-being amidst a covid environment.
- Successfully managed funding across three programs within the OTS DNR Branch of Agriculture and Rangeland Development.
- Continues to in place structure into new Bison Branch development and follow Secretary Order 3410 on Bison Strategy.
- Continues to carry out all agency requirements for Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act funds and pursuant BIL & IRA logic model performance development.

Addressing Current or Potential (Transaction) Backlogs

- Ensures pertinent regional staff are informed and provided guidance on compliance to regulatory requirements and time schedules to germane workload service activities.
- Supports regional staff respond to queries and offer guidance to tribes seeking navigation among DNR service areas.

- Provided agency and tribal coordination, management, planning, oversight, and monitoring for the development and protection of trust natural resources, protection of Indian Treaty rights, fish and wildlife resource management development, agriculture operations, environmental quality guidance and regulatory direction, youth education and natural resource related Climate Change habitat restoration.

Tracking & Accountability

- Activities are generated by tribal individual, local, regional, and national priorities communicated to all field, regional, and central office levels of function to the agency. Services are rendered to reflect those priorities and communicate a clear transparent delivery of information in the conveyance of services in fixed, operating, or tangible assets to ensure trust resources.
- Provided funding support in the direction and guidance for all tribal and agency activities related to the planning, management, conservation, development, and utilization of soil, water, farmland, rangeland, fish and wildlife resources, endangered species, invasive species, conservation law enforcement, youth and education within Natural Resources, and climate change address on treaty resources.
- Technical and administrative actions are on on-time, relevant and responsive to Tribes' needs with results transparent to the customer.
- Reporting on key program activities is on time and comparative data is sound and, in a format, meaningful to management and the Tribes.

Restoring Trust within Local Communities

- Initiated the provision oversight, review and working on finalization of all DNR Branch budget execution (est. \$170 M): Fish, Wildlife and Recreation (BFWR); and Agriculture Program. DNR fiscal assistance addresses and facilitates tribal priorities directly, fostering improvement at all agency levels to help tribes and agency offices incorporate best management scientific practice priorities that are consistent with streamlined regulatory adherence. Work plans tier from tribal priorities set in processes such as TBIC or congressional omnibus language facilitating tribal issues and venues such electronic systems or sites framed by DNR services.

- Maintain and update BFWR database system of tracking funding and responding to data calls with various accomplishment related information.
- Managing the OTS web content manager and helped to edit and upload content within the OTS webpage on the BIA internet, including Branch/Division Chief contact information; Links and newsletters; 508 compliant documents.
- Represent BIA on many DOI collaborative efforts, work groups, task force, relating to fisheries, invasive species, endangered species, and other fish and wildlife issues.
- Worked closely with USGS on surveys of feral horse populations on tribal lands.
- Worked proactively with the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society to provide financial resources and technical support bringing positive results in terms of increased membership and services provided to membership.
- Maintained and improved a database tracking tribal hatchery information, including production data.
- Continues to work closely with USGS on a National Fisheries Summit to include topics on Tribal Treaty fishing rights and Federal responsibilities.
- Represented BIA on DOI collaborative efforts, work groups, task force, relating to noxious weeds, Invasive Species, Bison Conservation Initiatives, Indigenous Food
- Sovereignty Initiatives, Native Seed Revegetation, and DOI Integrated Pest Management.
- Represented BIA on DOI collaborative efforts, work groups, task force, relating to noxious weeds, Invasive Species, Bison Conservation Initiatives, Indigenous Food Sovereignty Initiatives, Native Seed Revegetation, DOI Keystone Initiatives, and DOI Integrated Pest Management.
- Worked closely with the DOI Bison Working Group on Secretarial Order 3410 to coordinate the development of a Bison Apprenticeship Program and Shared Stewardship Strategy to assist Tribes with the expansion and development of respective Bison Programs.
- Participated in the DOI Bison Working Group Work Session to discuss focus on DOI Metapopulation Strategy and the Shared Stewardship Strategy to inform DOI Leadership on progress and updates from the DOI BWG.
- Participated with Native Nation Buffalo Project Representatives, Federal Agency Leaders, and Government Resource Program Managers on a Returning Buffalo with Native Nations Roundtable on Government Resources for Tribal Buffalo Restoration.
- Participated in Society for Range Management workshops while supporting Native American Range Advisory Committee to continue SRM endeavors of providing stakeholders with management approaches related to ITEK.
- Worked closely with the DOI Bison Working Group on Secretarial Order 3410 to coordinate the development of a Bison Apprenticeship Program and Shared Stewardship Strategy to assist Tribes with the expansion and development of respective Bison Programs.
- Coordinated with DOI web team to reorganize and publish new Branch of Agriculture and Range website. Web pages now provide Tribes an opportunity to access important documents and materials such as RFPs for each program, regional contact information, secretarial orders, OTS Bison Program information.
- Participated in the spring Tribal/Interior Budget Council Land, Water, and Natural Resource Subcommittee Meetings. Topics addressed in the meeting were Co-Management, Building Sustainable Economies, Water Quality and Water Conservation, Ecosystem Restoration Projects.
- Participated in the DOI Bison Working Group Work Session to discuss focus on DOI Metapopulation Strategy and the Shared Stewardship Strategy to inform DOI Leadership on progress and updates from the DOI BWG.
- Participated in Public Law 3-638 Indian Self Determination Education and Assistance Act, and Trust Asset Accounting Management System Trainings to better support Tribes and Regions with Technical Assistance.

Partnerships contribute to a balanced Stewardship of Trust Lands

- DNR services, operations and partnerships include 10 National Indian Organizations and 12 regional area Indian Organizations that cover, Fish and Wildlife, Agriculture, and environmental non-profit informational organizations. With the assistance of regional staff or directly through DNR, tribes and other agencies are served a wide array of information covering resources and their management inherent to the 3 branches of DNR. The process of information sharing particular and available to DNR information platforms generate cooperative, co-management, partnership and collaboration for multiple tribes and associated agencies natural resource management.
- DNR Represented BIA on many DOI collaborative efforts, work groups, task force, relating to DOI Fishery Summit, Indigenous Knowledge, Noxious Weeds, Invasive Species, DOI Bison Management, Native Seed Revegetation, DOI Integrated Pest Management, and other Agriculture and Rangeland Issues.

Outreach to Customers and Building a positive reputation.

- DNR fiscal support includes OTS interns yearly, as well as in the process of providing over 30 youth related projects and applying project fund criteria for youth program related support in natural resource programs.
- DNR Represented BIA on many DOI collaborative efforts, work groups, task force, relating to noxious weeds, Invasive Species, Bison Conservation Initiatives, Indigenous Food Sovereignty Initiatives, Native Seed Revegetation, and DOI Integrated Pest Management.
- DNR Worked closely with USGS on a National Fisheries Summit to include topics on Tribal Treaty fishing rights and Federal responsibilities.
- DNR Participated with Native Nation Buffalo Project Representatives, Federal Agency Leaders, and Government Resource Program Managers on a Returning Buffalo with Native Nations Roundtable on Government Resources for Tribal Buffalo Restoration.

- DNR Participated in Society for Range Management workshops while supporting Native American Range Advisory Committee to continue their endeavors of providing stakeholders with management approaches related to ITEK.
- DNR Worked closely with the DOI Bison Working Group on Secretarial Order 3410 to coordinate the development of a Bison Apprenticeship Program to assist Tribes with the expansion and development of respective Bison Programs.
- DNR Coordinated with DOI web team to reorganize and publish new BARD website. Our web pages now provide Tribes an opportunity to access important documents and materials such as RFPs for each of our programs, regional contact information, secretarial orders, OTS Bison Program information.
- DNR Represent BIA on many DOI collaborative efforts, work groups, task force, relating to fisheries, invasive species, endangered species, and other fish and wildlife issues.
- DNR Worked closely with USGS on a National Fisheries Summit to include topics on Tribal Treaty fishing rights and Federal responsibilities.
- DNR Worked closely with USGS conducting and reporting surveys to better determine the economic and ecological impacts of feral horse populations on tribal lands.
- DNR Worked proactively with the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society to provide financial resources and technical support bringing positive results in terms of increased membership and services provided to membership.
- DNR Worked closely with the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society to plan and implement a project providing tribal capacity to manage invasive species and implement Early Detection/Rapid Response regarding invasive species invasions.
- DNR Coordinated with DOI web team to reorganize and publish new BFWR website. Our web pages now provide Tribes an opportunity to access important documents and materials such as RFPs for each of our programs, regional contact information, secretarial orders pertaining to ESA for Tribes and Federal and Tribal co-management of lands. Through communication with BFWR Regional Managers, project photos and accomplishments were collected and are featured on our individual competitive and non-competitive program pages.

Empower Tribes to Manage their own Resources.

- DNR provided oversight, review and working on finalization of all DNR Branch budget execution (est. \$170 M): Fish, Wildlife and Recreation (BFWR); and Agriculture Program.
- DNR coordinated with BIA, regions in managing proposal based, and competitively ranked/funded programs (ESA, Invasive Species, Hatchery Maintenance, and Youth Initiative) and with Alaska Region on the management and allocation of Alaska Subsistence special appropriation funding.
- DNR designed project funding criteria to focus on building tribal management capacity and encourage the next generation by including tribal youth participation as a ranking criterion.
- DNR Rights protection Implementation supported the implementation of Federal court orders that resulted from decisions in complex, off-reservation treaty rights litigation.
- DNR provided guidance and implementation of Tribal Management Development Program (TMDP), where BFWR provides the core funding for several fish and wildlife management and economic development functions.
- DNR Wildlife & Parks Program (TPA) This program supports the Wildlife and Parks program at the agency or tribal level.
- DNR Fish, Wildlife and Parks Projects (Hatchery Operations and Maintenance) qualified tribal hatcheries will receive funding under the DNR Hatchery Operations Program, providing base funding for the operation of tribal fish hatcheries in the Northwest and Midwest regions.
- DNR Endangered Species (ES) Program, projects awarded from the FWR, Endangered Species program which is the primary program achieving Indian Affairs and tribal responsibilities associated with compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA), P.L. 93-205, and the related protection and preservation of trust lands and resources.
- DNR Invasive Species Program reviewing projects that will be awarded funds under the Invasive Species Program which supports the prevention, control, and eradication of invasive species on Indian reservations and treaty-ceded territories.
- DNR Conservation Law Enforcement Officer Program (CLEO) A total of 20 CLEO's scheduled for continued funding and supports the sound management of tribal trust resources and enforcement of tribal natural resource laws on trust lands.
- DNR coordinated \$10 Million in IRA funds for ten hatchery construction projects.
- DNR is facilitating A-123 measures with Agriculture, Environmental, Archaeology, and museum AU ICR's annually and monitoring GPRA measures for annual reporting schedule.
- DNR Continues to assist in communicating information from Central office to regional personnel and other BIA/Interior staff. Created records in DTS and helped move correspondence forward.
- DNR managed and supported the distribution of funds to regions and tribes for AG and range invasive species plant projects and programs. Coordinating and distributing funds to numerous proposals on Noxious Weed Projects. Supporting the prevention, control, and eradication of invasive Noxious species on Indian reservations and treaty-ceded territories. This funding is instrumental in protecting valuable tribal grazing lands.
- DNR Design project funding criteria to focus on building tribal management. This funding is instrumental in protecting valuable tribal grazing lands.
- DNR Coordinate with BIA, regions in managing proposal based, and competitively ranked/funded programs (ESA, Invasive Species, Hatchery Maintenance, and Youth Initiative)
- Coordinated with Alaska Region on the management and allocation of Alaska Subsistence special appropriation funding.
- DNR Design project funding criteria to focus on building tribal management capacity and encourage the next generation by including tribal youth participation as a ranking criterion.

- DNR FWR Delivered a National annual coordination meeting of BFWR regional managers, held in Durango, CO.
- DNR AG Managed and supported the Distribution of funds to regions and Tribes for agriculture and range invasive species plant projects and programs. Coordinated the distribution of funds to numerous proposals on noxious weed projects.
- DNR Coordinate with BIA Regions in managing proposal based, and competitively ranked/funded programs (Noxious Weeds, Invasive Species, Agriculture Non-Base)
- DNR Planning for the distribution of funds to regions and Tribes for agriculture and range invasive species plant projects and programs. Coordinating the distribution of funds to numerous proposals on noxious weed projects, currently awaiting the FY 2024 funding levels to become available for project selections.
- DNR Assisted the OTS DNR BFWR to design Invasive Species project funding criteria to focus on building tribal management. This funding is instrumental in protecting valuable tribal grazing lands.
- DNR AG Design project funding criteria to focus on building tribal management. This funding is instrumental in protecting valuable tribal grazing lands.
- DNR AG Coordinate with BIA, regions in managing proposal based, and competitively ranked/funded programs (Noxious Weeds, Invasive Species, Agriculture Non-Base)

Regional Priority Development, Execution and Communication to Indian Country

DNR services, operations and partnerships include 10 National Indian Organizations and 12 regional area Indian Organizations that cover, Fish and Wildlife, Agriculture, and environmental non-profit informational organizations. With the assistance of regional staff or directly through DNR tribes and other agencies are served a wide array of information covering resources and their management inherent to the 3 branches of DNR. The process of information sharing particular and available to DNR information platforms generate cooperative, co-management, partnership and collaboration for multiple tribes and associated agencies natural resource management.

DNR continues to facilitate OTS core priority to provide services to tribes, internal agency offices and agency partners in the management of Indian Trust Responsible natural resource assets through facilitation of best natural resource management practices.

Program and Service Alignment with Community Needs and Desired Results

DNR adheres to legacy and emerging distribution of fiscal assets to tribes and internal agency entities based on congressional, administrative, and tribal communicated priority needs within parameters of established processes such as narrative President Budget Requests and Tribal Budget Interior Council priorities and departmental strategies and initiatives. Fish and wildlife tribal goals are set by the tribes year to year and are consistent with services on the same basis. Agriculture goals are basic management priorities set by each tribe's determination of priorities and adhere to regulatory allowances. Environmental goals are consistent to the National Environmental Protection Act regulatory compliance of all federal actions which include those involving tribes using federal funds for their management activities. DNR navigates all leading prerogatives to advance tribal interest based on entitlements established to federal recognized individual or tribal entities.

Practices are Sustainable over Time and Across Organizational Change

- DNR branch activities are inherently aligned with the outlook of tribal interests over time.
- DNR is working with IA RACA to ensure current policy and memorandum facilitation of environment, agriculture and Fish and Wildlife agency apprise procedural articulation of natural resource activities in operational guidance for field, regional and central activities.
- DNR The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is proposing to revise the regulations addressing agricultural leasing of Indian land. This rule would revise the existing regulations to be consistent with the rest of the BIA's leasing regulations and clarify and streamline leasing processes, replacing the existing subpart on agricultural leasing with a new subpart. This proposed rule attempts to ensure consistency among all subparts of part 162, while also maintaining the specific directives for the management of agricultural lands present under authorizing statutes such as the American Indian Agricultural Resources Management Act (AIARMA), 25 USC 3711, et seq.

- DNR OTS DNR AG Branch is in the process of updating Agriculture Leasing Regulations 25 CFR Part 162, Subpart B, in collaboration and coordination with other departments within BIA OTS and USDA.
- DNR Maintained and improved a database tracking tribal hatchery information, including production data.
- DNR OTS DNR AG Branch is in the process of updating Agriculture Leasing Regulations 25 CFR Part 162, Subpart B, in collaboration and coordination with other departments within BIA OTS and USDA.
- DNR The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is proposing to revise the regulations addressing agricultural leasing of Indian land. This rule would revise the existing regulations to be consistent with the rest of the BIA's leasing regulations and clarify and streamline leasing processes, replacing the existing subpart on agricultural leasing with a new subpart. This rule would also make corresponding changes to the rest of the BIA's leasing regulations to fully integrate agricultural leasing in the rest of Part 162 and update certain sections in other subparts. This proposed rule attempts to ensure consistency among all subparts of part 162, while also maintaining the specific directives for the management of agricultural lands present under authorizing statutes such as the American Indian Agricultural Resources Management Act (AIARMA), 25 USC 3711, et seq.
- DNR BIA OTS held four consultation sessions, November 13, 2023, in Tulsa, Oklahoma; November 15, 2023, virtually; November 17, 2023, in Bismarck, North Dakota; and December 13, 2023, in Las Vegas, Nevada. The consultation period ended on December 29, 2023.
- DNR The Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Trust Services Division of Natural Resources (BIA OTS DNR) utilized Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Climate Adaptation and Resilience funding to support the Intertribal Buffalo Council (ITBC) herd development program and Apprenticeship Program with \$3.5 Million dollars to support Tribal buffalo programs.
- DNR OTS Branch of Agriculture designed Bison Herd Expansion project funding criteria to focus on supporting and Increasing Tribal Bison Herds and Restoring Cultural Resources for improved herd management. This funding is instrumental in protecting Tribal Food Sovereignty and Cultural Restoration. OTS Branch of Agriculture awarded and supported three Tribal Buffalo Herd Programs in three BIA Regions covering 2 Keystone Initiative Ecosystem Biomes.
- DNR BIA Office of Trust Services has developed an approved OMB Request for Proposal Application (RFP) Process Criteria for OTS Bison IRA and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Ecosystem Restoration (BIL-ER) Planning and Start Up costs. Eligibility is focused and limited to federally recognized Indian Tribal Governments, (Tribes authorized under P.L. 93-638 Indian Self Determination and Assistance Act) to engage in Tribal Bison Program expansion.
- DNR is currently in the process of updating Agriculture Leasing Regulations Part 162, Subpart B, in collaboration and coordination with other departments within BIA OTS.
- DNR Grazing Permit documents have been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget for review and approved by the Office of Regulatory Affairs and DNR Collaborative Action. The comment submission period has been completed and the forms are in the process of update.
- DNR Updated the National Policy Memorandum Administrative Fees - to establish policy and standardize internal controls for collecting, tracking, and retaining administrative fees for certain goods and services for agriculture and rangeland management provided by BIA on behalf of Indian Tribes.
- DNR FWR Participated in BIL and IRA coordination processes to receive additional FWR funding for hatchery construction projects.
- DNR FWR Managed additional reporting and coordination requirements specific to BIL and IRA funding.
- DNR FWR Supported Administration priorities through delivery of BIL, IRA, and annually recurring BFWR funding.

Standardize Processes and Modernize Information Systems

- DNR endeavors to rely on and tier from OTS program management office leadership guidance and align operations reflective with office direction consistent with administrative priority strategies, congressional direction, and agency services.
- DNR Maintained all AG systems and processes.

- DNR AG Standardized RFP announcements, due dates, and application processes to lessen the application burden.
- DNR AG Branch is in the process of updating Agriculture Leasing Regulations 25 CFR Part 162, Subpart B, in collaboration and coordination with other departments within BIA OTS and USDA. Expected completion of the draft rule update is the Beginning of FY 2024. Interagency Work Groups with United States Department of Agriculture NRCS/FSA/FPAC are in development to implement and update DOI BIA/USDA FPAC MOU.
- DNR AG is participating on Interagency Working Group (USDA/BIA) on Tribal Agricultural Lands (IWG)
- DNR Over the years there have been three MOUs between USDA and DOI directing both departments to increase coordination to improve customer service to Tribal agriculture producers. USDA and BIA are working together to build a permanent Interagency Working Group on Tribal Agricultural Lands to ensure both departments successfully change the way both agencies support agriculture throughout Indian Country.
- DNR USDA Office of Tribal Relations, NRCS and FSA National Tribal Liaisons attended January 2024 BIA Agriculture Meeting to facilitate Interagency Work Group Discussions.
- DNR Continue supporting the various BIA Regions and the efforts and challenges faced with grazing permits and low staffing levels by supporting the BIA Range TAAMS workshop.
- DNR Updated the National Policy Memorandum Administrative Fees - to establish policy and standardize internal controls for collecting, tracking, and retaining administrative fees for certain goods and services for agriculture and rangeland management provided by BIA on behalf of Indian Tribes.
- DNR Maintained all BFWR systems and processes amidst a covid environment requiring adjustments in management strategies and coordination with regions.
- DNR Maintained and improved a database tracking tribal hatchery information, including production data.
- DNR FWR Standardized RFP announcements, due dates, and application processes to lessen the application burden.
- DNR Worked to connect regional BFWR staff with professional organizations and other sources of professional knowledge benefitting their job and mental well-being amidst a covid environment.
- DNR AG Maintained all DNR Branch of Agriculture systems and processes amidst a covid environment requiring adjustments in management strategies and coordination with regions.
- DNR AG Updated the National Policy Memorandum Administrative Fees - to establish policy and standardize internal controls for collecting, tracking, and retaining administrative fees for certain goods and services for agriculture and rangeland management provided by BIA on behalf of Indian Tribes.
- DNR AG Standardized RFP announcements, due dates, and application processes to lessen the application burden.
- DNR AG Grazing Permit documents have been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget for review and approval by the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action. The comment submission period has been completed and the forms have been updated.
- DNR AG The IWG has been meeting since May of 2023. The intention of the group is to institutionalize the relationship between Interior and USDA contemplated by the MOU. Although it currently meets monthly, this Leadership Call is intended to transition to a quarterly meeting in calendar 2024.
- DNR AG Interagency sub-groups have been formed for the following areas: Ag Leasing and Grazing Permits; Data Exchange/TAAMS; Supporting and Streamlining Agriculture and Conservation Practices; Establish Reciprocity and Streamlining of Common Federal Processes; and Cross Training/ Intra & Interagency Communications.

- DNR AG USDA and BIA have appointed representatives to each sub-group to meet regularly to discuss respective areas and identify 3 top priorities and deliverables for each subgroup. The subgroup committees will be looking to finalize positions for each subgroup by October 2023.
- DNR AG Project teams will be developed “ad-hoc” to combine national program staff with subject-matter experts from field offices. Teams plan to meet as necessary to accomplish project objectives.
- DNR AG BIA completed its initial review and update of the Agricultural Leasing regulations found at 25 CFR Part 162 Subpart B. The purpose of Part 162 Subpart B is to promote the self-determination of Indian Tribes by providing for management of Indian agricultural and related renewable resources consistent with Tribal goals and priorities for conservation, multiple use, and sustained yield. 25 U.S.C. § 3702(1).
- DNR AG Consistent with the MOU, BIA shared with USDA staff draft updates to the Agricultural Leasing regulations in May of 2024.
- DNR AG USDA staff contributed comments and suggested revisions to the regulations that address feedback collected from tribal leaders, farmers, and ranchers on obstacles to successfully access USDA programs and resources on trust lands. USDA comments were considered, and appropriate changes were made to the regulations.
- DNR AG BIA has held multiple Tribal Consultation sessions (in-person and virtually). The DOI RACA office will also accept written comments on the proposed draft regulations during and after these tribal consultation sessions.
- DNR AG Continue supporting the various BIA Regions and the efforts and challenges faced with grazing permits and low staffing levels by supporting the BIA Range TAAMS workshop.



2024 BIA Agriculture Meeting Albuquerque NM.



DOI BWG Shared Steward Strategy Development Team Missoula February 2024



USDA Office of Tribal Relations, NRCS and FSA National Tribal Liaisons attended January 2024 BIA Agriculture Meeting to facilitate Interagency Work Group Discussions



Bison Release at Taos Pueblo



Invasive species pampas grass can outcompete native species for space, water, and soil nutrients.



Mescalero Apache Tribe fish hatchery raises trout.



Brown trout reared at the Lac du Flambeau hatchery.



Conservation Law Enforcement officer training provided by NAFWS.



Division of Program Management & Coordination (DMPC)

Services Provided

DPM&C serves in a supporting role to Office of Trust Services (OTS) Programs and assist leadership in assuring the programs adhere to the regulatory requirements and stay audit-free.

DPM&C provides centralized administrative programs and processes such as:

- Budget & Finance
- Acquisition, Fleet Management & Personal Property Inventories
- Human Resources & Workforce Planning
- Internal Policies & Procedures
- Performance Management Program & Internal Controls
- Communication Plans & Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
- Data Calls, Data Standardization & Integration, Records Management

A centralized administration helps with response time, creates efficient standardized processes and strategies. modernizes operations and improves data management.

Requests Staff are Working since October 1, 2023

- 54 Submissions
- 40 In Progress
- 874 Completed
- 968 Total

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

In FY 2024, DPM&C implemented the use of SmartSheets (STAT) as a mechanism for OTS Divisions to request and track administrative tasks. To date, DPM&C has received 968 requests; 874 have been completed.

DPM&C continues to host monthly Admin Calls with all OTS staff members. Some of the topics of discussion include travel, ethics, performance management, telework, remote work, etc. These sessions provide informative information and staff look forward to these calls.

Organizational charts in Trust Services are now in final form accompanied by spending plans. Currently, there are:

- 17 positions have been filled.
- six positions are pending background checks.
- six positions are pending either classification or staff actions.
- 20+ positions are in queue for review by DPM&C, giving priority to the positions identified on the Top 50 list.

OPPORTUNITIES

USA STAFFING – DPM&C will begin utilizing the USA Staffing for recruitment efforts. This system will house all classified position descriptions and will provide a processing timeline from the initial request to completion. We are working to update PDs so they can be uploaded into USA Staffing.

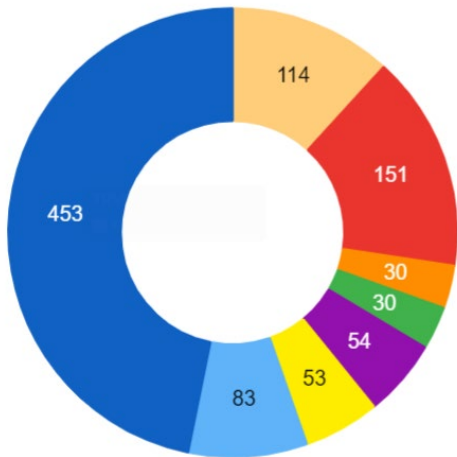
BEST PRACTICES

DPM&C continues to seek ways to improve (streamline) processes and response times. Implementing SmartSheets is assisting in this effort.

CHALLENGES

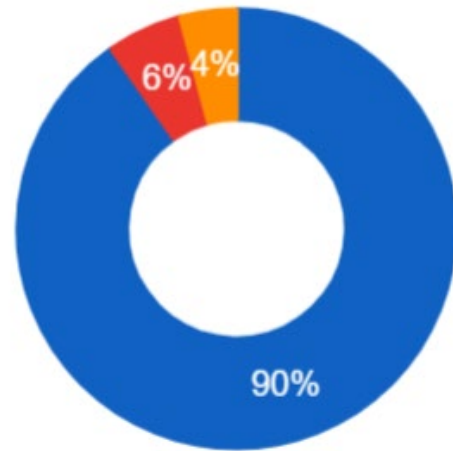
Human Resources continues to be a challenge with insufficient personnel to support human capital services and guidance.

OTS Portfolio Review (October 2023-March 2024)

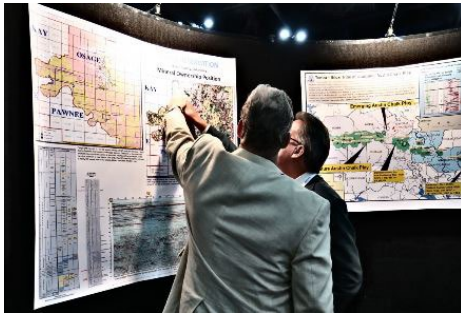


- ADMIN (Administrative Tasks)
- BDGT (Budget)
- CC (Charge Card)
- FOIA (Freedom of Information Act)
- HR (Human Resource)
- MISC (Miscellaneous)
- REQ (Requisition)
- TRVL (Travel Request)

Overall Status



- Completed
- Submitted
- In Progress



Division of Resource Integration & Services (DRIS)

DRIS, Branch of Resource Solutions

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

BRS's current priority is implementing the Solutions Trust Accountability Tracker (STAT) throughout OTS. STAT is a cloud-based software package that works with the BIA's data spanning legacy systems through desktop spreadsheets to better posture the usage of trust land data, enable improved accountability and project management monitoring/tracking, and accelerate collaboration between business units.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

The BRS staff has solidified a cross-disciplinary team that has built detailed prototypes of eight application tools in the STAT platform, executed a plan for gaining Authority to Operate approval in the near term, and utilized best practices from other DOI Bureaus who also use Smartsheet.gov. STAT is targeted primarily for tabular data and represents that data graphically, in a calendar style, in a Kanban/card mode, or in spreadsheet format with additional high-powered project management functionality. Charts and graphs can be displayed representing key performance metrics, data can be input via forms, importing, or through a data shuttle for ongoing updates from other information systems, plus many other collaboration, analysis, and modeling functionalities.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

- Achieve approvals for ATO for the platform and eight priority tools/applications.
- Initiate additional tools/applications for STAT 1.1 and build flexible solution roadmap for future versions.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Collaborate with OTS Divisions to solve business challenges and adopt best practices.
- Develop support infrastructure and re-purpose existing, proven infrastructure and processes.
- Participate in Data Stewardship and/or Custodial activities.

BEST PRACTICES

- Utilize agile development techniques for additional BIA OTS STAT tools/applications.
- Establish and maintain appropriate standard operating procedures for BIA OTS STAT
- Assist OTS Divisions and Branches with IT modernization needs, including cloud-based technologies, extending legacy systems, and cybersecurity.

CHALLENGES

Hiring, onboarding, and facilitating new BRS hires to be the most productive in the most effective way possible.

DRIS, Branch of Geodata Evaluation and Validation

The mission of the Branch of Geodata Examination and Validation is to facilitate the modernization of data resource communication and interface to prompt collaboration amongst programs and improve workflows throughout Indian Country in support of the Bureau of Indian Affairs mission and objectives, and to support the sharing of geospatial information and data resources among offices, programs, field offices and Tribes to promote informed decision making. A Strategic plan has been developed outlining mission, goals, strategy, and road map.

Branch of Geodata Examination and Validation has three main Project Areas: Fee to Trust Strike Team, Parcel Team and Rights of Way Team.

Fee-to-Trust GIS Strike Team

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

The FTT GIS Strike team attended The Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) presenting the 2023 review of Fee to Trust applications processed and the new submission platform in STAT. The team also attended the National Tribal Land Associations annual conference for Tribal land staff. The team met with Tribal staff and BLM BILS to build relationships and answer any questions they had about the new LDEV submission platform. FTT GIS Strike team has completed 56 LDEVs in the last 5 months and currently have 3 pending LDEV applications.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

- The FTT GIS Strike team will continue to prioritize FTT Land Description Review to restore Tribal homelands.
- Regional meetings will be scheduled on an as needed bases for regions that have experienced high turnover/hire rate.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Meet with Regional staff regularly on LDEV submissions and best practices.
- Shadow train team members on leadership, presentation skills, and meeting facilitation.

- ESRI Parcel Fabric training.
- Utilize DRIS Regional Visits to check in with realty staff on FTT.

BEST PRACTICES

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

CHALLENGES

Having to pull staff from other teams to fulfill an influx of LDEV applications.

DRIS, Parcel Team

The Parcel team is in collaboration with DRIS, BOGS and LTR0 to map trust Tracts recognized by TAAMS and their component parcels to follow the 2018 Geospatial Data Act. The work involves creating and curating registered GIS data based on TAAMS tabular with in a GIS Enterprise, which will provide base layer data for multiple GIS systems within the BIA. The collaborative effort to continues with the update of geodatabases and the mapping of Indian Tract/Parcels, this effort is patterned after similar work that has already been completed for DOI's Indian Buy Back Project.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

- LACs -Cook Inlet 975, Koniag 977, Sealaska 982, Aleut 984 and along with Master Load data sheets, resulting parcel mapping have been completed and are in the repository. LACs Ahtna 976, Metlakatla 99J and Arctic Slope 985 are being worked on.
- Oklahoma Townsites comprising approximately 2,000 records have been completely updated and remapped to accommodate Non-Parcel Tract inclusion, which include the following LACs: 888, 8A4, 8A6, 8A7,8C4, 8C5, 8C7, 8D4, 8D7, 8E4, 8E7, 8E8, 8F4, 8F5, 8F7, 8G4, 8G5, 8G6, 8H4, 8H5, 8H6, 8H7, 8I4, 8I6, 8J4, 8J5, 8K4, 8L4, 8L5, 8L6, 8M4, 8M5, 8M6, 8N4, 8N5, 8P4, 8Q4, 8Q5, 8R4, 8R6, 8S4, 8S5, 8T5, 8U4, 8U5, 8V4, 8V5, 8W4, 8W5, 8W6, 8X4, 8X5, 8Y4, 8Y5, 8Z5, and 8Z6

- Reconstituting the Axway Repository. This breaks LACs into individual data packages containing zip files for both parcels and CADNSDI/PLSS when applicable (i.e. Eastern Region LACs do not have CADNSDI or PLSS to which the parcels are registered).
- Working with BOGS Development Team to alleviate network speed issues Network speeds still very slow.
- Also working on re-platforming (AWS) repository data caches
- Developed specialized parcelization process to accommodate tracts made up of more than one survey type.
- Parcelization Team continued work on resolving TAAMS records identified with Can Not Map status within 300 Land Area Codes (LACs)
- Work continues initial mapping (areas previously unmapped) for the Eastern Region and Alaska. In the case of Alaska, a specialized process to convert TAAMS output data into a standardized LAC schema, while accommodating unique source data formatting developed to accommodate unique source data formatting.
- U&O litigation GIS work Split Estate identification and mapping.
- U&O portal map development
- Working with ESRI to develop parcel fabric methodologies by sharing existing data sets.
- Special data set development for Annette Island Metlakatla (LAC 99J)
- Fort Belknap (LAC 204) dataset repair – Hayes Townsite
- Match E Be Nash She Wish (LAC 484)
- Pokogon Band Potawatomi

- Developing parcelization process diagrams for Census meetings.
- Special TAAMS query requests to identify mineral acreage.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

- Remainder of LACs within Alaska
- GIS Data Requests that are received
- Mapping locations of American Indian Boarding Schools
- Parcel fabric development.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Working with Regional staff to complete LAC area
- Receive various project requests.
- Having Parcels mapped for each LAC.
- Able to provide Tribes and Agencies with knowledge to assist in making decisions.

BEST PRACTICES

- Completing one LAC at a time
- Prioritizing projects as they are being requested based on urgency.
- Getting the correct data to the agencies that needs it.

CHALLENGES

- Having the team to complete and maintaining parcel data. Short staffed.
- Parcel fabric learning curve.

Right of Way Team

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

- The Rights of Way Team (ROW) provides a visual location of right of way contracts within TAAMS. Inventory the types of right of ways across trust lands. Identify active, expired, and cancelled contracts within TAAMS. Enabling a visual assist in decision making for trust lands.
- Completed
- LAC 105 Chehalis completed 1/24/2024 Total Contracts of 31 with 17 contracts mapped and 15 contracts not mapped.
- LAC 106 Hoh River completed 2/7/2024 Total Contracts of 1 with 1 contract mapped.
- LAC 116 Quileute completed 2/28/2024 Total Contracts of 16 with 13 contracts mapped and 3 contracts not mapped.
- LAC 118 Shoalwater completed 3/6/2024 Total Con
- LAC 121 Squaxin Island completed 3/7/2024 Total Contracts of 8 with 8 contracts mapped.
- LAC 129 Jamestown Klallam completed 2/8/2024 Total Contracts of 7 with 5 contracts mapped and 2 contracts not mapped.
- LAC 132 Cowlitz completed 2/6/2024 Total Contracts 19 with 14 contracts mapped and 5 contracts not mapped.
- LAC 157 Olympic Peninsula Public Domain completed 2/20/2024 Total Contracts 13 with 8 contracts mapped and 5 not mapped.
- Project Request
- To date - Received 1 request to map LAC 107 Lummi Right of Way contracts next
- Begin Parcel Fabric for ROW
- Mapping FTT for LAC 583 Pala Reservation
- tracts of 2 with 2 contracts mapped.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

- LAC 107 Lummi Right of Way contracts
- Parcel Fabric for previously done ROW contracts mapped.
- Completion of the NW Region ROW contracts - 375 LACs within the NW Region to complete.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Working on Parcel Fabric for Parcel's Team

BEST PRACTICES

- Prioritizing projects as they are being requested based on urgency and completed in a timely manner.
- Getting the correct data to the agencies that needs it.

CHALLENGES

- Learning to apply Parcel Fabric
- Having time to map ROW contracts and assist others.

DRIS, Branch of Geospatial Support

During the past 6 months, BOGS worked with Esri and DOI to add 5,992 creator licenses. This greatly empowers tribes because it gives BIA the ability to add many more ESRI licenses for tribes. This potentially allows over 5,000 tribal employees access to GIS and to use the technology in ways that can significantly benefit the tribes.

Data Dashboards under Construction

BOGS is developing OTS data reporting dashboards with customizable content to allow easy monitoring of funding and visually show managers the status of high priority projects. Access to visual data and reports is expected to increase awareness of how much funding is going to projects that directly benefit tribes. Data mapping for each division is in process and started with BOGS.

A dashboard will provide quick access to FTT weekly status reports as requested by the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs. BOGS is expanding its dashboard team and developing templates to bring BIA the benefits of GIS for decision-making.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station Application

BOGS is creating an Electric Vehicle Charging Station mapping application showing potential sites for EV charging stations in Indian Country.

Collaboration

Over the last 6 months, BOGS has worked to establish/build relationships with other federal agencies.

- Organized small quarterly meetings with the BLM Indian Land Surveyors (BILS) and the RGCs to promote interaction and positive working relationships.
- BOGS met with USGS and Strategic Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (SHIRA) team to demo tools for RGCs, and possibly bring these free tools to tribes.
- BOGS, tribal boundary working group and [Census](#) connected on shared issues and inform the rest of federal agencies about updates to BIA datasets such as the LAR.
- Met with [NOAA Fisheries](#) and RGC's to discuss some of the issues facing coastal tribes.

The Tribal Boundary Working Group (TBWG) helps develop accountability with the tribes. BOGS briefed TBWG about plans for the Land Area Representation (LAR) dataset in January 2022, to obtain tribal feedback for the LAR and on the working group in general. BOGS is developing a plan for consultation on the LAR which would allow tribes to have much more involvement and feedback on products BOGS produces.

Uintah & Ouray Litigation Mapping Project

BOGS is managing the Uintah & Ouray (U&O) litigation mapping project. This has been a longstanding six (6) year project of collaboration with the Solicitor to identify and add patents effecting the litigation to the current map. The Branch published an interactive map called the *Restored Reserved Mineral Patents application* which integrates previous mapped information plus the newly discovered patents. This will result in a map that will significantly benefit the tribe and solicitors.

Migration to Amazon Web Services (AWS)

BOGS began planning for a contract negotiation to migrate to the Amazon Web Services (an on-demand cloud computing platform and web services) almost two years ago. This transition is moving forward and will be key to BIA's GIS program and development going forward. (April 2022 – Began initial migration, June 2022 – Move users over to AWS, August 2022 – propose full production in BOGS).

BOGS recently started creating hubs for each region in AWS and turning control over to each Regional Geospatial Coordinator (RGC). The RGC can customize their own page, build GIS within their region, and interact with users as well as tribes. This is expected to have a long-lasting positive impact on GIS within the BIA as it has the potential to allow interaction with tribes for consultation purposes in the future. BOGS will be the first branch to move to AWS and will set the stage for other divisions in the future.

CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, BEST PRACTICES

System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM)

The BOGS branch chief and Help Desk worked with IT to initiate automated software updates for the Regions using SCCM. This improves the customer experience by removing the RGC as a point of contact for request for GIS software update, such as Arc Pro. SCCM moves updates to the background so each user will no longer have to submit update requests through configuration management for action. Automating this process is a time saver for RGCs and the BOGS helpdesk staff. It provides software users a much better experience as they are receiving updates directly and not waiting on the RGCs.

Growth in Training Program

BOGS increased training available to BIA GIS users, tribes, and regional staff to 36 courses, up from 24 in FY 2021. Courses allow users to enhance their GIS skills, learn mapping, and create products to benefit tribal communities. BOGS is planning to increase this training program even more in the future.

Outdated Help Desk System

The current helpdesk system is outdated. Over the last few months, BOGS worked with stakeholders and BIA Security to gather requirements and evaluate available software with these requirements.

Helpdesk Quality Assurance Project

The BOGS helpdesk staff focused on reconciliation of records over the last few months. Many records need to be updated, and data in the system verified with the RGCs. The database is now up to date.

Mapping Services

BOGS is working on creating mapping templates for the future. This will allow BOGS to have maps that are created in advance of leadership or other stakeholders' requests. BOGS has also created a standardized process for printing large maps for leadership. Creating these templates increases efficiency and consistency across the BIA for GIS maps and allows for a quick turnaround on requests.

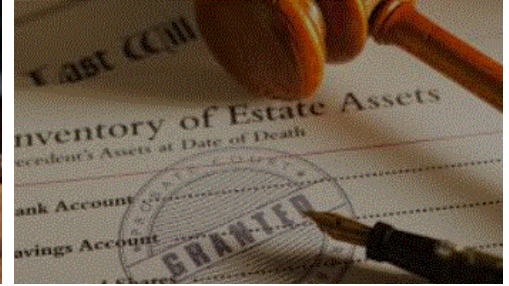
Standard Operation Procedure

BOGS is working on creating a master Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) for all processes across the Branch. This will provide each staff member access to a reference document on how all processes are done. This tool contributes to continuity of operations for the long term and reduces risk in the event of staff turnover. The SOP may also be used as a training tool as the branch grows.

Land Area Representation (LAR)

The LAR dataset is the BIA's official geospatial representation of American Indian Land areas.

BOGS is in the process of reworking and modernizing the LAR. This will involve integrating the LAR into Amazon Web Services (AWS) and allowing users to interact with the dataset and propose changes through AWS. This ability could possibly allow tribes to propose changes this way. BOGS has had a working group meeting on this process for months and is now starting to work with the regions on the actual process. The first region that BOGS has begun working with is the Midwest region. When complete, it will completely change the BIA GIS dataset available to the public, other federal agencies, and most importantly tribes.



Division of Trust Asset Ownership & Title (DTAO&T)

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

- Successfully tested major enhancements to the probate module. Conducted overview session to review the changes to the Superintendents, RDs, LTRO and probate staff.
- Timely Completed Monthly and quarterly reporting requirements to Capital Investment Team for TAAMS.
- TAAMS operations Team continues to provide information and training on the IIS replacement BSAM. BSAM is not a Trust system, but users have become reliant on the team for helpful information and assistance.
- Timely completed HISP reporting and requirements.
- Conducted two TAAMS Change Management Board meetings. Reviewed 12 Change Requests (CR's), approved 11 CR's, Placed 1 Hold for further action.
- Successfully coordinated 12 TAAMS training sessions for all disciplines across OTS.

Trust Asset and Accounting Management System (TAAMS)
TAAMS is the system of record for title and land resource management of Indian Trust and restricted land. The purpose of this system is to provide BIA and Tribal users access to trust asset data and trust asset management tools to create, modify, and maintain records relating to land ownership, contracts and leases, and beneficial owners.

System Updates and Testing

- Approved 11 change requests and submitted to the TAAMS contractor. Held one CR for further Action.
- Coordinated testing and system changes that resulted in 6 released software updates to enhance TAAMS.
- Coordinated 23 Web-Ex TAAMS training sessions and 9 in person training sessions.

Collaboration with Federal Partners

- Modified Oil and Gas distribution process by separating Ft. Berthold from the Other Oil and Gas Agencies to minimize system downtime beginning calendar year 2024. System down time minimized by 2 hours during oil and gas distribution.
- On-going collaboration with our DOI partners, Office of Natural Resources and Revenue (ONRR) to streamline data sharing.
- TAAMS operations Team continues to provide information and training on the IIS replacement BSAM. BSAM is not a Trust system, but users have become reliant on the team for helpful information and assistance to federal partners who utilize TAAMS.

DTAO&T, Branch of Probate

High Impact Service Providers (HISP) Project This BIA HISP Probate Project was newly designated in FY22 and in FY24 BIA met the requirement to submit an action plan addressing the following services:

- Accessing a Probate Order
- Receiving Trust Assets

As background, the President's Management Agenda (PMA) defines Government-wide management priorities for all Federal agencies to improve how Government operates and performs. The PMA identified BIA Probate as 1 of 35 of the nation's highest impact service providers (HISPs), due to the scale and impact of the public-facing services, to raise the standard of experience across government. This subjected the BIA Probate program to OMB Circular A-11 Section 280 activities including an annual enterprise-wide capacity assessment and action plan, focused on improvement efforts for designated services, customer feedback collections and public reporting.

Implemented a major Probate module enhancement to further streamline the probate workflow. The probate team preceded the release with a TEAMS overview session to provide the users a preview of the changes.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

- Implementing Multifactor authentication for TAAMS
- Continue to have issues awarding a contract to convert the TAAMS to a Cloud environment.

DTAO&T, Branch of Land Titles and Records

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

- GPRA Quarter 1 and 2 Reporting
- A-123 Review and preparation for reporting
- Monthly LTRO Manger Calls with updates on regional issues
- Assist LTRO Regions with questions on processing, TAAMS encoding, business rules, landowner requests/questions, recording.

Lockbox Oversight

Assist Lockbox Liaisons with check and invoice issues. Biweekly void, paid files to CGI

Monthly calls with Bureau of Trust funds Administration (BTFA) on check processing

Coordinate with the Division of Real Estate Services

Title Defect Project

Review of Title Defects on current title to determine validity or to expire.



Division of Trust Land Consolidation (DTLC)

FY2024 - The Division leads the Trust Land Consolidation (TLC) Program to build on the success of the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations (LBBP), which ended in November 2022. The TLC Program works to reverse the adverse effects of allotment by reducing fractionation through voluntary sales, in a manner that enhances Tribal sovereignty and promotes Tribal self-determination. The Program purchases interests in trust or restricted Indian land from willing individual sellers, restoring purchased interests to Tribal trust ownership. Willing sellers are paid fair market value for interests they choose to sell, and ownership is immediately transferred to the Federally recognized Tribe with jurisdiction over the land.

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

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

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

- Developed initial and long-range implementation plans for land consolidation.
- Solicited Tribal input on implementation.
- Established program policies and standard operating procedures.
- Created new TAAMS module for processing land acquisition transactions quickly, accurately, and cost-effectively.

- Coordinated with DOI partner offices and agencies on mapping needs, system interfaces, appraisals, and IIM account-related services.
- Coordinated with AVSO to provide appraisals for future implementation locations, using cost-effective mass appraisal methodology.
- Additional locations scheduled using remaining funds available and depending on FY24 funding level.
- Created and implemented new DTLC Tribal offer documents.

DTLC carried out land acquisition efforts at Umatilla. Accomplishments at this location include:

- 15 sales processed.
- 39 fractional interests acquired.
- 23,465 equivalent acres consolidated under Tribal ownership.

Ongoing efforts continue with the Eastern Shoshone Tribe and Northern Arapaho Tribe of the Wind River Reservation to obtain Tribal acquisition priorities. Wind River was chosen based on cost effectiveness. Wind River is one of the top ten most fractionated locations in the Country, and there was only one LBBP implementation at Wind River (in 2020), unlike other highly fractionated locations.

DTLC has assumed the printing, mailing, scanning and review process that has been performed by contractors since the LBBP began in 2013.

Continued collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to implement Tribally funded offers once funding and appraisals are available.

Land & Water Conservation Fund – Tribal Land Acquisition - The Nansemond Indian Nation received the remaining FY 2022 funding for the Greater Bridge Road Complex Project and the initial steps toward acquisition of the Roundtree Property. The Tribe received FY 2023 funding to cover remaining steps for acquisition of the Roundtree Property. The contracts to award funds to Nansemond have been endorsed and returned by the Nation to the Eastern Region.

[PROJECTS \(April-September 2024\)](#)

DTLC will conduct three Tribal Consultation sessions on the DTLC Strategic Plan FY 2022-2026 On July 16, July 17, and July 18, 2024, beginning from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. EST.

To complement existing Federal Indian probate provisions, the DTLC proposes a strategy designed and aimed at slowing future fractionation. The proposed strategy targets those fractional land interests that are not subject to the probate provisions. The strategy also prioritizes locations where the fractionation problem is most prevalent; as well as provides for incorporation of Tribal acquisition priorities, including but not limited to priorities relating to economic development and climate adaptation. The DTLC expects to update its strategy as needed based on lessons learned, best practices, and Tribal feedback and involvement.

It is incumbent upon the DTLC to minimize administrative costs associated with the land acquisition program, as required under the Indian Land Consolidation Act (ILCA), and this requirement necessarily informs the implementation strategy. Prioritizing locations where the fractionation problem is most prevalent enables the DTLC to reduce the overall level of fractionation in Indian Country in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The high number of fractional interests at these locations places the greatest administrative burden on the Federal government and poses the most significant land management challenges.

The DTLC proposes the following purchase strategy with maximum flexibility to accommodate the land acquisition priorities of Tribes while minimizing administrative costs:

The DTLC intends to target tracts with fractional interests equal to or greater than 5 percent of total tract ownership, as these are the interests that will continue to fractionate absent a will. Focusing on interests that are equal to or greater than 5 percent also provides a basis for the DTLC to consider smaller locations for implementation that were excluded from participation in the Buy-Back Program.

At present there are approximately 300,000 fractional ownership interests not subject to the Single Heir Rule which could be considered for acquisition by DTLC.

Current Purchase Schedule: The DTLC intends to acquire fractional interests at the following locations through early Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) as the appraisals become available. The total value of purchase offers to be extended at these locations will be determined once the appraisals are available and the Tribes have identified any Tribal acquisition priorities.

- Umatilla - Complete
- Wind River
- Pine Ridge
- Rosebud

[OPPORTUNITIES](#)

Mass Appraisals for Rosebud and Pine Ridge have been received from AVSO. Initial planning will begin for these locations.

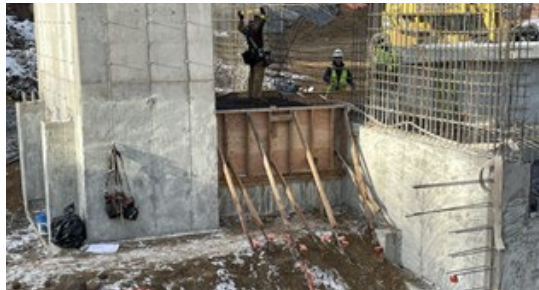
[CHALLENGES](#)

DTLC's main constraint is limited current funding and uncertain future funding. Appropriations cover both payments to willing sellers of fractional interests and administrative costs. The cost of determining fair market values is also covered by appropriations.

[BEST PRACTICES](#)

The Division adheres to best practices from the Buy-Back Program, including:

- Streamlined, standardized, and automated process and procedures for acquiring fractional land interests, specifically designed to minimize associated administrative costs.
- Efficient and cost-effective appraisal methods for obtaining timely fair market values on large numbers of properties; and
- Close coordination and collaboration with participating Tribes.



Division of Water & Power (DWP)

The Division of Water and Power (DWP) includes three branches: the Branch of Irrigation and Power, the Branch of Safety of Dams, and the Branch of Water Resources.

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

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

The Branch of Water Resources serves as the DWP Division Chief's liaison to BIA Regional Offices, local BIA agencies, and Tribal governments on issues involving water rights and negotiations, pre-development and water management, attorney fees, litigation support and water program evaluation.

Hydropower Compliance Program

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

Interagency collaboration has also been an important goal in 2024. In January Harold Peterson met with the national lead for the U.S. Forest Service's hydropower compliance in Fort Collins, discussing hydropower projects such as those on the St. Louis River in Minnesota where BIA has a mutual interest. The next day he met with the DOI Office of Environmental Compliance's Regional Environmental Scientist for their Denver Region to discuss NEPA issues such as climate change and how we can leverage the latest executive orders to further Tribal interests in the FERC relicensing process.

In addition, Harold met with staff at the National Weather Service office in Old Hickory, TN to discuss how climate change is expected to impact Probable Maximum Flooding on reservoirs upstream of dams. He has an inquiry for a similar meeting with the Tennessee Valley Authority and is awaiting a response.

OPPORTUNITIES

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

CHALLENGES

A challenge is created by a lack of additional funding to add additional BIA staff as well as additional Tribal funding to participate in hydropower relicensing activities and post-license compliance monitoring. Currently the program has one Central Office employee, one Northwest Region employee funded at 100%, and one Eastern Region employee funded at 60%. The program is working to partially alleviate the staffing shortage through an application for a Pathways intern in the summer of 2024. The intern's primary task would be to read docket notices from FERC to determine which are of highest priority for BIA's mission.



Grand Lake of the Cherokees taken from the Grand River Dam Authority's Ecosystems and Education Center next to Pensacola Dam

BEST PRACTICES

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

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

Water Resources Projects

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

FY2024 Water Resources Ranking Team

The Branch conducted the FY 2024 Ranking Team Meeting via Teams. Ranking Team members included staff from various Regions, as well as a team member from the Secretary's Indian Water Rights office (SIWRO) and the Central office Solicitor's office. The Tribes and Regions submitted projects for the Water Management Planning & Pre-Development program and Projects for the Water Rights Negotiation/Litigation program. These water resources projects were ranked and scored for funding distribution.

FY2024 Regional Administrative Cost

The Branch compiled and summarized administrative costs for all water resources regional staff for FY 2024. Administrative Costs Funds allows regional staff to oversee Water Management Planning & Pre-Development projects, Water Rights Settlements and litigation projects, Water Rights Contracts, and Department of Justice Agreements. Funding Also allows regional staff to participate on the Secretary's Indian Water Rights settlement and implementation Teams and allows the Regions to provide technical assistance to tribes for all facets of work involving trust water resources.

FY2024 A-123 Reviews

The Branch has completed A-123 reviews via Webex for the Midwest, Eastern Oklahoma and Southern Plains Regions that included Central Office Branch Staff, Regional Water Program Staff and Tribal Water Program Staff. In addition to interviews with Regional Water Program Staff, discussions were held with Regional Administration to gain the Region's perspective on tribal water needs as well as viewing various projects being implemented by the Tribes for management of reservation water resources. Interviews and project presentations were completed with Tribal Water Staff and discussions included recommended improvements and suggestions to be made to the Water program that would better aide and serve Tribal Water Programs. Eastern Region A-123 Review is scheduled for March 26, 2024.

FY2024 Attorney Fees/Litigation Ranking Team

The Branch is continuing the Attorney Fee/Litigation program. Requests for the Attorney Fee/ Litigations Program proposals have been submitted to the Tribes and were received on March 15, 2024.

A ranking team has been set up which will include a staff member from the Solicitor's, BIA, and Assistant Secretary's office. The Team is currently reviewing submitted proposals from the Tribes and anticipates submitting recommendations for funding to the Assistant Secretary's office by the end of May 2024.

The Navajo Gallup Water Supply project and the Navajo Nation is continuing to perform implementation activities for BIA's portion of the settlement that is planned to be completed in 2024 and appears to be on schedule. Final Funding for this Settlement has been allocated to the Navajo Region with FY-2019 funding allocations.

PROJECTS (APRIL-OCTOBER 2024)

Indian Land& Water Settlement Payments

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes' (CSKT) Water Rights Compact:

- FY24 Mandatory Funding Payment (\$90M): FY24 funding allocations for one Indian Land& Water Settlement Claims has been distributed for yearly funding.
- Discretionary Funding Payment – FY23 Construction Indexing Costs (\$18.8M): Construction indexing has been completed for the FY23 Mandatory payment of \$90M for a total of \$18.8M. Branch Staff is currently working on procedures to fund these settlements with various staff within in the Department.
- Discretionary Funding Payment – FY24 Construction Indexing Costs: Branch Staff is currently working on developing construction index costs with the various staff from the Settlement Team, Northwest Region and within the Department. Once CI costs have been finalized, the process to initiate payment will commence.

OPPORTUNITIES

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

The Branch of Water Resources began to plan for its annual water resources workshop anticipated to be held in August 2024. Sites being reviewed include Seattle, Washington, Southern California, and Eastern Oklahoma. Attendees will include Water Resources staff from various BIA Regional offices, Bureau of Reclamation, USGS, Secretary's Indian Water Rights office, Solicitor's Office (SIWRO), Conservation Legacy and selected tribes within the regional area. The main topic for this year's workshop will discuss implementation procedures for Indian Water Rights Settlements, as well as discussion for improvement of the water resources programs. This workshop allows for staff collaboration and partnerships involving water resources projects throughout the country on behalf of Tribes. The Branch is currently seeking partnerships within the Department of Interior for this event.

BEST PRACTICES

The Branch has re-established the Water Resources Technician training program and is currently working with a non-profit organization that performs the AmeriCorps program for student interns. Seventeen students have been selected to intern into the water science careers through various placements across the country.

DWP, Branch of Irrigation and Power



Jocko K Diversion and Fish Screen at Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP), Montana.

This is a #1 priority Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) project for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) and simultaneous improvement of FIIP's operational and safety concerns: Restores and enhances fish passage for T&E species (bull trout and west-slope cutthroat trout). For awareness: Tribes may invite DOI/BIA for ribbon cutting.



Regional Irrigation Engineer, Dan Lozar, at Jocko K Diversion and Fish Screen at Flathead Indian Irrigation Project, Montana



Portneuf Pumping Plant at Fort Hall Indian Irrigation Project, Idaho

The Branch of Irrigation and Power (BIP) is currently responsible for 117 ongoing and planned construction irrigation rehabilitation and modernization projects across 17 Indian Irrigation Projects.

[ACCOMPLISHMENTS \(October 2023-March 2024\)](#)

In fiscal year 2024 the BIP Branch funded 24 design and construction projects through Appropriations, Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law totaling \$35.3 million. Some example projects are listed below.

Northwest Region

Project Office	Activity	State
Flathead Indian Irrigation Project	Flathead Pumping Plant	MT
Fort Hall Indian Irrigation Project	Bannock Pump Station Rehabilitation Main Canal Rehabilitation Michaud Unit Deep Wells Reservation Canals & Headworks Rehab	ID
Mission Valley Power	Kerr Substation Upgrades Charlo Substation Upgrades Finley Point Substation-60kV Conversion	MT
Wapato Indian Irrigation Project	Wapato Main Diversion Rehab & Modernization Drop 1 Screening System and Pump Rehab Wapato Diversion Dam Scour Hole Emergency Repair SCADA Telemetry Irrigation Measurement Sites	WA

Rocky Mountain Region

Project Office	Activity	State
Blackfeet Indian Irrigation Project	Birch Creek Canal Rehab & Modernization Heavy Equipment Purchases	MT
Crow Indian Irrigation Project	Soap Creek Unit Canal Headgate Design	MT
Fort Belknap Indian Irrigation Project	Milk River Main Diversion Rehab & Modernization Utility Vehicle purchases	MT
Fort Peck Indian Irrigation Project	Wiota and Frazer Pumping Stations Rehab Heavy Equipment Purchases	MT
Wind River Indian Irrigation Project	Replacement of chute and 5 drop structures on Lateral 37C Heavy Equipment Purchases	WY

Western Region

Project Office	Activity	State
Colorado River Irrigation Project	Headgate Rock Dam Power Plan –Unit 2 Overhaul CRIP Sub-Lateral 73-36 Rehabilitation Headgate Rock Dam Irrigation Diversion Gates #11 & #12 Rehab	AZ
Duck Valley Indian Irrigation Project	Heavy Equipment Purchase China Diversion Dam Construction	NV
Pyramid Lake Indian Irrigation Project	Heavy Equipment Purchase Line ditch concrete repairs	NV
San Carlos Irrigation Project	Florence Copper Project Mammoth 2 Distribution System Coolidge Dam slide gate repairs	AZ
Uintah Indian Irrigation Project	Lower Bench Canal Reb & Modernization	UT
Walker River Indian Irrigation Project	Canal 1 Rehabilitation & Modernization Heavy Equipment Purchases	NV

Southwest Region

Project Office	Activity	State
Pine River Indian Irrigation Project	Heavy Equipment Purchases	CO

Navajo Region

Project Office	Activity	State
Navajo Indian Irrigation project	Block 9 Improvements and Design Armenta and Horn Siphon Repair Cleaning/Maintenance on 18 elevated water tanks Kutz Pumping Plan Transformer Replacement Amarillo Canal Gate Actuator Replacement	NM

PROJECTS (April - October 2024)

Going forward, over the next five years, BIP is planning on funding over \$150 million for irrigation and power utility design and construction projects.

FY 2025 Proposed Design and Construction Projects

The high-profile projects currently being considered for FY 2025 funding include, but are not limited to:

Project Office	Activity	State
Colorado River Agency	Headgate Rock Dam Power Plan-Industrial Control System Upgrade	
Mission Valley Power	Finley Point Substation – 69kV Conversion Ronan West Substation Upgrades	
Navajo Indian Irrigation	Siphon Repair (Horn Canyon, West Kutz)	AZ
Fort Belknap Irrigation	Milk River Diversion Rehab and Modernization	
Fort Hall Indian Irrigation	Bannock Pump Station Rehab Reservation Canal Headworks Rehab	
Pine River Indian Irrigation	Repair Dr. Morrison Canal over Ignacio Creek	
San Carlos Irrigation	Mammoth Distribution Substation Upgrades Oracle Distribution Substation Upgrades	
Uintah Indian Irrigation	Grey Mountain Canal Flume and Canal Lining	
Walker River Indian Irrigation	Canal 1 Rehab	
Wapato Irrigation	Drop 1 Screening System and Pump Rehab Lateral 3 Headworks and Check Structures Wapato Diversion Dam	
Wind River Indian Irrigation	“A” Canal Unit Improvements	

Irrigation Operations and Maintenance Funding

The Irrigation Operations and Maintenance program funds mandatory payments (payments required by court orders, legislated requirements or other agreements between BIA and Bureau of Reclamation) made by BIA on behalf of the Tribes for irrigation operations and maintenance (O&M) and irrigation water storage. These costs have increased over time primarily due to price increases of labor and materials. This program allows the irrigation program to execute the President's priority to both support Tribal Nations as they address the climate crisis and implement climate adaptation actions for IA to continue the services provided by Indian Irrigation Projects. Funds address O&M needs, with consideration given to Tribal input on methods to improve the O&M process. In addition, provides funding to support replacement of the National Irrigation Information Management System (NIIMS), BIA's irrigation billing, collection, and rate setting software.

National Irrigation Information Management System (NIIMS)

Activities for the modernization of NIIMS continue. The replacement system is expected to Go Live Fall 2024. In Phase 1, a modernized replica of NIIMS will be built so existing features are equivalent to the new system. Phase 2 provides future, optional enhancements beyond the initial contract and are contingent on funding. Funding for Phase 1 includes congressional appropriations of \$1M in the 2023 Omnibus budget and remaining funds provided by Office of Trust Services.

This is the second year of utilizing U.S. Department of the Treasury's Lockbox for processing irrigation O&M paper payments for all 16 revenue-generating irrigation projects. BIA NIIMS partnered with the U.S. Department of the Treasury in a pilot project for scanning all referred delinquent O&M debts for bankruptcy filings. The pilot project began July 2022, and did not find any verifiable bankruptcies for irrigation customers; the program ended Sept 30, 2023.

Decision Support Tool

Division of Water and Power's Decision Support Tool is developing a network trace component to calculate water and power usage throughout the distribution networks. GIS representations of NIIMS records is a priority task that is in progress. Work continues to increase the functionality of the Decision Support Tool to visually illustrate data compiled from numerous systems: GIS, financial, asset management, as well as documents and photos stored on BIA servers.

NIIMS Metrics (thru February 2024)

- 5,000 annual irrigation O&M, construction, and supplemental bills printed and mailed.
- ~ \$8.5M annual irrigation O&M revenue collected.
- ~ 300 total customer payments
- ~ 125 electronic payments processed.
- ~ 42% of total payments paid via electronic method.
- ~ 1,200 delinquent receivables referred to U.S. Treasury
- ~ \$561,000 from customers paid to U.S. Treasury for delinquent irrigation O&M debt.

Policy, Oversight and Technical Assistance Activities

BIP staff completed all Indian Affairs' FY2023 A-123 Control Review Integrated Risk Register and Control Matrices for four program assessable units, including Power Finance, Power Operations, Irrigation Finance, and Irrigation Operations.

A-123 Program Reviews for FY24:

- Blackfeet Indian Irrigation Project (November 2023)
- Wind River Indian Irrigation Project (March 2024)
- Fort Peck Indian Irrigation Project (April 2024)

A-123 Program Review Self-Assessments for FY24:

- Crow Indian Irrigation Project
- Pine River Indian Irrigation Project
- Fort Hall Indian Irrigation Project

BIP staff coordinated with the Office of the Solicitor and Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action staff on drafting and publishing Federal Register Notices for the Final Irrigation O&M Rate Adjustments for calendar year 2024; and Notice of Proposed 2025 Irrigation O&M Rate Adjustment for calendar year 2025.

BIA staff also oversaw the completion of the 'BIA Condition Assessment 2023 Update Summary Report, November 2023'. This assessment was performed under an AE Task Order for the full review and update of the previous Condition Assessment report from 2016. Scope included (1) a review and update of previous assumptions and methods, (2) a comprehensive update of unit cost data, and (3) updates to the condition assessment data to reflect recently completed construction projects and MAXIMO work orders. These updates bring BIA's estimates of deferred maintenance and current replacement value to current (2023) dollars while also addressing a variety of factors believed to contribute to the observed difference between expected and actual costs.

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities for Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Modernization

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

Opportunities for Geographic Information System (GIS) and Database Integration

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

CHALLENGES

Construction Cost Escalation

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

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

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

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

NIIMS: Replacement of the legacy NIIMS application allows for enhanced security features and additional functionality. In 2024, BIA implemented multifactor authentication (MFA) logon requirements for its information technology systems. The legacy NIIMS software does not have the capability to utilize this security function. Modernizing NIIMS to a cloud-based environment will satisfy the MFA security requirement. However, development of additional non-security functions is contingent on funding. The timing of replacement activities is aligned with BIA irrigation project billing lifecycles, and staff are working to minimize interruptions to the irrigation projects' daily operations. BIA is actively engaging all invested program areas including irrigation project, agency, and regional staff; Acquisitions; Office of Information Management and Technology; and the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

Recruiting Challenges, Staffing Shortages and Aging Infrastructure

BIA has numerous vacancies in its organization, including a severe staffing shortage in the Branch of Irrigation and Power. It has been difficult to accomplish the program mission, including the added infrastructure rehabilitation workload, given the increased funding and associated accomplishment expectations with our limited staff. Regardless, aging infrastructure and escalating capital costs for construction to overcome the deferred maintenance backlog for both irrigation projects and power utilities remain BIA's biggest area of concern.

BEST PRACTICES

BIA-Branch of Irrigation and Power hosted the 2024 National Irrigation Meeting in February 2024 at Cal Poly's Irrigation Training and Research Center (ITRC). The meeting brought BIA staff across the irrigation program together, in person and remotely, to program policy, accomplishments, challenges and key issues affecting the program. In-person attendees also received a tour of ITRC's facilities and a short-course in water measurement.

BIP has developed and distributed the BIA Irrigation Safety Guide in 2023 to assist irrigation field staff in maintaining a safe work environment. The Irrigation Safety Guide focuses on irrigation-related matters (e.g., pulling flashboards, operating canal gates and chemical exposure). DWP and BIP's goal is for Field Operations, especially irrigation project staff, to improve overall safety culture and reduce employee and public risk to the greatest extent possible given the nature of work in the irrigation business.

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

GIS, NIIMS, and Maximo teams have begun efforts to standardize data between systems to increase efficiency and the ability to maintain and provide data that is current and accurate. GIS representation of NIIMS parcels is being created and will be used to help support and tie into a Digital Water Ticketing System using utility trace functionality.

Wapato Diversion Dam Scour Hole Emergency Repair

The Wapato Diversion Dam and Headworks is the main irrigation facility for the Wapato Irrigation Project that serves approximately 132,000 acres on the Yakama Nation located in central Washington. Bureau of Indian Affairs is currently working on a major modernization and rehabilitation effort to the headworks which included a construction project at the Wapato Main Canal Diversion Dam in the Yakima River. The construction project has two main objectives: partially rehabilitate the Wapato Main Canal Headworks infrastructure and assess the existing conditions around the east and west diversion dams to inform future rehabilitation design efforts.

On November 6, 2023, after the removal of water downstream of the West Diversion Dam and Fish Ladder, a major scour hole at the toe of the dam and underneath the Fish Ladder structure was exposed. The scour hole created an emergency hazard for both the BIA Diversion Dam and the Fish Ladder owned by Bureau of Reclamation. A rapid response was mandatory to avert a catastrophic failure of these facilities. Approximately 1600 cubic yards of concrete was placed. From time of discovery, evaluation of alternatives, design, contract modification, environmental permitting, and final repair, took 15 days. BIA Division of Water and Power led the joint team effort between BIA, Yakima Nation, and BOR. BOR provided \$1M in funding. Total cost of the repair was \$2.1 million.





More information on Wapato Scour

The condition assessment activities required placement of a temporary cofferdam upstream of the west diversion dam in the west branch of the Yakima River. The cofferdam allowed river upstream and downstream of the west diversion dam to be un-watered for the first time since the Reclamation fish ladder was constructed in the mid-1980's.

On approximately November 6, 2023, after the removal of water downstream of the west diversion dam and fish ladder, a major scour hole at the toe of the dam and underneath the fish ladder structure was exposed. The scour hole created an emergency hazard for both the BIA diversion dam and the Reclamation fish ladder. A rapid response was mandatory to avert a catastrophic failure of these facilities. The photos below are representative of the conditions found downstream of the west diversion dam and the fish ladder:



The footprint of the impacted area was from the headworks sluiceway wall to the east side of the fish ladder and from the west diversion dam to a point approximately downstream 100-ft.

BIA managed the scour hole emergency remediation since the BIA already had a contractor on-site conducting the rehabilitation and condition assessment work at the headworks and the diversion dam. A design team consisting of BIA, DOWL (BIA design consultant), Reclamation, Yakama Nation, and other relevant stakeholders developed a remediation plan for the scour hole. The remediation plan needed to be developed quickly so the prescribed work can be completed by BIA's contractor in advance of the forthcoming hydrologic increases in the Yakima River expected to occur at the end of November 2023.

The design team on the environmental permitting and consultation aspects of the scour hole emergency remediation to ensure they were adequately addressed.

The total cost for the scour hole emergency remediation was estimated to be between \$1M and \$5M. The estimated costs included: design development by BIA, construction management/oversight by BIA, construction, and contingencies unknown at this time. Since the affected facilities are owned by both the BIA (diversion dam) and Reclamation (fish ladder), the remediation costs will be equitably shared between the two DOI bureaus.

DWP, Branch of Safety of Dams

The Safety of Dams Program is currently responsible for the safety of 141 high-hazard potential dams on 42 Reservations. Annual funding provides for dam rehabilitation projects, maintenance, and program activities.

General Safety of Dams Program Accomplishments:

- Disbursed Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding in support of all 141 high-hazard dams on 42 Reservations.
- Solicited, received, and reviewed firm qualifications for renewal of the Safety of Dams (SOD) Program Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract for Architectural and Engineering (A/E) support.

Completed a secondary screening of the 968 Prospective SOD Program dams, reported by Tribes, that have a population downstream that could potentially be harmed in the event the dam failed.

- Of the 968 Prospective SOD Program dams, 99 screened as likely high-hazard potential, 270 screened as likely significant-hazard potential, and 599 screened as likely low-hazard potential.

- These screened hazard potential classifications will assist in prioritizing the order the dams will receive a hazard classification study.

Significantly advanced an update to the SOD Handbook. The draft is under review by the Solicitor's Office.

Completed rehabilitation projects and returned the following dams to service after years of limited operations or fully restricted reservoirs:

- Charley Day Dam, Navajo Nation, AZ
- Crow Dam, Flathead Reservation, MT
- To'hajiilee Dam, Navajo Nation, NM.

Staff/stakeholder communication

- Continued periodic meetings across SOD Program areas and with Regional SOD Officers.
- Held 2 EWS Working Group meetings, which have improved communications, increased transparency, and provided additional opportunities for input from Tribes, BIA Regions, and BIA Agencies.



Oglala Dam Groundbreaking, March 2024



To'hajiilee Dam Spillway, August 2023

Training

- Continued holding virtual Dam Tender Training every other month on various dam safety topics.
- Organized and conducted one 3-day in-person EWS and Dam Tender Training in the Northwest Region in October and will be conducting another training for the Southwest Region in early April.
- Started working with the Bureau of Reclamation to create dam tender trainings specific to non-Reclamation dams in the Department of the Interior. The first training is expected to take place in October 2024.

New program tools

- Implemented Smartsheet project management software, resulting in improved management of routine and non-routine dam safety projects.
- Created a dam inventory viewer tool in a GIS application, which allows staff to easily locate any dam in the inventory, view the database fields for the dam, and provides a link to final reports.

Design and Construction:

- Awarded the Oglala Dam Remediation Project on the Pine Ridge Reservation in SD. Included \$58M in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding.
- Completed design of the Menager's Dam Remediation project on the Tohono O'odham Nation, NM.

Initiated or advanced 16 dam rehabilitation design projects:

Reservation	Dam	State
Choctaw	Lake Pushmataha Dam	MS
Colville	Owhi Dam	WA
Crow	Willow Creek Dam	MT
Fort Apache	A-1 Dam Bootleg Dam Christmas Tree Dam Cooley Dam Davis Dam	AZ
Menominee	Neopit Dam	WI
Pine Ridge	Allen Dam White Clay Dam	SD
Red Lake Nation	Kiwosay Dam	MN
Rosebud	Antelope Dam Ghost Hawk Dam	SD
Rocky Boy's	Bonneau Dam	MT
San Carlos	Tufa Stone Dam	AZ

Early Warning System (EWS):

- Completed 2023 annual maintenance and initiated 2024 annual maintenance for 256 EWS sites at and near BIA Program dams.
- Awarded 1 EWS Task Order totaling \$303,962.
- Awarded Phase 2 of the EWS Site Infrastructure Improvements task order (\$473,687) under the A/E IDIQ contract.
- Continued progress toward a new EWS support contract.
- Continued progress toward obtaining an Authority to Operate the EWS website, including a third-party security assessment, creation of a Plan of Actions and Milestones in XACTA (the system of record), and initiation of activities to resolve identified deficiencies.

- Published 1 EWS Newsletter with articles about spring maintenance, staff highlights, and dam safety training opportunities.
- Updated the EWS website to improve overall usability and mobile user experience.
- Updated over 3,000 system alerts to improve clarity of messages and simplify maintenance of alerts in the future.

Completed onsite repairs and maintenance of EWS sites at the following locations:

- Choctaw Indian Reservation, MS
- Flathead Indian Reservation, MT
- Navajo Nation, AZ, and NM
- Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, SD
- Rosebud Indian Reservation, SD
- San Carlos Indian Reservation, AZ.

Emergency Management and Security:

Completed Emergency Action Plan Tabletop Exercises for 14 dams:

Reservation	Dam	State
Spirit Lake	BIA 4 North Dam BIA 4 South Dam 5 Dam Jetty 1 Dam Jetty 2 Dam Kurtz Dam Spring Lake Dam Michael 1 Dam Michael 2 Dam Michael 3 Dam	ND
Cow Creek	Dam No. 1 IWR Main and Auxiliary Dam No. 1	OR
Walker River	Weber Dam	NV
Choctaw	Standing Pine Dam	MS

Completed Emergency Action Plan Functional Exercises for 6 dams:

Reservation	Dam	State
Umatilla	Indian Lake Dam	OR
Tohono O'odham	Menager's Dam Tat Momolikot Dam	AZ
Pueblo of Laguna	Paguete Dam	NM
Standing Rock	Prairie No. 1 Dam No. 1 Dam	SD

Planned Emergency Action Plan Exercises for 36 dams:

Reservation	Dam	State
Duck Valley	Wildhorse Dam	NV
San Felipe	San Francisco Dam Water Tank Dam	NM
San Carlos	Dry Lake Dam Elgo Dam Point of Pines Dam Tufa Stone Dam Upper Point of Pines Dam	AZ
Mescalero	Eagle Creek No. 1 Dam Lake Mescalero Dam Silver Lake Dam	NM
Rosebud	Antelope Dam Ghost Haw Dam He Hog Dam Indian Scout Dam Parmalee Dam Ponca Dam Ring Thunder Dam Rosebud Dam South Okreek Dam Sully 2 Dam	SD
Fort Apache	A-1 Dam Bog Tank Dam Bootleg Dam Christmas Tree Dam Cooley Dam Cyclone dam Davis Dam Drift Fence Dam Earl Park Dam Horseshoe Cienega Dam Pacheta Dam Reservation Dam Shush Be Tou Dam Shush Be Zahze Dam Sunrise Dam	AZ

Awarded an Emergency Action Plan 638 Self-Determination contract to the White Mountain Apache Tribe for \$0.4M.

Flood Hydrology:

Completed 2 Hydrologic Hazard Studies

Reservation	Dam	State
Fort Apache	A-1 Dam	AZ
San Carlos	Coolidge Dam	AZ

Started 17 Hydrologic Hazard Studies:

Reservation	Dam	State
Crow Creek	Ambrose Dam	SD
Duck Valley	Wildhorse Dam	NV
Flathead	Black Lake Dam Jocko Dam Mission Dam Tabor Dam	MT
Fort Apache	Bootleg Dam Cooley Dam	AZ
Fort Hall	Blackfoot Dam	ID
Mescalero Apache	Lake Mescalero Dam	NM
Pine Ridge	Kyle Dam	SD
Pueblo of Laguna	Paguata Dam	NM
Rosebud	Rosebud Dam	SD
San Carlos	Dry Lake Dam Point of Pines Dam Upper Point of Pines Dam	AZ
Standing Rock Sioux	Prairie No. 1 Dam	ND

Started 19 Dam Failure Inundation Studies:

Reservation	Dam	State
Crow Creek	Ambrose Dam	SD
Duck Valley	Wildhorse Dam	NV
Flathead	Black Lake Dam Jocko Dam Mission Dam Tabor Dam	MT
Fort Apache	Bootleg Dam Cooley Dam	AZ
Fort Hall	Blackfoot Dam	ID
Laguna Pueblo	Paguata Dam	NM
Mescalero Apache	Eagle Creek No. 1 Dam Lake Mescalero Dam	NM
Pine Ridge	Kyle Dam	SD
Rosebud	Rosebud Dam	SD
San Carlos	Coolidge Dam Dry Lake Dam Point of Pines Dam Upper Point of Pines Dam	AZ
Standing Rock Sioux	Prairie No. 1 Dam	ND

Completed 7 Dam Failure Consequence Analyses:

Reservation	Dam	State
Fort Apache	A-1 Dam	AZ
Navajo Nation	Charley Day Spring Dam	AZ
Navajo Nation	Captain Tom Dam Window Rock Dam	NM
Standing Rock	No. 1 Dam	SD
Uintah & Ouray	Bottle Hollow Dam Midview Dam	UT

Started 21 Dam Failure Consequence Analyses:

Reservation	Dam	State
Duck Valley	Wildhorse Dam	NV
Flathead	Black Lake Dam Jocko Dam Mission Dam Pablo Dam Tabor Dam	MT
Fort Apache	Bootleg Dam Cooley Dam Horseshoe Cienega Dam	AZ
Fort Hall	Blackfoot Dam	ID
Laguna Pueblo	Paguate Dam	NM
Mescalero Apache	Lake Mescalero Dam	NM
Navajo Nation	Ganado Dam	AZ
Navajo Nation	Todacheene Dam To'hajiilee Dam	NM
Pine Ridge	Kyle Dam	SD
Rosebud	Rosebud Dam	SD
San Carlos	Coolidge Dam Dry Lake Dam Point of Pines Dam Upper Point of Pines Dam	AZ

- Completed 1 Site-Specific Extreme Precipitation (Probable Maximum Precipitation) Study for 1 dam - Coolidge Dam, San Carlos Reservation, AZ.
- Started 1 Site-Specific Extreme Precipitation (Probable Maximum Precipitation) Study - Bonneau Dam, Rocky Boy's Reservation, MT.

Formal Dam Evaluations:

Completed Comprehensive Review reports for 4 dams:

Reservation	Dam	State
Colorado River	Headgate Dam	AZ
Flathead	Crow Dam	MT
Navajo Nation	Blue Canyon Dam Charley Day School Dam	AZ

Started 40 Comprehensive Reviews (40 dams):

Reservation	Dam	State
Choctaw	Standing Pine Dam	MS
Duck Valley	Wildhorse Dam	NV
Flathead	Mission Dam Pablo Dam	MT
Fort Apache	A-1 Dam Bootleg Dam Cooley Dam Horseshoe Cienega Dam	AZ
Fort Hall	Blackfoot Dam	ID
Jicarilla Apache	Grady Hamilton Dam Lower Mundo Dam	NM
Laguna Pueblo	Paguete Dam	NM
Mescalero Apache	Lake Mescalero Dam Todacheene Dam To'hajiilee Dam	NM
Navajo Nation	Ganado Dam Round Rock Dam Window Rock	AZ
Navajo Nation	Captain Tom Dam	NM
Pine Ridge	Kyle Dam	SD
Rosebud	Parmalee Dam Ponca Dam Rosebud Dam	SD
San Carlos	Coolidge Dam Dry Lake Dam Point of Pines Dam Upper Point of Pines Dam	AZ
San Felipe Pueblo	San Francisco Dam	NM
Southern Ute	Lake Capote Dam	CO
Spirit Lake	BIA Route 4 & 5 Dam Jetty Dam St. Michael Dam Spirit Lake Dam Spring Lake Dam Kurtz Dam	ND
Standing Rock	Prairie No. 1 Dam Standing Rock No. 1 Dam	SD
Uintah & Ouray	Bottle Hollow Dam Midview Dam	UT
Walker River	Weber Dam	NV
Wind River	Ray Lake Dam	WY
Zuni	Black Rock Dam Trapped Rock Dam	NM

Completed 8 Periodic Review Reports for 8 dams:

Reservation	Dam	State
Cow Creek	IWR Dam No. 1 Dam	OR
Navajo Nation	Many Farms Dam	AZ
Navajo Nation	Cutter Dam	NM
Rocky Boy's	Bonneau Dam East Fork Dam	MT
Tesuque Pueblo	Tesuque Day School Dam	NM
Zuni	Pescado Dam	NM

Started 11 Periodic Review Reports:

Reservation	Dam	State
Annette Islands Reserve	Chester Lake Dam	AK
Flathead	McDonald Dam	MT
Jicarilla Apache	Stone Lake Dam	NM
Navajo Nation	Tsaile Dam Wheatfields Dam	AZ
Navajo Nation	Red Lake Dam	NM
Pine Ridge	White Clay Dam	SD
Tohono O'odham	Tat Momolikot Dam	AZ
Turtle Mountain	Belcourt Dam Gordon Dam	ND
Wind River	Washakie Dam	WY

Hazard Classification Studies:

Completed the following 7 Hazard Potential Classification studies:

Reservation	Dam	State
Navajo Nation	Kin Bineola Dam	NM
Red Lake	Kiwosay Dam	MN
Sandia Pueblo	83-A Dam 82-1 Dam 82-2 Dam 82-3 Dam 82-4 Dam	NM

Started 26 hazard classification studies:

Reservation	Dam	State
Annette Islands Reserve	Chester lake Dam	AK
Fort Belknap	3 Mile Storage Weigand Reservoir	MT
Jicarilla Apache	Pappaws Dam	NM
Mescalero Apache	Eagle Creek No. 1 Dam	NM
Mohegan	Tantaquidgeon Dam	CT
Navajo Nation	Flat Rock Reservoir Lukachukai North Dam NAV-001-931D NAV-002-333D NAV-002-424D NAV-002-441D NAV-005-728U NAV-005-798U	AZ
Navajo Nation	Chuska Lake Dam Juan Lake Dam	NM
Pueblo of Laguna	Mesita Dam	NM
Pueblo of Zuni	Eustace Dam Nutria No. 2 Dam Nutria No. 3 Dam Nutria No. 4 Dam	NM
Rocky Boy's	New Brown's Dam	MT
Rosebud	Corn Creek Dam Ring Thunder Dam	SD
Wind River	Goose Pond Dam	WY

Inventory dam screening.

- Of the 968 Prospective SOD Program dams, 99 might be high-hazard potential, 270 might be significant-hazard potential, and 599 might be low-hazard potential.
- Hazard potential classification studies are required to accurately determine the hazard potential classification for the majority of these structures.

GIS Support Projects and Mapping:

Completed 20 structures analysis screenings to support consequence analysis:

Reservation	Dam	State
Choctaw	Standing Pine Dam	MS
Cow Creek	Cow Creek Dam	OR
Flathead	Black Lake Dam Mission Dam Pablo Dam	MT
Fort Hall	Blackfoot Dam	ID
Laguna Pueblo	Paguete Dam	NM
Mescalero	Lake Mescalero Dam	NM
Navajo Nation	Ganado Dam Todacheene Dam To'hajiilee Dam	AZ
Rosebud	Parmelee Dam Ponca Dam Rosebud Dam	SD
San Felipe	San Francisco Dam	NM
Spirit Lake	Spirit Lake Dam	ND
Standing Rock	Prairie No. 1	SD
Wind River	Ray Lake Dam	WY
Zuni Pueblo	Black Rock Dam Trapped Rock Dam	NM

- Completed 1 Hydrologic Hazard Study - Ambrose Dam, Crow Creek Indian Reservation, SD.
- Completed 2 Dam Failure Inundation Studies - Wildhorse Dam, Duck Valley Indian Reservation, NV and Eagle Creek No. 1 Dam, Mescalero Indian Reservation, NM.
- Completed 1 Consequences Memo - Oglala Dam, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, SD.

Completed 10 inundation mapping and/or map reviews to support Emergency Action Plans:

Reservation	Dam	State
San Carlos	Dry Lake Dam Elgo Dam Point of Pines Dam Tufa Stone Dam Upper Point Pines Dam	AZ
Standing Rock	Prairie No. 1 Standing Rock No. 1 Dam	SD
Tohono O'odham	Menager's Dam Tat Momolikot Dam	AZ
Walker River	Weber Dam	NV

Started 15 Emergency Action Plan mapping projects:

Reservation	Dam	State
Duck Valley	Wildhorse Dam	NV
Mescalero	Eagle Creek No. 1 Dam Lake Mescalero Dam Silver Lake Dam	NM
Rosebud	Antelope Dam Ghost Hawk Dam He Dog Dam Indian Scout Dam Parmelee Dam Ponca Dam Ring Thunder Dam Rosebud Dam South Okreek Dam Sully 2 Dam	SD
Tesuque	Tesuque Dam	NM

Other GIS support by program area:

Safety of Dams Program

- Created process/template for verifying Indian Land status that uses GIS and TAAMS.
- Added new features to SOD Dam Inventory Viewer (export data functionality, elevation profile, print, add new data, and new search queries).
- Created the SOD Data Download Page on Production Portal for users to quickly download data.
- Prepared workflows for resource metric forecasting and Paid Time Off spreadsheet.
- Implemented Smartsheet resource metric forecasting for all program areas.
- Researched vendors for archived and tasked imagery for asset monitoring.

Met with IIPP team leads about potential partnership with BIA EWS

- Completed EWS security assessment for ATO.
- Created terrain data materials for datum investigation for dams on the White Mountain Apache Tribe.
- Created POAMs for failed security controls.

CHALLENGES

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

The SOD Program estimates that approximately \$1.5B is required to address all known life safety deficiencies at the high-hazard potential dams it administers that do not meet federal guidelines. In addition to the \$1.5B in known deficiencies, an unknown—but not insignificant—need likely exists for hidden life safety deficiencies that are impractical or impossible to be detected with existing methods, and for operational deficiencies that exist but do not pose a life safety threat.

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

Beyond the financial resources necessary to address these issues, the Program faces difficulties in obtaining and retaining adequate human resources. The Program has awarded a technical services contract to assist, but inherently federal duties remain that bottleneck the execution the program.

Two separate external audits of the Program have identified that insufficient federal personnel staffing levels pose a significant risk to the Program's success.

A significant recruiting and retention challenge the Program faces is that the BIA does not participate in special salary rates used by other agencies for engineers performing similar duties. In addition, the BIA Regional and Agency Offices have difficulty recruiting and keeping qualified and trained Dam Tenders and other related dam safety staff. Attracting and maintaining a qualified federal staff remains the Program's most significant challenge.

OPPORTUNITIES

The additional funding provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will afford the opportunity to accelerate the completion of dam rehabilitation projects.

BEST PRACTICES

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



Division of Wildland Fire Management (DWFM)

Over the first six months of fiscal year 2024, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Division of Wildland Fire Management has accomplished several goals as part of the national interagency fire community.

As of March 5, 2024, 33 standard position descriptions and four fire management officer templates have been issued by the 456 interagency standard position description group in conjunction with the Department of Interior Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM). BIA wildland fire management subject matter experts have been instrumental in the series' development process. On February 24, BIA OHCM posted the first JOA in the new GS-456 Wildland Fire Management series, marking a milestone in workforce development for the Division of Wildland Fire Management.

October 2023 – March 2023, the Division has filled the following positions: budget analyst (2), assistant budget director, financial specialist, federal workforce development program training specialist, Tribal mental health and wellbeing program manager, national mental health and wellbeing program manager and administrative assistant (2) positions. The Division has also completed one temporary promotion assignment for the assistant fire director position.

The Division, in coordination with the Southwest Regional Office, hosted the annual National Fire Leadership Team in-person meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, January 30-February 1, 2024. The meeting was well represented with BIA leadership from field operations and the Division, deputy regional directors, Office of Trust Services, and the OHCM.

Fuels Management

American Indian Science and Engineering Society National Conference

In October 2023, the Division attended the 2023 American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) National Conference as an exhibitor. The purpose of attendance being to recruit for wildland fire management positions that have science and math emphases. Fuels Management collaborators (Los Alamos Lab, New Mexico Consortium and Northwest Management Inc.) presented on new technologies used to assist the BIA and other agencies with wildland fire management planning and implementation tools. Technologies exhibited included aerial light detection and ranging (LiDAR), terrestrial laser scanning, Fast Fuels which converts LiDAR signals into three dimensional representations, surface fuels model derived from Fast Fuels and QUIK-Fire, a new fluid dynamics-based fire behavior model. Over 300 students and professionals stopped by the BIA's wildland fire management exhibit booths to learn more about our work and future career opportunities.

Fire Reporting

During the first week in February of 2024, Fuels conducted initial training for converting from the National Fire plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS) to the new Interior Fuels & Post Fire Reporting System (IFPRS). The new system replaces the 20+ year old Fuels reporting system and is a significant upgrade from NFPORS. Training was provided to regional staff who will serve as IFPRS subject matter experts and will conduct regional and field-based training. Eventually, post wildfire recovery staff will convert to using IFPRS later this year. Our deputy post-wildfire recovery coordinator participated in the training in anticipation of the conversion.

CHALLENGES

In December 2023, BIA regions completed the BIL Final Program of Work (FPOW), due to budget uncertainty we were not able to complete a FPOW for our Base Fuels program funds, that work is nearing completion.

DOI Fuels national budget was reduced by approximately \$33M, the Office of Wildland Fire has been working with all bureaus on strategies to mitigate the impacts of the reduction. Final business strategies and rules determination are still under consideration.

Prevention

From October of 2023 through March of 2024, prevention staff has provided 60 Tribes and 185 Tribal communities support through direct and indirect assistance including technical guidance and oversight to prevention programs to reduce human caused ignition, mitigating wildfire risk to communities, developing wildfire prevention plans, providing supplemental funding assistance for prevention signage and materials as requested and as budget allows.

Prevention staff continues to provide leadership and support to the Wildfire Prevention Spatial Assessment & Planning Strategies (WPSAPS) software application. This includes project development leadership, completing revisions to the training curriculum which includes Student and Instructor Guides, participating as instructors and team coaches for interagency training sessions, continual testing of upgrades and bug fixes, providing feedback on software issues and identifying future program enhancements.

Post Wildfire Recovery

Post-Wildfire Recovery (PWR) staff continues to work with Tribes on approved post wildfire recovery projects. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) necessitates updating post-wildfire reporting direction and staff are working with Tribes and BIA Regional Offices to submit accomplishment reports for completed projects. This updated policy provides consistent departmental direction on authoritative data sources and due dates for post-wildfire related planning and accomplishment reporting.

Solicitations for fiscal year 2025 of Plant Materials for Post Wildfire Rehabilitation were sent out to all regional directors and agency superintendents in March with a deadline of May 31, 2024. BIL provides \$325 million for post-wildfire restoration. The intent of BIL burned area recovery investments is to focus on landscapes that are unlikely to recover naturally from wildfire by ensuring appropriate plant materials (necessary for establishing a trajectory towards a functioning structure, composition, and diversity that are consistent with existing land management plans such as rare, native, and culturally important) are readily available when a fire occurs. The intent is to develop plant materials production that will sustain itself into the future.

Planning

In the first half of the fiscal year 2024, the planning section supported creating spatial fire management plans for the Great Plains region. This included development of a written plan and creation of spatial maps that will identify agency wildland fire suppression priorities. The spatial fire management plan process displays key information of strategic direction and operational guidance into a geospatial and graphical format.

In this plan: Critical information is more readily accessible in graphic format to users such as managers, operational staff, incident teams, cooperators, and the public. Routine updates are easier (can be updated on the maps without making any changes to the approved document) as conditions change (e.g. fuels projects are completed and/or wildfires occur). Updates can be real-time for incident specific information. Geospatially represented information can be integrated with other efforts such as the Wildland Fire Decision Support System and fire management plans.

Operations

In January 2024, National Mental Health and Wellbeing Program Manager and Tribal Mental Health and Wellbeing Program Manager to support wildland firefighter mental health initiatives. The program managers are both United States Public Health Service Officers and have a combined 25 plus years of experience in mental health services and program management.

Training

In February 2024, DWFM Training Specialist Michael Black received the inaugural National Wildfire Coordinating Group Award for Excellence for participation, leadership and representation on the Interagency Positions and Standards Committee.

Training staff has hired on the initial staff for the newly developed and BIL-funded Federal Wildland Fire Workforce Development Program (FWDP.) This career training program's goal is to find gaps in current day job training for fire positions, then "create or curate" the identified training/and or gaps, ensuring our fire personnel have the best advantage possible to succeed. FWDP facilitated its first ever training, establishing a Coaching Habit, which had over 85 participants from all agencies, including eight from BIA/Tribes. The course was so popular they scheduled another course for mid-March, which had over 95 participants.

Our 2021 required engine operator course developed to further professionalize our BIA/Tribal engine personnel has now trained over 600 personnel. It has been extremely well coordinated and facilitated with collaboration between our training and workforce development specialist, and regional and unit fire staff. This course has been very successful, taking our engine personnel to the next level of operation and safety standards. The latter half of this fiscal year, three national level courses will be facilitated by training staff.

The Wildland Fire Apprenticeship Program (WFAP) has acquired apprentices for 2024. Our first apprentices will work out of the BIA Southwest Region and will begin work as early as May 2024, on their journey towards increasing skill level and awareness of what it takes to be competent and professional in the fire industry. This program has initially been funded through BIL and our goal at is to eventually have 20 apprentices enrolled.

Our National Wildfire Group Coordination Training employee is working diligently within the newly designed Incident Performance Training and Modernization project. This is an ongoing effort to reduce redundance and make our fire training methodology more contemporary.

Aviation

In November 2023, the BIA Aviation Office hosted its first uncrewed aircraft system, A450- Basic Remote Pilot Training at Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque, NM. The second BIA hosted A450 course has been finalized at Boise, ID, April 1-5. An additional class is now being planned for October 2024. These interagency courses are in high demand and BIA can contribute to the interagency needs. BIA will have two qualified Lead Instructors for A450 by the end of March. We took delivery of eight more UAS (Skydio X10) on March 4. We'll be adding an additional six BIA and Tribal UAS pilots throughout the country.

Helicopter solicitation for the Southwest Region has been strategically postponed for October 2024, with plans to award in January 2025. Great proactive budget formulation and planning has been completed. This will help with regional program organization and planning. The early season helicopter training platform has been planned and organized for the first 2024 exclusive use helicopter contract.

The first of two exclusive use enhanced air attack contracts started February 15, 2024, in Oklahoma. A safe and successful operation has been reported. The second of three designated bases will start the second week of April. The exclusive use single-engine scooping Airtanker was awarded on March 22, 2024, for Deer Park, Washington.

Budget

The Budget Office is now fully staffed with a director, deputy director, formulation specialist, incident business specialist and three analysts.

Budget completed distribution of special pay supplements for tribal firefighters to regions for obligation to tribes. These payments for FY22 and FY23 combined went to over 900 individuals (approximately 630 FTE) totaling nearly \$24 million.



Division of Workforce & Youth Development (DWYD)

DWYD, Office of Workforce Planning

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

During FY23 and FY24, the Office of Workforce Planning liaised with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to conduct Competency Modeling & Gap Analysis as well as Training initiatives for the Office of Trust Services workforce. With much success, the Office of Workforce Planning accomplished 6 training initiatives that were held between October 2023 and January 2024. To name a few:

- Communicate Like a Pro,
- Creating Results-Oriented Performance Plans,
- Dealing with Poor Performance,
- Succession Planning,
- Teamwork & Communication in the Virtual Environment, and
- Valuing Results and Accountability.

In addition, the continued coordination between OPM and OTS of Gap Analysis & Competency Modeling has been successful by identifying subject matter experts within their occupational series as they collaborate in their working groups to further discuss their day-to-day duties and to further assess the competencies of each occupational series. As of date, OPM and the Office of Workforce Planning have successfully completed 6 occupations with the *Rangeland Management that is currently in the process.

- 0028 – Environmental Protection Specialist
- 0193 – Archeologist
- *0454 – Rangeland Management – *in progress*
- 0459 – Irrigation System Operator
- 0460 – Forestry
- 0963 – Legal Instrument Examiner
- 1170 – Realty Specialist

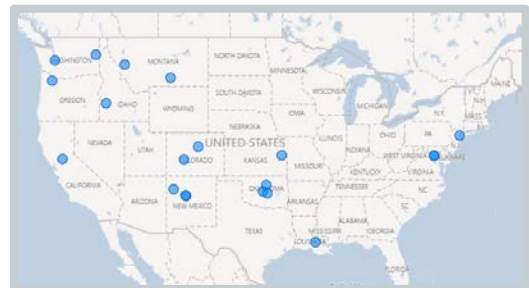
DWYD, Pathways Internship Program

The BIA Pathways Internship Program connects Native American and Alaska Native students to paid internships across the United States. With meaningful projects, rotational assignments, and multi-semester opportunities, Pathways prepares Native American and Alaska Native students for impactful careers in public service and offers a direct pipeline to full-time employment with the BIA or Tribal Nations upon graduation.

Snapshot of FY2024 Pathways Cohort

- As of April 2024, the BIA-OTS Pathways Internship Program has welcomed **16** new Student Trainees to the program. The incoming interns represent 13 Tribes and 11 educational institutions across 9 states and 6 different BIA Regions.
- In Summer 2024, **37** Student Trainees are expected to participate in the OTS Pathways Program. This summer's intern cohort represents 23 Tribes, 25 educational institutions, 18 states, and 10 different BIA Regions.

OTS Pathways Outreach Locations (FY2024)



FY2024 Pathways Conversions

As of April 2024, 5 Student Trainees have already converted to positions with the BIA this year:

- Natural Resources Specialist, Great Plains Region, Rosebud Agency (SD)
- Natural Resources Specialist, Great Plains Region, Rosebud Agency (SD)
- Indian Self Determination Specialist, Pacific Region (CA)
- Realty Specialist Contracts Management, Western Region, Pima Agency (AZ)
- Natural Resources Specialist, Eastern Region (TN)

Up to 11 additional Student Trainees are projected to graduate and convert within the next 3-6 months.

Pathways Outreach & Recruitment

Thus far in FY2024, BIA-OTS Pathways Staff have organized 29 outreach and recruitment events spanning 12 States and 6 BIA Regions.



From left to right: Riley Berry (Pathways Alumni, DWP), Trisha Johnson (Senior GIS Specialist, DRIS), Isaiah Soicher (Pathways Student Trainee), and Kevin Coronado (Pathways Student Trainee) table at the 2023 AISES National Conference in Spokane, WA.

Outreach highlights include:

- Southwest Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) Career Fair (October 2023) – Albuquerque, NM
- Oklahoma State University (October 2023) – Stillwater, OK
- AISES National Conference (October 2023) – Spokane, WA
- Citizen Potawatomi Nation Scholarship Forum (November 2023) – Shawnee, OK
- Presentation to Chief Leschi Schools (BIE) (November 2023) – Virtual, Puyallup, WA
- Outreach Call with University of Montana Students (December 2023) – Missoula, MT
- Haskell Indian Nations University Career Fair (February 2024) – Lawrence, KS
- Society of American Foresters Rising Professionals Conference (February 2024) – Baton Rouge, LA
- Red Earth Festival (March 2024) – Oklahoma City, OK
- National American Indian Science and Engineering Fair (April 2024) – Stillwater, OK
- Pathways Presentation to the 2024 Indigenous Youth Climate Resiliency Through Public Policy Program (April 2024) – Washington, DC



- BUILD** work skills and experience.
- EXPLORE** different Federal occupations.
- LEARN** from a professional workforce.
- RECEIVE** on-the-job training.



From left to right: Carly Dyer (Pathways Program Coordinator), Karen Herrera (Pathways Program Coordinator), and Amanda Williams (Administrative Specialist) table at Haskell Indian Nations University's Spring Career Fair in Lawrence, KS.

Upcoming Outreach Events

- Gathering of Nations (April 25-26) – Albuquerque, NM
- National Indian Native American Employment & Training Conference (May 13-17) – Orlando, FL
- Annual Indian Timber Symposium (May 13-17) – Cherokee, NC
- Native Youth Climate Adaptation Leadership Congress (June 24-28) – Shepherdstown, WV
- United National Indigenous and Tribal Youth (UNITY) Annual Conference (July 1-3) – Portland, OR
- National Tribal & Indigenous Climate Conference (September 9-12) – Anchorage, AK
- AISES National Conference (October 3-4) – San Antonio, TX

PROJECTS (APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2024)

OTS Student Trainee Standardized PD Library

OTS Pathways staff will begin the process of building a library of new standardized internship position descriptions that will allow student trainees to 1) access higher grade levels for which they qualify, 2) begin accruing time-in-grade for specific job series, and 3) clarify different paths toward permanent employment with the BIA. Once classified, the new PDs will resolve a longstanding issue of master's and PhD interns being paid at the same rates as those pursuing a bachelor's or associate degree. The new PD library will also expand recruitment and conversion opportunities by providing interns with the ability to specialize and gain experience in specific, targeted job series.

Quarterly Open-Continuous Job Announcements for Pathways

To improve recruiting outcomes and reach a broader and more diverse population of candidates, targeted JOAs for Student Trainee positions will be released on a quarterly basis for mission critical and hard-to-fill positions. Implementation of the quarterly JOAs is dependent on HR capacity.

Targeted Outreach for Forestry, Rangeland Management

In the latter half of the fiscal year, OTS Pathways Staff will be refocusing outreach and recruitment efforts to attract more candidates in the fields of Forestry and Rangeland Management.

OPPORTUNITIES

Changes to the Pathways Authorities

OPM recently announced changes to their Pathways regulations that will reduce administrative burden on Programs and increase flexibilities related to program eligibility and conversion timelines. As DOI implements the changes and codifies the new rules in the DOI-OPM MOU, the OTS Pathways Program will be updating its internal policy and SOPs to reflect the changes.

CHALLENGES

Staffing

The Pathways Program is understaffed with two unfilled and unadvertised vacancies (GS-301-12 Pathways / Workforce Development Program Specialist and GS-0301-09 Pathways Program Coordinator positions). The GS-09 position is already classified but stalled in the HR queue for posting on USAJOBS.

High Demand for Interns vs. Limited HR Support

While Pathways is consistently experiencing a high volume of host inquiries and requests, the Program cannot meet the demand due to 1) limited staff capacity, 2) limited support from HR / lack of bandwidth for HR to support JOA efforts.

Increasing External Demand for Interns

As the only active Pathways Program in Indian Affairs, our program receives numerous internship requests from non-OTS offices. In recent years, OTS Pathways has attempted to accommodate requests from outside offices if the opportunities aligned with our students' academic and professional goals. However, Pathways intends to scale back its interactions with external offices to ensure OTS needs remain the primary focus, particularly while the program is short-staffed.

Stakeholder Confusion about OHCM Role in Pathways

Following the hiring of the Pathways Programs Program Manager (AS-IA, OHCM) and the release of the Pathways Programs Playbook, Agencies and Regional Offices have consistently expressed confusion about the new roles and responsibilities outlined in the policy. Most stakeholders do not understand that OTS Pathways is designed for and funded by OTS. It is still unclear if OIS, BIE, BTFA, or AS-IA intend to set up their own Pathways Programs as described in the Playbook.

HR Challenges

Over the last several months, Pathways has experienced repeat challenges obtaining consistent, accurate, and timely HR support. Lapses in service have resulted in payroll errors and delays, incorrect separation actions in FPPS, and other disruptions. The challenges have been communicated up the chain of command, and Pathways is hopeful to see improvements moving forward.



Indian Youth Service Corps members walking to project

DWYD, Indian Youth Service Corps

The Indian Youth Service Corps (IYSC) is a new Department of Interior (DOI) initiative designed to provide Native youth with opportunities to engage in meaningful public service projects on federal and Tribal lands for the benefit of Native communities. In FY23, over 40 pilot project proposals were collected and assessed. The BIA Office of Trust Services has collaborated closely with several DOI stakeholders and agencies to identify co-funding opportunities and joint projects, greatly improving interagency cooperation, information-sharing, and further reducing barriers for Tribes and Tribal enterprises interested in engaging in IYSC activities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS (October 2023-March 2024)

Completed over 40 virtual and in-person meetings with federal partners, potential pilot projects, Tribal entities, and other stakeholders.

PROJECTS (April-September 2024)

Delivery of remaining FY23 IYSC Funding

87% of FY2023 project dollars has successfully been awarded; the final 13% (\$480,223) must be delivered to the ALCC Traditional Farm Corps. A funding mechanism has not been determined due to limited staff capacity.

Hiring of GS-0301-13 Youth Services Manager

Pending classification and JOA.

Delivery of FY2024 Pilot Project Sustainment Funding

BIA intends to match its previous years' contributions using FY2024 dollars and implementing agreements with extended periods of performance to reduce administrative burden on Tribes and increase program flexibility.

Project Performance Reporting

As staff capacity allows, the IYSC Program plans to collect pilot project performance data and narratives to report out on program outcomes and submit justifications for sustainment funding.