Dear USET SPF Membership,

On February 8, 2021 the Department of Defense (DoD) issued a Dear Tribal Leader Letter [link] announcing that they are seeking comments on how to improve their Tribal Consultation efforts. This action is in response to President Biden’s January 26, 2021, “Presidential Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships” [link], which reaffirms the Administration’s commitment to Executive Order 13175 [link] and requires federal agencies to prepare and periodically update plans to implement E.O. 13175.

As directed by President Biden’s Memorandum, DoD is seeking input from Tribal Nations to develop a “plan of action” within 90 days on specific issues and recommendations including, but not limited to—

- Revisions to its current DoD Instruction 4710.02: “DoD interactions with Federally Recognized Tribes” [link];
- Identify procedures to ensure regular, meaningful, and robust consultation;
- Measure the progress of ongoing efforts to consult and coordinate with Tribal Nations;
- Protection of Tribal lands, rights, and resources from impacts related to ongoing military installations and training operations;
- Addressing legacy pollution of Tribal lands due to past DoD activities; and
- Recognizing the service and sacrifice of Native American Veterans.

For a complete list of issues DoD is seeking Tribal Nation comment on, please view the Dear Tribal Leader Letter linked above.

Comments on the items referenced in the Dear Tribal Leader Letter and other recommendations to improve DoD’s Tribal Consultation efforts can be emailed to DoD_NativeAffairs@keresnm.com [link]. Comments will be accepted until March 8, 2021.

For more information, please contact USET SPF Senior Policy Analyst, Brian Howard at bhoward@usetinc.org.