



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Secretary of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

May 21, 2013

Dear Tribal Leader:

The Department of Commerce (Department) is pleased to send you our final “Department of Commerce Tribal Consultation and Coordination Policy” (Policy). This policy responds to Executive Order (E.O.) No. 13175, “Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments,” (November 6, 2000), and President Obama’s November 5, 2009, “Tribal Consultation” Memorandum. The Memorandum emphasized that regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials has to occur with Federal Agencies prior to making Federal policy decisions that have tribal implications. In order to develop our Policy, the Department participated in tribal consultation sessions with tribal governments at national and regional meetings throughout Indian Country, hosted webinars, published a notice in the *Federal Register*, and contacted tribes directly. We received written comments and input from tribal representatives, and these were instrumental in the development of our final Policy.

The Department is committed to the tenants of E.O. 13175, and we worked to create an overarching Policy structured to provide guidance to all twelve agencies and bureaus under the Department. The attached Policy replaces the Department’s “American Indian and Alaska Native Policy” (March 30, 1995), and it builds and expands upon the principles in the 1995 policy. This Policy is intended to provide high-level guidance to operating units to implement depending on their circumstances and governing legal authorities allowing each bureau and agency flexibility to determine the best approach to consult with tribes on policies that have tribal implications.

This Policy would not have been possible without the input from tribes during our national webinars held in September 2012 and the public comment phase from July 2012 to October 2012. Thank you all for your participation and comments during this process.

The Department looks forward to continuing to build upon the government-to-government relationships between tribes and the Department’s agencies and bureaus, and we look forward to future consultations with the tribes. If you have any questions, please contact Dee Alexander, the Department’s Senior Advisor on Native American Affairs, at (202) 482-0789.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rebecca Blank".

Rebecca M. Blank
Acting Secretary of Commerce