

**March 17, 2008 BIA Modernization Initiative – Human Resources**

Temporary Co-Chairs: Phil Swain/Mike Smith

No Technical Staff at this time

Data Needs for Work Group appear to be available; may obtain more as group progresses

Discussion and Collective Ideas to Initialize Dialogue:

- Recruitment to fill vacancies or positions that will become vacant
- Lack of skilled personnel/training needs; Indian Preference? Upward Mobility?
- OST issue: Bring them back into the operations of the BIA?
- Redlegation of Authority to local level for all Indian Affairs activities?
- Background Investigations – BIA/Tribal; what is process? Can it be changed?
- Personnel (BIA/OST) who are being paid currently; don't know what they do.
- Superintendent(s) without proper experience. How do we address?
- Too many employees in Central Office?
- Water issues – why does it take so long to negotiate/litigate? Where is paperwork?
- Indian Honors Program (Indian Preference – Excepted appointments). Tribes need information.
- Training, Orientation needs – Example: Superintendent' Boot Camp, cross-training for all.
- Field training and experience for Honors students.

Additional Meetings/Follow-Up:

- Timeliness of notification for meetings. Next meeting in Albuquerque, April 24, 25, 2008.
- Partnership with Tribes; bigger effort to find and utilize dollars from other Feds plus private sector Foundations
- Tribes are subsidizing Federal programs with tribal dollars; most tribes can't afford.
- Need more flexibility to do a job (Generalists vs. Specialists); currently can't go outside chain of command/authority. Policies are a problem.

Basic Issues:

- Need Tribal Liaison with BIA similar to State or other Fed relationship.
- Agency Superintendent – What authorities are needed? Take a look at Superintendent's standard Position Description (PD).

- What are Regional priorities of the tribes? Need to have a few more meetings, regionally. Might think of adding a day before or after the RD meeting or other National meeting.
- Background Checks – Want answers to: “How do we make changes, not why we can’t make changes”. “Everything is there, just change the processes and provide funding”. Listen to Tribes.
- What is the BIA doing? Are ‘Best Practices’ in place?