



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

California State Office
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1623
Sacramento, CA 95825
www.ca.blm.gov

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To: All CA Field Offices, All CA Field Managers

From: State Director

Subject: California BLM Response to Tribal Land Transfer/Acquisition Requests

The purpose of this Information Bulletin (IB) is to provide a Field Office response to requests by federally recognized Indian Tribes for the acquisition of public lands managed by BLM-California

BLM-California has long been committed to assist Tribes under federal law regulation and policy. There are 108 federally recognized Indian Tribes in the state of California with numerous others petitioning for federal recognition. Many of these tribes have little or no land and may seek land transfers from BLM.

As you are aware, BLM does not have authority to transfer land to tribes to be taken into Trust. The authority to transfer public/federal land to Trust status is reserved to Congress, and must be accomplished through legislation. The Bureau's lack of authority to act on public land transfer requests should be made clear to tribes. When responding to such requests, BLM field offices should refer tribes to their local Bureau of Indian Affairs office and document such referrals.

However, BLM Field Offices can assist tribes by providing factual information regarding the land in question (i.e., existing valid rights, Land Use Plans, special designations, etc.) but may not make comment on any potential BLM position regarding legislation/potential legislation concerning the parcel or parcels. Positions on draft legislation are reserved to the Department of the Interior when a Congressional hearing is held. The Department would comment/testify at that time on behalf of the Administration and BLM.

If you have questions regarding this issue, please contact Stephanie Damadio, Senior Program Analyst-Heritage, at sdamadio@blm.gov or (916) 978-4650.

Signed by:
James Wesley Abbott
Acting State Director

Authenticated by:
Richard A. Erickson
Records Management