

Chairman's Report

I am sharing important information from Matt Hill, our Tribal lobbyist in Washington, D.C., regarding the proposed FY18 appropriations bill in Congress:

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Overall Funding (BIA + BIE): \$3.6 billion (\$203 million above FY17 level)

Contract Support: \$241.6 million (\$36 million reduction from FY17 level)

BIE/Education: \$914 million (\$128 million over FY17)

Public Safety & Justice: \$405 million (\$56 million above FY17)

BIA Forestry: \$54.8 million is provided (a slight increase from FY17 and significantly more than the administration's request)

Columbia River Fishing Sites: Report language – "The committees note that the bureau has not yet complied with the fiscal year 2017 directive to provide a report on funding requirements associated with operating and law enforcement needs for congressionally authorized treaty fishing sites on the Columbia River. The bureau is directed to transmit the report no later than 30 days following enactment of this act. The bureau is also urged to incorporate unfunded needs for these sites as part of future budget requests."

Tribal Languages: Report language – "The committees support efforts to revitalize and maintain Native languages and expand the use of language immersion programs. The ISEP program is expected to continue to enhance access to Native language and culture programs in bureau-funded schools and the bureau shall report back within 60 days of enactment of this act on how funding has been and can con-

tinue to be used to support these programs. In addition, \$2,000,000 is provided within Education Program Enhancements for capacity building grants for bureau- and Tribally operated schools to expand existing language immersion programs or to create new programs."

PL-280 Tribes: \$13 million in new funds are earmarked for PL-280 courts. Report language – "The committees understand that several Tribes whose federal recognition was terminated and then subsequently restored now face significant challenges in securing law enforcement funding through self-determination contracts. The bureau is directed to work with affected Tribes to assess their law enforcement needs and submit a report within 120 days of enactment of this act that details the amounts necessary to provide sufficient law enforcement capacity for them."

Forest/Fire Management: The bill directs the department to report on how it prioritizes wildfire suppression on Indian trust forests (after reports of BIA losing suppression assets to protect privately owned summer homes in Washington state) – "The Department of the Interior is expected to promote and expand the use of agreements with Indian Tribes to protect Indian trust resources from catastrophic wildfire, insect and disease infestation, or other threats from adjacent federal lands, as authorized by law. The committees direct the bureau to coordinate with the Office of Wildland Fire to submit a report describing how the department determines the use of wildfire suppression and rehabilitation resources and prioritizes Indian forest land, the title to which is held by the United States in trust"

Indian Health Service

Overall Funding: \$5,537,764,000, an increase of \$497 million from the FY17 enacted level.

Purchased/Referred Care: The bill provides \$962,695,000, an increase of \$33.8 million from FY17. Congress also expressed its concern about the inequitable distribution of funds as reported by the Government Accountability Office (GAO-12-446).

Contract Support Costs: The bill provides an "indefinite" appropriation of nearly \$718 million/year for contract support costs.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Tribal Hatcheries: "Within the amounts provided for fish, wildlife and parks, the agreement continues \$545,000 for substantially producing Tribal hatcheries in BIA's Northwest Region currently not receiving annual BIA hatchery operations funding. This funding should be allocated in the same manner as in fiscal year 2017 but should be considered base funding in fiscal year 2018 and thereafter."

Traditional Ecological Knowledge: The bills states that, "The committees are concerned that the Fish and Wildlife Service has not fully incorporated traditional Tribal knowledge in its implementation of the ESA. When appropriate, the committees expect the service to make every effort to incorporate traditional knowledge in ESA decisions. The committees also expect the service to engage in additional outreach to Tribal governments in circumstances where traditional knowledge may provide valuable information, including for species like the northern sea otter. The



Delores Pigsley

service should brief the committees on its efforts regarding traditional knowledge within 60 days of enactment of this act."

National Park Service

NAGPRA Funding: Funding for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Grant Program is maintained at the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. Elsewhere, in the BIA law enforcement budget, there is \$1,000,000 to implement the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

Wildfire/Forest Management (Forest Service, DOI)

The bill contains somewhat of a "deal" on wildfire suppression and for-

See Chairman on page 12

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Deadline for the May issue is April 10.

Submission of articles and photos is encouraged.

Please see the Passages Policy on page 20 when submitting items for Passages.



Member of the Native American Journalists Association

Elders Council Meeting

April 14 • 1-4 p.m.

Chinook Winds Golf Resort

For more information, contact the Elders Program at 800-922-1399, ext. 1261, or 541-444-8261.

Nuu-wee-ya' (our words)

Introduction to the Athabaskan language

Open to Tribal members of all ages

Siletz

Siletz Tribal Community Center
April 2 – 6-8 p.m.
April 30 – 6-8 p.m.

Portland

Portland Area Office
April 16 – 6-8 p.m.
May 14 – 6-8 p.m.

Eugene

Eugene Area Office
April 3 – 6-8 p.m.
May 1 – 6-8 p.m.

Salem

Salem Area Office
April 17 – 6-8 p.m.
May 15 – 6-8 p.m.

Classes begin with basic instruction and progress over the year. They also are a refresher course for more-advanced students. Come and join other members of your community and Tribe in learning to speak one of our ancient languages.

We also have equipment in the Cultural Department available for use in grinding and drilling shell or pine nuts or other applications. If you need to use the equipment, call the number below to set up an appointment.

For more information, contact Bud Lane at the Siletz Cultural Department at 541-444-8320 or 800-922-1399, ext. 1320; or e-mail budl@ctsi.nsn.us.