



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Washington, DC 20240

August 2023

Morgan Rodman  
Executive Director  
White House Council on Native American Affairs  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
*Sent via Email*

**Re: STAC General Recommendations for the White House Council on Native American Affairs**

Dear Executive Director Rodman:

As the appointed Chair and Vice Chair of the Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee (STAC) at the U.S. Department of the Interior (Interior), we write to you on behalf of the Committee's membership by extending our gratitude to you for joining the Department's first in-person meeting on May 16 – 17, 2023 in Washington, D.C. in conjunction with the White House Domestic Policy Council. We are deeply appreciative of the time and attention that the White House Council on Native American Affairs (WHCNAA) took to present to STAC membership.

As you know, the Interior STAC collectively represents the priorities of the 574 federally recognized Tribes in the country, as established by Secretary Haaland in furtherance of the federal government-to-government relationship with Tribal Nations and President Biden's commitments to Indian Country memorialized under the [Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships](#) and advance the federal trust responsibility.

In this letter to WHCNAA, we have outlined STAC's policy recommendations and requests collectively formulated and reviewed by STAC with input from the Tribal Nations we represent in the 12 Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Regions. Our recommendations outline our most immediate and time-sensitive priorities for WHCNAA, and in relation to the forthcoming 2023 White House Tribal Nations Summit.

The STAC recommendations detailed below are extension of the conversations our Tribal Nations had with Interior, White House, and the White House Council of Native American Affairs leadership during the May 2023 meeting, and welcome an opportunity to follow up with you on our requests at your earliest convenience:

## **WHCNAA Recommendations and Requests:**

- STAC requests a meeting with the WHCNAA discuss how we can work together on our common interests in implementing an all-of-government approach to the federal government meeting its treaty and trust obligations to Tribal Nations. During this meeting, we would like to also discuss what opportunities STAC membership can have to help organize the selected topics for discussion during the 2023 White House Tribal Nations Summit to help address issues of concern and facilitate conversations with federal agencies.
- WHCNAA should encourage all federal agencies to communicate, coordinate, and pursue cross budget and discipline approaches to meet the needs of Tribal Nations most

effectively. This includes the WHCNAA completing a comprehensive assessment of the needs of Indian Country to support requests for funding to meet needs and provide data to both the White House and United States Congress.

- The WHCNNA should also support and advocate for increased high-level Indigenous political representation in all federal agencies and help make recommendations for the placement of appointed Indigenous employees to work on all issues that impact Indian Country, especially at the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Communications Commission, among others.
- STAC requests WHCNAA's advocacy to support our Interior Budget Recommendations for Indian Country at the White House Office of Budget and Management (OMB), especially to ensure federal funding is provided directly to Tribal Nations (opposed to through states) and for increased Tribal set-aside grants.
- STAC further requests the assistance of WHCNAA to advance the priorities outlined in each of the External letters provided under this recommendations document including the:

1) State Department request for Secretary Blinken to establish a Special Envoy for Indigenous Issues; and

2) White House request for an Executive Order requiring a uniform Tribal consultation and consent policy for broadband infrastructure development on Tribal lands and acknowledge the federal government's fiduciary duty to advance our ownership over finite EMS resources on Tribal lands.

If you have questions or would like to schedule follow-up meetings, please email Heidi Todacheene, Senior Advisor to the Secretary and Executive Director of STAC at: [STAC@ios.doi.gov](mailto:STAC@ios.doi.gov)

Respectfully,



Whitney Gravelle, STAC Chair  
*President, Bay Mills Indian Community*  
Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Erica M. Pinto, STAC Vice Chair  
*Chairwoman, Jamul Indian Village of CA*  
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