

U.S. Department of the Interior

Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee Charter

Background

The relationship between the United States and Tribal Nations is one between sovereigns and is based in the United States Constitution. It is a “government-to-government” relationship that has helped to shape the long history of interactions between the Federal Government and Tribes. In recognition of this relationship and pursuant to Executive Order 13175 (November 6, 2000), Federal agencies are charged with engaging in regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with Tribal officials in the development of Federal policies that have Tribal implications.

Purpose and Function

The Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee's (STAC) purpose is to seek consensus and provide a forum to discuss ways to enhance the intergovernmental relationship between the United States and federally recognized Tribes. The STAC will accomplish this purpose by exchanging views, sharing information, providing advice, and otherwise facilitating interactions related to intergovernmental responsibilities or administration of Department of the Interior (DOI) programs, including those that arise explicitly or implicitly under treaty, statute, regulation, or Executive Order. The STAC will facilitate conversations between Federal officials and elected Tribal leaders in their official capacity or their designated employees with authority to act on their behalf.

Duties

The duties of the STAC are to:

- a. Identify evolving issues and barriers to access, coverage, and delivery of services to American Indians and Alaska Natives related to DOI programs.
- b. Identify evolving issues relating to trust assets; lands, waters, and treaty/subsistence resources; cultural resources; and governmental interests of federally recognized Indian Tribes.
- c. Propose clarifications and other recommendations and solutions to address issues raised at Tribal, regional, and national levels.
- d. Serve as a forum for Tribes and DOI to discuss these issues and proposals for changes to DOI regulations, policies, and procedures.
- e. Identify priorities and provide advice on appropriate strategies for Tribal consultation on issues at the Tribal, regional, and/or national levels.
- f. Ensure that pertinent concerns are brought to the attention of Tribes in a timely manner, so that timely Tribal feedback can be obtained.

g. Coordinate with DOI Regional Offices on Tribal consultation initiatives.

Membership

The STAC shall be composed of a Tribal member from each of the twelve Bureau of Indian Affairs Regions, and one alternate member:

- Alaska Region
- Eastern Region
- Eastern Oklahoma Region
- Great Plains Region
- Midwest Region
- Navajo Region
- Northwest Region
- Pacific Region
- Rocky Mountain Region
- Southern Plains Region
- Southwest Region
- Western Region

Members serve at the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) and are appointed on a staggered term basis for terms not to exceed 2 years.

The Secretary will send a letter to Tribal leaders requesting nominations for a member and alternate member in their respective Bureau of Indian Affairs Regions. The names of each nominated STAC member and alternate must be submitted to the Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs (IEA) in an official letter from the Tribe. The Chief of Staff and the Director of IEA will be responsible for selecting and finalizing the body of members. Members should be an elected official or designated representative that is qualified to represent the views of the Tribes in the respective Region for which they are being nominated. Nominations will be considered for selection in the priority order listed below. In the event that there is more than one nomination in the priority list, individuals who had a letter of support from regional Tribal organizations will be taken into consideration when selecting the primary and alternate delegates.

1. Tribal President/Chairperson/Governor
2. Tribal Vice-President/Vice-Chairperson/Lt. Governor
3. Elected or Appointed Tribal Official
4. Designated Tribal Official

A vacancy on the STAC is filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

The Secretary, in consultation with the Assistant Secretary— Indian Affairs (Assistant Secretary), designates one member of the STAC to serve as chairperson.

Non-Federal members of the STAC serve without compensation. However, while away from their homes or regular places of business, non-Federal members engaged in STAC or subcommittee business may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, under 5 U.S.C. § 5703.

STAC members must make a good faith effort to participate in all meetings. If a STAC member does not participate in a meeting on three successive occasions the Assistant Secretary will notify Indian Tribes in the respective area and ask them to nominate a replacement.

DOI representatives determined by the Secretary or Assistant Secretary will be expected to attend meetings of the STAC.

Meetings

The STAC will meet at least two times per year to exchange views, information, or advice, and at such times as designated by the Secretary or the Assistant Secretary. Conference calls will be held as needed.

DOI will provide appropriate advance notice to STAC members and alternates of in-person and virtual meetings and conference calls.

Termination

The STAC will remain existence until such time as the Secretary determines it appropriate to terminate and notifies the members of this determination.


Secretary of the Interior

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Date Signed